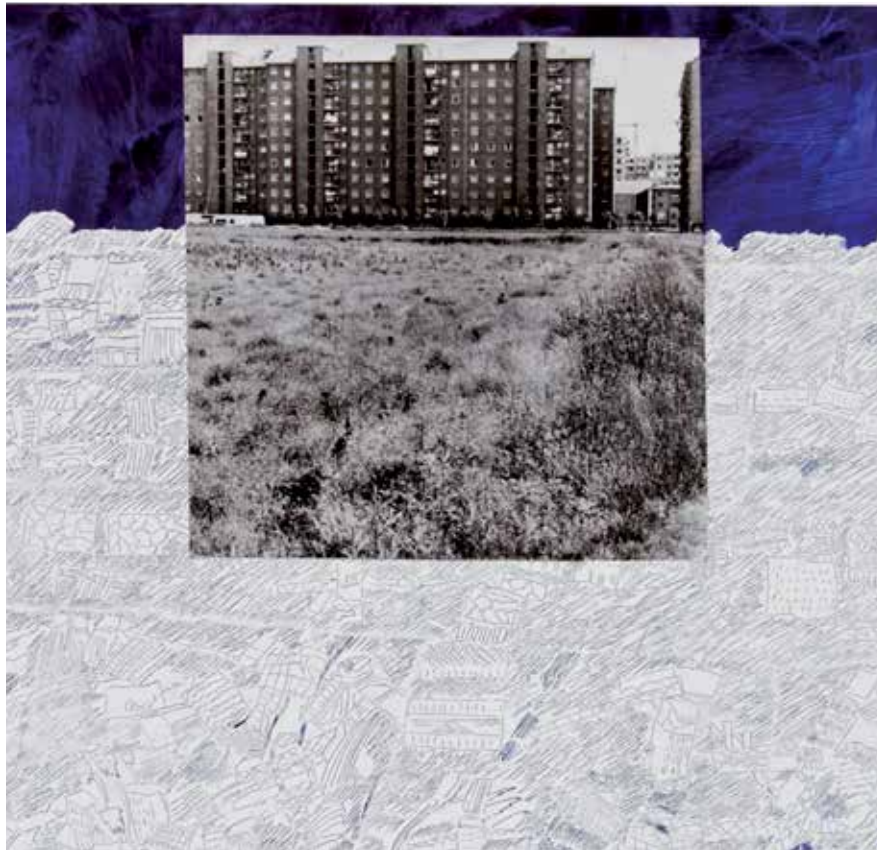


POLISCAPES



Ugo La Pietra, *La città senza morale* (particolare)

POLISCAPES - Polycultural Cities in the 21st century
University of Bergamo
9 December 2013, Aula 1 Salvecchio



Università
della
Svizzera
italiana

Facoltà
di scienze della
comunicazione

Laboratorio
studi
mediterranei
LSM



The Bartlett School of Planning



Docucity



University of Colorado
Boulder

POLISCAPES - Polycultural Cities in the 21st century

In Ersilia, to establish the relationships that sustain the city's life, the inhabitants stretch strings from the corners of the houses, white or black or grey or black-and-white according to whether they mark a relationship of blood, of trade, authority, agency. When the strings become so numerous that you can no longer pass among them, the inhabitants leave: the houses are dismantled; only the strings and their supports remain. From a mountainside, camping with their household goods, Ersilia's refugees look at the labyrinth of taut strings and poles that rise in the plain. That is the city of Ersilia still, and they are nothing. They rebuild Ersilia elsewhere. They weave a similar pattern of strings which they would like to be more complex and at the same time more regular than the other... spiderwebs of intricate relationships seeking a form. (Italo Calvino, The Invisible Cities)

PoliScapes is an on-going Seminar on the urban reality – organized at the University of Bergamo, Dept. of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Communication – whose aim is inviting to re-open the never-ending text that is the city. With the contribution of outstanding artists and scholars that have devoted their research to the City, we will re-read the topographies and the multifarious representations that are investing the city-scape, as they emerge in art, literature and the media, as well as in the global and digital dynamics and formations that mark the contemporary space. Faced with the spatial assets designed by institutions, and remodelled by the media in a non-stop process of virtualization, a growing concern is at the core of those city thinkers who focus on the life of the city, on those threads and strings that tell “of blood, of trade, authority, agency”.

