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Symbio-polis – a bio-regional Collaboratorium:

*University of Florence- Architecture Department &
Manchester Urban Institute, University of Manchester:*

Regenerating metabolisms at the urban/rural interface for the urban bioregion: collective intelligence, integrated and immersive co-design in the agro-urban context of Prato.

DETAILED PROGRAM AND ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE

(version May 5th 2023)

Inspiration

“We focus on a ‘bio-regional’ approach for renewing the links between human & natural systems. The ‘symbio-polis’ is both a city and a civilization, based on a ‘*collective bio-regional intelligence*’, which can turn crisis into opportunity – from climate extinction to peace and prosperity.

While the principle is clear, the practice raises many questions.... where is the ‘bio-region’ and who decides: how to distribute resources by markets / other systems: how to balance social justice with ecological priorities: how to balance local needs with international trade, etc.

This workshop is a dynamic ‘Collaboratorium’ – an experimental living lab. We can explore deeper problems & co-design pathways for transformation, where physical / urban design is fully integrated with other systems. To start we ask topical questions:

- ‘**What** is the system & **how** does it work’: - the ‘**factors**’ of cause and effect – food-energy-water: spatial units from household to regional: economic enterprise & investment: technical innovation & digital intelligence: cultural diversity & empowerment, etc...
- ‘**Who**’ is involved – the ‘**actors**’ or stakeholders, in systems of ‘agency’ and ‘intention’: public, private, civic, citizens, academics etc.
- ‘**Why**’ is this a priority: the ‘**vectors**’ or systems of deeper value and meaning: - social, technical, economic, ecological, political, cultural

For such challenges there are no ‘models’ or ‘apps’ with big data & AI. It’s more useful and meaningful, to explore together the landscape / mind-scape, to map a

longer journey of transformation, and design the pathways ahead, based on the synergies between actors, vectors, factors etc.

Application

We can use a variety of methods and tools both on-site and online. The synergistic method / pathways toolkit provides a set of visual thinking templates, for mapping and design of cognitive systems. The overall aim is to demonstrate & develop a ‘*collective bio-regional intelligence*’ –

- between the workshop participants,
- for the users / clients / community / region / society around.


Online tools (since 2020) include Mural whiteboards, Kumu system mapping, Padlet platforms, and ‘Playbooks’ – we will demonstrate how these can work.



On-site tools are based on visual thinking and the Pathways toolkit of flexible templates: methods include soft systems mapping, causal layer analysis, role-play mapping, and the over-arching ‘synergistic approach’ to mapping and design for the collective intelligence.

General workshop / collaboratorium principles: (1) everyone has a chance to speak & do something, (b) we aim to turn ideas into action, (c) we aim for a *collective intelligence* of learning, co-creation & co-production.



Further info on [Deeper-City: Collective-Intelligence-and-the-Pathways-from-Smart-to-Wise](#) & [Laboratory for collective intelligence](#)

(Day 1) - Monday May 8: Scoping & mapping of problems & challenges


Time	Activity	Actors Involved	Venue	QUESTIONS & TASKS	METHODS	MATERIALS & TEMPLATES
9.00-9.30	Welcome Coffee	Professor, teaching staff, tutors and workshop students	PIN di Prato Room 202			
9.30	<p>Methodological & operational framing of the workshop;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Context: Introduction to concepts & workshop goals : Bioregionalism: urban-rural metabolisms & linkages; Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> guest Professor Joe Ravetz; Prof.C.Perrone: Metodologia per la individuazione del quadro degli attori e stakeholders 	PIN di Prato Room 202	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q - what is 'bio-regional'? Q - Can it work in a global capitalist system? Q – which are the biggest problems & challenges? Q – what kind of case studies to work on? 	An extended debate & demonstration of ideas & methods. - start in plenary (full meeting):	visual thinking materials: space for posters (possible online whiteboard)
11.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (BREAK) 			<p>We form groups in the break -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People propose groups on the whiteboard - Others put up notes to join the group they prefer (we can change later) 	Groups can focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - themes: (food, housing, ecology...) - practices (urban design, planning, IT systems, governance...) 	
12.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of participants Co-design for collective bio-regional intelligence - methods Practical: problem mapping Discussion 	Students, Professors and teaching staff	PIN Prato Room 202	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q - How to visualize / map / analyse these 'hyper complex' problems? Q - How do different people see them? 	Visual thinking: group / individual – (template may be useful)	<p>('crystal ball')</p> 


