

# Pensieri critici per il progetto della città contemporanea

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# Città  
# Urbanistica contemporanea  
# Principi

# City  
# Contemporary urban planning  
# Principles

## Critical Thoughts on the Project of the Contemporary City

The crisis of contemporary urban planning is evident: in the ugly and dysfunctional new peripheries that spread inconsistently around the European cities as well as in their socially and aesthetically damaged historical centres. Most actual urban theories either accept the present status quo or elude its problems. Without pretending to substitute these theories with a new one, five simple questions are proposed to be considered in the design of cities and neighbourhoods: the program, usually a political given, which has to be rooted in an intelligent functional mix and always needs to be critically assessed by the urban architect; the plan, to be drawn beginning with the definition of the public spaces, the heart of the city and its life; the urban convention as strong conceptual frame into which the different individual architectures must fit, refraining from vain and selfish extravagances; the clear authorship of the overall plan and the public spaces, giving the city or the neighbourhood the necessary consistency and personality; finally, the openness and neutrality of all urban elements, which allows innovative, surprising interpretations and uses that cannot reasonably be foreseen. All this requires the political and architectural courage of creating structures and forms that may seem anachronistic today but allow and offer appropriate, stimulating and attractive solutions for future forms of living.

Nel *Dictionnaire des idées reçues* Gustave Flaubert scrive, riportando un'opinione popolare, che gli architetti sono «tutti imbecilli»<sup>1</sup>. La tentazione, oggi, è di estendere questo commento sarcastico agli urbanisti.

Effettivamente, in tutta Europa l'urbanistica è in crisi, sia nella teoria che nella pratica. Le città, i villaggi e le aree urbanizzate stanno subendo un profondo cambiamento: politico, economico, ecologico, tecnico e sociale. I nostri centri storici vengono deturpati da inadeguati interventi strutturali e maltrattati per negligenza o errori di pianificazione e le nuove periferie, dove le nostre città si stanno sviluppando con crescente velocità, si presentano sempre più squallide.

<sup>1</sup> «Tous imbéciles» (Flaubert 2002, p. 6).