



# ARQUITECTURA Y PAISAJE

**transferencias históricas  
retos contemporáneos**

VOLUMEN I

A B A D A E D I T O R E S





# **ARQUITECTURA Y PAISAJE**

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**VOLUMEN I**

## LECTURAS

### Serie H.<sup>a</sup> del Arte y de la Arquitectura

DIRECTORES Juan Miguel HERNÁNDEZ LEÓN y Juan CALATRAVA

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# Los pueblos rurales italianos de los años 50: lugares para conocer y revivir

*The Rural Italian Villages of the 1950s: Places to Know and Relive*

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## Abstract

Después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, la Reforma Agraria estableció un nuevo sistema de tierras en Italia, aboliendo la organización a gran escala y animando a los agricultores a repoblar el campo. En el sur de Italia, especialmente, muchos pueblos rurales fueron proyectados por algunos arquitectos importantes, como Ludovico Quaroni o Plinio Marconi. En los mismos años, el Régimen de Franco impulsó la construcción de unos 300 "pueblos de Colonización", a veces inspirados en los pueblos fascistas italianos de Agro Pontino. Los asentamientos españoles tenían un carácter social y económico y representaban ejemplos significativos de la vuelta al campo, así como los italianos construidos en la década de 1950. Los agricultores se alojaban cerca de sus fincas y podían aprovechar una serie de servicios públicos, sociales y religiosos especialmente diseñados. En la actualidad, estos asentamientos rurales italianos y españoles a veces han perdido su identidad debido a intervenciones radicales de renovación de edificios o a largos períodos de abandono. Por lo tanto, merecen ser conocidos por sus nuevas re-utilizaciones, ahora más que nunca, dados los problemas de vivir en ciudades densamente pobladas.

*After World War II the Agrarian Reform established a new land system in Italy, abolishing large-scale organization and encouraging farmers to repopulate the countryside. In Southern Italy, in particular, many rural villages were designed by some important architects such as Ludovico Quaroni or Plinio Marconi. In the same years, Franco's Regime encouraged the construction of about 300 "pueblos de Colonización", sometimes inspired by the Italian fascist towns of Agro Pontino. The Spanish settlements had a social and economic character and represented significant examples of a return to the countryside as well as the rural Italian villages built in the 1950s. Farmers were housed close to their estates and could take advantage of a range of specially designed public, social and religious services. Nowadays, these Italian and Spanish rural settlements have sometimes lost their identity through radical interventions of building renovations or long periods of abandonment. Therefore, they deserve to be known for new reuses, now more than ever, given the problems of living in densely populated cities.*

## Keywords

Pueblos rurales, Ley de Reforma Agraria, Plinio Marconi, pueblo Taccone, San Cataldo  
*Rural villages, Agrarian Reform Law, Plinio Marconi, Taccone village, San Cataldo village*

## Totalitarian regimes and rural architecture<sup>1</sup>

For the totalitarian regimes of the Twentieth century, rural-urban planning became a tool for transforming territorial, economic, and social systems. During the Fascist period, new agricultural villages over central and southern Italy were created. And even in Francoist Spain 300 pueblos de colonización were built. Although the time shift, there are numerous points of contact between Italian and Spanish experiences<sup>2</sup>. In both cases, the rural settlements were expressions of a triumphalist political and social ideology. They were located near existing routes in areas made arable thanks to hydraulic engineering interventions (reclamations, irrigation works). These centers, equipped with houses and facilities, were characterized by an architecture combining local tradition (materials, colors, construction techniques) and innovation (functionality and sizing of house plans).

Due to the historical period in which the Spanish Colonización took place, the desire to experience the precepts of the Modern Movement was more evident. The projects, developed in a centralized way in Madrid, constituted models that were sometimes very distant from local tradition. Their roots were in the local history – the colonization of Charles III of Bourbon – but also in Howard's utopian socialism, in the English industrial experiments, such as New Lanark, in the Italian fascist ones in the Agro Pontino<sup>3</sup>. However, they were not the small rural villages of Lazio, the urban model that inspired the Spaniards, but the towns like Aprilia with its orthogonal axes, the central square, and the Littorian tower. In fact, the Italian fascist settlement was based on a polycentric and hierarchical pattern, where small living villages gravitated around larger urban centers (3-5000 inhabitants). In Spain, the colonization favored smaller settlements (1-2000 inhabitants), self-sufficient and no more than 5 km away from each other, corresponding to a distance covered by a farm wagon in one day (module-wagon)<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, models tending towards standardization were codified. But there were some architects, sometimes well-known, who broke the rigid geometric meshes and proposed more organic solutions, open to the territory and easily recognizable. For example, the Madrilénian architect José Luis Fernández del Amo, used decomposition, fragmentation and sliding of volumes to create arcades, loggias and niches. His projects for Villalba de Calatrava, with its hexagonal geometry (fig. 1), or Cañada del Agra with an urban structure following the disposition of the land and its slopes are particularly interesting<sup>5</sup>. The use of traditional materials and

<sup>1</sup> This paper is the result of joint research; however, paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 are by A. Teodosio; the paragraph 3 is by S. Talenti.

