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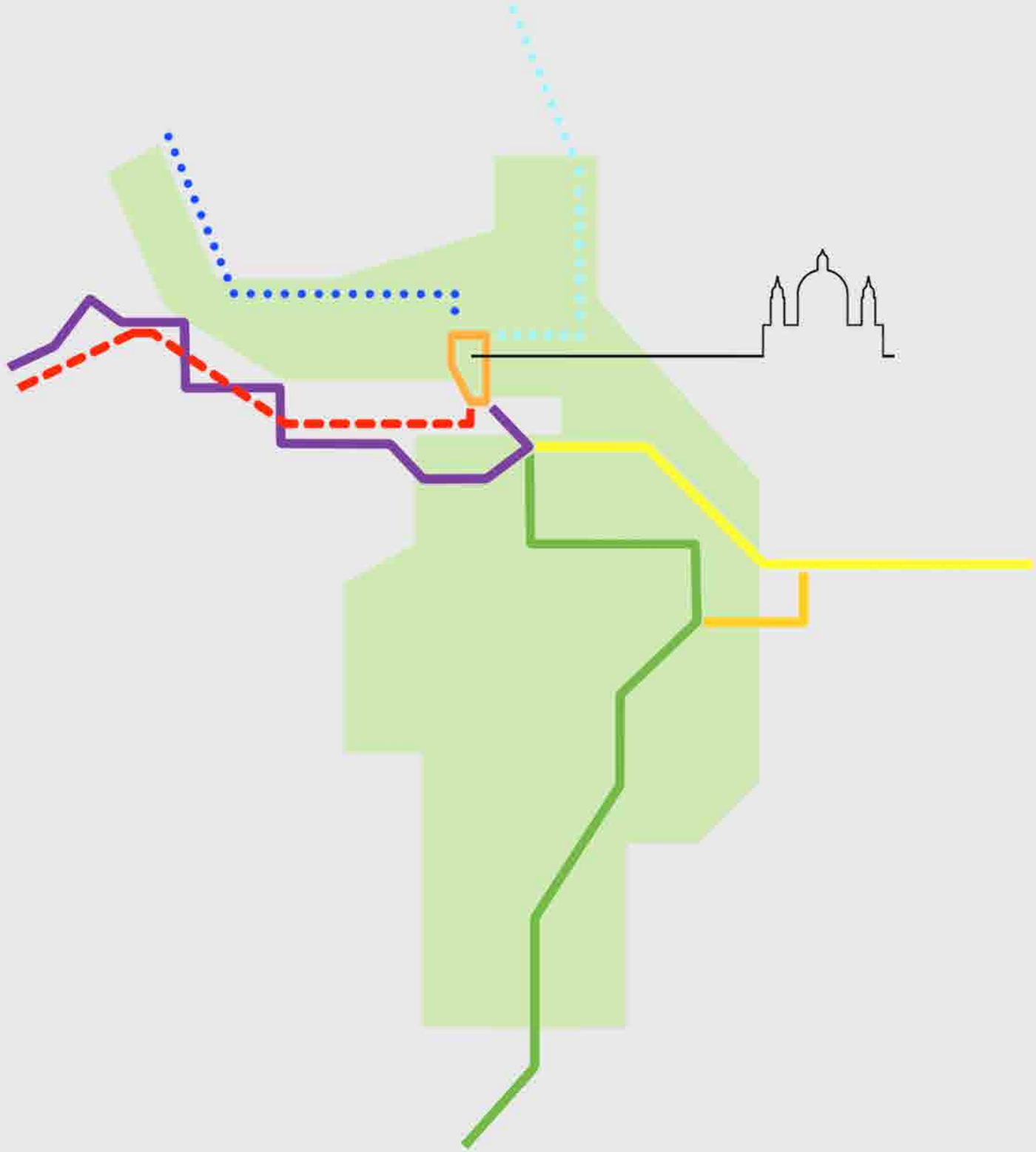

luca barello | chiara devoti

THE WAYS TO SUPERGA

2012-13 | history and design studio projects

POLITECNICO DI TORINO

This e-book presents the results of the *History and Design Studio* for year 2012-13, at the first semester of the second year of the course in "Architecture" of the Politecnico di Torino. Teachers Luca Barello and Chiara Devoti, with the assistance of Maria Vittoria Cattaneo, Luca Malvicino and Rachele Vicario.

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HISTORY AND DESIGN STUDIO WORKS

The ways to Superga

Trail 28-29 from Meisino
atlas
atlas synthesis — project synthesis
project A B C — models

Strada Baldissero
atlas
atlas synthesis — project synthesis
project A B C — models

Tramvia Sassi-Superga
atlas
atlas synthesis — project synthesis
project A B C — models

Around the Basilica
atlas
atlas synthesis — project synthesis
project A B C — models

Strada Superga
atlas
atlas synthesis — project synthesis
project A B — models

Trail 65 from San Mauro
atlas
atlas synthesis — project synthesis
project A B C — models

Panoramica
atlas
atlas synthesis — project synthesis
project A B C D — models

Strada Palucco
atlas
atlas synthesis — project synthesis
project A — models

Authors Profiles

OUVERTURES
the ways to superga

The History and Design Studio takes place during the first term of the second year of the degree course in Architecture and actually is the second design studio students are asked to face during the Bachelor's Degree course.

This particular studio – as described here – is actually part of the course taught in English, set up in year 2007-2008, which is mostly attended by foreign students mainly from Asian countries, students with an educational background that often look at History (not just History of Architecture) from a complete different point of view compared to how we use to practise it in Italy.

I believe this is one of the more important aspects of this teaching module. The central role that History occupies developing a design project takes on a particular value in such a context, a mainly foreign audience or class. We can appreciate this from the results: these are very interesting projects both from the point of view of their approach (and this is mainly thanks to the tutors) and of the results.

We are dealing with forms that are not at all 'bound' by formal schemes that are too closely tied to a philological reading of the context, but that at the same time respect location and tradition; something that has to be a contemporary, topical design appropriate for our times, for the technologies available on the market, for the use of materials and their production, despite the students' youth and their lack of design experience.

I believe this exercise was useful not only for the students involved, but for the teachers as well.

The chance to work with these students – with their active minds, listening to their direct impressions on the places and the conversations with their classmates – allows those of us standing on this side of the desk, or of the drawing board, to realise how different these points of view are, how they are sometimes even diametrically opposed to ours and often baffling.

These students see things very differently from how we are used to and from how we are used to interpret them. They often propose unusual, original, fresh solutions and teachers are sometimes asked to face issues that emerge from the drawing board, from discussions about ideas, impressions and stimuli that stem from efforts to define a new layout for a place, to envisage new landscapes.

Even this hill of Superga – which we thought could inspire little more than what had already been written or said over the centuries – becomes a focus for design explorations that allows us to put forward new, striking, captivating hypotheses that draw from – or contrast with – what currently exists, what has been passed down to us by the history of the city and of the area, this area so replete with traces, signs and memories.

I believe the role of education should be to try to provide students with a cultural training, a *forma mentis* that is not only technical but ethical as well, on the basis of which they could face any possible design project.

School and university are not just phases, occasions for learning the architect profession: they are part of a long, long process that takes time. It is a process, often tortuous and complicated, that – in a way – leads to the construction of an *attitude* towards the architect profession.

This attitude I believe we should focus on, rather than on technical instruction, which – though certainly important and essential for training an architect – is not the sole factor.

Today, more than ever, students are distracted by images (books and magazines, not to mention videos and websites) and the influence these images exert. Therefore it is essential that, as soon as possible, they should be able to construct a personal *opinion* on architecture. This mental order can be acquired almost like a habit, learning to 'attack' a problem in a particular way, carefully examining the different aspects of the matter, acquiring the ability to communicate with the various players involved and, above all, dedicating all the time necessary and one's own expertise to all designs – and I mean 'all' – with *fervour*.

This profession of ours needs to be undertaken, with patient practice, by fervent people.

I want to believe that *fervour* is contagious and that, though it might not be possible to transmit it, it can at least fill the air: if we breathe *fervour* at school, the students attending it will probably become imbued with it.

To inspire students we always try to find highly topical issues that are hotly discussed in the mass media, issues that can stir their emotional involvement, that allow us to transmit to students, first and foremost, the doubts that plague us when we are facing a blank piece of paper.

Sometimes students generate futuristic solutions that tend towards the high-tech; other times we see more understated, almost camouflaged designs: the results of a design workshop can be puzzling, original and unusual or, in contrast, normal, ordinary and logical. It doesn't matter whether the results attain the excellence of form, the height of expression or the peak of technique (at this stage of their education, the foundations of technical disciplines are still lacking). 'Special effects' are also unnecessary. What is important, however, is that students acquire an *awareness* of what they are doing.

It is essential that the teaching of architecture create *awareness*: an awareness of the work, research and experimentation that goes into a design.

Within every design is the kernel of a research process, as Roberto Gabetti wrote almost 30 years ago, and I think this is still true today: the right aspect of a design is its *scientific dimension*.

Sometimes a timid design – uncertain but motivated in its essence, which renders a particular approach in an appropriate and conscious way – is better than an impressive, but unfounded, design.

It isn't easy, but I am convinced that until students know why they do what they do, they have not acquired an awareness of this profession and therefore they cannot understand what they have learnt.

I think I can safely assert that the results of this studio prove that its students have understood what they have done, and most of all that they now possess a fervour for this profession. We can only be pleased.

Paolo Mellano
Director of Studies for BA in Architecture

The *History and Design Studio* class is at the first semester of the second year of the bachelor in *Architecture*, been what is considered as a “foundation” course. The interaction and mutual exchange between history knowledge and architectural design is one of its first aims and has been well applied in this context, proposing the students to afford the complexity of the real city, Turin, and its relationships with its natural environment.

The studio purpose was, really, to provide students with useful tools for the development of the design process, starting with the knowledge of the study area and its historical transformation, through the analysis of the elements that have contributed to define its present form: the landscape design and the relationship between the landscape shape, the ways of settlement and the design of the architectures.

Students were required to learn the vocabulary of the history of the territory, to seize the instruments for the representation of the settlements historical structure and the landscape. After having understood the land logics, they were asked to define a design process aimed to develop proposals for the territory transformation.

The area, extremely relevant both for its historical and natural aspects, is the hill with at the top the Basilica di Superga, probably one of the most known baroque monuments not only in Italy but worldwide. The choice was taken in accordance to the needs and interests expressed by the director of the *Aree protette del Po e della collina torinese*, more involved in the discovering and improving of the connections between the city and its hills on the right bank of river Po, than to a reinforcement of the arrival to the Basilica.

We chose, so, eight ways to reach the architectural monument, from main different places around it, but also with different characteristics: history, landscape, ways of going through. Four ways start from the base of the hills where Torino is settled and the river Po slows: the road climbing up the hill from Sassi (*strada Superga*), the tramway starting just aside it (*tranvia Sassi-Superga* or *dentera*), the trail from *Meisino park* going up along one of the left strips of wood (*trails 28+29 from Meisino*) and the most northern trail from the ancient village (now town) of San Mauro (*trail 65 from San Mauro*). On the hills side we selected the ancient crest road from the village of Baldissero (*strada Baldissero*), the new road from Pino Torinese, completing the more wide program of new scenic road, decided during the 1910-20s (*Panoramica*) and the short road around the Palucco hill top (*strada Palucco*).

The ways go through different historical remains (villages, Baroque villas, modern detached houses, road and tramway infrastructures) and landscapes (woods, fields, paths, fragments of the old organization of the vineyards), each one with its own relation with the surroundings, more direct or needing a certain investigation.

The kind of visitors and their needs change from way to way, the aim of the projects is to widen the chances of exploring the area outlining its natural characteristics and revealing its historical signs and roots.

Softly placed on the ground, the interventions create links with the existing context, revealing some of its features and inviting to discover other significances not only concentrated to the most relevant monument.

The work on a complex and wide area with class of foreign students, mostly from outside Europe, was a challenge we succeeded to overcome with strict schedule of required out comes, but also thanks to the students’ attitude to open themselves to new areas knowledge and comprehension.

Operatively, the studio started with a collective analysis of the entire project area to create a map to be used to go on specific design studies on different areas by each smaller group of students: the work began with an analysis of the chosen ways. Groups of 5-6 students created a map collecting on it all the historical, architectural and natural elements found out along their given way.

These 8 atlas maps lead to synthesis map where the groups outlined the most critical points where they planned to settle their interventions, following a given program of topics: new installations to help to orientate along the ways and to generate curiosity and attention to invite deeper exploration of the area, gates, signs, viewpoints, info points, new paths or bike lanes, new activity areas.

Each intervention was studied by a group of two students that had to refer to the general concept elaborated with the colleagues working along the same way.

Luca Barello and *Chiara Devoti*

SUPERGA AND THE PARK TODAY

the ways to superga

Superga: the Hills, the Natural Park and the Monumental site
Routes/Itineraries for the Knowledge and the Interpretation

In 1991 the Regione Piemonte *decides to insert Superga and its architectural complex at the cultural centre of a new regional protected area and the* Parco Naturale di Superga *takes its origin.*

It was not something exceptional: the idea to combine the natural protection with the valorisation of high value cultural, historical and architectural contexts having been the propeller in many other cases. From Stupinigi to the Mandria, from Rivoli Castle to Piedmont Sacri Monti *the same model: the integration between environmental and cultural values for the territory, for the projects as well as for the initiatives.*

This firm conviction has guided the cooperation between the Park and the Politecnico di Torino English course in "Architecture" and – specifically – the "History and Design Studio" to find routes, trails, interconnections between the site and the city. So, not only the monumental Basilica di Superga*, but also its surroundings, the communities around like Pino Torinese, San Mauro Torinese and Baldissero Torinese, the different ways to reach the monument: from the Strada Panoramica di Superga to the Strada Comunale di Soperga, from the typical railway "Dentiera" to the trekking trails in the forest.*

Apart from the extraordinary Baroque architecture by the Royal Architect Filippo Juvarra, the Parco Naturale di Superga *has a lot of surprising aspects to offer, so that the different projects proposed by the Studio Students can be good suggestions for the valorisation of such an impressive context: "spaces and tools to perceive the landscape" of Torino Hills.* (abstract)

Superga: collina, parco naturale e spazio monumentale
Percorsi/Itinerari di conoscenza e di interpretazione

Nel 1991 la Regione Piemonte sceglie di inserire Superga e il complesso architettonico al centro di una nuova area protetta regionale e nasce il Parco naturale di Superga. Una scelta, quella di abbinare tutela della natura e valorizzazione di contesti ad altro valore storico ed architettonico, che ha caratterizzato diverse realtà dei parchi: da Stupinigi alla Mandria, dal Castello di Rivoli ai Sacri Monti del Piemonte. Una scelta chiara che mira ad integrare valori ambientali e culturali del territorio ed alla quale dovrebbe quindi seguire un lavoro di ampia integrazione fra questi due contesti, sia nei progetti, nei piani e nelle iniziative.

L'idea di conservazione di uno spazio naturale integrato con altre componenti, che sta alla base del progetto di tutela, deve tuttavia essere sempre di più affiancata dal dotare questi territori di idee progettuali che interessino i diversi ambiti che compongono uno spazio interessato dal progetto di tutela e non limitarsi ad una dichiarazione di istituzione senza dar seguito ad un progetto trasformati o gestionale di quel territorio.

Con l'intento di costruire questi percorsi l'Ente di gestione ha accettato di collaborare con il corso del Politecnico per proporre agli studenti di lavorare su questo sito, ma questa volta identificando una rete di focus e non solo un singolo spazio, canonicamente e tradizionalmente legato all'area monumentale della Basilica di Superga. In questa scelta sta la chiara volontà di costruire appunto quella rete di interpretazione e lettura delle relazioni che coinvolge un sistema di vie che giungono a Superga, ma che hanno anche altri focus nel territorio collinare fra i Comuni di Torino, Pino Torinese, San Mauro Torinese e Baldissero Torinese.

Gli obiettivi sono quelli di tutelare e valorizzare un territorio di notevole interesse per le sue peculiarità ambientali, architettoniche e paesaggistiche ancora ben conservate, nonostante la vicinanza con l'abitato di Torino ed anzi accettando la sfida di integrare una realtà paesaggistica e naturale proprio con il telaio urbano collinare. Un tema questo che si colloca nelle attività dell'ampio programma per l'area metropolitana e per la valorizzazione dei suoi spazi verdi e aperti, denominato *Corona Verde*.

Volutamente quindi l'approccio è partito dal riconoscere il luogo, collocato nel contesto delle aree protette regionali, per poi proporre una figura di progetto. Innanzi tutto, per avvicinarsi al tema territoriale del parco, di seguito si riporta una carta di identità del sito.

Il Parco si inserisce in un sistema di rilievi collinari, la cui varietà morfologica e posizione a metà strada tra le Alpi ed il mare fanno sì che il patrimonio floristico sia ricco ed interessante, con specie microterme di origine alpina (faggio, pino silvestre, sorbo montano, mirtillo nero), alternate a specie di ambiente mediterraneo (orniello, sorbo domestico, pungitopo, dittamo). I popolamenti forestali più diffusi sono i boschi misti di latifoglie a prevalenza di querce e castagno, fino a pochi decenni fa ampiamente coltivato per la legna e per il frutto. A ridosso della Strada Panoramica dei Colli sono presenti ampi nuclei di piante esotiche, soprattutto conifere, introdotte a più riprese negli scorsi decenni con scopi di riforestazione ed ornamentali. Nei coltivi e nelle vigne abbandonate, ma anche all'interno dei boschi di latifoglie, la robinia si inserisce con vigore e la sua presenza tende a soppiantare le specie autoctone collinari. La zona marginale del Parco è caratterizzata dalla comparsa di aree a coltivazioni intensive, mentre il paesaggio è dominato dalla presenza del complesso monumentale della Basilica di Superga, capolavoro dell'architettura barocca di Filippo Juvarra. La fauna è quella peculiare delle Colline Torinesi e del Bosco del Vaj. Fra i mammiferi di grosse dimensioni sono presenti volpe, tasso, faina, donnola, riccio, scoiattolo rosso, ghiro, cinghiale; fra gli uccelli rapaci sono presenti soprattutto specie diurne come poiana, nibbio, sparviere, gheppio; fra le specie notturne si annoverano allocco e civetta. Altre specie interessanti di uccelli sono picchio (verde e rosso), upupa, zigolo nero e numerose specie di passeracei. Da un punto di vista geologico i rilievi collinari sono costituiti da rocce sedimentarie (arenarie, conglomerati e marne, spesso ricche di fossili) formatisi sul fondale oceanico, a partire da circa 40 milioni di anni fa, sollevate come gigantesche pieghe da spinte tettoniche legate alla genesi dell'arco alpino. Il *Parco Naturale della Collina di Superga*

si estende per circa 750 ettari nei comuni di Baldissero Torinese, Pino Torinese, San Mauro Torinese e Torino.

