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BUDDcamp 2013
The City of Euphemia 3
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A very special *thank you* goes to Agostino Zanotti, head of LDE, for initiating, developing, and coordinating the workshop programme again in collaboration with Madalena, Maria and Valeria. Due to their consistent enthusiasm, passion and activism for a “good and open city”, we enjoyed a very successful BUDDcamp 2013. We also wish to thank Adriano for welcoming us in the warm and hospitable Movimento Nonviolente Headquarter (MIR) at Via Milano, where we enjoyed very good Italian food and pacifism memorabilia. And of course, we would like to graciously acknowledge the individuals who shared their stories, their spaces and their desires so effortlessly.

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Foreword

Camillo Boano, Emily Kelling & Caroline Newton

Since a re-visioning of BUDDcamp with the first Brescia-held workshop in March 2011, this experience has been considered an attempt to offer the students a provocative, contemporary and instant brief immersion into an urban reality, extracting a certain momentum of reflection on the design-research challenges and methodologies for intervention as part of a broader attempt to recalibrate the discourse around urban design in development. The BUDDcamp, despite its short nature, is seen as opportunity to get closer to the facts, to the mutable realities of urban manifestations, and to allow the participants to deconstruct the real apparatuses of the complex, conflictive and multi-scalar nature of urbanism.

As in the past editions, in this third incarnation of our Brescia BUDDcamp we turned again to an adoption of Calvino's "Trading Cities 1" from his book *Invisible Cities*, in which he offers a richly illustrated narrative of eclectic cultural exchange. Like those wandering trade merchants drawn around a shared identity and diverse stories of life and land, the migrant residents of Brescia find themselves in a new territory, yet somehow bound together through the challenge of inclusion and identification in the everyday life of Brescia.

During a long weekend in early February 2013, the sixteen participants of the MSc programme Building and Urban Design in Development (BUDD), developed transformative design strategies rooted in a socio-spatial understanding of four different sites and the people living there. Each of the selected sites had its challenges and triggered the participants to question conventional planning and design thinking.

In the refugee apartments in Cellatica the investigation focused on understanding how formal and informal contacts between the refugees, who are only temporarily staying in these apartments, and the inhabitants of other apartments of the same housing block could be stimulated, and how a redesign of the shared open spaces could support this.

In San Polino, a newly developed neighbourhood, the students' strategy revolved around the activation of po-

tentials for social integration with the wider city on common grounds of environmental concern. Here, the students identified the distress caused by un-clarity about the area's future redevelopment as well as the presence of a massive abandoned open area as potential spatial catalysts for social engagement.

Through participatory tools and engaged walks with the youth of the San Giovanni centre for unaccompanied minors, the third group of students discovered what a deep knowledge these young refugees have of the city – and especially of the different areas they frequently visit. Although the centre is located in the historical heart of Brescia around the Piazza della Loggia, the young refugees often frequent more peripheral areas, following mental maps and personally functional relations within the city, as opposed to what the typical touristic gaze toward an Italian city would suggest. This realisation inspired the development of hypotheses about how these young people are appropriating their arrival city.

The fourth site was a Roma neighbourhood in Brescia's periphery, which revealed how a very strong spatial isolation hampers possible integration or appropriation of the city. This short but powerful experience of the space of the camp and its surroundings provoked ideas for alternative ways of stimulating a discourse of integration, using visual representations of children's every day experiences in other parts of the city.

Essentially, during four days of exploring the city and engaging with its citizens, the participants of the BUDDcamp have investigated the multiple dimensions of spatial and temporal exchange between immigrants and locals, between the city and its meanings; and through this grasped the complex interrelation between information, experience and (symbolic) attributes of space, as well as their significance for provoking design actions -or even the act of 'refraining'- which can serve as a catalyst for transformation. With a new introduction by Agostino Zannotti, head of the LDA, BUDDlab Vol.5 represents the students' efforts and reflections of another BUDDcamp Brescia experience.

Introduction

Agostino Zanotti

The Good City

"And you know that in the long journey ahead of you, when to keep awake against the camel's swaying or the junk's rocking, you start summoning up your memories one by one, your wolf will have become another wolf, your sister a different sister, your battle other battles, on your return from Euphemia, the city where memory is traded at every solstice and at every equinox."

Umberto Curi, Foreign

"La memoria storica vive se passa come un ricordo che transita dall'uno verso l'altro, e lo riguarda. Se non si incorpora nell'esperienza di chi riceve, in un modo o nell'altro, ogni informazione rischia di essere uguale ad un silenzio"

Paolo Jedlowski, Memoria, esperienza e modernità

"La politica non è l'esercizio del potere. La politica deve essere definita di per sé, come un modo di agire specifico messo in atto da un soggetto proprio e derivante da una razionalità propria. È la relazione politica che permette di pensare il soggetto politico e non l'inverso."

Jacques Rancière, Ai bordi del politico

The BUDDcamp has arrived at its third edition. This event represents an ideal occasion for us to reflect on and re-view what we have accomplished in the last three years.

The various ideas inspired by Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities*, in particular the chapter of the city of Euphemia, build a leitmotif that runs throughout our work. I think it is important to highlight some passages of it (see above) to understand one of the grounds of this activity: the city as a place where memories are shared.

The different places that were the sites of engagement during the last years have been passed through by people, asylum-seekers or people under international protection, who stayed or left, leaving some memory of them behind or not. In this flow of stasis and movement, the students had the task to capture their experiences in the

field, designing an urban reflection that enables to let emerge what is floating underneath the surface, inside the city.


As the association LDA we tried to provide an opportunity for the students to observe the main objective of our activity: a project approach aimed at engendering the inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers, which has, however, not yet reached the point at which their acts (of inclusion), in a public and thus political space, are able to defend their right to escape.

Citizen and foreigner, dwelling and movement, private and common interests, local and global: the city is a place under the influence of opposing forces, and therefore marked by conflict. The city is the place where inhabitants manage their memories and nourish their destinations (Anna Lazarini); in this perspective, immigrants become frontier citizens, living the condition of neither being here (living) nor there (coming), thus experiencing double absence (Abdelmalek Sayad).

The relation between citizenship and movements of migration should be supported by a new pact of coexistence among citizens: an agreement that can form and support each person's well-being and that can relate identity to differences, bringing back value in terms of social connection.

In the last three years of the BUDDcamp we tried to intertwine the three terms 'city planning', 'politics' and 'ethics' in one perspective aiming at investigating the concept of the fair city, as Camillo Boano pertinently pointed out during the conference "Immigrants and Politics" on the 2nd of February 2013. Therefore, it is possible to affirm that the reflection on the topic of a fair city is the focus of the social commitment of LDA Zavidovici and its activities. Social and urban justice, and social and political responsibility form the gaze, the lens, through which LDA's projects of the last years should be looked at.

Agostino Zanotti is the head of the Local Democracy Embassy of Zavidovici in Brescia.



**“Modernity creates a zone of indistinction
not so much between inside and outside
but by cutting through every subject and
the political.”**

Diken & Carsten Laustsen

Student Reflections

ANDREA CUBIDES (Colombia)

Reflecting on Brescia

After this quick and interesting visit to Brescia, Italy, I reinforced the idea that it is very important to observe and try to unpack what has been perceived by outsiders as problems but it is equally important to listen to what people (local communities) have to say without imposing previous specific views, so you can try to unpack their real concerns. This would make a huge difference in finding a key to engage local peoples' interests matched with the outsider's interests (being it a governmental institution, an organisation, community based organisation), which would be then a catalyser of inner and outer efforts towards change.