<sup>2</sup> Moisés Bazán de Huerta, María del Mar Lozano-Bartolozzi, “El Agro Pontino italiano y los pueblos de colonización en la provincia de Cáceres”, *BSAA arte*, vol. LXXXI (2015): 203-30.

<sup>3</sup> María del Mar Lozano-Bartolozzi, “Architettura e Urbanistica nei villaggi di colonizzazione della regione di Estremadura”, *Infolio*, 35 (2020): 9-18.

<sup>4</sup> Rubén Cabecera Soriano, “La colonizzazione interna in Italia e in Spagna durante la prima metà del Ventesimo secolo”, *Infolio*, 35 (2020): 19-27.

<sup>5</sup> Ana Esteban Maluenda, José Antonio Flores Soto, “Los pueblos de José Luis Fernández del Amo. Un nuevo paisaje rural para la España de Posguerra”, in *Patrimonio e Paisagem em espaços lusófonos e hispânicos. Preservação da paisagem construída e natural*, ed. by Luiz Manoel Gazzaneo Cavalcanti (Río de Janeiro: Universidad Federal de Río de Janeiro, 2012), 10-35.

techniques did not prevent Spanish architects from producing innovative solutions that, despite the modest means, represented a synthesis of tradition and modernity.

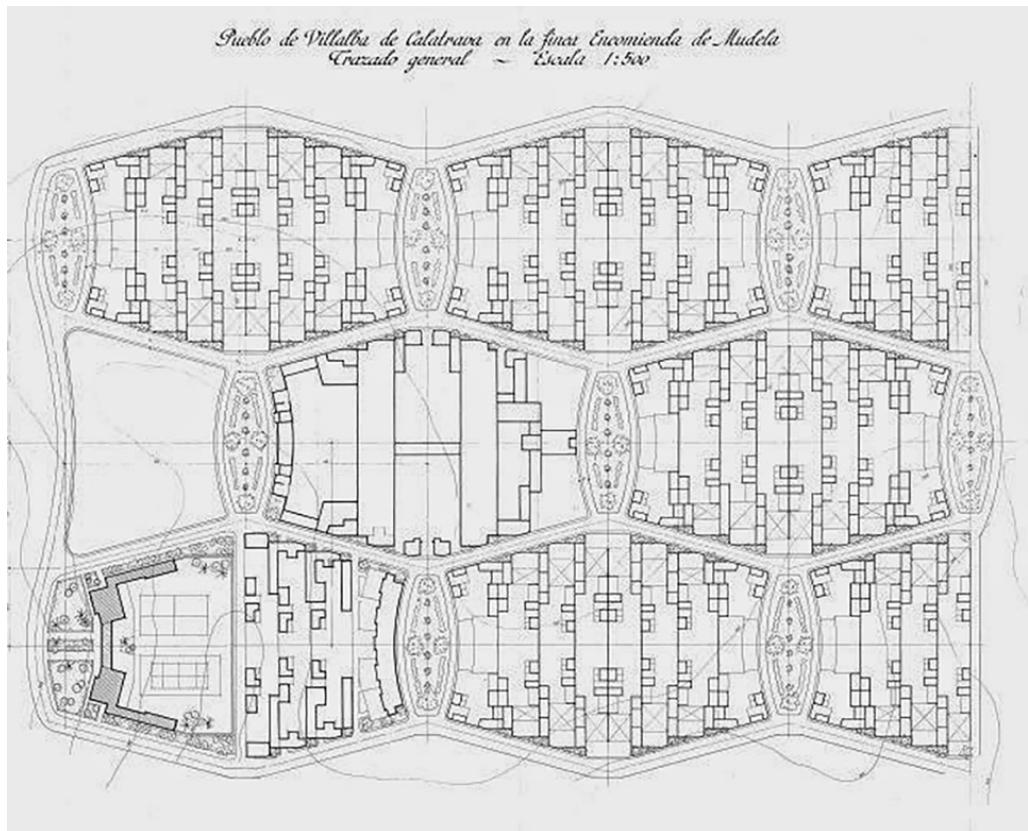


Figure 1: José Luis Fernández del Amo, *Villalba de Calatrava. Hexagonal urban structure* (Hidden Architecture Journal).

### The Agrarian Reform in Italy

Few years after the end of the Second World War, the Italian government issued the law “Regulations for the expropriation, reclamation, transformation and assignment of land to farmers”<sup>6</sup>, to reduce the climate of tension in the Italian countryside, especially in the south. This was the start of the biggest reform of the post-war period, co-financed with funds from the Marshall Plan (fig. 2).

The Agrarian Reform Law was intended to divide up the estates by redistributing land more fairly, to improve productivity by changing cultivation techniques<sup>7</sup>. This would have

<sup>6</sup> n.841, 21 October 1950, published in *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, 249, 28 October 1950.

<sup>7</sup> Antonio Valentino Simoncelli, Enzo Della Nesta, *Dalla Riforma Fondiaria allo Sviluppo Agricolo* (Roma: ETSAF-ERSAL, 1991).

prevented the abandonment of the fields, but also the overcrowding of cities and public disorder.