Questa descrizione sintetica aiuta tuttavia ad avere un quadro limitatamente al territorio dell'area protetta, mentre una riflessione complessiva dovrebbe riguardare l'insieme del territorio del crinale collinare che interessa più direttamente Torino e i comuni contermini coinvolti, fino a Chieri sull'altro versante. Proprio questo sguardo, che deve permettere di costruire una rete territoriale, è lo sfondo al quale traguardare ed al quale le occasioni di riflessione progettuale possono aiutare a costruire nuove figure, una necessità specifica che spetta proprio al territorio collinare, spesso "spazi di confine" fra tante realtà e quindi letta raramente come "centro" di una idea progettuale. Eppure un luogo alto e articolato nelle sue forme e pendenze offre mille occasioni per costruire idee di progetto e di uso.

La proposta interpretativa che il parco ha proposto per i lavori del laboratorio che hanno avuto come fulcro i colli di Superga, ha riguardato lo sviluppo di temi progettuali intorno ad una figura territoriale che collegava la piana alla collina, per poi dipartirsi dal colle di Superga da un lato verso Baldissero Torinese e dall'altro lungo il crinale che collega questa con Pino Torinese. Una figura quindi a "Y" volutamente centrata sui percorsi di avvicinamento dei collegamenti con e fra i colli intorno a Superga. Un approccio che in questa occasione ha volutamente evitato di porre al centro il singolo bene, il grande valore monumentale o storico, per concentrarsi sulle linee territoriali che a questo bene, come ad altri valori, possono giungere.

Il tema del percorso nel caso collinare è un *fil rouge* significativo anche per storia dei progetti di valorizzazione. Uno dei principali progetti è infatti quello della promozione e cura della rete dei sentieri della collina torinese che le associazioni di volontari locali dei comuni e con il supporto del Parco hanno da anni promosso. Questa complessa e ricca serie di percorsi, oggi promossa più a scala degli appassionati che non estesa alla fruizione dei cittadini, rappresenta proprio il telaio sul quale gli approcci di studio e progetto si sono rivolti, ricomprendendo anche le vie più tradizionali di accesso, che costituiscono altrettanti percorsi di grande valore.

Ripercorrendoli sinteticamente le tracce individuate e proposte hanno interessato diversi ambiti e temi-progetto.

Da San Mauro le vie interessate sono state proprio i sentieri, muovendosi su un versante che vede in questi percorsi il sistema identificativo più evidente, mentre il sistema dell'accessibilità viaria interessa in misura meno emblematica il versante sanmaurese. Qui infatti si estendono i versanti più ombrosi e boscosi favoriti dall'esposizione di versante a nord, e qui sono quindi maggiormente sviluppabili i temi del percorso nel bosco.

Da Torino l'asse invece presenta più opzioni: il percorso dell'infrastruttura della "Dentiera", il percorso stradale "di Soperga" ed infine i sentieri. In questo tratto quindi le possibili letture progettali si alternano su diversi temi spesso di natura più infrastrutturale.

Dipartendosi invece verso nord si aprono altre due vie: una che collega con Pino Torinese, la nota Strada Panoramica o dei Colli e l'altra che invece porta verso Baldissero Torinese. Due vie tradizionalmente di collina, che permettono di collegare per strade paesaggi ed ambienti boschivi, riproducendo modelli di percorsi viari "montani". Qui l'intreccio con il progetto dei sentieri, e con le vie alternative non stradali, assume un rilievo originale e unico, tuttora da sviluppare.

Queste vie, questi percorsi, assumono valore e significato tuttavia non in sé, ma devono essere letti come quei "luoghi lineari" che permettono di collegare fra di loro singoli spazi aventi diversi finalità e significati: dalla Basilica ai luoghi tradizionali delle borgate; dalla stazione di arrivo della "Dentiera" alle aree attrezzate intorno alla Basilica; dal Planetario di Pino Torinese al campo avventura lungo la panoramica; dagli edifici lungo la strada panoramica alle aree attrezzate che la seguono e costeggiano; dalla Cava del Bric Paluch alle viste panoramiche da aprire nel sistema dell'omonima via ed ai tanti e diversi servizi nuovi attivabili e progettabili.

L'individuazione di un sistema di percorsi da valorizzare per rendere migliore e più significativa la relazione e connessione fra questi diversi luoghi, può permettere di dare vita quindi ad un vero Park Tour, nel quale ogni punto può assumere valenza e dare quindi quella lettura di insieme di risorse e non solo più di unicum monumentale che rischia di non cogliere tutta la ricchezza di un complesso territoriale che merita una attenzione "di progetto" più ricca e differenziata, e che può contestualizzare meglio e di più questa realtà collinare nel ricco palinsesto dei paesaggi e delle opportunità territoriali che Torino e il sistema territoriale che lo circonda possiede in qualità e quantità che ne fanno una eccellenza nel panorama dei sistemi urbani europei. Partendo quindi da un "Superga Park Tour", omonimo *claim* dell'evento di promozione promosso dal parco ed illustrato nel contributo di Monica N. Mantelli, curatrice del progetto, si può pensare di partire, insieme ai progetti di uso e di qualificazione immaginati con il laboratorio, per arrivare a dotarsi di un territorio arricchito di "spazi e strumenti per la percezione del paesaggio" per la Collina torinese.

Ippolito Ostellino
Direttore Ente di gestione delle aree protette del Po e della Collina torinese

Superga Park Tour: the Spirit and the Form
Exercises and Challenges for the Territory re-discovering

The nowadays extensive discussions about the potentialities of Torino metropolitan area are dealing with the capacity of our cultural heritage to promote new economies, creating a "system of cultural factories". To promote this role for the Ente Parco del Po e Collina Torinese*, since 2011 the author started her collaboration to define an event able to combine the landscape identity with the cultural heritage:* Superga Park Tour*, a confluence between official bureaus, enterprises, artists, promoters and everyday visitors, to offer them a "multitasking" experience in one of the most impressive Baroque contexts.*

In the more and more compromised relationship between men, landscape, nature and the territory, Superga Park Tour *has, in fact, established for itself the aim of raising the perceived environment and proposing an "initiatory journey" towards a social action more aware of nature-beauty-sacred space-humanity-architecture/art. The connection of* Superga Park Tour *with the history of the* Parco Naturale di Superga *involves the highest meaning of the different cultural cohesion that, and rightly so, is legitimacy in the identification of art, sport and culture and heritage as an investment in a broad sense, introducing a new development and enhancing the identity and specificity of this naturalistic, and cultural environment.* (abstract)

Superga Park Tour: spirito e forma
Esercizi e sfide di riscoperta del territorio

In questi ultimi anni si è dibattuto molto sui tavoli strategici avviati dalle istituzioni politiche locali circa la potenzialità nell'area di Torino metropolitana del nostro patrimonio culturale quale generatore di "un sistema di fabbriche culturali" ed attivatore di nuove economie. Indagini sui fattori geneticamente costituenti di tale fermento, che in maniera vocazionale appartengono alla cultura e alla produttività del capoluogo piemontese geograficamente insediato tra tre fiumi e una florida collina, ne sono state fatte molte. Tra queste va segnalato lo studio *Atmosfera creativa. Un modello di sviluppo sostenibile per il Piemonte fondato su cultura e creatività* a cura di Enrico Bertacchini e Walter Santagata, (Il Mulino, 2012). Ma azioni che mettano in rete di *governance* e a sistema le diverse anime del comprensorio tra Torino, Superga, Pino Torinese, Baldissero Torinese, San Mauro Torinese e altre entità annesse al Parco Naturale di Superga, assai meno.

Per tale motivo è nata nel 2011 la condivisione progettuale tra la Scrivente e l'Ente Parco del Po e Collina Torinese, al fine di sviluppare insieme un appuntamento che potesse diventare veicolo di riaffermazione dell'identità paesaggistica locale e del suo patrimonio ("heritage") ispirato alla natura polivalente più vera del luogo. Tutto ciò con la volontà di guidare il fruitore – fosse esso escursionista, sportivo, appassionato di cultura o di scienze – verso esercizi di ri-scoperta del territorio dettati dall'offerta congiunta di un esistente reticolato di tipicità naturalistiche, paesaggistiche, artistiche e culturali.

Grazie all'istituzione e registrazione in Camera di Commercio di Torino del marchio "CollinaPo" – un brand declinato dall'Ente Parco in diversi *claim* nati a loro volta per individuare eventi di promozione quale appunto quello dedicato al complesso territoriale della collina torinese in cui è successivamente sfociato il "Superga Park Tour" (di seguito SPT) – l'operazione è stata facilitata poiché già esistevano i prodromi per la progettazione di un evento con caratteristiche multiformi, anche in virtù di un pregresso coordinamento di una rete locale identificata geograficamente con una "Y" – appartenente al sistema del marchio CollinaPo – e guidata dal Direttore del Parco del Po e Collina Torinese, Ippolito Ostellino.

Non è mai facile da parte di un operatore culturale che si occupa di valorizzazione territoriale ripercorrere a ritroso i momenti che hanno costituito la nascita di un progetto così complesso e sistemico come il Superga Park Tour, poiché esso stesso rappresenta nel suo lavoro di tessitura costitutiva un delicato pacchetto valoriale rappresentato da un lato da consolidati equilibri di governo locale e *modus operandi* autoreferenziale radicato nel

territorio e dall'altro da giovani ed emergenti forze creative (siano esse artistiche, associative o imprenditoriali) che rappresentano il futuro del nostro comprensorio.

Pertanto, prima ancora di progettare la messa in rete della manifestazione con partner come GTT, Decathlon, Coldiretti, Circoscrizione 7, Opera del Murialdo, Galliano Habitat, Etnotango, etc, la stessa ideazione dell'SPT è stata posta alla conoscenza e attenzione da parte dell'arch. Valerio Corino, referente per la Soprintendenza ai Beni Culturali e Paesaggistici, la Città di Torino, i Servi di Maria che abitano nel complesso ecclesiastico della Real Basilica di Superga, il Demanio e i Soggetti gestori dei servizi museali della chiesa stessa, nonché il Politecnico di Torino.

Nel sempre più compromesso rapporto tra uomini, paesaggio, natura e territorio, il Superga Park Tour si è infatti prefisso lo scopo di sensibilizzare il percepito sull'ambiente e proporre un viaggio *iniziatico* verso un agire sociale più consapevole tra natura-sacro-bellezza-uomo-architettura/arte, offrendo sin dalla sua prima edizione un camminamento che unisse Natura a Sacro e Bellezza denominato *La Natura torna ad Arte*. Un contenitore atto a implementare la vigente lettura esclusivamente "naturalistica" comunicata dai parchi in Italia sin dai tempi della loro costituzione negli anni Settanta, e a instillare invece fattori integranti tra varie discipline e coinvolgenti emozionalmente annessi alle aree verdi.

L'SPT prevede infatti l'attrazione e targettizzazione di un pubblico generalista quale parte attiva dello scambio dialettico tra Natura e Opera dell'Uomo, facendogli prendere maggiore coscienza – attraverso esperienze anche assai diverse tra di loro – di quanta interazione vi sia tra il percorso di un fiume, gli anfratti boschivi, i fenomeni culturali e i progetti architettonici, la produttività e l'eccellenza culturale di un luogo.

Nel 2012 *La Natura torna ad Arte* si è manifestata sotto forma di una videomostra gratuita e a fruibilità itinerante nel chiostro interno della Real Basilica di Superga. Il pubblico di oltre quattrocento persone – accettando la lunga coda prevedibile nel breve orario di accesso concesso (dalle 21,30 alle 23,00 circa) – è riguardosamente entrato a gruppetti per percorrere con la nostra guida il colonnato perimetrale, scoprendo con un *coup de théâtre* la visione a effetto magnitudinale della Cupola (accorgimento prospettico molto amato dall'architetto Filippo Juvarra, come già aveva dimostrato nell'approdo stesso alla Real Basilica dalla Strada Comunale di Soperga!) e la magia rarefatta e meditativa del deambulatorio con giardino verde, progettato nel 1731. Intervistata, gran parte dei visitatori ha dichiarato di essersi avvicinata per la prima volta quella sera all'interno di un luogo sacro poiché attratta dalla mostra, ma rimanendo poi assolutamente colpita dall'effetto Cupola percepita quasi a lente d'ingrandimento, e da quella che Gianfranco Gritella ben descrive come «la ritmica sequenza delle lesene e dei pilastri che con austera solennità scandiscono il portico nord del chiostro conventuale».

Ritmo su ritmo, la performance musicale del sassofonista Valerio Signetto ha accompagnato, con la complicità della luna, le suggestive proiezioni dei fotografi Mauro Raffini, Carlo Lenti, Claudio Molinaro, Gerry Di Fonzo, Tony Farina e Pierilario Benedetto che sono a quel punto risultate opere in risonanza totale con il contenitore esterno. Un'esperienza definita da tutti come indimenticabile.

Con questa "forzata" operazione di ingresso emozionale "interno" al complesso della Real Basilica, e che purtroppo non ci è più stato concesso ripetere, il Superga Park Tour ha iniziato la sua impervia strada di "facilitatore di rete sistemica" esercitando la rispettosa ma determinata consapevolezza di voler condividere con nuovi target – non necessariamente solo annessi al turismo religioso o storico-architettonico – le molteplici bellezze del Parco Naturale di Superga che racchiudono anche un bene culturale di straordinaria allure come la Real Basilica ad oggi principalmente fruito solo in occasione le visite guidate diurne (a pagamento) o come corridoio di connessione tra le maniche del complesso basilicale dagli attuali tre rimanenti Padri residenti, oppure ancora dei clienti pertinenti alle aree di destinazione del ristorante interno alla Basilica Ristoro del Priore. Modalità quindi di fruizione del bene ben al di sotto delle sue potenzialità!

Ripensandoci, è stato quanto mai difficoltoso attuare con taluni soggetti quel delicato processo di amalgama che sta alla base di ogni progetto vincente di rete: la sfida a cedere qualcosa del "proprio" individuale a favore del bene di molti, la sfida a rompere vecchi

schemi annessi al "filologico" e ad aprirsi più generosamente alle proposte contemporanee con energie meno stagnanti e più disponibilità alla crescita globale di un bene comune. In questo caso, il comprensorio di "Soperga", che per l'Ente Parco rappresenta ben più di una chiesa ma è anche un luogo-icona che porta con sé – lo sappiamo bene – sia fascino solare (la firma della Real Basilica è dell'architetto "Illuminista" Filippo Juvarra) che l'ombra/bruma memoriale (la sventurata caduta della squadra del Torino Calcio nel 1949) e si è pertanto adoperato per dichiarare il suo invito a una sosta più prolungata in collina con la proposta di esperienze sensoriali e cognitive tra linguaggi contemporanei, realtà di memoria storica e naturalistica e più recenti realtà d'impresa territoriale, anche annesse al settore della ristorazione "slow".

Oltre alla collaborazione con i Comuni sopraindicati, la chiamata dell'SPT si è arricchita nel 2013 di altri Enti e Aziende che con le loro proposte (Cremagliera con musicisti viaggianti a cura di Circoscrizione 7, Planetario con proiezione tematica dell'emisfero australe, Parco Avventure con percorsi dedicati, e lo stesso Parco del Po e Collina con l'offerta di una navetta gratuita lungo la Strada Panoramica) unite a quelle di soggetti significativi nel settore dell'ambiente, dell'escursionismo e dello sport come ProNatura, Nordic Walking Torino, Atletica Settimese e Touring Club hanno aderito con proposte e percorsi studiati tra natura, paesaggio, arti e scienze per contribuire a quella visione di sensibilizzazione verso le nuove dinamiche socioambientali che vedono protagoniste iniziative culturali-artistiche quanto comunicazionali.

Il rapporto dunque dell'SPT con la storia del Parco Naturale di Superga comporta la più alta accezione della diversa coesione culturale che, a giusto titolo, trova legittimazione nell'identificazione dell'arte, sport e cultura come investimento e patrimonio in senso lato, da sostenere nella sua valorizzazione e a cui attingere come valore di supporto all'identità e tipicizzazione di un ambiente naturalistico. Si sono pertanto delineate le linee guida tra la cultura artistica del fare (si pensi all'installazione scultorea Natura Ribelle sulla scalinata della Real Basilica nel 2013 con i giganteschi e coloratissimi fiori in poliuretano espanso dell'art designer Diego Maria Gugliermetto) e quella dell'essere (il Faber Teatre nel 2012 con gli spettacoli itineranti e l'Etnotango Festival nel 2013 con le sue azioni di teatrodanza). Una visione sistemica dei contenuti che accetta e accoglie la nascita, la crescita e lo sviluppo di corredi e compendi creativi perseguendo un sogno a volte pianificando e ponderando le scelte da operare.

Così è confluito e si è consolidato il mood di "Superga Park Tour", progetto culturale di valorizzazione di rete sistemica, dove semiotica e semantica si uniscono a un percepito mentale e immaginifico che unisce il materiale all'immateriale, potenziando in particolare quest'ultimo per dare valore all'esistente e immaginare in un secondo tempo nuove necessità di "costruito" come espressione di quel linguaggio creativo che ci viene riconosciuto vocazionalmente da molto tempo. Un evento che, identificando nella matrice "memoria, identità e futuro", la sua anima più profonda, si traduce nella concezione di tematiche dove si possono leggere storie di testimonianze territoriali che con le loro idee e la loro partecipazione contribuiscono alla costruzione dell'eccellenza percepita e riconosciuta di un luogo.

