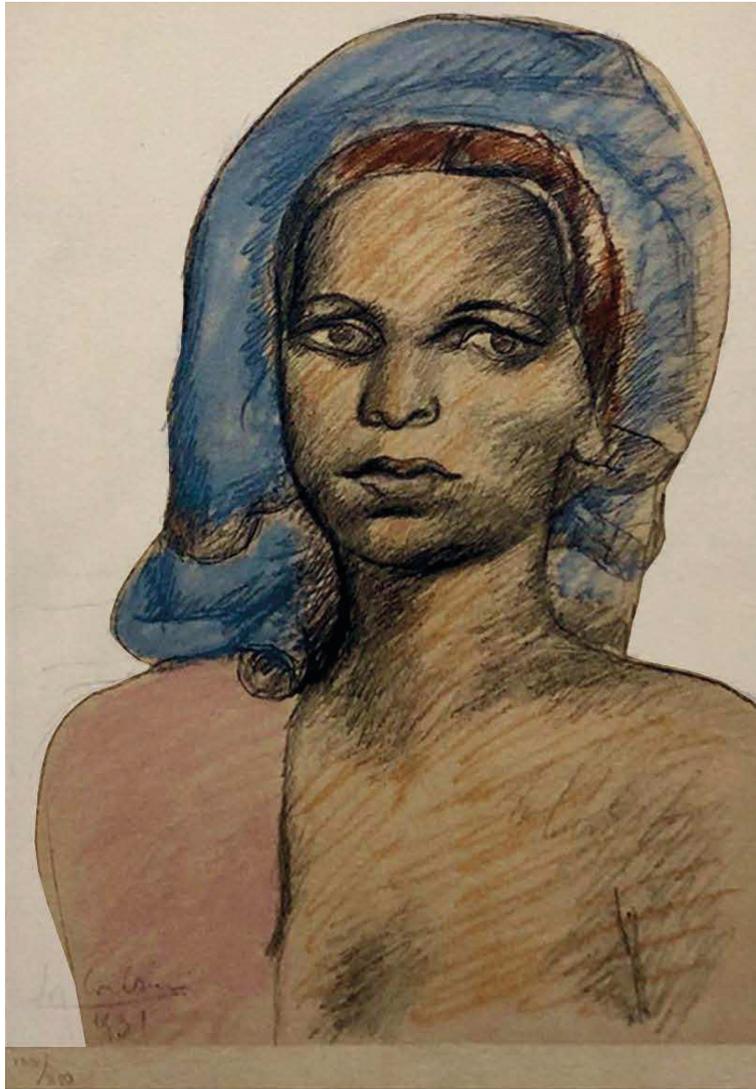ARCHITECTURE HERITAGE and DESIGN

Carmine Gambardella

XVIII INTERNATIONAL FORUM

Le Vie dei
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World Heritage and Contamination

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Collana fondata e diretta da Carmine Gambardella

ARCHITECTURE HERITAGE and DESIGN
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The role of art for the regeneration of the public city.
The experiences of the Metropolitan Cities of Palermo and Naples

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Abstract

The progressive dissolution of common heritage of material and immaterial values, caused by the intensification of phenomena of congestion and fragmentation of public spaces, transforming them into residual and abandoned spaces even in historic areas, requires the development of a regeneration strategy in marginal contexts, promoting functional and morphological approach through an innovative and creative way of public spaces uses.

In this context, culture and art become propulsive elements for regeneration strategies, being bearers of new values of inclusion and urban quality, as developed by the experience of *Strategic Plan of Metropolitan City of Palermo*, city of intense and widespread cultural and artistic creativity, which attributes the role of socioeconomic development of the historic city to culture and art, involving Palermo community in the activation of virtuous regeneration processes.

At the same time, the use of art as a leitmotif of regeneration projects, integrating city flows with architectural and functional aspects of public city for realization of widespread and interactive museums, is at the base of the experience of *Art Stations* and of *Strategic Plan of Metropolitan City of Naples*, with policies that integrate urban planning, mobility and cultural heritage, for a paradigm shift of mobility spaces, previously seen only in their functional aspect, but today also as public spaces, integral part of the metropolitan identity and of city transformation.

