

Chapter 2

A Great Work: Renovatio Urbis in the Age of Globalisation

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Abstract The elements that give shape to the new way society is organised in the contemporary city are three:

- The enormous, abnormal inequality, socially and in terms of power: nowadays the powerful on earth are like the semi-gods of mythology: they share only their mortal condition with the rest of humanity; the modern semi-gods do not even share places with us mortals: they live in separate spaces within or between the cities of men.
- The power of income or financial capital, power that exceeds official power. Following the ‘glorious thirty’ of the post-war period – an age of cold and hot wars, risk of mutual destruction and really harsh international wars and wars of liberation from colonialism, of totalitarian regimes in power over half of Europe, but an age of growth of collective well-being, a period of over 25 years of prosperity and progress – urban policies were abandoned and financial capital alone took over the management of transformations.
- New globalisation: today’s globalisation is special. It has enabled really rapid delocalisation of manufacturing activities and has brought to an end the need for spatial contiguity; in this age, for the first time, the semi-gods can do without being a part of the city and taking care of their part of the city.

The focal problems of contemporary city transformation are therefore the ones of power management in the city, a question of democracy and decisional power, on the one hand, and management and conflict ‘resolution’, on the other.

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The great work all European countries need is a general plan for urban upgrading and city reconstruction (both ‘urbs’ and *civitas*), starting with the ‘rejected’ places, the outskirts: a work that would assure environmental sustainability, expert development, growth of social capital, improvement in quality of life and the aesthetic quality of cities.

Here we outline possible guidelines for it.

Keywords Globalisation • Semi-gods • Democracy • City reconstruction • Social capital • Quality of life

2.1 Background

One of the fundamental components of the urban landscape is human beings: urban landscape perspectives are first and foremost the perspectives of the people that compose it. Without being deterministic, the landscape ultimately reflects social organisation and the urban landscape does so in particular. At the end of the fourth century, following the Via Emilia towards Ravenna, St. Ambrose described a totally decaying landscape on a territory that had been rich in civilisation:

Nempe de Bononiensi veniens urbe a tergo Claternam, ipsam Bononiam, Mutinam, Rhegium derelinquebas, in dextera erat Brixillum, a fronte occurrebat Placentia, veterem nobilitatem ipso adhuc nomine sonans, ad laevam Apenini inculta miseratus, et florentissimorum quondam populorum castella considerabas, atque affectu relegebis dolenti. Tot igitur semirutarum urbium cadavera, terrarumque sub eodem conspectu exposita funera...¹

The bleakness of the landscape was due to the end of *civitas*, bringing with it the end of the ‘urbs’. *Civitas* may end for many reasons, one of which is the loss of social and cultural diversity. City rhymes with diversity (of course, it also rhymes with liberty and society and civility). An essential condition for a city to be able to exist and be beautiful is that it welcomes, defends and develops every kind of diversity from economic (monocultures are the ruin of States, but also of cities) to social (rich and poor must live side by side and, incidentally, not be too rich or too poor), cultural (including subcultures and subversive cultures) and ethnic. But the city must be the place where diversities encounter each other, or we might say – using the term as it is used in chemistry – where diversities ‘react’.

In Italy a heated discussion has been going on for many years on the theme of the ‘great works’, above all infrastructure works, the country needs in order to deal with the problems of efficiency and quality of the manufacturing system and services; the ‘great works’ theme is one that is being raised in many countries (Cedolin 2008).

This chapter links up with the discussion on ‘great works’ to propose the idea of a really great ‘great work’: to update and renovate all the settlements of a nation with high-density population and history and with many areas profoundly hit by the absence of effective and efficient urban design! To do so, we will try to describe the new features of the contemporary city, though not only nor especially in Italy.

2.2 Three Elements

Three elements give shape to the new way society is organised in the contemporary city.

2.2.1 *Semi-gods and Richistan*

In a successful, documented and somewhat contradictory book, Robert Frank describes the world of Richistan (Frank 2007), the pervasive *enclave* that in each country throughout the world groups together the extremely rich and their vast entourage of courtesans and chamberlains.

There have always been very rich people, “so very rich”² perhaps never, so far away in wealth and power from the vast majority of other beings almost certainly never, since the era, moreover mythical, of the semi-gods (Reich 1991).

The fact is that nowadays the powerful on earth are like the semi-gods of mythology (*legibus soluti* [above the law] like them but also lawless – *anomoï* [those who do not follow the law], ultrapowerful and conspicuous), sharing only their mortal condition with the rest of humanity. The modern semi-gods do not even share places with us mortals (something the ancient ones often did), but live on their ‘Olympus’ mounts or in separate spaces within or between the cities of men. Then those of them or of their chamberlains who have to stay in cities to some extent build themselves up as a separate caste. This fact has enormous consequences for the city.

The pyramid of power was built out of velocity, access to the means of transportation and the resulting freedom of movement.

Panopticon was a model of mutual engagement and confrontation between the two sides of the power relationship. The managers’ strategies of guarding their own volatility and routinizing the flow of time of their subordinates merged into one (...)

Panopticon is burdened with other handicaps as well. It is an expensive strategy: conquering space and holding to it as well as keeping its residents in the surveilled place spawned a wide range of costly and cumbersome administrative tasks. There are buildings to erect and maintain in good shape, professional surveillants to hire and pay, the survival and working capacity of the inmates to be attended to and provided for. Finally, administration means, willy-nilly, taking responsibility for the overall well-being of the place, even if only in the name of well-understood self-interest – and responsibility again means being bound to the place. It requires presence, and engagement, at least in the form of a perpetual confrontation and tug-of-war. (...) For all practical purposes, power has become truly *exterritorial*, longer bound, not even slowed down, by the resistance of space. (...) It does not matter any more where the giver of the command is – the difference between ‘close by’ and ‘far away’ or for that matter between the wilderness and the civilized, orderly space, has been all but cancelled. (...) The end of Panopticon augurs *the end of the era of mutual engagement*: between the supervisors and the supervised, capital and labour, leaders and their followers, armies at war. The prime technique of power is now escape, slippage, elision and avoidance, the effective rejection of any territorial confinement with its cumbersome corollaries of order-building, order-maintenance and the responsibility for the consequences of it all as well as of the necessity to bear their costs. (...)

