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SPATIAL PLANNING, LANDSCAPE AND QUALITY OF LIFE: AN EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

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Failures in spatial planning?

Two questions:

1. Has spatial planning failed?
2. How can spatial planning build new ways to imagine a high quality of life in the future?

Against urbanism?

Obsolete vision and loss of contact with reality > urbanism has never become a “human science”

Urban planning has become increasingly inadequate (formalistic approach and “far from what people want”)

Epistemologically, *urbanism* has lost the sense of reality. It conceals itself and tries to defend itself behind statistics, maps, trends and flows. It is unable to enter people’s physical lives instead of their physical places. This downfall of tools and intellectual poverty signs the end of a discipline, left behind a short-sighted technism and which has never wanted to become a human science.

L’urbanistica «ha perso «epistemologicamente» il senso della realtà. Si barrica e si difende dietro statistiche, mappe, trend e flussi ed è incapace invece di entrare nella vita fisica delle persone rispetto ai luoghi fisici ... C’è in questa caduta di strumenti, in questa povertà intellettuale, la fine di una disciplina che si è arroccata dietro a un tecnicismo miope e che non ha mai voluto diventare una scienza umana».



F. La Cecla, *Contro l'urbanistica*, Einaudi, Torino, 2014, pp. 12-13.

Crisis of culture and imagination

We are living a crisis of culture and imagination in the ways of thinking about the future.

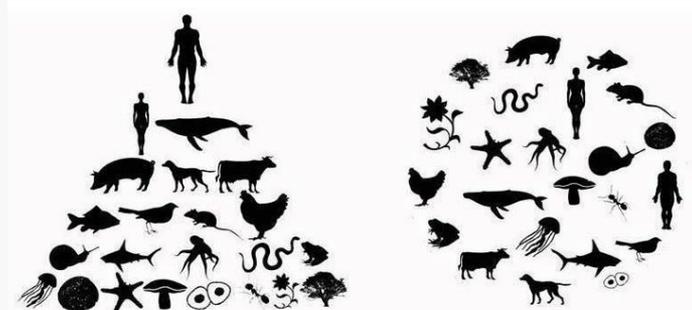
Four points:

1. The relationship between man and nature
2. Role of spatial planning
3. Spatial planning and landscape
4. The value of education

1) The relationship between man and nature

From to live “AGAINST” nature to live “WITH” nature

From to be “ABOVE THE PARTS” to be “PART OF ALL”



Re-thinking spatial planning>

from “OUTSIDE AND ABOVE” to “INSIDE AND WITH”



G. Clément, *L'alternativa ambiente* (2014), trad. it. Quodlibet, Macerata 2015.

1) The relationship between man and nature (2)

The idea of being “ABOVE THE PARTS” has been translated in the spatial planning in an approach:

inspired by a deterministic model (from A → B);

focused on prediction;

based on technicism (ideology of scientific rationality).

prediction > spatial planning > behaviours



U. Morelli, *Mente e paesaggio*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino, 2014.

2) The role of spatial planning: from forecast to foresight

1. growing complexity and uncertainty;
2. natural resources are limited.

from

FORECAST

(prediction, estimation of potential future based on the forward projection of past experiences)

to

FORESIGHT

(anticipation of possible futures based on weak signals, emerging trends and coexisting presents for exploring new paths for action).

2) The role of spatial planning (2)

FORESIGHT (anticipation logic) > to build probable scenarios based on quality of life through changing expectations and behaviours

Starting points are the “expectations and behaviours” and their changes

(“people first”)

behaviours > building a better quality of life

Breaking news: quality of life and landscape

Good news: there's a raising sensibility and raising awareness about themes (natural resources, environment, ...) concerning the future quality of life.

Landscape is a concept able to contain many themes and questions on natural resources, environment

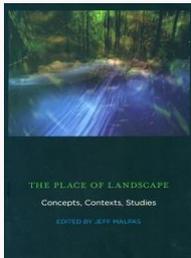
- > Landscape as a “**living space**” closely related to the future quality of life.

3) Why is “landscape” such an important concept for spatial planning?

Landscape is a political concept that can become a reference point in the processes of spatial planning.

Landscape is a “**suitcase concept**” (“sponge word”), an “**inclusive concept**” that contains a variety of different ideas which includes several meanings.