Keywords: public city, regeneration, art, cultural heritage, mobility

1. Urban regeneration and public city

The generalized process of *metropolization* that in recent decades has affected the contemporary city, has led to the presence of widespread and fragmented settlement forms contributing to the dissolution of public spaces, a network of centrality and sociality places [1], to the segregation and social marginalization , to the fragmentation of ecological connections, a structural element of the landscape, to infrastructural congestion, evidence of a model of mobility that is no longer sustainable [2].

All this is reflected in the intensification of the phenomena of fragmentation and privatization of the public space even in the part of ancient plant, so that the public city, collective resource and witness of the identity characteristics of the local communities settled, has failed, often transforming the public spaces into a residual and abandoned areas. These elements, together with the tendency towards homologation and trivialization of the different cultural and identity landscapes, the phenomena of abandonment or musealization of historic centers, the formation of abandoned and degraded areas within the historic and consolidated city [3], the spread of 'anonymous' spaces devoid of their own character but a mere point of passage, determine the emergence of new needs in local communities.

Besides that, it is also necessary to take into consideration that the complexity of the contemporary city and its systems is now linked to the metropolitan horizon of urbanized contexts, and therefore requires innovative tools on a territorial scale, following the establishment of Metropolitan Cities (Law no. 56/2014 on "Provisions on metropolitan cities, provinces, unions and mergers of municipalities"), which will have

the task of tracing the lines of development and transformation of cities, in a strategic way, referring to specific projects that guide their implementation.

In this context, the need to implement a regeneration strategy aimed at contrasting the unsustainable and pathological characteristics of contemporary territories is evident, through a complex of integrated and interscalar policies and actions, which identify the building of the public city as the primary reference matrix, or the set of public or public use components, present in the different settlement forms of the historic and consolidated city, relating to spaces, green areas, equipment, mobility [4] with a specific identity. However, it is common that these public services are degraded and obsolescent, constituted of abandoned areas in consolidated fabrics, of mobility spaces without identity, of "non-places" characterized by the loss of the specificity of collective space. These elements represent a challenge and a resource for the enhancement of the existing public space system and they should be the means for recomposing the contemporary cities and territories, affirming the link between physical continuity and social integration [5].

Thus, the building of the public city becomes the element at the base of any regeneration strategy that recognizes the importance of planning interventions that respond to the principles of sustainability and resilience, putting in the first place the reconfiguration of the public space, made up at the same time of what is perceived and what is lived, which has represented for centuries, due to this dual nature, the privileged place of social relations [6]. The contemporary public space in fact needs a rethinking as a "common good" and a place of cohesion and social integration, of cultural development, economic vitality and experimentation of new strategies and tools for urban regeneration [7], promoting economic development and social inclusion [5], through innovative and creative ways of using public spaces.

In this context, culture and art represent innovative and propulsive elements for regeneration strategies, becoming bearers of new values of inclusion and urban quality, through local-based interventions that on the one hand make the urban environment no longer a background but itself a work of art, through the physical reconfiguration of spaces also through alternative and temporary uses, and on the other hand they lead to the social revitalization of these spaces generating places where the community recognizes itself, considering the ethical and artistic values of local communities and the specificities of individual contexts.

In this contribution, two cases will be analyzed: the first relating to the role of art in the regeneration of the Metropolitan City of Palermo, focusing on a fragile and complex area such as the historic center, by reading the contents of the *Metropolitan Strategic Plan* which gives rise to the *Centro Storico Pilot Project;* the second which deals with the experience of the Metropolitan City of Naples and the role of art in the regeneration of the consolidated city, in particular of public spaces connected to mobility, analyzing the project of the *Art Stations* and how the positive outcomes and reflections resulting from this experience have merged into the new *Metropolitan Strategic Plan.*

2.   Historic city, public art and local identity

In the context of urban regeneration strategies of the contemporary city, to reflex on the regeneration of the historic city means asking about the restoration of the quality of urban life; in fact, the historical heritage - physical and social entity - requires regeneration practices based on local partnerships, in order to mobilize resources within a framework of limited means [8], and to produce social and cultural innovation, promoting interventions aimed at restoring recognition to degraded areas, protecting and enhancing historical-documentary evidences, identifying mix of compatible uses with a strong cultural, symbolic and creative character.

