The new season of urban vegetable gardens in the city of Bologna: intergenerational exchanges and environmental sustainability?

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Allotment for working classes in 19th and 20th century



French family in a jardin ouvrier

The research on social gardens in Bologna

- participant observation in a municipal allotment area in Bologna
- interviews with contact persons of 4 municipal allotment areas (Barca, Nicholas Green, Maggiore, Ca Bura)
- 18 in deep interviews with "young" gardeners (with Giulia Cecchelin PhD)
- in depth-interviews or conversations with political actors and participation to meetings on vegetable gardens public policies



October 2011-September 2012 Mai 2013-Augus 2013

The institutional framework of gardening practices in Bologna: the evolution of a municipal policy

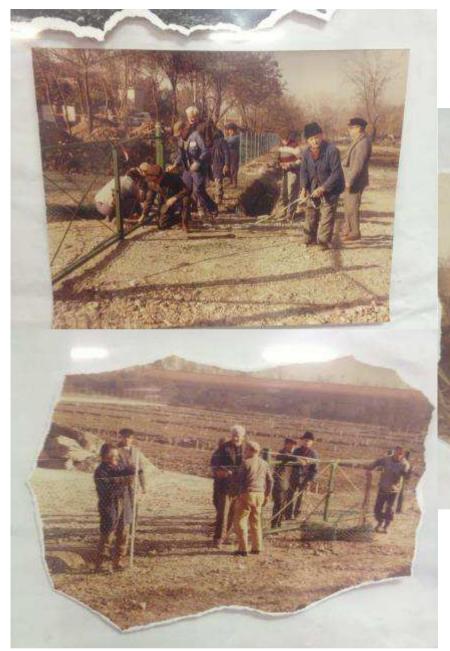
integration of elderly retired people and promotion of their active leisure and self-organization

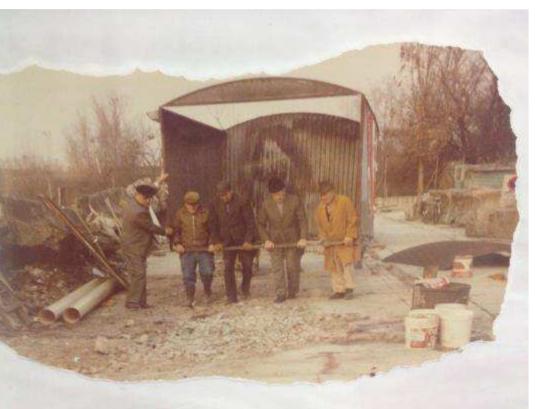
recover abandoned and illegally cultivated land





The building of an allotment area in the Eighties





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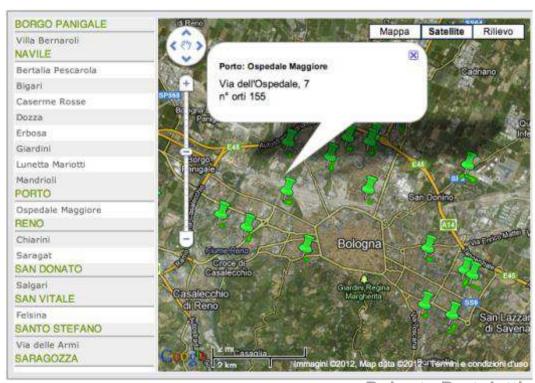
The social evolution of vegetable gardening in Bologna

Today

2677 municipal plots

321 of them (12%) are assigned to "young" gardeners (18-50 years old)

more than 1300 citizens are waiting for a municipal plot



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Are gardens spaces of development for a culture of environmental sustainability? **JUST PARTIALLY**

Do young gardeners participate in the traditional "generosity of gardeners"? **YES, BUT...**

responsible styles of food production and consumption

direct connection with nature







"Gardener's generosity" and gift culture

Intergenerational exchanges

Elderly recognition





To conclude

Young gardeners introduced a deeper sensibility towards nature and responsible styles of cultivation

Young gardeners experience connection with elderly generation,

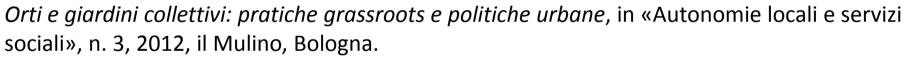
contacts that in everyday life are lost



Thank you for the attention!

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My publications on the topic:



Mappare la campagna in città: immagini tra New York City e l'Italia (with Pierluigi Musarò), in «Sociologia della comunicazione», n. 44, 2/2012, FrancoAngeli, Milano.

Pratiche di consumo e civic engagement: il consumo impegnato di natura in città, in Comunicazione e civic engagement, R. Bartoletti, F. Faccioli (eds), FrancoAngeli Milano 2013.