The contemporary global elite is shaped after the pattern of the old-style 'absentee landlords'. It can rule without burdening itself with the chores of administration, management, welfare concerns, or, for that matter, with the mission of 'bringing light', 'reforming the ways', morally uplifting, 'civilizing' and cultural crusades. Active engagement in the life of subordinate populations is no longer needed (on the contrary, it is actively avoided as unnecessarily costly and ineffective). (Bauman 2000, pp. 10–13)

Over 200 years after the French Revolution, and much more than at that time, semi-gods populate the earth again. The gulf is ever wider between the rich – free from all laws and virtually omnipotent, their only limit that they are mortal – and the common people, including the wretches on the outskirts of the world, but not only them, to the point that they live separate lives in separate worlds, almost without intersections or relations.

2.2.2 *The Glorious Thirty*

There was an age in the recent history of man when things did not go like this: an age of cold and hot wars, risk of mutual destruction, potentially catastrophic 'brinkmanship'³ ('dancing' at the edge of the gulf), really harsh international wars⁴ and wars of liberation from colonialism,⁵ totalitarian regimes in power over half of Europe,⁶ but an age of growth of collective well-being, a period of over 25 years of prosperity and progress.⁷

Racial conflicts, poverty, marginalisation, speculators' unrestrained appetites, economic stagnation and regional imbalances seemed to be the heritage of a past that should and could be 'surpassed'.⁸

A Texan, for example (rather a Southern Democrat: Lyndon Baines Johnson), who had become President following John Kennedy's assassination,⁹ managed to launch an extraordinary project for reform in the USA (the Great Society of 1965¹⁰) and sign the act of equality of black people in 1964, making their rights effective in the Southern United States (the 'Civil Rights Act'¹¹).

Obviously not everything was golden in this story and this period: Lyndon B. Johnson was the President of 'escalation' in Vietnam.¹²

To give another example, in that period in Italy for the first time since the war, clear political will was glimpsed as far as urban development policies were concerned. A Christian Democrat minister, referring to the experience of many European countries, proposed an urban planning law which would promote planned development of cities and prevent or reduce speculation. The Minister was Fiorentino Sullo and the year 1962.¹³ Speaking to the Senate, Sullo said:

To regulate the buildable sites in zones of urban expansion and consequent building activity, the scheme envisages within each detailed plan, compulsory for the local Councils expressly singled out at the moment of drawing up the area plan, the expropriation of all buildable sites by the Council, who are obliged to implement basic urbanisation works on them before turning them over for building use. The Council subsequently proceeds to auction the *ius ad aedificandum* on the urbanised areas: with the possibility, moreover, of directly giving up this right to Boards operating in the social housing sector.

The financial problem connected with such regulation is resolved by the system of payment of compensation for expropriation, which, equal to the material taking of the patrimony, may be deferred for a year; this term appears sufficient to set in motion a rotation mechanism of the sums needed by the local Councils.¹⁴

Sullo's proposal for urban planning reform was shelved, and no urban reform carried out in Italy, especially after 1980 when the Constitutional Court cancelled the land law, approved in 1977, proposed by the Republican minister Bucalossi.¹⁵

In many European countries, there had already been a law for some time regulating the land regime and a modern urban planning law,¹⁶ and during the course of the twentieth century, extraordinary local strategic plans¹⁷ were created in various cities and excellent urban planning and good architecture were not uncommon.

It should be mentioned that there was also, at least in Europe and many third world countries, a strong social conflict and an organised, influential left wing – in some countries with a strong presence or predominance of Communists – which often contested reformist choices as being instrumental for the survival of capitalism (and they were). Meanwhile, however, this social pressure (together with the international situation) forced those capitalist elements to be reformist,¹⁸ even if they did not want to, and to build the social state, defend public spaces and reduce inequalities. The great mass movement of 1968, the moment in which the political pendulum reached one of its extremes, belonged to that period.¹⁹

2.2.3 *New Globalisation*

All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilised nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the productions of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.²⁰

If this description by Marx and Engels is not globalisation, it leaves out very little of what has happened and is happening in our own times.

We do not want to go back over a debate here that has followers on one side convinced of the fact that the globalisation process is a 'continuum' dating back several centuries (Robertson 1992; Sen 2001, 2002; Wallerstein 1979; Frank and Gills 1993) and others thinking this globalisation is unique for one reason or another, compared with other phenomena of the past (Klein and Levy 2002; Beck 1999).

What is certain is that in many respects, this is not the first globalisation, for there have been others before it, certainly the triangular trade of the sixteenth

century (which had the slave trade as its characterising feature, an activity to which Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the present queen of the United Kingdom, owes much of her wealth) (Northrup 1994) and the one of the nineteenth century described by Marx and Engels (which could have 1842 as its symbolic date, the year in which a group of international drug traffickers led by Queen Victoria of England ‘opened up’ Imperial China ‘to the world’ with the Treaty of Nanking) (Hobsbawm 1988).

But today’s globalisation is special. It has enabled really rapid delocalisation of manufacturing activities and has brought to an end the need for spatial contiguity; in this age, for the first time, the semi-gods can do without being a part of the city and taking care of its public part and can live in a global city made up of dispersed fragments and small ‘enclaves’ throughout the world.²¹ This globalisation, based on deregulation and economic liberalism, is having devastating effects on the city (Harvey 2010).

Who will the designer or planner refer to if the (financial) markets now ‘vote’ (alone or before the others vote or binding the vote of the others)?²² And if the financial markets have one characteristic, it is that of not ‘recognising’ national boundaries and local governments (those voted for with the ‘one head, one vote’ principle).²³

Who is going to commission the work of designers, planners, urbanists and architects? Will they have to be the creators of a product, a consumer good (and therefore something that is a good though volatile or virtual) for the ‘city market’? Bearing in mind that ‘city market’ is understood here not so much as the market that cities allow, promote and generate, but the market in which cities themselves are goods?

This new globalisation, too, in which the role of financial capital is enormous and pathological (% finance of GDP), has, like the others, encountered – following many more localised crises – a devastating crisis, of lengthy duration and with no foreseeable outcome (Stiglitz 2010).