A questa freschezza d'approccio abbiamo affiancato un percorso fruitivo dinamico seppur "slow living" in cui il visitatore, in maniera interattiva, ha potuto avere una percezione più chiara delle sottili contaminazione tra più linguaggi: da quello della natura e del paesaggio a quello letterario (è del 2013 la Maratona Letteraria SPT con figure intellettuali appartenenti al mondo della botanica, economia, arte, musica e sport come Cesare Lasen, Giovanni Cordero, Pierandrea Ferro, Silvestro Catacchio, Valter Giuliano, Fulvio Albano e Paolo Turati), a quello delle arti figurative, visive e coreutiche con Diego Maria Gugliermetto, Gerry Di Fonzo e Libera Compagnia Musicale Migrante LCMM.

Lo scoprire che esiste un Piemonte che non è solo arte delle "cose materiali" ma è anche quella dell'"dell'estetica, dei saperi e delle tradizioni creative intangibili" vuol dire superare quella matrice che rende luoghi come Superga meramente passaggio per una tappa mordi e fuggi. Riteniamo infatti che i valori esistenti debbano, in questa ottica, essere assunti non tanto per essere difesi o protetti, quanto per essere interpretati e proiettati come valori di nuove esigenze, dando voce e spazio al nuovo.

Nel Superga Park Tour la "giusta formula" – ci conferma il consigliere regionale Roberto Tentoni – racchiude attraverso l'esaltazione di uno spazio principalmente concepito come "barocco" una visione più fedele al concetto del Barocco stesso, ovvero l'enfatizzazione delle differenze, il Pieno e del Vuoto, il rimando tra il Dentro e il Fuori, tra lo Spirito e la Materia che è tipico della multidisciplinarietà dell'SPT. Uno spirito che ci ha portati a proporre nella sua seconda edizione la realizzazione di un Gran Concerto Jazz e Tango condotto dalla Torino Youth Jazz Orchestra in collaborazione con l'eccellenza territoriale del

Jazz Club Torino, presentando un repertorio da Duke Ellinton a George Gershwin a Astor Piazzolla e una performance sul sagrato della Real Basilica con compendio di danzatori.

Le commistioni progettuali generate e prodotte dall'SPT hanno influenzato anche la vita e la visione futura dei cittadini stanziali nel post-evento. Pensiamo (finalmente!) alla realizzazione nel 2013 dell'itinerario con navetta di collegamento tra il Planetario INFINITO di Pino Torinese, la Real Basilica e il Parco Avventure 3 Querce lungo la Strada Panoramica mai attuato prima dell'SPT. Oppure al Mercatino Coldiretti CampagnAmica proposto per la prima volta in un luogo di arrivo o partenza ma mai di sosta come il piazzale Modena di Sassi, all'ingresso della Stazione Dentiera GTT. Oppure all'Assessorato allo Sport Città di Torino che si è occupato per la prima volta di inserire quest'area dell'asse metropolitano nel circuito dei Festeggianti del San Giovanni, da sempre concentrato nel centro città.

Questi sforzi gestionali condotti dall'SPT e con la regia dell'Ente Parco del Po e Collina Torinese contribuiscono a trasformare – attraverso una nuova forma di comprensione delle dinamiche culturali – il comparto ideologico delle verità storicistiche attualmente insediata in loco. In questo contesto, il contributo apportato dai processi creativi, artistici e semantici, all'implementazione seppur contenuta della crescita economica e culturale del comprensorio, si configura come campo d'indagine per portare in luce quanto l'uno sia leva propulsiva dell'altro, confluendo energeticamente nell'agire svolto da tante persone prima di noi – si pensi ai soggetti gestori di varie realtà consolidate o agli operatori dell'accoglienza e del "food" che promuovono il territorio anche attraverso il loro operato – vedasi il progetto enogastronomico che si svolge ormai da anni a inizio settembre tra Pino e Baldissero denominato La Camminata del Duca oppure alla rassegna ormai decennale di chitarristica internazionale Six Ways a Superga) che, grazie al loro impegno tra spirito e forma hanno saputo trasmettere sostegno alla identità plurima di questo comprensorio.

La memoria, l'identità e il futuro dell'area del Parco Naturale di Superga si delineano, quindi, come matrici generanti di una visione sviluppata da CollinaPo che si è prefissa lo scopo di indagare e mettere a sistema quel processo dinamico che ha prodotto azioni e interazioni tra l'ambiente, il paesaggio, il mondo imprenditoriale locale e il mondo culturale presente nel Parco e che genera nuove "eccellenze" e indica nuovi stilemi di fruizione territoriale, turistica e paesaggistico-naturalistica.

La chiave dell'efficacia comunicativa SPT sta e starà nella capacità di sviluppare e raccontare storie in grado di emozionare. Il racconto di una o più giornate attraverso un paesaggio di grande forza e bellezza naturalistica – tra querce e castagni, conifere, vegetazione alpina composta da faggi e mirtillo nero, o mediterranea come il pungitopo e l'orniello – significa anche far vivere, esplicitandolo ai più attraverso tutte le forme di arti e scienze praticate dall'uomo, ciò che il territorio è stato, è e potrà divenire.

A noi uomini contemporanei, totalmente immersi in un mondo pervaso di nuove tecnologie, abituati a vivere e a pensare alla comunicazione come a una comunicazione di fatti, risulta difficile ormai scoprire quanta attinenza abbiano le manifestazioni artistiche con la comunicazione. Nell'antichità nessuno avrebbe mai pensato che l'arte potesse svolgere una funzione diversa da quella della comunicazione. Le opere d'arte avevano sempre degli scopi ben precisi a cui assolvere: ornamenti di templi, chiese, santuari come espressione religiosa, ritratti come testimonianza e affermazione del proprio potere, architetture e piani urbanistici come forme di mecenatismo, rafforzative del proprio prestigio. Ora, l'arte solo in poche circostanze viene realizzata per queste motivazioni. Tuttavia risulta tuttora difficile far comprendere quella funzione pratica dell'arte come sollecitazione al messaggio sociale, di cui essa è mezzo, fino al punto di non vedere nella sua qualità estetica, nient'altro che un premio d'incentivazione. Proprio da questo spirito sensoriale ed emotivo è nata la progettazione artistica SPT. Una rappresentazione dei fermenti attivi della creatività contemporanea, declinati nel contesto naturalistico del parco attraverso musica, teatro, danza, video, fotografia, pittura e scultura, al fine di sottolineare come la cultura e l'arte possano armonizzare messaggi di attenzione all'ambiente e natura nei tempi attuali.

Filippo Juvarra ha aperto la strada riconoscendo di questo sito geografico il Genius Loci, ma la sua intuizione non deve certo fermarsi al periodo storico della realizzazione del complesso architettonico che ivi troneggia, poiché "Le style est de l'homme même" come ben aveva intuito il naturalista, matematico e cosmologo Georges-Louis Leclerc.

L'integrazione contenutistica di uno spazio architettonico apparentemente misterioso, la cui fruibilità emozionale non deve perdersi, ma anzi deve ripercorrersi anche nella

itinerarietà delle mostre disseminate lungo il suo asse percettivo (tra la Stazione della Dentiera, il Centro Visite del Parco, il chiostro, il sagrato e la scalinata della Real Basilica e il piazzale dell'aiuola monumentale dedicata a Umberto I con il suo Rics Gallico – re guerriero celto-germanico di Tancredi Pozzi nel 1902) ha portato alla concezione di un percorso artistico secondo una griglia modulare che infrange le assialità filologiche del periodo squisitamente barocco entro cui si sono finora percepiti gli spazi di Superga. La scelta curatoriale è dunque caduta su spazi entro cui muoversi emotivamente, nei quali poter leggere tanto la "memoria", quanto il "futuro". Spazi che, nel rispetto del luogo intriso di matrice sacra e spirituale come la Real Basilica, sappiano comunque produrre letture integrate in cui, la forza e la capacità evocativa degli elementi e delle nuove progettualità creative proposte, rompano, annullando, quelle "gabbie" che vorrebbero rinchiudere in un passato il nostro futuro.

Monica N. Mantelli
Operatore culturale - Progettista di valorizzazione territoriale sistemica

HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE AROUND SUPERGA

the ways to superga

In the historical analysis of a settlement and its surroundings, which aims to explore the diachronic dynamics of its formation, particular attention should be paid to identify the elements structuring the sites, conditioning the typological appearance of the buildings. The two thousand years ago foundation of the Roman *castrum*, in the Piedmont plain occupied by the tribes of *Taurini*, involves a colony, *Julia Augusta Taurinorum* (about 25 BC) and has to be interpreted as a preminent choice for a control place. Being quite the centre of gravity of the plain, which is bordered to the west by the chain of the Alps, the city is located on an embankment on the Dora Riparia river (north) and is laying backward on the bank of River Po (east).

Among the fortified city and the preeminent axis of the River, in south-north direction, a long sequence of bumps hills derives from the last sections of the *plateau* of the Monferrato area, which closes on the west into the Po. This hilly area, of considerable height, whose crest is maintained parallel to the Po, in the geological transformation, has been eroded by rainfall, which washed away the slope on the west direction, cutting deeply into the layered sediment, forming a series of valleys like the teeth in a comb, positioned perpendicular to river Po, modelled in centuries by the water regime and even more by the aggression of winter frost and the transition to the hot season.

These valleys have a strong north erosion: glaciation and thaw configure a very steep and pronounced gradient, which receives no light even in summer, so very humid and that has fostered the growth of forests, these, rooted on the steep slopes, prevented a further degradation. This position is called reverse side (*inverso*).

From the crest of these valleys to the south, there was a minor washing away, which has maintained a sweet modeling, little gradient (*indritto*) with a series of *plateaus*, full of light, that favored both the cultivation and the early settlement of human nodes, being more safe for their altitude, if compared to the plain settlements, less easily defensible.

The mild climate and good sunny position, the easiness to access to the paths connecting the Po plain and the Monferrato area facilitated the construction of rustic structures for vineyards cultivation and chestnut trees in comparison with oak forests collocated on the summit.

The good summer ventilation and the weather in general cooler than the continental climate of the clay plain decided a unique settlement organization. On the plain, fertile for the cultivation of corn or suitable to the presence of large irrigated meadows for cattle breeding (decided as early as the Roman settlement), decided a specific dichotomy between the agricultural plain settlements, with the system of the *cassine* (farmhouses) – linked to the regime of the great noble property – and the summer holidays settlement system in the hill. The organization dates back to the XVI century exploitation model at the hills foot, but also the old infrastructure system of roads defining the location of the existing vineyards (*vigne*) and transformation of them into new villas, suitable for the "resort" as Giovanni Botero described[1].

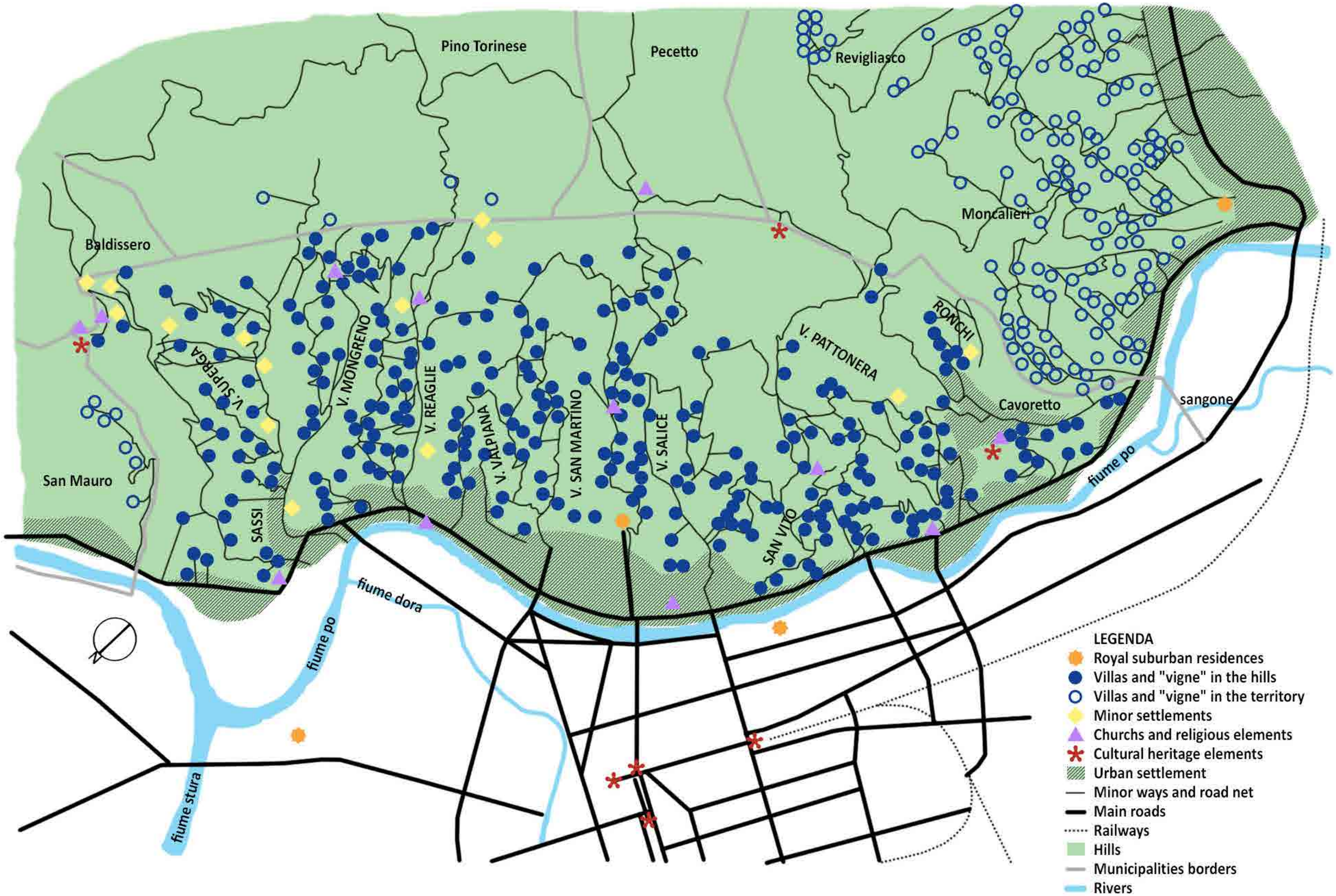
Beyond a more complex analysis of the villas and vineyards (*vigne*) in the hills of Turin[2], for people who look out from the hill of Superga, Turin latest offshoot of the plain looking from north to south, it is possible to capture the rhythmic sequence of the northern ridges densely wooded and with a few settlements, only on the ridges of the picks. If you take advantage of the opposite balcony, in front to that of Superga, namely from the col named *della Maddalena*, above of Moncalieri, you will benefit of the historical calibrated modeling, of the coherent system of villas, cottages, lodges and chapels. Related to the road net, from the Po banks towards the ridge, the settlements and the hill buildings compose a landscape of a strong historicity and a quiet beauty. A lanscape based on the integration between the human organization, the geomorphic components of the sites, measured on the relations of architectures and works of terracing, in a synthesis that takes up the declination of rustic matrices reinterpreted in a dignified, aulic, way[3].

Vittorio Defabiani

1 Giovanni Botero, *Relatione di Piamonte*, on *Relationi Universali*, 1607, ed. Venezia, 1650.

2 Refer to the contribution by Maria Vittoria Cattaneo and Chiara Devoti on this book.

3 For more details, see Vittorio Defabiani and Costanza Roggero, L*ettura storica delle ville e "vigne" della collina torinese*, on Gianfranco Spagnesi (ed.), *Esperienze di storia dell'Architettura e di Restauro*, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, Roma 1987, pp. 455-467.



The cultural and historical system of “villas” and “vigne” (vineyards) in Torino hills. Drawing by V. Defabiani and C. Roggero Bardelli, published in Gianfranco Spagnesi (ed.), *Esperienze di storia dell’Architettura e di Restauro*, Roma 1987.

Section 1

The "other" Turin[1], this is the idea often moving the analysis on the hills on East river Po side of the city. Always considered as a different section if compared to the "plain" area of the city, the "mountain" is definitively and normatively recomposed as a part of the whole urban structure in the master plan of 1906-08[2]. But it has always been a place where the city itself could find another space and a different way of life: a leisure, productive, representative space. The relevance of this system is appropriately underlined by this significant assessment: «The hillside spurs that runs along the right bank of the River Po from Moncalieri to San Mauro, constitute a significant element of the landscape and environment framing the city centre. The custom of residing on these healthy and easily accessible places can be traced back to the organisation of the territory around the capital city in the absolutism era. The hillside settlement system was connected to the great landscape design that was established as a projection of the Duke's power over the region»[3].

Giovanni Lorenzo Amedeo Grossi, *Carta Corografica dimostrativa del territorio della città di Torino, luoghi e parti confinanti* [...], 1790. Archivio Storico della Città di Torino (ASCT), *coll. Simeom*, D 1800, detail.

The overall system has been traced by architect Grossi, on his *Guida alle cascine e vigne del territorio di Torino e suoi contorni*, dating of 1790[4], in which he talked about over than 800 different places, both farms and villas or *vigne* (vineyards with residential buildings), in the plain of the city (mainly the farms) and on the hills (villas and *vigne*), there been 421 buildings with their gardens, word, orchards, etc. In his work he also established a sort of social mirror about the purchasers, retraced more recently by Elisa Gribaudi Rossi[5], who recognised 87 noble families, having often appointments in the Court organization; 77 bourgeois; 49 merchants or artisans with their jobs expressed (7 contractors, 3 merchants on fashion, 3 booksellers, 3 producers of sockets, 3 merchants on silk, 2 merchants on brandy, 2 merchants on bread, 2 upholsters, 1 confectioner, 1 hatter, 1 porcelain producer, 1 merchant on pastas, 1 merchant on leather, 1 dryer, 1 forwarder, 1 merchant on velvet, 1 merchant on furs, 1 merchant on brass) and some others with no specification; 34 man of law (lawyers, notaries, solicitors, procurers); 31 bankers; 29 religious men (10 canonicals, 6 theologians, 6 priors, 4 priests, 2 rectors, 1 abbot); 24 bureaucrats, 20 religious congregations (only masculine), 16 "particulars" (i.e. farmers), 16 fine arts artisans (5 painters, 3 architects, 1 master builder or foreman, 1 contractor, 1 gilder, 1 sculptor, 1 engravers, 1 silversmith, 1 horologer, 1 jeweller); 14 serve in the army (only one of them being also a nobleman); 11 employees on the Royal Service; 6 doctors and surgeons; 6 musicians; 1 professor at the University.

