

## Italy '45 -'45. Roots, conditions, perspectives

### CALL FOR PAPERS

Italy is experiencing a deep and prolonged crisis. Different studies and researches are exploring the conditions and transformations that are profoundly changing this country. In recent years it clearly emerged the need for an in depth reassessment of its territorial, socio-economic and cultural assets, in order to better understand what is going on, as well as to develop new ideas, imageries, projects and policies for a different future.

In this framework, it is of utmost importance to consider the crises not just as a phase of economic decline, but rather as a structural transition leading to the emergence of new phenomena; not just a difficult period to be overcome, but a process entailing paradigm shifts and new cognitive strategies as a pre-condition for the growth of knowledge. In order to discover and experience what is really happening and to provide a realistic picture of the Italian situation, it is necessary to 'get out of libraries' and to yield the multi-layered interpretations accumulated so far.

Next to seminars and conferences, numerous books are offering new portraits of the country, rooted on the evidence emerged from different researches, travels, walks and meetings. Talk shows and tv programs also proliferate, focussing on the critical challenges the country is actually facing (e.g. declining economic districts, polluted territories, corruption). Photo reportages, novels, stories and movies such as Gianfranco Rosi's *Sacro GRA* amplify the significance of the cases studied turning them into "story boxes within an expanding universe".

A set of contributions ranging from reports to travel diaries, maps, atlases and proceedings definitely represent an important starting point for those intentioned to reflect on the actual conditions of our country. Within this rich and complex framework, the XVIII SIU National Conference is conceived as an opportunity for a collective reflection on the actual conditions of the country and its future scenarios. After the great transformations experienced in the second half of the twentieth century, Italy is now going through a period of profound crisis that can - and should - open to new and different frames for action and innovative ways of governing the territory.

The title "Italy '45 / '45. Roots, conditions, perspectives" intends to stimulate a reflection on the present situation and on the processes underpinning it, with particular focus on the actual conditions of the territory and of Italian cities. At the same time, it aims to look ahead and work for a better future by imagining scenarios, building visions, plans, projects and territorial policies for the country with a long-term perspective. This entails expanding the gaze, getting out of the contingencies dictated by the current crisis to assess the past and build the future. A reframing of the country in terms of urban planning is needed, to identify lessons learned from the several implicit and explicit projects implemented during the century taken into consideration and plan for the next decades.

To this aim, SIU Conference 2015 intends also to foster substantial exchanges with other fields of knowledge, to examine the state of our country from different disciplinary perspectives. By recognizing that innovation is often produced by the encounter and interaction among different knowledge, subjects, languages, forms of interpretation and projections, the Conference intends to act as a trading zone, a crossroads, a platform for ideas exchange. The underpinning idea is that the event has to overcome the simple format of a 'meeting of planners', turning into an opportunity for planners to interact with - and learn from - other fields of knowledge.

A reflection on urban planning itself and on the contribution the discipline might provide in this historical moment – both in terms of professional practices and academic studies – has to be rooted on the concrete challenges the country is experiencing. The role of planners, together with others, is indeed that of capturing and processing the needs emerging from the territory, to define agendas and priorities for - and together with - the civil society. This entails a deep reflection to properly interpret what is going on and advancing relevant and effective proposals for action.

By adopting the traditional format consisting in plenary and parallel sessions, the SIU Conference 2015 will prompt to explore a series of specific issues. Parallel sessions will be functional to produce a cross-disciplinary understanding of the challenges identified, to come out with new interpretations, to reframe paradigms, with the ultimate goal of building new frameworks of meaning for urbanism in such a way to enable the development of effective tools and actions to rethink our collective future.

