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## PLANNING AS A TRANSFORMATIVE ACTION IN AN AGE OF PLANETARY CRISIS



**BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**

# Colophon

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## Special Session 15 | REVERSING THE GAZE: REIMAGINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CITIES AND THEIR WATERWAYS

**SS\_15 REVERSING THE GAZE: REIMAGINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CITIES AND THEIR WATERWAYS / 2010**

### **Water-Sensitive City: Enhancing River-Centered Planning Strategies in Turin**

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The topic of Urban Water Management has experienced a major shift in recent decades, driven by increasing environmental awareness and evolving social expectations. This shift marks a paradigmatic change, offering an opportunity to restore rivers to a central role in urban development, reflecting their historical interdisciplinary significance and multiple values. From being resources historically subjected to intensive exploitation, rivers can once again be recognised as living systems with their own dignity. While they can support the biological cycles of multiple species, they can also provide opportunities for development and regeneration of the urban fabric, becoming crucial drivers for re-thinking the metabolism and complex dynamics of cities. Among the array of emerging water-related strategies, projects, and frameworks, the Water Sensitive City (Wong and Brown, 2009) approach stands out for its comprehensive engagement with urban disciplines and spatial dynamics. Leveraging this innovative approach and the possibilities of river-centred transformation, this paper aims to contribute to the discussion on Urban Water Management and Spatial Planning interdependencies. It explores Turin's urban river areas through the lenses of legacy, river-city interaction, and collective spatial imaginary, aiming to enhance the practical application of the Water Sensitive City model. By highlighting the importance of urban rivers and advocating for a more river centric perspective to spatial planning and design, this research aims to foster a renewed focus on river-oriented centrality, positioning rivers as pivotal elements in addressing the complex challenges of urban transformation within contemporary urban complexity.

**Keywords:**

water sensitive city; urban river; urban water management; spatial planning

**References:**

Wong, T. H. F. and Brown, R. R. (2009) 'The water sensitive city: Principles for practice, Water Science and Technology', 60(3), pp. 673-682.

**SS\_15 REVERSING THE GAZE: REIMAGINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CITIES AND THEIR WATERWAYS / 1922**

### **In order for co-existing, in a just way, with the excess of water in a small favela**

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Torresmo is a community, in the eastern periphery of São Paulo, Itaim Paulista, inhabiting an informal settlement divided by a stream whose recent channelization increased the incidence of flooding.

The hydraulic safeness of the Brazilian megalopolis is planned by the Secretary of Infrastructures (SIURB) through numerical modeling -of the presence of water and its drainage- and design, mainly, of gigantic lamination basins, Piscinões. These reservoirs, a third border for the rivers (de Mello Franco et al 2007), are usually built in peripheral areas where soil is less expensive (Millington 2021) and in proximity of informal settlements where the non legal occupation of space may afford an opaque making of the infrastructure. Recently, likely due to the activities of a Living Lab in the area, the SIURB proposed the construction of a Piscinão in Torresmo to repair the issues exacerbated by the previous channelization. The existence of this project became an occasion -for the inhabitants and the lab- to envision the redeveloping of the river space in terms of spatial and cognitive justice (de Sousa Santos 2015), imagining the construction of recreation spaces above the lamination basin and starting the negotiation for its “fair construction” . Grounding on fieldwork experience, collaboration with the lab, and participatory art activities, this presentation discusses the undergoing spatial processes and dynamics linked to the construction of the Piscinão. Furthermore, it addresses how the inhabitants are (re)constructing their relation with water forms by reflecting with design concepts such as surface runoff and the size of the basin.

**Keywords:**

water infrastructure, informality, brazil, cognitive justice, participation, flooding, imagination, arts-practice

**SS\_15 REVERSING THE GAZE: REIMAGINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CITIES AND THEIR WATERWAYS / 1997**

**Unfolding water interfaces: water between urban infrastructure and culture**

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Over the centuries, the process of urbanization has progressively expanded, altered and modified the natural water cycles: water has been urbanized. This paper proposes to analyze water infrastructure as the intertwining of distinct but yet interconnected networks: surface, ground, drinking, runoff, wastewater. With the development of increasingly complex water machines, mainly conceived as a solely technical space, the link between the urban space and the water as an element and as a cycle has been progressively lost. Water urbanization has heavily modified not only each water system individually (through river vaulting, diversions, canals, dikes, drainage, supply and sanitation networks and devices) but also and most importantly the way in which they function as a whole, the way in which they interface.

This paper proposes to read the process of water urbanization through the notion of water interfaces, defined as the spaces where different water systems meet, and where to analyze water as a systemic infrastructure and as a common culture at once. Water urbanization will be explored documenting, mapping, categorizing water interfaces within