Expression of the importance and prestige of the owners, all the biggest and most gorgeous of these *vigne* and villas had always their own chapel, often facing the public roads (at the origin sometimes lanes between the contiguous properties) and sometimes still remaining even if the villa has disappeared. Even less impressive settlements, maybe group of *vigne* may have their own chapels again emerging on the landscape as landmarks and pillars in the hill organization. These religious buildings may form a cultural system to be reconnected with the parallel parish organization characterizing the connection with the city (churches on the bank of river Po like the *Madonna del Pilone*) or the small villages (parish church in Mongreno just to make an example) and obviously with the enormous and prominent presence of the Royal Basilica of Superga[6].

1 «Un altro Torino», this was the definition given by Giovanni Botero of the area on the right side of the Po, where villas, and buildings, erected for pleasure, formed a sort of other city, different from the capital city laying in the plain area on the left bank of the same river. Giovanni Botero, *Relatione di Piamonte*, on *Relationi Universali*, 1607, ed. Venezia, 1650.

2 *Pianta della città di Torino coll'indicazione del Piano Regolatore e di Ampliamento*, 1906-1908. ASCT, *Serie 1K*, Decreti reali, *Piani Regolatori*, 1899-1911, n. 14, all. 3. See the contribution by Chiara Devoti on this book.

3 Mauro Volpiano, *The Hill System*, on Vera Comoli, Carlo Olmo (ed.), *Architectural Guides. Turin*, Allemandi, Turin 2000, pp. 133-134.

4 Giovanni Lorenzo Amedeo Grossi, *Guida alle cascine, e vigne del territorio di Torino e' suoi contorni* [...], *in cui si danno diverse notizie utili, ed interessanti, massime in ordine alli Feudi, e distretti delle Parrocchie in detto territorio esistenti* [...], 2 voll., Torino 1790.

5 Elisa Gribaudi Rossi, *Ville e vigne della collina torinese. Personaggi e storia dal XVI al XIX secolo*, 2 voll., Gribaudi, Torino 1981, I, pp. 13-14.

6 For the history of this religious foundation, refer to the essay by Maria Vittoria Cattaneo on this book.

The specific condition is perfectly represented by the *Carta Topografica della caccia*, dating of 1760-66[7], describing graphically the complex intersection between vineyards, woods, gardens and residences, perfectly integrated each other and connected by a quite infinite system of small, narrow landscape lanes, roads, tree lines.

It has been underlined the specific characteristic of the urbanization of the area

Anonymous, *Carta Topografica della caccia*, [1761-66]. Archivio di Stato di Torino (ASTo), Corte, *Carte topografiche Segrete*, 15 A VI rosso, detail and composition with preparatory sketches for the area of Superga in ASCT, *coll. Simeom*, D1821.

of hills nearer to the city, been essentially of the XIX and beginning of the XX centuries with no substantial destruction of the original organization of the landscape so that, really, except for few bad examples, in general this part of the city is between the most prestigious and well-being residential space[8]. We must notice anyway the relevant impact, on the contrary, of the recent diffusion of the conurbation (60th and 70th mainly), loosing the original relationship with the logics of ancient settlements and a lack of attention for the historical structure of the hilly landscape or the connection with the fluvial banks.

The presence of the *vigne* and villas is anyway less strongly connected to the roads than the settlement of the farms in the plain area: the vineyards position mostly depends, on the contrary, on land conformation, soil quality, good position, sun exposition or panoramic views, so often the original connection in the hills is given by the old and narrow roads linking one *vigna* with the others and we have to wait the end of the XIX and the beginning of the XX century to find a rational organisation of roads and lanes going from the city to the different levels of the settlements on the hills.

Some of these roads, anyway, have a great historical relevance and are really axis of the organization of the hills structure. First of all, we must considerer the *via Villa della Regina*, *de facto* a prosecution of the city main street represented by via Po (the ancient *Contrada della calce*), connecting the centre with the bridge crossing river Po (substituted during the Napoleonic era by a new monumental stone bridge) and going to the road to Casale and then Rome. The *via Villa della Regina* was also the impressive telescope putting at the centre the villa (or *vigna*) belonging to cardinal Maurizio (brother in law of Christine of France and important member of the court, introducing in Turin tastes and ways of life coming from the Pope court in Rome). During the XIX century the same axis became a sort of urban pivot to redefine the connections between the river and the hills, ruling the redefinition of *borgo Po* [9] but also being the point of reconnection of the most elevated ancient hill road system to the city.

More recently a new axis became equally relevant: the one protruding the very long *corso Vittorio Emanuele II* (anciently *viale del Re*) with the monumental *bridge Umberto I*, prosecuting on *corso Fiume* till it reaches *piazza Crimea*. The axis became the element ruling the transformation of the ancient *borgo del Rubatto* onto the very luxurious *borgo Crimea* [10]. In both cases, the axis are protruded to reach the relevant first tollgates (*cinta daziaria*) established in 1853 and then enlarged in 1912, to be definitively abolished in 1930[11]. The nowadays *corsi Gabetti*, *Sella* and *Lanza*, representing a sort of ring road on the east side of the city, derive on the old route of this tollgates, formed by a long continuous brick wall, partially recognizable even today and been still now the ring road system for the bottom section of the hills, with its small translation on *corso Picco* (deriving from a translation for a small section of the wall with the new dispositions for the second tollgates in 1912)[12].

7 See the contribution by Chiara Devoti on this book.

8 Politecnico di Torino, Dipartimento Casa-città (chair for the research Vera Comoli), *Beni culturali ambientali nel Comune di Torino*, 2 voll., Società degli Ingegneri e degli Architetti in Torino, Torino 1984, I, p. 169.

9 Compare section 2.

10 Compare section 2.

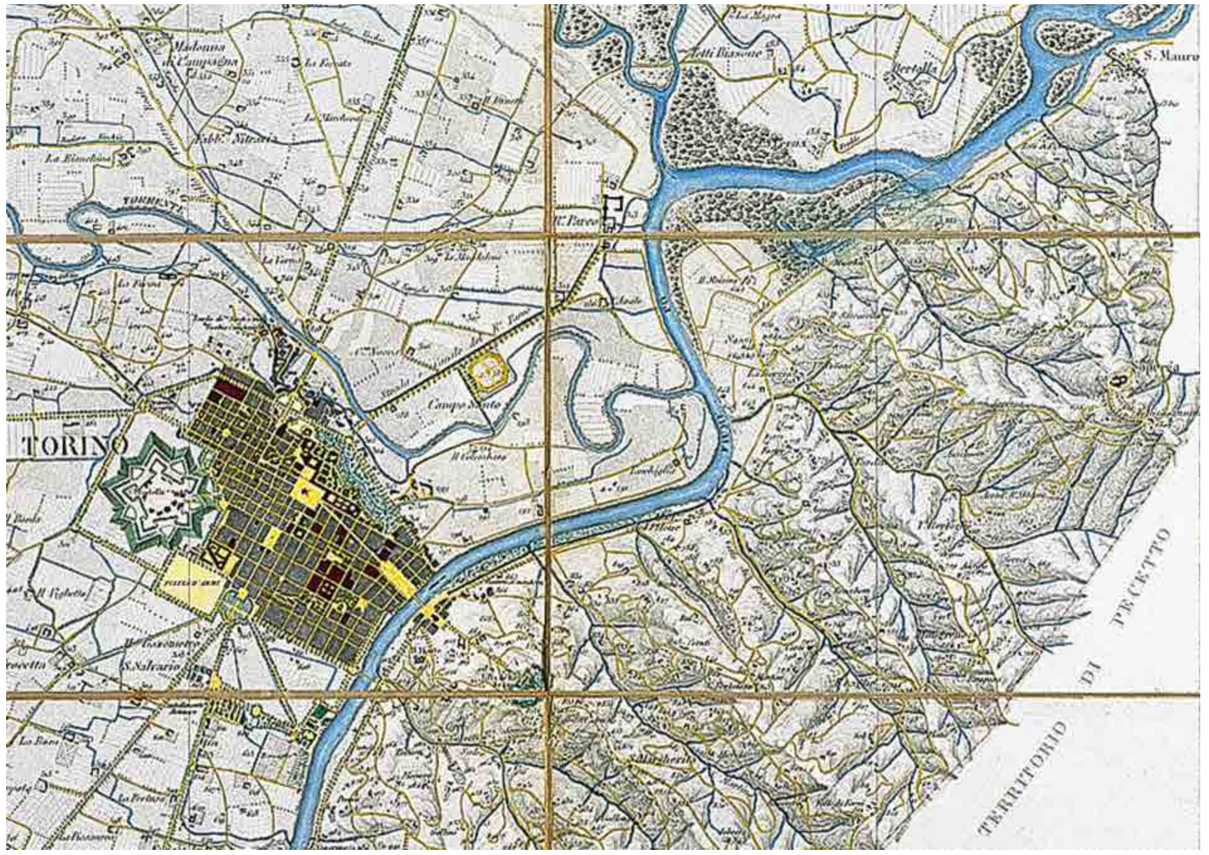
11 For the logic and history of the two Turin tollgates, see Giovanni Maria Lupo, *Le barriere e la cinta daziaria*, on Umberto Levra (ed.), *Da capitale politica a capitale industriale (1864-1915)*, vol. VII of *Storia di Torino*, Einaudi, Torino 2001 and Giovanni Maria Lupo, Paola Paschetto, *1853-1912, 1912-1930. Le due cinte daziarie della città di Torino*, Archivio Storico della Città di Torino, Torino 2005.

12 Compare the new line for the tollgates on the bibliography by Lupo suggested above.

At the level of the river we must consider the absolute relevance of *corso Casale* (the name depends on the going to direction of the road, linking the capital, Turin, with Rome, passing through Casale, in the south east of Piedmont, and called at the origin *strada di San Mauro* because of the more proximity to the important village of San Mauro with its relevant abbey of *Santa Maria di Pulcherada*). The street glides in front of a relevant monument – and its urban contest, a formal square – from which the *via Villa della Regina* starts: the imposing church of the *Gran Madre di Dio*, erected at the beginning of the Restoration to celebrate the coming back of the Savoy king in Turin after the Napoleonic dominance (Ferdinando Bonsignore, from 1818). But it connects also this sanctuary to another historically relevant: the church of the *Madonna del Pilone*, originating in the XVI century and being the pivot of the homonymous borough[13]. This important road continues till the *strada comunale di Soperga* starting from the square being the departing point of the so called *dentera di Superga* (a rack train system linking corso Casale to the top of the hill were the basilica di Superga stands).

This road net, collecting the plain area of the city with the bottom of the hillside is completed not only by the grid of roads serving the boroughs (*borghi*) of Crimea, Po and Madonna del Pilone, and the more far on the direction to San Mauro[14], and villages (*borgate*) of *Sassi-Rosa*, but mainly by the complex remaining of the ancient organization of the settlements on the hills (*tetti*, *ronchi*, as small complexes, but also some few *farms* – quite recently established on older residential and productive buildings, being the farm a topologic model quite alien to Turin hillside – and a constellation of villas and *vigne*).

This complex system is well recognizable on the historical maps[15] and has had a long continuity in its traditional organization, retracing the relations and connections indicated above. Anyway some hill roads are more relevant than others and represent also the line connecting a series of villas and *vigne* of great historical importance. These roads normally follow the natural morphological conformation of Turin hillside and are also more or less parallel to creeks flowing from the top to Po river. Between them we surely must remember the *strada comunale di S. Vito Revigliasco*, hosting the very important *vigna di Madama Reale* (now only partially preserved and known with another name, but originally depending on the desires of Christine of France first Royal Madam at the court of Savoy) and the *strada di Val San Martino*, *strada comunale di Valsalice*, or *strada comunale di Mongreno*, just to remember some of them,



Antonio Rabbini, *Topografia della città e territorio di Torino cogli immediati suoi contorni compilata dal Geometra Antonio Rabbini colla scorta delle Mappe territoriali e delle perlustrazioni locali, dedicata all'inclito corpo decurionale di essa Città*, 1840. ASCT, *coll. Simeom*, D. 1803 Rabbini 1840, detail of the city and the hills area from San Mauro on the north to the fines of Cavoretto, excluded, on the south.

but ancient examples of gorgeous villas are also collocated on road connecting different sections or valleys on the same hillside, like the *strada del Nobile* or the long, narrow, but very interesting *Strada di Fenestrelle* [16].

The reorganization of their track, the connection with the bottom of the hills and the definition of some "zigzagging" (with curves and hairpin bends) roads are anyway depending on the old system, but are more strongly linked to the general master plan for the city (PRG) of 1906-08[17] and even more to the so-called Quaglia-Marescotti's plan (1913).

As masterfully underlined by Vittorio Defabiani, the approval by Turin Communal Council of the *Piano Regolatore e di Ampliamento della zona collinare* (Master Plan for the organization and expansion of the city in the hills) in 1913, represented a moment

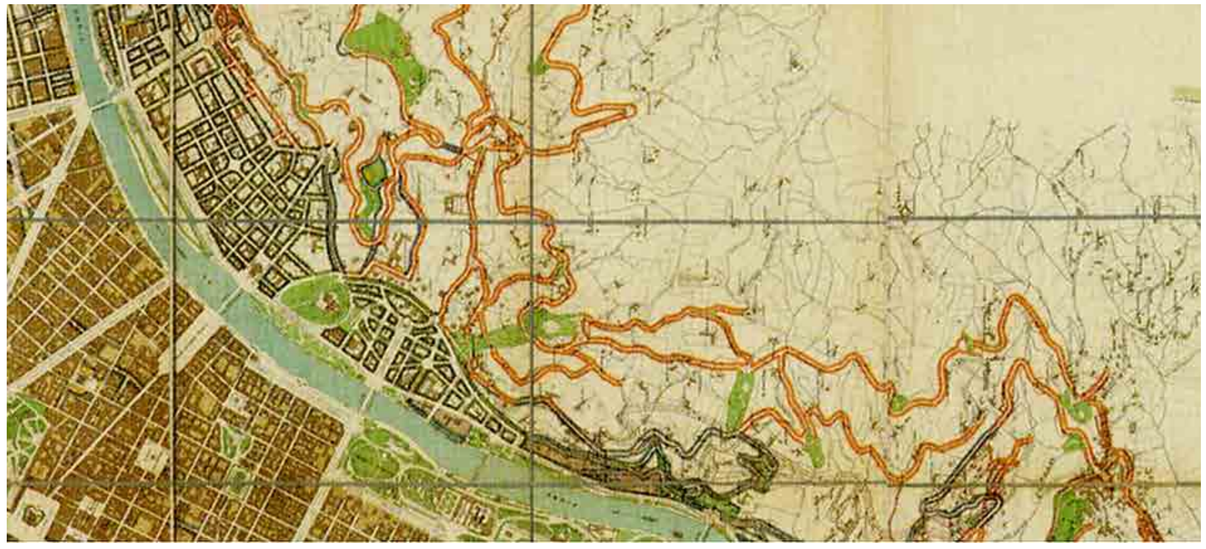
13 See section 2, point 3, "boroughs", for more details.

14 See section 2, point 3, "boroughs", for more details.

15 Compare the contribution by the author on this book.

16 For the selected villas and vigne individuated on the track of these roads, refer to section 2.

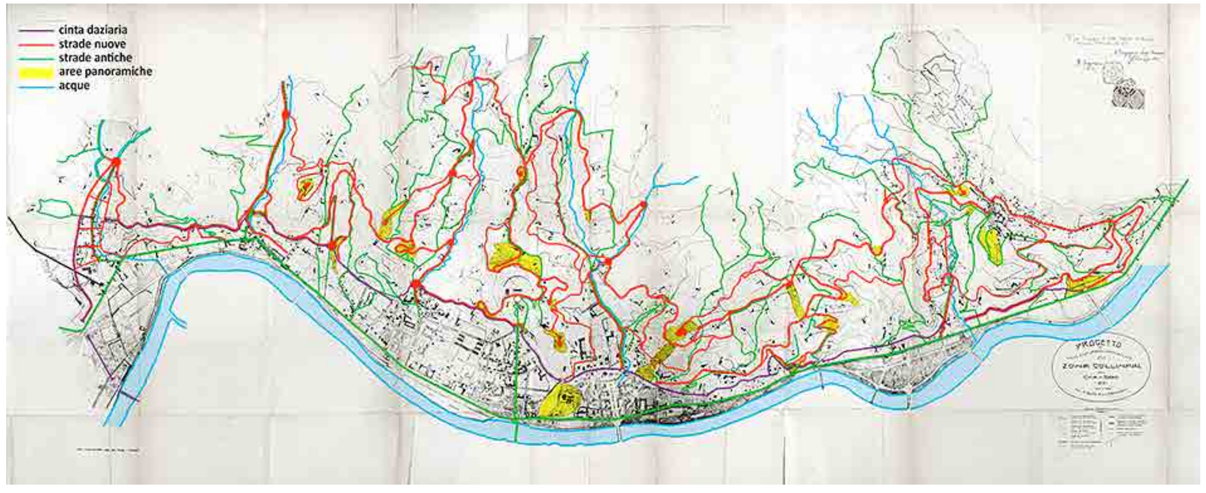
17 See the contribution on cartography on this book.



Pianta di Torino coll'indicazione dei due Piani Regolatori e di Ampliamento rispettivamente delle zone piana e collinare adottati dal Consiglio Comunale nel 1913, colle varianti apportate successivamente sino a maggio 1915, compilata dalla divisione III dell'Ufficio Municipale dei Lavori Pubblici, scala 1:5000. Private Archive, detail of tav. 6.

of consciousness of the relevance, both naturalistic and historical-artistic of the hillside of the city[18]. It was the result of a large public consultation about the importance of the check on the building development of the hills and also the response to the idea for the realization of a panoramic boulevard between the Valsalice barrier (belonging to the second tollgates of 1912) and the village of Cavoretto. Particularly an association, the so-called "Pro-Collina", founded in 1909, has the merit to have early reported the importance to consider the hillside as «a prospective balcony opening on the unsurpassed beauty of the Alpine chain and the spectacular laying of Turin», showing so the opportunity to preserve this happy condition and to benefit of the natural chance by improving and rationalizing the road system, to open «unexpected new panoramas»[19].

