Chapter 3
The Re-signification of the City and Inherited Building Stock

Abstract The re-signification of historical heritage is one possible action for triggering real processes of urban regeneration in the contemporary city. The historic city represents the concentration of the know-how and values that have come to define and characterise the evolution of society and the environment it inhabits. During the sixty years since the approval of the first Gubbio Charter (1960) for the conservation of historic centres, urban historical heritage has often represented an impediment and a limit on the natural evolution of the city. Many of the current reflections on urban regeneration consider the historic city as something to be defended and protected against the impoverishment of the landscape and the territory. While this may be undeniable, in this chapter, we will underline how historical heritage represents the resource from which to set out and define a process of pragmatic regeneration, though based on the recognition (or definition) of new local identities (of proximity). A similar approach overcomes the dichotomies between conservation and transformation and includes proactive attitudes toward understanding and caring for the territory.

In this chapter, proximity is defined as the 'expression of identity' and the paragraphs that follow reflect on three themes. Firstly, the theme of urban history concerning the dimension of the contemporary city, as a revealing of the values of a community, redesigned beginning with the new geographies of ancient and modern heritage at the territorial scale. The historical territory is intended here as a structural network of the city that consolidates bonds of proximity, memory and identity of communities. The second theme centres on the street as the arena of a sedimentation of relations between space and society, between heritage and community, between conservation/protection of identity and the valorisation/promotion of urban history. The third theme regards tourism as a tool for rediscovering historical cities to keep them from succumbing to either 'hit-and-run' tourism or the process that re-directs the vacation market toward destinations closer at hand, less familiar and less crowded. The chapter concludes with a return to a number of aspects of the design of Milan's Green and Blue Backbone that, by thematising the public spaces around the new stations of the M4 metro line, restores the *urbs* to the *civitas*.

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3.1 Proximity as Identity. From the Historic Centre to the Historical Territory

3.1.1 Calling Things Back to Memory

In the social sciences, the concept of identity explores how people perceive themselves and their place in society and what characterises and sets them apart from others. Identity is not immutable but transforms as society develops and changes. Able to observe the world, but not one's self, an individual must make recourse to tools that allow for self-revelation. As a physical object, the city is one of these instruments of self-discovery and self-comprehension, above all when the subject is not a singular individual but a community.

Simmel (1908) assumed space as a condition for the existence of communities, in other words, he considered the urban environment not as a backdrop against with society acts, but instead as a property of society. Hence, through the observation of the city it is possible to define a collective identity by recognising the signs that link a community to a place, in other words, its *genius loci* or "statute of place" (*statuto dei luoghi*), as indicated by the Territorialist approach (Magnaghi 2000). Collective identity is the conception a community has of itself with respect to its founding values, concretely represented in the rich 'palimpsest' of the territory (Corboz 1985). It follows that the city conserves a 'historical territory'—the result of a constant process of stratification and writing by natural processes and human interventions—to be revealed through analysis and design at the real scale of the metropolized contemporary city.

The revealing of the historical territory, and its use as a tool for the design of the city, is an attitude that consolidates collective memory and identity by attributing new meaning to the sum of historical traces. The concept of the 'historical territory'—born in the early 1990s in Italy (ANCSA 1990)—testifies to a new urbanist culture that makes every effort to work in the present, even with the faintest and most unusual traces of the 'only recently cooled past' (Gasparrini 2008). The idea is to delineate the future traits of the city and society within a continuous process of re-signification that no longer sets any limit, boundary, or separation between materials of value and the de-qualified city.

There exists today a new awareness of the role of urban history and its typo-morphological expressions, derived from various processes, such as, for example: the sensibility of societies toward themes of the environment and health and safety deriving from the unsustainability of the metropolized city (Oliva 2010); the presence of new ties and a sense of belonging to the territory that have emerged from the study of current practices of using the city (Cellamare 2009); the abandonment of many stereotypes, such as, for example, the ugliness of the short twentieth century and its architectural, urban, industrial and artistic expressions (Di Biagi 1999). Indeed, in virtue of the territorial, social, and economic changes that have come about, which can place material and immaterial heritage at risk, that we see a powerful re-emergence of the need to develop new awarenesses, policies, and actions to safeguard the historical city.

The contemporary historical framework is composed of an articulated repertory of heritage recognisable at various scales: from medieval fortifications to Renaissance palaces, from archaeological remains to Rationalist neighbourhoods, from late medieval agrarian land divisions to Baroque gardens, from the roads built by the Romans to the railways of the late nineteenth century. This variegated system of open and built spaces is characterised by intrinsic and relational values revealed by urban design. They have documentary and historiographic value and blossom to produce other values: environmental, ecosystemic and landscape-related, as well as ludic-recreational and mnemonic.

The act of remembering, of calling things back to memory, is fundamental to identity construction, and partially determined by the vision and knowledge of existing signs and traces. This does not imply that cancelling historical traces always negatively affects the affirmation of a specific identity. Instead, it signifies that the conservation or suppression of the territorial palimpsest comports a re-elaboration and actualisation of its significance. When a community re-signifies traces, it determines a mechanism of appropriation of places that defines a new relation between space and society. For this reason the historical city is an ‘identifying structure’ of place (Manieri Elia 2008). In other words, it can demonstrate the distinctive traits of a community by placing it at the centre of a project for urban regeneration.

The current urban condition—characterised by flows and uses that have caused an implosion in proximity spaces—has dematerialised the anthropological premise of the *civitas*, that is, the capacity to edify the *urbs*, intended as its living environment. However, thanks to an intelligent work with the materials of history (*pars construens*) society can once again appropriate the skills of the art of building (*l’art d’édifier*) its living environment (Choay 2008). An environment at the human scale, characterised by the proximity of diversified functions and rediscovered or new values, as well as a stimulus to the “cooperation as a factor in the evolution of society itself” (Nowak 2006). Attentively selecting the elements to be preserved legitimises a continuous remodelling and stratification of places, avoiding museum-like conservation, the mercification of heritage and the consequent alienation of the communities that inhabit them. Selecting aids memory, and memory aids the transmission of “urban facts” to future generations.

The “urban facts” referred to by Rossi (1995)—streets, quarters, buildings—can be considered works of art because “all great manifestations of social life and all great works of art are born in unconscious life”. Cities reveal the temporal experiences that have societies have practiced unconsciously within and with them. For this reason, cities (or at least parts of them), can be considered ‘works of art’ *tout court*; in the sense that they are influenced by the territory in which they are born, but at the same time condition the evolution of this context and the society that inhabits them.

Not by chance, every urban element inherently contains a memory recounted through a form. Urban forms, revealed like works of art, constitute a value more powerful than the environment in which they are located and more resistant than memory. It is because the value they conserve is the idea of the city that generated them; they are the exemplification of how the structure/substance of a good is bound up within its form. Remembering is an action that takes place in the present, making it strictly dependent on the context in which this action occurs. The reconstruction of the past corresponds with present-day society's interests, ways of thinking and ideal needs. Remembering thus signifies actualising the memory of a group. The image that derives from the past and that memory actualises is not something immutable, nor something definitive: the past is conserved in the life of men, in the spaces they have experienced, and the forms of consciousness these spaces have generated them. "Collective memory" consists of a mass of dense and mobile memories that are continually modifiable and re-buildable based on the necessities of living and active social groups (Halbwachs 1987: 28).

When returning to a city visited in the past, what we perceive visually aids the reconstruction of a set of forgotten events. On the one hand, what we observe is repositioned in old memories; on the other hand, memories adapt to changes to what we maintain in the present. The concordance of this mnemonic feedback makes it possible to reconstruct a set of recognisable memories (a collective memory). If we find that a place once visited has changed considerably after many years, we fail to recognise it, but we also modify memories that are completely annulled. What we see as totally new has no place in the memory of what was, while we adapt fully to changes in what we see in the present. This means that the complete annulment of the space in which memory re-emerges also annuls the memory itself. Though not necessarily all elements, as the permanence of a few is sufficient for memory to be regenerated.

Memory is configured as a weak human attitude if taken singularly. That is, not only remembering and memory can be annulled in the absence of direct evidence, but there is also a risk of annulment when memories are not shared. Hence the importance of the "collective" dimension. "Collective memory" makes it possible to transmit a group experience through time. Collective memory is structured when multiple individuals belong to a group and, in a certain sense, think together. Remaining in contact with one another, they can identify themselves with this group, completely fusing the past of a single individual with the group's history. Memory is formed through collectivity because the single memory disappears and has belonged to the group that conserves and transmits it for some time. For individual memory to survive it is not enough that the group presents its own evidence; individual memory should match collective memory and there must be points of encounter whose re-evocation lays the foundations for this common structure.

Collective memory is profoundly social in nature because it links the sharing of an experience. By expanding this reasoning to the city we can consider it the most essential space of human experience, the place where shared collective action occurs, if not for direct reasons, at least for indirect one linked to the proximity of common spaces. Given the collective nature of memory, preserving (public) urban spaces is not a process that tends to generalise all urban palimpsests. Instead, it selects, in virtue of a broad sharing of recognition, only those spaces thanks to which society manages to recognise itself, and decides to conserve for future generations. In this sense both voids and solids, presences and missing elements, are eloquent. This is a means for organising and structuring more or less shared repertories of spaces, formed and modified over time, becoming places, discarding certain presences and privileging others. This mechanism which alternates remembering and forgetting generates identity (Helzel 2016).

