



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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retos contemporáneos

VOLUMEN I

LECTURAS

Serie **H.^a del Arte y de la Arquitectura**

DIRECTORES Juan Miguel HERNÁNDEZ LEÓN y Juan CALATRAVA

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Arquitectura, ciudad y paisaje en el proyecto de Sabaudia en el Agro Pontino

Architecture, City, and Landscape in the Sabaudia Project in the Agro Pontino

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Abstract

Inaugurada en 1934, basada en un proyecto de Piccinato, Cancellotti, Montuori y Scalpelli, Sabaudia se cita a menudo como uno de los logros más importantes de la Italia fascista. Por su trazado urbanístico, siempre se ha considerado diferente al resto de ciudades pontinas, capaz de integrar las pautas de ruralización del Régimen con las indicaciones del debate urbanístico más actual. Pero la fortuna crítica también depende de la relación privilegiada que crea con el paisaje circundante: el mar Tirreno –del que la ciudad está separada por el lago de Paola, por las dunas y por el matorral mediterráneo–, la antigua Via Appia, la campiña romana, el promontorio del Circeo y una rica vegetación arbolada. Los informes del proyecto muestran claramente cómo los diseñadores tienen en cuenta el paisaje circundante, con respecto al cual planifican los recorridos, el sistema de espacios abiertos, así como las tipologías residenciales.

Inaugurated in 1934, based on a design by Piccinato, Cancellotti, Montuori and Scalpelli, Sabaudia is often cited as one of the most significant achievements of fascist Italy. Due to its urban layout, it has always been considered differently from the other cities in the Agro Pontino, capable of integrating the ruralisation guidelines of the Regime with the indications of the most up-to-date urban planning debate. But the critical fortune also depends on the privileged relationship it creates with the surrounding landscape: the Tyrrhenian sea – from which it is separated by the Lake Paola, the dunes, and the Mediterranean bush –, the ancient Via Appia, the Roman countryside, the Circeo promontory, and a wooded vegetation of great value. From the plan reports, it clearly emerges that the designers consider the surrounding landscape, with respect to which they plan the routes, the system of open spaces, as well as the residential typologies.

Keywords

Architecture, landscape, city of foundation, Sabaudia, Luigi Piccinato
Arquitectura, paisaje, ciudad de fundación, Sabaudia, Luigi Piccinato

Introduction

A “scandal” in the eyes of conservatives or, on the contrary, a striking “victory” of the Italian Rationalist Movement in the opinion of the innovators: whatever the assessment may have been, Sabaudia has always been unanimously recognized as a city capable of realizing an extraordinary relationship with the landscape (fig. 1), which made her “hostage to her own fame”¹.



Figure 1: *Sabaudia. The Circeo promontory seen from the beach*, 2018 (photo by Michele Insogna, <https://www.facebook.com>).

“Narrations” about Sabaudia

Ever since it was still a project, Sabaudia has attracted the thriving attention of critics. Immediately and enthusiastically Marcello Piacentini supports its program, guiding the composition of the competition commission. And on *Architettura* he points to it as a “Truly excellent example”² of rural construction, defining it “the concrete realization of our views on modern architecture [...], the synthesis of our aspirations and the maturity of our Movement”³, as it was conceived in “compliance with the canons that urban planning today indicates for the constitution of building groups”⁴. He also appreciates the system of open spaces, which he interprets as an innovative re-proposal of the one he put into practice in Bergamo and Brescia.

¹ Franco Purini, “Questioni pontine”, *ArchitetturaCittà. Rivista di Architettura e Cultura Urbana*, “Città pontine”, no. 14 (2006): 42.

² Marcello Piacentini, “Sabaudia”, *Architettura*, no. 6 (1934): 321.

³ Piacentini, “Sabaudia”, 321.

⁴ Piacentini, “Sabaudia”, 321.