The plan by Quaglia and Marescotti "opens" the hillside to the city, trying to balance the mountain condition of the east bank of river Po with the intensive conurbation of the city, forming a new road system on the valleys San Martino, Salice, of San Vito, Pattonera, and tracing beltway, high in the hills been imagined to be always free from contrasts to the width of the eye and framing the mountains (the Alps), the plain with the rivers of Turin (Po, Dora and Stura), the entrance to the Val di Susa and the roads. The idea in general is intelligent, up to date and even forerunner of other choices, but it is also the trailblazer to a massive urbanization (not always responsible) made after the Second World War, characterized by villas, small blocks of flats, artificial villages on the flanks of the hills, in the area more easily connected to the city.



Graphical interpretation of the new road system and the panoramic views on *Progetto del Piano Regolatore e di Ampliamento della Zona collinare della Città di Torino* by engineers A. Quaglia and L. Marescotti, 1913. In green the old roads; in red the new panoramic roads; in yellow the parks and with red dots the panoramic front views.

View of the city centre from the road connecting the Gran Madre di Dio church (the dome in the photo) to the Villa della Regina. At the centre of the photo the large piazza Vittorio and the axe of via Po. On the left the emergence of the skyscraper in piazza Castello and on the backstage the Alpine chain.

18 Vittorio Defabiani, *Il Piano Regolatore e di Ampliamento della zona collinare della città del 1913*, on Chiara Devoti (ed.), *La città e le regole. Poster presentati al III congresso dell'AISU*, Celid, Torino 2008, pp. 81-82.

19 For more details, refer on the essay by Vittorio Defabiani and to the relation presented by engineers Andrea Quaglia and Luigi Marescotti with their plan, then published on "Atti della Società degli Ingegneri e degli Architetti in Torino", 1913.

Section 2

It's mainly after the choice of Turin as capital of the dukedom – following the Cateau-Cambrésis treaty in 1559 – that a relevant process of formation and transformation of the hillside shape begins. In this historical context some buildings were constructed and, assuming the role of strategic poles, they began to heavily influence the different settlements logics on the territory: they are both civil and religious buildings, almost always commissioned by the Savoy family and linked to the greater project that takes place, so protruding the ducal power on the territory[20].

1. "CIVIL BUILDINGS"

The construction of ducal residences on the slope of the hills that faces the Po river, since the first decades of the Seventeenth century, started by Cardinal Maurizio of Savoy – Vittorio Amedeo I's brother – and by the first *Madama Reale* (Royal Madame) Christine of France, originated a general process of improvement in the hillside properties, to cope with the new leisure oriented needs of the Court.

Cardinal Maurizio's "vigna", now *Villa della Regina* (via Villa della Regina)[21]

It was built since 1615 according to Ascanio Vitozzi's project and on the will of Cardinal Maurizio of Savoy. It was later refurbished and enlarged in the second half of XVII and during XVIII centuries, partly according to Filippo Juvarra's designs. It is located on the hills above Turin, at the end of a perspective axis in line with the eastern entrance to the Baroque city, on the opposite side of river Po. The plan is characterized by an inseparable relationship between internal rooms and external spaces, as the backyard garden with its semicircular terraces, realized according to Roman villas model. It is the only example still recognizable of such a structure "all'italiana" from the Sixteenth-Seventeenth century.

Vigna di Madama Reale, currently *villa Abegg* (strada comunale di San Vito Revigliasco 65)[22]

It is the surviving part of the *vigna* – or hillside property – bought in 1622 by the first *Madama Reale*, Christine of France, who commissioned the refurbishment project initially to Michelangelo Morello and then to Padre Costaguta. The final shape is due to Amedeo di Castellamonte. After subsequent changes in ownership, it currently belongs to the City of Turin. The building and its park form a inseparable set and are still preserving the old links with the surrounding hillside territory of San Vito and with the Valentino castle on the other side of River Po.

Villa della Regina.

Villa Abegg.

1.1 Vigne (late XVI - XVII centuries)

It is a complex formed by an agricultural estate mainly cultivated in wine yards and a series of buildings, with different functional purposes (civil, religious and rural).

The civil building was the temporary residence of the owners, while the rustic was continuously occupied by the responsible of the vineyards (*vignolante*). The garden and the cultivated part were integral to the *vigna*, together with the main residence and the farm building. It is worth underlying that during this period the *vigne* were mainly oriented towards the production of agricultural goods.

The *vigne* were built from noble families living in the city to satisfy different needs
– they were an element to take part to social life
– they were a refuge in case of epidemics and pestilences
– they were a farm representing a good investment of capital

They can be more "rustic", "aulic" or "gorgeous with different introductions and transformations". Here are the main examples:

Villa Coggiola, formerly *Vigna Pagliani* and then *vigna Oliveri di Vernier* (Strada vicinale del Nobile 51)

The *vigna* [hillside property] was indicated in the *Carta topografica della Caccia* and Grossi referred to it as «vigna con casino e cappella» (*vigna* with a hunting lodge and a chapel). It still has the original compact structure of XVII century; the interventions of the XX century had indeed only minimal impacts. A farm building on the east

20 Refer in specific to Vera Comoli, *Torino*, Laterza, Roma-Bari 1983 for the general concept and for further details, in all the exposition, to the analysis conducted during the works that leaded to the cited volume on *Beni culturali ambientali nel Comune di Torino*, and also Maria Grazia Vinardi, *Struttura e immagine della residenza collinare torinese: permanenze e trasformazioni*, there, pp. 760-770.

21 See also the card on Vera Comoli, Carlo Olmo (ed.), *Architectural Guides. Turin*, Allemandi, Turin 2000, p. 122.

22 Always here, p. 121.

is still existing, but is now in ruin; while the ancient chapel, that was in axis with the entrance from the public road, has now disappeared. The complex is part of the sequence of vigne of the Val Salice.

Villa Coggiola ("rustic" villa example).

Villa Rey, formerly *il Priè* (Strada comunale superiore di val San Martino 27)[23]

The *vigna*, belonging to the Turinetti di Priero family since 1637, was enlarged at the end of the XVIII century according to a project drawn by the architect Mario Ludovico Quarini. This was likely commissioned by the new owner, Angelo Carron di Aigueblanche, but was not completed when in 1796 he died without heirs.

It is an example of noble architecture that emerges on the last ridge of the Val San Martino and dominates river Po. The original Sixteenth century layout can easily be seen even today (internally, in the salon on the first floor, there are still coffered ceilings), and the interventions of Quarini are evident too (the most interesting ones are the high colonnade, with a clear influence from the Seventeenth century, the main rooms, the chapel and the backdrop of the garden). It currently belongs to the city of Torino and hosts a camping in the park.

Villa de Col, formerly *vigna Gonetti* (now *villa Maria Letizia*) (strada comunale di Fenestrelle 64 – strada d'Harcourt 19)

The villa was one of the very first residences of the Savoy family on the hills surrounding Turin. The layout of the first half of the Sixteenth century can still be seen in the hall, that spans over two floors and has a coffered ceiling decorated with the knots of the Savoy family and the French lilies. The main building is a block that faces the vast gardens and terraces, the chapel with sacristy is located inside it and is oriented towards south and the Reaglie valley. A small farm building is located beneath the chapel. The facades differ between each other because of the interventions in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth century, that led to consolidate the overall volumes of the building too (the last intervention dates back to the first quarter of the Nineteenth century).

Villa Rivoira, form. *Vigna Giuliano* (*vigna del Pingone*) (strada vic. del Nobile 109)

The building is the legacy of an original *vigna* from the Sixteenth century that was located on the old road climbing val Salice. It is a good example of successive interventions from XVIII to XIX century. In 1565 the *vigna* was purchased by Filiberto Pingone, counsellor and historian at Emanuele Filiberto di Savoia court. The building was then owned by the silversmiths Giuliano and in 1781 by the leather merchant Lorenzo Rossetti. The civil building, with four floors out of the ground, still has the original framework with a linear block; the modifications during XVIII and XIX century have not altered the overall layout. The farm buildings, located higher on the hill's slope, were indicated in the maps until the Napoleonic period and currently don't exist any longer. The chapel, near to the entrance, and the enlargement of the park date back to XIX century.

Two examples of "aulic" villas: Villa Rey and Villa Rivoira.

23 See also the card on Vera Comoli, Carlo Olmo (ed.), *Architectural Guides. Turin*, Allemandi, Turin 2000, p. 136.

Villa d'Ormea, formerly *vigna Berardt* (strada alla villa d'Ormea)

It is a *vigna* with an ancient layout, already existing at the beginning of the XVIII century, located on the hill and dominating the Po river and Corso Moncalieri.

In the *Carta Topografica della Caccia* it is indicated as a building with a block structure, in axis within a terraced («ad artefatto piano») semicircle shaped garden, with a chapel located higher on the slope, on the ancient road that connects it with strada della Viassa. The building, owned by the Ferrero d'Ormea since the half of the XIX century, currently has the shape of a villa of the Nineteenth century.

As main example of a vigna with a noble character, dating back to the XVII century, it is useful to refer to the *vigna di Madama Reale*, that was discussed among the ones that have influenced the developments on the hills surrounding the city since then.

To have more examples of *vigne*-villas with a noble character built during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries, it could be interesting to deal with the following examples:

Villa Giordano, formerly *vigna "il Pulpito"* (strada comunale di Fenestrelle 77, 83)

The villa and *vigna* with a chapel dominate a ridge over the strada di Fenestrelle and the city beneath. The original layout from the Sixteenth century can be seen in the positioning, that is parallel to the historic road that was climbing the valley, and internally in the sectioned vaults in the superior arm. The current shape of the complex with a big, elongated and linear bloc was defined by the interventions during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries, mainly evident in the front, that faces the terraces over the strada di Fenestrelle and is decorated with a neoclassical tympanum. The other buildings, among them the belvedere brickwork on the border of the terrace, dates back to the neoclassical period.

Villa Giordano and its belvedere brickwork.

Villa Becker, formerly *villa San Germano* (strada del Righino 1)

In 1633 the villa was owned by Ludovico d'Agliè, uncle of Filippo. Grossi describes it as the most beautiful villa and *vigna* in the valley of San Vito, with an amphitheatre shaped garden and "a chapel with a peculiar design". During the Eighteenth and even more in the Nineteenth century, the building underwent important transformations, among them we can enumerate: the reshaping of the central part, the addition of side arms and the renovation of the garden according to the romantic fashion. The most important intervention dates back to 1908 and is due to Engineer Fenoglio. Today the building and its park are among the ones that define the environment between Val Salice and San Vito valley. The small building near the entrance, that was already indicated in the maps of the Nineteenth century, was transformed according to the eclectic fashion.

1.2 Villas (XVII and XVIII centuries): Structuring and Consolidation Phase

The definition "villa" was introduced referring to the prevalence of a leisure role over the productive one. This period is mainly important for the valleys of Reaglie, Val Salice, San Vito, Val Pattonera; the ridges of Cavoretto and Fenestrelle and the valley of Superga, where the activity was heavily influenced by the construction of the Basilica. One of the driving factors is the desire of embellishing and re-qualifying the residences located on the hills through different interventions like enlargements, addition of elements that are typical of the baroque style as pillars with architectural orders (in Italian known as *paraste*), cornices, handrail, tympanum and gable-ends.

The buildings that are interested by these interventions typically exhibit two or three floors out of the ground, with the entrance usually located in axis with the central part of the façade, further underlined by the presence of the gable-end, balcony and dormer. Common elements for the most important villas are the colonnade and the small bell, often located in the central dormer, with a function as a signal.

The re-qualification of pre-existing parts impacts gardens too, with the use of terraces («artefatti piani») – whose walls are embellished with caves, statues and balustrades – and entrances, with a portal, sided by the chapel, that has a greater than before dignity.

Chapels are an integral part of the complex and can be found from the XVI century onwards on the hill's slopes. According to their public or private use they can be classified in three main categories:

– chapels located in the most important point along the pathways, that show strong analogies with the chapels in the countryside, but are under the protection of a family that owns a nearby *vigna*;

– chapels that belong to a *vigna*, but have a public function too and faces a public road;
– private oratories, often part of the civil buildings.

It is then possible to say that chapels are often an element that links with the public pathways and characterizes the environment around the public road and the entrance.

In Val San Martino it's possible to find some of the most important villas from the Eighteenth century with a chapel that faces the public road. Their sequence characterizes the unwinding of strada Valpiana and strada comunale superiore di Val San Martino. All of them show a nice architecture with baroque or neoclassical features and they usually have both a private and a public function. It is worth mentioning:

Vigna and chapel "il Bontan", currently *villa Salviati* (strada Valpiana 75)

The civil building is distant from the public road, it has an elongated shape with two floors out of the ground. It is the result of important refurbishments dating back to 1787 on the pre existing vigna belonging to the wife of architect Viana and still preserves its design from the late Seventeenth century. The chapel is in brick and mortar, sided by the road and was likely built in 1787, perhaps according to a project of architect Viana himself, as it was not indicated on the *Carta Topografica della Caccia* [1762].

Villa and chapel Musy, formerly *vigna "il Robesti"* (strada Valpiana 83/87)[24]

The villa lies off the main road and still maintains the original layout, unusual in its proportions, with an elongated block with three floors out of the ground. The façade has a flat structure, with a slightly protruding central part; the interior is characterized by fine coffered ceilings. The original farm building, nearby the villa, was refurbished as a residence too. Along the public road there is the chapel with an octagonal ground plan, dedicated to San Michele Arcangelo. It likely dates back to the mid of Seventeenth century both for the overall volume and the decorations: it is the element that connects the public pathway with the entrance to the park, designed in the Eighteenth century, located south of the villa.

Villa and chapel Carignano, formerly *vigna Bertet*, currently *villa Maria* (strada Valpiana 131)

It is an important example of a villa from the Eighteenth century, with a chapel and a terraced garden, that was later transformed during the Nineteenth century according to the romantic fashion. The villa and the service buildings still maintain the original layout dating back to the second half of the Eighteenth century. In the villa octagonal entrance the original plaster decoration is well preserved. The chapel, located along the public road near the entrance to the villa, is dedicated to Santa Caterina and is attributed to Vittone. It has a peculiar square ground plan.

Villa Nobili chapel (strada comunale superiore di val San Martino 60)

The chapel was built around 1767 according to a project of architect Viana. The villa was enlarged during the same period and later completely rebuilt after the second world war. It is located along the public road, near the entrance portal, that was designed by Viana too, and it has a façade from the late baroque period.

Villa Salviati chapel.

Villa Musy chapel.

Villa Maria chapel.

Villa Nobili chapel.

24 See also the card on Vera Comoli, Carlo Olmo (ed.), *Architectural Guides. Turin*, Allemandi, Turin 2000, p. 138.

Villa and chapel Kolliker, formerly *vigna sant'Antonio* (strada comunale superiore di val San Martino 102)

The complex, formed by civil and farm buildings, still has a layout from Sixteenth and Seventeenth century. The chapel was built in 1787, commissioned by abbot Richard then owner of the estate: it is located along the public road, near the entrance gate and has conserved its late baroque shape.

Villa and chapel Paradiso, formerly *vigna Boas* (strada comunale superiore di val San Martino 137)

The villa is the result of important refurbishments on the pre-existing building dating back to the end of the Eighteenth century; in the same period the gardens were renovated and terraced on the ridge dominating the city. They were later modified around the middle of the Nineteenth century, when a semicircular terrace was added. The chapel, located nearby the entrance gate on the border with the public road, has baroque shapes and is attributed to Bernardo Vittone: it used to be dedicated both to public and private use.

Villa Koelliker chapel.

Villa Paradiso chapel.

Villa Calligaris, already *des Hayes* (strada Valpiana 66)

The villa still maintains the original layout from the Seventeenth century with a square ground plan and three floors out of the ground; two rectangular buildings with two floors out of the ground were added later on the north and south sides and a long colonnaded terrace was built during the second half of the Nineteenth century on the side towards the road. The façade is divided into sections by pillars with architectural order and is characterized by a rather prominent ledge. The main entrance towards the garden is emphasized by the presence of a small terrace with pillars. The belvedere, tower shaped, is located on the south western corner of the garden at the edge of the terrace; it was originally indicated in the *Carta topografica della Caccia*. The chapel was located along the public road, on the opposite side of the belvedere.

Villa Calligaris.

Other relevant examples of the structuring and consolidating phase are:

Villa Fubini, formerly *vigna Durando* (strada consortile del Bellardo, 115)

The building, located on the ridge between Sassi and Mongreno, is an important example of an Eighteenth century villa. It was built in 1789 from the architect Ludovico Quarini on a pre existing *vigna*, mentioned in a document related to the sale in 1774, and still preserves almost unchanged Quarini's design.

The villa has two floors out of the ground with a central part with one more floor, topped by a balustrade with statues, that in the centre gives way to the small tower bell. Terraces supported by columns characterize both the front and the sides of the building. The ancient chapel, realized by Quarini inside the complex, was transformed into a space for domestic use.

Villa Canuto, formerly *vigna Mondet*, currently *villa Stillio* (strada antica di Revigliasco 6)

It is a peculiar example of vigna from the Eighteenth century, with the original design almost unchanged. The building has a linear and elongated ground plan, parallel to the road and with three floors. It dominates the church and the valley of San Vito; in the central part of the façade, that looks towards Torino, the small bell for signal is still very evident.

Villa Fubini ("aulic" villa example).

Villa Stillio ("rustic" villa example).

1.3 New Villas and Small Houses with Garden and Vegetable Garden (second half of the XIX and beginning of the XX centuries)

The improvements in the transportation system at the foot of the hill and the creation, on the former excise duty perimeter, of roads with accesses to lands both towards the city and the hill, promoted a process of growth and improvement of the residences on the hill. Old rural buildings were transformed for a civil use or new civil constructions were built near the pre-existing rural ones; villas and small houses with garden and vegetable garden were built from scratch too. This phenomenon was very important in the neighbourhoods originally situated outside of the 1853 excise duty perimeter. Its importance grew even bigger at the beginning of the Twentieth century, when the concept of the hill as a good available for the entire community and as a balcony dominating the city were enshrined in the Quaglia Marescotti plan of 1913. Also because of this, the following interventions lost their ties with the peculiar features of the historical developments.

Examples:

New villas. Usually located at the centre of the estate, surrounded by the park and internally distributed around the entrance and the stairs. On the ground floor there were the public rooms, on the first one those meant to the private use.

