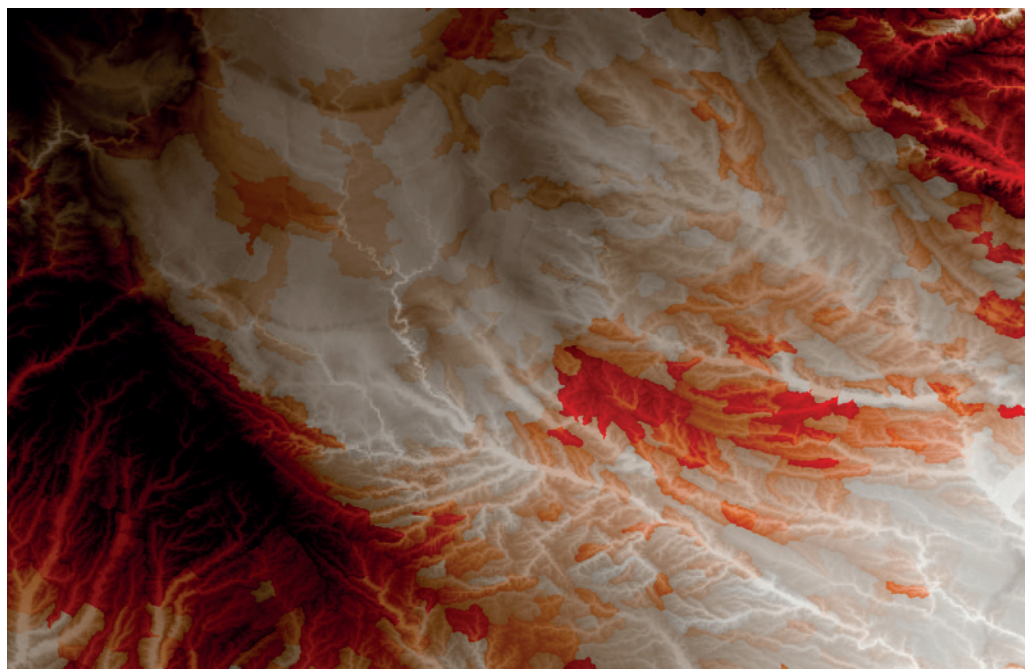# Marginal urbanities

The hidden face of planetary urbanisation

10–11 July 2023

Accademia di architettura

Mendrisio Palazzo Canavée Hall C 0.61

USI

Istituto di studi urbani e del paesaggio

Marginal urbanities
The hidden face
of planetary urbanisation

organised by
Mosè Cometta
Giulia Scotto

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There is no need to resort to old cartographic binomials to describe the contemporary territory. In particular, the "city-countryside" pair shows all its limitations in describing the production of today's space. Although intuitively comprehensible, these terms are in fact polysemous and inaccurate (Angelo, 2017). This cartographic crisis calls for a rethink based on new criteria and categories. The planetary urbanisation hypothesis (Brenner & Schmid, 2015; Schmid & Brenner, 2011) responds to this challenge by emphasising, in close proximity to the assessments of political ecology and urban political ecology, the way in which different territories contribute to the maintenance of the global urban structure. This perspective is part of a trend that attempts to overcome paternalist, normative and Eurocentric paradigms. Today it is possible to discover the urban by talking about territories, processes and phenomena that occur in what would once have been excluded from the study of cities (Brenner, 2018; Reddy, 2018). Thanks to the introduction of these externalities, contemporary urban analysis can develop creative tools and interdisciplinary hybridities.

This symposium is interested precisely in these non-centralities that today are becoming one of the main assets of urban analysis. The aim of the event is to propose a series of heterogeneous interventions that can enrich contemporary urban analysis from original and innovative perspectives. The focus will be on case studies of marginal places and groups, as well as on innovative and original perspectives and modes of analysis that are able to enrich urban studies by reintegrating the externalities of the urban system that have long been ignored.