This is drawn on what we were introduced to, which mainly focused on social issues and lack of cohesion, but when we talked with some people from the neighbourhood, what came out really strongly was an environmental concern. This made us think of a way of unifying San Polino's social issues and environmental threat as a catalysing force for action.

Caminar, recorrer, observar, y escuchar (to walk around, observe and listen to people) are vital exercises to understand a place. Those were our group's main methods to try to understand and localise the information that we were given previously by members of organisations that work locally. As well as listening to the perception of outsiders that work with local communities, the need to feel the physical space and try to move around it is equally important to find similar or different perceptions of the space.

What we felt when we walked around the different buildings throughout the site was a place surrounded by beautiful mountains and natural paths but because of the cold weather despite the sunshine or even the lack of social cohesion the public space and roads were mainly empty.

About the lack of social cohesion in the area with a population of foreigners and Italians, for the specific families we could notice there were no problems about living closely with foreigners, they pointed out that for them this was more with individuals because of personality not by cultural differences. However they also mentioned

that not everyone finds the sharing of location that easy.

I think it is really important to promote social cohesion through regular activities / interchange, in order to push a mutual understanding and respect for different cultures.

The more you share or just inhabit a space with individuals from a different culture, the more that perceived difference becomes closer as you start realising about similarities with your own costumes. Therefore, you feel respect for the beliefs and cultural practices of others and appreciate the differences.

Regarding ways on how to promote interchange and therefore mutual understanding between Italians and foreigners in San Polino, it may be helpful to engage foreigners in participating with the environmental concern from the nationals of the area for future possible benefits regarding more understanding towards their culture and rights if they support and enrich the noise in the fight for the natural park project that surrounds the neighbourhood.

Finally, this was a great hard working weekend with regular touches of delicious Italian food and wine but most of all, warmed by great Italian hospitality, which always made me feel close to home.

ANNA KOLEDOVA (Russia)

Reflecting on Brescia

The BUDD camp field trip to Brescia was a highly interactive and educational experience. Knowing little about the destination and the context did make me feel slightly uncomfortable about forthcoming work. However, upon arrival things started to become more clear gradually. During the first group stroll down to the centre of Brescia I got a glimpse of how various cultural and historical traces are embedded in the build environment and structure everyday life of local people. The introductory talk given by Agostino and other members of LDE and BUDD explained about existing practices undertaken by the organisation as well as situated our roles as practitioners in the particular context of Brescia.

My specific group assignment was to investigate and act in San Polino, the neighbourhood which is located



in the suburbs of Brescia. Recently built San Polino has emerged out of the need to accommodate mixed residents of failed and evacuated complexes from the next door area of San Polo known for the high levels of social and economic deprivation.

ELEA organisation – a development agent in both areas considers San Polino to be at risk of adopting eventually the unfortunate patterns of hardships.

Observation of San Polino pointed to a strong feeling of the area's isolation from the larger urban landscape, the phenomenon reinforced by the new built metro line and a number of leftover unused and un-programmed spaces. As a group we concluded that the torn urban fabric and the deficiency of opportunities for local people to interact directly associates with the lack of social cohesion among local inhabitants.

Surprisingly enough, the perceived problematic does not correlate with issues that local people (at least those who we met with) are concerned about the most. From the communication with San Polino's inhabitants the area of San Polino is in danger of environmental degradation caused by the nearby dumping of dangerous asbestos material.

Although, San Polino district is only new and still has a chance of developing organically into a stronger and better community our group has suggested a possible intervention built upon existing practices and assets in the area. 'Blooming with confidence' is a design strategy that aims to engage people from both areas of San

Polo and San Polino through a specific activity in order to address environmental concerns and by doing so to saw the social cohesion among local people. It was uplifting to find out that our research and suggested intervention could become an effective compliment to existing initiatives considered in San Polino by LDE.

As for a more personal reflection, fieldtrip to Brescia was my first introduction to Italy as a whole and I can confidently say, I have nothing to complain about! It was a good example of how hard work and good fun can coexist in a perfect harmony. Although, my energy levels were sometimes lower than average, the excitement of being in an unfamiliar environment kept me stimulated to complete all the exercise related tasks on time so that I could have some free time to explore more of Brescia town. Bella Italia! Besides, the stuff of LDE and BUDD were extremely welcoming what made my stay pleasant and inspiring for work. Laying on a bunk bed brought back memories of my summer camp experiences and a variety of fine wine gave a token insight of the Italian culture. God bless the winemaking of Italy!

Working in the field has strengthened my understanding behind the importance of quality town planning and socially based urban design. Moreover, working in the field in Italy has made me strongly consider learning another language in order to decrease the barrier and to expand research possibilities. Lastly, the BUDD CAMP trip has provided me with a valuable set of skills and expectations for the upcoming overseas fieldtrip. I am looking forward to this one!

ANUAR MAKHAYEV (Kazakhstan)**Bresciano**

It is extremely challenging for me to fit my reflection of the city of Brescia into 500 words, as I would like to write about the city a lot and particularly about Italy. I did not know anything about the city apart from that the great Roberto Baggio ended his career playing for the local football team. When we arrived to Brescia it was still difficult to feel the “real” atmosphere of Italy. However, on the second day I realized how different Brescia is from London and other European cities.

Firstly, the architecture of the city amazed me from the first day, not because of the fancy buildings, rather because of the old style buildings. As I was told before, the Italians always, or almost always, try to preserve architecture of their cities without significant changes, which gives a feeling of Italian culture and tradition.

Secondly, the food and wine were wonderful. It is difficult to explain why, but the food reminded me of my hometown where the taste of wine and food is pretty similar. Thirdly, I liked the hospitality of the local people, especially those who were working with us during the BUDDcamp. I was delighted that Agostino and his team have done so many things in order to improve people's life, those who come to Brescia to seek not only a better life, but also simply for protection and for having a chance to live.

Roma camp

Our group worked in the Roma camp, which was located almost in the outskirts of the city near a highway. Almost all the residents (29 families) of the camp are refugees from the Balkans, Afghanistan, Pakistan and other countries, which have been involved in different types of conflicts. As I have never worked with refugees and never been in camps I was quite worried. The new and current municipal government did not welcome the people in the camp, so the refugees were infringed on their rights. We tried to analyze the social constraints of the camp, through which we could identify which design intervention could be implemented. As we were limited in time on site visit and could not talk with the refugees and did not have sufficient information, we tried to do our own investigation. We interviewed people in Brescia, asking whether they know about the camp and what they think about the camp. The outcome of the interviews had positive as well as negative aspects for me. The negative moment of the interview was that none of the residents did know about the camp, although they knew the location of the camp very well. It was quite frustrating that so many people did not know the camp and that it was just “invisible” for the local people. But for me the most frustrating moment was that there were so many children (70) who had to walk along a dangerous highway in order to go to school. However, there was a positive moment; people were willing to offer help to refugees and particularly to their children, as I have noticed that the children in the camp were the most vulnerable to social oppression.