Examples like these can be found in strada villa Zanetti: these villas were signalled for the first time on the Rabbini map (for example villa de Luca, strada Villa Zanetti 315g) or on the later carthography and still maintain a layout typical of the Eighteenth century (for example villa Zanetti, that gives its name to the road and represents a peculiar element inside the Parco Europa plain).

Villas undergoing refurbishments. The pre-existing buildings are enlarged, often through the addition of new parts, or embellished through facades according to the eclectic fashion. The terraced gardens are transformed too according to the romantic park concept and rare tall trees are planted.

Good examples of villas refurbished during the second half of the Eighteenth century with elements according to the eclectic style are:

a. *Villa Lombard* (strada vicinale del Passarino 3): it was enlarged with a new part on the southern side during the first half of the Eighteenth century, and between 1885 and 1890 was realized the neo-gothic facade.

b. *Villa Ariot* (strada Valpiana 12): its original layout dates back to the Seventeenth-Eighteenth century; in the second half of the nineteenth century was refurbished according to the eclectic fashion: the intervention is mainly evident on the front that faces the entrance gate.

Among the other examples of a refurbishment according to the style of the beginning of the twentieth century, it's worth mentioning the intervention of Ingegner Fenoglio in *villa San Germano* too. Its exterior is currently according to neo-Eighteenth century shapes, while internally it is decorated with neo-medieval and XVII century elements.

Villa Ariot.

Small villas and houses with garden and vegetable garden.

a. *Small villas:* they're mainly single family buildings on a small scale, with a small garden and a vegetable garden. They were developed in clusters, mainly in relationships with the flat areas around the city; they often have formal elements that are linked to the Liberty or Decò style.

The small villas around via Moncalvo, largo Moncalvo and via Cardinal Maurizio are a relevant example. The same can be said of the buildings realized between XIX and XX century in via Gatti and via Villa Quiete, and about the clusters of strada Sabaudia, viale Thovez and strada del Morozzo, the lower parts of strada val Piana, strada val San Martino and strada val Salice. To conclude it's worth mentioning the small villas around older clusters of Reaglie and Cavoretto, strada di Santa Lucia and strada dei Falconieri.

Via Gatti: villa Giuliano andf villa Gelati.

Largo Moncalvo.

b. Small houses: they differ from small villas for the ownership structure – the lower bourgeois that consolidated itself as a social class – and for their simple design and decoration, like faked worked plasters, small balconies and balustrades, architectural frameworks indicating the different floors. They usually have a square or rectangular ground plan, two floors out of the ground and are located along the roads, or terraced slopes, and are strictly linked to their estate, with garden and vegetable garden. A relevant example of a small cluster can be found around the ancient road of Cavoretto and the Pattonera stream, and characterizes the crescent at the beginning of viale XXV Aprile.

Tetti. Between the Nineteenth and the Twentieth century the so called "tetti" (roofs) find their final definition too: clusters that originate from rural activities and are progressively structured on the hills surrounding Torino from the XVII century. They are usually formed by buildings with a single arm and different-connected modules, with two or three floors out of the ground, external stairs and balconies to access the individual units. They usually have roofs in tiles with a large sloping to cover balconies. They're usually named after the family that owns them. They're mainly located in the valleys below Superga, Reaglie, Mongreno and Cavoretto. In Cavoretto there's also another type of rural conglomerates, called "ronchi": realized in the second half of the Eighteenth and in the Nineteenth century from local farmers and small owners, working on areas subtracted to the wood and then cultivated.

We can mention: *Tetti Badan* and *Tetti Giovannini* in the strada comunale di Superga; *Tetti Bertoglio* in strada Cartman, *Tetti Gramaglia* in Cavoretto.

Small houses. They were mainly built during the first decades of the Twentieth century, and are residential buildings for many different families, that have the formal layout of the villas, but with dimensional and functional features typical of the condominiums (for example, the buildings at the corner between corso Gabetti and corso Quintino Sella).

1.4 Major Transformations to the Hillside System (Contemporary Buidings)

During the second half of the Nineteenth century, mainly in the Sixties, interventions that have no links with the peculiar features of the historical setting are realized on the hill. The image of the individual buildings is kept into consideration, ignoring their relationships with the neighbourhoods.

Typical examples of this phenomenon are:

Colonia Elioterapica "3 gennaio", formerly *villa Gualino* (viale Settimio Severo 65)[25]

The building, that dominates the city from the ridge of the hill, is the result of the transformation into a centre for heliotherapy of the villa, began in 1929 under the commission of Riccardo Gualino. The initial design, by the roman architects Clemente and Busiri Vici, envisaged the construction of a building according to the expressionist architecture of the early XX century, with a polygonal central part with three floors out of the ground linked to two elongated wings from galleries with only one floor. The architects Ferroglio, Grassi, Passanti and Perone, all from Torino, were later in charge of the transformation and gave to the building features that are closer to the rationalistic architecture.

The complex most recently was a congress centre for the Regione Piemonte.

Residential building (viale Thovez 43 bis)[26]

The complex, that hosts many different apartments, was built on the hill surrounding Torino by the architect Giorgio Ranieri, between 1968 and 1970, not far from the Noviziato delle Suore di Carità. The cylindrical shape stems from a strict interpretation of the rules for the new buildings on the hill: it dictated indeed that the new constructions had to lye within a circle with a spoke no longer than 21 meters. The

25 See also the card on Vera Comoli, Carlo Olmo (ed.), *Architectural Guides. Turin*, Allemandi, Turin 2000, p. 186, and the card on Agostino Magnaghi, Mariolina Monge, Luciano Re (ed.), *Guida all'architettura moderna di Torino*, Celid, Turin 2005, pp. 144-145.

26 See also the card on Vera Comoli, Carlo Olmo (ed.), *Architectural Guides. Turin*, Allemandi, Turin 2000, p. 223, and the card on Agostino Magnaghi, Mariolina Monge, Luciano Re (ed.), *Guida all'architettura moderna di Torino*, cit., p. 257

building, with three floors out of the ground, follows the natural slope of the hill. The roof, with just one slope, in aluminium, gives a strong unity to the entire complex.

Villa Gualino.

Viale Thovez 43bis.

Centro Incontri "La Salle" (strada comunale di Santa Margherita 132)[27]

The current form of the building stems from an original religious construction, that was unfinished at the level of the drum and originally was designed in 1883 from the architect Bertinaria on a ridge lying behind the Monte dei Cappuccini and dominating the city.

The preminent position of the unfished monument, clearebly visible from the great piazza Vittorio, and the dimension of the complex moved, in 1974, the Fratelli delle Scuole Cristiane to commission the architect Mario Federico Roggero a transformation of the original structure to host a congress centre. He clearly underlined the opposition between the new and the old part in its design for the ground plan and the materials put close to each other.

View of the Centro Incontri "La Salle" from piazza Vittorio.

Casa dell'Obelisco (piazza Crimea 2)[28]

It is a building hosting different apartments, that was realized between 1954 and 1959 by Turin architects Sergio Jaretti and Elio Luzi. It exploits the most of the area while at the same time coping with the rules on the new buildings and expressing the influence on the two architects of the works of Gaudì and Wright. The building, with its post rationalistic shape, is completely removed from the features of the square and the neighbourhood.

Casa dell'Obelisco.

2. "RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS"

Between the end of the Sixteenth and the beginning of the Seventeenth century two religious buildings with a very important relevance in the urban and hillside panoramas were realized.

27 See also the card on Agostino Magnaghi, Mariolina Monge, Luciano Re (ed.), *Guida all'architettura moderna di Torino*, Celid, Turin 2005, p. 271.

28 See also the card on Vera Comoli, Carlo Olmo (ed.), *Architectural Guides. Turin*, Allemandi, Turin 2000, p. 206, and L. Barello, A. Luzi (ed.) *Le Case Manolino. Storia di una famiglia di costruttori e di due architetti*, Il Tipografo, Buttigliera d'Asti 1996, pp. 55-61.

Church and convent of Santa Maria al Monte (via Giardino 35)[29]

The complex, built on a high ridge upon the city and river Po, was realized from 1584 on a former fortified structure by the ducal engineer Giacomo Soldati, later continued by Ascanio Vitozzi and finally completed by Carlo di Castellamonte. The church, with a central plan, is a rare and important example of the religious architecture from the late Mannerist period. During the XIX century some structural interventions modified the roof and the decorations inside the dome.

Church and convent of Santa Maria al Monte (Monte dei Cappuccini).

Hermitage of the Camaldolesians

The monastery was located on the hill of Pecetto, between Turin and Chieri. It was founded in 1602 on the orders of Carlo Emanuele I, realized by the first ducal engineer Ascanio Vitozzi and decorated from the main artists of the period. The church and part of the convent were refurbished in 1787 according to Dellala di Beinasco designs. Completely deprived of its own goods during the Napoleonic period and rebuilt later, it is currently located to Sermig, that is in charge of refurbishment. For its historical role it has had a relevant impact on the higher territories of the hill.

During the first half of XVIII century a similar influence stems from the *Basilica of Superga*, that becomes a new pole of visual attraction in the territory. It sparks successive refurbishments for the *vigne* on the sunny slopes surrounding Superga valley, that are often enlarged to be used as leisure residences.

29 Always here, p. 51

A relevant role for the development in the settlements on the hills surrounding the city is finally the one that derives from the *hillside parishes*. They are usually buildings with a single hall with three wooden altars that are painted marble like and have a baptismal font internally. We can remember:

S. Vito parish church, Chiesa dei SS. Vito, Modesto e Crescenzia (strada comunale di S. Vito Revigliasco)

It was initially documented in 860 as a church depending on the Cathedral Chapter. In the second half of the XVIII century, following a fire, it was rebuilt in baroque forms.

The base of the tower bell is still from its original foundation. Many chapels used to depend on this church, they were often part of villas and *vigne* [hillside properties] and open to the public worship. A small cemetery, functioning until 1951, was lying near to the church.

San Vito church.

Cavoretto parish church, Chiesa di San Pietro in Vincoli (via San Rocco 29, Cavoretto)

The old religious building, located on a ridge dominating the city, was reshaped during the Eighties of the Nineteenth century and the façade, in neo baroque style, was completed in 1914.

Santa Margherita parish church (st.da San Vincenzo 146)

Built between 1826 and 1832 on the side of a former chapel belonging to Villa Asinari and dedicated to Santa Margherita, it was created parish in 1834.

Superga parish church, Chiesa di Santa Maria (piazzale di Superga)

The old construction, dating back to the XIV century, was rebuilt during the first quarter of the XVIII century near the original site, to leave room for the new Superga Royal Basilica. In 1848 it was enlarged and the decorations were embellished under the commission of king Carlo Alberto.

Sassi parish church, Chiesa di San Giovanni Battista Decollato (via Bocca 15)

A pastoral visit in 1584 states that it was a church with a single nave, with three altars and tower bell, depending on Turin metropolitan church. Suppressed during the Napoleonic period, it was later given back its parish jurisdiction in 1821. It was later enlarged in 1869 and in 1903 the old tower bell was demolished.

Mongreno parish church, Chiesa di San Grato (strada Com. di Mongreno 344)

The current church was built in 1630, likely on a former building from XV-XVI century. In 1757 the presbytery was enlarged and the altar rebuilt on a project from the architect Ignazio Agliaudi Baroni di Tavigliano. In the XIX century the sacristy was enlarged and the façade was frescoed. The parish church is characterized by its belongings: the pedestrian road to access it with San Grato's pillar, the church yard and the area of the old cemetery.

Reaglie parish church, Chiesa di Santa Maria (strada comunale dei Forni e Goffi 2)

It was originally mentioned in a pastoral visit in 1585; in the XVIII century it had a single nave and three chapels. It was refurbished between the Nineteenth and Twentieth century.

Baldissero parish church, Chiesa di Santa Maria della Spina (piazza Santa Maria della Spina, Baldissero Torinese)

The church is a relevant example of late Piedmont baroque architecture. It was built between 1715 and 1725 where an ancient, medieval tower was located. It was consecrated in 1744.

3. "BOROUGHS"

Finally there are some small boroughs[30], that are important knots linking the city and the hill:

Borgo Po. It grows on the right side of the river along the old road towards Casale, currently corso Casale. After the second decade of the Nineteenth century it is characterized from the presence of the *Gran Madre di Dio* church and the square surrounding it.

The grid of the streets beneath the hill has a rather regular shape, that was designed between Nineteenth and Twentieth century.

Borgo Rubatto, currently "Crimea". Is located along the road towards Moncalieri, near the Umberto I bridge, that is in axis with the former Viale del Re, currently Corso Vittorio Emanuele II. It had and kept an industrial destination for most of the period, using the hydraulic power to produce energy thanks to the river nearby.

Between the Eighteenth and Nineteenth century the entire borough is reshaped and it is transformed into a residential area with large and small villas with a garden. The only ancient street surviving is via della Brocca, encapsulated inside the Crimea borough, whose traces are still present in some segments of the paths along San Vito hill.

Madonna del Pilone. Its name is due to the church, built during the first half of the Eighteenth century and refurbished in 1817. It is strictly connected with corso Casale and the grid of its streets is typical of the borough outside of the excise duty perimeter.

The area between via Boccaccio, Lomellina and Tonello is very interesting: it represents the urban portion of the territory beneath the hill, some historical path starts here, as strada Valpiana, to give an example. Buildings there usually have three or four floors out of the ground and are either developed along the streets or organized as courts and they form a continuous cluster.

Maria Vittoria Cattaneo and *Chiara Devoti*[31]

30 For more details about boroughs, see Roberto Gambino, Giovanni Maria Lupo (ed.), *Borghi e borgate di Torino tra tutela e rilancio civile*, Celid, Torino 2011, with particular attention to the essays by Chiara Devoti and Giovanni Maria Lupo.

31 Section 1 is due to Chiara Devoti; section 2 is due to Maria Vittoria Cattaneo.

Introduction

The history of lands, territories, cities and settlements is strongly connected with the knowledge of the ancient cartography drawn to show them, sometimes even to build a specific image of the area, more than a geographical pure representation.

This position is more and more relevant depending on the importance of the condition represented by iconography and cartography. When the city is not only a settlement (even of great economical or political relevance) but a State Capital, the representation can show many more elements than we can suppose immediately.

The case of Turin is emblematic: the city is, since the XVI century, an iper-normed town following the concept that every choice is imposed or ruled by a specific administrative act emanated by the sovereign (at the beginning Duke of Savoy, after King of Sardinia, then King of Italy) and drawn by Architects or Engineers belonging to the Court *entourage* (Royal Architects or collaborators).

Founded by the Romans at the very end of the I century BC, the city was a relevant element of the «Romanization of the territory that is now Piedmont, occurring during the Republican era, as part of a broader process of urban diffusion at the time within the extended area of the Po river valley. This was seen in the rationalisation of the production system and the installation of an efficient infrastructure in the territory in order to control the very important Alpine passes. The Roman conquest proceeded slowly over the course of the second century BC in the area of Cisalpine Gaul (*Regio XI Transpadana*) and met the powerful opposition of the original population of the valleys. A definitive settlement of the region would only occur during the middle years of the empire of Augustus. Two operations were representative of this: the founding of *Augusta Praetoria* (nowadays Aosta) and the recolonization or reinforcement of *Julia Augusta Taurinorum* (Turin), around the year 25 BC, giving the two cities a very powerful monumental importance»[1].

Contracted – as extremely frequent in Western Europe, with the dissolution of the Roman Empire, after 476 AC, and the following administrative structures collapse – the city is any way a known Carolingian committee capital and by the X and XI centuries Turin heads a great march which extends from the Alps (the Lanzo valley in particular) to Liguria.

Since 1280 the city is under the control of the Savoy family but with less importance than other cities like Chieri, now on the contrary a satellite settlement if compared to the metropolitan area.

Lost by the family during the XVI century, Turin will re-come to Emanuel Philibert after the Cateau-Cambrésis treaty of 1559 and will became the capital of the redefined Duchy on the two sides of the Alpine chain.

As underlined by Vera Comoli, «the precise design for the refoundation of the Duchy that characterized the policy of the central Savoyard years of the XVI century in the new European political balance, with the consolidation – or rather the complete invention – of the capital city, led to events and processes in town planning and architecture that would make Turin one of the most important young capitals in Europe.

The town and the hills, separated by River Po. Detail of aerial view. On the right, the Valentino Castle facing the river.

Peripheral only in appearance, the identity of the Duchy became more and more European between the XVI and XVII centuries. This was therefore the basis of its town planning structure and an urban landscape characterized between the late XVI and XVIII centuries by uniformity, formal coherence and continuity, the rigid and repetitive pattern of buildings and squares and then later, in the XIX century, by long tree-lined streets, the systematic structural expansion of the road system along the old Baroque axes and a renewed uniformity in the middle-class building»[2].

All this activities to produce a city «born immediately "modern"»[3] let enormous series of documents, both written and drawn, being often the real base for the interpretation of territorial transformations and nowadays settlement.

It is clear, in fact, that we must start from the consolidated situation we can see directly nowadays, to understand – like in a sort of book of which we move the pages from the end to the beginning – the reasons of the organizations we can recognize today.

1 Chiara Devoti, Andrea Longhi, *The Roman and Medieval City*, on Vera Comoli, Carlo Olmo (ed.), *Architectural Guides. Turin*, Allemandi, Turin 2000, p. 15.