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Soil erosion patterns
across the topography
of Iowa in 2018.
Author: Nikos Katsikis;
data source: USGS

Banning, USA
Google Earth View
©2023 County of San Bernardino,
Maxar Technologies,
U.S. Geological Survey,
USDA Farm Service Agency

La Paz, Bolivia
photo Alberto Canepa

10 July 2023	
10:00-10:05	Institutional welcome , J. Sergison
10:05-10:30	Opening speech, M. Cometta
10:30-12:30	**Session *Inhabiting the margins*** **moderated by G. Scotto** Eschatopolis. Migrant workers ghettos and the 'dark side' of rural accumulation T. Raeymaekers Endless City F. Kolsal Living on Unstable Ground: Marginality, Ruination, and Resilience in Datong's Sinking Mining Settlements J. Audin The incremental city. Embedded practices of incremental housing in Lima N. Nowara
12:30-14:00	Lunch at Vignetta
14:00-16:00	**Session *Metabolisms and operational landscapes*** **moderated by S. Balzan** The daily building of a capital city from its margins: the red brick supply chain and the urbanization processes in Cairo C. Pérez-Houis The urbanisation of the Adriatic Sea: Emerging nfrastructural systems, logistics platforms and productive sites in a maritime region L. Ramondetti Appennino natura urbana R. Ruggeri
16:00-16:30	Coffee break
16:30-17:30	**Keynote: Mega-events and marginality: Investigating the substance behind the spectacle** *S.D. Wolfe*
17:30-18:30	Aperitif
19:00	Dinner at Cantine di Mendrisio

11 July 2023	
09:30-10:00	Opening speech, G. Scotto
10:00-12:00	**Session *Alternative geographies*** **moderated by M. Cometta** Marginal communities and the right to the city. Which Right to the City for Youth in Urban spaces? A. Colombo, M. Colella Time, movement, urban space. The example of transit places: an urban asynchrony? G. Buffoli Recycling Regimes, Scrapwork and Domination in Delhi's E-Waste Sector G. Rathore The foundations of prosperity J. Herburger
12:00-13:00	Lunch at Vignetta
13:00-14:00	**Keynote lecture: *Soils, genes & nitrates. Construction and Appropriation of Ecological Surplus across the US Cornbelt*** **N. Katsikis**
14:00-14:15	Coffee break
14:15-16:15	**Session *Alternative practices*** **moderated by C. Sinatra** Bottom-up urbanity in Rome, or how to make the city livable through self-management S. Ranocchiari Tracking the spatiality of ordinary phenomena, discovering *terrae icognitae*, mapping "urban infrageopolitics" and bringing to light unsuspected forms of inhabiting the contemporary world: what a critical geosophy approach of graffiti-trainwriting reveals M. Tadorian Outdoor activities and the hypothesis of extra-urban centralities V. Geffroy
16:15-16:20	Closing speech M. Cometta and G. Scotto

Topics & Speakers

Eschatopolis. Migrant workers ghettos and the 'dark side' of rural accumulation
Timothy Raeymaekers

This paper discusses the place of the migrant labour camp – or ghetto – in the relational geography of Mediterranean rural capitalism, which, over the past three decades, has been characterized by systematic forced displacements of, and racial cruelty against, precarious migrant workers. Eschatopolis – from polis (city, state, city-state) and eschatia (confines, border, edge) – hosts a form of life that is deliberately located in the margins of nation-state territoriality, but at the same time contributes structurally to rural capital accumulation. Based on five years of ethographic research in Southern Italy, the paper discusses the emergence of this liminal urban form from an innovative theoretical and methodological perspective. Using planterary urbanization as a conceptual lens, it explains contemporary rural urbanity not so much as the redrawing of urban-rural boundaries, but rather as a stratified compartmentalization of space, which lodges relations of (re-)production into a vast geographic network across Mediterranean waters. Building on contemporary archaeology, it traces the reproduction of rural marginality as a conduit of extractive capitalist operations that actively transform the earth and human bodies into productive commodities, but simultaneously destroy the very foundations of the life that sustains them.

Endless City
Fatma Kolsal

Each city has its own development dynamics and processes. It can also be claimed that many cities had once defined centers and borders. However, there are decentralized polycentricities for a great deal of the cities today and it has become difficult to reposition and recenter ourselves in this polycentricity contemporaneously. In this study, the urban development processes of Eskişehir, a city in the Central Anatolian Region of Turkey, are discussed through Henry Lefebvre's planetary urbanization (planétarization de l'urbain) concepts. Eskişehir is a city that had undergone a rapid industrialization process in the Republic of Turkey after 1923. The main factors that determine the morphology of the city are the railway (Networks), the Porsuk river passing through the city, the natural borders determined by the geography (Borders) and the population increase due to the industrialization and migrations (Differences). When this process is cartographically followed, a defined center of the city can be read, but over time, the city began to expand from its periphery. Due to this expansion, deviations occurred in the center, and even new centers began to appear. While shifting our analyses from the cities to the urban societies, it is important to learn from this expansion, especially after the urban age in 2007. It is necessary to reconsider which "city" and what kind of "right" for the Right To The City (RTTC) or Here Comes Everyone (HCE) movements define. Frederic Jameson's cognitive maps can be thought of as a new tool for expressing abstract situations about how we perceive our world and how we live in the cityscape. How to give form to reality that is very formless today may need new tools for representation. Cognitive mapping can be utilized for the invisible political realities of the cities. Lefebvre's space is global, fragmented and hierarchical. According to him, cities are concrete forms, but urban societies are formless abstract realities. By this definition, form of the city, that is to say physical elements of the city are insufficient to analyze urban happenings. So, we have to look at to the city from the qualitative lens of observation as well as the quantitative one. Naturally, this requires a description of what is qualitative and what is quantitative. After setting clear those definitions, the endless expansion of the city of Eskişehir is interrogated through both

