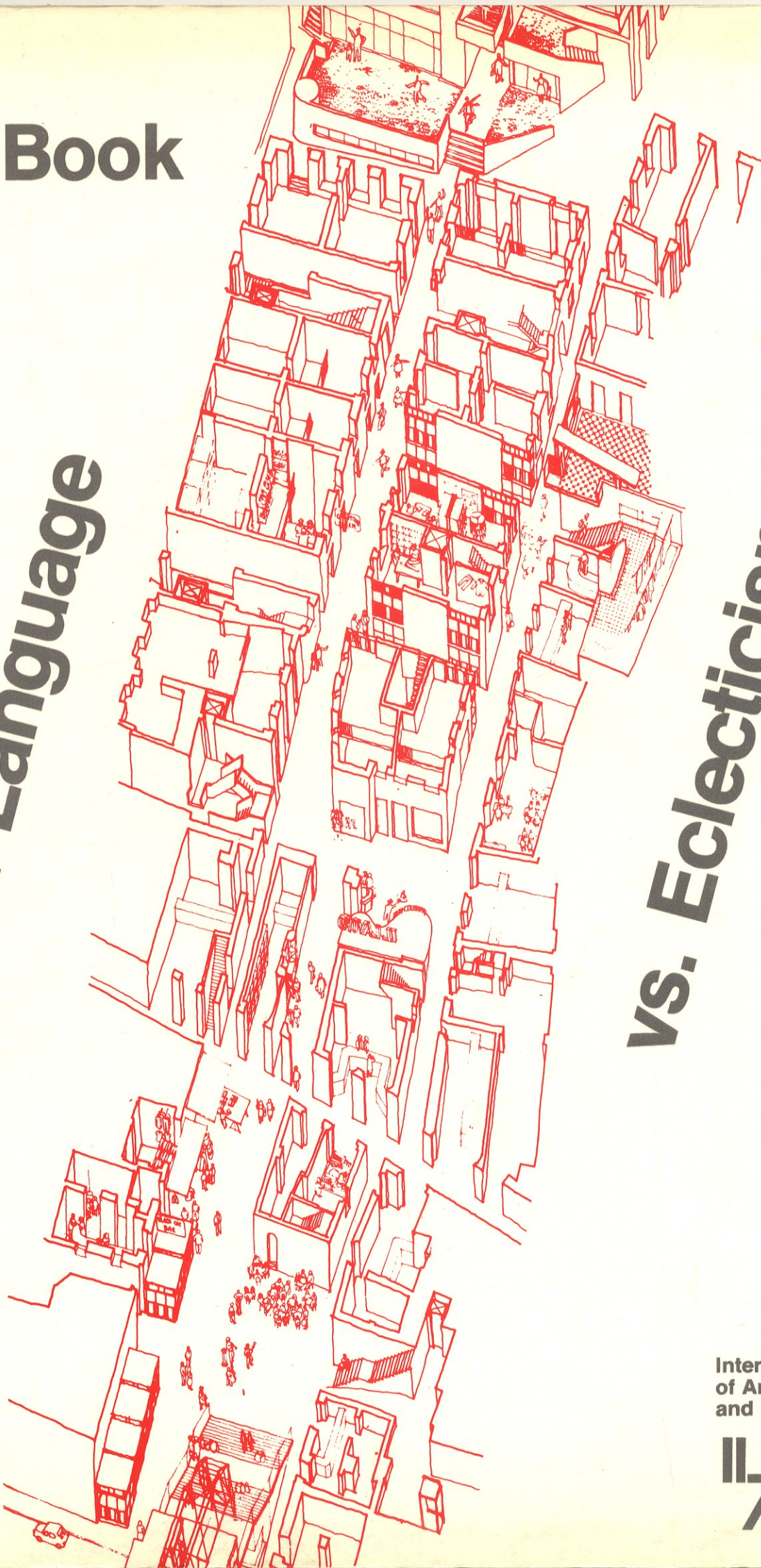


**1982
Year Book**

Multiplicity of Language

vs. Eclecticism



**Sansoni
Editore**

**International Laboratory
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and Urban Design**



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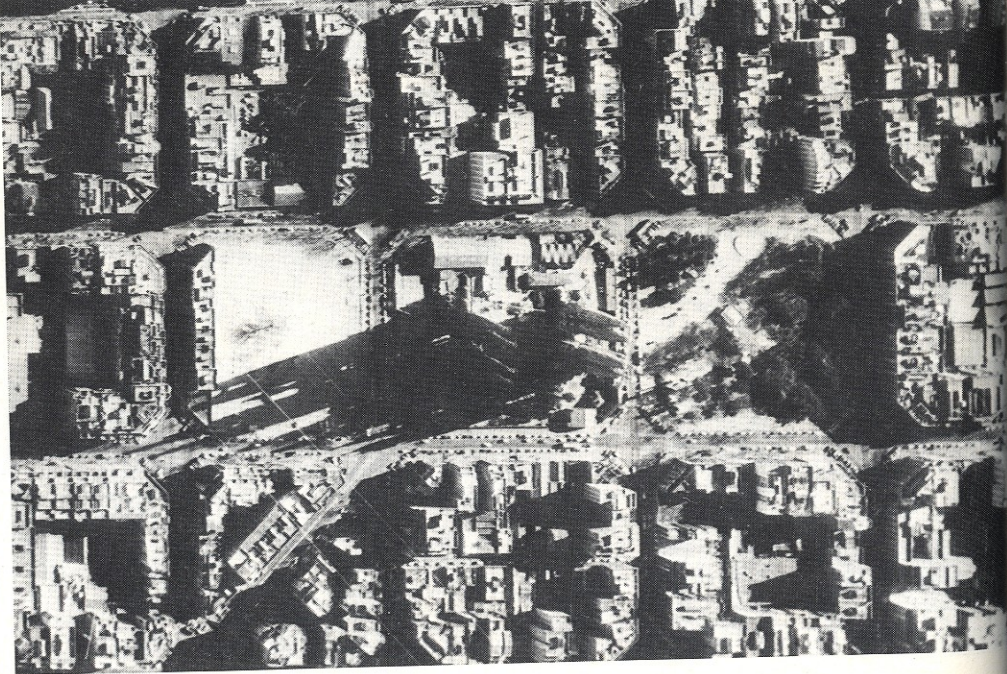
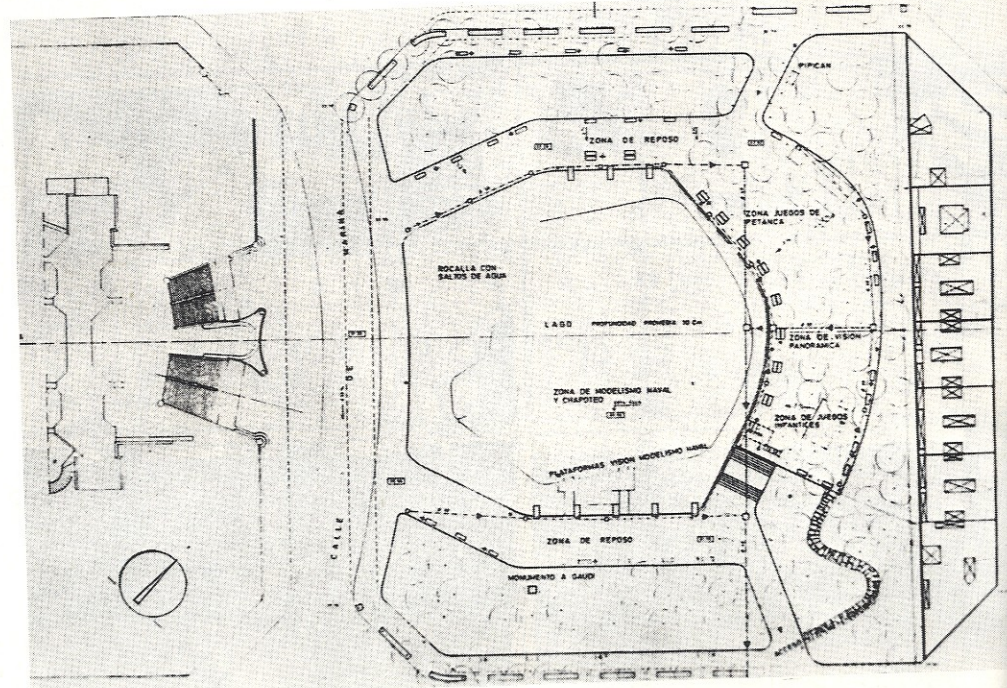
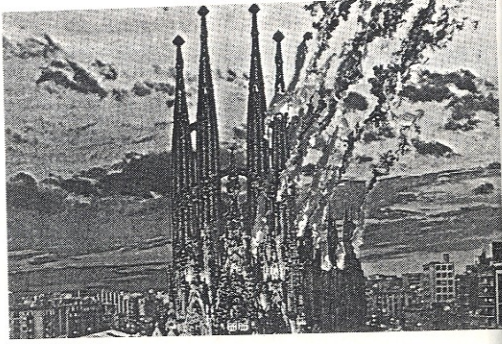
Skins of the Town

Why and how Architecture happens to be eclectic again?
 Our Permanent Activities' work does not aim at giving an answer to this question. Rather, it aims at taking advantage of the Architectural Debate and refers to the city frame which summarizes the correct and incorrect "architectures" of the new languages or classical rules.
 What are the possible attitudes in order to approach the project?
 What are the architectural languages to be used?

