

Call for paper "Ritorno alla Terra"

In the next few years Europe - as well as the whole World- is expected to face such hard and complex challenges as never before. The need of food supplies for a continuously growing population, collides with a condition of a generalized reduction of fertile lands and climate changes, accelerating the exhaustion of resources. This already happened during the greatest economic depression of last century, accompanied also by great environmental and social crisis.

The migration of rural population towards the cities hoping for a better life, their shift in employment into industry and service, and the deep changes which progressively transformed agriculture into agro-industry, are some of the main reasons for the structural fragility of contemporary urban systems.

Traditional agriculture was a complete, integrated and multifunctional economic activity, where food production was intimately connected to highly-complex ecosystems and bio-regions, of significant landscape value.

Since the last fifty years, agriculture has been changing into a dual model: on the one hand it changes towards a highly industrial, mechanized system, which needs and determines a concentration of land and capital, also sustained at transnational level through EU funding. On the other hand, medium and small family run farms, even if progressively marginalized, keep on producing seasonal high-quality goods, thus contributing to environmental and landscape protection.

The Market and its scale-economies led agro-industries to become progressively more specialized, sectorialized and intensive, releasing them from local networks, while erasing the historical relationships between the countryside and the city.

From a massive use of mechanization and chemical fertilizer in order to continuously increase production, resulted also an extreme reduction in employment in the agricultural field throughout Europe.

The decay of environmental balance and landscape quality, demonstrates how industrialized agriculture, with its standardized approach, pays no attention to places and local knowledges, and it is far from the direct care which farmers use to give to their living environments. Moreover, it causes biodiversity loss, decay of historical landscapes, and lowering of environmental quality, which represents also a significant risk factor in business development and a threat to long term economic sustainability, related -first of all- with the impoverishment of the soil. An agriculture based on erosive techniques, which makes large use of chemicals deeply polluting the aquifer and spoiling the soil, is inevitably cost-ineffective.

Soils are not just spoiled, but also they are largely abandoned: due to urban migration, in 2008 -and for the first time ever- urban population overcame the rural one. This represents a loss at economic, environmental, social and cultural level.

The territorial settlement system intended as a whole, needs the precise and prompt maintenance that farmers provided for centuries, together with their control of flat-land, hill and mountain

landscapes. So, it is highly important to find new ways to ensure their active presence in the countryside.

Turning back to the land is a rather recurrent phenomenon. History shows how this usually happens during recessions, as well as after a famine, a plague, or a war, in short when the land starts to be considered again as a primary good. Following the commercial and the related Market contraction, it happens often that financial flows are directed towards the countryside, supplying it.

We may say that, after the heedlessness of the last decades, determined by the illusion of a never-ending growth - particularly industrial and financial, contemporary societies are now developing a new awareness about the profound value of the land, which has also a mythical meaning, being it the deep root of whatever is living.

Today, the land is at the core of new demands and needs, such as healthy and secure foods, the production of renewable energies, environmental protection and improvement, the conservation of biodiversity, hydro-geological safety, as well as the availability of leisure areas for improving the quality of life and the general quality of urban suburbs, the conservation of the socio-cultural patrimony, the support to local economies, ecosystem services, and more

A new habit is spreading among urban citizens, which are developing a more critical approach to consumes, against the worst of Market large distribution's rules: that of actively sustaining farmers and their quality production choices, in a short-production chain, with relevant economic advantages for both. This is leading to a reciprocal credit, and to social capital improvement too.

We may also say that there are some, even if minor, signs of a countertendency in the demographic movement towards metropolitan areas. More and more people are moving back to the countryside, and even if their choice is rather shadowed by the much more strong urbanization process, it demonstrates a sort of 'farmer's resistance' against the dramatic features urban life-style can assume. It also contributes in changing the very idea of what living in the country-side can mean today: a different life-style, a new way of together taking care of our living environment and our planet, considered as 'common goods'.