Living on Unstable Ground: Marginality, Ruination, and Resilience in Datong's Sinking Mining Settlements (Shanxi, China)
Judith Audin

Based on ethnographic research in Datong (Shanxi), this article analyses living conditions in depopulated coal mining villages in the era of China's resource transition. Coal miners and their families used to live directly on the site of each mine in small self-built houses. Most houses were made out of stones; there was no direct access to water. Not only did the families breathe an air polluted by coal, they also burnt coal as a heating and cooking practice. The issue of "sinking mining villages" (caimei chenxian cun) and dilapidated housing (penghuqu) in mining sites lasted for decades, but did not constitute a priority issue in the context of the fast developing, low-regulated coal industry.
The nationalisation of the industry and the rise of state-owned enterprises as central actors during the coal boom in Datong finally led to a massive operation of urban renewal by Tongmei Group (Datong Coal Mine Group), the state-owned company in charge of most of Datong's mines. In 2006, Tongmei initiated the construction of a new urban residential compound, which now hosts a population of 300,000 residents. However the 2013 coal crisis left the project incomplete.
The unfinished "great coal migration" and the issue of the right to the city of the left behind residents in sinking coal mining territories allows us to reflect on resilient lifestyles in a dilapidated, depopulated, urbanized yet ruralizing, environment and on their uncertain prospects as a once solid local economy entered an era of restructuring. Based on fieldwork in the mining settlements between February 2016 and June 2019, this proposal analyses how the last residents of coal mining villages experience social and spatial ruination after most of the population left. It focuses on the overlooked urbanity and everyday living conditions of marginalized coal miners' collectives from a micro-social angle.

The incremental city. Embedded practices of incremental housing in Lima
Nick Nowara

Barriadas, pueblos jóvenes and asentamientos humanos - that is what marginalised neighbourhoods are called in Peru. In a country where two out of three new homes built are constructed through incremental housing schemes.
Barriadas make up a large part of the capital Lima, a global megacity struggling with the consequences of decades of rural-urban migration. Despite numerous policy reforms, the state has never been able or willing to provide sufficient affordable housing. One of these changes was initiated by John Turner's book "Freedom to build" and its immense impact on the international housing debate. The British architect, questioned "[…] whether the government should, or even can, supply a basic necessity like housing through centrally administered systems; or whether it should support locally self-governing production and use by guaranteeing equitable access to basic resources and supra-local infrastructures." (Turner 1978: 1135).
Turner's ideas were widely adopted and had a lasting impact on Peruvian housing policy in the 1970s and 1980s. The following decade was then to be marked by Hernando de Soto, a Peruvian economist and politician. He promoted the free market and "was mainly responsible for some four hundred initiatives, laws, and regulations that led to significant changes in Peru's economic system" (Brooke 1990). According to him, granting land titles would enable informal residents to participate in the formal property market and motivate them to improve their property. This theory is widely known and today largely disputed. In the case of Lima, it led to a rapid increase in barriada residents to as much as 64% of the city's population in 1998.
Since then, Peru has relied on a mix of housing programmes. However, there is little empirical research on the everyday practice of incremental housing. This contribution will shed some light on this phenomenon.

The daily building of a capital city from its margins: the red brick supply chain and the urbanization processes in Cairo (Egypt)
Corten Pérez-Houis

This proposal relies on the idea that the building materials' production peripheral areas are a relevant place from which to observe the contemporary urban transformations of a city. On the basis of a case study on Cairo's red brick supply chain, I will argue that the processes linked to the fast urbanisation of the Egyptian capital city are deeply entangled with the economic, technical and social evolutions of the red brick production.
The red brick, made of shale clay extracted from quarries, is one of the most

commonly used in the country, especially in the urban areas. It is produced in factories, owned by small to medium companies, and mainly concentrated in industrial areas at 35-50 km to the south of Cairo.