Working process

We spent all day working in our project, but it was really exciting. We had come up with an idea of how to involve the refugees into the social life of the city, giving an opportunity for the children to take a picture of their daily life, which would help to identify their main concern and use it as an entry point. We thought that not only expansion of the built environment, but also social inclusion of the refugees would strengthen the social intervention. Another intervention was infrastructural; to make a pathway for the children, which consisted in short-term and long-term projects. However, I had a concern about the project, but not about the project itself, rather that we could not communicate with the camp residents and hear from them, their concerns as well as perspective about the project.

Concluding remarks

Generally, the work in Brescia was enjoyable, as we had the chance to explore the city. Brescia seems for me the city of migrants, as there are a lot of them. I do not know the problems of the city as I did not do any research about it, but it seems that it is a desirable place for the people. Probably it is not accidental that migrants move to Brescia, to a city, which is able to provide a service, education, home and hope for the people. As my classmate said that some people consider Brescia as a city, which gave them a chance to identify them and move beyond their desire. I hope that after some years I will visit the city, whether as a tourist or for a job, it really does not matter. FORZA Brescia!!!

AUBRIE EISENHART (United States)

They can give you smile, but not the right smile.
Asylum Seeker in Cellatica

I was excited when I found out that the organization we would be working with for our BUDD Camp exercise would be one that worked with refugees. Having worked with refugees on and off since 2007, I have cultivated a sincere passion for working with this demographic. In the past I have only worked with this population in the United States so I was to eager to find out the similarities and differences between the way the system worked there and the way it worked in Italy.

A majority of the individuals our group met were asylum seekers. The UN defines asylum seekers as:

When people flee their own country and seek sanctuary in another country, they apply for asylum – the right to be recognized as a refugee and receive legal protection and material assistance. An asylum seeker must demonstrate that his or her fear of persecution in his or her home country is well-founded.

This statement highlights a difference between the U.S. and Italy. A majority of the people I worked with in the U.S. already had refugee status and only a small minority were seeking asylum whereas in Italy the opposite seems to be the case. Having refugee status in the U.S. also enables refugees to qualify for resettlement assistance. Usually this is a period of time when the person first arrives that assistance in terms of housing, language classes and employment help is given. Even with this aforementioned assistance though refugees sometimes experience setbacks to settling into their new country. Many of the refugees I worked with were homeless or on the verge of being homeless after receiving the initial assistance upon their arrival. From what I understand asylum seekers in Italy are not given assistance from the Italian national government. Organizations, such as LDA, fill that gap. Many of the individuals we spoke to praised this organization for their assistance. One even mentioned that he was formerly homeless before connecting with LDA.

The Italian government also values and encourages integration into the Italian culture. It was insightful to hear about the ups and downs of this experience of integrating into the Italian culture from the mouths of the asylum seekers. The quote that I started with gives insight as to how one of the asylees perceived Italian culture as unwelcoming. Others, however, spoke of people that welcomed them into the Italian way of life. For example, one man was taught how to play an Italian game while another when asked how he prepared spaghetti was given a packet of spices and instructions on how to make the dish and another joined the local football team and bonded with the other team members. In the U.S. refugees have tended to congregate in communities where other refugees similar to them (usually being from the same geographic location) live. Integration into American culture is not that big of a priority since America has been a melting pot of cultures for a majority of its history.

At the end of my time in Cellatica my perceived observations of the differences between the refugee/asylee situation in the U.S. and Italy were:

- More refugees in the U.S. and more asylees in Italy.
- Italy values integration into their culture more than the U.S.

The similarities I found were:

- There are always a handful of people that take the time to welcome newcomers to their neighborhood.
- It is hard for refugees/asylees to receive assistance and even when they do it doesn't always guarantee that they will succeed in their new environment.

In conclusion, I have found the former experience of being given a "wrong smile" exhibited more often in the U.S. than the welcoming experiences the asylum speakers experienced above. Yet, even one wrong smile is one too many in Italy or the U.S. or anywhere else asylees and ref-

ugees find themselves. If we took the time to talk with and share our culture with these newcomers I think we would find that we have much more in common than we think. I am glad the BUDD Camp gave me that opportunity and reminded me once again how amazing and resilient asylees and refugees are and how much we can learn from each other. Hopefully, I gave them the right smile.

CRISTIAN OLMOS (Chile)

This report is composed of seven reflections about the city and specifically about space of refuge or asylum. The dynamic of this exercise is to show the experience through different poems, or rather in Antipoetry.

The use of antipoetry in this response is with the intention of creating a rupture between the outer and the inner, using interviews in the field and my own thoughts, and to deconstruct the typical polarized relationship between permanent residents and refugees. Through spontaneity, humor or irony, through a popular language, this poem bypasses the reader's conscious identification with the events that occurred, and prioritizes my personal reflections and debate on the experience.

CITY OF EUPHEMIA

Invisible city, attract me
Heterogeneous and complex
Brescia received us
With fog, rain and coldness
Freeze our bodies, our ideas
Pizza and wine is my hope,
My energy to understand
This narrative that the space and voices
Are shouting out in the darkness
To be heard, to be included.

Catalytic and analytic city
In the proximity of the asylum
How can I try to understand?
Your geography and variety of your people.
Multicolored as Neapolitan pizza
As your hundred types of wines
And just 3 days on your floor
At macro-micro tensions
In a small urban reality
Of the space of refuge

But why refugee?, Why asylum?
Why not just a simple visitor
With expectations in Cellatica
Struggling with the language
OMAR – SOBEH – SAMSON – HASHMAT
Different versions, looks, expectations,
Accustomed to the pace European

Seizing opportunities
Writing on white walls,
Without roots or memory

Leave everything to this loneliness.
Passenger in transit
Trying to discover
Where is my being?
As the airport without rooting
Only with suitcases and illusions.
Avoiding your reality
Escaping your memories.
And dreaming of your sun
That warmed with different intentions.

You transformed your personality
Thinking, talking...trying
Becoming a second hand Italian.
This story sounds familiar
Maybe I'm a refugee
In my room without stories,
Clean, waiting for a new student
With longings and desires in English
Shut upA!
Please, Shut upA with the Shut upA!
Religion, speech and separation
Skype, Facebook, Internet
My land bridge never forgotten
My body here
My mind in the past and maybe there,
My memories in danger of extinction
Multicolored flags and transitional
Why not come into my kitchen?
Immersed in sublime space
Enjoying my customs
My wife, my children in the distance.

Openness and ambivalence imagined
Like the fusion between industrial and heritage
Exchange between culture and manpower
Sharing Design strategies
Observation and action
For some it is all darkness
They do not come back,
Some stayed
Can I not join the dance?,
Too many differences, the powerless retract.

Thank you for your warmth Italy
You sent me back to my earth
To my confusing and cracked mind
Thanks for the space and opportunity
Out of my confinement, my refuge
Although it was a couple of days
Raised hopes and illusions
As I walk on
Brescia, bread and wine
You are in my heart.

Dangerous urban designers striking Brescia

By: A Bresciano

My traditional column of Tuesdays is addressed towards a series of events that occurred last weekend which for me a great cause of concern about the future of our city.

Last weekend, the city of Brescia was prepared to live another typical weekend. Brescia Calcio was facing a match against the modest Spezia but all went as expected, as the match ended with a draw and presented no great occasions to score. Knowing the history of our dear squad, it seemed like Sunday would business as usual.