Great attention was paid to the precarious living conditions of the farmers who needed more dignified houses<sup>8</sup>. In Italy, there was no real division between rural and town planning. Sociologists, agronomists, and town planners agreed on the fact that the rural house, although requiring specific knowledge, had to be similar to the town dwellings in terms of technical, practical, and aesthetic requirements and had to be conceived giving precedence to “humanitarian reasons” over strictly economic ones to avoid it serving only “the land and not man”<sup>9</sup>.



Figure 2: Plan of implementation areas of the Agrarian Reform Laws in Italy in 1950 (Infolio, 35).

There was a large debate on rural planning and architecture, in search of theoretical foundations for a new typological model. As Pagano said, the traditional farmhouse “represents the living link between the land and the man who cultivates it”<sup>10</sup> and it shares with the modern house functionality and simplicity. But it was not easy to elaborate and standardize, because it was spontaneous, without rules, and greatly influenced by

<sup>8</sup> Pasquale Carbonara, *La casa rurale in Architettura pratica*, vol. I, (Turin: UTET, 1954).

<sup>9</sup> Carbonara, *La casa...* 679.

<sup>10</sup> Giuseppe Pagano, Guarnerio Daniel, *Architettura rurale italiana. Quaderni della Triennale* (Milan: Hoepli, 1936).

geographical, orographic, and climatic issues<sup>11</sup>. In the 1940s Nallo Mazzocchi Alemanni, as director of “Ente di colonizzazione del latifondo siciliano”, entrusted the design of the Sicilian villages only to young local architects to avoid “office projects” and promoting a new architecture based on the “interpretation of island forms, penetrating their spirit and adapting them to the modern functions of the buildings making up the village”<sup>12</sup>. According to engineer Mario Castelli, “applications in the practical field of mathematical solutions [...] can lead to absurd results”<sup>13</sup>, since not everything can be schematized in a numerical model or translated into figures. Therefore, the authorities in charge of the Reform and the planners involved took great care to adjust the solutions suggested by the general theoretical guidelines to the local specificities as regards the positioning and size of the new hamlets, the proportioning and location of services, roads, houses and building types<sup>14</sup>. The rural houses of the Agrarian Reform represented territorial variations of pre-established models, trying to balance the influences of the *genius loci* with the need for standardization. They responded to the principle of maximum autonomy thanks also to the facilities they were equipped with: vegetable garden, stable, storage room, oven, cistern, and well. In southern Italy, for orographic and climatic reasons, they generally had a horizontal development (single-level) with simple but functional layouts, perhaps also to optimize space and encourage repeatability. A portico allowed access to the kitchen-living room, which had a central practical and symbolic role; from here there was access to the bedrooms and bathroom. The façades were linear and sober, only distinguished by the openings and the chimneys which, in many cases, became the stylistic feature of the new villages.

### **Plinio Marconi on Lucanian land: the Taccone village**

In Basilicata, Agrarian Reform encouraged the creation of residential and productive infrastructures in the countryside, aimed at establishing the farmers on their estate. But the peasants soon abandoned their new residences because they no longer felt part of a community, being too isolated in the territory. Thus, the creation of real inhabited villages equipped with churches, service centers, schools, etc. was more successful as Scanzano Jonico, Policoro, Macchia di Ferrandina, ecc...<sup>15</sup>.

The topics of the Agrarian Reform were intertwined with the need to relocate the inhabitants of the Sassi of Matera. Architects, agronomists, sociologists, and town planners had been considering this question for some years. The Martella village (1951-54), designed by Ludovico Quaroni, was “the first post-war project to consider the problem of housing

<sup>11</sup> Pagano, Daniel, *Architettura rurale...* 75.

<sup>12</sup> Nallo Mazzocchi Alemanni, “La redenzione del latifondo siciliano: opere e problemi”, *Il latifondo siciliano* (Palermo: Arti grafiche Pezzino & figlio, 1942), 372.

<sup>13</sup> Mario Castelli, *Fabbricati rurali*, (Turin: UTET, 1948), 94.

<sup>14</sup> Carbonara, *La casa...*

<sup>15</sup> Anna Abate, Rosanna Argento, “Le trasformazioni urbane nei luoghi della riforma agraria”, *Rivista ricerche per la progettazione del paesaggio*, 18 (2012): 118-25; Ippolita Mecca. “Borghi e paesaggi rurali della Basilicata: tipologie edilizie e tecniche costruttive”, *EdA Esempi d’Architettura*, 1 (2012): 1-10.

together with that of work and social education”<sup>16</sup>. The architect did not uproot the inhabitants from their context and proposed an agglomeration that emulated the idea of a neighbourhood in the Sassi, as in the Borgo Venusio design (1953) by Luigi Piccinato, who also drew up the Matera Master Plan<sup>17</sup>. Both projects were based on a very different concept from that of Santa Maria d’Irsi in the Irsina countryside (1948-49), built by Mazzocchi Alemanni, where economic reasons inspired intensive building. Quarini himself, with a team of technicians and intellectuals including Adriano Olivetti, also worked on the “Inchiesta sulla miseria in Italia e sui mezzi per combatterla” (1952-53), which included an analysis of the traditional farmhouse. The study ended with Le Macchiette, an innovative settlement seeking to overcome the dichotomy between a centralized and a scattered village.