Following on from the urban political ecology works (Swyngedouw 1996), from the Science and technology studies (Farias and Blok 2017), as well as from the follow-the-thing approach (Cook 2004, Tsing 2017), this contribution will try to show the interest of linking the already well-studied construction areas in Cairo (Sims 2010, Shawkat 2020) and the industrial peripheries of the capital city. It argues that the current urban transformations are to be understood from these hybrid margins, between urban and rural areas, and often unknown or neglected in urban studies.

The urbanisation of the Adriatic Sea: Emerging infrastructural systems, logistics platforms and productive sites in a maritime region
Leonardo Ramondetti

The combination of global pandemic, war, supply chain issues, and energy speculation has redrawn well-established trade flows in the Mediterranean. Once on the margins, the Adriatic Sea has now become an area of strategic importance: it is one of the main branches of the Belt and Road Initiative, and the beneficiary of major investment by the European Union. As a result, a plethora of international and local projects are currently underway in this region. Not only have these initiatives strong geoeconomic and geopolitical implications, but they are also transforming the Adriatic into a sea-land continuum made up of trade routes, logistic platforms, pipelines, and cables which is sparking new urbanisation processes. Drawing on research such as Brenner and Katsikis (2014) and Couling and Hein (2020), this study adopts a perspective 'from the sea' to explore the emerging form of extended urbanisation in the Adriatic region, and its impact on the port-cities of Trieste, Piraeus, Rijeka, and Ravenna. Through original visual materials and critical cartographies, this contribution makes the structure of this space visible, and problematises how these new networks are constructing urbanities and ecologies, which transcend political boundaries (see Glass, Addie, and Nelles 2019). These conditions call for new systems of governance and planning tools, as well as an engagement with such forms of extended urbanisation through pertinent design activities.

Appennino natura urbana
Riccardo Ruggeri

This contribution aims to offer a perspective on the Apennines as part of the urban environment.

Far from being a physical boundary of separation and division, the Apennines have for centuries been a place of exchange and relations of human cultures and non-humans. Conversely, within the current national socio-economic geography, the narrative on this territory is contradictory: on the one hand they are objectified as margins, underdeveloped remnants, on the other as an idealized nature's sanctuary. Anything but urban.

Nowadays, also as a response to recent crises, inland areas such as the Apennines are enjoying renewed attention. Thanks to their variety of natural, food and heritage resources, it is now emerging a need for this territory to become an extended collective space: a true common good from which new projects and unprecedented territorial alliances can develop, going beyond old- fashioned dualism.

However, claiming the centrality of the Apennine backbone over the current urban structure means abandoning a habit of vision encrusted with contradictions. With this contribution, I will propose one of the possible ways to subvert these perspectives. Here, the appropriation of the concept of 'Metropolitan Nature' by Matthew Gandy allows me to read this mountain chain and its surrounding geographies from a unitary perspective. By narrowing the glaze on provisioning infrastructures for drinkable water in Italy and particularly on the pharaonic construction of the Peschiera-Capore aqueduct, which each hour derives tons of pure drinkable water from the Apennines to Rome, it will be possible to highlight the entanglement among distant points in space. The insertion of certain heuristic devices into the territory reveals reciprocities: 'Nature', that is the water of the Apennines, appears in the city of Rome as the outcome of a process and the response to a need; similarly, the distant 'city' appears in 'nature' as a vector of transformation and producer of conflict.

Construction of a new swimming pool in Aubervilliers for the Paris 2024 Olympics. Parts of community allotment gardens were destroyed to make room for this construction."
Photo Sven Daniel Wolfe, 2022

- **Mega-events and marginality: Investigating the substance behind the spectacle**
  Sven Daniel Wolfe