Aiming at changing the urbanization process, to denounce the waste of soil and the diseconomies it produces is not sufficient. On the contrary, what is needed is a constructive proposal, able to show the new advantages of life in the countryside, as well as its pleasures. This objective must be addressed to the young generation in particular, and would led to: the improvement of agricultural biodiversity, the implementation of ecological methodologies for food production and for forestry, the use of biomass for producing eco-energy, to provide services and facilities as good and accessible as those available in urban contexts, to improve the offer of accessible lands, to link the protection of soil to that of landscape, to make the most of rural and agricultural traditions, to sustain local economies, also through new sustainable and proper forms of tourism and leisure.

In the new rural development, expert and traditional knowledges will cooperate at sustaining a better use of technologies, leading also to production's improvement, whose features would contrast with agro-industry diseconomies.

In this view, the regeneration of rural settlements and territories should provide the basis for a much broader regeneration, that is to say, of the whole territory, where green and rural areas, the definition of urban borders, revitalization of minor or marginal areas through a change of their land-use

towards agriculture (such as kitchen gardens), the rationalization of water-, energy- and waste-cycles in an ecological perspective, play a decisive role.

It is sure that the return to the land is not exempt from the risk of conflicts at various scales. In fact, at local level conflicts on the land use could emerge, as well as divergent perspectives on the city-countryside relationship, particularly related to the tendency of the urban at overcoming its own borders, and of the sub-urban agricultural areas at expecting an increase of land rent.

Another example of potential conflict is linked to the role of techno-sciences. The problem seems to be how scientific progress and innovation are conceived, and how they are related with the local / traditional knowledge and know-how.

Some differences emerge among the various disciplines involved in the field of ‘territorial sciences’ in tackling the ‘turn’ to the land. The issues and actions they consider and preview may include: the design of multi-functional rural parks; the creation of agencies dedicated to land-rent dynamic control; tools for maintaining in unaltered condition rural areas (as expressed through the French concept of ‘pérennisation’ – that is to say, of perpetuation); the recourse to forms of conditionality, as also stated at EU level (Common Agricultural Policy); the support to new agro-urban economies; the boost for giving access to lands, the differentiation of wages between small and big firms; the redefinition of the value of land; the creation of short chain of food production; the implementation of urban agriculture; the re-use of rural buildings for socio-productive objectives related to the idea of a living countryside; the exploitation of the social capital in agriculture; the interpretation of the conservation and improvement of biodiversity, landscapes, natural resources and welfare as forms of public services to be remunerated; and so on.

This first issue of the ‘Rivista Scienze del Territorio’ intends to offer a different perspective on urbanization processes from the mainstream. It calls for contributions able at showing through an integrated and dialectical approach, theories, methods and tools, practices and case-studies, helpful to improve scientific knowledge, but also competences and capacities of institutional, political, economical, cultural and social actors interested in actualizing the return to the land.

Submission guidelines

Articles should be consistent with the Journal's aims and the core theme, and use a language suitable to be enjoyed not by experts only, but also by all who expect to get practical information on their contents. They may have a theoretical nature or contain reflections on case studies or research-action practices; every article will undergo an external peer review process.

Always maintaining a personal style in presentation and argument, articles should all have:

- originality and innovativeness;
- methodological rigour;
- arguments clarity;
- trans-disciplinary orientation;
- mastery of the relevant literature.

Format standards:

- Articles may be written in one of the following languages: Italian, French, German, Spanish, English, and always translated into British or American English. Translation suitability will be checked by the Editors): in case of negative check, texts will be sent back to authors; Italian translation is by the Editors.
- Texts should be maximum 15,000 characters in length, spaces and footnotes included, and may be accompanied by pictures, photographs, drawings, illustrations. Exceptionally, for experiences of great importance or hard to summarize, 25,000 characters (spaces and footnotes included) will be allowed.

Articles should be accompanied by:

- a 1,000 characters abstract written both in the selected language and in English.
- 3 or 4 keywords (in the selected language and in English) positioning the article in its disciplinary field(s) and describing its contents.
- a 300 characters author profile with: i) academic status or vocational qualification, ii) disciplinary field(s), iii) affiliation, iv) telephone number, v) e-mail.