13.30	Lunch		Free in the places around (bars, take away, etc.)			
15.00	Presentation of the study the area key features, processes, challenges and related Municipality policies	Professors and Teaching Staff, Municipality Urban policies and urban planning adjoint arch. V.Barberis. Gli indirizzi ed obiettivi della Pianificazione; C.Giuliacchi: Il paesaggio agrario storico di Prato; A.Regoli: Prima survey degli attori locali e stakeholders - Laura Fortuna – (Avventura Urbana) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion 	PIN Prato Room 202	Q - Which are the top priorities & challenges for the area? Q - What are the policies & plans? Q - On which sources, data and materials, we can count on ?	Presentation of the available archives of data for the laboratory	
16.30	Break					
16.45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical: 'Actor mapping' of the problems Discussion 	Attendees: Working in groups (themes / practices)	PIN Prato Room 202	For each theme / practice: Q - Who does what around the table? Q - Who has the power & knowledge? Q - Who 'sets the agenda'	Visual thinking: group / individual – (template may be useful)	'round table' 
17.15-18.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical: 'Factor mapping' of the problems Discussion 	Attendees: Working in groups (themes / practices)	PIN Prato Room 202	Q - How does your 'system' work? Q - Which are the inputs, processes, outputs?	Visual thinking: group / individual – (template may be useful)	'business model' 

(Day 2) - Tuesday May 9: Changes & futures



Time	Activity	Actors Involved	Venue	QUESTIONS & TASKS	METHODS	MATERIALS & TEMPLATES
9.30-13.00	First guided field visit and survey	Students, Workshop coordinators, teaching staff, tutors,	Study area: "agriurban gulf"	Survey about the main features of the area	Participative observation, sketches, photos report	
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch		Circolo ARCI Zanobetti, San Giusto (v.Cava n. 195)			
14.00	First interactive debriefing: exploring criticalities, changes & possible futures (comments/notes/projectual reflection) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General discussion 	Students, Workshop coordinators, teaching staff, tutors,	Circolo ARCI Zanobetti, San Giusto (v.Cava n. 195)			
14.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to futures methods • Practical – change mapping • Discussion 			Q – what forces may change your system? Q – which are highest impact / uncertainty? Q – which are local / global, short / long time? Q – which are surface / deeper levels?	Visual thinking: group / individual – (template may be useful)	<i>'driving forces & layers': '3 horizons'</i> 
15.30	Break					
16.00	Practical – design with the future			Q – what creative ideas come from future study?	Design thinking: group / individual –	
17.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to scenarios • Practical – scenario mapping • Discussion 	Joe Ravetz	Circolo ARCI Zanobetti, San Giusto (v.Cava n. 195)	Q – which forces can produce alternative futures? Q – what do these alternative futures look like & feel like?	Visual thinking: group / individual – (template may be useful)	<i>'crossroads'</i> 
18.30	Back home/accomodations					

(Day 3) - Wednesday May 10: Opportunities and synergies

Time	Activity	Actors Involved	Venue	QUESTIONS & TASKS	METHODS	MATERIALS & TEMPLATES
9.30-13.30	Second guided field visit and in-depth analysis of the site with local actors	Students, Workshop coordinators, teaching staff, tutors, local actors: farmers, pastor,	Study area: "agri-urban gulf"	Survey about the main features of the area	Participative observation, sketches, photos report	
13.00-14.00	Lunch		Circolo ARCI Zanobetti, San Giusto (v.Cava n. 195)			
14.00	Second interactive de-briefing : exploring opprtunities and synergies - comments/notes/project reflection; -design groups formation	Students, Workshop coordinators, teaching staff, tutors,	Circolo ARCI Zanobetti, San Giusto (v.Cava n. 195)	Q - what criteria for the division into working groups?	(we may move the groups around)	
14.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to synergistic methods • Practical – 'synergy mapping (1) • Discussion 			Q – which are the possible synergies of different actors? Q – how do these change the structures of power? Q – how can the collective intelligence emerge?	Visual thinking: group / individual – (template may be useful)	<i>'round table synergies'</i> 
15.30	Break					
15.45	Practical – design with synergy			Q – what creative ideas can realize the synergies?	Design thinking: group / individual –	

17.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical – ‘synergy mapping (2) Discussion 	Joe Ravetz	Circolo ARCI Zanobetti, San Giusto (v.Cava n. 195)	<p>Q – which synergies in the business model / value chain?</p> <p>Q – how can the collective intelligence emerge?</p>	Visual thinking: group / individual – (template may be useful)	<p><i>‘business model synergies’</i></p> 
18.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion 					
18.30	Back home/accomodations					