Keynote speech

Mega-events – global, mobile celebrations like the Olympics and the Football World Cup – are more than sport: they are billion-dollar businesses, coupling massive urban development projects with political aspirations on the world stage. Typically, organizers and policymakers promise that mega-events herald a wealth of financial, infrastructural, political, and social benefits, ultimately furthering a host's goals towards sustainable cities and societies. In contrast, critics warn that mega-events foretell a litany of social, spatial, economic, and environmental disasters for the cities that host them. Organizers, politicians, commentators, and scholars commonly use the term "legacy" when discussing – and justifying – mega-events but, with a few notable exceptions, crucial post-event questions remain under-researched and incompletely theorized. In most cases, host cities disappear from global attention after the spotlight. Given the dramatic costs and impacts of hosting, it is remarkable that these cities so often disappear from view. Globally, there is a need to investigate the tangible and less tangible effects on cities and societies after the spotlight moves on. To address this gap, my new project aims to explore the aftereffects on cities and societies of hosting the Olympics, the men's Football World Cup, the Euro, and the Commonwealth Games. It establishes a comparative investigation of underexplored former host cities, societies, and events from around the globe, working through a theoretical framework that considers mega-event urban infrastructures and interventions, governance paradigms, dominant narratives, and the conduct of everyday life.
In light of the remit of this symposium, this talk reflects on the potentially productive overlaps of focusing on the margins when exploring the aftereffects of mega-event hosting.

Session: Alternative geographies
Moderator: Mosè Cometta, USI

Which Right to the City for Youth in Urban spaces?
Annamaria Colombo
Marianna Colella

Urban space is primarily seen as a place of passage designed by and for active adults (Tonucci, 2019). Urban planning is not always adapted to the reality of young people seeking to spend time with peers outside of family and school (Legendre, 2010; Poretti, 2016). Youth groups meet outside to practice various activities such as skateboarding, chilling, listening to music, sometimes even watching series on the phone. In other word, it is primarily about having fun and spending time with friends and empowering themselves from adults (Amsellem-Mainguy & Vuattoux, 2018).
Nevertheless, their presence in public spaces disturbs (too much noise, too visible, wandering) and they are regularly the target of numerous denuncia-tions to the police, notably from nearby residents.
Preliminary results of a research on the appropriation of urban, but also digital spaces by young people in the Swiss context show that young people use conscious or unconscious strategies to find a balance between their need to be together outside and the complaints or annoyance (sometimes fear) of other occupants of the spaces who are often unhappy with their presence. These strategies can be understood an effort to participate in urban life and claim to their right to the city.
The multisite methodology mobilized for this study allows for varying levels of observation, ranging from very close with the youth, during participant observation in urban spaces, to more distant, when conducting an online ethnography on the social networks held by the youth we met. This paper focuses more specifically on the stage of the Urban walking interviews where young people from Geneva, Fribourg, Zurich and Mendrisio present and tell us their stories and ways of occupying (their) urban spaces.

Time, movement, urban space. The example of transit places: an urban asynchrony?
Giulia Buffoli

The presentation aims to question the spatial transformations of places of "asylum" in Europe in the 21st century: camps, settlements and other "hors-lieux" used as "refuges" (hotspots, reception centres, detention centres…). The aim is to analyse the relationship between these places and the contemporary city, and how the city is being transformed, or should be transformed, taking into account – or not – their existence. These urban phenomena are inscribed in a short time, with a "normatively" limited duration; however, their existence has an impact on the morphology of the city over a (more or less) long period. Rather than considering them either as "hors-lieux" or as "hauts-lieux" (newsworthy and, therefore, ephemeral because they are "in the spotlight"), why don't we "cool down" the object? We could thus consider them as places that, like the other elements of the urban puzzle, (de) structure, organise and shape the city and the lives of those who live there. These questions seem to me to be all the more appropriate that migratory phenomena in Europe are most often managed as "crisis" or "emergency" phenomena to which are commonly attached the themes of "impossible management", "overflow" or "non-absorption". The multiplication of camps and places of refuge in Europe is therefore the most obvious sign of this "crisis". Kamel Dorai and Nicolas Puig, in their introduction to L'urbanité des marges, defines them as "interval places" that serve as breaks in the continuity of the city. Characterised by a specific temporality, one in which exile becomes waiting, these places are "intervals" because they are as much perimeters obeying particular social and spatial dynamics as they are "perimeters of time" that cover ways of living in this territory that are desynchronised or poorly synchronised in relation to the "urban pulsation".
The question of time seems to me to be a decisive entry point for reading the relationship between these places, whose nomenclature should first be explored in order to qualify them and the territories in which they are located. To write that these camps are perimeters of time is: 1) to state a reality since all micro-society obey temporal logics; 2) it is also, from my modest point of view, to try to go against this common sense by understanding this perimeters of time as a prism that allows us to "reveal" in counterpoint an "urban pulsation" that is so homogeneous that it condemns these "hors-lieux" to being perimeters of "hors-temps" urban. There are, however, contacts between these perimeters and their environment that go beyond the sole interface constituted by the camp's boundaries (the transport network, the local press in its dimension of constructing an urban identity, the names of the streets, contacts with actors from outside the camps, first and foremost the NGOs…). The time of the place of transit is an interweaving of individual temporalities according to the different personal trajectories; it also relies on their temporary homogenisation (food distributions, showers, school at fixed hours…). This presentation questions the interactions between these temporalities and the urban fabric in its granular dimension.