The relationship between the form of the city and the society that inhabits it is reinforced by the mnemonic bond through which collective society associates experience with place. Thus, there is no collective memory that does not unfold also in a spatial framework. Space is a shifting reality, but it persists: we could not find the past were it not physically preserved, even in the minimum doses intent on continuing it, in the material world that surrounds it. The space occupied by humankind must be the object of the attention of urban design because it is the direct custodian of collective memory.

3.1.2 The Italian School: From the 'Historic Centre' to the 'Historic City'

By involving heritage, the process of historicity permits an evolution in continuity with the past. In other words, the historicity of a piece of heritage is its character of 'becoming historical' over time, admitting mutations and evolutions. Opposite to it, Historicism is the interpretation and evaluation of this same element concerning the present moment and the historical environment in which it was produced.[1] Dealing with historicity in disciplines concerned with space signifies working with design: for a monument, for a group of buildings, for homogenous/recognisable portions of the city, until we comprehend the existing city in its entirety (Gabrielli 1993; Bonfantini 2002). The history of a place and its community is manifest and described through "urban facts" (Rossi 1995) that in turn become the object of different interpretations, descriptions, and attitudes for their preservation. The techniques of urban planning employed to investigate historicity in the city have sedimented approaches to preservation that—beginning with interventions of conservation reserved for the most ancient parts of the city—were later implemented through adaptations and contaminations, and applied to all that was "consolidated within a territory" through a "discrete regulation" (Bonfantini 2002). The evolution of approaches to conservation has revealed the expansion of the set of possible interventions for regulating historical fabrics (from isolation to rehabilitation, from conservation to requalification). On the other hand, it has raised the necessity of preserving urban historicity (from the historical monument to urban environments, from the historic centre to the historical territory), admitting an expansion of borders to identify heritage of historical interest.

When we refer to the historical city, everyone has their idea or point of view on what it is. This construct tends to be associated with a rather circumscribed image:

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[1] Definitive from the *Dizionario Hoepli Italiano* by A. Gabrielli, available via *eLexico* from the website of the Politecnico di Milano.

a warren of narrow streets, a few widenings, or small public squares lined by houses and shops that define a single organism, distinct and homogeneous, and referred to in urban planning terms as the ‘historic centre.’ Historic centre because on the one hand, this structure of settlement is generally located in the heart of the city (at its centre) and, secondly, because the spatial forms described by this term belong to a way of conceiving of and building the city that has now been surpassed (historical because it refers to the past). In reality there is a notable cultural distance between what is described by the notion of a ‘historic centre’ and that of a ‘historic city.’ A depth of thinking and an evolution of techniques of urban-building intervention with relatively distant origins and a process of slow and often contrasted formation. An evolution that has traversed centuries and which today appears to have found a new codification in the concept of the ‘historical territory’ (ANCSA 1990). The reflections and experiences of the past sixty years in the fields of recovery and conservation of historical urban heritage have now consolidated the idea that the historic centre, circumscribed within the physical perimeter of the boundary of an ancient city it is not sufficient to gather up the dense and layered, living and active memory of a place and a community. Despite this, the historic centre plays an influential and symbolic role in identifying the privileged space in which the most relevant historical, artistic and cultural values to be preserved are concentrated. Today there is a consolidated idea that ‘historical quality’ must be recognised in cities or territories whose dimensions exceed those of an ancient city.

The cultural passage from the concept of the ‘historic centre’ to that of the ‘historical city’ contributes to the abandonment of the functionalist approach to zoning (DI 1444/1968 instituted the *A Zones* that include “those parts of the territory home to urban agglomerations of a historic or artistic character or of particular environmental value, or portions thereof, including surrounding areas, which can be considered an integral part, owing to these characteristics, of these same agglomerations”), or which identify the historical memory of the entire body of the existing city (through the institution of ‘urban fabrics’). Admitting the evolution of urban historicity, this passage exalts both the values of ancient nuclei, as well as the values of modern (and even contemporary) architecture and urbanism, that is, places with a recognised symbolic, testimonial and cultural value, and thus of identity for the city and society. Values that are not read through differences and oppositions but in continuities, successions, and evolutions. This important methodological leap forward overcomes the historical dilemma between conservation and transformation, two tendentially opposing attitudes, and give rise to conceptual and operative difficulties (Cervellati 2010). Nevertheless, in Italy, when we speak of ‘urban fabrics’ we refer primarily to those parts of the city that are homogenous by typologies, morphologies, building proportions and spatial relations, history, era of construction and successive stratifications, including functions and use’s that, while diverse, are also compatible with one another. Among urban fabrics, we tend to single out those with an ancient history and those with a more modern one. The first refers to the area of the ‘historic centre’ for which there continues to be a necessity and urgency to enact unquestioned preservation (Guermandi and D’Angelo 2019). Modern-contemporary fabrics, instead, belong to that part of the existing city with a recognised historical value for its being the result of a process of urban planning. Through their recognisable urban design, these urban fabrics of the 'historical city' reveal the vision of the development of settlement typical of the period spanning between the late 1800s and the post-war era. In other words, these parts of the city are configured as the legacy of the plans created by modern urbanism.

The concept of the 'historic centre' is the result of an evolution of the discipline that recognised the historical and cultural value and identity of an organic part of the city, and not only monuments and their immediate surroundings (Fior 2020a; b). With the passage from the conservation of monuments to the conservation of the historic centre we can mention the numerous essays by Françoise Choay (1973, 1992, 1995), though in particular the debate among Italian urbanists in the wake of the definition of the Gubbio Charters, by the Associazione Nazionale Centri Storico-Artistici. The first Gubbio Charter (1960) sanctioned the existence of a "single monument" to be preserved: the historic centre, made of exceptional works of architecture, as well as minor works of architecture and the public spaces linking them. These buildings and spaces are substantially circumscribed within the expansions of medieval city walls (in smaller towns) or seventeenth/eighteenth-century walls (in larger towns). The second Gubbio Charter (1990) introduced the concept of the 'historical territory,' which expanded the paradigm of the historic centre. Article 2 of the second Gubbio Charter reads: "In every European city the historic centre has represented the area in which the values of the *civitas* and the *urbs* have been concentrated: its protection and promotion are necessary to guarantee the historical identity of settlements and thus their value. The historic centre also constitutes the node of a vaster structure of settlement. This structure, interpreted in its centuries-long process of formation, must now be identified as a 'historical territory,' the comprehensive expression of cultural identity and thus subject in all of its parts (existing city, built landscapes, rural territory) to an organic strategy of intervention".

In reality, in Italy, the second Gubbio Charter from 1990 anticipated UNESCO's recommendations for the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL 2011). It is defined as follows in art. 8: "The Historic Urban Landscape is the urban area understood as the result of a historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of 'historic centre' or '*ensemble*' to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting".

In a 2012 interview, Bruno Gabrielli stated: "The UNESCO Declaration on the theme of the Historic Urban Landscape contains two innovations. The first is the recognition of 'immaterial, and not only 'material' heritage, among that to be preserved. Or the comingling of material heritage and immaterial value. For example, a poem could bring value to a wall, a building, an urban perspective… and this is very important for defining that which possesses a historic and cultural value and identity. The second innovation is that the UNESCO recommendations place a strong accent on the contemporary. Heritage conservation is guaranteed when it is contemporary, that is, if the value of this heritage is recognised in our contemporary era. We consider heritage actual if there have been or exist hypothesis for its re-contextualisation. And design offers a means for making inherited heritage contemporary" (Fior 2013: 120).

The second Gubbio Charter aimed at being a written contribution to building consensus and sharing decision-making processes for confronting the regulation of the historical and cultural heritage and identity in the city and territory in a more structured manner. These rules were to uniform both the technical language employed when approaching the notions of ‘conservation’ and ‘transformation.’ Still, above all they were to have unified the methods used to investigate and recognise the founding characteristics of the existing city and built landscape. This sanctioned the importance of a “project of knowledge”, that is, the process of understanding the potentialities of settlement that are the foundation of any urban regeneration project (Mazzoleni 1991: 36).

As Bruno Gabrielli wrote, the 1990 Charter “is an entirely open document, even incomplete, but which contains the sum of the positions of ANCSA[2] matured during the first 30 years of its existence. Here we reflect firstly on the failure of the hypothesis of public intervention [in the field of preservation], the affirmation of the principles of protection but also the need for innovation and, above all, there is a consolidation of the idea of a strategy that regards not only the historic centre, but also the exiting city” (Gabrielli in Toppetti 2011: 12).

The 1990 Gubbio Charter definitively sanctioned the presence of the historical value of cultural and natural heritage located outside the perimeter of the historic centre. At the same time, the second Gubbio Charter also sanctioned the dilatation of the meaning and the field of intervention of preservation: from an action of conservation increasingly less tied to the defence of existing values toward an innovative action, increasingly more founded on design as the “privileged space for the production of the new values of contemporary society”. Indeed, this outlined “a new philosophy of behaviour toward historic and natural heritage and its relations with the territories of our contemporary era, destined to have an impact on conceptions of the city, historic centres and the landscape, overturning many consolidated divisions and opening up expectations for reform” (Gambino in Volpiano 2011: 19).