2.3 Two Issues

The focal problems of contemporary city transformation are therefore the ones of power management in the city – democracy and decisional power, on the one hand, and management and conflict ‘resolution’, on the other.²⁴

2.3.1 *Participation and Democracy*

The democracy crisis has not extinguished the conflict. In fact, it is true that there exists in many citizens an acute sensitivity and willing capacity for mobilisation in a variety of circumstances and on different issues, which is anyway ultimately a

good thing, even when such mobilisation is ‘wrong’. But these ‘forewarned’ citizens generally contend with problems almost always as single issues, usually ‘local’ or ‘separate’ issues. They often perceive and represent themselves as ‘users’, claiming not so much power and responsibility as, above all, services and respect for the rules. Their voice often, therefore, speaks for themselves alone, for the moment, for what they have a right to, but rarely for everyone (and a project for the organisation and management of the territory can only be a project for everyone), for a space that is larger than their space, to achieve new rights. And it is true above all that those who do not have a voice do not find anyone who will give them one (at most – and this is not negligible – they are offered pity and compassion).

The rationalisation of decisional mechanisms that eliminate overlapping and conflicts of competences would offer, at least on a theoretical level, some hopes of realising oneself better than in the past. For communication is easier, faster and more complete, the organisational model becoming established that of a light, target-oriented system and good techniques and good technologies make it possible to dismantle and destroy the bureaucratic cages.

But if techniques are reduced to techniques, the essence of democracy is lost and rationalisation and ‘reforms’ serve – at best to enable the *élite* to do their job better and produce people like themselves.

2.3.2 *Breaking Up the Space of Conflicts*

The French suburb revolution is certainly the fruit of a condition pertaining almost to caste: the majority of the children and grandchildren of colonial immigration have no hope of social mobility, condemned as they are to inherit the status of their parents and grandparents, or even be declassified. Their prospects of getting a job and being accepted socially is somewhat elusive if, as a survey has shown, those with an Arab- or African-sounding surname have six times less chance of being called for a job interview, compared with a Franco-French peer. On the part of the institutions, one of the few non-repressive responses given to the great social issue behind the revolution is the proposal to lower the school-leaving age to 14 years, making it possible to have the 14 to 16 age-bracket ready for work. Which amounts to a final sentence for the young people of the 752 urban zones sensitive of their fate as outcasts. (Rivera 2005)²⁵

Many of the causes of urban fragmentation are linked with the social question and the predominance of financial capital, of which land rent is the ‘material’ element. These two engines were the source of destruction of the united character of the urban dimension, and there we have the new cities made up of fragments.

For example, does the housing emergency come into it or not? Does it come into it or not that in France, too, social housing is no longer being built and town councils are selling those they have. Does it come into it or not that one salary is not enough to rent a two-roomed property? Does it come into it or not that with 340,000 people applying for housing in the Paris area, no housing is available? Does the endless race of the property market, rents and property values that have grown exorbitantly come into it or not? (...) Does it come into it or not that re-distribution of wealth is producing more and more accentuated

polarisation between rich and poor? Does it come into it or not that some 6 million people in France are relegated to ghetto-quarters of the large cities from which they have been excluded, physically and socially? Are we sure that our past does not come into it and (...) we have “Nothing to hide”?

What type of outskirts are these that run through the centre and are before our eyes as we go through our everyday activities? Or, rather, of “what” are they the outskirts? What is it that surrounds what we simply refer to as outskirts? Where is the centre of these outskirts, the place from which these traces, following a centrifugal movement, reach this far?

The outskirts set on fire and smoking do not illuminate the social and physical decay of the districts but betray the removal of a thought for the city, for what the city has become, the inequalities produced, here and elsewhere, by the neo-liberal economic model.

Is it true or not that cities have no longer been on the public political agenda for some time? Is it true or not that urban safety is the way, now prevalent, that cities enter into debates and get onto political agendas? (...)

Can we change the route? Can we go back to looking at cities as places of innovation, growth and social justice? The answer has to be yes, and we must do so in such a way that cities (not just the outskirts) go back to being a focal theme.’ (Caudo 2005)²⁶

Let us look at a list of ‘elements’ and city fragments that can exist in their pure forms or ‘cohabit’ in more or less composite, integrated groups: the suburbs, the old centres that have now become the backdrop or a sort of Disneyland ‘with a past’, the exploded settlement and the planet of slums. They are the cities we might call, as Mike Davis does, the ‘other cities’ (Davis 2006), the places of brands, decentralised Olympuses or places where the ‘archistars’ work for the modern semi-gods, the gated communities, the mass consumer centres, great outlets or enormous malls, and the communication nodes of both traditional and recent transport networks, maybe built ex novo around the low-cost flight hubs. All together these built spaces create non-cities, that sort of ‘contemporary city’ that Maciocco calls ‘discomposed’ (formless), generic or segregated (Maciocco 2008).

As we have said, all these types of ‘neocity’ are governed by the modern forms of income and financial capital, the true engine of twenty-first century globalisation: wealth without work or merit. Basically, financial capital is the ‘honey and ambrosia’ of the new semi-gods, who – wherever they happen to pass through, almost always outside cities – want their temples and their niches. This triumph of financial capital is accompanied by economic and symbolic downgrading of labour and its spaces.

2.4 A Great Work

I would like to develop an argument put forth on more than one occasion by the Italian urban planner Pier Luigi Cervellati: a project is needed and is actually indispensable, which will link up economic development and the recovery and upgrading of urban areas, one with public directors but based on the possibility of private initiative. But if the public needs private initiative, private initiative also needs the public. The city is a common good; forgetting this has led to the crisis of cities (with the contribution of bad local authorities, very bad State guidelines,

ravenous speculation and estate agents getting rich producing the wrong kind of outskirts and regulatory plans). We are one of the countries with the highest number of homeowners. Streets that were once a place for cohabiting are now occupied by waiting or moving cars. Public places are scarce and usually far away and dirty. These choices produce only outskirts, which become 'suburbs', places of banishment, while the beautiful city, or rather the true city, requires wise administration, the will for planning, capacity of coordination in the common interest and for the good of the collectivity (Cervellati 2005).

The great work all European countries need is a general plan for urban upgrading and city reconstruction (both 'urbs' and *civitas*), starting with the 'rejected' places, the outskirts: a work that would assure environmental sustainability, expert development, growth of social capital, improvement in quality of life and the aesthetic quality of cities.