Plinio Marconi was one of the major actors in the planning of these rural settlements in Basilicata. This important architect-engineer, very close to the renowned Gustavo Giovannoni and Marcello Piacentini, had begun to take an interest in rustic architecture in the 1920s when he discovered the ‘nameless’ buildings of Capri and Amalfi Coast<sup>18</sup>. For him, the houses of this area would be nothing more than “an aspect of the landscape”<sup>19</sup>. He was deeply convinced that all these anonymous creations possessed an intrinsic beauty, but above all an interest in the development of future architecture. According to Marconi, it was precisely from Mediterranean tradition that it was possible to give life to a specific modern Italian architecture. The design of the Garbatella garden-city in Rome – where he had worked since 1920 as construction manager but also as an architect – arose from the careful study of these vernacular constructions<sup>20</sup>. The echo of that anonymous architecture discovered in southern Italy was flagrant in the simple and essential volumes without added decorations, in the several chimneys, the external stairs, the roof terraces, or the loggias of the buildings of the new settlement. Marconi Archive fund holds many postcards and photographs of rustic architecture on Lake Maggiore, as well as documents illustrating the spontaneous architecture of Trentino, thus confirming that his gaze and his interest ranged across the entire national territory<sup>21</sup>.

During the Thirties Marconi summarized these theoretical ideas in the entry “rustic architecture” in the *Encyclopédia Italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*<sup>22</sup>. He underlined how “rustic” did not coincide with rural or primitive architecture and was a spontaneous product, the result of the “constructive genius of the people of the land”<sup>23</sup>. On the contrary, rural

<sup>16</sup> Federico Gorio, “Il villaggio La Martella”, *Casabella Continuità*, 200 (1954): 31-8.

<sup>17</sup> Cesare De Sessa, *Luigi Piccinato architetto*, (Bari: Dedalo, 1985).

<sup>18</sup> Simona Talenti, “Plinio Marconi e l’architettura ‘senza nomi’ tra Capri e Vitorchiano”, *La città, il viaggio, il turismo. Percezione, produzione e trasformazione*, ed. by Gemma Belli, Francesca Capano, Maria Ines Pascariello (Naples: Cirice, 2017), 375-81.

<sup>19</sup> Plinio Marconi, “L’architettura rustica nell’isola di Capri”, *Le Madie. Rivista d’Arti Paesane*, 2, (1923): 21-7, 22.

<sup>20</sup> Simona Talenti, “Plinio Marconi...”

<sup>21</sup> Marconi-FOTO/sta/cit/67, Plinio Marconi Fund (PMF), Central State Archives, Rome (CSAR).

<sup>22</sup> Plinio Marconi, “Architettura rustica” in *Encyclopédia Italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, 30 (Rome: Istituto dell’Encyclopédia Giovanni Treccani, 1936), 344-6.

<sup>23</sup> Marconi, “Architettura...”, 344.

buildings – also erected in the countryside – have always been built “by educated technicians and based on well-organized designs”<sup>24</sup>. It should also be remembered that starting from 1932, the year of the competition for the Verona Town Plan in which Marconi participated, his activity in the urban planning sector had become increasingly prolific. As a consultant for the Land Reform of Puglia, Lucania and Molise from 1948 to 1960, Marconi designed Taccone village in Agro di Irsina (Potenza) and San Cataldo village in Agro di Bella (Matera)<sup>25</sup>. A few years later, in collaboration with his son Paolo (Bari Archives), he planned the service center of Lamadacqua village in Agro di Noci (Bari-Puglia)<sup>26</sup>.

The first project of Taccone village, designed by Marconi in 1952 and located in the agricultural area between Irsina and Genzano, covered a much larger area and included a greater number of dwellings. Marconi initially envisaged 480 ‘production units’ of 7 hectares each to be allocated to families of 5 people<sup>27</sup>. The houses were placed near the center of the village but were also scattered on the estates, following the gentle slopes of the hills (fig. 3). This original plan was scaled down because the farmers did not like the excessive distance between houses and farms, thus confirming the need to bring people close together. Located 15 km from other settlements, close to the railway line and the junction of an existing or planned dense road network, the village had a mixed character: alongside the residences, Marconi planned a social service center (with educational, religious, medical, social, sport facilities etc.) also serving a large surrounding area within a five-kilometer radius. Probably, the railway station encouraged the architect to design a new technical service center as well, including silos, warehouses, workshops, shelters for agricultural machinery, etc. He designed residential buildings of different kinds, depending on the various target groups: farmers, craftsmen, and public service employees<sup>28</sup>. Marconi intended to build a village that took on the character of a true and traditional rural settlement, with several service centers and mixed residential types (fig. 4).