At the same time, on the pages of *La Casa Bella*, Giuseppe Pensabene, while highlighting how much the scheme is suggested by the place (with the main roads oriented according to the prevailing winds and contour curves), argues instead that a completely new town, designed to “rise on an absolutely deserted site, and designed according to eminently practical schemes, it could have given greater impetus to free oneself from certain schemes, now obsolete”⁵. And he encourages the authors to review certain aspects, being “the pure and simple application of the so-called ‘Novecento’ [...] too little for Sabaudia”⁶.

In the article “Architettura italiana dell’anno XIV”, Giuseppe Pagano defines Sabaudia one of the three “dramas of architecture, that reached a victorious conclusion only because, at a certain moment, the Man who creates our History openly defended the Italian and artistic faith of Modern architects, and he made silence the croaking of frogs”⁷.

Gustavo Giovannoni reproduces the plan as a model in the item “Piano regolatore”, which he writes for the *Enciclopedia italiana*⁸, and Piero Bottoni points to it as an example of “the prince of urban planning for a collective social purpose”⁹, in his book *Urbanistica*.

At the same time Le Corbusier defines it as a “rêve de bergerie comme Marie-Antoinette avait rêvé les bergeries du Petit Trianon”¹⁰: in fact, he considers that, despite the efforts made, Sabaudia is unable to embody the modern city that was hoped for.

Years later, in his *Storia dell’Architettura moderna*¹¹, Bruno Zevi enhances its character of marked diversity, compared to the various achievements of the Fascist period. While, in 1964, Manfredo Tafuri writes that the manner in which it was built and the urban configuration “which should have given substance to those real problematic statements, corresponded only minimally to the declared or alleged contents; the one, that will later be recognized as the only example of a ‘rationalist’ city built in Italy, did not differ much [...] in its cardodecumanic approach, in the rhetoric of central or almost central perspectives, in its very building qualification, from academic compositional canons, grafted into an organism, on the contrary, new and intelligent as an organization between the various parts and in its relations with the territory”¹². In his opinion, therefore, Sabaudia anticipates that “ability to create more or less valid premises and operational models, but the inability to translate those premises and models into consequent configurations”¹³: and this is a contradiction that will be found accentuated in all post-war Italian urban planning.

⁵ Giuseppe Pensabene, “Sabaudia”, *La Casa bella*, no. 10 (October 1933): 30.

⁶ Pensabene, “Sabaudia”, 30.

⁷ Giuseppe Pagano, “Architettura italiana dell’anno XIV”, *Casabella*, no. 95 (November 1933): 4.

⁸ Gustavo Giovannoni, “Piano regolatore”, in *Enciclopedia Italiana di Lettere, Scienze ed Arti* (Rome: Treccani, 1937).

⁹ Piero Bottoni, *Urbanistica* (Milan: Quaderni della Triennale, Hoepli 1938): 128.

¹⁰ *Le Corbusier*, “La fattoria radieuse. Il villaggio radieux. 1933-34”, in *Le Corbusier. Scritti*, ed. Rosa Tamborrino, (Turin: Einaudi, 2003): 279.

¹¹ Bruno Zevi, *Storia dell’architettura moderna* (Turin: Einaudi, 1950).

¹² Manfredo Tafuri, *Ludovico Quaroni e lo sviluppo dell’architettura moderna in Italia* (Milan: Comunità, 1964), 34-35.

¹³ Tafuri, *Ludovico Quaroni e...*, 34-35.

Completely ignored by Kenneth Frampton in his *Modern Architecture: a critical History*¹⁴, published in 1980 – despite the author gives good space to the architecture of Italian rationalism and the themes of ideology and representation during Fascism –, and completely ignored by William J.R. Curtis in his *Modern Architecture Since 1900* in 1982¹⁵, Sabaudia is just mentioned by David Watkin in *A History of Western Architecture* in 1986¹⁶ (despite the synthesis of a work extended to a very broad chronological period), who considers it connoted by a more modern lexicon than Littoria, and only marginally cited by Paolo Sica, in his weighty history of urban planning¹⁷.