The passage from ‘historic centre’ to ‘historic city’ or ‘historical territory’ has introduced important innovations in the conservation of urban historicity. First and foremost, historicity becomes a theme of urban planning, which determines an expansion in the scale of intervention of preservation (from the single historical monument to a more complex system of urban materials). In particular, the conservation of urban historicity occurs by maintaining and consolidating relations between different parts: between different historical values (ancient, modern, and even contemporary eras) and between “urban facts” and the community. The expansion of the list of “urban facts” with a recognised historical value, transforms the ‘conservation of heritage’ into the ‘conservation of the relations between heritages,’ which translates into the construction/design of ‘networks di historical values.’ We are dealing with a system of relations that does not negate, but instead complements and increases the historical interest in traditional heritage. The awareness that historicity traverses the entirety of the territory, emerging in signs and traces of differing typology, location, date, etc. What is more, it comports the application of widespread, often ordinary, interventions, no longer focused exclusively on a special/exceptional spatial environment. Finally, the action of preserving historicity implies recognising the mnemonic value and identity of historical-artistic urban materials, attributing a social meaning to conservation. The idea of conserving urban historicity comports an admission of the evolution of the facts of which it is comprised. In other words, the transformation (and even the elimination) of some traces to respond to the necessities and meanings attributed by contemporary society to those parts held to possess value and that it wishes to pass on to future generations.

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[2] The Italian National Association of Historic-Artistic Centers (*Associazione Nazionale Centri Storico-Artistici*, ANCSA). The ANCSA was founded in 1961 to promote cultural and practical initiatives to support the activities of public administrations in safeguarding and regenerating the urban heritage.

For these reasons, the concepts of 'historic city' and 'historical territory' can be considered largely equivalent. Underlying both is the premise of recognising the complexity of traces, in the various forms and eras they represent, and the ties they establish with society. The possible distinction between the two terms is that while 'historic city' refers to a collection of signs that belong prevalently to built agglomerations; the term 'historical territory' refers also to the traces of open spaces (nature and landscape) and the territorial morphologies that structured the environments in which communities live.

3.2 A Framework for Regeneration. Networks for Structuring Neighbourhood Identities

3.2.1 The Historical Territory Network

The Covid-19 pandemic accentuated the challenges for the cities of the future, adding health issues to the sweeping changes to be governed, which already included the environmental, climatic, economic, social, digital, and technological changes taking place. At the same time, we are witnessing a process of redefining urban planning (its tools, approaches, mechanisms and issues) that receives questions and demands for solutions to adapt cities to global changes. A European Union document from 2011 shed light on the fact that growing populations in the world's metropolises are accompanied by phenomena of social segregation in urban areas and the depopulation of many peripheral territories and historic landscapes. This second aspect, in particular, has exposed the many intrinsic vulnerabilities of territories, fragilities linked to the natural risks inherent to specific sites (earthquakes, landslides, flooding, etc.), outdated infrastructures (roads, railways, and information networks), and the absence of accessible, structured and quality social welfare.

Despite this, cities play a fundamental role as economic drivers, sites of connectivity, creativity and innovation, and centres of service. Since the 1990s, however, their administrative boundaries have ceased to correspond with the physical, social, economic, cultural or environmental reality of traditional development. There is a need for new ideas to concretely implement sustainable urban regeneration projects. By promoting innovation, we can support the transition (not only ecological) of the cities of the future, following the principles of the Urban Agenda EU 2030, reiterated in the Leipzig Charter (EC 2020), which promotes more ecological, inclusive and cohesive, productive and connected cities. For this reason, digital, social, environmental, climatic, health-related or economic challenges must be confronted at diverse scales and in an integrated manner. We must pay attention to the needs of quarters (to increase energy performance, support the protection of historical values-identity, and reduce phenomena of social segregation) and those of metropolitan territories. Guaranteeing the coherence between sector-specific initiatives focused on providing more efficient accessibility to services, mass mobility via public transport, the recognisability of places and biodiversity preservation.

Nonetheless, before producing any vision of the future, there is a need for solid know-how to support a shared comprehension of the potential to regenerate cities. A fundamental role in this perspective is played by the elements that structure and innervate new immaterial relations and physical connections in the contemporary city. These networks are the only components that support a process of spatial reconfiguration that goes beyond the infinite extension of the contemporary city (Bonomi and Abruzzese 2004). Networks overcome the discontinuities, the porosities and fragmentations (natural and socio-economic) created in the city and surrounding contexts. Not least, historical heritage, as a system of historic-cultural values and identities, characteristic of contemporary territories, is added to consolidated social, infrastructural and transport, environmental and ecological networks (Secchi and Viganò 1998; Campos Venuti 2001; Oliva 2001).

The objective is to work toward the common good and public realm, focusing on citizens, entrepreneurs, institutions and the new roles of administrations in governance. As well as overcoming the most urgent challenges, such as social housing and inclusivity, attractiveness for businesses, preservation of historical-cultural heritage and identity and ecological-environmental sustainability. In this vision of the future of cities, public space is no longer simply the space between buildings, but a space that generates a new urbanity. Urbanity is no longer bound to the codified and reassuring area of the city centre, or an elevated density of buildings, but covers a widespread condition of contemporary dwelling, with different lifestyles and expressions of historicity.

The regeneration of the contemporary city is substantially different, despite representing a normal evolution of the era of urban requalification that characterised the strategic programming of Italian cities since the 1990s. Urban regeneration obliges us to confront new lifestyles, new necessities (social dwelling) and the scarcity of resources (economic, but also the exhaustion of environmental resources, such as the soil or energy). The first goal of regeneration is the restoration of an equilibrium across the entire territorial system. For this reason, any new strategy of territorial governance must be developed under the banner of urban regeneration. Urban planning—only one of the many components of territorial governance—thanks to its specific tools (the master plan and the urban project), can provide the framework of territorial coherence within which to develop each new hypothesis for the regeneration of the environments in which we live. Within this general framework, preparing a project for the city that considers the 'historical territory network' helps reinforce a vision of urban development founded on elements that identify a place and configure a regenerative process rooted in the community. In other words, the historical territory is one of those networks that bring structure to the city of the future, beginning with its relations with the communities that inhabit it.

The concept of 'historical territory' is not intended to substitute that of 'landscape.' While both concepts lack a precise physical or temporal dimension, replicable in any context, the landscape is a 'non-fractionable unit' because it is characterised by an indissoluble dimension of spatial–temporal evolution. On the contrary, the historical territory is a 'selection of units,' of territorial elements that make up its structure, soul, genesis and identity. The historical territory is similar to a selective network of nodes connected by material and immaterial relations. Because of its selectivity, the historical territory doesn't exist as an open entity. Instead, it reveals itself and its components only through a 'project of understanding' because the historical territory is first and foremost symptomatic of the elements of which it is composed. It represents the moment when historical components are investigated. Secondly, the design of the historical territory network explicates the relations a community establishes with and through the nodes of this network. In other words, despite both terms being dynamic interpretations of space and its mutations over time. The landscape is nonetheless 'a system of ecosystems' (the adhesive, the amalgam), while the historical territory is 'a system of persistences,' that is, a network of elements that persist over time and to which society attributes meaning, or is willing to do so.

Therefore, the elements that belong to the network of historical territories are not only those that persist, as morphologically identifiable signs in the territory, but are also those that persist over time. They acquire a role in structuring the collective identity, even when it is modified and adapted.

The key point of the passage from preserving historical heritage to a regenerative project for the contemporary city—through the re-signification and creation of a network of the signs of urban history (above all in those contexts that, for various reasons, have ignored or even lost the distinctive signs of a common history)—occurs only when two operations develop in parallel. On the one hand, the formation of a 'collective conscience' that collaborates from the bottom-up in the search for the distinctive signs in territories, actualising their meaning and significance. The subjective value that each person may attribute to an element of heritage is born of countless motivations bound to personal experience: from the emotions for a birthplace or space in which we spend a great deal of time, but also through literature, music, poetry, with nurture the emotions of individuals toward an element of heritage. This emotivity can involve many subjects, and in the end, the faithful preservation of historicity, a strong guarantee for the preservation of heritage, lies in the fact that this element is recognized, independent from the motivations of a large part of society. On the other hand, there is the need for the formation of a 'technical conscience' that, from the top-down, through specialised know-how, gathers the signs and traces of historic interest and repositions them within a framework of urban coherence, capable of generating a new model of settlement, unified and functional, for the city. Substantially at least two conditions must be verified if a project for the historical territory is to acquire concreteness and have an effect on regenerative processes: citizens must appropriate the meaning of particular elements of historical interest that make the population an actor in the territory, capable of caring for the traces and values it preserves; and, on the other hand, there must be a technical know-how (typical of urbanism) that establishes a network from the many signs that express urban historicity and at the same time are capable of synergically attracting resources, actors, energies and ideas for the regeneration of the contemporary city.

The historical territory is a complex system of elements that delimit any project for the regeneration of the contemporary city. By interacting with and reinforcing itself through connections with other structural networks (environment and mobility), the historical territory can bring new quality to metropolized, fragmented and discontinuous urban systems (Fior 2013). The historical territory is a sum of goods that often coincides with the public city (publicly owned and used properties and services). The 'public city'[3] is historically deputised with collecting and layering the life of communities in its public squares, civic palaces, places of worship and streets. In this overlapping of functions and values, the historical territory becomes an 'infrastructure' for generating new urbanity (Gabellini 2010; Bonfantini 2013).

3.2.2 *Networking (Historical) Public Spaces*

Urban regeneration presents challenges that are political and economic, technological and linked to social innovation. It requires the development of new supply chains, experimentation with new approaches and the activation of new business models, not to mention an ever closer interaction between public and private subjects. In this situation, the concept of 'resilience' constitutes "a fundamental reference for the development of an idea and practical application of urban planning oriented toward the future" (Talia 2017) and the field of experimentation for planning in the implementation of sustainable urban regeneration (Musco 2016). As part of changes to society, the concept of resilience supports the affirmation of new inclusive models of coexistence, the restitching of relations with the territory, based on the management of risk and the promotion of the landscape, and the adaptation to global changes through new, lasting circular green economies.