The project report describes in detail the design of the farmhouses “transferred from the countryside to the outskirts of the village”, equipped with a farmyard, annex, and vegetable garden<sup>29</sup>. Each farmhouse stood on a plot of 800 square meters, of which  $\frac{1}{4}$  was built up. Behind the house, there were a vegetable and fruit garden, a henhouse, a pigsty, a manure store, and a stockyard, whereas at the end of the courtyard there was a single building containing a stable and a warehouse. The spatial sequence of the constructions within each farmer’s land fulfilled functional requirements but also allowed the aesthetics of the street front to be preserved.

<sup>24</sup> Marconi, “Architettura...”, 344.

<sup>25</sup> Marconi-FAS/ads/13/02, PMF, CSAR.

<sup>26</sup> The designs (1960) by Marconi relate only to the service center. They are held in the Ersap Fund (EF) at State Archives of Bari (SAB).

<sup>27</sup> Plinio Marconi, “Borgata rurale Taccone in Agro di Irsina”, PMF, Marconi-FAS/ads/13/02, CSAR.

<sup>28</sup> Carbonara, *La casa...*

<sup>29</sup> Marconi Plinio, *Relazione case coloniche della Borgata rurale Taccone in agro di Irsina*, cit. in: Domenico Domichino, “La scuola e la casa: architettura pubblica e abitazione rurale in Basilicata” (PhD thesis, University of Basilicata, 2011), 190.

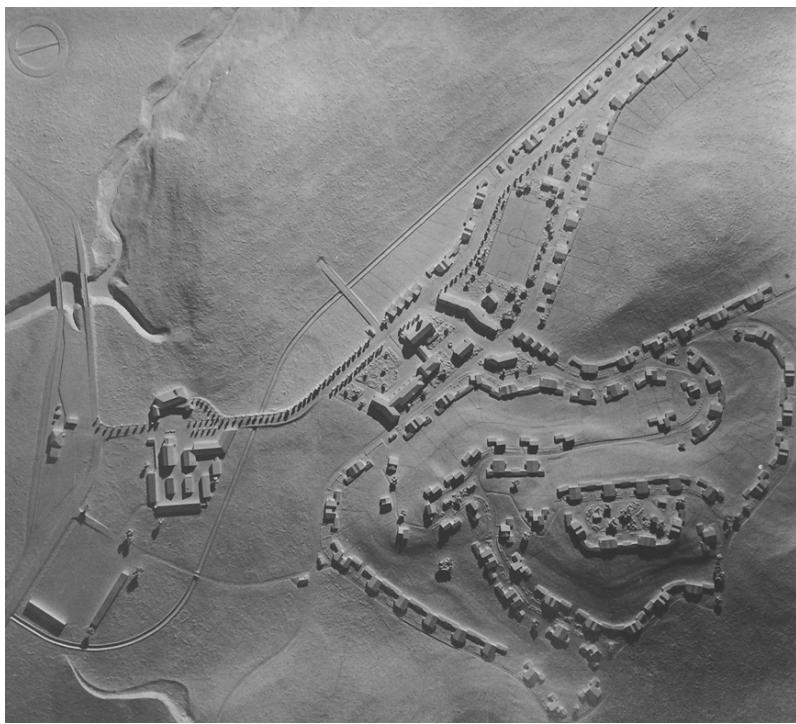


Figure 3: Plinio Marconi, *Model of Taccone village* (Central State Archives, Rome).

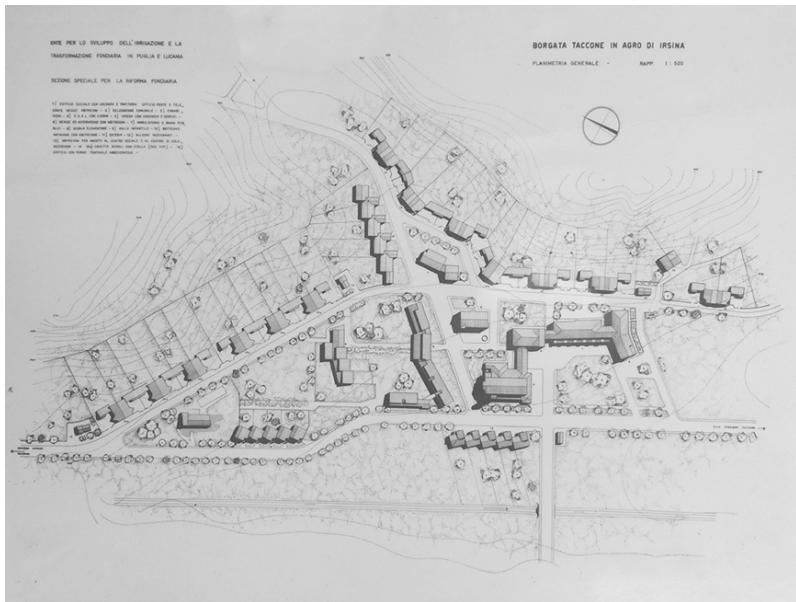


Figure 4: Plinio Marconi, *Plan of Taccone village* (Central State Archives, Rome).