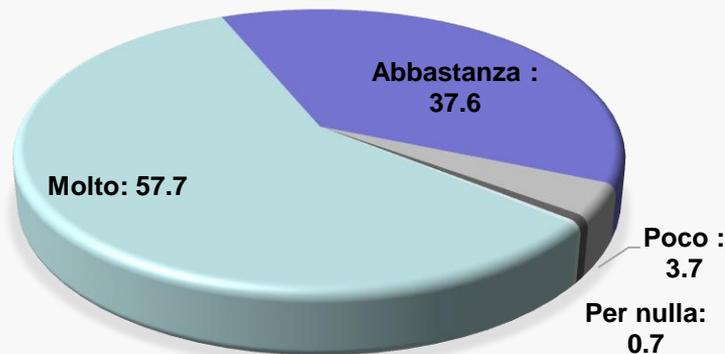
Landscape “**in between**” > nature and culture; past and future; subject and object; individuals and communities; inside and outside.



B. Debarbieux, The Political Meaning of Landscape, in J. Malpas, *The Place of Landscape*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 2010; 131-149.

What is landscape? (1)

Is Trentino a «land of landscapes»?

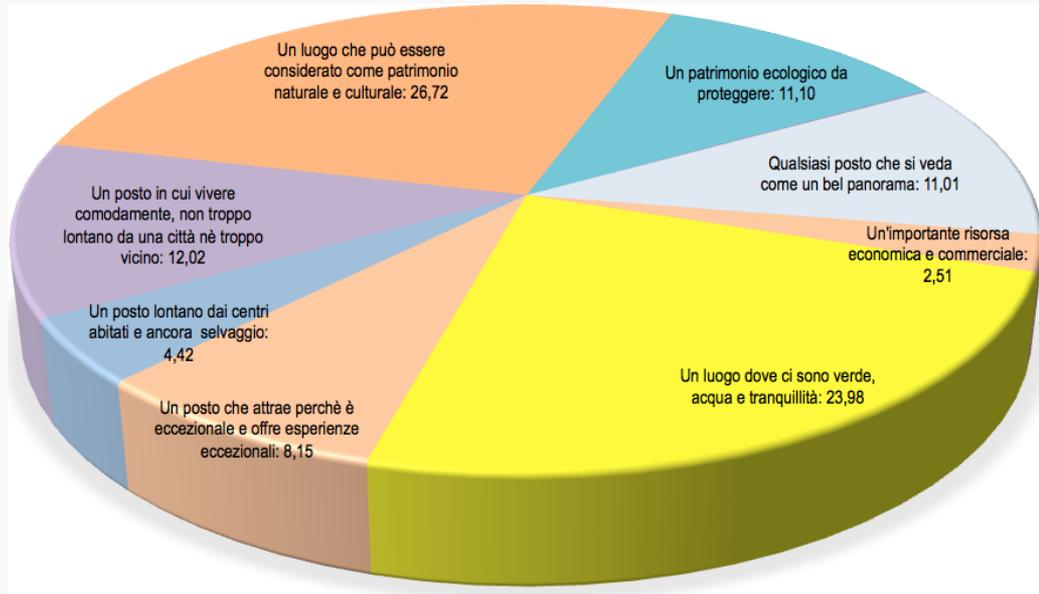


95,3% of respondents indicated Trentino as a «land of landscapes» the idea of 'mountain' as a means of self and collective identification



step-Trentino Landscape Observatory, Landscape Perception - State of the Landscape Report, 2016 (1,457 respondents).

What is landscape? (2)