Although he agrees that the city detaches itself “decisively both from the flat monumentality of Littoria [...] and from the mediocre rural construction that will characterize the subsequent project for the third city of reclamation, Pontinia”¹⁸, Giorgio Ciucci considers that “the clear urban planning program, which expands the intervention by inserting it on a regional scale, already marked by the reclamation of the Agro Pontino, does not match an equally clear architectural solution”. In other words, he believes that in Sabaudia there emerges “that split between methodological premises and architectural solutions, which marks the experience of the plan in subsequent years, and from which only the competition project presented by Libera for Aprilia will be distinguished”¹⁹. Objecting to this analysis, Cesare De Sessa argues that in Sabaudia “the reduced height of the buildings was intended to be an opposition to the monumental rhetoric advocated by the regime”, and he argues that “if at the urbanistic level [the designers] set up a rational plan, in the architectural artifacts they tried to introduce a multiplicity of ‘suggestions’, which in a certain sense advanced it, while also referring to the language of rationalism, or in any case he ‘recalibrated’ it by adapting it to express that condition of estrangement, of overflowing subjects, typical of the most vital intellectuals of the period”²⁰.

In the opinion of Guido Zucconi, then, the project represents an indisputable turning point in the thinking of the 20th century urban planners, capable of marking the shift of attention from the question of the master plan to the problems of the territory. Even if, in his opinion, “to analyze it well, beyond the celebrations of fascism and the history of modern Italian architecture, Sabaudia is nothing more than a small theme of ‘city building’ placed in the middle of a vast plan of farms elaborated by the Opera Nazionale Combattenti (Piccinato himself in a moment of sincerity will speak of ‘modesty of the urban planning theme’)”²¹.

And again, Vincenzo Fontana, underlining the rational plan and the opening “towards Lake Paola and the view of the Circeo”²², notes that there is a “qualitative leap between urban

¹⁴ Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (London: Tames and Hudson, 1980).

¹⁵ William J. R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900* (London: Phaidon, 1982).

¹⁶ David Watkin, *A History of Western Architecture* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1986).

¹⁷ Paolo Sica, *Storia dell'urbanistica. Il Novecento* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1991).

¹⁸ Giorgio Ciucci, *Gli architetti e il fascismo* (Turin: Einaudi, 1989), 139.

¹⁹ Ciucci, *Gli architetti e...*, 139.

²⁰ Cesare De Sessa, *Luigi Piccinato architetto* (Bari: Edizioni Dedalo, 1985), 172.

²¹ Guido Zucconi, *La città contesa. Dagli ingegneri sanitari agli urbanisti (1885-1942)* (Milan: Jaca Book, 1988), 173.

²² Vincenzo Fontana, *Profilo di architettura italiana del Novecento* (Venice: Marsilio 1999), 176.

design, based on the most advanced European models, and the architecture of public buildings that does not go beyond the repetition of simplified 20th century schemes”²³. Alessandra Muntoni highlights how much the Sabaudia plan opens towards the promontory and the “Selva del Circeo”, and how much it extends over Lake Paola and the coastal dune; and she judges Sabaudia, together with Guidonia, an example of a singular and “almost magical” balance between modern European urban planning, the tradition of the medieval Italian city and “the Mediterranean stamp of rational architecture”²⁴.

Paolo Portoghesi identifies it as Piccinato’s undisputed masterpiece: “a modern city equally nourished by three apparently antithetical factors: the profound link with the tradition of historic urban spaces, the linguistic rigor of Italian rationalism and a propensity that we could define as ‘organic’ for the interaction between urban image and natural scenery”²⁵.

And finally – just to mention some of the many who have written about Sabaudia – Franco Purini recently spoke for it of a “modern drift of a cardodecumanist layout”, “modern disguise of a traditional structure”²⁶, which proves inadequate to support a city conceived under the banner of a relevant settlement experimentalism, and where, on the contrary, an authentic typological and morphological research is lacking.