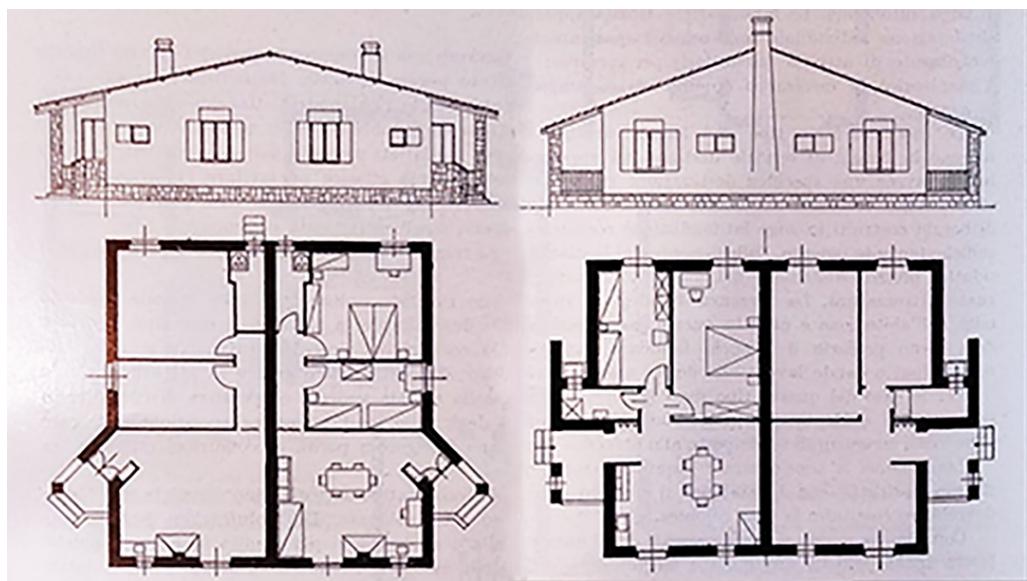


Figure 5: Plinio Marconi, *Houses Project for Taccone (lh) and San Cataldo (rh) villages*. (Central State Archives, Rome).

The farmhouses were generally coupled for economic reasons, but autonomous and independent in access and services to avoid conflicts between neighbors. Of the four types initially planned, only two (B and C) were implemented, resulting in a total of 42 dwellings (fig. 5). All the single-storey buildings had an almost square floor plan and more or less the same size – slightly more than 70 square meters each – with a small veranda-entrance and a large kitchen-living room accessed through a side entrance. Marconi's rather original solution was to create for the type C house an overhanging portico rotated at 45° with respect to the façade, for “aesthetic and hygienic purposes”<sup>30</sup>. A quite similar system was designed for type B house where the entrance was located on the corner, on a wall placed diagonally to the two directions of the facades<sup>31</sup>. These architectural options increased the “private character of the complex” by avoiding direct access from the street. At the same time, they offered greater variety to the street front<sup>32</sup>. This variety was also encouraged by different sizes of roof pitches and the use of various traditional materials (limestone, tuff, etc.) The attention paid to collective spaces – which Marconi had already displayed in his Garbatella garden-city and would later prove in some districts at the end of the 1950s, such as the De Gasperi Housing Unit in Salerno<sup>33</sup> – was expressed in the placement at road

<sup>30</sup> Domichino, “La scuola...”, 190.

<sup>31</sup> Plinio Marconi, “Borgata Taccone. Progetti e computi metrici”, 175/2, Sezione Borgate-EF, SAB.

<sup>32</sup> Marconi, “Borgata Taccone...”

<sup>33</sup> Simona Talenti, “Rethinking Salerno after the 1954 Flood: the arrival of Plinio Marconi in the city”, in *Putting Tradition into Practice: Heritage, Place and Design*, ed. by Giuseppe Amoruso (Cham: Springer, 2017), 227-33.

crossings of small buildings with facilities – including an oven, public fountain, etc. – for the use of 12 houses<sup>34</sup>. Even the church, built of reinforced concrete, whitewashed, and with a bell tower that was the only vertical element in the whole village, nevertheless established a link with its context and the central square. The stone portico, as well as acting as a shelter, sought to establish a clear material link with the nearby public center.

### **San Cataldo: a rural village on the hill**

In the same years, Marconi designed the rural village of San Cataldo in Agro di Bella (Potenza). The settlement, located in an unusual landscape (on a hill at 850 m above s.l.), was conceived to become the reference point for a wide territory<sup>35</sup>. In fact, as the Taccone village, it was sized to offer general facilities to a zone included in the radius of 5 km with a population of about 4000 people. The location of S.Cataldo was also influenced by the need to replace the pre-existing settlement composed of about 120 slums – dwellings built with local materials, with small surfaces and heights, often without windows – in which a thousand farmers lived in conditions of poor hygiene and promiscuity<sup>36</sup>.