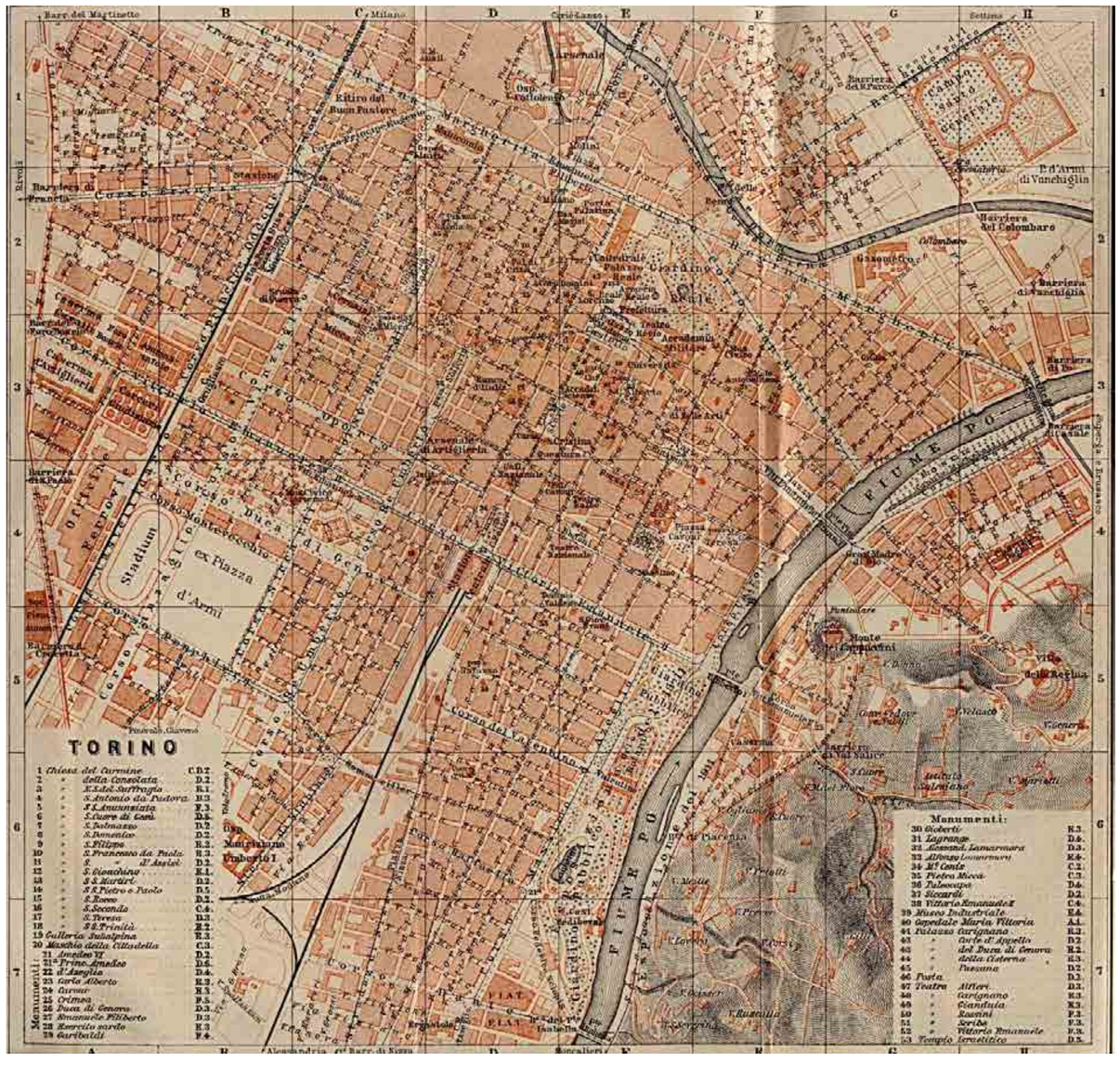
2 Vera Comoli, *Introduction to the city of Ancien Régime*, Ibid., p. 11.

3 *Ibid*.

Torino Hills and their Cartography

Ancient cartography, especially in iper-normed contests like the one represented by Turin and its constantly programmed enlargement is extremely proficient. Actually we read commonly that town planning is always running after the "natural" transformation and evolution of town area, in a constant delay between the prevision and the real going of the reorganization of collective life; in the specific case of Turin the rigorous control applicated by the Court allowed since the origin (the XVI century) a rigid drawing of each transformation and expansion, giving naissance to a specific and copied European model.

In such a contest, the hills in front of the city, on the opposite bank of river Po, called since the beginning of the XVII century the "Mountain of Turin" are well represented



The city and part of the hills and the rivers in a map of 1912, in TCI (Touring Club Italiano), *Guida d'Italia. Torino e Milano*, Milano 1913.

even if not ruled or planned since the beginning of the XX century (plan of 1906-08 considering both the "flat area" – *parte piana* – and the "hill area" – *parte collinare* – of the city). Anyway, the area is as a stable settlements during the middle ages (even if the pretended Lombard establishment in the emergent area of Superga, narrated even recently by Symcox and Cardoza[4], to which the topographic name could be referred, appears with no archaeological evidence) then an important land for villas and vineyards (*vigne*) all over the Modern ages to the Contemporary years a place of urban development and luxurious houses.

The first relevant map we can explore is the so called *Carte de la montagne de Turin*, attributed to Engineer La Marchia, dating of the end of the XVII century[5], in which the topographic complexity of the hills is directly emerging and showing the differences between the sun well exposed sectors (called *indritti*) and the badly exposed versants (called *inversi*), with different kinds of settlements[6]. Obviously the Basilica di Superga at that time is not present, but the soaring condition of the specific hill then occupied by the monument is clearly evident, as in the quite contemporary *Carta generale degli Stati di Sua Altezza Reale* (also known with the title of *Carta di Madama Reale*), by Giovanni Tommaso Borgonio, of 1680[7], representing all the States belonging to the Savoy at that time and so with obviously few details if compared to the specific representation of the first cartography considered. The orography is anyway well detailed and extremely relevant in the map, strongly (and correctly even in a so great scale) interrelated to the road net and settlement organization, giving the first correct, official and "real" representation of the land of Piedmont, and other states for the Modern ages. This so important map will be "re-drawn" and integrated some hundred years after by Giacomo Stagnone (and Giovanni Maria Belgrano) in the not less famous *Carta corografica degli Stati di S.M. il Re di Sardegna* [8], denunciating since the complete title (see note below) the debit to the ancient work of Borgonio and its enlargement including the areas now aggregated to the States belonging to

4 Anthony L. Cardoza, Geoffrey W. Symcox, *A History of Turin*, Einaudi, Turin 2006, p. 28.

5 [La Marchia], *Carte de la montagne de Turin avec l'etendue de la plaine Depuis le Sangon Jusqu'à la Sture*, n.d. [1694-1696]. State Archives of Turin (then ASTo), Corte, *Carte Topografiche per A e B*, Torino 14.

6 For more details, see the text by Vittorio Defabiani on this book.

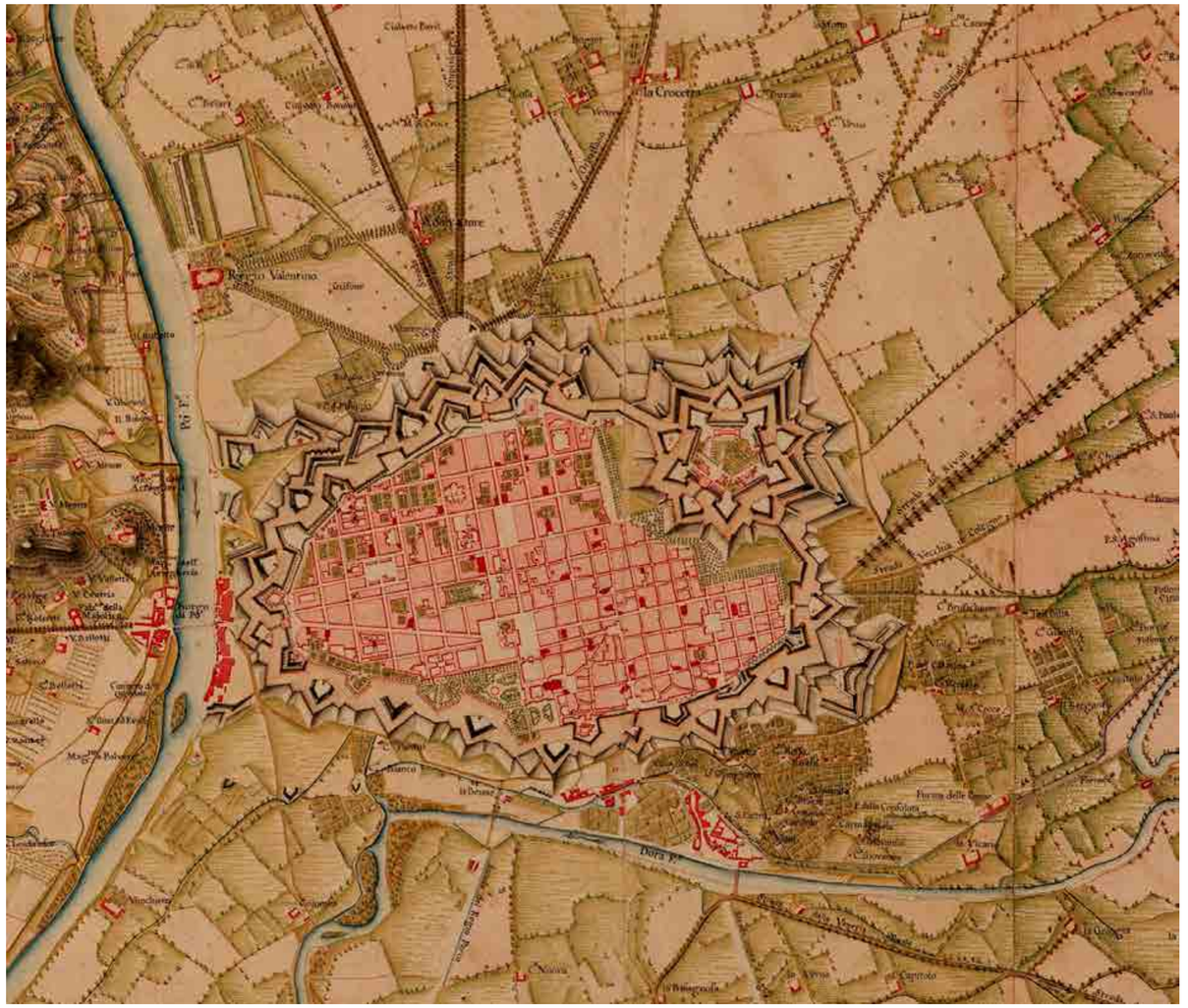
7 Giovanni Tommaso Borgonio, *Carta generale degli Stati di Sua Altezza Reale*, 1680. The engraved coppers are parcially conservated in the Royal Library of Turin and the one of the different printed copies is in ASTo, Corte, *Carte Topografiche per A e B*, Piemonte 23.

8 Giacomo Stagnone, Giovanni Maria Belgrano (engravers), *Carta corografica degli Stati di S.M. il Re di Sardegna data in luce dall'ingegnere Borgonio nel 1683 corretta ed accresciuta nell'anno 1772*. ASTo, Corte, *Carte Topografiche per A e B*, Piemonte 23.

the Royal Family of Savoy (i.e. the Sesia lands till Ticino river, part of the Milan Duchy and the Alpine areas of the Monginevro pass, etc.)

More recent, but trying to retrace the organization of the city and its surroundings in a previous period, is the map of 1785-1790 representing the dangerous event of the siege of Turin in 1706[9] (at the origin of the ducal vote that will originate the building of the great Holy Virgin Sanctuary at the top of Superga hill)[10]. The description of the "mountain of Turin" is extremely detailed with the correct indication of the three bridges crossing river Po and connecting the city with the hills: the main bridge in front of the *Porta di Po* (then substituted by stone bridge built during the Napoleonic occupation), the one in front of Cavoretto (a relevant settlement in the hills) and the one not far from the confluence of the Dora creek to the Po, using a double bridge connecting the two banks of a small sand isle in the river bed. The hill that will host the basilica is recognizable with no doubts and is occupied by a no more specified building, not religious, just indicated with a geometric polyline.

The most important document representing the city and its surroundings is the famous *Carta Topografica della caccia*, drawn by an anonymous Piedmont cartographer between 1761 and 1766[11], showing the areas reserved to the royal hunt all around the capital from the hills to Rivoli, from Carignano to Venaria Reale, with the exclusion of the area at the north of the Stura creek. In spite of the lack of the section of the "mountain of Turin" for the section occupied by the hill of Superga and the Baldissero on the opposite side, we can complete the knowledge on this area implementing the map by a preparatory map, also conserved in the State Archives in Turin and never traduced into an official version[12]. In this second preparatory cartography not only the basilica is shown, but especially the complex historical structure of the territory around the capital, Turin, for this specific part and the intricate system of trails crossing the glens characterizing the area.



The city and its fortifications, but also the relation with River Po and River Dora, in the *Carta Topografica della Caccia*, 1761-66. ASTO, Corte, *Carte topografiche Segrete*, 15 A VI rosso.

The same area is perfectly reproduced in the *Carta Corografica dimostrativa del territorio della città di Torino*, defined by Architect Giovanni Lorenzo Amedeo Grossi between 1790 and 1791[13], constituting the first census of the vineyards and villas present in Turin hills. The scholars have shown the relevance of this representation cause the process of "re-appropriation" of the area outside the city contained inside the great fortification (represented on the contrary totally in the *Carta dell'interiore*

9 Gaetano Quaglia, *Città e cittadella di Torino attaccata dai Gallispani li 9 giugno 1706, liberata li 7 settem[b]re*, 1785-1790. ASTo, *Carte Topografiche per A e B*, Torino 31 and the analysis by Guido Gentile on Isabella Massabò Ricci, Guido Gentile, Blythe Alice Raviola (editors), *Il teatro delle terre. Cartografia sabauda tra Alpi e pianura*, L'Artistica, Savigliano 2006, pp. 74-75. See also Chiara Devoti, *Carta dell'assedio di Torino (Quaglia, 1706)*, in *Museo Torino*, http://www.museotorino.it/view/s/32fb132b50ae4b8c99b65dab238993db.

10 See the contribution by Maria Vittoria Cattaneo on this book.

11 Anonymous, *Carta Topografica della caccia*, [1761-66]. ASTo, Corte, *Carte topografiche Segrete*, 15 A VI rosso. Chiara Devoti, *Carta topografica della caccia (1760-1766 circa)*, in *Museo Torino*, http://www.museotorino.it/view/s/b253d7d4bddc49c5a2c3b1be09a72c07.

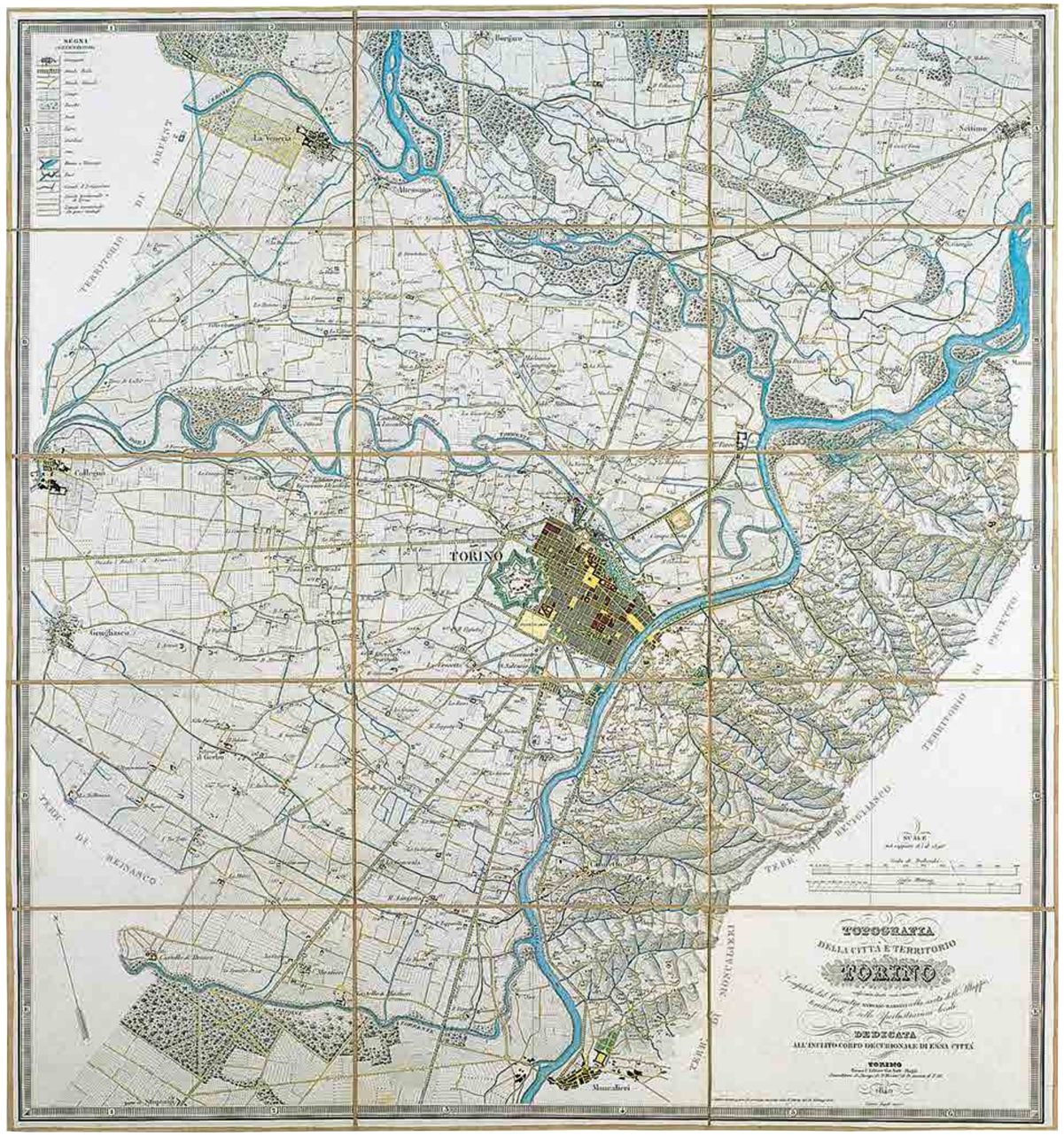
12 Preparatory sketches for the implementation of the same *Carta Topografica della caccia*.

13 Giovanni Lorenzo Amedeo Grossi, *Carta Corografica dimostrativa del territorio della città di Torino, luoghi e parti confinanti* [...], 1790-1791. Archivio Storico della Città (then ASCT), Collezione Simeom, D 1800. For the analysis, Cecilia Castiglioni, *Carta Corografica dimostrativa del territorio della città di Torino (Grossi, 1790-1791*), in *Museo Torino*, http://www.museotorino.it/view/s/b8770588ef7641bcb9412ee54d0849c2.

della città di Torino che comprende ancora il Borgo di Po (1762 approx)[14] and in the even more famous map by Ignazio Amedeo Galletti, of the same year, representing the accomplished military works for the protection of the capital city[15]) and its territorially reconnection to the surroundings of the town, annunciating processes then typical for the XIX century.