Above all, regeneration is a theme of urban design, with evident effects on physical space, which must be guided (that is, planned) to be tangible and efficacious. The approach supported here is one of practicing urban regeneration through the identification, design and management of a "frame of networks" (*rete di reti*) (Ricci et al.

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[3] In Italy, the term 'public city' refers to all the areas, spaces, services and public or community facilities that make up the city. It is a highly varied territorial endowment that includes schools, health facilities, parks and gardens, public buildings and places of worship; but also streets, squares and car parks. Town planning generally considers the areas for urban standards regulated by Decree n. 1444/68, together with a more articulated welfare system (e.g., social housing districts).

2018). In particular, blue-green networks and historical heritage become structural and structuring elements of possible strategies for the regeneration of the contemporary city. In these networks there is a linking, an overlapping, intersection and operativity of open and relational spaces functional to the inhabitability and recognisability of places.

The concept of the network has dilated and assumed diverse meanings. In scientific language, the term is employed in diverse fields, from economics to computer sciences to ecology. In sociology, for many years now, networks have been used as important elements in processes that aid and promote the quality of life. In particular, in social studies, fundamental networks include those that unite people through blood ties, friendship, neighbourhood relations, and which naturally and reciprocally support one another. However, with the term network, we also refer to the constitution of relations among institutions (governments, agencies, public and semi-public entities) or the collection of people who gather, informally, to seek solutions to common questions (associations, NGOs, committees). In urban studies, the theme of the network is widely used above all in the field of transportation and when discussing the offering of underground utilities, for example, the supply of electrical energy or water, where we are dealing with sectors that supply the territory with material services. Despite this, the theme also developed toward immaterial services, that is, by leveraging the system of values (information, resources, skills) that can be connected between cities or within them, positioning urban agglomerations, or parts thereof, within a hierarchy of roles and nodes, and setting them before the choice to collaborate with one another to ensure their survival in the era of globalisation.

The conditions of the contemporary city (boundless, porous, and fragmented) recentres debate on the design of the city around the theme of the network to overcome the discontinuities that have been created within it, and with surrounding contexts (natural and socio-economic). Infrastructural, transportation, environmental, and ecological networks accompany those of historical heritage to define the set of cultural values and identities that characterise the contemporary territories. Working within the logic of the network allows us to overcome the dichotomy between reconstruction and prevention, as well as the difficulty in differentiating and specialising the range of performance of the single elements of which it is composed.

The construction of a frame comprised of thematic, though complementary and integrated networks, determines an approach to the analysis of the city and design that inverts traditional planning and design methods. Indeed, the complexity of urban systems perhaps resides much more in how they are represented than in the nature of the systems themselves. Complexity is a quality of the observing system (urban planning) and not only of the observed system (the city). Therefore, the more urbanism employs structural networks in the design of cities and territories, the more it spreads and relaunches their specific characteristics outside the elements of the network. The design of networks redistributes weights and responsibilities and generates new values and orderings of the features that make up the network. In this manner, recognised and planned networks converge toward an organised system (the frame) that structures successive grafts and changes, as the network is by definition an open, as opposed to a closed system.

The networks that intersect and complete one another define the frame inside which urban regeneration takes form. By intersecting thousands of threads (relations between nodes), the work of the frame produces a visible (feasible) image of the future city, whose purpose is threefold. This design: (i) serves to support the development of the city, whose networks (environmental, infrastructural, and historical) are no longer a backdrop against which to activate transformative processes but move into the foreground and become the condition that initiates transformative processes; (ii) serves to orient the development of single and specific interventions that find coherence at the territorial scale (of the network) despite being activated over lengthy periods, and in different places and ways; (iii) serves to order the priority of actions, to programme and hierarchies the transformations of the territory based on the maturity of projects, on the agreement reached among stakeholders and available economic resources.

Urban regeneration based on the design of a frame of networks is not about identifying the optimum solution (one best way) but one among many possible solutions in a given spatial context at a particular moment in time. Through this approach, the network (environmental, infrastructural, or historical) becomes a strategy for exploration that does not reduce complexity but articulates and decomposes it to identify the unit of intervention that can be confronted simply and concretely, while respecting the dialectic with the other components of the network, as well as the frame. The environment and history are themes/factors that most easily define the concept of the network for the regeneration of the contemporary city.

Ecological networks represent a fundamental theme for urban planning and design approached from an environmental standpoint. Green and Blue Infrastructures now envelop/amplify/develop ecological networks and the more complex system of urban, peri-urban, agricultural and semi-natural open spaces. The city of the future must be capable of absorbing disturbances and changes to climate, the environment and health, incorporating the concept of resilience, and the design of blue-green networks integrated with grey networks (underground utilities) and for mobility become strategic for supporting concrete processes of urban regeneration. "Vegetal and water networks, agrarian urban and peri-urban landscapes, leftover and wasted areas interact increasingly more often with the traditional public spaces of the street and square, qualifying them by bringing advanced ecosystemic and technological elements and penetrating into urban fabrics. They thus stimulate a paradigm shift in the urban metabolism founded on the recycling of resources and asocial and identity-based re-appropriation of common goods. Blue and green infrastructures thus become a dynamic constellation of ecologically and socially informed tactics that interact with systemic choices of a reticular nature, oscillating between synergies and conflicts and outlining place-based strategies of urban regeneration" (Gasparrini 2017).

As with open green spaces, the space of history (prevalently built, but not only) represent an interesting element atop which to build a network for the regeneration of the contemporary city. As presented in previous paragraphs, the topic of urban historicity is very dear to Italian urbanism, and has permitted the sedimentation of analytical-interpretative and design-based paradigms (cf. historic centre) and approaches to conservation, safeguarding, preservation and restoration of historical heritage (cf. a Muratorian typo-morphological approach[4]) exported at the international level. This study and continuous evolution of the discipline around the theme of urban historicity and its role to collective society now recognises the existence of a structuring character for the design of the city, considering the values of history a true infrastructure of the territory (Bonfantini 2013). As an infrastructure—a term that generally refers to complementary works necessary to economic activity (streets, railways, airports, etc.) or indispensable to new urban settlements (sewers, parks, gardens, etc.)—the set of historical values become fundamental to the design of the city of tomorrow. This is because the usefulness of the historical network derives from the benefits enjoyed by communities who make use of it and care for it. Caring for the territory, in other words, its daily and systematic comprehension, protection and promotion, becomes an action of designing for the future, and not simply a remedy for the wounds inflicted by the global changes taking place (banalisation, touristification, abandonment, degradation, etc.). Therefore, its reconstruction is essential if we wish to inject a new quality into contemporary urban spaces, re-reading meaning and qualities per contemporary society.

The multi-scale and multi-value dimension of the historical territory—which overcomes administrative boundaries and the theme of restriction—also leads to a rethinking of the traditional historical city. The historic city is intended here as that system of urban fabrics, both ancient and new, in other words, historic centres, selected nineteenth-century expansions (for example those designed by Beruto in Milan), and the architecture and districts of the Modern Movement (Campos Venuti 2008). This definition must be adapted to various urban realities whose genesis, morphology, scale, state of conservation, and socio-economic role can vary widely. In any case, the urban structure of these historicised urban fabrics is characterised by a system of relational public spaces (streets) that play a crucial role in recognising the typo-morphological and functional variants of urban history. The street is intended here as the 'place' for experiencing the space 'between buildings,' consolidating collective memories and identities and stimulating new methods of using urban fabrics. This is because, as Louis Kahn wrote, "The street is a room by agreement, a community room the walls of which belong to the donors […]. Its ceiling is the sky" (Bonaiti 2002). Working with the street means bringing urban planning policies and actions back to the human scale and, in so doing, (re)discovering proximity as an ideal dimension for improving quality of life.

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[4] Urban morphology is the study of city forms, while building typology is the study of building types. In the 1950s, Saverio Muratori invented the "morphogenesis of urban space" approach by identifying 'tissues' as settlement morphologies that characterise the form and spaces between streets and buildings (typo-morphological analysis). "Morphologically homogeneous urban parts can be distinguished into 'tissues and open forms' (*tessuti e forme aperte*). Tissues are the settlement morphologies characterised by a close correlation between the shape of the street spaces and the set of buildings, determined by the fact that the built fronts are arranged along the edges of the streets" (Cappuccitti 2008: 289). Tissues can be classified according to two characteristics called 'structure and grain' (*impianto e grana*). The structure is the shape of a set of streets and can be distinguished in intricate, reticular, radiocentric, and organic. The grain is the fragmentation degree of the built-up space in the fabric, and the size of buildings' footprint defines it.

In a condition of dispersion and fragmentation the city requires two actions: a re-structuring of its settlement features and an infra-structuring of its open-air spaces (not only green areas). In a perspective of connection and relation between parts, the street ceases being a mere infrastructure for transport and becomes the ordering part of the historical city. The functional components of the city, streets handling flows of goods and people, are transformed into elements that re-design the urban landscape and become the space for rooting and recognising new identities.