It is not only trying to go back in time in order to recognize the multiple architectural languages and adding them up, but to understand them from the designers' point of view.

A systematic view of Barcelona takes us always to the same consecutive transgressions provoked by the different economical and political stages and changes that have taken place in Spain. Therefore, the architectural elements have been consecutively superimposed arriving to the present chaotic situation, partially solved by the action first taken in the 19th century by Ildefonso Cerdà, following a general desire for an urban planning of the town.

Barcelona has become the result of the maladjustment between the planning and the actual work. The city was forced to absorb the different cultural tendencies of the last century: the Romanic and the Gothic styles of the historic center, the cartesian grid of the 19th century Cerdà extension, and the enormous and disorganized growth of the Post-War period. In such a structure, all the different



architectural expressions were inserted: the "noucentistas" houses, the "art nouveau" vagancies, the very refined rationalism of Sert and Torres Clavé's works, the "Escola de Barcelona"; etc. In spite of this incoherence its image today is that of a city well consolidated.

At present, there is a general manifest concern to retrieve the city, to discover its ruptures, its empty spaces, and its transgressions.

Our aim in any action taken is to give back urban quality to the façades, symbols, parks, houses, etc.

We have chosen the Sagrada Familia Square because it is a clear example of promiscuity between different types of architectures: the significant, the respectable, and even the prostituted. We limit our action to the block that encloses the square and its connections with it.

We have taken into consideration the difference between architecture that derives from the urban plan (where the planner handles history and proposes a justified and inevitable reform), and the one derived from acting upon what is incomplete, using familiar elements that have already been successfully used. From this starting point and as a result of numerous discussions, different ways to face this fundamental premises were brought out. Even if some of the solutions that came up were discarded as inadequate, elementary and incomplete, or on the contrary too spectacular and overwhelming, our wish was to carry on this controversy by presenting not just one sole project restricted to itself, but two prototypical solutions.

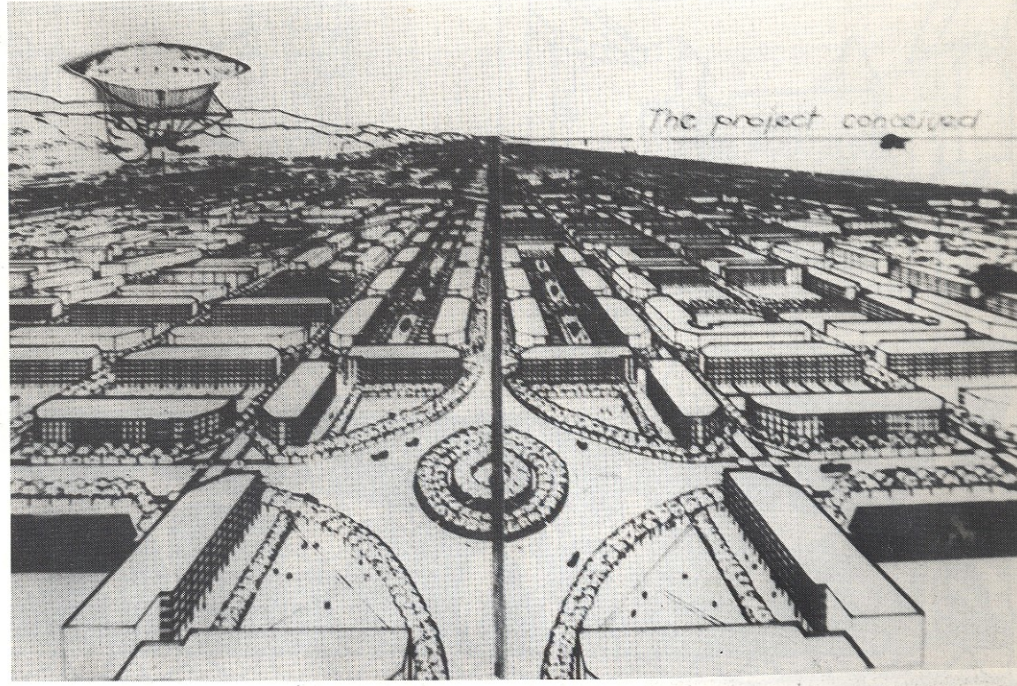
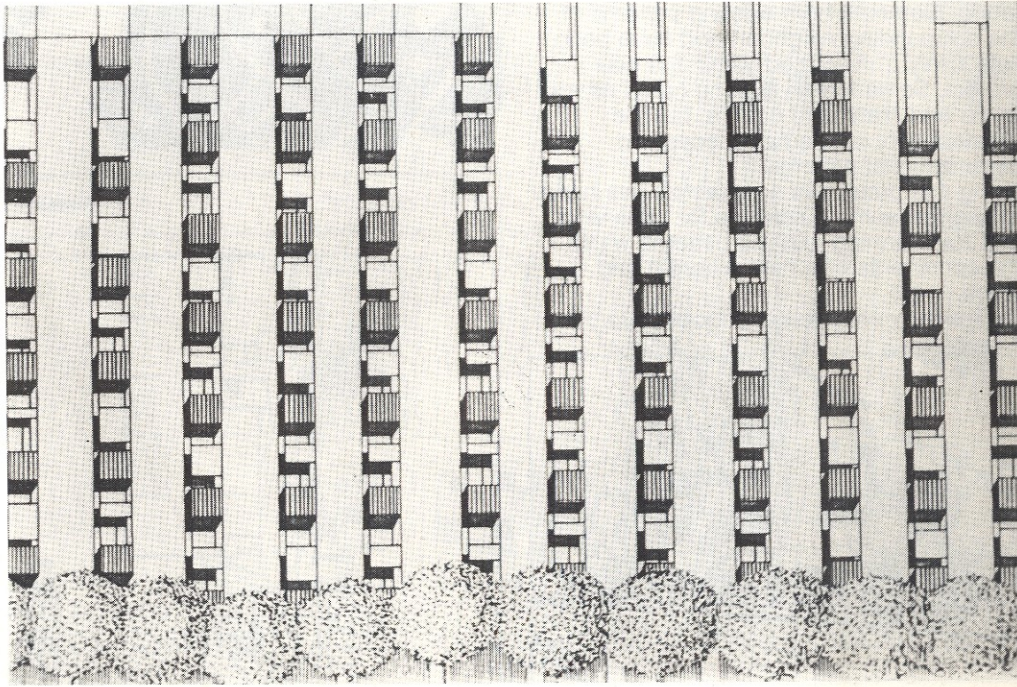
The first solution introduces only a new skin that unifies the façade. We don't touch the inside of the houses at all, redesigning only the building's upper part and its balconies that will coincide with the existing openings. In this way, although it is easy and economical to execute it, we get a new image.