The reclamation of the Agro Pontino

Since Roman times, various reclamation projects had been concentrated in the Agro Pontino. In the 16th century, some “illustrious” hypotheses were also presented, including one from the Leonardo school. But it was only in 1917 that, following a design by the Civil Engineers of Rome, the general plan of reclamation started, which was at a mature stage when Fascism took power. At the same time, the ancient possessions of the Church in the Pontine marshes are affected by the law for the abolition of civic uses and by the provisions for reforestation for the regulation of rivers, lakes and waterways extended throughout the country.

Thus, while thousands of laborers are employed to carry out the restructuring works of the territory (fig. 2), there is a need to create small administrative entities in charge of management.

And it is in this context that the law for complete reclamation was passed in 1928. Developed since the early 1920s by Arrigo Serpieri, it not only provides for the drainage of water but also prepares a more complex plan for the redevelopment of the territory, the redistribution of agricultural land and the enhancement of cultures (but in fact there will be an exploitation land intensive according to traditional canons), a network of road infrastructures, as well as the construction of new rural complexes. The works began in 1931, and the commissioner of the Opera Nazionale Combattenti, Valentino Orsolino Cencelli, was in charge of them.

²³ Fontana, *Profilo di architettura...*, 176.

²⁴ Alessandra Muntoni, *Lineamenti di storia dell'architettura contemporanea* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 2005), 202.

²⁵ Paolo Portoghesi, *I grandi architetti del Novecento* (Rome: Newton Compton, 2016), 376-381.

²⁶ Portoghesi, *I grandi architetti...*, 42.



Figure 2: *Reclamation of the Agro Pontino*, about 1928 (Consortium for the Reclamation of the Agro Pontino).

The operation becomes a sort of amplification chamber of that 'ruralism from the trench' heralded by Mussolini, starting from the *Discorso dell'Ascensione* in 1927. In fact, if initially the Opera does not formulate specific hypotheses for the assignment of the lands, on which thousands of people lived in precarious conditions for centuries, later the Duce orders that they be attributed to the fascists of the regions most tried by unemployment, like Emilia-Romagna and Veneto, also to fulfil the promise made during the Great War, summarized in the cry "land to veterans".

As is well known, the design provides for a regular rather random territorial grid, only adequate for orographic irregularities: at a first level there is the subdivision of the farms, with an extension of between 15 and 30 hectares, with single-family houses aligned along the narrow streets between the farms; at a second level, the villages, about thirty, formed by the aggregation of a hundred houses; on the third level, the so-called "new towns", strategically located at the points of convergence of the main road axes, with a representative role.

Moreover, despite some opposition from the more radical left, which in decentralization identified a threat to the metropolitan proletarian revolution, since the 1910s the idea of a garden city, understood as a residential industrial and agricultural entity, had become the

word of the order and the guiding image of all European and American reformism. And among the formal connotations it assumes, there is also the new town²⁷.

In fact, however, at first, we do not speak of towns but of rural municipalities, being the first considered to be in contrast with the anti-urbanism policy of the Regime. But the Duce soon realizes that the founding act of new cities can constitute an extraordinary propaganda operation. And it is therefore that when Littoria inaugurates, despite having given up attending the ceremony of laying the first stone, he triumphantly announces the foundation of Sabaudia.

But precisely the role assumed in relation to the rhetoric of the Regime entails, however, that the layout of the reclamation works and the design of the cities are not very organic one another.

Sabaudia between History and Project

Sabaudia has the task of coordinating the activity of the second reclamation lot of 14,000 hectares, whose works began on February 23, 1933, and were inaugurated on December 18, 1933, under the guidance of the engineers Ugo Todaro and Caio Savoia.

The national competition for the urban plan project is announced on 21 April 1933, and the deadline is set for 25 May: just two years have passed since the first MIAR exhibition, during which Mussolini had guaranteed his keenest interest in rationalist architecture, prompting many professionals to take the side of Italian rationalism, with the air with which one joins a party political rather than a cultural movement²⁸. At the same time, the victory of the Tuscan Group in the competition for the Florence station, the opening of the V Triennale di Milano towards the best European rationalism, and the participation in the IV Ciam had consolidated the Italian role in the panorama of European rationalism.