Recycling Regimes, Scrapwork and Domination in Delhi's E-Waste Sector
Gayatri Jai Singh Rathore

The formalisation of the e-waste sector in India (Laser 2017) through the creation of E-waste Management Rules (2016) has created what I call recycling regimes (e-waste license, technology-driven facilities). Set in the upper and middle class desires of a world-class, clean and pollution free Delhi, recycling regimes unfold technologies of domination as well as technologies of "face work". Recycling regimes in conjunction with riot violence (Delhi riots 2020) perpetuated in the name of a Hindu nation, attempt to undermine the value produced by the labour of the Muslim e-scrap dealers, who are commonly known under the broader term of kabadi, working in the informal sector. While technologies of domination introduce new intermediaries in the recycling value chain in the name of incorporating responsibility, they not only redirect waste flows, set price wars between the authorised recyclers and unauthorised e-scrap workers involved, but also deceive and exploit the latter. Technologies of "face work" on the other hand cover the failings of the authorised recycling units, when flouting rules hauls of electronic discards are redirected back into the informal sector. However, there is a debatable moral edification vis-à-vis the e-scrap dealers. Their processes are labelled as toxic, neighbourhoods as pollution havens, and

lives as expendable. Despite the pressure from the government and the deepening competition from authorised recyclers, kabadis are able to weather the difficulties and changes in the regulatory climate and enforcement. Shunning the tag of recycling, they anchor themselves as petty entrepreneur, trader and dealer, where waste "work" becomes a tool to counter recycling companies with heavy machinery and large capital requirements. Their modest capital requirements permit local participation, are associated with multiple and smaller leakages, leave control in local hands, and are more likely to fit in with local activities and land uses, while linked to the rest of the capitalist economy.

| **The foundations of prosperity**
Johannes Herburger | The province of Vorarlberg in western Austria can look back at a comparatively short, but eventful history of industrialization. Larger scale industrial complexes started to emerge only at around the 1850s, but until the advent of world war I industrialization reconfigured the socio-economic structure of the region in plentiful ways. However, as in most other countries of the western hemisphere, it took until the 1960s to bring socio-economic prosperity to many. By leaving the long dominant textile industry behind in the 1970s and transforming into highly specialized industrial sectors such as electronics, metal processing and food and beverage, Vorarlberg is now one of the most highly industrialized and wealthiest regions in Europe.
While powerful actors such as the association of industrialists (Industriellenvereini-gung Vorarlberg) promote Vorarlbergs urbaner Weg (Vorarlbergs urban future) and many municipalities and towns in the province seek inspiration for their development in the gentrified inner-city neighborhoods of global metropolises, the many spatiotemporal concurrencies of agrarian, industrial and financialized modes of (re-)production seem to fade out of collective memory. Going hand in hand with the current anti-migrant sociopolitical sentiments, the essential role of stigmatized and marginalized social groups in the economic success of the region is largely put aside. Through the presentation of three stories of working-class neighborhoods, this contribution aims to illuminate and set into context the multi-scalar and uneven spatiotemporal configurations that are the foundation for the province's economic success. |

● **Soils, genes & nitrates. Construction and Appropriation of Ecological Surplus across the US Cornbelt**
Nikos Katsikis

| **Keynote speech** | This contribution discusses the historical process of operationalization of the US Cornbelt within the context of the construction of a globalized, capitalist hinterland, part of the metabolic geographies of Planetary Urbanization. The paper examines the social, natural and ecological processes that supported multiple phases of articulation and eventual appropriation of what Jason Moore conceptualizes as ecological surplus: bundles of unpaid work contributed by human and more-than-human actors to the value nexus of the capitalist search for profit. The question of the construction of the Cornbelt can thus be framed in a way that connects it to shifts in the composition of ecological surplus: Initial phases took advantage of the socionatural construction of soil fertility, from the effects of glacial retreats, to the land clearings of indigenous tribes; later phases required the expansion of capitalist appropriation over nitrogen cycles through capital intensive energy and nutrient inputs and the eventual genetic manipulation of biological frontiers. Finally, the exhaustion of several different bundles of ecological surplus across has left one last frontier able to still contribute unpaid work into the system: the social structure of and around the family farm. The contribution examines the historical geographies of key phases of appropriation and exhaustion, from the perspective of more than city environments and more than human agents, combining theoretical insights from Planetary urbanization and World Systems Ecology with a robust geospatial apparatus. |