In the context referred to above, in fact, the historic city, and in particular the historic centers, "are threatened by dangers of an old and new type" [9] such as tourist or depopulation, abusiveness or musealization, gentrification or degradation, which require new and more current planning and financing capacities. In this context, cultural heritage is therefore reinterpreted as a "common good", integrating conservation and innovation, socio-economic revitalization and socio-cultural enhancement, by strengthening the reinforcement of the public city to restore urban quality and achieve new forms of well-being and social inclusion.

The revitalization of the components of historical interest will require a re-functionalization strategy based on the functional mix that envisages the conversion into innovative, cultural, artistic and inclusive public services, capable of revitalizing the fabrics, and becoming the crucial resource on which basing strategies of re-appropriation of spaces by local communities, of improving the quality of life of citizens. During these past years, in order to achieve these goals, cultural and artistic factors – that are now essential elements - have been added to the regenerative models to guarantee an innovative approach, developing a new way of realizing urban regeneration interventions through this creative component. Indeed, there are many cases in which public art - understood as any type of artistic activity that takes place in a public space and that is motivated, designed, created and perceived according to its public nature - has become a crucial element for the revitalization of historical contexts now in conditions of degradation or abandonment such as the case of the *Milan Artline Project*, a modern art park in the heart of the city, the case of *Un PO d'arte*, a public art project that offers artists the opportunity to create

great works in the green areas of the Turin Po river, and still the case of a smaller reality like that of Favara, an abandoned historic center of Sicily that due to the *Farm Cultural Park* now hosts hundreds of artists every year, or even the case of the *Museum diffuso of Pietrasanta*, reflection of the typical sculptural activity that characterizes this small Tuscan town.

As demonstrated by the success of these experiences, public art guarantees the effective implementation of regeneration interventions: it allows to develop a sense of community, in the direction of establishing a social group that shares a space with connections deriving from its identity, from the same values and from the same culture; it allows to develop a new sense of place, contributing to the formation of a civic identity rooted strongly in the identity of the place; it allows to face the needs of the community, in a perspective where art doesn't simply provide objects but where it also offers solutions to enrich the territory.

2.2 The case of the historic center of Palermo

The Metropolitan City of Palermo - fifth metropolitan city by population with one million inhabitants and with a population density higher than the national and regional average - is the main urban center of the island of Sicily and of the insular Italy and due to its strategic position had an important role in the history of the Mediterranean. Destination of numerous civilizations, which have followed in the government of the city, Palermo has been configured through a long history, denounced by the complexity of the urban systems and by profound stratifications, in which it's possible to read testimonies of artistic and architectural heritage of multiple eras [10]. The key role played by these cultural, historical and artistic heritage is underlined in the *Strategic Plan Palermo Capital of the Euro-Mediterranean*, which attributes to culture and art the role of engine of socio-economic development of the historic city, involving Palermo community in the activation of virtuous regeneration processes.

The Metropolitan City, established with Law no. 56/2014, has the task of identifying development strategies in the medium-long term through the development of a *Strategic Plan*, whose founding principles - competitiveness, innovation, cohesion - are pursued by defining nine strategic objectives, the *nine cities*, which respond to four transversal thematic axes (mobility, environment, infrastructure and culture) with the aim of enhancing the city's growth potential. The *Strategic Plan*, in order to make concrete the goals identified, puts in place two different levels of integrated strategies: the first consisting of macro-actions that are substantiated in the identification of strategic areas of the city, the *New Urban Centralities*, where urban and metropolitan projects will be able to generate attractiveness, competitiveness and social cohesion; the second consisting of a set of specific strategic projects, the *Integrated Strategic Programs* (PSI), which starting from the specific features and values present in the identified areas, become the engine of a new and overall development. Among the PSI identified, the result of a selection process starting from a transversal reading of the strategic lines of the Plan, the *PSI-Valorisation of Cultural Heritage* deserves particular attention. In this program, culture - both in terms of consolidated material assets and in terms of creative innovation - becomes the fulcrum of new regeneration processes, as the degraded areas of the historic city become key elements for the development of creative projects, through interventions on a more strictly material level (requalification and re-functionalization of both built spaces and public spaces) and on an intangible one that concerns the promotion and creation of cultural and knowledge networks, on the one hand through the implementation of key interventions, with actions related to different strategic lines, and on the other hand through implementation projects, with which the individual key interventions are implemented [11]. Some of these interventions, characterized by potential feasibility in the short-medium term because they are structural elements for the implementation of the Plan strategy, are defined as *Pilot Projects*.