However, something was afoot within the rooms of LDA on Via della Roca. A lorgnette student group from London, encouraged by Agostino Zanotti and Camillo Boano, they were trying to change our beloved city according to their own alien perspective. Under the idea of Euphemia (yes, you read correctly) in two days they made provocative proposals to San Giovanni, San Polino, Cellatica and the Roma communities.

At San Giovanni and Rovetta they went about asking people what they wanted to change in their city, bypassing our authorities with crazy ideas like participation, public consultation and convincing our citizens about the necessity of new projects. At the refugees' apartments, they attempted to modify the structure of the place. I think we already have enough problems with the foreigners to give them the power to change the shape of our city. In the Roma community, the students proposed a tunnel under the highway. Do we need that kind of new and expensive infrastructure? What do these students know about our needs?

But the most extreme and dangerous proposal was developed in San Polino, where these "students," without any consideration of the law and order of our city, promoted a plan of "sustainable riots". This plan is based on the coordination between teenagers of San Polo (a group of anarchists that with their noisy music are bothering everyone in the buildings) and the young people of San Polino (a kind of Greenpeace society that are against the development and progress of the city). Their idea was to take the empty plots between San Polo and San Polino to sow flowers (of course that without the permission of the owners of these plots) in a clear act of illegality. But that is just the beginning, because after a couple of weeks they proposed to cut the flowers and leave the refuse at the main square of the city.

*I wonder: Who do they think they are?
Why are they riling our neighbours?*

They are probably a group of naïve and irresponsible youngsters who still believe in the flower revolution of Lennon and ignore the fact that Brescia is an important city in northern Italy with a long history of competition with Milan and Turin. This kind of initiative, encouraged by Local Democracy Agency, will mobilize people that do not have enough capacity to decide about the future of this city. With economic development will appear new opportunities; we need to trust that our system will ensure a social equity.

My reflection is about the conservative people in participatory processes: Do we have tools to integrate them to our design processes or this is just to "left wing" citizens? What can we do in towns where the individualism is a life style? Do we have answers? We were lucky because apparently, in Brescia, the people have an interesting sense of collectiveness, but how can we deliver this kind of healthy way to develop the city within neoliberal neighbourhoods?

FRANCISCO VERGARA (Chile)



GRAHAM PERRING (United Kingdom)

**Seeing, hearing, speaking:
Centre for unaccompanied minors: San Giovanni &
Rovetta Square - Carmine neighbourhoods**

SEEING: As a development practitioner, the legibility of any unfamiliar context is revealed initially through prior research and subsequent observation in the field. The reading gained is often one of detached onlooker. In this sense, the historic and culturally rich fabric of Brescia is only partially accessible through observation.

This can be illustrated by example of our analytical study of Brescia's market square – Piazza della Loggia. We viewed an active and vibrant Saturday morning 'black tent' market which engulfed the market square pressing up close to the edges of the physical square. Cheap goods on sale (both imported and locally manufactured); traders and customers of a multiethnic mix, representative of the city (city population of 200,000, of which 36,000 are foreigners). On returning to the market square later in the day, we were able to experience an entirely different, formal, unified 'yellow tent' farmers market neatly arranged along the central axis of the square. Around 16-20 identical yellow tents with local 'native' traders selling high quality local produce, either side of a wide promenade along which the 'well dressed' and 'well-heeled' perused their needs. The contrasting 'boutique' and 'multi-ethnic' markets offer clues to a potentially contested arena within the city.

HEARING: To the east end of the square we viewed a

memorial to those killed and wounded as a result of a terrorist bomb which exploded during an anti-fascist protest in May 1974. Later we viewed an exhibition, inside the Loggia overlooking the square, dedicated to Hitler's invasion of Russia in 1941 (of which the Italian army played an instrumental part) in which over 700,000 soldiers were reported to have died. Within this exhibition space, we were also shown actual physical scars of shelling of the building during the 'Ten Days of Brescia' (1849), a conflict between the occupying Austrian powers and the city dwellers in which 1,000 residents lost their lives.

These narratives, once heard play on our 'clean' perception of place, forcing us to visualise the city differently, as a place invested with political, cultural and historic meaning. Our reading is modified when we move beyond mere observation towards informed engagement with a place.

SPEAKING: The Centre for Unaccompanied Minors – I Tre Volti (transl. 'The Three Faces') sets out to achieve 'the gradual positive integration of the internal community (immigrant boys aged 14 – 18yrs) within the wider societal territory'. In methodological terms our first day in Brescia was spent trying to understand the city 'as experienced by the boys' in both physical and non-physical terms. The outcome of the workshop conducted and subsequent city walk provided unexpected insights into the ways that the complex and culturally dense city environment was acting on their experience of private and public space within the city.

During our second day in Brescia, we set out to visit the

places which they identified with (both positively and negatively) to investigate the extent to which, in reverse, they are able (or are invited) to act on the city. We were interested to find clues to explain to what extent these people of 'other' background were able to find their 'sense of belonging' within the city. Some places, in particular those which were within the historic city centre, seemed inaccessible, perhaps as a result of a dense cultural association – in a sense these were perceived as impenetrable spaces.

In this context the threshold between home (temporary community) and city appears complex. This is the territory of crossing - from secure to impenetrable. In remembering that these are adolescent boys, culturally diverse (Pakistani, Egyptian, Moroccan, Balkan), living away from their home of origin under strict social codes, it is unsurprising that the areas which they associated with were culturally universal: railway station; modern shopping centre; football playing area. A relationship with the density and complexity of 21C European city centre was only articulated where the city provided opportunities for them to meet and 'hang out' with friends... and in reality the historic city centre provides little opportunity for this.

In conclusion, we chose to make proposals for intervention in (or en-route to) these spaces which are less invested or codified. Whilst these spaces are sometimes described as 'junkspaces' (Koolhaas), they offer opportunities for the 'boys' to meet with friends and others neutrally, and thus speak of belonging and detachment simultaneously.

JIAWEN CAI (China)

Our information collection started from a site visit of Cellatica, including the refugee camp and its surroundings and centred at the interviews with refugee camp members and their neighbours. Our initial perception for the community was that although one small pub had some local Italian people during lunch time, barely any people hanged around in the public space. It might be due to the heavy rain or being weekend. Our initial goal for our interviews was to collect spatial perception, opinions and aspiration of the blocks as well as the community from the blocks residents based on which we tried to identify the key factors and challenges of this refugee camps spatial improvement case. From the first interviewee who was the block manager, we gained information mainly about the administration of the condominium. The second interviewee with his wife mainly gave us a social picture within the condominium in a relatively critical way. The third interviewees were refugee house members who helped us better understand their perception, situation and needs. The last interview was a keen neighbour who shared her ideas about integrating the asylum seekers into the community.

In terms of possible interventions, we basically came up with ideas about holding different events to get the refugees involved through ways related to language learning, culture sharing or spatial interaction. The failure of backyard garden project indicates that what matter are not the forms of these events but the system and the processes that could be generated by this system and therefore we intend to set up a condominium committee which would attach big responsibility to the representative of refugees who may therefore have an opportunity to explore his/her potential to motivate more refugees to get involved. Also, to cover everyday social interaction, we propose to transform the courtyard into a green space with defined paths by which makes people have more chance to interact face-to-face rather than passing by each other in different routes. During the discussion, Cristian questioned about the existence of "courtyard", proposing to make the gated courtyard into a public space which was revolutionary but not being accepted by the whole group due to security concerns and its feasibility. My suggestion about integrating the space in backyard by removing the boundary between the common green space and community garden also failed because of the local environmental law. Many physical transformation ideas that might have potential to trigger a spatial change were aborted due to different reasons. It really requires a balance between taking reality into account and not being confined by barriers in the reality.