The other project starts thinking about the creation of a back-drop of the Sagrada Familia Square.

The project proposes to use the existing architectural support in order to improve the conditions of 60 m² Barcelona 80' apartments next to an unexpected open space.

Actually, we dealt with the construction (in terms of process and materials) of a skin with the aim of serving certain spaces with no other qualities than those given by the new façade. The use, the light conditions (from illumination to darkness), and the construction logic, determined the dimensions, the measures and the sections.

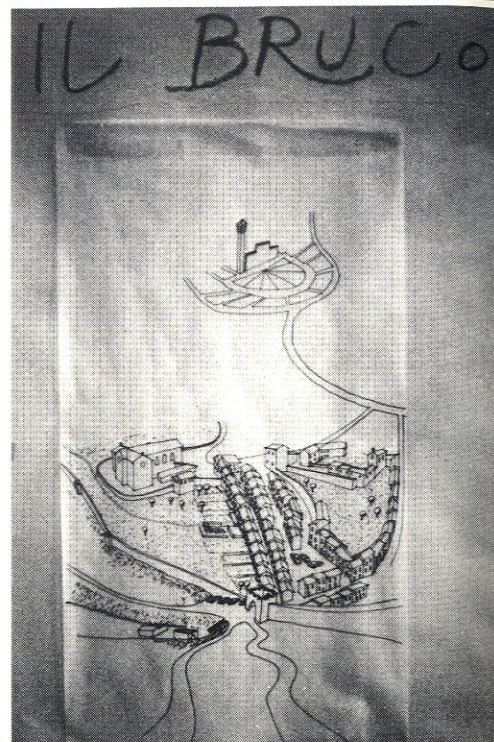
We looked at how the building stands on the ground: The basement is support and underneath shadow of the curtain.