(Day 4) - Thursday May 11: Pathways & strategic design

Time	Activity	Actors Involved	Venue	QUESTIONS & TASKS	METHODS	MATERIALS & TEMPLATES
9.30	Design laboratory session - General discussion	Students, Workshop coordinators, teaching staff, tutors	Prisma Laboratory Comune di Prato (v. Galcianese, 34)	Implementing the agreed and shared design issues in coordination between the different groups	Interactive design work in groups	
10.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to pathways, road-mapping, evaluation Practical – ‘pathway mapping’ 	Joe Ravetz	Circolo ARCI Zanobetti, San Giusto (v.Cava n. 195)	<p>Q – what ‘pathways’ can realize the synergies?</p> <p>Q – will these work in alternative futures?</p> <p>Q – how to improve the ‘collective intelligence’?</p>	Visual thinking: group / individual – (template may be useful)	<p><i>‘pathway stress-test’</i></p> 
11.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break 					
11.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical – ‘road-mapping’ 			Q – who can do what / when / how much?	Visual thinking: group / individual –	<p><i>‘road-mapping’</i></p> 



				Q – what policies / governance actions are needed? Q – how to improve the ‘collective intelligence’?	(template may be useful)	
12.30	• Discussion					
13.00	Light lunch		Self-organised			
14.30 - 18.00	Design Laboratory session	Students, Workshop coordinators, teaching staff, tutors	Prisma Laboratory Comune di Prato	Implementing the agreed and shared design issues in coordination between the different groups	Interactive design work in groups	
18.00-	Free visit to the ancient centre of Prato-Macrolotto 0 (Chinese urban places)	(not mandatory) Students, willing teaching staff, local experts	Historical centre of Prato, Macrolotto 0			



(Day 5) - Friday May 12: discussion / evaluation / next steps

Time	Activity	Actors Involved	Venue	QUESTIONS & TASKS	METHODS	MATERIALS & TEMPLATES
9.30	Design Laboratory session	Students, Workshop coordinators, teaching staff, tutors	Prisma Laboratory Comune di Prato	Implementing the agreed and shared design issues in coordination between the different groups	Interactive design work in groups	
11.30	Overview of 'collective bio-regional intelligence' – applications, challenges, opportunities - <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion	Joe Ravetz		Q – how do these ideas & designs work in a changing world?? Q – how to achieve the collective intelligence needed??		
12.30-13.30	Light Lunch		Self-organised			
14.00-16.30	Groups projects presentation	Students, Workshop coordinators, Municipality adjoints and staff, teaching staff, tutors,	Prisma Laboratory Comune di Prato		Plenary presentation	
16.30-17.30	Questions and results discussion	Students, Workshop coordinators, Municipality adjoints and staff, teaching staff, tutors,	Prisma Laboratory Comune di Prato	Which is the overall scenario structure, main strategies & projects to achieve it; which the main potentialities and hurdles?	Collective discussion	
18.00	Group picture and greetings	Students, Workshop coordinators, teaching staff, tutors, local actors involved	Outdoor spaces			

LOGISTIC DETAILS

1) Monday May 8: Scoping & mapping of problems & challenges

9.00 Gathering point. Piazza dell'Univeristà , in front of the Railway Station Prato Porta al Serraglio

9.30 PIN Prato, Aula 202

Lunch: self-organised. There are many options in the city centre

2) Tuesday May 9: Changes and futures

9.30 Parcheggio Piazzale Nenni (accessible from Viale Leonardo Da Vinci by car or by bus: LAM ARANCIONE direzione Galciana)



At this link the proposal for the field trip. The tour can be rearranged according to conditions

https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1hTRT4M-WvRGjxsN_8_XOZpCy3IZtGv8&usp=sharing

Lunch at Circolo Zanobetti

3) Wednesday May 10: Opportunities and synergies

9.30 San Giusto 4 Bus station (accessible by car or by bus: LAM ROSSA direzione S. Giusto)



Here's the link to the proposed field trip. The tour can be rearranged according to conditions

https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1eesH7k4KHiyPv2DbTH2w6v_VUOYTcQA&usp=sharing

Lunch at Circolo Zanobetti

(4) Thursday May 11: Pathways & strategic design

9.30 Prisma Via Galcianese 34, (We'll see if reach there by bus/car or walking)

Lunch: self-organised.

54) Friday May 12: discussion / evaluation / next steps

9.30 Prisma Via Galcianese 34, (We'll see if reach there by bus/car or walking)

Lunch: self-organised.