The first thing I learnt a lesson from during the camp is that we did not reach a quite clear strategy and ideas about our aim of doing interviews beforehand so that the questions we asked lacked consistency between different interviewees and the information we collected was a bit random. According to the feedback from ADL, our intervention did not address internal conflicts and the connection between life in flats and public space. This is partly because we tried to know the refugees' life only by interviews which limited our understanding to the reflection of their own perception. Also we processed our interview in an all-together basis which means individual answers had a risk of being affected by the presence of their peers. In terms of internal life in the flats for the refugees, apart from the probable conflicts brought about between different ethnic refugees, we noticed the dramatic difference of interior decoration between the refugees' house and their neighbours'. Both of these two problems are policy-related, which frustrate me because "policy" always seems to be the biggest barrier that we can do nothing about it. If we leave the policy issue aside, it will boil down to a question of how to intervene refugees' everyday life in their flats against the policy of transitional stay. Would it be better if providing refugees warmly decorated house or sufficient decorating materials for them to refurbish their house by which might give them a sense of belonging? Would they be willing to do so? Would it generate more conflicts among the refugees? It would be extremely exciting if we had a chance to test out our proposals.



JULIA HANSEN (United States)

Luca's living room

Our first day in Brescia was cold and wet. My group was walking around the suburban development of San Polino, wondering what exactly we could extract about social connectivity on a day when there was no one to be seen. Then our guide from LDA led us to the house of one of his friends in order to gather a personal view of the situation. Luca met us with his wife, son, and neighbour in his warm, bright living room. Our guide left a few minutes later, and, a little bewildered, we started asking a few hurriedly formed questions. An originally short chat turned into a two hour long conversation over espresso, biscotti, and freshly pressed apple juice, and by the time we left with our stomachs and heads happily filled, it had even stopped raining.



We went into Luca's living room expecting to ask a few questions about their experiences living in an area with many immigrants and to approach issues of race and income with a good degree of political correctness and distance. But we found that our priority was not their priority, for the conversation or in general. Their primary concern and lens for viewing change in the community was around saving a nearby park from conversion to an asbestos dump. When we asked them some more pointed questions about social connectivity they answered thoughtfully but then returned to the environmental and political issues they were passionately discussing before. I think we did the right thing by following their lead, letting them guide us to a different end point in our conversation on San Polino. We learned information that would probably have remained hidden if we had doggedly pursued our original interests. Plus, it was a reminder that what you uncover in the field rarely fits perfectly with the ideas you form behind the research desk.



This may not have been what LDA wanted to get out of our visit to San Polino – in fact, a lot of what we presented back to them could be downright contrary to their goals or outside of their interests. But I feel that LDA in that case would be acting like the insensitive practitioner who tries to elicit viewpoints that coincide with what he already believes. In the end, I'm not sure how useful our main idea – linking the environmental activist movement with immigrant groups and restless youngsters to increase social connectivity through a series of activities in San Polino and in central Brescia – was to our partners at LDA, but I believe that we were onto something by finding common points of interest between the different groups. There are perhaps many reasons our idea wouldn't work in this situation in Brescia, but the root idea is a good one and would not have come about if we hadn't allowed ourselves to stray.

The most special part of that conversation at Luca's for

me was speaking Italian. Having a casual and basic handling of Italian based on Spanish and hanging around Italian friends, our sometimes technical and always fast-paced conversation at Luca's was a mental and lingual long jump for me. But I get a thrill out of dismantling phrases and connecting pieces of grammar to form words I've never said before but somehow make sense, or learning a new word from its context and using it a few minutes later. The mental stimulus for me was like that of a child's in Disneyland.

More significant than my personal amusement, however, I think that speaking the language of the people you are working with – spoken language, body language, the language of their priorities and needs – is an important part of building trust and understanding things from their point of view, and of being a good practitioner generally. While I think Luca and his family trusted us from the start because we were introduced by his friend, I could feel him visibly open up when we began to speak in Italian, and a two hour long conversation could never have happened if it were all in English. By speaking with them in their language, as well as leaving behind our language concerning our perceived needs for San Polino and adopting theirs of environmental advocacy and activism, we were more successful in understanding reality as they saw it, and, I think, produced a more valuable design intervention as a result.

KAY PALLARIS (United Kingdom)

On Saturday morning, Piazza Laggo and the surrounding streets bustled with people. Italians and Immigrants alike were out and about shopping for food, wares and bargains undeterred by the weather. Under the pouring rain, there were no obvious signs of any ethnic tensions, so often quoted as afflicting Brescia. The afternoon and evening however, saw the historic centre transform into a different place. Co-existence was no longer observable. The atmosphere was no longer encompassing or reconciling; no longer a place where strangers became a community.

Instead, the prettier and formal farmers market somehow created a sense of displacement, reflecting the processes of 'gentrification' happening here. The accepted vibrancy of differences evident earlier in the day, somehow lost their right to exist.

Early that afternoon, we visited the centre for unaccompanied minors. Here, young strangers from Egypt, Pakistan, Morocco, Albania among others, where now 'family', at least for a while. Brought to Italy in pursuit of elusive dreams of a better life, jobs and opportunities, 'I Tres Volti' (the three faces) programme is helping these minors to better integrate with the Italian culture, offering



assistance with education, hospitality and interaction. Symbolically, the aims of the I Tres Volti programme was to give these young adults the "key" to the city, opening up their opportunities for interaction and eventual integration. We wanted to open up a dialogue with them regarding their views of the city. Whether they were experiencing any borders with regards to their freedom of movement within it - perceived or real - and glean from their stories what the cultural constructions of space might look like, both within the historic centre, in particular their relationship to their immediate neighbourhood of Carmine, as well as the wider city.

We listened to their stories; their likes and dislikes about the areas; their recommendations about what to visit as tourists. They suggested taking us on a tour to the castle. All spoke of liking it here because of the beautiful views, or because there wasn't anything like this back in their country of origin. In many ways what emerged was not surprising; as young adults, their favourite places were the football courts, the parks for more games of football and the shopping centre, south of the city centre.

It all seemed to make sense the following day when, on that sunny Sunday, we explored the wider area. The areas near the station, south of the centre appeared multicultural. The shopping centre was a low-end indoor mall, which was in stark contrast to the glitzy high-end labels found east of Carmine where the more affluent appeared to be shopping.

Whilst one of our tasks was to suggest possible socially-rooted design interventions, it was alas still not concretely clear in my mind what this needs to be over and above

what the youth centre is already doing. Whilst some small-scale interventions must surely be considered, like providing a dedicated prayer room in the absence of a nearby mosque, most of the discussions were focused around finding ways of promoting better integration into the community. Some spoke of disrupting the 'Italian' ways or historical context in order for these migrants to feel better integrated. But in many ways, 'building community' can be misleading place to start from as the word is often associated with the coming together of similarities, not differences. The right to differences needs to be accommodated within cities. Reflecting back to my own childhood growing up to migrant parents in London, I believe that interventions must stem from the actual citizens themselves; both the host and the migrant population. And that fundamentally, possibility for acceptance and interaction is born from within. No matter what the city-planners do, they will always feel excluded if they don't try to accept the fact they are different. And most importantly, the host cities should also show respect, love and trust for the differences they exchange, that ultimately enrich us with variety. We are happy to accept their traded goods (food, celebrations and interesting stories), so why not accept them.