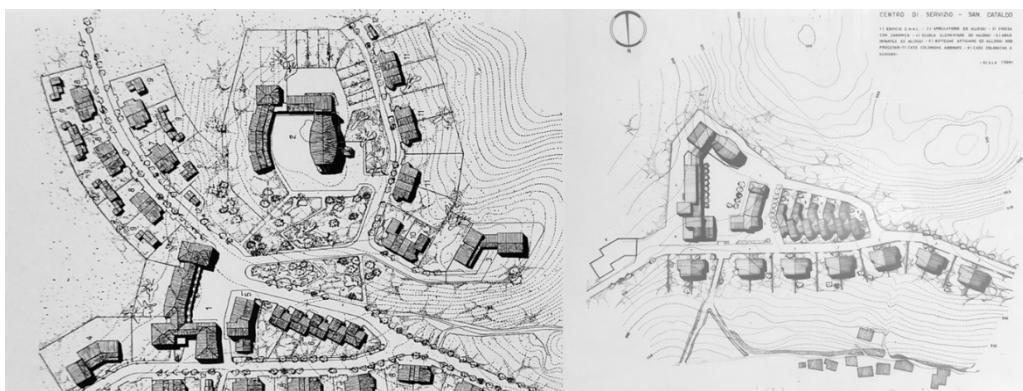


Figure 6: Plinio Marconi, *Two urban projects of San Cataldo village*. (Central State Archives, Rome).

The urban layout planned by Marconi was conditioned by the pre-existing road network and the rugged orography of the site. The first project of 1953 shows a center hinged around two squares connected to each other and with the main road arteries: the first one, located in front of the social building, porticoed, surrounded by stores and technical rooms; the other one, placed between the school and the church, open to the village but snugger<sup>37</sup>(fig. 6). The buildings' layout, as can be read in the project report, took into

<sup>34</sup> Carbonara, *La casa...*

<sup>35</sup> Plinio Marconi, “Borgata rurale in Agro di Bella (Potenza). Progetto delle case coloniche ed annessi. Relazione”, 143/1, Sezione Borgate-EF, SAB, 1-3.

<sup>36</sup> Plinio Marconi, “Borgata rurale in Agro di Bella (Potenza). Relazione”, 143/1, Sezione Borgate-EF, SAB.

<sup>37</sup> Plinio Marconi, “Villaggio rurale di S. Cataldo in Agro di Bella. Planimetria generale and Borgata rurale in Agro di Bella (Potenza)”, 143/1, Sezione Borgate-EF, SAB.

account the orientation, the amount of sunshine and also showed particular attention to the perspective views. By contrast, the realized settlement has a monocentric layout with a single square where all public functions were concentrated. Therefore, it does not seem to follow Marconi's original intentions and can be traced back to a project plan, probably later, found at the Central State Archives in Rome<sup>38</sup> (fig. 6).

The residential area has also been reduced compared to the first project by including only 32 paired or terraced residences to save building and road construction costs<sup>39</sup> (fig. 5). There were four categories of residential buildings (A, B, C1, C2), different for internal composition and the location of the accessory rooms. A particular morphology of the territory sometimes suggested a vertical development to exploit the slope of the ground. This project, even without "folkloric accentuations"<sup>40</sup>, referred to Lucanian rural architecture, as evidenced by the choice of cheap and readily available local materials (concrete and terracotta roofs with tiles, trowelled plaster, concrete slab floors) that characterized public and private buildings. Only the church, with its polygonal shape, the reinforced concrete frame, without a bell tower and with an external baptistery, constituted a technological and semantic exception (fig. 7). All the buildings were very functional and thanks to some small innovative compositional devices they aimed at improving the living conditions of the inhabitants: kitchen preceded by a porch, hallway for the sleeping area, and bathroom equipped with a squat toilet on which a shower platform could be placed. Also, the collective facilities (oven, wash houses, drinking troughs, fountain) were well distributed and proportioned to the number of inhabitants. Furthermore, the choice of alternating the sequence of residential typologies – different in plan, elevations, roofs, and architectural details, such as the chimneys emphasized or sometimes hidden – contributed to enliven the urban composition and avoid monotony (fig. 7).

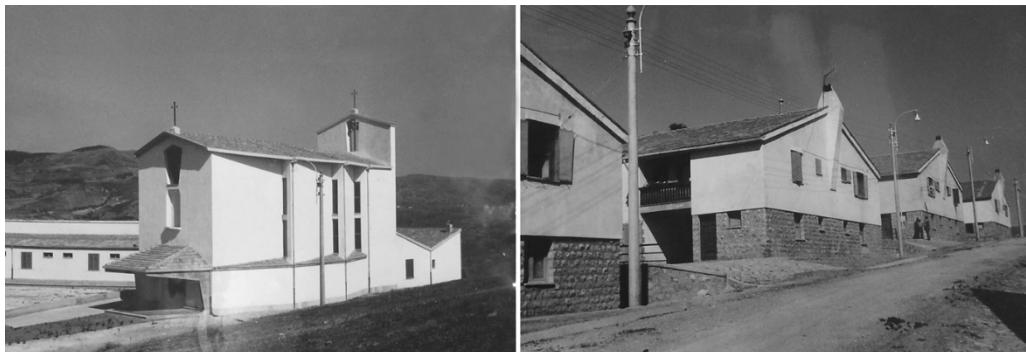


Figure 7: Plinio Marconi, *Views of San Cataldo village*. (Central State Archives, Rome).