## **WORKSHOPS**

Within this context, proposals will be evaluated by the coordinators of the workshop. The themes of the workshops are structured as follows:

### **1. Territories of the economy.**

The crisis that has engulfed the Italian economy in recent years is reshaping the relationship between the territory and the manufacturing processes. Considering their mutual influences, observing the Italian territory together with the economic-productive processes of transformation, what structures and articulations can we observe? Between the crises of big industry and the holding of pocket multinationals, the restructuring of business clusters, offshoring, the resumption of manufacturing linked to the *Made in Italy* concept and the new polarization of the service industry and metropolitan areas, which geographies does the Italian economic-productive system present today? How is the production of goods and services intertwined with the structure of settlements and infrastructure? How is all this redefining centrality and marginality? How many and which "Italies" can be recognized today? What impact has all this had on settlements and their territorial policies? What scenarios and territorial policies can be outlined from these processes?

### **2. Agricultural areas between production and reproduction.**

In recent years, the urban debate has dedicated increasing attention to agriculture and agricultural areas. Contemporary society is expressing different needs in regard to cultivated space: the production of food and biomass for energy, the conservation of the environment and biodiversity, services to urban populations and opportunities for socializing, reproduction of the cultural heritage. These are contrasting requirements that easily come

into conflict, putting a strain on the concept of the multifunctionality of agriculture. The experience of recent years shows how hard it is to think of reconciling these needs, if not as part of a new territorial project. This opens up new scenarios for city planning and regional planning, particularly in reconsidering interpretations, approaches, projects, tools, policies for the territories of the contemporary city.

### **3. Landscape at risk**

Climate Change, emerging hydraulic and geological risk, soil consumption and the reduction of biodiversity, are emerging as extreme phenomena which may harm communities; at the same time, investments to secure territories seem to significantly stress economic programming. However, in the last decades, to respond to new Directives and indications from the European Commission, several cities from Europe and abroad have arranged experimental plans and projects to increase the resilience to climate change of their urban and territorial systems. The Italian Government has recently adopted the National Strategy for the Adaptation to Climate Change; the implementation within the integration of planning systems and related investments will require a wide effort in building strategies and projects. Within this perspective, it seems fundamental to experiment innovative approaches to urban planning, as for the case of "urban metabolism", which is based on the management of fluxes of materials and energy in the environment, integrating several disciplines.

### **4. Poverty and wealth. New populations, settlement dynamics, processes of exclusion and inclusion**

Demographic and economic dynamics, new articulations of international and domestic migration and the consequent pluralization (which often degenerates into fragmentation) of contemporary urban societies, result in rapid processes of abandonment, recapture and re-signification of parts of cities and territories (public spaces, neighbourhoods, local systems of small and medium-sized municipalities). The emergence of new interest groups and cultures multiplies the "city requests", redesigning the spatial relations between the centre and urban and territorial suburbs. The polarization between the middle classes and the new poor and their relationship with the organization of the urban space that is becoming increasingly a "threshold space" and a space of internal boundaries, require daily negotiations and expert mediations.

### **5. Public fabric and spatial justice**

The set of urban facilities constitutes a major collective infrastructure of the country, an instrument for the promotion of a more static efficiency of settlements and an activator of processes of cohesion and social inclusion. In ensuring a widespread accessibility to the city, it becomes an instrument of promoting forms of spatial justice. The production of "public goods", of a new public fabric made of spaces of proximity, of common areas, increasingly occurs through the activation of new forms of welfare. The promotion of new structures and processes of association and cooperation involves the settled communities in the reorganization of collective services, in the emerging phenomena of temporary reuse or in the conversion of natural and environmental areas into "common goods". These changes are often accurate and require specific frames of sense, scenarios and visions on how to reorganize the public fabric.

### **6. The home and living**

The living issue is posed today not so much in terms of "how many houses for how many inhabitants," but "which houses for which inhabitants" and the continuing and worsening of problems in the sphere of living. The session aims to highlight different, intersecting issues

that revolve around housing: daily practice, new forms of living, new needs and demand for housing but also issues related, for example, to real estate speculation. The debate and the most recent experimentations are putting emphasis on the themes of convergence and the construction of new public-private partnerships for the realization of residential accommodation intended for weak segments of the population; but also on the theme of the reuse and upgrading of the existing structures. For this reason it is advisable to address also issues related to the purpose and role of social housing, economic investments in the field of housing and new policies for living.