NATHAN MAHAFFEY (United States)

At some point I packed, got on the tube, arrived at the train station, bought toothpaste, got on the train with my fellow BUDDies, snapped a few pictures then boarded the plane. I read Calvino, viewed the Alps from above, slept, got on a mini bus, spoke Spanglish with Chilean classmates while practicing our Italian, arrived in Brescia with a warm welcome at the Movimento Nonviolento Headquarters, Italian food and wine, went for a group walk, observed nightlife outside the city centre, slept. -- Today begins with the excitement and anticipation of visiting a Roma camp whose school bus service for their children has been suspended. -- This will be interesting, sensitivity is key, 'the gatekeeper' will introduce us and show us around the community... "Nathan! You speak Spanish? Maybe you can ride in the car with Señora María"... Ciao! Señora María, Tante grazie. Parli español? (Do you speak Spanish) No? Bene, Capisco Italiano un poquito (I understand a little Italian?)... We leave in her car, communicating in broken Italian is easy and pleasant, she points to the school that the children must walk to... Now we're entering the camp, they live in three buildings that comprise flats oriented around courtyards, our translator gets out of the other car and it is raining intensely. As we cross the large courtyard an elderly woman glides from across the courtyard to intersect our path, María greets her and they exchange greetings and a few words, the woman confronts us with her posture and body language but María explains that we don't speak Italian, we are motioned to keep moving

and we wonder why. We move towards the open door of the family that wishes to meet us, the mother greets us and we enter the house, the physical conditions are very adequate and it has the feeling of a comfortable home. Her three kids are playing on the sofa and darting in and out of one of the two bedrooms. She shows us around the house and offers for us to sit and relax in the living room, María respectfully declines and explains that we should keep moving, so we all leave the flat. Inside the courtyard and to our left another mother with three children greet us from their porch while a man on the far side of the courtyard disappears into his flat. It's still pouring down rain, but we're looking forward to seeing more of the camp. We walk as a group towards the parking lot and our interpreter tells us she's leaving. María communicates to us that we can take some pictures from outside of the camp then we will walk the route that the children take to school. After passing through the tunnel underpass, we begin walking along the very edge of the street in the direction of the school. We stop short after a short time and María begins to explain how we can take the bus back to the office. The remainder of the day we explore Brescia, gather information and gain perspective about the Roma camp from the outside.

Reflecting on Brescia I think about two ways to enter a community: 1) without any preparation or planning but building relationships and understanding over time and 2) preparing and planning a quick, surgical entrance and exit with goals and objectives. In Brescia, our group entered the Roma camp in the mind set of method 1, of course realising that any understanding would have to take place quickly. We had the opportunity to ask questions to María before our visit to the camp. We asked many questions trying to get a preliminary understand of their situation but we did not ask logistical questions about what we would actually be doing and how we would visit the camp. Our actual visit to the camp ended abruptly and unexpectedly, so in hindsight it would have been beneficial to ask about logistics such as where we would go, with whom we would talk and for how long. We learned a lot about working in groups in an unknown city and how to improvise and adjust to unforeseen circumstances. We also learned that good things come out of any circumstance. I think that being forced to analyse the Roma camp from the outside, with just a brief glimpse of the inside was actually perfectly appropriate. It helped us to understand the dynamic of isolation between the Romas and the city of Brescia at large; what should remain hidden and what should become exposed. It shaped our proposal into a series of interventions that would help illuminate the issues surrounding the Roma camp and express them externally. We proposed that the space occupied by the children whilst walking to school could become an opportunity to connect the expression of their political isolation to an expression of their hopes, dreams and aspirations of how they would like to interact and exist within the city of Brescia.

A vertical photograph of a narrow street in a European city. The street is lined with multi-story buildings featuring balconies with ornate metal railings. A street lamp is visible on the left side of the street. The sky is clear and blue. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

“ In the context of a democratic multi-ethnic society, ‘integration’ essentially means the inclusion of all ethnic groups on an equal basis without loss of group identity.”

Robin Oakley



RAFEEF ABDELRAZEK (Palestine)

My group for this design charrette looked at the topic of Refugee Apartments and dynamics of proximity in the Italian suburb of Cellatica. Refugee participants in the LDA project receive temporary living accommodation in a condominium complex in a well-to-do residential neighborhood outside of Brescia. Neighborly relations between the native Italians and the new foreign inhabitants are the central issue for this location, and were physically manifested in the courtyard, the “central space” of the apartments as well as the relationship. Inherently, I feel these issues are a mirror for the deeper and larger issue of integration. I was initially attracted to this topic because I felt I could relate to the refugees on a personal level, and believed my own history and background would provide me with an insight into the issues. My parents, although not refugees or asylum seekers, were new immigrants to the United States, and I was a first hand witness to their settled in a foreign place, and with time and effort their assimilation into the local society.

I believed I had a solid grasp of the situation, and yet once the exercise began was surprised by different situations. In our review of the site, the group was able to interview some of the Italian neighbors and LDA refugee participants. During and after these interviews, I noticed my own expectations and how they were unmet or surpassed. I thought the neighbors and refugees would both behave in different manners. The Italian neighbors were more formal and reserved than I expected. They seemed stiff and I wondered if they gave answers they

thought they should give. The responses came off as politically correct and even at times calculated. Contemplation afterwards lead me to question why this was the case. Was it due to the need and use of translators or because we were non-Italian foreigners? It seems likely that it was a combination of both.

In turn, I expected the refugees to be more reserved. There was an element of formality and “proper” behavior in the beginning but after a short period the group actually relaxed and opened up. They were very forthcoming with their opinions, experiences, and feelings. This may have been because we could speak with them directly without the need for a translator. Also we, the students, were genuinely interested in their views, and tried to convey as much through our body language in addition to our discussion with them. This may have been an encouraging factor for them to share with us. It must be difficult for a marginalized group to find people willing to listen to them, and hear what they have to say. Genuinely learning about one another was a concept appearing repeatedly in the interviews. We, the BUDD group, in a small way were trying to get to know the refugees as people and not just as this marginalized group.

These issues and surprising results of the interviews tied in with a previous lecture by Caroline Newton on the scale of the body and how “fieldwork is an embodied activity.” Our own physicality affected the responses we received. Furthermore, I began to wonder how I could encourage more genuine responses or dig out deeper the true feelings and issues. I felt we only scratched the surface, and there was more to learn. Would more time have helped? I am not sure.

After the interviews, when sharing together in groups, it became apparent the variety of impressions and different observations were made. While group work may be tricky at times, the wider spectrum of information gathered can provide a clearer picture. The key is to then analyze and create solutions in a strategic way as was pointed out by Camilo Boano and Caroline as well. These are skills, which I feel we, as a group, still need to build on and develop further. We each have skills to offer and therefore have to learn to let go at times and distribute the tasks in a manner to achieve the best results.

SIGNE LINDBERG IVERSEN (Denmark)

Visiting the Roma Camp

The Movimento Nonviolento Headquarters kindly accommodated us and provided us with coffee, peace-jam and (much needed) beds - from here we collaborated with DLA looking at the conditions for different groups of refugees in Brescia. Here issues are evolving at present in regards to the general cuts on financial support to

foreigners.