The notice, promoted by the National Opera for Combatants (established in 1917 and remodelled in 1926), provides only for the participation of Italian architects and engineers registered with trade unions and their respective professional registers. Competitors are allowed ample freedom of initiative, provided that the plan constitutes an eminently rural centre, based on the criteria of hygiene, economy, traffic, and aesthetics, intended for 5,000 inhabitants, in addition to a further 15,000 to be installed in the within the entire municipal area. Furthermore, the plan must include all the public services necessary for the functioning of the centre: the Municipality with the tower, the Fascio building, the Dopolavoro, the Militia barracks, the Casa del Balilla, the church with bell tower and parish house, the kindergarten, the elementary schools, the hospital, the Maternity and Childhood Opera, the Fighting associations, the management of the Opera Nazionale Combattenti, the post office, the sports field, the covered market, the hotel, the cinema, the slaughterhouse, the shops, the cemetery; to these, obviously, are added the buildings for residential use.

The examining commission – which must include, among others, a representative of the Sindacato Nazionale Architetti, one of the Sindacato Nazionale Ingegneri and one of the

²⁷ Riccardo Mariani, “Città nuove pontine”, *ArchitetturaCittà. Rivista di Architettura e Cultura Urbana*, “Città pontine”, no. 14 (2006): 17.

²⁸ Mariani, “Città nuove...”, 20.

Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica, the Head of the Reclamation Service, the Director of Reclamation Works – is chaired by Gustavo Giovannoni, and composed of Vincenzo Fasolo, as well as Adalberto Libera, significant presence of the “modern” front, as consultant of the PNF. Thirteen groups of designers participate in the first-degree competition, three of which are admitted to the second degree, including Oriolo Frezzotti and Angelo Vicario.

The group of winners, consisting of Gino Cancellotti, Eugenio Montuori, Luigi Piccinato and Alfredo Scalpelli, is entrusted with the design of the buildings making up the central nucleus, as well as the final drafting of the master plan. Oriolo Frezzotti oversees the school project, the Casa del Balilla, the sports field and the water tank, while Angelo Vicario, the hospital, the sports field, the farm, and the cemetery.

The first stone was laid on August 5, 1933. Up to 4,560 workers work on the construction: and, thus, after only 253 days, six before the official forecasts, Sabaudia is inaugurated. It is April 15, 1934.

In the meantime, with the law of 25 January 1934 n. 285, the Circeo park is established, on an area of 8,000 hectares, part of the ancient Selva di Terracina.

From the beginning, the relationship that Sabaudia programmatically establishes with its territory and with the landscape is remarked by Piccinato in the well-known article “Il significato urbanistico di Sabaudia”²⁹, which was interpreted by Franco Purini as part of a skilful strategy aimed at generating consensus, with which the Venetian designer takes care to attract the attention of the public and the interest of the critics, aware of the purposes and implications of the entire reclamation operation³⁰.

Piccinato’s long premise focuses on the difficulty of defining Sabaudia a city, both in relation to the idea of closure that it implies, and in relation to the size and above all the “parasitic” role that the city plays towards the countryside, a role opposed by the structure di Sabaudia which refers to a strong dispersed production network.

Regardless of whether marking the difference between “agricultural urban centre” and city may, or may not, constitute an “ambivalent and [...] contradictory falsification”³¹, however, the conditioning that the territory and the landscape exert on the project is undeniable. Piccinato rightly observes that “the region is one of the most beautiful and evocative in Italy: covered in part by woods, it is closed to the south by the isolated massif of Mount Circeo and by the last offshoots of the Ausoni mountains towards Terracina. The straight line of the Appia limits the territory to the north-east, the sea to the southwest. Towards the sea, parallel to this and separated by a thin strip of dunes (about 300 meters wide), there is the very long lake of Paola which goes eastwards with five arms like *fiords*”³²: natural elements of beauty that constitute a “suggestive setting and a unique environment”³³.