A truly great work, never mind bridges to Messina or exhibitions in Milan, beginning with restoring full dignity to each human being. What the inhabitants of the outskirts ask for first and foremost, like all human beings, is what forms the basis of the human condition in a system of social relations: respect and dignity.²⁷

*On n'est pas des racailles mais des êtres humains. On existe. La preuve: les voitures brûlent.*²⁸

Les quartiers pauvres, au XIXe siècle, n'étaient pas extérieurs à la capitale. Le prolétariat était dans la ville. La nouveauté des banlieues, ces espaces où l'on parque aujourd'hui les pauvres, c'est cette extériorité radicale. Le ban est un lieu qui n'en est pas un. Les parias partagent avec cet espace où ils sont parqués la même caractéristique. Ils sont tout à la fois dehors et intérieurs à la société, sur le mode du déchet. Ils sont toujours dans cette situation topologique paradoxale où ils sont à la fois à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur. J'essaie dans ce petit livre de mettre à jour une continuité : les choses fondamentales, dans l'histoire de l'humanité, se découvrent au ban. Le paradigme de la naissance du monothéisme, de ce point de vue, est intéressant. Un peuple d'esclaves, les Juifs, porté par une nécessité historique, invente une subversion universaliste, égalitaire, inédite dans l'histoire de l'humanité, qui lui permet de se libérer. Ces hommes du ban, du fait de n'être ni à l'intérieur, ni à l'extérieur, ont découvert l'être lui-même, ce que l'on a très longtemps appelé Dieu, et que certains continuent à appeler ainsi. Ce Dieu sans visage, vide, qui choquait les Romains. (...)

Dans l'immédiat, il faut refuser ce leitmotiv du nihilisme démocratique qui consiste à dire : «Les paroles ne valent rien, elles n'ont pas de conséquences, elles ne comptent pas.» La parole a des effets. Chacun peut trouver ses énoncés. Se réunir, prendre la parole, parler de l'actualité, fabriquer des choses (...). La source de la psychose est dans ce nihilisme démocratique tantôt hilare, tantôt dépressif, qui consiste à ne plus croire en rien, à penser que plus rien de grand n'est possible. À dire, pour celui qui jouit d'un confort dont la plus grande partie de lé est toujours privée, qu'il n'y a «pas de progrès». Pas d'enjeu, pas de principes, pas de progrès, pas d'héroïsme...²⁹

Security policies determine how the cry of he who has no future be interpreted. The violence produced by hatred of an unacceptable, hopeless condition receives an answer that separates human beings from each other, so that they do not turn their gaze to the semi-gods.

The most sinister and painful of contemporary troubles can be best collected under the rubric of *Unsicherheit* – the German term which blends together experiences which need three English terms – uncertainty, insecurity and unsafety – to be

conveyed. The curious thing is that the nature of these troubles is itself a most powerful impediment to collective remedies: people feeling insecure, people wary of what the future might hold in store and fearing for their safety, are not truly free to take the risks which collective action demands. They lack the courage to dare and the time to imagine alternative ways of living together; and they are too preoccupied with tasks they cannot share to think of, let alone to devote their energy to, such tasks as can be undertaken only in common.

The extant political institutions, meant to assist them in the fight against insecurity, offer little help. In a fast globalising world, where a large part of power, and the most seminal part, is taken out of politics, these institutions cannot do much to offer security or certainty. What they can do and what they more often than not are doing is to shift the scattered and diffuse anxiety to one ingredient of *Unsicherheit* alone – that of safety, the only field in which something can be done and seen to be done. The snag is, though, that while doing something effectively to cure or at least to mitigate insecurity and uncertainty calls for united action, most measures undertaken under the banner of safety are divisive; they sow mutual suspicion, set people apart, prompt them to sniff enemies and conspirators behind every contention or dissent and in the end make the loners yet more lonely than before. Worst of all, while such measures come nowhere near hitting at the genuine source of anxiety, they use up all the energy these sources generate – energy which could be put to much more effective use if channelled into the effort of bringing power back into the politically managed public space. (Bauman 1999, pp. 5–6)

The modern outskirts were born with the stigma of being the place where the ‘dangerous classes’ lived.³⁰ Initially the dangerous classes of the large cities of the industrial revolution massed proletariat and subproletariat together (workmen, labourers, street traders, beggars, prostitutes and thieves) in shameful living conditions (Engels 1845). At some point, the efforts of hygienists and philanthropists, the growth of productivity and effects of the second globalisation³¹ and consequent unequal exchange imposed by imperialism and the organisation and struggle organised by the Socialists led not only to physical and social recovery of the outskirts but also to a reduction in their peripheral nature and the birth of quality, well-located and well-connected ‘working men’s’ districts.³² When the inhabitants of the popular districts, with their trade unions and political organisations, began to elect the majority of the Town Councillors and the Mayor³³ and managed to siphon off large shares of income and increase the quantity of salaries compared with profits, their outskirts, no longer so peripheral, became more beautiful and richer in functions, attracting resources and activities. They were centres of discussion, decision and power: a situation that was always precarious, vulnerable and needing protection, but exciting, totally urban and civil.³⁴

This is the first important reflection we must make and constitutes the key to dealing with the problem.

The great majority of reasons for the crisis of the city, including the contemporary one, can be traced back to the contradiction between the collective, community, social nature of the city and the individualist features of the fundamental aspects of the organisation of production or consumerism. (Salzano 1998)³⁵

From the inhabitants’ point of view, the decisive issue was the reappraisal of the importance of labour in income distribution in western societies, which took place

from the 1980s onwards. This reappraisal was general and constant in all countries and often somewhat in favour of income rather than profits.

It was not just a case of the effects of the transformations brought about by new globalisation (delocalisation of productive activities in the emerging countries, changes in the organisation of labour, new role of consumerism, IT revolution and telematics) but of the defeat of subordinate labour after harsh conflicts and the surrender to the ideology of the 'single thought'.

Subordinate labour does not disappear even where traditional employed workers decrease, but is transformed largely into precarious, downgraded, badly paid, servile work: the so-called McJobs (Goos and Manning 2003),³⁶ an almost compulsory fate for young people of the outskirts, marked by the stigma of race, religion or perhaps even more of belonging to a class (giving an address in the Zen district of Palermo does not increase one's probabilities of passing a job interview, even if the candidate's family have been in Palermo for many generations and he/she is Catholic).

Generally speaking, guidelines may be identified that take into account 14 factors which, when interwoven, constitute an effective strategy. The first three in particular – land income control, empowerment/respect and labour/jobs – are structural elements through which it will be possible, as long as certain conditions are satisfied, to construct a 'form' of the city, new *civitas* and new sociality/integration.

The control of development dynamics, for example, needs to be released from the predominance of land rents and governed, on the basis of power relations between the classes, by public power. The protagonists of transformations should be all the inhabitants of the city districts, citizens and non-citizens, and their wealth of cultural and artistic production³⁷ and needs and desires must find a means of expression. Moreover, an essential condition is that work be a guarantee of recognition and promotion (who can ever consider himself worthy when his outlook is temporary work or frying meatballs for the whole of his life?), income and value for everyone.