My group was working with the Roma refuge-camp south east of Brescia centre, which has existed for 20 years and now contains a new generation of children. Prior to the visit in the camp we were informed that going there was a delicate matter, because the residents had formed a relatively closed community and were guarded when outsiders are around. We were also informed that for this reason after the visit we would have to do our fieldwork outside the camp.

Since returning to London I have wondered how I would react if someone approached me in the intermediate surroundings of my home and asked me questions about my life. To be honest I would probably be quite dismissive and maybe even defensive. I will definitely keep this in mind next time I do field work. I do not know how much information the Roma camp residents were given about our visit beforehand, but I could not help but have a sense of intruding when walking onto their premises. The houses were one story with windows in all directions and densely positioned and sure enough people started exiting their houses when we approached, even in the pouring rain. Our perception of what happened thereafter was very varied.

How to see what is really there

My mum used to say; before you judge someone for their actions, try to think of 10 reasons why the person acted the way they did – it is not always possible to come up with 10 reasons, but it makes you wonder and pause before you jump to any conclusions. I think of this method as being beneficial in the field as well; when you register something, go over it quickly in your mind and think of all the different interpretations of what you see – then ask questions. Know what you are looking at. It is a difficult exercise to undertake in practise because you instinctively try to find results and conclusions right away. Our site visit was unexpectedly cut quite short – around 30 minutes total and in a future situation the same thing could happen for a number of reasons. If you refrain from being critical of what you see in the moment you see it, you risk basing your subsequent work on misconceptions.

Another way of collecting data that we used was to talk to different stores, churches and people on the street in Brescia. Apart from an obvious language issue – Italian vs. English and limited Spanish skills – I found that an official introduction of myself and why I was in Brescia was very intimidating and in the face of the people I spoke to. “I am from London (the big city), I study at the university (she is highly educated) and I am doing an analysis (you lost me...) of the Roma camp (we are not in Rome?) outside Brescia.” Yes, someone actually thought I was lost... Before I asked any questions people already had

panic in their eyes. This is my first time doing a field research abroad and when I have previously worked in the field, I was helping people who knew the context already. An experience I will take home is definitely the notion of having to practice my subtlety and skill in approaching people for information.

Overall this has been an extremely educational trip for me and I enjoyed very much working with DLA whom I wish all the best in their future work.

WENSHI YANG (China)

BUDD Camp is a brand new experience for me. It is the very first time I get the chance to directly work with community, making the theoretical knowledge learnt from classes more real and more straight forward.

Brescia is a beautiful city which welcomed us warmly. The people hosting and working with us were there to give me the first impression of what it is like to work in an NGO, which is totally not what I have imagined. The working atmosphere in LDA is so friendly. Even though the work for the four days was intense, I was enjoy every minute of it with the kind help and guidance from LDA people.



Through working with the unaccompanied minor group in the Carmine neighborhood of Brescia, I start to understand the contesting urban area, where different culture meet, conflict and seek a balance to work together. Through interaction with the boys in the community and observing the city, we got much valuable information out of it. When speaking to the boys, there is a language barrier that must be overcome. And the use of words is also of great importance to make an appropriate conversation. On the Piazza we mainly studied, the vast contrast between the morning market, where international immigrants doing business, and the evening one, which is more decent and formal, was so striking. And people using the urban space seemed to be following some invisible code, which no one wants to break it.

The teenager boys living in the community now had gone through so much to make their way to Italy and were trying to make their way in the city, where opportunity are provided. Mostly, they are perceiving and interacting with the urban space in a normal teenager's way. However, they have also got their personal attribute coming with their international background. In the process of feeling welcomed by the city, the boys are adjusting their role of involving in the city life. They are going through a dynamic process of the new city life pushing into their personality and open themselves up and let their personal background more exposed in the urban context. In order to fit in the new urban life and maintain their own characteristic, a balance between the two must be met. This new balancing point will become the new personal attribute of the boy, forming a new "self" perceiving the re-perceived city in a different manner. In order to make the process easier for the boys to adjust to the city and thus leaving more problem to the city on the other hand, we proposed intervention on the physical design of the city, targeting at helping the boys preserve their own culture and become more open to the new urban atmosphere.

During the four days of BUDD Camp, I received so much more than what I have expected. I got the chance to know what it is like to work in the real field and dealing people's emotions. The choosing of words when talking to the boys were so essential during the communication. Also, this is the first time for me to have a chance to combine theoretical knowledge with the real field. As soon as I found an entry point to connect the two system of looking at urban space. I felt so excited and even more convinced on looking deeper into the theories and try to relate it to a real context.

Besides from learning through working, my group mates, Graham, Kay and Yang also had so much to offer. I enjoyed working with them in a group and get a lot of knowledge, both in the planning industry and communication skill. Thank you all so much for being there and supporting each other to reach our final presentation.

YANG LUO (China)

Brescia is the first European city I have visited until now, it is really a nice, unique and historic city. The impressive BUDD camp was very worthwhile on many fronts. Firstly, it provides with us a good opportunity to stop assumption and begin to observe. Then, learning to a better understanding about urban contests from social-economic, political and cultural perspectives. Moreover, an important development gained from the trip was the efficiency of working in a limited time, communicate skills and interview techniques. All of these experiences will be very helpful to our Thailand field trip.

The "why"

"You take delight not in a city's seven or seventy wonders, but in the answer it gives to a question of yours." (Calvino, 1972) When we finished the presentation in the last day, Camillo asked us why we came to Brescia. From my point of view, the reason is that we can find our various answers in the context of Brescia's special urban discourse. Brescia is an old industrial city with a total population around 200,000, 15.1% of which are foreigners. There was a rapidly increase in foreign migration during the past twenty years, most of them come from Egypt, Ukraine, Parkston, India, etc. Immigrants (both formal and informal) came to Brescia to pursue a better future with different reasons; however, they have been struggling to live as an Italian citizen for a long time. This social phenomenon brings about a series of questions in my mind. How do they affect the transformation of the city? How does the city interact with them? What can they contribute to change the urban identity and fabric?

The "how"

"Cities, like dreams, are made of desires and fears, even if the thread of their discourse is secret, their rules are absurd, their perspectives deceitful, and everything conceals something else." (Calvino, 1972) Our group focuses on the youth center for unaccompanied minors, which located right at the city center in the area called Carmine. The biggest challenge for us is how to understand the young immigrants' dreams (desires and fears) about the city, additionally, how the urban fabric affects their perceptions about city. After a brief group charrette, we decided to launch a "positive" and "negative" workshop with them. In order to let the boys participate in the workshop, they are given some color pens to draw "smiling" and "crying" faces on the map and show us their favorite and disliked places in the city. It turned out that it was helpful to express feelings and emotions in a visual way. After building the trust with them, we began to explore a deeper understanding about the reasons. It was interesting to interview a range of people; especially most of them cannot speak English. We had to try different kinds of body language, gestures and expressions to communicate with them. Last but not least, it



was important to control the time and collect the useful information during the interview.

The “who”

For me, the most valuable part of this exercise was being put into a real situation and asked to generate potential interventions in a limited time. We need to arrange the time and share the tasks among group members. In addition, I also realized that our interventions should be grounded for the people who really need, rather than just drawing on the theories we have learned. Identifying people's real need was quite difficult and complex in the real life, but to be a practitioner, it is worth trying our best to explore the real situation and help them built a “positive” urban space.