In particular, within the PSI examined, the *Centro Storico Pilot Project* provides the redevelopment and enhancement of the historic center of Palermo, through the activation of policies aimed at the regeneration of the ancient urban fabric and public spaces, not only from a physical point of view, but also from a socio-economic point of view, reintegrating the quality of the historic city into the general development vision by drafting the new Detailed Executive Plan.

As early as the nineteenth century, in fact, the historic center began to undergo a progressive phenomenon of degradation, with a dangerous overcrowding and the decline of the building heritage; but it is only after the Second World War, during which the Sicilian historic centers were deeply affected by the bombings, which began the exodus of the inhabitants, causing a progressive rarefaction of production activities and a depopulation of the ancient nucleus. If on the one hand the historic center of Palermo has therefore become a place of widespread crime, social exclusion and degradation, as evidenced by the high incidence of empty buildings (430 out of 4227, equal to 10.2%) and free of maintenance (51.5%), on the other the historical events have strongly marked the urban fabric, as evidenced by its very rich and varied artistic and architectural heritage (Punic walls, monumental presences of the Arab domination, baroque churches and villas) which represents almost a third of the cultural heritage of Sicily (26%), making fundamental the role that can be played by cultural heritage destined for the use of the community and for tourism.

Fig. 1: Palermo Street Art Map, Source: Street Art Factory.

With the new Detailed Executive Plan, the Municipal Administration therefore aims at the redevelopment and a renewed enhancement of the ancient urban center considered an essential strategic resource for the improvement of the quality of city life, for the promotion of culture and for the enjoyment of free time by citizens, tourists and city users. Among the actions that contribute to the implementation of this Pilot Project, there is the Cultural District Implementation Project which plans to relaunch cultural initiatives through new marketing strategies, trying to give strength to the virtuous mechanism that in recent decades has gradually been impoverishing due to the loss of stratified functions in the ancient urban fabric, the overall deterioration of the building heritage and collective spaces of the historic center, which have contributed to fueling the perception of the lack of an adequate level of security that hinders the development of private entrepreneurship. Starting from the idea of a widespread museum, and in consideration of the fact that the historical fabric of Palermo - so thickly intertwined and scattered with historical-identity buildings that constitute an exceptional and unique heritage - is a real open-air museum, a first model of a widespread museum system has been proposed within the Cultural District that facilitates cultural enjoyment through the implementation of actions aimed at promoting the existing cultural heritage, the structuring of historical-artistic itineraries, the implementation of services and cultural offerings with an innovative character. In this framework, the first experience of a widespread museum, capable of involving the entire local community, is represented by the MAUA - Museum of Augmented Urban Art, an open-air gallery and an unconventional route in the center of Palermo, which consists of over 30 animated street art works with virtual content accessible through augmented reality. Palermo, a city that has always witnessed a multitude of cultures, styles and traditions, of which today even street art represents a significant element, due to its medieval configuration it showed to be a perfect city for street artists. The works of the MAUA were selected by the inhabitants of the neighborhood, in an advanced experiment of widespread curatorship that provides for the collective and participatory identification of the works and a common discussion on their perceived meaning and their value for the city. In particular, the MAUA, created in collaboration with Street Art Factory (platform that allows to locate street art works and to obtain information on artists) and PUSH (Design Laboratory that operates between environmental sustainability, digital technologies and social innovation), in addition to the creation of paper and digital maps, it offers the first augmented reality tour dedicated to public art, created by 30 young Palermo creatives (artists, designers and architects) who have created, by adopting 20 street art works spread throughout the historic center, some unedited digital animations usable in augmented reality through a simple app. The MAUA represents an ever-evolving project which, emerging from an elitist conception, wants to open up to a wider and heterogeneous public aiming at the creation of an autonomous but integrated system with the aim of conservation, enhancement and use of historical-identity components and public spaces in the historic center of Palermo.

Fig. 2 *I mangiatori di patate* of Guido Palmadessa in the educational farm in the historic center of Palermo, Source: Mauro Filippi.

3. Mobility, art and metropolitan identity

As part of the regeneration strategies that address the metropolitan dimension, the mobility system represents a network of opportunities for widespread, democratic and coherent interventions of reinterpretation of public spaces related to mobility, both in a morphological and functional sense.