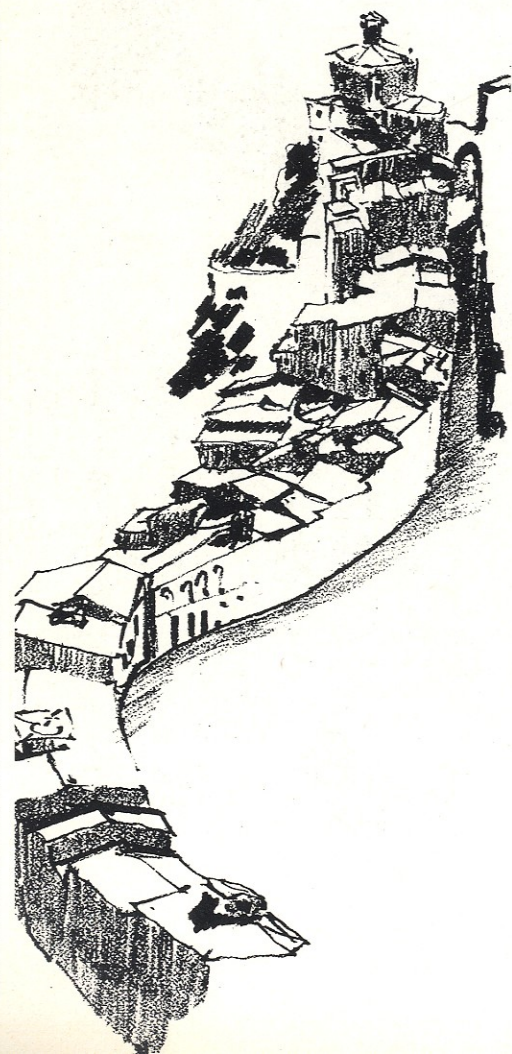
Il Bruco

"Bruco" is the name of a *contrada* (neighbourhood) in the northern sector of Siena, just inside one of the town gates. The prevailing character of the area is residential, most of it needs rehabilitation both in the housing and in the open spaces just beyond. A rehabilitation plan drawn by the Commune has been realised in a very small part of the neighbourhood. We will consider another block, the western side of the sequence descending Via del Comune and arriving to Porta Ovile. The sequence is formed by a series of high buildings (3-4 floors each) that follow the contour lines.

Each unit is served internally by only one staircase. At the back of the sequence of buildings a line of orchards extends to the town walls. At present the units are in a state of decay, even if they are intensely inhabited. Also the orchards at the back are neglected. The Commune's intention was to give adequate living standards to the flats through its rehabilitation plan, changing as little as possible the original types and preserving the building's form. As already mentioned, the study has been applied only to a small sector, but a



complete documentation exists for the whole *contrada*. As it was suggested in Urbino last year, a method should be studied that could be used - by analogy - in other areas of the town. Also, this is an exercise that could contribute to clarify how - in any part of the world - a piece of urban fabric can be rehabilitated without altering the characters that give it a precise identity. In the case of the "Bruco", it is necessary to consider also the green area behind the housing, and define a private and/or public use for it.



Katrin Baumgartner Carlos Llop Joan E. Pastor Mercè Sans Il Bruco

Il Bruco, a piece of urban tissue inserted in the historic grid of Siena, keeps large green areas between the rows of houses and the wall. This neighbourhood has a high level of social interaction with a strong consciousness of *contrada*. The dwellings nevertheless do not reach acceptable standards, and the open spaces are forgotten.