During the pandemic in many cities, we witnessed the creation of small public squares, some as large as a single parking stall, offered to inhabitants and users of the street for various purposes: micro-spaces created primarily for encountering others, meeting and socialising. The post-pandemic city asks for more temporary, hybrid, and reversible spaces. Many experiences in tactical urbanism have been consolidated (see the project for Piazza San Luigi e Nolo in Milan) or intensified (such as the creation of new dehors for bars and restaurants). They redesign the urban space of the street, now less valued for its form than for what occurs within it (Gehl 2011). The street becomes a specific object of study and urban design with a view toward global sustainability. Attractive and qualifying uses contaminate the street to bring value to the communities it intercepts and so that its space generates recognisability, economies, environmental quality, and historical-cultural identity.

In the wake of the pandemic, numerous cities in Europe and around the globe have attempted to provide a new impulse to public space, above all in dense and historicised contexts. This is achieved through policies and projects for improving the performance of streets, viewed as both spaces of relations and flows (to be travelled by means that offer an alternative to the automobile) and a space of socialisation and proximity. History presents well-known engineering and sanitary operations from the late nineteenth century applied to road infrastructures to improve conditions of salubrity and hygiene in the city (London, Paris, Naples, Philadelphia, New York). Instead, recent experiences in re-qualifying the street consider infrastructural space for new integrated uses based on more sustainable mobility.

In various projects proposed in different cities—Paris (Plan Velò, 2015), Auckland/New Zealand (Innovating Streets for People, 2016), Barcelona (Eixample Superilles, 2016), Milan (Strade Aperte, 2018), Montréal (Pedestrian Only Streets, 2020), Mountain View/USA (Castro StrEATs Summer, 2020), New York (Open Streets, 2020), Rotterdam (Witte de Withstraat, 2020), Turin (Precollinear Park, 2020)—the street is not merely a traffic artery but a space of social aggregation. The total or partial closure of streets, reduced lane widths or the elimination of parking stalls are accompanied by the introduction of functions for sport, leisure, play, culture (exhibitions, concerts) and other services, promoting both pedestrianisation and cyclability, as well as the street space as a place of pause (Guzzabocca and Legoratti 2021).

In most cases, these operations are carried out within existing historical fabrics that developed after the Industrial Revolution. A city with vast road infrastructures was once dedicated to the 'rapid' passage of carriages, but also to favour strolling by the bourgeoisie under the shade of large trees. Today's *controviali* (frontage roads) were, in reality, broad sidewalks, along which Parisians, Turinese, and Milanese strolled and stopped to enjoy a coffee in ground floor shops fronting the street. These broad systems for circulation and social life in the city were reinterpreted in programmes to pedestrianize parts of the city, which only intensified with the pandemic and allow residents to experience a new urbanity.

Similar interventions demonstrate how the re-activation of the public space of the street consolidates the presence of communities in the neighbourhoods of historical cities. Returning people to the street reaffirms the necessity to establish a relationship between space and society that consolidates urban identities and attributes meaning and significance to places.

3.3 Slow Tourism and Proximity also in the Contemporary City

3.3.1 New Itineraries into the Historical Territory

The theme of the historic city is inevitably linked to the question of its use for tourism. Monuments, historic centres, modern architecture and districts are a heritage whose historical, artistic, aesthetic, cultural, and recreational value and use can be appreciated by inhabitants and users of the city alike. When the theme of proximity is linked with identity in policies for rebalancing the city, then the proportion between conservation and innovation acquires a strategic role in redefining the space in which communities identify themselves, without bending to exogenous forms of use. New bonds with the territory are evidence of a 'plural city' with a growing ethnic, cultural and religious variety; on the other hand, the historic city also becomes a privileged space for (global) tourism as a concentration of collective life experience and memory. The historic city is the principal expression of the art of organising urban space. Its strong representativeness is considered a resource for attracting tourism.

In recent decades, strong criticisms have been moved against mass tourism or overtourism (Koens et al. 2018). This approach has created problems for the liveability and identity of many large cities, such as Venice, Florence, and Rome, and labelled cities of art as fun parks. Thanks to heightened accessibility to low-cost flights, to new digital platforms for the autonomous organisation of travel, not to mention the influence of global organisations like UNESCO, responsible for promoting a series of 'must-see tourist destinations,' historical cities have developed forms of voracious and hurried fruition. The UNESCO label is not a cause of tourism, but its certification, its guarantee, be-cause it produces destructive effects on the preservation of cultural heritage at all costs (D'Eramo 2017). Mass tourism, also known as 'hit-and-run' tourism, is a way of using the city. Its public spaces are crowded with tourists generating difficult conditions for residents (simply strolling in the centre has become stressful and laborious in many cities). Moreover, mass tourism creates problems in terms of management of services, both public (waste collection, mobility and public transport) and private (the offering of lodgings and restaurants).

The ‘science of tourism’ and international bodies have been looking for some time at a more curious, more sustainable and responsible form of tourism (cf. the website of the World Tourism Organization https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development). Sustainability has become central to promoting conditions of use with a lesser impact on society and the environment. In recent years, particularly in the wake of the pandemic, there has been a growing affirmation of the phenomenon of under-tourism. It is a practice of traveling to discover unusual and lesser-known destinations, often national and regional, and for this reason, less crowded (Mihalic 2017). Cities around the world are working to appeal to the collective imagination through campaigns of marketing designed to promote less famous destinations in a bid to ‘save’ traditional sites from over-tourism.

As Zygmunt Bauman reminds us, contemporary society’s current freedom of movement has become a ‘must-have’ that is difficult to do without. However, it also becomes a criterion of accessibility to spaces and services, places and functions, attractions and sources of enjoyment. “The effects induced by the new condition create radical inequalities. Some of us become ‘global’ in the true and fullest sense of the term, others remain fixed to their ‘localness’—a condition that is anything but pleasing or supportable, in a world in which the ‘globals’ set the rhythm and establish the rules of the game of life” (Bauman 2001: 5).

The challenge presented to planners and decision-makers is thus focused on defining urban strategies capable of stimulating new flows of tourism—more sensitive and aware, but also more sophisticated, connected, and emancipated—capable of promoting visits to (global) ‘must-see destinations’ without denaturing their structures and identities (Coliva 2021). The search for a balance between crowds of tourists and empty streets or museums is preferred, and some believe this objective can be reached through ‘creative tourism,’ which employs existing or potential resources (Gowreesunkar and Vo Thanh 2020). In this perspective, it is crucial to work with the performance of medium- to large-sized cities, otherwise excluded from circuits of ‘slow tourism,’ which tends to search primarily for unknown ‘villages’ and natural settings. In particular, it becomes strategic to work with an existing network of historical territories related to the needs of residents and tourists, offering extensive spaces, services, and uses that are both original and sustainable.

In fact, tourist and historical networks can be combined, expanding occasional fruition to different parts of the city, even in large cities. The historic city and its heterogeneous public spaces can be connected and enjoyed by providing new routes in many ways. By offering itineraries, these new routes can bring people closer to discovering historical and natural heritage (ecotourism, geotourism), and become familiar with proximity, i.e. the legacies found close to home (staycation, locavism, according to Hollenhorst et al. 2014) and unveil neighbourhood identities. Moreover, routes can also be new in terms of the way they are travelled (biketourism), and how they involve tourists in visiting (material and immaterial) heritage (voluntourism).

The development of slow tourism and staycationing explains the interest of cities and urban planning in creating paths, circuits, and itineraries for rediscovering the stratification of signs, memories, and new identities, inside and outside the dense city (Imbesi 2003). Approaching sustainable and responsible tourism in the wake of the pandemic signifies offering spaces and services to travellers looking to ‘experience place,' supporting the competitivity of local businesses, and promoting territorial excellence (ancient or modern).

Regarding consumer and mass tourism, new vacationers are looking for different forms of travel concerning the past (bike-tourism and public transport), preferably outdoor and immersed in nature (rural and enogastronomic tourism). In the long-term, these requests may pose a risk to the economies of many large cities and traditional destinations. To avoid dying out, they will have to equip themselves with new infrastructures more suited to the changing needs of society and tourism focused on authenticity of place.

Big cities can thus rediscover the fabrics of the historic city and the identities of diverse districts, promoting slow itineraries through urban streets that reveal the rich legacy of signs. Itineraries that combine tourism circuits and pedestrian, bicycle, or waterborne routes and that, in addition to being more sustainable, also help present and appreciate unusual or lesser-known parts of the city (innovative industrial districts, Modernist buildings, working-class neighbourhoods). Itineraries that simultaneously aid and decrease crowding in traditional tourist sites (historic centres, museums, cathedrals, monuments) and increase the quality of environments and lifestyles for residents (reduced traffic, accidents, noise, pollution, and increased local services).

For tourism to be reconfigured toward a more creative and sustainable dimension, cities must also contribute to supporting it by reimagining their offering of facilities, public spaces and connections. Both must pursue the objective of overcoming the myopic vision of promoting monumental historical-cultural heritage as a means for generating profit (to be used for successive investments) and instead promote the historical territory as the means for maintaining and caring for the authenticity of place over time.