The integration in urban planning between the enhancement of the historical, artistic and architectural heritage and the strategies for sustainable mobility, appears today as an emerging axis for urban regeneration practices, in particular for the reconfiguration of public spaces, for the reconstruction of a common metropolitan identity and for the management of the tourism sector, which indissolubly combines these two aspects.

A metropolitan identity that is linked to the themes of the Right to the Mobility, which can be counted today as the right of citizenship for excellence, which implies on the one hand the possibility for every citizen to move freely on the territory, outlining a value extended to the totality of the subjects that make up the urban community (regardless of social background, class, cultural level, etc.), and on the other hand entails the faculty to exercise a responsible and conscious choice on the possible ways to move, according to availability and opportunities; that, taking into account the conditions of accessibility, quality and costs of collective transport systems, in relation to the particular disadvantaged social categories and geographic situations at risk of isolation [12].

In particular, today the speed of movement has become a basic factor, probably the main factor of social stratification and hierarchy of the domain [13], transversal [14] respect to any social practice in all marginal contexts of the territory.

So, the stations, the railway lines or the railway abandoned areas inserted within the consolidated urban fabric become one of the strategic components of the public city and an opportunity for the widespread regeneration of the existing city, as shown since the '80 by the experiences in Paris (Rive Gauche, Montparnasse, Vincenneuse), in Berlin (Anhalter Bahnhof Park, Hamburger Bahnhof, Gorlitzer Park), but also in Milan (Porta Nuova) or in Turin (Dora Park), and also underlined today in Italian planning in the cases of the railway areas of Turin, of the railway scales of Milan and of the stations of Naples.

The great opportunities generated by the interventions on these components are closely linked to their functional role, such as nodes of a network that structures the entire urban organism, crucial points generating flows and sustainable urban dynamics but also complex and layered places of the city, highly recognizable in their morphological characters and in the meanings assumed in relation to movement

and fruition, places of mending of the fracture generated by the presence of the railway, driving forces of a new widespread urban quality [15].

In this sense, some experimentations has accompanied the construction of the metro stations with the aim to build cities reference points for a recomposition of the public city and didactic tales for understanding the history of the city that is traversed underground; so examples are the SubBrixia project in Brescia, with site specific works created by five young artists in the stations represent their interpretation of the city, or the Stations of Archeology in Athens, that exposed the archeological finds found during their construction, and similarly, the Metro C stations in Rome of San Giovanni and of Amba Aradam, where we can see the finds exhibited in a unitary project of the underground route.

3.1 The case of the Art Stations of Naples

The Metropolitan City of Naples, in the southern part of Italy, with a population of over three million people, is the third largest metropolitan city in Italy by number of inhabitants, first in terms of population density (2.700 inhabitants for square kilometer); its territory occupies just 8.6% of the Campania region area but more than half of the entire regional population is concentrated in it. This overcrowding phenomenon has created a strong demographic and territorial imbalance in relation with the other areas of the region, more extensive and less populated, and a strong congestion and deterioration of the most populous part. The metropolitan area of Naples today appears as an extension of the chief town, an urbanized *continuum* whose frayed margins and urban fabric are composed by agricultural areas, rural areas, new spontaneous and abusive buildings, and industrial areas. In the context of the *genetic anomaly* [16] which sees Italian cities developed and expanded later than the other European cities - context at the same time of the explosion of individual mass motorization which today is reflected in a lack of public transport infrastructures (railways, subways, tramways) in the fabric of the consolidated city - on the contrary Naples has distinguished itself for a metropolitan structure driven by public mobility. Naples starts, in fact, from an important tradition in rail transport, with the Naples-Portici Line, the first railway in Italy, inaugurated in 1839, the Cumana Line in 1889, the second metropolitan line in the world after London, and the Direttissima Pozzuoli - Gianturco, in 1925, the first railway link in Europe. With the advent of automotive transport, this accumulation of 'railway capital' stopped, and mobility policies and funds have moved to the construction of an extensive road and highway network, subtracting these funds from the rail network that recorded maintenance problems, fragmentation of lines and reduction of service.