Challenged by unprecedented migrations and cultural provocations, pulled by inside and outside forces, the 21st century city is a *PoliScope* that calls for a different combination of “competent gazes”, fit to investigate the situated cacophonies that result from the present ‘melting-pots’ invented by globalisation – but with a view to the past, and to the many urban experiments and dreams that have constructed the urban discourse.

The seminar will proceed on work sessions devoted to specific subjects inhering the on-going debate on the city, while revisiting concepts that are familiar to urban scholars and facing the new hot questions concerning spatiality and social justice, creativity and homologation, ‘endlessness’ and boundaries. A key note speaker, chosen among scholars who have provided a significant contribution to the contemporary Urban Studies debate, will be confronted with a multidisciplinary arena of academic and non-academic experts.

The seminar is organised and funded by the University of Bergamo, in collaboration with scholars from outstanding Institutions and Centres researching on “Cities”, such as the Bartlett School of Planning (UCL, London), the Laboratorio studi mediterranei (Università della Svizzera italiana), the University of Colorado-Boulder and Docucity (University of Milan)

Scientific Committee:

Gianluca Bocchi, Rossana Bonadei, Paola Briata, Sergio Cavalieri, Nabil Echchaibi, Francesca Forno, Federica Frediani, Flaminia Nicora, Ugo Persi, Nicoletta Vallorani, Ugo Volli.

Organizing Committee:

Davide Del Bello, Cristina Grasseni, Francesca Guidotti, Roberto Peretta, Valentina Pisanty, Fabio Scotto, Andrea Trovesi, Elena Viani.

University of Bergamo

Department of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Communication

FIRST VENUE

Cities and Ethics. Focus on Social Justice

[Città ed Eticità. Il punto sulla giustizia sociale]

University of Bergamo, 9 December 2013

Aula 1 Salvecchio

Programme

9.30 am

Welcome to the participants

Keynote Speaker – **Edward SOJA** – Urban Studies, UCLA University

Chair – **Rossana BONADEI** – English Studies, University of Bergamo

12.30

Lunch

2.30 pm

Debate

Paola BRIATA – Urban Studies, The Bartlett School of Planning

Laura Di MICHELE – Cultural Studies, University of L'Aquila

Nabil ECHCHAIBI – Media Studies, University of Colorado-Boulder

Francesca FORNO – Sociology, University of Bergamo

Ugo VOLLI – Semiotics, University of Turin

6 pm

Guest Artist

Ugo LA PIETRA Interviewed by

Marco MENEGUZZO – Art Curator, Brera Academy of Fine Arts

Contacts:

Rossana Bonadei

rossana.bonadei@unibg.it

Federica Frediani

federica.frediani@usi.ch

website

<http://dinamico1.unibg.it/turismo/scrittureurbane/poliscapes.asp>

Short Biographies



Edward Soja

Professor Emeritus of Urban Planning at the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs., Edward Soja has focused his research and writing on urban restructuring in Los Angeles and more broadly on the critical study of cities and regions. Of particular interest to him is the way issues of class, race, gender, and sexuality intersect with what he calls the spatiality of social life, and with the new cultural politics of difference and identity that this generates. Among his major publications: *ThirdSpace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (1996); *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions* (2000); "Writing the city spatially", *City*, 2003; "The city and spatial justice", *Justice spatiale | Spatial Justice*, n° 1 September 2009; *Seeking Spatial Justice* (2010).



Ugo La Pietra

Ugo La Pietra graduated at Politecnico di Milano in 1964. In the 1960s and 1970s, for him years of intense experimental activity, he made significant contributions to radical design. His work attempts to clarify the concept of "individual-environment" and to transform the traditional "work-viewer" relationship. In 1967, he began his research on the theory of the "Unbalancing System" (1967-1972), which involves an attempt to intervene on physical space and territory through symbolic actions. He has authored many articles, monographs and catalogues: among them, *Abitare la città* (1987); *Nodi Urbani*, (1966); *Il sistema disequilibrante*, (1967-75). He realized films and videos, such as "La Riappropriazione della città," (1976); "La grande occasione," (1972), displayed in an original scenography specially designed by Ugo La Pietra for the FRAC Centre. He took part to over 900 exhibitions and performances: at Biennale di Venezia in 1970, 1978, 1980, Triennale di Milano in 1968, 1972, 1979-80-81, 1993, 1996, 2007, Museum of Modern Art and Museum of Contemporary Craft of New York, Centre Pompidou, Graz Neue Galerie, London Royal College of Art, and the major Italian museums and galleries.