Globalisation, supported by technology, social media, and low-cost travel, has stimulated the interest in discovering both unusual and traditional destinations that have been capable of renewal through urban projects and works of contemporary architecture. Paris (the Beaubourg, the Museo d'Orsay by Gae Aulenti, the Pyramid by Ieoh Ming Pei, the Défense Grand Arche, the restoration of the Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain by Jean Nouvel, the new Fondation Louis Vuitton by Frank Gehry in the Jardin d'Acclimatation inside the Bois de Boulogne), London (the Millennium Wheel, the renovated spaces of the Tate Gallery and the Dome along the River Thames), Berlin (Renzo Piano's Potsdamer Platz, the Holocaust Memorial by Peter Eisenman), Bilbao (the Guggenheim Museum by Frank Gehry and the white Zubi Zuri footbridge by Santiago Calatrava) are the traditional European tourist destinations that have taken on a new life for many young and less young travellers, attracted by the discovery of new values. American and Asian metropolises join these European cities: from Seattle (home to the historical Space Needle and the Experience Music Project by Frank Gehry), to Los Angeles (the Getty Center by Richard Meier) to Dubai, the global capital of tax-free shopping and land of experimentation with audacious works of architecture and new districts for tourism (Pascucci 2015). In this condition of globalised and globalising tourism, emphasising uniqueness and defending historical heritage-identity can be a tool for the survival of traditional cities.

The network of historical territories permits a re-reading of historical heritage, in order that it can be protected and, at the same time, promoted. This expands the boundaries and dilates the experiences of fruition; it enriches it with cultural values. The design of the network of historical territories—which defines new relations, invites further readings and understandings and critically reformed observation—contributes to determining the infrastructure of the city, which produces new images and new sources of attraction. The design of the historical network preserves the spirit and characteristics of valuable resources, investing in factors with a lasting and important attractiveness. This project dilutes the attractiveness of historical-cultural heritage across a broad spectrum of resources. On the one hand, it facilitates the arrival and permanence of mass tourism because it is captured by a new, richer, articulated and unprecedented cultural offering. On the other hand, it helps distribute tourists across different spaces and areas, keeping people from concentrating in the usual parts of the city, which causes congestion.

Cities can thus redefine new itineraries for the fruition of historical territories, reinvigorating their role as sites of collectivity, in which architecture (from the ancient to the modern) assumes a socially communicative and interactive function for its ability make urban space a place in which people can recognise and identify themselves. In this sense, the redesign of particular ‘urban thresholds,’ areas of passage and gateways to the city for flows at a vast scale, may help expand the range of places whose identity is a bearer of historical interest. For example, the project for the renewal of Italy’s main railway stations (from the Central Station in Milan to Termini Station in Rome) represents nodes in a frame composed of different networks: from the infrastructural (at the vast scale) to the historical. These spaces, once requalified, can obtain the same appreciation as the heritage of the past; they convert railway stations into dynamic public spaces and an area for exchanges between different cultures. Additionally, when these urban thresholds are connected and inserted within a circuit of fruition based on soft, active and sustainable mobility, it is possible to further expand the network of historical territories, distributing it and linking it up through urban and extra-urban itineraries with slow, sustainable, unique and greener circuits.

3.3.2 The Continuous and Daily Care for Heritage

As Rantala and her colleagues write (2020), with respect to the definition of a new model of di tourism after the Anthropocene more connected with the nature of places, Rhythmicity—the revealing of cycles and biorhythms shared by different people, more than a simple coexistence among them—Vitality—the self-organisation of living beings to coexist and positively influence one another, unhinging hierarchies of species—and Care—the existence of multiple forms of relations based on ethics (good/bad) and not on morals (right/wrong)—are three aspects with which to work in order to become reactive toward what we encounter as we discover new places. It is a question of defining emancipated forms of tourism of proximity, more sustainable and informed, and which therefore avoid the contradictions of a model of tourism camouflaged behind adjectives of green and slow (which use online platforms to book stays or low-cost and energy consuming flights), but which are truly oriented toward the promotion of quality (of places) rather than quantity (of tourists) (Izcara Conde and Cañada Mullor 2020).

In these terms, it is fundamental to work above all with the available offering of historical and cultural heritage and identity for use by tourism. As mentioned, a heritage is variegated in its form, era and state of conservation, dimension, and location. A collection of heritage so vast that it must be constantly monitored. Day-to-day care of this heritage must be at the base of living and dwelling, that is, the greatest revolution for unhinging lifestyles and models of development that threaten man and the environment in which he lives. It is not enough to physically live in a given territory to be a true inhabitant. Inhabitation means interacting and rediscovering a sense of belonging to places. We truly 'inhabit' when streets, squares, gardens, parks and buildings and every other part of the territory in which we are 'guests' (another reason why heritage represents a gift to be passed on to others and of which we are only temporary custodians), stimulate a desire to know more about and care for them.

The landscape and heritage are often private property conceded for public use (whose fruition is never exclusive but collective) whose true purpose is to satisfy people's fundamental rights. Hence they are private property (above all works of modern architecture) that contribute to the creation of a common good (the beauty and quality of the urban landscape and environments of life). In this perspective of collective function, the preservation and safeguarding of historical heritage are not objectives to be pursued, but the means through which to amplify and spread a new awareness, a new education and a new culture. Historical heritage is thus assigned an edifying role that, also supported by technologies and contemporary forms of exchange of information (high-speed and for the masses), spreads and expands accessibility to the resources offered by the territory (Montanari 2017). Resources that, to remain structuring of the identity of communities, and thus structural elements to the definition of the identity of places, must be constantly cared for.

Of Latin origin, the word 'care' is often utilised to indicate affective relations and in reference to an attitude of thoughtfulness. In care there is an action of paying attention and supporting, in the broadest sense of cultivating a relationship or (indicated by the derivation of the term 'culture') of building, constructing and producing awareness.

Pragmatically, an 'inhabitant' (resident, tourist, and worker) who wishes to care for existing historical heritage to pass it on as a source of knowledge and testimonial has three essential tasks: to be a good custodian, to become a good observe and gain awareness of his/her limits of action. Being a good custodian means paying attention to heritage (be it mobile or immobile), knowing the correct procedures to be implemented to ensure its conservation and durability over time and being a valid support to those legally responsible but unable to do this with the necessary consistency. Knowing how to observe means being able to capture those signs that may suggest deterioration or a potential source of risk to the conservation of heritage. Acting with awareness of one's limits means avoiding improvised restoration or conservation works and promoting regular cleaning and ordinary maintenance of heritage and the context in which it is situated.

3.4 Defining a Theme for Each Station of the New M4 Metro Line

The experience of action-research for the design of the Green and Blue Backbone of the new M4 metro line is important to the re-signification of places and for rooting the identities of neighbourhoods. The historic city of Milan, the urban result of the 'spontaneous' evolution of the ancient centre and the 'planned' evolution of nineteenth/twentieth-century fabrics (Oliva 2002), is now placed in a condition of tension by the construction of the city's fifth metro line. The realisation of the M4 was welcomed as an opportunity to restore meaning and significance to the sites it intercepts and comes into contact with through its stations. When designing this Backbone, the 21 stations of the new metro line were considered the nodes of a single Green and Blue Infrastructure for the city that links (subterranean) mass public transport, soft mobility, waterways, green systems, history, and local identities. Within this vision of infrastructure at the service of residents and city users, the Green and Blue Backbone becomes an occasion for bringing new meaning to places in the city by thematising the stations based on the characteristics of the neighbourhoods in which they surface.

Metro Art Los Angeles and the Naples metro (both completed during the 1990s) are well-known examples of how the thematisation of transport stations can permit the construction of true and proper stations-landmarks for their respective cities. In these examples, the arrival of the metro and the construction of its stations in different neighbourhoods brought an identity to the 'generic city' (Koolhaas 1997). Working in the opposite direction, with the Green and Blue Backbone project, the thematisation of the metro stations occurs by recognising the peculiarities (environmental, historical, and functional) of the territory in which the infrastructure emerges on the surface. The design of the stations at the level of the city is not focused on the theatricalization, musealisation or artificialisation of Milan's public space—using an artistic sign (installations, artworks, video, colours, etc.)—, tagging the stations and, with them, the neighbourhoods in which they are located. Instead, the objective is to highlight the inherent resources offered by the diverse territorial contexts traversed by the M4 line and reveal the (already existing) value of urban space. In other words, it is not the station that thematises place, but the site (with its services, history, monuments, typo-morphological layout, ecological devices and identity) that attributes a design theme to the station (Fior 2020a; b).

This approach to design orients future architectural projects for the (prevalently public) spaces around the stations, working with the identity of place and proximity to the community. The objective is to stimulate the day-to-day care of regenerated spaces, permitting the historic city revealed by the project (façades of basilicas, archaeological remains, ancient watercourses, Modernist Milanese architecture) to be constantly surveilled and maintained by communities. As part of the project for the Green and Blue backbone, the historic city, whose sense and meaning are re-actualised, acquires the role of a driver for the regeneration of the settlement system and loses the connotation of something subject to a passive heritage listing to ensure its safeguarding and protection (Figs. 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5).