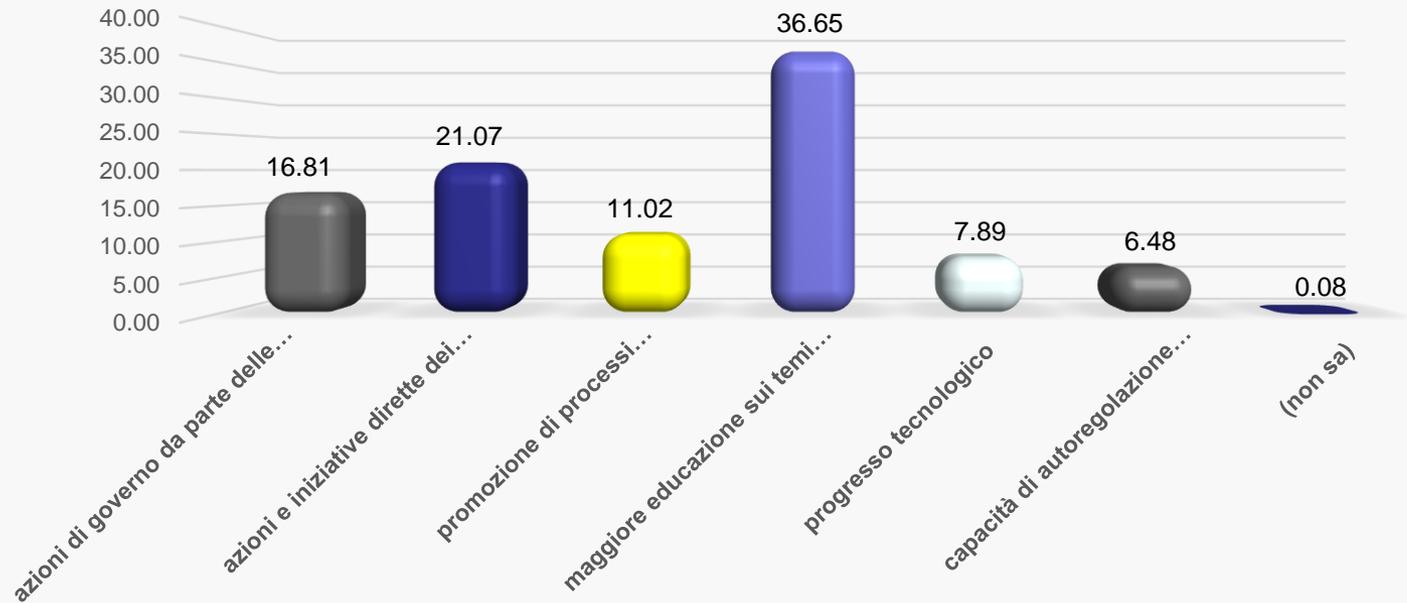


- The rise of the idea of landscape as naturalcultural heritage (a bridge between nature and culture)
- The decrease of the traditional view of landscape as «postcard», «beautiful place», «panorama», «view outside»
- The decrease of the romantic idea of landscape as «wilderness»



step-Trentino Landscape Observatory, Landscape Perception - State of the Landscape Report, 2016 (1,457 respondents).

Actions for improving landscape quality



Raising sensibility and raising awareness > request for education and participation in landscape transformation

The belief in nature's capacity of self-regulation (widespread in the past years) is decreasing (as public trust in technological innovation)



3) Landscape as “living space”

Shift from a traditional idea of landscape.

Landscape **is not** ... :

- ... a postcard or a scenario for our photos;
- ... only a matter for architects or other technicians;
- ... a «beautiful place»; something we must save before it's too late;
- ... something we can sell to tourists (or buy);
-

Landscape is our “**living space**”.

Nowadays landscape concept is evolving and becoming a political concept connected to the quality of life.

4) The value of education: awareness, sensibility and behavioural changes

Raising sensibility and raising awareness about landscape quality space don't mean correct and appropriate behaviours.

The recognition of a problem is often an important step for initiating and stimulating action, but it is not enough.

Resistance to change behaviours

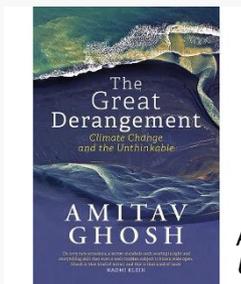
“We want a different world but we are not able to change behaviours” > our worldview is based on the assumption that things will remain normal.

role of habits and tendency to conformism;

Negation, denial and remotion;

send issues and problem to others (somebody will resolve ...);

individualism (privatism);



A. Ghosh, *The Great Derangement. Climate Change and the Unthinkable*, The University of Chicago Press, 2016.

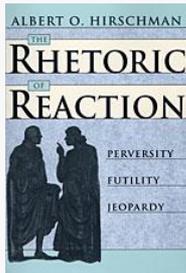
Resistance to change behaviours (2)

Rhetoric of reaction:

Futility: the change will achieve nothing (“After you” > I want to change but “after you”)

Perversity: no matter what you do, it’s going in the opposite direction (“The Titanic's orchestra syndrome”)

Jeopardy: you can try to change but the cost of such a change is so prohibitive that you will be in jeopardy



A. Hirschman, *The Rhetoric of Reaction*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1991.

Role of education: from awareness to action

bridging the gap

between

raising sensibility and raising awareness

and

behaviours, attitudes and practices

through

education

we must continue our efforts to increase the level of
knowledge, sensibility, awareness

we must change behaviours, attitudes and material
practices for building new possible futures

Role of education: from awareness to action (2)

Spatial planning as a learning process able to connect a normative dimension to an educational dimension:

- to anticipate and imagine better future scenarios characterized by a high quality of life;
- to change expectations and wrong/inappropriate behaviours (to improve knowledge and awareness but also to introduce discontinuity in practices).