But today what Italy and Europe are experiencing is a new paradigm shift, following the awareness of the negative externalities produced by automotive transport - in terms of urban quality, quality of life, health, environment, ecology - promoting policies and funds for sustainable mobility. The debate on the future of cities is therefore aligning on an alternative model, and Naples is following a strategy that aims decisively at strengthening and upgrading its railway and underground network. The policies implemented in this sense by Campania region in the last 20 years have brought Naples today in second place among Italian cities by extension of the metropolitan network (48 km against 87 km in Milan).

In fact, since 1994, the Municipality of Naples has started an integrated planning process between transport and territory [17], starting from the town planning guidelines of the City Council, with the aim of "making the car an option and not a necessity", through the Variant to the PRG for the western area (1998), the Variant to the PRG for the historic center, the eastern area and the north-western area (2004), the Municipal Transport Plan (1997), the Plan of the primary road network (2000) and the Plan of 100 stations (2003), with interventions aimed at improving the accessibility to and from the 100 stations and the architectural and urban quality of the buildings of the stations, the squares and the surrounding public spaces.

This integration process is based on the idea that large construction sites opened - in the iconic areas of the city, as well as in the most marginal and degraded areas - for the construction of the underground, should leave something to the city in terms of urban regeneration and quality public spaces, particularly congested and chaotic in some areas and desolate and forgotten in others.

In line with this vision, the idea of the *Art Stations* was born. The project of the *Art Stations*, is configured as a real cultural and social project, which intends to contrast the destiny of "non-places", of anonymous space without historicity which characterizes the stations, and realizes in them a meeting between beauty and movement, in order to promote knowledge by bringing the museum under everyone's eyes. Through the involvement of famous regional and international architects and artists in the integration of the new stations with the works of art, for the creation of what has been defined by Achille Bonito Oliva, coordinator of the project, as a "compulsory museum, because people are forced to see the works, they pass there every day and familiarize with them", the project sought to combine the use of public transport with the exposure of users to contemporary art, with the aim to promote knowledge and dissemination.

Fig. 3: Salvator Rosa Station, Naples, Source: Dante Caporali.

The mayor of the city of that time, Bassolino, defined them as real contemporary art museums, with important works designed specifically for the individual stations, whose construction, together with the reconfiguration of the public spaces above the intervention, were entrusted to internationally renowned architects, who were confronted from time to time with extremely heterogeneous contexts and who represent different styles and approaches.

The project of the *Art Stations*, 15 stations distributed between lines 1 and 6, began in 2001 with the stations of *Quattro Giornate*, *Salvator Rosa*, *Museo*, entrusted to Domenico Orlacchio, Alessandro Mendini, Gae Aulenti, followed in the following years from stations designed by architects such as Uberto Siola (*Mostra*), Karim Rashid (*Università*), Dominique Perrault (*Garibaldi*), Alvaro Siza and Eduardo Souto de Moura (*Municipio*), Oscar Tusquets Blanca (*Toledo*, station elected in 2012 as "the most impressive underground railway station in Europe", Daily Telegraph, 23 November 2012).

The stations welcome over 180 works of art by exponents of poor art, of the *transavanguardia*, of photographers, made by Italian and International artists, who offered their interpretation of the history of ancient and modern Naples. Following the success of the initiative and the positive effects for the districts affected by the interventions, the Metropolitan City of Naples is pursuing an integrated approach between urban planning, transport and art, underlined in the *Strategic Plan for the Metropolitan City 2019-2021 ImmagiNA*, whose guidelines were approved with Resolution no. 281/2019, which aims to build a sense of "metropolitan citizenship", shared, real, fair, "without leaving anyone behind", starting from two principal lines (a. economic and social development of the territory; b. increasing the quality of life through environmental protection), which contain specific Axes and Actions. Among the Actions inherent the *Culture as development Axis*, in order to enhance the cultural heritage as a 'common good' and tourist attraction, is provided: the enhancement of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage, the maintenance of the existing road networks and the creation of new road networks, the building of sustainable mobility networks, the strengthening of the public transport system [18]. The intertwining of transport and cultural components and the use of art for the building of a quality public city and for the recomposition of a metropolitan identity, re-reading the historical and traditional characters of a territory so complex and rich in local identity, show how these elements can now be read as the pillars for the construction of a new metropolitan Naples.

Fig. 4: Toledo Station, Naples, Source: Photo of the author.

