

UNISCAPE *En-Route* International Seminar

Recovering river landscape

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RESILIENT LANDSCAPES: THE CASE OF THE ANIENE RIVER BETWEEN ROMA AND TIVOLI.

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Track b. *Resilient spaces of river fruition*

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The more recent European policies acknowledge greenways and “Green Infrastructure” as strategically planned and delivered networks comprising the broadest range of green spaces and other environmental features, even more so in the urban fringe, where suburbs are melted with agricultural and natural landscapes and along the rivers, often neglected.

The Aniene river, linking the eastern suburbs of Rome to the town of Tivoli, could become to all effects a Green Infrastructure called upon to hinder land use fragmentation and giving continuity to remainders of open space.

The site of Tivoli is well renowned for its sulphur mineral water springs and for the exploitation of water resources in the impressive sceneries for the gardens of Villa Adriana (II Century) and Villa d'Este (XVI Century). The City is actually on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites.

The long history of mutual interdependencies between Rome and Tivoli is physically marked both by the Aniene river and the Tiburtina consular road and economically by a series of long lasting trade exchanges. Tivoli hills have always been producing high quality olive's oil, the quarries along the Aniene River have been providing a particular white calcium-carbonate rock – the “travertino” - used in building most Roman monuments. The water power of the Aniene falls has been used since the early industrial period for paper mills and ironworks factories. From the Twentieth Century onwards, the river has partly provided for the Capital's electricity needs.

Today, what remains of all this?

Several abandoned sites and brownfields, examples of industrial archeology, are lying among illegal settlements along the river, whereas the open space is abandoned or is illegally occupied by warehouses or junkyards.

The use of the Aniene river as a greenway could allow address the manifold dimensions of open space, on the backdrop of the new “Metropolitan City”, whose extra powers could steer the inter-municipal planning process in a more strategic way. Several are the issues and the scales involved: urban agriculture and urban greening, but also re-use, re-cycle and transformation of former factories into a sort of “quality incubators” in a strategy of ecological and touristic regeneration along with small-scale solutions able to improve urban quality.

Thus, resilience encompasses both processes related to environmental sciences, such as vegetal reproductive cycles, and the physical treatment of unresolved places, prompting actions of landscape completion or even re-invention.