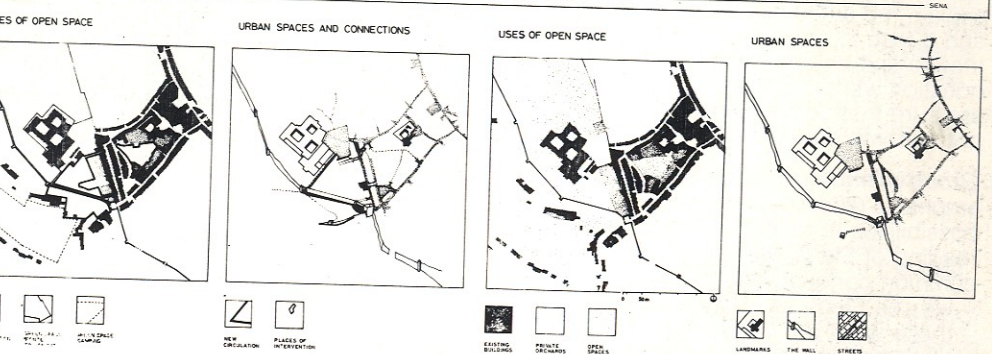
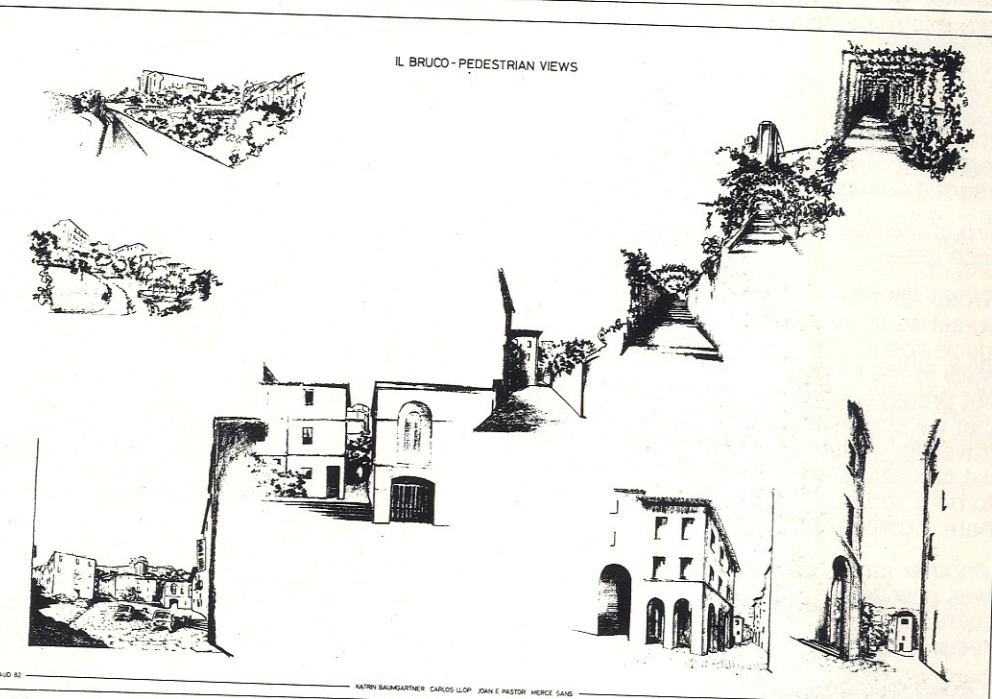
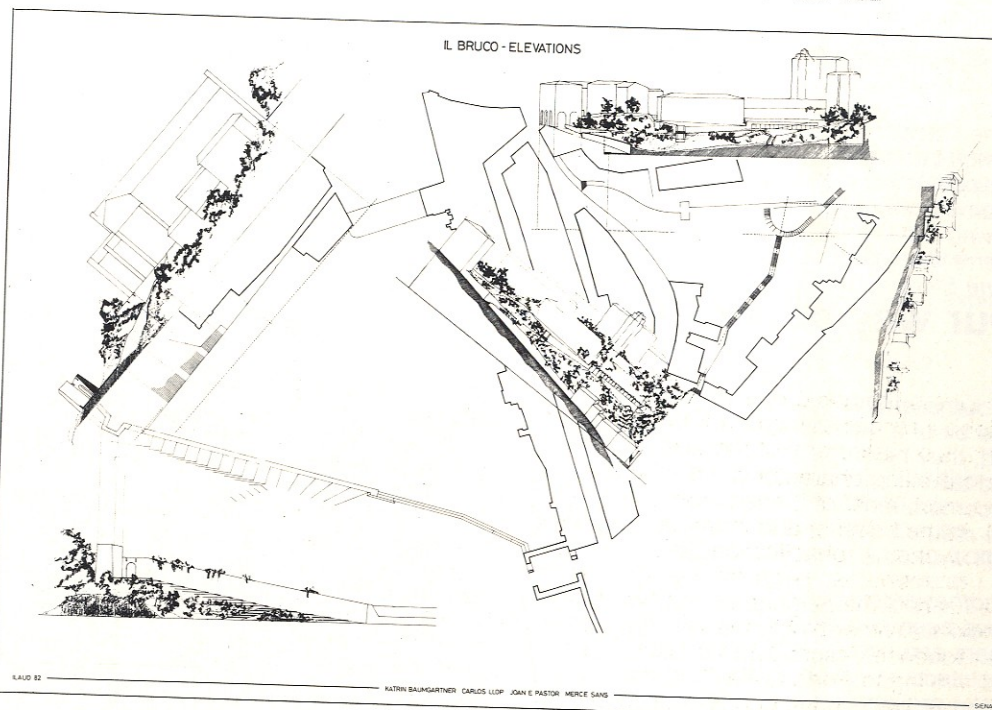
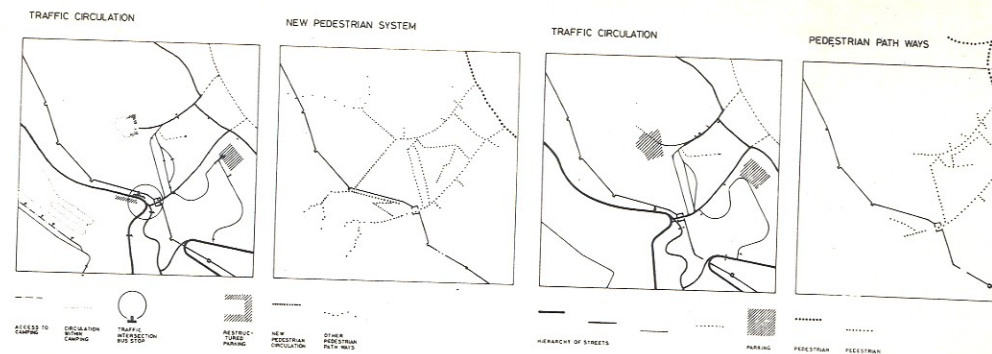
The Commune has already taken care of the rehabilitation of the houses. Our work has paid more attention to the raising of the urbanistic standards of the area, to arrange the open spaces and to make them more useful.