| **Bottom-up urbanity in Rome, or how to make the city livable through self-management.**
Simone Ranocchiari | Despite being one of the most ancient metropolises on the planet, Rome often lacks of urbanity, intended as that "social quality" (Knoop 2020) that makes an inhabited space a (urban) place, a city. If this last term – as the one of urban itself – is more and more contested in our era of "planetary urbanization" (Knoop 2020; Brenner et Schmid 2011) it still can be useful to describe the main cultural, economic and sociological features of a city, that is density of people, ideas, exchanges, services, powers, and so on. Outside its millenary city center, Rome is mostly made of muddled neighborhoods, deficient of public services, cultural venues or sites of encounter, being almost abandoned by local authorities. As the New York Times reports in fact, Romans are experiencing an important "degradation of services, buildings and their standard of living — and the general sense that their ancient city, even more than usual, is falling apart" (Pianigiani 2015, para. 2). Self-organization appears thus as the only ways to face this situation. Whether it is about parks cleaned by groups of elderly people, playgrounds maintained by parents or socio-cultural centers run by activists, what makes Rome livable is often bottom-up action, at the point that some scholars see it as a "città autoprodotta (self-made city)" (Cellamare 2014). By presenting my case study of self-managed socio-cultural centers, I will explain how urbanity (i.e. urban livability) can be produced by the margins. By restoring abandoned urban spaces or by putting in place accessible-to-all classes of sports, music or dance, facilities such as meeting rooms, workshops or social services as social aids demands support, tutoring for students, or simply by offering a place to gather outside of shopping malls, these self-managed places ensure what authorities do not, contributing to make this urban space again not only a urbs, but also a civitas and a polis (B. Prato 2015). |

| **Tracking the spatiality of ordinary phenomena, discovering terrae icognitae, mapping "urban infrageopoli-tics" and bringing to light unsuspected forms of inhabiting the contemporary world: what a critical geosophy approach of graffiti-trainwriting reveals**
Marc Tadorian | Nowadays, "wild graffiti" constitutes a so important part of city life all over the world that some consider it one of the most visible contemporary expressions of global urban culture (Bofkin, 2014, cité dans Ferrell, 2016, p. xxx). Paradoxically, in some places, such as the static and mobile surfaces of the urban infrastructure along the lines of the railway network, their presence goes largely unnoticed just as the cigarette butts colonising the railway tracks along the platforms of some stations. In this sense and from an ethnogeographic point of view (Claval et Singaravelou, 1995), the transgressive railway graffiti at the core of this paper are not so [extra-]ordinary. In other words, they look like "des petits riens urbains" (Paquot, 2010). If we closely track the ephemeral inscriptions left by their authors, while endeavouring to connect one place to another, end to end, as in a game of dots, the ghost trail of their off-route trajectories, we can see the rhythmic moves of a curious 'heretical dance' shaped in underground arenas of public urban life. Based on data from a multisited ethnographic fieldwork (Marcus 1995) in its itinerancy carried out as part of a research on the spatiality of a group of graffiti trainwriters based in Switzerland, but active and networked in several regions of Europe, this contribution aims to describe the choreography of this dance with trains and to map the "infrageopolitics" (Tadorian, 2022) that underpin it. In doing so, and with theoretical and conceptual tools derived from a critical geosophy approach (Wright, 1947; Cresswell 1996, 2006) combining a translocal/transnational ("translocational" [Tadorian, 2022]) perspective and a pragmatic spatial perspective of the use of space (Lussault and Stock, 2010), this paper provides a more fundamental account of ongoing socio-spatial dynamics specific to the context of contemporary urbanisation, namely the production of social spaces under circulatory conditions. |

| **Outdoor activities and the hypothesis of extra-urban centralities**
Valérian Geffroy | This contribution is an attempt to make sense, within urban theory, of those small-scale centralities, away and apart from all major forms of urban space, that owe at least part of their centrality to their interpretation as places of 'nature'.
It is based on qualitative and field research on outdoor sport tourism practices and communities of practices conducted in some of the most globally attractive places for 3 different sport practices (paragliding, whitewater kayaking, and rock climbing). Those are global centralities, but for niche leisure practices that take place in 'natural' environments. |

Thus, they often materialize in small, remote settlements, in comparison with urban centralities and 'generalist' tourist centralities. I propose to describe them as extra-urban centralities: defined in relation with urbanity, but away and apart from urban space.