²⁹ Luigi Piccinato, “Il significato urbanistico di Sabaudia”, *Urbanistica*, no. 1 (January-February, 1934): 10-24.

³⁰ Purini, “Questioni...”, 42.

³¹ Purini, “Questioni...”, 42.

³² Piccinato, “Il significato...”, 13.

³³ “Criteri generali e caratteristiche del piano regolatore di Sabaudia”, *Urbanistica*, no. 6 (November-December 1934): 331.

As soon as in the inhabited area, “the large reclamation road widens and points directly to the urban centre with an axial view of the tower of the municipal seat that will already be seen many kilometres away. [...] Before entering the square, the large road meets via di Terracina, and after a bayonet, necessary for the traffic sorting, continues straight ahead to the west beyond the peripheral road and crosses the lake on a bridge to reach the coast and the sea”³⁴. Connection with the sea that will only be built in 1962, and was inaugurated three years later, based on a project by Riccardo Morandi.

At the intersection of the main roads, the small centre takes place, with the Town Hall square, “dominated by the tower with the arengo and from this towards the south and towards the lake a second large free square opens which points to the view of the mount Circeo, which [constitutes] its background. These two squares therefore form a typical L-shaped system, which is frequently found in the ancient systems of squares in Italian cities”³⁵ (fig. 3). The centre, therefore, is arranged around a system of open and concatenated built spaces, which become a reference point for the main activities, and whose civic and symbolic program intentionally transcends the simple dimension of an agricultural economy town: it is a dynamic sequence that seems to change with the observer’s position.

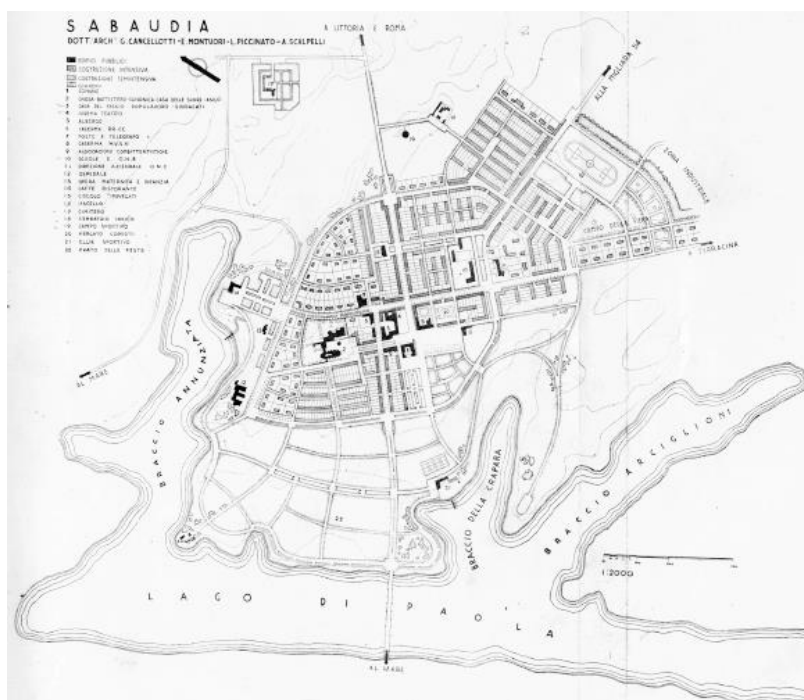


Figure 3: Gino Cancellotti, Eugenio Montuori, Luigi Piccinato and Alfredo Scalpelli, *Sabaudia. Project plan*, 1933 (Piccinato, “Il significato...”, 19).

³⁴ Piccinato, “Il significato...”, 17-18.

³⁵ Piccinato, “Il significato...”, 20.

In the complex of open spaces, natural elements, including water, play a fundamental role. A system of multiple reticular or linear connections arises, generating a concatenation of planimetric figures: portions of symbolic summary of nature open to recreational and meeting uses, which, compared to the minute size of urban fabrics, introduce a contrast of scale.