4.   Prospects

The reflections on the building of the public city in degraded areas, abandoned or devoid of recognizability and identity in the contexts of the historical and consolidated city, allow us to retrace some issues emerging from the ongoing debate on the relationships between urban-suburban, homologation-specificity, plan-project.

In particular, for the latter point it is evident that the two cases present different ways of defining the planning and project process: in Naples with a previous project compared to the adoption of the *Strategic Plan*, in Palermo with the approval of the Plan strategy and subsequent definition of *Pilot Projects*. In the first case, the definition of a new relationship between public space and mobility is expressed in the program of the Naples *Art Stations* with the reorganization of mobility and of public spaces, representing a virtuous model of intervention on public areas, without however being included in a unitary policy of goals for Naples; a question that they are trying to solve with the *Strategic Plan for the Metropolitan City 2019-2021*, channeling the success of the *Art Stations* program within the Plan's previsions and by manifestly linking sustainable mobility and cultural heritage. In the second case, the goals of competitiveness, innovation and cohesion of the Palermo *Metropolitan Strategic Plan* are pursued by defining an overall and interscaling strategy for the metropolitan area which responds to the four thematic axes of mobility, environment, infrastructure and culture, concrete, in order to ensure social

inclusion and the well-being of citizens, through specific strategic projects (*Pilot Projects*). These *Pilot Projects*, consistent with the general strategy and that starting from the specific features and values present in the areas identified, become the engine of a new and overall development, although it is still early to evaluate the results of these projects.

The innovative connotation of these two experiences substantiates the need to implement regeneration strategies that are operationally declined through the building of the public city, as a structural matrix for the activation of processes to rebalance the historic and consolidated city - at the urban scale and at the metropolitan scale - through artistic and creative ways of using public spaces.

The case of Naples, that relaunching railway systems as the main factor to affirm the sustainable mobility, through railway projects to redevelop entire parts of the urban fabric, offers a broader reflection on the accessibility and usability of the historical and artistic heritage, linked to the decongestion of large cities, the urban quality of public spaces, the pedestrianization and the structuring of a public mobility system that goes towards the construction of sustainable, safe and inclusive cities.

The *Art Stations* system, in particular, can be defined as a connection and regeneration network capable of triggering a deep relationship with the surrounding settlement environment; a system that has an important role in the organization of public space, today disputed and subtracted from pedestrians by congested and disordered vehicular traffic, through which architecture tries to solve the flow problem and in which the users can deal with different functions related to the transport activity. The overcoming of the vision of spaces dedicated to mobility in their only functional meaning must in this sense evolve towards the construction of multifunctional, complex and qualitatively attractive places, an integral part of urban identity and city transformations.

The case of Palermo, combining the enhancement of the components of the historic city with new management models, with innovative technological ways of using the spaces - creating a physical network of paths connected to a digital network to guarantee complete accessibility and use of the historic goods - and finally by activating new local economies and expanding potential users, demonstrates how public art can become the fulcrum of a new development model.

Within this context and starting from the MAUA project, it is evident how the identification of an integrated *Cultural district* defines a new system for the organization and development of historical-identity assets, in which art and culture become a driving force for the experimentation of innovative forms of dissemination of cultural activities in the city - using a renewed heritage of memories for the activation of economic mechanisms, bringing together public and private initiatives - thus strengthening the national and international role of the city of Palermo.

As can be seen from these experiences, therefore, the disciplinary innovations for the regeneration of the historic and consolidated city are not only the actions aimed at the conservation of the fabric, but also the policies to promote the ability to welcome and respond to the various social categories, the availability of spaces and public services, the possibility of enhancing tourism, the provision of services and economic, commercial, managerial and craft functions, all actions aimed at raising the quality of urban life.

This determines the experimentation of new planning methods and tools and of innovative financing policies aimed at: the redevelopment of public spaces, such as places of social and cultural innovation; the enhancement of accessibility, as a condition for the revitalization and modernization of these contexts; finally the re-signification of different and multiple historical-identity components with the aim of consolidating and promoting the role that they can assume as nodal poles in regeneration strategies, that on the one hand contrast the depopulation and marginality dynamics of the historic centers and on the other hand contrast the lack of recognition and quality of places of mobility.

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* Paragraphs 1 and 2 are attributable to G. Bevilacqua and paragraphs 3 and 4 to C. Amato.