Only if these three requisites are realised may architectural, urban planning and cultural interventions hope for success and may they deliver the outskirts from their condition of places of banishment.

The other 11 points clarify methods of action or 'how to do it'.

Building up work opportunities and creating services, including important ones, may pass through an economy based not only on goods. Experiments exist of alternative economies, solid though in a minority, like those based on the 'time bank' (Coluccia 2001), for example, or participatory economy (Albert 2003) or so-called microcredit (Yunus 2003). We do not intend here to be indulgent either towards the a critical praise of informal economy, which is often the submerged version of precarious parasubordinate work and almost always has the limit of not permitting accumulation but – if it goes well – just subsistence and the division of already existing work between a number of people (Bremen et al. 2000; Bremen 2004) or towards the 'new age' versions of so-called self-help like those promoted by De Soto (2000).³⁸ However, whether or not the State and public sector have an important role, with the 'Welfare State's' set of guarantees and rules in terms of rights to work, safety, health, education, social security and assistance, if weight

and substance are given to people's capacities for self-organisation and creating their own future, this is not only timely but perhaps indispensable.

Public mobility from, for and to – not only for work (not just 'Taylorist') is possible today, if anything the entire mobility system needs to be redesigned, combining mass, flexible and personalised transportation. Modern organisation of mobility has actually allowed the birth of the outskirts and their extension onto the territory. This organisation has become more and more inadequate with the change in production methods and lifestyles; what were once reachable places, 'easy' for mass transportation (at least in the planned outskirts), have become separate, unreachable places and ever farther from cities and with no ties between them.

Urban regeneration may be accompanied by new 'in loco' building and the voluntary shifting of people and groups who would prefer a new location rather than resort to the 'bulldozer' logic as a solution, which some continue to propose for the problem of the outskirts. This is wrong for a variety of reasons, but above all because it implies forced redeployment of people (and as we know, even the worst outskirts are not social black holes). Regeneration and reorganisation of buildings are, moreover, both possible and useful.

If efficient, rapid mobility can be realised on all the urban territory; supra-local and central functions should necessarily be extended also into the outskirts – quality functions, offering opportunities for economic revitalisation and avoiding concentration in dedicated zones.

Like functions, events, too, including important architectural interventions should be shared out, as they are also a stimulus to economic, social and cultural growth.

The poor quality and trivialisation of public spaces concerns the whole city, often including the central zones that have succumbed to consumerism, whether for tourism or not. A city is defined by its quality of life, housing and public spaces. Each of its parts should basically have quality houses and public places.³⁹

Starting with the outskirts, where there are less constraints on restructuring interventions, renovation and new building, a programme of renewal may be considered that could be extended to the whole city and the territory of scattered settlements. It would focus on environmental sustainability, beginning (as we have said) with mobility, to continue with energy-saving interventions and self-sufficiency in power production, closure of cycles and integrated refuse management (reduction, reuse, recovery, recycling and differentiated collection).

Territorial rebalancing consists of many steps: those we have indicated but also action against 'sprawl' to make the city compact when possible, stop it exploding and make its spreading less unsustainable. Strong protection of nonurbanised territory should be included. It should become a part of the opportunities of urban life, though also involve the rediscovery and management of urban and environmental landscapes. Only within this strategic view and, if possible, with zero increase in volume, may we think of large interventions involving new building.

The theme of education has strictly to do with that of work. Often in peripheral districts schools are the 'only' facility of the democratic state; primary and middle schools frequently manage to some extent, thanks also to the 'heroism' of mistresses and women teachers (and the use of feminine nouns is perfectly correct), to play a

useful role and give some hope, even if dramatic family and social situations put every little conquest at risk each day. So that the fact that they are indeed the ‘only’ facility of the democratic state burdens schools with incorrect tasks, superior to their strength. Then secondary schools almost always become authentic ‘black holes’, due not so much simply to the greater difficulty of building learning communities in the adolescent phase, as to the obvious perception (partly objectively justified) of the basic uselessness in terms of working career of that particular course. To have good schools, you (also) need good jobs, but education and training are a necessary investment that the city needs and with the highest quality, especially in the outskirts.

The self-government issue is strictly connected with the theme of participation, democracy and empowerment and is a condition and consequence of guaranteeing recognition of human dignity and allowing each person to build up respect for him/herself and others.

Finally, there is the issue of social variety (which we have summarised in the pair *mixité/métissage* – ‘racial blending’). It is worth saying that this should also be a variety of classes and races, not just an internal variety in the ‘underclass’ group. As is obvious, no-one can be forced to live somewhere or not live somewhere else, but if social, urban design, mobility and economic policies (keeping rents under control) are good, then they will be able to encourage, also in the short term, the mixing of different people and social groups.

Apart from those mentioned, there is a theme we have not dealt with, not because it is not important but because it is an issue in itself with many aspects. This is the theme of security. The invention of the new ‘dangerous classes’ has many ideological components, often not sustained by the actual facts. In the October–November 2005 ‘revolution’ of the ‘banlieue’, there was consistent, unpleasant damage to things (8,000–10,000 cars set on fire and some public facilities plundered), but episodes of violence against people were very rare, and in all the manifestations of unease of the *banlieue*, the dead and wounded were rare, almost always from fights linked with the abuse of power by the police or directly provoked by them.

The situation in the USA has sometimes been much harsher, but the context of the ‘ghettos’ of the North American cities is a special one.