<sup>38</sup> Plinio Marconi, "Centro di servizio S. Cataldo in Agro di Bella (PZ)", Marconi-FAS/ads/13/02, PMF, CSAR.

<sup>39</sup> Marconi, "Centro di servizio S. Cataldo..."

<sup>40</sup> Marconi, "Borgata rurale...", 4.

## Conclusions

The construction of rural villages was an important part of the Italian Agrarian Reform Law, although the topic was older and international. Settlements linked to the reclamation of large areas of the territory were built during the Fascist period, anticipating the characteristics of those of the 1950s. In the 1930s in many other European countries, from Germany to France, a debate was carried out on the issue of housing for farmers and their families. Even Le Corbusier, in 1934, elaborated a study of a rural house for a cooperative village to be built in the department of Sarthe, foreseeing a prefabrication system of modular elements<sup>41</sup>. In 1936, the Milan Triennale, curated by Giuseppe Pagano and Guarniero Daniel, constituted an important opportunity for discussion on rural architecture, highlighting its essentiality and rationality as John Ruskin had already underlined in his study on *Architectural Poetry* of 1837<sup>42</sup>.

Since the 1920s, Plinio Marconi had shown interest in vernacular architecture, demonstrating a particular sensitivity towards those social issues of living that have also characterized his later projects in Basilicata. At Garbatella garden-city, as well as in Tacccone and San Cataldo villages, the architect combined modernity and tradition, without causing estrangement. The search for a link with the Lucanian rural context was expressed at all scales. The house plans were essential but functional; as in the typical Lucanian dwelling, the kitchen kept a central role both practical and symbolic. Only the church, built in concrete, was characterized by greater formal and technological freedom, contrasting with the simplicity of the other edifices built with traditional techniques and native materials. In the villages' layout Marconi was particularly attentive to urban perception and views. To avoid the monotony of the road fronts, he used alternations, rotations, retreats of housing modules. Some unique elements such church, bell tower or chimneys, gave character and recognizability to the villages, whereas green areas led back to the model of the garden city. A similar variety of volumes characterized also the *pueblos de colonización*, realized in the same years in Spain. But if the villages of the Agrarian Reform, with their irregular and organic shapes seemed to be more similar to the historical fabrics, Franco's settlements leaned towards more defined and regular geometric patterns, confirming that modern architecture largely inspired the Spanish designers. The different attitude towards historical heritage was also evident in the use of traditional materials and techniques, probably more linked, in Spain, to political and economic issues (difficult availability, costs, lack of skilled labor) than to cultural choices.

Today, few houses continue to be inhabited and maintained as in the San Cataldo village. But often new inhabitants and renewed needs have led to profound changes. However, the traces of the old villages (stores, chimneys) continue to resurface, underlining even today the unity and quality of the original designs. Many other villages are almost totally uninhabited as Borgo Tacccone. The abandonment has caused collapses and structural failures, but it has sometimes made it possible to preserve the original features.

In Italy as well as in Spain, these rural settlements dating back to the 1950s are now unfortunately poorly studied although they often represent the result of research and

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<sup>41</sup> Carbonara, *La casa...*

<sup>42</sup> Pagano, Daniel, *Architettura...*

experimentation carried out in those years by architects and engineers of international renown. The interventions – based on archival studies and programs on a large territorial scale – are urgently needed to avoid subsequent loss of material, but also memory and identity. It is essential to safeguard the unity of the settlement and not only the single building, since the value lies in the totality of the project, in the urban layout of the village, in the architectural design choices to instill the identity of a rural and modern landscape at the same time. Today, more than ever, given the limits and problems of life in contexts with high population density, these realities could open up to new reuses by offering more sustainable living alternatives.

El paisaje es hoy un tema crucial en el debate arquitectónico, urbanístico, artístico, territorial, político, ecológico y antropológico. En la pregunta sobre qué es un paisaje se entrecruzan muchas de las grandes cuestiones que tienen que ver con la construcción y con la percepción de nuestro entorno, en un momento determinado por una crisis global que convierte a la mirada sobre nuestro hábitat en un asunto marcado por la urgencia. La centralidad del paisaje en la cultura contemporánea es un fenómeno tan reconocido que ha dado lugar a elaboraciones teóricas específicas tendentes a dar cuenta del mismo. Está claro que hoy las cuestiones relacionadas con el paisaje, en su sentido más amplio, constituyen uno de los núcleos conceptuales en los que en mayor medida se entrecruzan naturaleza, cultura, historia y contemporaneidad.

La complejidad y variedad de temas que el paisaje convoca solo puede abordarse desde una mirada transversal y desde la complementariedad de diferentes saberes y disciplinas. Tal fue el objetivo que se propuso el Congreso Internacional *Arquitectura y paisaje: transferencias históricas, retos contemporáneos*, celebrado en Granada del 26 al 28 de enero de 2022, cuyas aportaciones se recogen en el presente volumen.