Submission guidelines:

- Texts should be sent in their ultimate version as digital files (Word or Rich Text Format). Graphs and tables should be already inserted in their intended positions and consecutively numbered (Table 1, Table 2, etc..), tables in Word or Excel format, graphs in EPS or in the original spreadsheet (Excel or other) format.
- Footnotes are intended for explication use, not for references: these should be quoted inside the text body with author's last name, year of issue and, if necessary, page numbers (Rossi 1995, 234-249); complete detail of each mentioned item will be specified in a final reference list, to be written as follows:

Monographs and edited books:

- Carnap Rudolf (1947), *Meaning and necessity. A Study in Semantics and Modal Logic*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago IL
- Carnap Rudolf (1976), *Significato e necessità*, La Nuova Italia, Firenze (orig. 1947)
- Andronico Marilena, Marconi Diego & Penco Carlo (1988 - eds.), *Capire Wittgenstein*, Marietti, Genova

Articles on journals or books:

Mondadori Fabrizio (1971), "Wittgenstein sui fondamenti della necessità logica", *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia*, 26, pp. 57-78

Doe John (1991), "Intentional Systems in Cognitive Ethology", in Dennet David C. (ed.), *Brainstorms. Philosophical Essays on Mind and Psychology*, The MIT Press, Cambridge MA, pp. 237-268

or, when the essay's author is the same as the book's,

Dennet David C. (1991), "Intentional Systems in Cognitive Ethology", in Id., *Brainstorms. Philosophical Essays on Mind and Psychology*, The MIT Press, Cambridge MA, pp. 237-268

for multiple (last) names or corporate authors:

Quine Willard Van Orman (1948), "On What There Is", *Review of Metaphysics*, 2/5, pp. 21-38

Cavalli Sforza Luigi L. (1996), *Geni, popoli e lingue*, Adelphi, Milano

European Commission (2011), *Seas for life*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

For each web site author(s) should indicate the complete URL (between < >) and the appropriate date of visit (month/year). Online articles and books are the same as printed ones with the only addition of web address and date of visit, e.g.:

Notiziario dell'Accademia della Crusca, <<http://www.accademiadellacrusca.it/notiziario.shtml>> (10/2007)

Ahlback Philip M. (2007), "The Reader! The Reader! The Mimetic Challenge of Addressivity and Response in Historical Writing", *Cromohs*, 12, 1-17,

<http://www.cromohs.unifi.it/12_2007/ahlback_reader.html> (01/2008)

Calvo Manuela, Ciotti Franco, Roncaglia Giorgio (2003 - a cura di), *Internet 2004*, Laterza, Roma-Bari, <<http://www.laterza.it/internet/index.htm>> (01/2008).

- In quotations, "therein" is referred to a sentence appearing in the text already mentioned in a different page (ivi, 23), "ibid." is referred to a sentence appearing in the text already mentioned but in the same page (*ibid.*).
- Names of organisations and institutions (always to be thoroughly mentioned) should be capitalised for the first term only: Ministry of education; Department of town and country planning.
- Bold or underlined words are not allowed in text body. Bold typeface is used for section, paragraphs and subsections headings, italic for uncommon foreign terms and titles of books, films, works. Uppercase and small caps should be used when necessary only.
- Pictures:
 - all pictures should be indicated with consecutive numbering (Fig. 1, Fig 2, etc.);
 - they should be sent separately as individual TIFF files, in 300 dpi minimum resolution at print size, and each one uniquely named according to its serial number: fig001, fig002 etc.;
 - for line-art, resolution has to be 800 dpi minimum;
 - for each picture, a placeholder should appear in the text body indicating its exact place and intended dimensions;
 - captions should all be listed in a separate file named "Legend", or displayed in a list at text bottom.

Submission deadlines and procedures:

Articles should be emailed to the following address: rivista@societadeiterritorialisti.it

Submission deadline is November 15, 2012.

Articles not matching the requested standards will be rejected.

Once verified their compliance to standards and suitability of English translation, articles will be sent to referees.

A confirmation of acceptance and/or change requests will be given by January 15, 2012.

Final submission deadline for the revised articles is February 28, 2012.