A pervasive presence also exists in Italy and is particularly strong in the metropolises of the south where organised crime often totally controls the territory, and with it an erratic form of spontaneous crime that is highly aggressive and dangerous. But these criminal activities, which also often originate in the outskirts (and are frequently visible and perceived as unsustainable when they take place in the ‘central’ outskirts in particular, as happens in Naples) are phenomena born of complex reasons. They often involve a ‘continuum’ between criminal illegality and illegality ‘with a jacket and tie’, between the dissolution of the ties of society and the values of cohabiting and exaltation of wealth and between crime, tax evasion, exploitation of illicit work and corruption.⁴⁰ Crime also becomes contiguous with market logics, though much more so than in the past when it might also have been a choice of a ‘rebellious’ life (Quadrelli 2004). We need in this case, too, in situations often experienced with great discomfort by many people, to know how to reason and distinguish. We need to give an answer to this unease, even when it is only perceived and

when, as often happens, it makes the various uncertainties – fear of the future, lack of prospects and the emptiness of existence (the various forms of *Unsicherheit* Bauman speaks of) – ‘collapse’ in the demand for ‘police’ security. Giving an answer is difficult. We must analyse, discuss and distinguish; listen also to the voice within the social phenomena of those who do not speak out but express themselves via destruction and refusal (those who ‘break’, the ‘casseurs’), calling them outside; it takes patience, respect and humility.⁴¹ Nor can crime be reduced to a ‘unicum’. There is (or has been) ‘individual’, ‘anarchic’ and ‘rebellious’ crime, which is more frightening for the dominant classes but perhaps looked upon with benevolence or tolerated and controlled by the poor classes (including the working ones)⁴² and ‘immoral’ crime, rejected by everyone (the definition of immoral changes from place to place – in the East Harlem ‘Barrio’, drug pushers and pimps are not ‘immoral’) (Bourgois 2003). Then there is organised crime linked with the market, which some deprived social strata perhaps tolerate or appreciate, through fear or for the ‘advantages’ it brings. It is not easy and the outskirts do not always come into it in the same way.⁴³

Denis Duclos’ interesting essay, documented, attentive and free of prejudice, shows that the *banlieue* is a place able to set itself up as an engine of integration, with integration meant as exchange, hybridisation and mixture of races, but not assimilation (after all, it is the Franco-French society that has refused to assimilate these French of a different origin, now third or fourth generation citizens, but too brown or dark or perhaps too dynamic or disrespectful).

Gang turbulence can be unbearable. But it would be better to distinguish between the signs of an everyday revolution and what is nothing more than the explosive energy of the new generation (...).

But what greatly irritates some intellectuals is the fact that this noisy vitality, sometimes mortal, has been translated into the production of an expansive culture, much more shareable than the one brooded over in the “centre”. (...)

... the Republic’s schools still remain in the forefront, however, the media cover and permeate this population like the rest of the French and the level of technological mastery of the youth of the *banlieue* (internet, mobile phones, etc.) has already astonished ... the police in charge of foreseeing groups assembling to fight, who have sometimes been deceived by what we might well call a culture of organisation! (...)

Anyway, the success of a real public policy for integration – liable alone to have rapid, long-term effects on the Paris thugs who play at Robin Hood with the police or fire brigade – depends on two conditions.

The first is that it should be part of a radical change of attitude discarding all forms of paternalism or unconscious denigration, and should recognise the right of the Other to occupy his own place near us in this world which is becoming united, just as we demand the same thing when we emigrate in groups to Morocco or near African beaches or those of other host countries, to live as pensioners with better purchasing power.

The second condition is specific to the young people of the “districts”. It is possible to wish together that the Republic’s school be appreciated by everyone and propose at the same time to align remuneration for labour and the conditions of labour to the lowest levels in force in the “world’s workshops”, where capitalist exploitation, unable to survive without slaves, has been massively delocalized. As one of our old sages rightly says: ‘We must give young people work; but profitable work. And, one day, they will be nice and kind’ (Duclos 2006).⁴⁴

2.5 Brief Conclusions

However, disrupted they are, not all outskirts, particularly Italian ones, including those of large cities, have the same type of problems as the French *banlieue* or the ethnic ghettos of the USA. The problems are not necessarily less, but are certainly different: the racial-ethnic-religious question, above all linked with the presence of second or third generation citizens, is the main difference. In Italy immigration is a more recent phenomenon, and immigrants are certainly located in decayed areas, but often they are placed within historic urban centres or some zones of the central areas (like in the American ‘inner cities’ (Wilson 1990), though due to different dynamics) – authentic outskirts in the centre of the city (‘central suburbs’) with specific problems of marginality. In Italy the authentic outskirts (the ‘peripheral outskirts’) are still places of ‘banishment’ of the marginalised, the ‘dangerous classes’ of the twenty-first century, but often inhabited by Italians descending from noble ancestors; the presence almost always prevails within them of ‘working classes’, pushed to the edges by the great transforming force of rents.

Of course the great crisis that began in 2007, the end of which we cannot see at this moment, has accentuated the problems and strengthened the dynamics, and even though the efforts to counter the presumption that the effects of the crisis be paid by its victims are weak and contradictory, there are signs that, regarding the unilateral ‘class struggle from the top’ of these last decades (Harvey 2005, 2010; Gallino 2012), indicate a revival of the organised, aware social urban conflict (Harvey 2012).

In these different outskirts, the issue of safety sometimes seems to be a focal question and the ‘media’ almost always make it more focal – a question, this one of safety, which exists also because it is perceived as a great problem and has to be dealt with in a direct way. However, the ‘great work’ I propose, namely the concerted reconstruction in rapid, defined times, of the ‘urbs’ and the *civitas* in many urban places in Italy, is able to give an answer also to this need. *Renovatio urbis* in the globalisation era may make the great miracle of the city possible: to be a place of encounter between diverse peoples, who change themselves and others, in relationships of constant participation in the debate and negotiation, a place of encounter that manages the conflict making it useful and fruitful.

Notes

1. ‘Coming from Bononia you left behind you Claterna, Bononia itself, Matina, Rhegium; Brixillum was on your right, in front of you Placentia, by its very name still recalling its ancient lustre, on the left you saw with pity the wastes of the Apennines, you surveyed the fortresses of these once flourishing tribes, and remembered them with sorrowful affection. Do not then the carcasses of so many half-ruined cities, and states stretched on their bier beneath your eyes ... remind you ...’ St. Ambrose: Letters, 1–91, translated by Mary Melchior Beyenka (Ambrose of Milan 2002), Washington 2002.

