Chapter 5
Urban Fronts in Murattiano Neighbourhood of Bari:
A Selective Survey of the Built Environment

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ABSTRACT
Developing a project for the city for a specific urban context means building, first of all, a reliable system of knowledge, easy to read and understand, and being able to inspire other actions aimed at protecting, transforming, and promoting. It is on this complex data system that the chapter questions its nature and consistency and, specifically, the display that this system offers. The definition of the image of the city in its current configuration distinguishes the work of investigation on neighborhood or Borgo Murattiano of the city of Bari and is presented as a search for identity of the places, visible in the drawing of the facades of the blocks in their linear sequence.

INTRODUCTION
To reflect upon the future of the city means to enable scientific studies about the urban reality such as spotting unstable places and situations, peculiar urban realities and other kinds of complex scenarios that are awaiting for a new solution. Most of all it means establishing a relationship among heterogeneous data, building a system of values shared by the community and identifying categories to develop general criteria of intervention on the whole city or on a specific part of it.

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The analysis of the current status and the reflections on the future of the contemporary city prelude and prepare to the project.

Drawing and representing its image are the appropriate operating systems to respond to research requirements as well as the urban survey operations, that are the reliable methodological tool for the collection and the interpretation of the data.

Through drawing, the city is transferred into a theoretical-perceptive dimension that fosters a simultaneous reading of the whole multifaceted set of gathered data.

Drawing the urban space and the system of architectures that make up the public and private spaces, historic places and lesser known places, represents a peculiar way of questioning and getting to know things; this activity leads to reflect upon the very essence of built architecture, of the landscape and of the world where ideas, considerations and desires are made of visual material.

Representing the architecture and the city means to reproduce it graphically and to display its image on external media - detached and neutral – that allows consciously to accept and embrace the complexity of the sites, aligning with aspects that change rapidly and directing our view towards the targets to be achieved, accessing to the perceptual dimension of the knowledge project.

The definition of the image of the city into the current configuration characterizes the work of investigation carried out in the Quartiere (or “Borgo”) Murattiano in the city of Bari; such work configures itself as a research of that complex, layered and consolidated image which is the paradigm of everyday life and the synthesis of the identity of its places.

The search for the identity of this place, fulcrum of economic and commercial activities and the center of the community, pervades each phase of the knowledge acquisition process, and each time it enlivens urban analysis and surveying, as it drives its definition and graphical transposition.

The narrative and figurative dimension of this research highlights a tension towards the theory of a study method of the image of the contemporary city, exposed to actions that will change the face (perhaps forever), and towards experimentation of expressive languages to describe the ambivalent character of this part of the city that is divided between his intimate and collective, private and public dimension.

The “Murattiano” is the extramoenia nineteenth century expansion neighborhood (or “Borgo” as it is called even today) placed immediately next to the old town. Currently it spreads over a surface defined formally by 4 perimeter roads (Corso Vittorio Emanuele II in the north, facing the old city, Corso Cavour east to the waterfront, Corso Italia close to the railway line and Via Sagarriga Visconti), 89 blocks and 4 public green islands, which are distributed in a regular way along the orthogonal road axes, 11 vertical axes and 11 horizontal axes.
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