Indeed, I acknowledge outdoor activities as integrated to urban practices and urban modes of inhabiting, in that the aesthetization and ludification of 'nature' or 'the outdoor' originates in the urban gaze on little anthropized environments; and in that they are mostly places of temporary inhabiting, nodes in a system of mobilities that links urban centralities to leisure centralities.

But I also underline the 'flight from the urban', and quest for 'nature', as an important driving force of such activities; and the absence, or sparse presence, of urban materialities as the central feature of the interpretation of some environments as 'nature'.

Thus, the concept of extra-urban that I propose here draws on the theory of planetary urbanisation; but it rejects the hypothesis of ubiquitous urban space. The extra-urban, indeed, is characterized by its functional integration to urbanity (as a dominant mode of spatial organization and dominant mode of inhabiting), but material and symbolic exclusion from the characteristics of urban space.

Campus Map

1 Villa Argentina
2 Palazzo Turconi, Library
3 Palazzo Canavée
4 Teatro dell'architettura
5 ISUP
6 Research Institutes
7 Osteria "Vignetta"

Albergo Milano

**How to reach
Academy Campus?**

The Academy of Architecture is located in Mendrisio, Largo Bernasconi 2, close to the OBV Hospital.

● By Bus from Mendrisio Train Station:
Bus nr. 523 (Gaggiolo direction) or Bus nr. 2 (Chiasso direction); stop at "Ospedale OBV, Mendrisio"
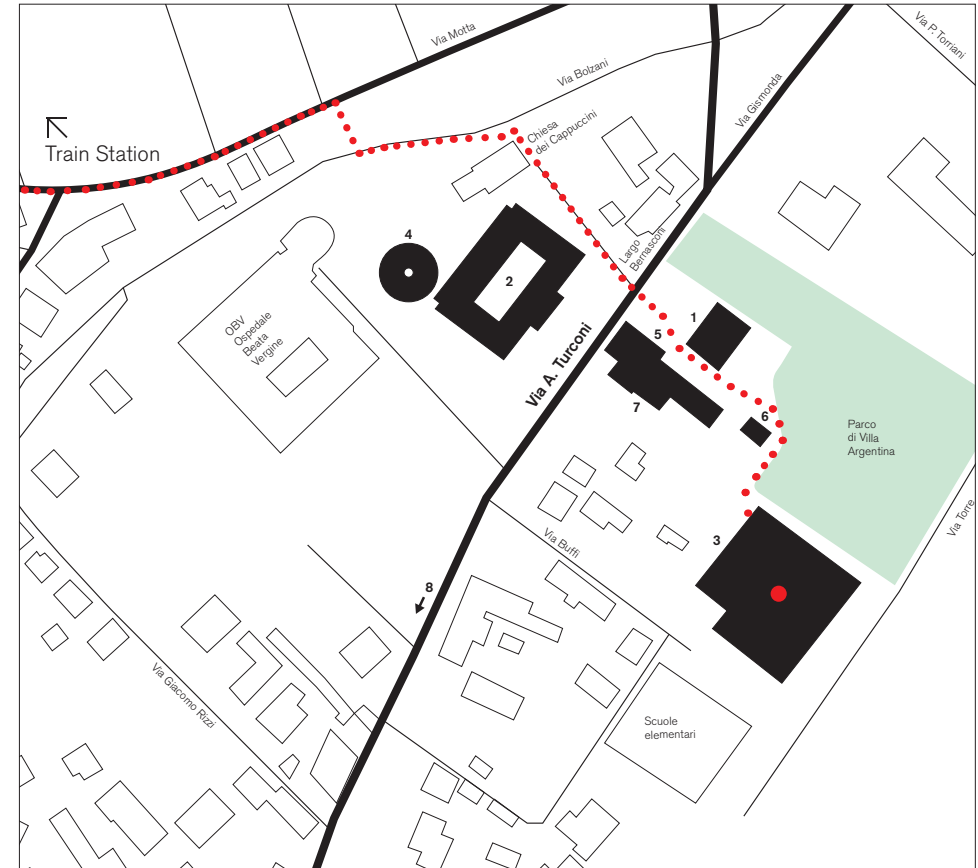
On Foot: 10-minute walk from Mendrisio train station.

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Università
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**Istituto
di studi urbani
e del
paesaggio**

**Marginal urbanities.
The hidden face of planetary
urbanisation**

**Mendrisio
10–11 July
2023**

**Mendrisio
Palazzo Canavée
Hall C0.61**

Info
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