2. It should be considered that in our era as in all the others, the concept of wealth is relative: one is rich compared with the others who live in the same era and the same place. In many ways nowadays, place is a single one for all human beings, the entire planet (Krugman 2007).
3. On the concept of brinkmanship, see Schelling (1960), Nalebuff (1986).
4. On the Cuba crisis, see Schelling (1960), Dobbs (2008).
5. The bibliography on the Vietnam War is endless, as is well known; see, for example, Fincher (1980).
6. On colonialism, see Osterhammel (1997), Fanon (1961), Said (1978).
7. We owe the expression to Jean Fourastié (1979).
8. A symbol of the age was the triad of hope; Kennedy, Krushev and Pope John XXIII are highly fascinating figures in the media, but certainly overestimated, at least two of them, from the point of view of their effective, long-term importance in history. Nevertheless, some words are more important, they are more than words, such as those of Kennedy's inaugural speech: 'Now the trumpet summons us again – not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need; not as a call to battle, though embattled we are – but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation" – a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease, and war itself. (...) And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country.'
9. John Kennedy's assassination at 12.30 on 22 November 1963 in Dallas was a crucial event of the second half of the twentieth century, much more for its symbolic impact than its actual importance ('Where were you when they shot Kennedy?'); look into the enormous bibliography by Manchester (1967).
10. 'We are going to assemble the best thought and broadest knowledge from all over the world to find these answers. I intend to establish working groups to prepare a series of conferences and meetings – on the cities, on natural beauty, on the quality of education, and on other emerging challenges. From these studies, we will begin to set our course towards the Great Society': this was LBJ's speech at Ann Arbor. The Great Society followed Roosevelt's 'New Deal' and Kennedy's 'New Frontier'; 'urban renewal' was one of the great themes of the 'Great Society' (see Andrew 1998).
11. The 'Civil Rights Act' came into force on 2 July 1964 and had a long, meaningful title: 'An Act to enforce the constitutional right to vote, to confer jurisdiction upon the district courts of the United States of America to provide relief against discrimination in public accommodations, to authorize the Attorney General to institute suits to protect constitutional rights in public facilities and public education, to extend the Commission on Civil Rights, to prevent discrimination in federally assisted programs, to establish a Commission on Equal Employment Opportunity, and for other purposes'.
12. The choice of 'escalation' in the Vietnam War forced Johnson to give up the race for re-election in 1968. After him the progressive backlash began in the USA; his successor was Richard Nixon. But in the electoral campaign for President in 1968, another Kennedy was assassinated – Robert, John's brother.

13. At that moment, the Italian government was a DC-PSDI-PRI (Christian Democracy/Italian Democratic Socialist Party/Italian Republican Party) three-party one, led by Amintore Fanfani (Fanfani IV), and it was on the very eve of the entry of the Socialists that took place in November 1963.
14. Speech to the Senate by Fiorentino Sullo on 28 June 1962 (our translation).
15. The Bucalossi Law No. 10 (28 January 1977) envisaged, but in a rather ambiguous, unclear way, the separation between right of ownership and *jus edificandi*; 3 years later, the Constitutional Court deemed some points of the law anti-constitutional, due also to this ambiguity (Sentence No. 5 of 25.1.1980).
16. The battle against rents and for an efficient land law was very harsh everywhere, however (see Bernoulli 1943). Bernoulli is Swiss and is a direct descendant of those Bernoulli.
17. We may refer, for example, to the General Expansion Plan for Amsterdam (*Algemeen Uitbreidingsplan van Amsterdam-AUP*, 1935), the Greater London Plan (*Greater London Plan*, 1944), the Regional Plan for Greater Copenhagen (*Finger Plan* 1947) and the General Plan for Stockholm (*General plan för Stockholm*, 1952). As usual all that glitters is not gold; in fact some of the effects of these plans were debatable or counter-intuitive. But a fool's gold is better than none, and thinking of the future of a city is however better than not doing so; at least those plans could be discussed, while illegal urban growth could not (see Hall 1991).
18. At that time, the terms reformism and reform meant – in contrast with the use made of them in our times where reform also stands for a return to the past or to the age preceding the reforms – change in a ‘progressive’ sense, towards the future. ‘Reformist’ stood for ‘moderate left’, and the reforms were the social-democratic alternative to the Communist revolution, never under right wing fundamentalism (see Caffè 1990).
19. Apart from the opinions one may have on the movements of that year, there is no doubt that they hit the whole of the western world. But there was much more than echoes and reverberations in the countries of so-called real Socialism, too, and those movements were characteristically libertarian and left wing (see Kurkansky 2004).
20. The quotation is from the 1888 edition of Marx and Engels' *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, edited by Engels (Marx and Engels 1888). The original version is the German one of 1848 (*Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei*), and the first English version was the translation by Helen Macfarlane, 1850.
21. The last virtual conurbation that was invented with a great deal of ideology and reference to a ‘happy few’ was the imaginary conurbation between the two shores of the Atlantic called NYLon (New York + London) (see Gapper 2007).
22. For example, Italy's finance bill in 2006, like the ones for at least the previous 10 years, was ‘passed’ first by the international ‘rating’ institutes (like ‘Standard & Poor's’) and then by the parliament of the Republic.
23. In general the élites have never had much love for the principle that each vote has the same value. It took a long time to achieve universal suffrage, and a great many electoral systems, for reasons of ‘governability’, maintain mechanisms

that make sure that a different, perhaps very different, number of votes is needed, to elect a representative so that many voters remain unrepresented. On all the issues we speak of in these lines, see Crouch (2004).

24. I have developed, together with a juggler colleague (Ben Sidoti), a game on work in the age of globalisation. It was difficult above all to think up a role, the new one we have called the 'semi-gods'. We mean first of all the true billionaires, the men and (rare) women worth over a million euros and people like them or who have become assimilated. Since the French Revolution, there may not have been a similar class of rogues, free from all laws, with their court of stooges and puppets, hack writers, courtesans, clowns, bootlickers and flatterers, who live in a separate world from ours, inaccessible and indifferent to our destiny. To them are added low rank nobles, including public managers paid a salary of over a million euro a year and a few million as a golden handshake. Times have changed, and it is not polite to speak of 'class hatred', but some nostalgia, only virtual, for Monsieur Guillottin's 'bachelor machine', lies in each of our hearts. The game is *Pianeta GiOtto* and you will find it on my website <http://bibo.lampnet.org>
25. Our translation.
26. Our translation.
27. 'Respect' is the title of an important book by Sennett. Also in the recent debate on the problems and contradictions of multiculturalism, I see a common point between the different answers to the crisis of integration models: respect (see Sennett 2003 and Benhabib 2002). Bourgois (2003) also refers to the theme of respect as a focal concept. For an Italian situation, see also Palmas Queirola (2006).
28. 'Non siamo feccia, ma esseri umani. Esistiamo. La prova: le macchine bruciano.' 'We are not scum but human beings. We exist. The proof: cars are burning' (our translation).
29. 'In the nineteenth century the poor districts were not outside the capital. The proletariat was in the city. The novelty of the *banlieues*, these spaces where the poor are parked nowadays, is this radical "eternity". "Banishment" involves a place that is not a place. The pariahs share the same characteristic as the space where they have been parked. They are simultaneously external and internal to society, like refuse. They are always in this paradoxical topological situation in which they are simultaneously inside and outside. I am trying in this little book to highlight a continuity: in the history of humanity the fundamental things are discovered in "banishment". The paradigm of the birth of monotheism is interesting from this point of view. A slave people, the Jews, driven by past needs, invents subversion that is universalist, egalitarian, brand new in the history of humanity, which allows them to free themselves. These men of "banishment", for they are neither inside nor out, have discovered the being itself, which for a long time was called God, and which some continue to call thus. This faceless, empty God, who was troubling the Romans. (...) For the time being we must refuse this *leitmotiv* of democratic annihilationism that consists of saying: "Words have no value, they have no consequences, they do not count." Words do have effects. Each can find his own argument. Meet up, speak out, talk about current