These are not isolated figures but placed in connection using linear elements to form a system that goes beyond the confines of the built space to ideally join the landscape. The transition to which is mediated by some of the main axialities, clearings and artificial woods on the edges of the city, which reaffirm the programmatically open urban form. In this regard, Piccinato writes that the system of green areas penetrates the building structure and opens to the outside, enhancing panoramic views and bringing “the pure air of the woods and the sea” into the built-up area³⁶.

Therefore, if for dimensional reasons in Sabaudia the zoning – one of the fundamental elements of the plan – is necessarily “limited to very few categories and is distributed with the utmost simplicity”³⁷, the design of the green spaces, another fundamental aspect of the plan “à la Piccinato”, is strongly explicit (fig. 4).

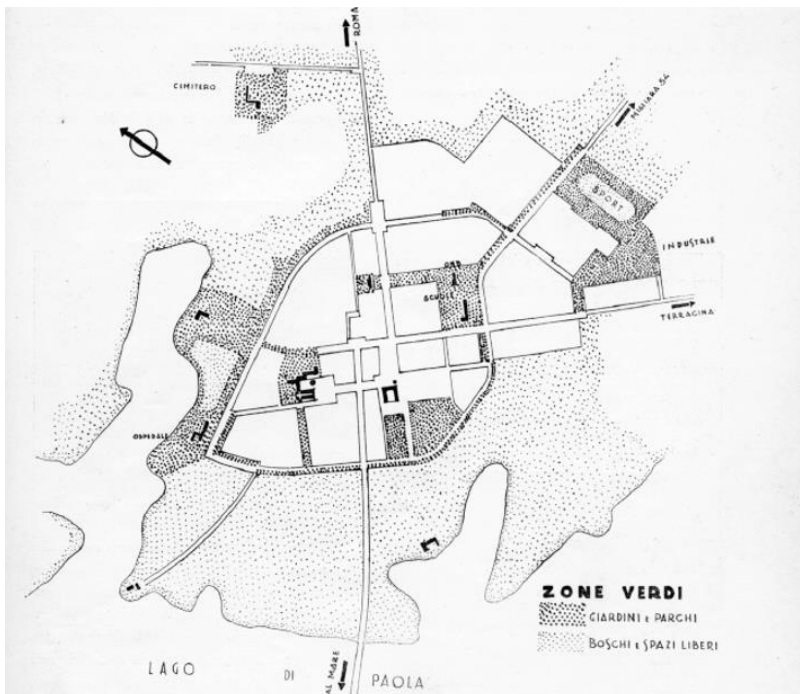


Figure 4: Gino Cancellotti, Eugenio Montuori, Luigi Piccinato and Alfredo Scalpelli, *Sabaudia. Plan of the green areas*, 1933 (Piccinato, “Il significato...”, 19).

³⁶ Piccinato, “Il significato...”, 23.

³⁷ Piccinato, “Il significato...”, 21.

And it is therefore for this reason that, according to Piacentini, Sabaudia manages to reflect one of the most typical and significant characteristics of modern architectural training, “that of wanting to go down to the roots of the art of building, considering, before the type of buildings, the connection of them with the environment”³⁸. Through a clear understanding of environmental values and their skilful use for architectural purposes, the building ensemble fits into the surrounding nature with “masses [that] never enclose hermetic spaces; [because] like wings they are cleverly composed, so that the large fractures penetrate the landscape everywhere, especially in its most important views, such as those of Circeo and Lake Paola”³⁹; elements that polarize the design of the city, resulting in the alignment of the two emergencies, such as the church bell tower and the Torre Littoria (fig. 5).

The Director of *Architettura* thus highlights not only the creation of a unitary environment, in which dominant landscape and architectural elements are enhanced through the study of precise views, but also the idea of an organism where part and everything are inseparable.



Figure 5: Gino Cancellotti, Eugenio Montuori, Luigi Piccinato and Alfredo Scalpelli, *Sabaudia. View of the Town square*, 1930s (Consortium for the Reclamation of the Agro Pontino).

³⁸ Piacentini, “Sabaudia”, 321.