We could summarize our project essentially in 4 principles:

1. to intervene in three different green areas, to suggest the use of the Fonte d'Ovile valley as a camping, youth hostel or other facilities for travellers, and to use the Follonica valley as a park for the city.
2. to point out landmarks and important urban elements of the area in order to establish new connections (links).
3. to accept the conditions of the traffic, because they are on a level which is outside of our control.
4. to improve and expand the pedestrian circulation in order to connect the new green areas with the existing urban spaces and landmarks.

The changes we propose in our project are as follows:

- a. in the space between S. Francesco and il Bruco, we do not introduce important changes. We keep existing paths, platforms and terraces, and we reinforce the limits of the *contrada* in order not to introduce tensions between the public and the private space.
- We open two new passages to connect the open space with via del Comune and we connect S. Francesco with the outside road, and Fonte d'Ovile with a stair.
- b. at Fonte d'Ovile, we propose the re-organisation of the edges of the green space, a connection with the Porta d'Ovile, and we suppose that the introduction of services for travellers would be useful to revitalize this space.
- c. we leave the green space above Piazza d'Ovile as it is now (divided in private orchards) and we introduce some pedestrian connections that meet in two public platforms.
- d. we also introduce some innovations in some of the urban spaces in order to improve their actual condition and the connections between them.