YU HUA (China)

Traded Stories and Tall Tales

Brescia is an impressive city. It shows different faces in different time.

On the first night, when I saw the old walls, empty buildings, dark windows, I just thought it should be a very old and miserable city. It is really out of my imagination of Italy. Then we walked to the center of city after dinner. It was not a long walk. We went passing supermarket, many large trashes in the streets, cemetery and church, sculpture and square to entrance the walking street. We also find some water points on the street with beautiful but old carving, which Emily told me this is the characteristic of Italy. On the way to look for bars, there were some construction parts of the city.

The second day was a wet day. All of us were walking in the rain, experienced the different rain styles between Italy and Britain. Even though I held an umbrella all the day, my coat was still wet. This day we started to touch the case---Roman camp. The woman who works with the Roman people told us it was very hard to close to them. However, I didn't know whether it is true. Be-

cause one of the Roman women invited us to visit her home and introduce some information about her family. And there is a very interesting case about a woman married to a Roman man and moved out of the city to live in the camp. But we don't have any chance to interview her and ask her questions. After the visit, I really think the tool of language is very important and the preparation should be as full as possible. Before we left London, I did not do any prep of this Roman people. When the translator gone, it was very hard for us to ask some deep questions to the woman who work with the Romans. We also want to ask the people in the city to get some general ideas of what the Brescia people think about the Romans. But because of the language, we just told with a few people. It was a huge obstacle for our group. A very interesting thing was we asked some Chinese if they knew anything about the camp and anybody can speak English. Finally, we got a talk with a man about the Romans but very little information.

We recognized time is so short. We did not have enough time to collect information. Our research and observations just in some possibility and assumptions. There was nothing feedback from the community.

In the rest time of the 2nd day, we just walked around the center of the city. Even it was raining and the whole city looks so gray, many people walked around and many shops were full of people. I could see many flags, flowers and different market on the roads while hearing Italian songs and teenagers' cheers in the air.

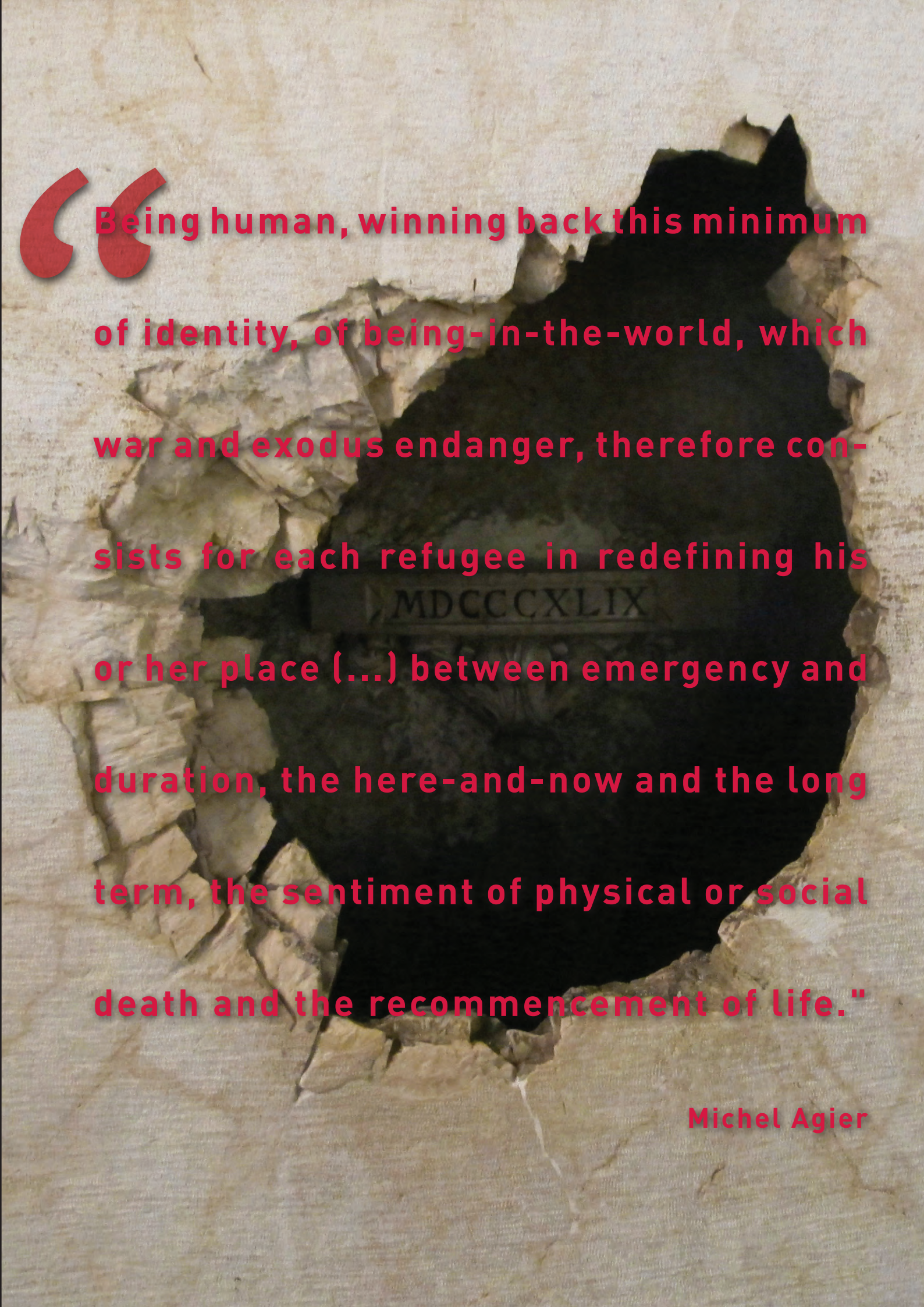
It is really amazing because of the sunshine on the third day. The blue sky without any clouds, the warm wings touching our faces, the colorful buildings with lovely balconies, all of them were shouting to us: this is Italy! This is Mediterranean!

All of the city appeared to us. We could find the history in any corner of the city. Everything was kind and warm, everyone was smiling. It was very hard to find a takeaway coffee shop as Starbucks or Costa in the city. If you want to have a cup of coffee, stop your foot and sit down to taste Italy. It was also very hard to find a wifi spot in the city. It seemed like that when people were waiting for someone, they'd better like to chat and go around the market instead of playing their own mobile phones in the street. I can feel the city is very close to people.

I like the field trip very much even though it is too short. The experience is very important for us to touch the real case and communicate with the residents. The observation is the key to get some details and close to the truth. I really want to have more chances to stay with Roman camp and got more information to solve problems without assumptions.

I hope we can do more in the future field trips.





“Being human, winning back this minimum of identity, of being-in-the-world, which war and exodus endanger, therefore consists for each refugee in redefining his or her place (...) between emergency and duration, the here-and-now and the long term, the sentiment of physical or social death and the recommencement of life.”

Michel Agier

Non andare, figlio, coi signori della guerra
La divisa che ti hanno dato
mettila addosso allo spavento
passeri
che veglia sul campo di grano:
lui vale molto di più di un generale
perche' custodisce la vita che nasce;
il tuo generale, invece,
comanda su un campo di morte
dove non nasce mai
nemmeno un fiore.

da ILARIO BELLONI