Affordable and Sustainable: Revitalisation and Regeneration

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Live webinar: Affordable Housing
14:00 - 15:00 CET
15 December 2021
HOUSE = FAMILY

Since in Italy, people have a strong connection with the home, the house has always been an important issue of Italian politics.

During all the XX century, in Italy there were many laws on social housing (in the figure a district built in 1920).

In tradition, the house is the symbol of family wealth, handed down from generation to generation.

Over 75% of Italian families own the house they live in.

However, this “brick culture” makes Italian cities lazy to change.

Furthermore, the laws deriving from the most recent urban culture and the built environment one, require that cities do not grow but evolve the existing to adapt it to new needs.

WHAT ARE THE NEW NEEDS?

Housing District for Workers, Mestre, Venezia 1921
NEW SOCIETY = NEW URBAN MODEL 
NEW USERS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSE

1) the different demographic dynamics between Europe, Africa and Asia produce and will produce strong migrations which will entail temporary and long-term housing needs for migrants
NEW SOCIETY = NEW URBAN MODEL
NEW USERS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSE

2) Italy has a division by age group that in the last 150 years has been decidedly skewed upwards

the elderly population becomes prevalent.
this determines poor social and economic dynamism, little aptitude for mobility, low rate of reproduction.

Fonte: ISTAT
3) In the last 20 years, the concentration of wealth in Italy has also increased social divisions, pushing a greater portion towards poverty, resulting in a greater need for affordable housing.
Today we are emitting 36 billion tons of CO2 into the atmosphere.

This amount is due for:

10% production of cement and iron

15% public and private mobility

17% heating and cooling of buildings

The existing city today is an important part of the problem.

In order for it to be a solution, it must be rethought from different points of view than those used to create it.

It is necessary to work both on buildings and on urban relations.
NEW SOCIETY= NEW URBAN MODEL
NEW TYPE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSE

KEYWORDS For the next future:

- MOBILITY OF PEOPLE (MIGRANTS, STUDENTS, WORKERS...)
- ELDER POPULATION
- NEW URBAN POVERTY
- ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTENABILITY
We must learn from past experiences that were successful and from those that were unsuccessful.

After the war, Italy started a strong social housing production program dedicated to the working classes.

With a modest deduction from the salaries of all employees, a fund was created with which 350,000 social housing were built in 14 years.

The best architects of that time were called and the average quality was more than acceptable.

LESSON FROM THE RECENT PAST

Roma- Quartiere Tiburtino - arch. Mario Ridolfi
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Italy, between the 70s and 90s, tried to maximize the production of social housing while minimizing costs:

Neighborhoods were built in areas away from the center (where land was cheap)

Experimental typologies based on large size and lower class only were used.

Today, every large Italian city has neighborhoods resulting from this period that represent a huge problem due to:

- low quality of life they offer;
- high maintenance costs;
- low accessibility from the city

Roma- District Corviale (arch. Mario Fiorentino)
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Napoli - District Scampia
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Genova - District Begato (arch. Piero Gambacciani)
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Milano - District Gallaratese (archh. A.Rossi, C.Aymonino)
The solution adopted by many local Administrations today for these neighborhoods is the demolition of the buildings. Aware that, this solution is expensive, it reduces the availability of houses, however, it is applied since the result of these choices is considered "non-recoverable".

Architects must be aware of their role in these processes and avoid these results in the future.

LESSON FROM THE RECENT PAST

Genova – demolition Buildings in District Begato
Napoli – demolition Buildings in District Scampia
At the end of the twentieth century, Municipality of Bologna began a successful program (designed by Pier Luigi Cervellati) in the historic center; this experience was replicated in many Italian cities.

These programs for the refurbishment of historic centers were launched (and financed) and included a large social housing quotas.

Here, the mix of functions, the centrality of the areas, the small scale of the interventions have produced excellent results and today these urban heritage areas have a good level of maintenance.

Bologna - Masterplan for Historical District
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Venezia – social housing in Giudecca Isle (arch. Gino Valle)
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Venezia – social housing on Mazorbo Isle (arch. G. De Carlo)
Venezia - social housing on Giudecca Isle (arch. C.Zucchi)
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To go from making the city to redo the city, objectives and tools need to be changed.

Make the city
- Buildings
- Streets
- Economic infrastructure

Redo the city
- Confidence
- Relationships
- Social infrastructure
LESSONS FROM THE RECENT PAST FOR THE NEXT FUTURE

The European Next EU Generation and New EU Bauhaus programs provide economic resources and a cultural address for the renewal of the European city and Affordable Housing.

The Italian experience provides the following keywords:

- MIXITE’ OF FUNCTIONS
- NEW USERS
- URBAN RELATIONSHIPS
- TEMPORARY HOUSES
- REUSE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS
- BOTTOM UP PROCESS