affairs, invent things ... (...) The source of psychosis is in this democratic annihilation, sometimes hilarious, sometimes depressing, that consists of not believing any more in anything, considering that nothing great is any longer possible. In saying, on the part of he who enjoys a kind of comfort of which the majority of people are deprived, that “there is no progress”: There are no challenges, no principles, no progress, no heroism ...’ Belhaj Kacem M (2006a) “Entretien” in *L’Humanité* 7 June (our translation); the «little book» referred to is Belhaj Kacem (2006b) *La Psychose française. Les banlieues: le ban de la République*.

30. The contrast between ‘working classes’ and ‘dangerous classes’ has to do with the birth of the modern city and urban design; see Chevalier (1958). A more general analysis of the strategies to control the ‘dangerous classes’ is found in Foucault (1975).
31. Before this globalisation, we can perhaps count another two: that of the seventeenth/ eighteenth centuries involving the triangular trade between Africa, Europe and the Americas, which created productive slavery and that of the era of the Empires and Colonialism, symbolised in the opium wars and the submission of the great Asian civilisations. See the works (Sen 2001, 2002; Wallerstein 1979; Frank and Gills 1993; Klein and Levy 2002; Beck 1999; Northrup 1994; Hobsbawm 1988; Gapper 2007; Harvey 2010).
32. At least this is how it was in the first world. If or how much this also happened at the expense of the ‘colonies’ and the unequal exchange is a theme to be investigated. See the works (Sen 2001, 2002; Wallerstein 1979; Frank and Gills 1993; Klein and Levy 2002; Beck 1999; Northrup 1994; Hobsbawm 1988; Gapper 2007; Harvey 2010).
33. This is what happened for around 15 years in Vienna, with extraordinary results from the social, urban planning and architectural points of view (see Tafuri 1980).
34. The characteristics of new globalisation with the abnormal increase in inequalities have direct effects on urban organisation. ‘But the negative effects to the detriment of the less well-off classes do not end here. It happens that, given the huge spending possibility of 5 or 10 % of the population of a country, a possibility that has gradually grown over the years thanks to speculative activities and a benevolent revenue office, many goods and services have increased in price to such an extent that the working classes and also a large part of the middle classes can no longer afford them, or find it much more difficult to have access to them. Think of that sort of tax on everyday life of home/work commuters. In many European Union and United States cities, the colossal financial income taxed with favourable rates have made the price of property or the rents in the centre of large cities rise so high as to expel almost all the population that traditionally resided there. We are speaking of professionals who are precious for the life of a city, but who are no longer able to live in the city. So that several hours of daily commuting weigh upon their existence’ (Gallino 2012, p. 26). On the increase of inequalities and its effects see: Wilkinson and Pickett (2009).

35. Our translation.
36. The distinction is between downgrading jobs, like those at McDonalds, and 'hi-tech' jobs, referring to the Apple Company, Macintosh. We read that the situation is not so pleasant even in 'technological' jobs in Baldwin and Lessard (1999).
37. Which, by the way, the 'fashion patrons' plunder, without paying duty. There are no end of advertising videos, slogans, melodies, claims, images and fashion trends extorted or stolen by 'cool' hunters from young people of the suburbs throughout the world. See, for example, Madonna's 'Hung Up' video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDwb9jOVRtU>
38. In the light of what happens in China (and in India and Vietnam and ...), the title does not show much inspiration either.
39. Neither did ideas for rationalisation and organisation of the modern city on the basis of spatial division of functions abandon the conviction that all functions had to be present in urban life, even if they were organised in distinct zones. So-called zoning, as it was defined, should be considered in the light of the past situation, analysing results and outcomes, both positive and negative, in context. In this case, too, we must avoid one of the fallacies of the issue: retrospective evaluation or looking at the past with the eyes of the present. There were many reasons for proposing zoning as a solution, but only in a specific context and at a specific moment, trying to rationally justify the disorder that was the fruit not only of complexity but also (for example) of speculation.
40. See Roberto Saviano's book (2006), the enormous success of which is due to its literary qualities but also to the depth of the social survey.
41. There are those who have been studying the phenomena for some time. In France whole years of issues of the *Annales de la recherche urbaine* have investigated the *banlieue* theme, warning everyone that many things might happen (and they did) and saying why. Then there are those who really listen to the voices (sometimes strangled or coarse, sometimes refined and innovative) that can be heard in cultural production, music, language, or the many Creole languages (from the *verlan* to types of linguistic contamination) and contamination between cultures. The three protagonists only able to express a few things using their communicative method in the cult film on the *banlieues*, namely 'Hate' by Kassovitz, are a Franco-African, a Franco-Arab (*beur* in *verlan*) and a Franco-Jew. To some extent, this cultural mix or a similar one exists in many *banlieues*, where there are also many Franco-French and it often also becomes *métissage*.
42. Without indulging in any romanticism, we should say "there are different kinds of *mala* (underworld)". Massimo Carlotto's book (2006), dedicated to the smuggler/robber Beniamino Rossini, a gangster of old times (no drugs or women), perhaps builds up too special a myth. The same indulgence can perhaps be found in the study, though documented, of Del Lago and Quadrelli (2003). However, not all crime is perceived with the same fear and opposed in the same way.

43. In Stefania Scateni's fine book-report (2006), a collection of papers by writers and artists 'able to see what is not there', the essay by Nicola Lagioia on Bari offers illuminating food for thought on how and why criminals are different depending on the social context. Also in these extreme cases, we should say 'yes, something exists that is called society', otherwise we are done for.
44. Our translation.

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