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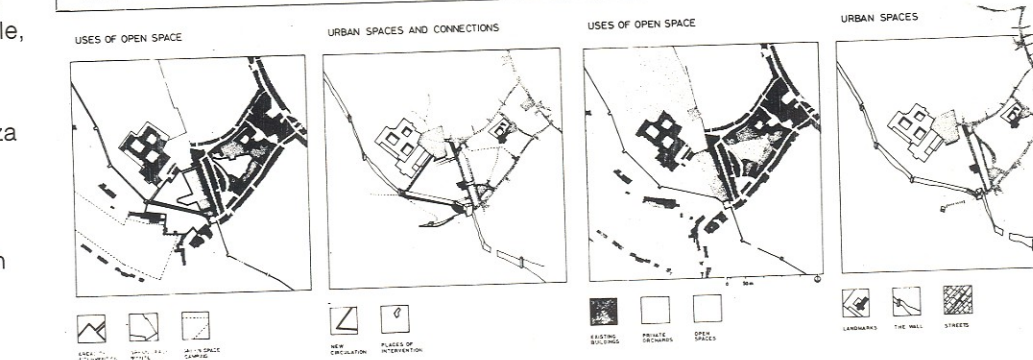
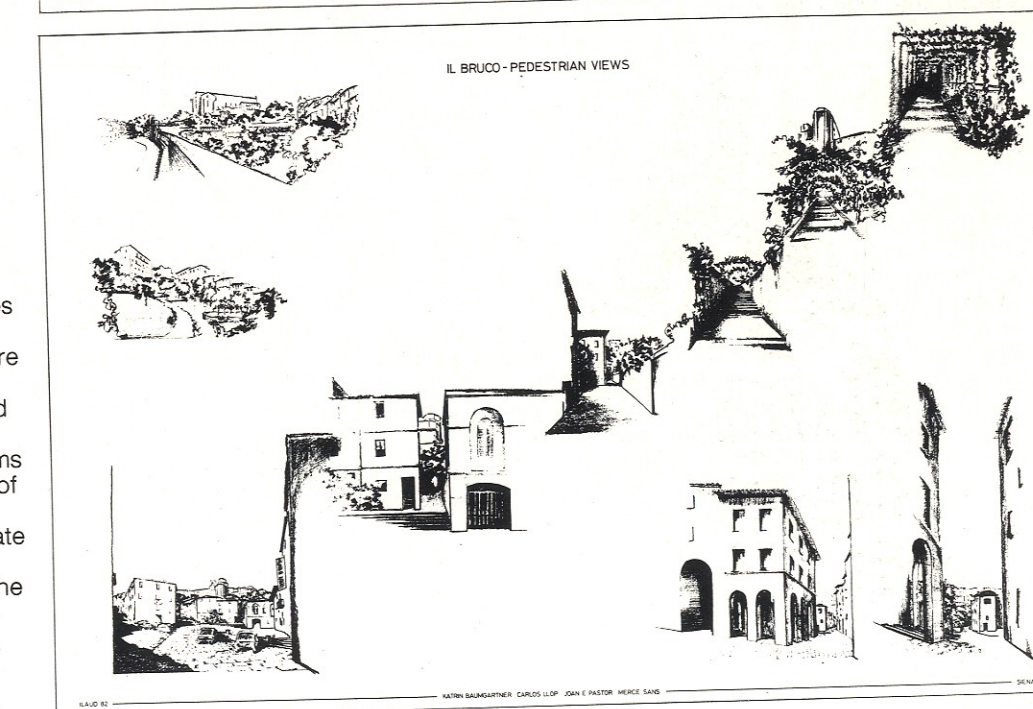
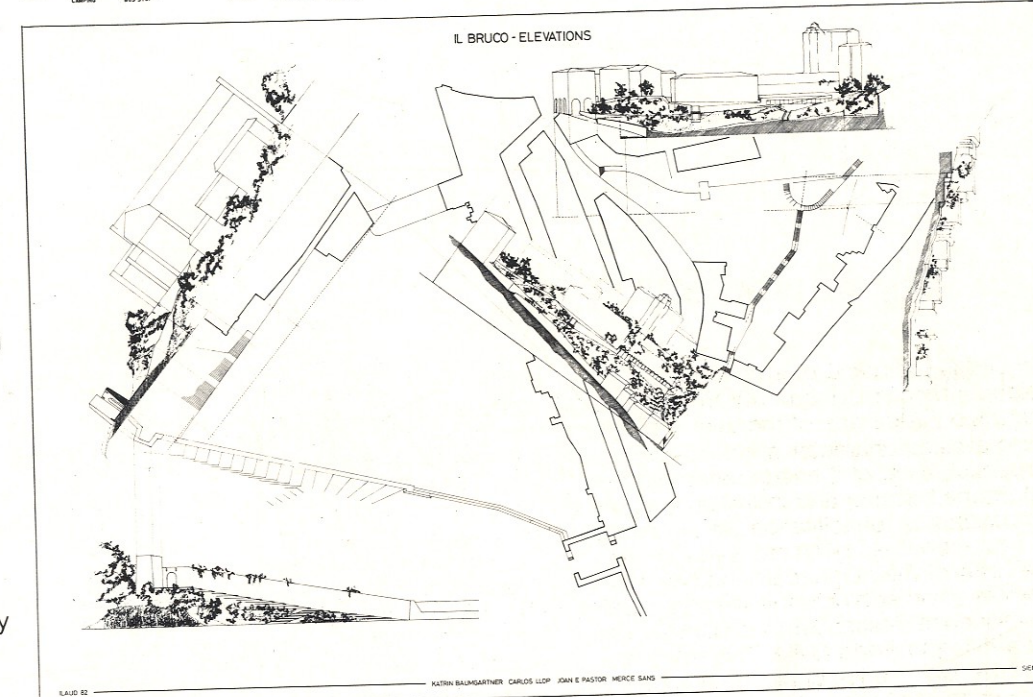
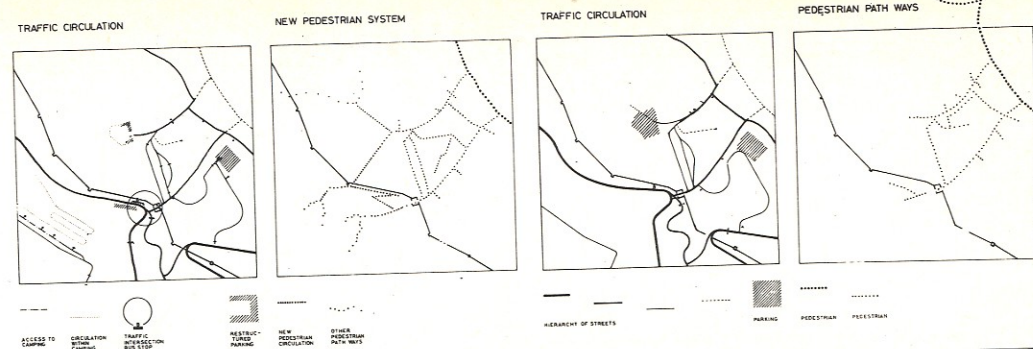
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Editing:
Connie Occhialini and Attilio Gobbi

Graphic design:
Connie Occhialini

Printed in Italy by:
Litografia Leschiera
Via Perugino 21
Cologno Monzese (MI)