³⁹ Piacentini, “Sabaudia”, 322.

In this context, the road system is characterized by a hierarchy, which identifies: main internal streets of the first order of magnitude (18-20 meters wide), main roads of second order of magnitude (14-16 meters wide), subdivision or residential roads (8-10 meters wide) and subdivision or residential roads (4-6 meters); while the building is characterized by the repetition of a variety of figures, each based on a simple rule capable of producing a recognizable part of the city, ordered according to a progressive rarefaction, which moves from the centre towards the outside. Thus, in the central areas there is above all the 'intensive' residence, made up of two-storey houses, in addition to the land, and apartments with horizontal division; the terraced houses (fundamental residential group) are then distributed within the large mesh of main roads, characterized by a height of two floors, a vertical division of the apartments, and the detachment from the road line; and, finally, distributed towards the most valuable points of view, and rarely grafted near the centre, the combined and isolated houses appear characterized by a height of two floors in addition to the ground one, a covered area of 100 square meters, and by a distance from the boundaries of at least five meters. All lodgings have a large garden of 250 square meters, except for the most central houses, which have gardens for children's games. In any case, however, the green spaces are designed to open outwards, also through the inclusion of tree-lined streets and the enhancement of the panoramic views. The shape of the buildings, their mass, the prevalence of flat and horizontal lines, the light colour, the long arcades, the pergolas clearly move in the direction of a “modern” and open *forma urbis*, being also exhibited as “a very Italian architecture [...] [with] a clear Mediterranean flavour in perfect harmony with the harmonious landscape that surrounds it”⁴⁰.

The prevalent horizontal position, where only rare points are marked through vertical architectural elements, is intended to recall the horizon line and the calm of the surrounding plain (fig. 6), towards which the city projects itself.

⁴⁰ “Criteri generali e...”, 340.



Figure 6: *Sabaudia. The dunes*, 2018 (photo by Michele Insogna, <https://www.facebook.com>).



Figure 7: Pier Paolo Pasolini, *La forma della città*, 1974 (Frames from the movie).

Conclusions

Alongside the original natural landscape, the reclamation has created a completely new one, “in which there is almost more of a Greek echo than a Roman memory”, with a relationship made of antagonism and identification, which ends up imposing Sabaudia as “unique and necessary”⁴¹.

Thirty-eight years later Piccinato will return to work on the drafting of the new master plan, at a time when the fate of the city is clearly oriented in a “tourist-seaside” direction⁴². Meanwhile, Sabaudia has attracted literary authors and directors: from Alessandro Blasetti with *Il sole* (1929) to Pietro Maria Bardi with the screenplay *L'americana a Sabaudia* (1935), from Pier Paolo Pasolini with *La forma della città* (1974) (fig. 7) – who describes it as “miraculously beautiful, of a strange, almost esoteric, almost exotic, oriental purity with those kinds of towers that look like minarets in the grey air”⁴³ – to Bertolucci con *La luna* (1978), to name a few among many, which capture the indissoluble relationship between city and landscape.

After all, despite the criticisms, Le Corbusier also agreed that “Sabaudia is a sweet poem, perhaps a little romantic, full of good taste, [but] a sign of evident love”⁴⁴.

⁴¹ “Criteri generali e...”, 44.

⁴² Luigi Piccinato, “Piano regolatore di Sabaudia”, 1971, in *Relazioni ai piani regolatori 1926-1974/1975-1977* (Rome: Self-printed, 1978), 876.

⁴³ *Pasolini e... la forma della città*, season 3, episode 9, “Io e...”, directed by Paolo Brunatto, written by Anna Zanoli, interpreted by Pier Paolo Pasolini e Ninetto Davoli, broadcast on February 7, 1974, RAI-Tv, min. 11.

⁴⁴ *Le Corbusier*, “La fattoria radieuse. Il villaggio radieux. 1933-34”, in *Le Corbusier. Scritti*, ed. Rosa Tamborrino, (Turin: Einaudi, 2003): 279.

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.



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