The potential of "residual material" in the contemporary city: a project for the functional re-conversion of the former Fiera of Rome

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The economic, environmental and social crisis that we are experiencing in recent years has exacerbated the need to find solutions to urban diseconomies, in terms of mobility and accessibility, social cohesion and more generally of urban quality, produced by urban sprawl. Metropolisation processes and the dynamics of urban sprawl, which have dominated the process of urban transformation in recent decades, have left the city a number of places that are sometimes marginal, and sometimes placed in the fabric of the consolidated city, abandoned places, variously defined under-used spaces (terrain vague, drosscapes, Junkspace), which today represent, by virtue of their widespread presence in the metropolitan area and of the opportunity to rethink them within a territorial network of open spaces, a great potential in the process (the opposite of urban sprawl) of urban regeneration and compaction of the fabric of the contemporary city.

Designing places dedicated to the waste, the rubbish, the disposal means dealing with a situation that is already established, where the project performs the task of seeking dialogue with the physical and social context in order to define a comprehensive set of interventions on the city, starting from the opportunities that the place offers and that must be identified.

Unlike many other Italian and European cities, Rome does not have a vast and widespread territory of unused, potentially productive assets. However, a few available areas of this kind have an exceptional strategic importance from a location point of view, for two reasons: they are located within that broad context that the new regulation plan has defined as the "fabric of the historic city," and this context is is often characterized by chaotic development after World War II and lack of adequate infrastructures. Hence, a contradiction with a strong character of "provocation" for those who must take action today: a historically qualified context, that has been partly de-qualified on a formal an functional level during the 50s and 60s.

The urban plan for the former Fiera of Rome complex is part of the political conversion of the functional sites where operations have been discontinued. This paper presents a critical overview of the two proposals, with regards to settlement weight, functional mix and possible effects on a highly urbanized environment, made by different municipalities that were in charge in recent years.

REFERENCES

Monografie


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