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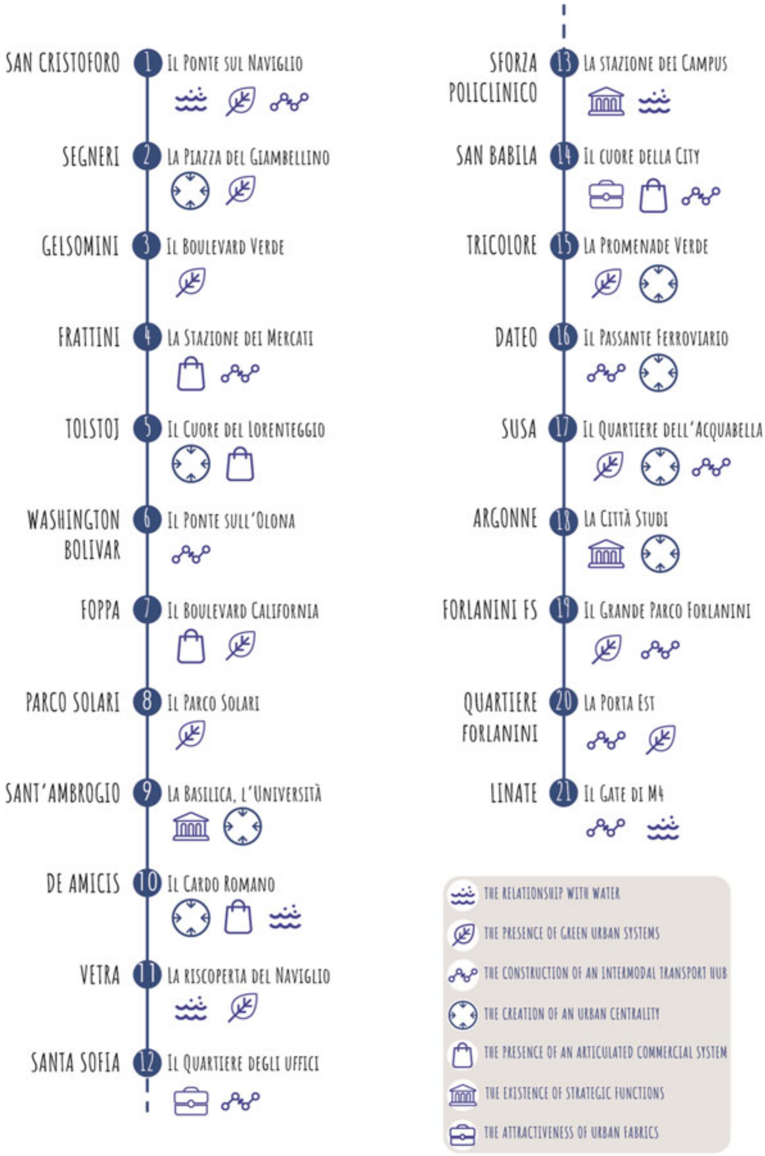
SAN CRISTOFORO
1
Il Ponte sul Naviglio
SEGNERI
2
La Piazza del Giambellino
GELSOMINI
3
Il Boulevard Verde
FRATTINI
4
La Stazione dei Mercati
TOLSTOJ
5
Il Cuore del Lorenteggio
WASHINGTON BOLIVAR
6
Il Ponte sull'Olona
FOPPA
7
Il Boulevard California
PARCO SOLARI
8
Il Parco Solari
SANT'AMBROGIO
9
La Basilica, l'Università
DE AMICIS
10
Il Cardo Romano
VETRA
11
La riscoperta del Naviglio
SANTA SOFIA
12
Il Quartiere degli uffici
SFORZA POLICLINICO
13
La stazione dei Campus
SAN BABILA
14
Il cuore della City
TRICOLORE
15
La Promenade Verde
DATEO
16
Il Passante Ferroviario
SUSA
17
Il Quartiere dell'Acquabella
ARGONNE
18
La Città Studi
FORLANINI FS
19
Il Grande Parco Forlanini
QUARTIERE FORLANINI
20
La Porta Est
LINATE
21
Il Gate di M4
THE RELATIONSHIP WITH WATER
THE PRESENCE OF GREEN URBAN SYSTEMS
THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN INTERMODAL TRANSPORT HUB
THE CREATION OF AN URBAN CENTRALITY
THE PRESENCE OF AN ARTICULATED COMMERCIAL SYSTEM
THE EXISTENCE OF STRATEGIC FUNCTIONS
THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF URBAN FABRICS

Fig. 3.1 The thematization of the project for the new M4 line. Along the M4 line, the design of areas on the surface of the stations (left) is guided by a theme (right), in turn defined by a set of themes and questions (the symbols) that emerged from a critical-interpretative study of the urban setting

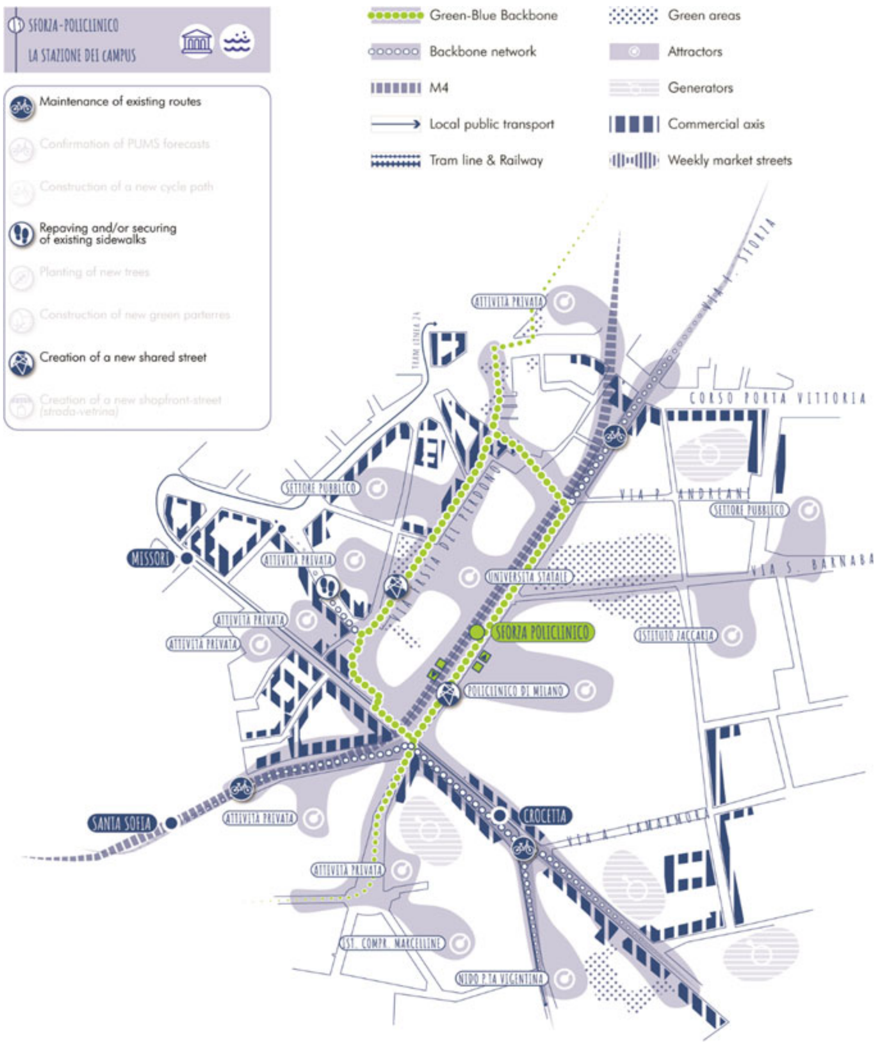
SFORZA-POLICLINICO
LA STAZIONE DEI CAMPUS
Maintenance of existing routes
Confirmation of PUMS forecasts
Construction of a new cycle path
Repaving and/or securing of existing sidewalks
Planting of new trees
Construction of new green parterres
Creation of a new shared street
Creation of a new shopfront-street (strada-vetrina)
Green-Blue Backbone
Backbone network
M4
Local public transport
Tram line & Railway
Green areas
Attractors
Generators
Commercial axis
Weekly market streets
VIA F. SFORZA
ATTIVITÀ PRIVATA
TRAM LINEA 24
CORSO PORTA VITTORIA
VIA P. ANDREANI
SETTORE PUBBLICO
SETTORE PUBBLICO
VIA FESTA DEL PERDONO
VIA S. BARNABA
MISSORI
ATTIVITÀ PRIVATA
UNIVERSITÀ STATALE
ATTIVITÀ PRIVATA
ATTIVITÀ PRIVATA
SFORZA POLICLINICO
ISTITUTO ZACCARIA
POLICLINICO DI MILANO
SANTA SOFIA
ATTIVITÀ PRIVATA
CROCETTA
VIA A. LAMARMORA
ATTIVITÀ PRIVATA
IST. COMPR. MARCELLINE
NIDO P.TA VIGENTINA

Fig. 3.2 The path of the Green–Blue Backbone and the relative masterplan for programming actions around the Sforza-Policlinico station. In the upper left is the theme of the project (the Campus station) and the principal actions for creating a network of open spaces for pedestrians and cyclists