### **7. Italy between palimpsest and heritage**

The cultural, architectural and landscape heritage constitutes among other things an important forgotten capital of the country in which to invest. Protection, enhancement and promotion of the cultural and landscape resources constitute a strategic framework for the recapitalization of the territory and cities. In the same way and with the same scope, the planning and testing of new scenarios - through which to replace, reuse, recycle the old city and the cultural landscapes - undermine old models still lingering on in practice, and help to reconsider and manage their change. In this frame of sense, tourism is a potential tool to promote the area but at the same time is likely to be a possible instrument of depredation/impoverishment.

### **8. Water, mobility, energy: recycling infrastructure**

The road infrastructure is often an emblem of a mobility model unfit to meet the objectives of reducing emissions and the creation of equitable economic and accessibility policies. Water networks and the ground infrastructure are inadequate or insufficient to cope with the challenges posed by the changing climate and the hydrogeological instability. Energy and technology networks are heavily dependent on fossil fuels. Minor railways, often degraded, are still a fundamental structure for a possible expanded use of the territory. This open list of local infrastructure, in the last century a fundamental support of the economic development and modernization of the country, today has to be rethought within integrated and non-sectorial projects, able to include within the same frame of sense social, environmental, energy and revaluation issues, including spatial ones, of the Italian landscape.

### **9. Collective goods and social role**

With this workshop we intend to have a debate on the effects of the so-called "social role" in the modes of creation, production and management of collective goods (not necessarily of public ownership), as a potential field of experimentation to question (and innovate) the relationship between institutions responsible for urban governance, knowledge and society. Collective goods (or if you will, common goods) that can be called such for a demand for use by groups and community associations, which are activated and (self-)organize for the recognition and production of a "social function of property", determined by uses, functionality, forms of management, accessibility, that are an alternative to both the logics of the private market and those of the production of public services.

**Papers** must propose geographic and/or historical interpretations of the forms and processes of transformation taking place in our country. They must be seen as case studies, deep excavations capable of projecting the topics into the future, thus reflecting on what is the space of intervention which is opening today to urbanism: what plans, scenarios, visions, policies, processes, projects.

## **PARTICIPATION IN THE CONFERENCE**

Abstracts must not be longer than 3,000 characters (inclusive of spaces) and they must contain the following information:

- (i) title, authors, affiliation, contacts, the selected workshop, key words (three);
- (ii) the thesis presented;
- (iii) field in which the thesis is discussed;
- (iv) work prospects.

Failure to follow this format will constitute grounds for exclusion.

## **IMPORTANT DEADLINES**

Abstracts must be received at the following e-mail address by February 16th, 2015 for prior approval: [siu.conferenza2015@italia45-45.it](mailto:siu.conferenza2015@italia45-45.it)

The academic committee of the SIU will inform those concerned if their proposals have been accepted by March 16th, 2015.

Final papers, not longer than 20,000 characters (inclusive of spaces), in addition to figures and tables, must be received at the above email address by May 4th, 2015.

## **CONFERENCE FEES**

Conference participation only

Senior 150,00 € / Junior 80,00 € (reduced to 140,00 and 60,00 if paid before May 24th)

Conference participation only for SIU members (individual or affiliated with a partner institution)

Senior 120,00 € / Junior 60,00 € (reduced to 100,00 and 50,00 if paid before May 24th)

SIU membership cost for 2015 (not required if affiliated with a partner institution)

Senior 100,00 € / Junior 50,00€

Conference participation + individual SIU membership cost for 2015

Senior 200,00 € / Junior 100,00 € (reduced to 180,00 and 90,00 if paid before May 24th)

Note 1: are considered to be "Senior", the academic staff and public administration officers of all ages as well as other participants over the age of 40.

Note 2: SIU list of partner institutions is published on the website: [www.societaurbanisti.it](http://www.societaurbanisti.it)

## **MODES OF PAYMENT**

### ***Bank transfer to:***

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### ***Payment by credit card:***

From March 1st, 2015 on the website [www.societaurbanisti.it](http://www.societaurbanisti.it), XVIII Conference 2015 section

## **CONTACTS**

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