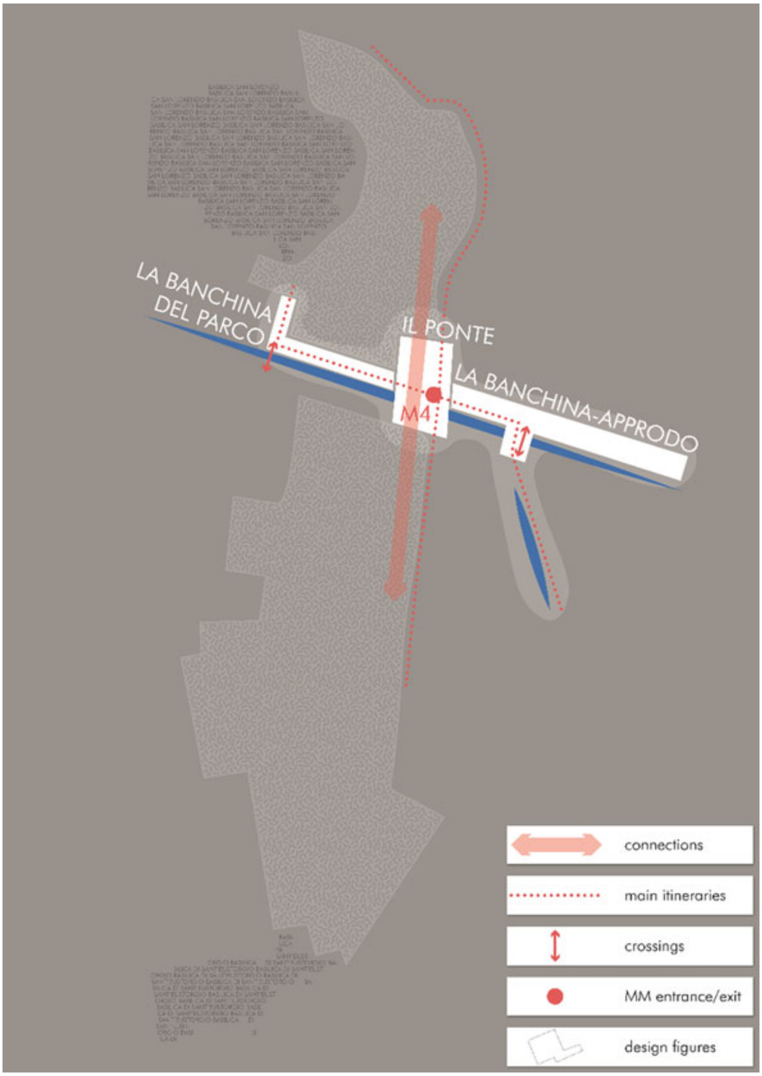
LA BANCHINA DEL PARCO
IL PONTE
LA BANCHINA-APPRODO
M4
connections
main itineraries
crossings
MM entrance/exit
design figures

Fig. 3.3 The ‘design figures’ for Vetra station. The diagram highlights the places generated by the redesign of the surface areas near the M4 entrances/exits. In particular, the project for Vetra station includes a connection between two green areas of the Parco delle Basiliche (the bridge); and the development of a system of open spaces for pedestrians (the park quay), coherent with a renewed urban landscape that rediscovers the city’s historical heritage and new forms of tourism (the quay-mooring point along the Naviglio)

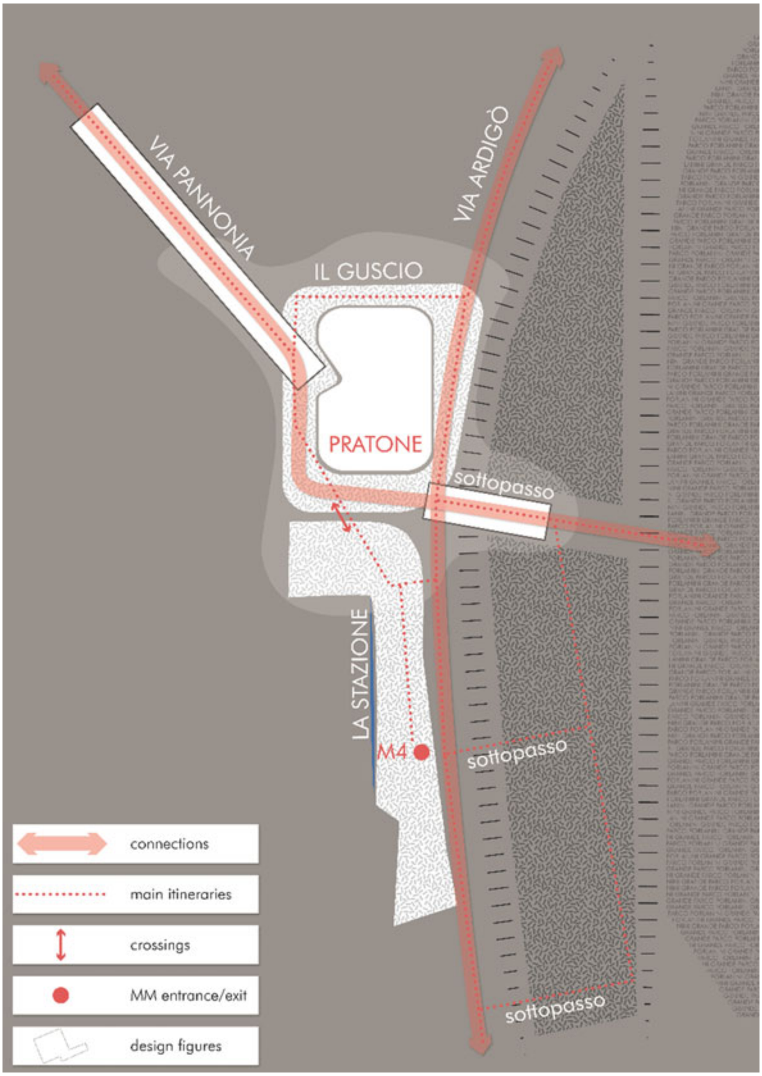
VIA PANNONIA
VIA ARDIGÒ
IL GUSCIO
PRATONE
sottopasso
LA STAZIONE
M4
sottopasso
sottopasso
connections
main itineraries
crossings
MM entrance/exit
design figures

Fig. 3.4 The 'design figures' for the Forlanini FS station. The diagram highlights the places generated by the redesign of the surface areas near the M4 entrances/exits. In particular, the project for the Forlanini FS station proposes two specific areas: 'the lawn', a usable green space at the heart of the project; 'the shell', trees and paths creating a buffer area that protects the heart of the lawn; the urban axis of 'Via Pannonia' to be rehabilitated and reorganised by introducing bicycle-footpaths connecting the station with the city; 'the underpass', a project to reuse an underpass once used to transport building site debris to connect the city's cycle-footpaths with metropolitan networks; and, finally, the area of the 'station', characterised by a redesign of permeable and filtering surfaces connected with the proposed introduction of new soft mobility itineraries

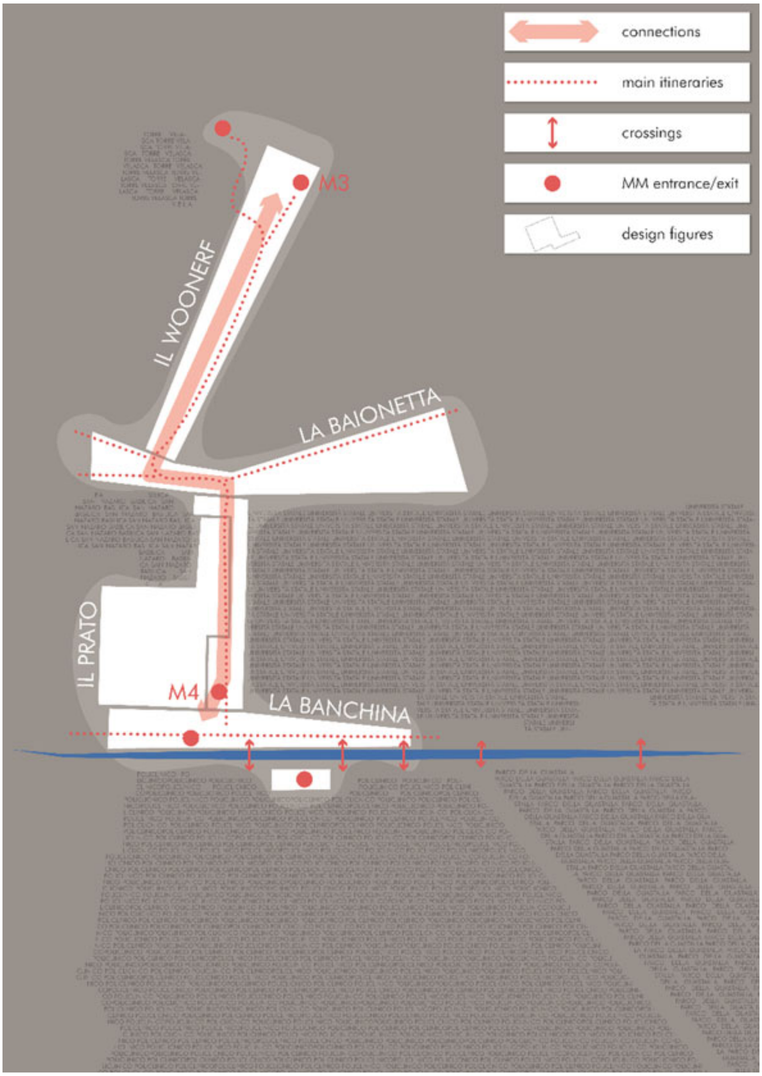
connections
main itineraries
crossings
MM entrance/exit
design figures
M3
IL WOONERF
LA BAIONETTA
IL PRATO
M4
LA BANCHINA

Fig. 3.5 The ‘design figures’ for the Sforza-Policlinico station. The diagram highlights the places generated by the redesign of the surface areas near the M4 entrances/exits. In particular, the project for the Sforza-Policlinico station identifies four project areas. Most importantly, ‘the quay’ where the design of public space links the insertion of the exits from the M4 with the future presence of the Naviglio and creates a space of connection between the university campus and the hospital; ‘the lawn’, a very large area that includes both the redesign of the historical tree-lined pedestrian path along the edge of the State University as well as the areas belonging to the Basilica di San Nazaro in Brolo; the area of Largo Richini (the bayonet) transformed from parking into a public square; and, finally, the axis of Via Pantano (the woonerf) whose requalification and pedestrianisation will create a space of connection between the M3 and M4 lines