The XVIII century is also a period of great transformations all over Europe, but Savoy and Piedmont are surely excellent in the international panorama for the precocious organization and adoption of a modern cadastral survey, established by king Vittorio Amedeo II (1666-1732, ruling 1685-1730) and defined for Piedmont with the rules given by his son, Carlo Emanuele III in 1739 (imposing the drafting of a figurative plan of the areas surveyed). The capital city is anyway exempt so we don't have particular representation of the town and hills and we must wait for the arrival of Napoleon Bonaparte and the annexation of Piedmont to France (11th September 1802) to have a cadastral survey with maps also for the city at that time called *Ville Impériale de Turin*. The area of Superga (very restricted in fines) in the Napoleonic Cadastral Survey[16], indicated as *Parrocchia di Superga* (parish of Superga) is represented in sheet number 10, with an interesting indication of the complex orography of the territory and the street defined some twenty years before to connect more efficiently the city and the votive church at the top of the hill[17].

The agricultural and wood assessment of this lands is more overall recognizable in a great map, realized between 1816 and 1830 – following the new topographic and cartographic indications furnished by Napoleonic Military Academies – by the *Corpo di Stato Maggiore dell'esercito sardo* (Royal Military Major Status of the Sardinian Kingdom) to represent all the territories owned by the Savoy after the Restoration European Monarchies (erasing the Napoleonic parabola) of



Antonio Rabbini, *Topografia della città e territorio di Torino cogli immediati suoi contorni compilata dal Geometra Antonio Rabbini colla scorta delle Mappe territoriali e delle perlustrazioni locali, dedicata all'inclito corpo decurionale di essa Città*, 1840. ASCT, *coll. Simeom*, D. 1803 Rabbini 1840.

1815 and conserved in Florence[18]. The splendid pictorial representation shows the persistence of the late Baroque organization of Turin hills, reconfirmed by the following survey, made by the same army officers in 1852 in the so-called

14 *Copia della Carta dell'interiore della città di Torino che comprende ancora il Borgo di Po*. ASTo, Corte, *Carte topografiche per A e B*, Torino 16 and for the analysis Maria Vittoria Cattaneo, *Copia della Carta dell'interiore della città di Torino che comprende ancora il Borgo di Po (1762 circa)*, in *Museo Torino*, http://www.museotorino.it/view/s/551f7f6a85f54e0d948cdc4d83141613.

15 Ignazio Amedeo Galletti, *Pianta geometrica della reale città e cittadella di Torino colla loro fortificazione*, 1790. ASCT, *Tipi e Disegni*, 64.2.13. For the analysis see Maria Vittoria Cattaneo, *Pianta geometrica della reale città, e cittadella di Torino colla loro fortificazione (Galletti, 1790)*, in *Museo Torino*, http://www.museotorino.it/view/s/1b31d8f23d55473596a0f91c4a541746.

16 Napoleonic Cadastral Survey of Turin, 1802-1804. ASCT, Catasti, Catasto napoleonico.

17 See the specific contribution by Maria Vittoria Cattaneo in this book.

18 Corpo Reale dello Stato Maggiore, *Carta degli Stati Sardi*, 1816-1830. IGM, Firenze, Archivio Topocartografico.

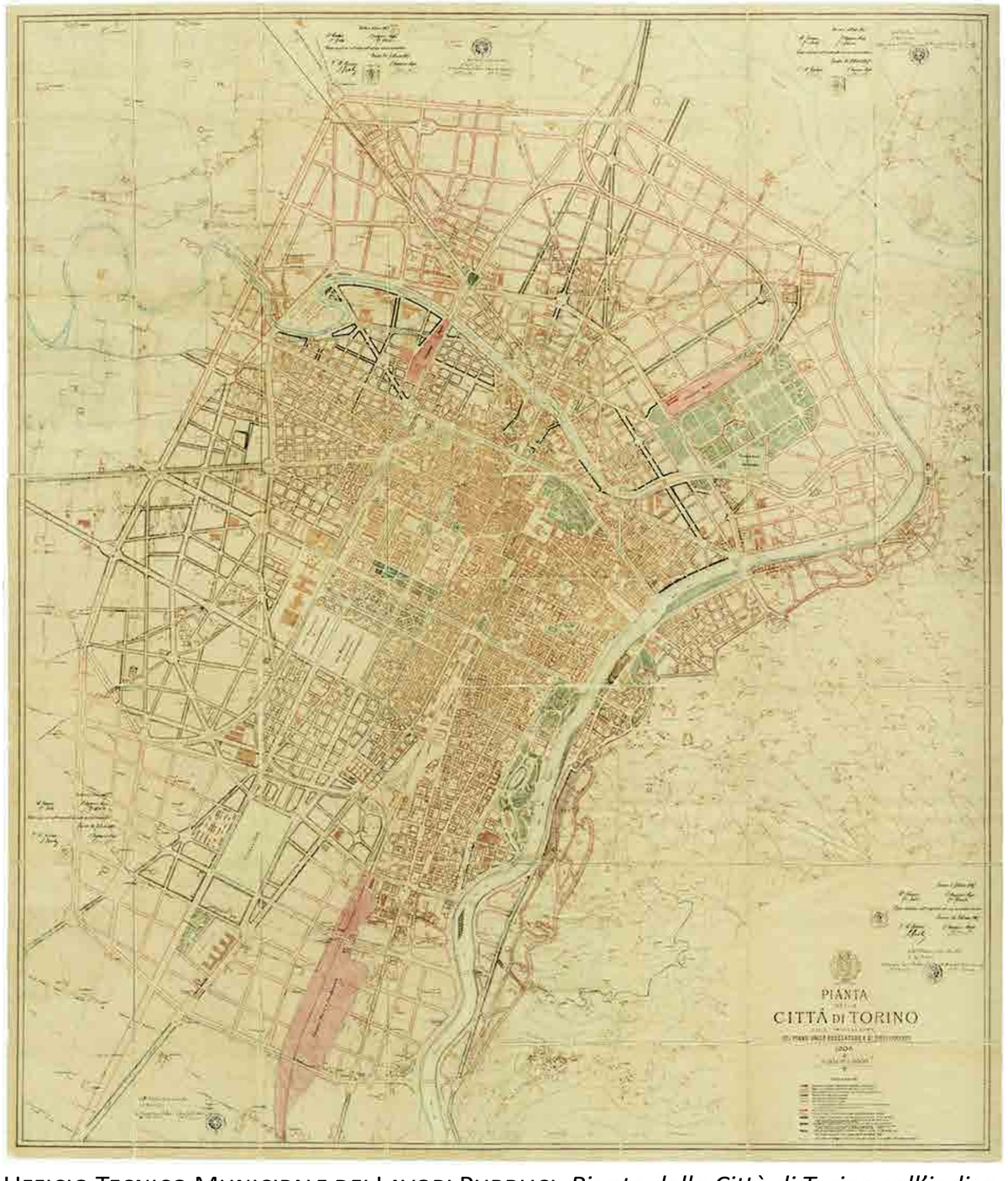
Gran Carta degli Stati Sardi [19], again an overall representation of the State approximately ten years before the unification of Italy (1861) and the passage from Kingdom of Sardinia to Kingdom of Italy.

Even in the rarefaction of the signs used in the representation, trying to move from the pictorial drawn to a more geometrical and symbolic way to show nature and morphology, what we can appreciate is the specificity of the hills land: woods are surely reduced in some area, especially the nearest to the conurbation, and some vineyards appear substituted by gardens or simple invasive trees spots, but the general organization of the area is absolutely permanent especially in the road net system, in the hierarchic relation between trails and in the connection to the city.

The situation, again reconfirmed in the IGM (Istituto Geografico Militare) tablets (scale 1:25.000), the most common post-unity geographic codification, that we even continue – surely with implementations – to use nowadays and firstly appearing around 1880, is stable till the remembered beginning of the XX century when it is no more matter to reabsorb the ancient "mountain of Turin" in the master plans for the city (*Piano Regolatore Generale*, normally indicated by the acronym P.R.G.), but sometimes to preserve the specificity of this hilly area.

The master plan of 1906-08[20] we cited at the beginning of this essay is exemplary, in its indications for the flat area and the hilly part of the city, but it appears symptomatic of a new way to consider the "other bank of the Po and its mountain". What the plan shows is in fact the systematic redefinition of the strip nearest to the bridges and the east bank of the Po, where a new, rich and eclectic architecture for luxurious villas and small block of flats starts to indicate a sure census in the owners and a new way to live the city away from the smells of the industrial conurbation, in total immersion into the green. The Renaissance and Baroque model of the vineyards is reappearing in a new way, connected with the use of new transport systems, the cars Turin was starting to produce systematically. Business leaders, factories owners and bankers start to use to live in the hills and then move to the centre or the industrial peripheries of the town to work during the day.

In the contingent Italian and International contest of the beginning of the XX century and the years twenties, in which the idea of panoramas, pictorial views and landscape start to have more and more importance, two engineers working for the municipality elaborated a specific master plan for the regimentation and road organization



Ufficio Tecnico Municipale dei Lavori Pubblici, *Pianta della Città di Torino coll'indicazione del Piano Regolatore e di Ampliamento*, 1906, Roma, 5 aprile 1908. ASCT, Serie 1K, *Decreti Reali*, *Piani Regolatori*, *1899-1911*, n.14, all.3.

19 Corpo Reale dello Stato Maggiore, *Gran Carta degli Stati Sardi*,1852. ASTo, *Carte topografiche segrete*, B5-bis nero.

20 *Pianta della città di Torino coll'indicazione del Piano Regolatore e di Ampliamento*, 1906-1908. ASCT, *Serie 1K*, Decreti reali, *Piani Regolatori*, 1899-1911, n. 14, all. 3.

of Turin hills: it's the project we normally call *Piano Quaglia- Marescotti* [21]. The plan, the absorbed by the *Piani Regolatori e di Ampliamento della zona piana e collinare*, new versions of 1913 and 1926[22], is the real masterplan of the redefinition of the hills system, introducing new roads, panoramic foreshortenings, landscape views on the Alps (remembering the views in the engraving of the *Theatrum Sabaudiae* of 1680) and in general the reorganization of the relation between the working city and its bucolic surroundings.

Conclusions

The situation shown and normed by the *Piani Regolatori*, from the beginning of the XX century to the current plan, is specific of Turin morphology and ancient relation to the city hills, but also not uncommon in towns having to deal with mountains or hilly perspectives. What is a uniqueness of its identity is the oldness of the relation, shown by ancient cartography, starting from the *Carte de la montagne* dating to the end of the XVII century, but retracing a Renaissance (and probably Middle ages) use of the area. The city, divided by the stream of the great river Po from its hills, never considered them as detached parts, apart from probably the moment of the accomplishment of the military fortification, chosen as a "flat area" system and not climbing the mountain as the project by Ercole Negro di Sanfront[23] would have liked.

XX century plans reconfirmed this relationship and the relevance of Superga hill, not only for the presence of the Sanctuary, but also as a landmark of absolute preminence in Turin natural (but even more industrial) contest.

The work on historical cartography is so the best possible demonstration of what we call the *historical structure of the territory*, as the comprehension of the signs let on a landscape by historical events, phenomena, and way of life, in a word: land memory and our memory.

Chiara Devoti

At the top: settlement and landscape organization in the plane area of the city (in Barca region). Down: settlement and landscape organization in the hills (in Sassi, at the beginning of the main road going to Superga).

21 Andrea Quaglia, Luigi Marescotti, *Progetto del Piano Regolatore e di Ampliamento della zona collinare della Città di Torino*, 1913. ASCT, *Tipi e disegni*, 64.8.18, 19/A and also, for the critical analysis, Vittorio Defabiani, *Il Piano Regolatore e di Ampliamento della zona collinare della città di Torino del 1913*, poster shown at the *III Congresso dell'AISU* (Associazione Italiana di Storia Urbana), Turin 15-16-17 june 2006, then published in Chiara Devoti (ed.), *La città e le regole. Poster presentati al III Congresso dell'AISU*, vol. n. 21 of Politecnico di Torino - Scuola di Specializzazione in "Storia, Analisi e Valutazione dei Beni Architettonici e Ambientali", Celid, Turin 2008, pp. 81-82.

22 The final issue is the *Pianta di Torino coll'indicazione dei due piani regolatori e di ampliamento rispettivamente della zona piana* (vigente per Legge 5 Aprile 1908 e R. Decreto 15 Gennaio 1920) *e della zona collinare* (vigente per Decreto Luog. 10 Marzo 1918) *aggiornati colle varianti approvate successivamente sino a marzo 1926*. ASCT, *Serie 1K*, Decreti reali, Piani Regolatori, 1911-1931, n. 15, all. 5.

23 Ercole Negro di Sanfront, *Fortification project for Turin, including the Villa del Cardinal Maurizio*, 1618. ASTo, Corte, Carte topografiche e disegni, *Carte topografiche per A e B*, Torino, n. 1. and in *Museo Torino,* http://www.museotorino.it/view/s/5d6dc9052e444479805b5f56b84f2dc1.

The Royal Basilica of Superga[1] is located on the top of the hill with the same name, the highest in the central part of the hills surrounding Turin, at 670 m. Because of its positioning it is a fundamental pole both for the city and for the landscape of the central part of Piedmont, from the plan around Turin to the Alps (between Biella and Saluzzo), from the high hills around the Po river to Monferrato.

The reasons behind the construction of the Superga Basilica are strictly related to the "policies about the kingdom" of Vittorio Amedeo II, whose long tenure in the government (1684-1730) is linked to the transformation of the dukedom into kingdom that had an apex during Turin siege in 1706 (with the victory of Piedmont and Austrian allies over the French Army) and that ended with Utrecht Treaty in 1713.

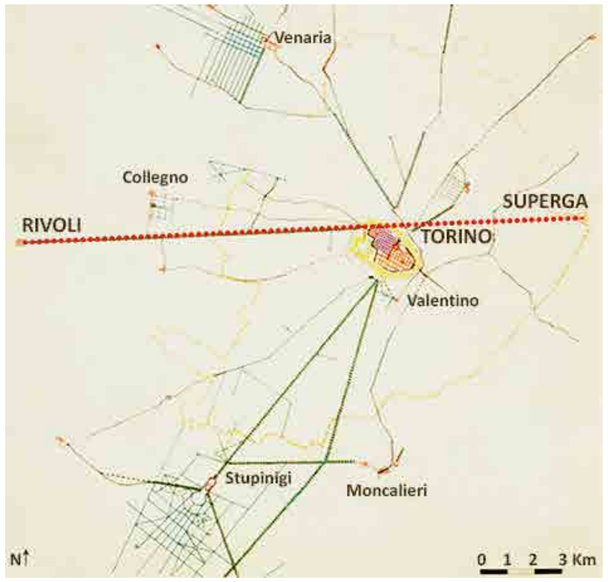
In this historical and political context Vittorio Amedeo, who was a tireless promoter of innovations, decided to begin an architectural and urban program to give to Turin the features of a capital city, hosting the state authorities and the government, according to the main models in Europe.

To accomplish this renovation, in 1714 Vittorio Amedeo II appointed to the role of *Primo Architetto Regio* (Chief Royal Architect) Filippo Juvarra[2] from Messina, trained in Rome at the Domenico Fontana's atelier, at that time among the best architects in the city. In Rome Juvarra had also had the opportunity to study the classical architecture and the buildings of the most important masters from the XVII century, as Borromini, Bernini and Pietro da Cortona. Thanks to his roman formation, monumental scale and magnificence became fundamental features of the design he brought to Savoy's court.

The program to review Turin layout in relationship with the landscape surrounding it was already begun, under the will of Vittorio Amedeo II, with the architect Michelangelo Garove. The duke had already decided after 1706 to redefine as a royal palace the old dynastic castle in Rivoli, lying west of the city. The new royal palace should have been the residence for the entire court and not just a palace of pleasance, in line with other models of a royal palace outside of the capital, as in Versailles, Schönbrunn or Prince Eugenio's Belvedere in Wien.

For this reason in 1711 the duke asked Garove to build a large and straight road planted with trees, to link Rivoli castle to Turin west entrance (named *Porta Susina*). The road was completed in a short period of time, between 1711 and 1712, and it currently coincides with corso Francia.

When Juvarra came to Turin he was commissioned important projects, among the others the enlargement and refurbishment of Rivoli castle – already begun by Garove – and the building, on the top of the hills surrounding the city, of a religious complex formed by church, convent, royal apartments and mausoleum, according to a model widely in use at the main European courts. Juvarra indeed located the Basilica at the intersection of the Turin – Rivoli axis with the ridge of the hills, inserting so both buildings



1 For Superga Basilica it's possible to refer to the rich and up to date bibliography by Elena Gianasso, in Valerio Piero Corino (ed.), *La Reale Basilica di Superga. Storia, restauri e nuovi spazi per l'accoglienza*, Omega Edizioni, Turin 2011, pp. 123-132.

2 There are many publications on Filippo Juvarra and his activity, among them it's possible to refer to the monograph by Gianfranco Gritella, *Juvarra. L'architettura*, 2 voll., Panini, Modena 1992, and for his activity in Turin to Andreina Griseri and Giovanni Romano (eds.), *Filippo Juvarra a Torino. Nuovi progetti per la città*, Cassa di Risparmio di Torino, Turin 1989.

inside a wider territorial design that had to link the royal palace outside of the city, not only with the capital itself, but also with Superga Basilica, through a perspective line 20 kilometres long.

It is commonly believed that the reasons for Superga's project was a vow that Vittorio Amedeo II and Prince Eugenio made in case of a victory against the French armies in 1706. The exact location of the Basilica – dedicated to the Holy Virgin – is actually far more than a simple accomplishment of this religious vow: it is a precise choice within a project that has a territorial scale, to express the political power of Vittorio Amedeo II, his control on the state territory and show the importance of Savoy family.

Juvarra thus added a territorial element, that didn't exist before his intervention, to the relationship between Rivoli, Turin and Superga: starting from Rivoli castle, traditionally the place of birth for the Savoy, the road entered the capital, through Porta Susina, and touched the headquarters, the royal palace and its dependencies, where Savoy family and the court used to live, continuing ideally towards Superga, where family tombs are.

This territorial component, this attention not just to the individual architectures, but to the territory surrounding the buildings, will be a distinctive feature of the entire Juvarra's activity.

The Superga construction yard lasted actually for the entire time span that Juvarra spent at the Savoy family service (1714-1735). The first designs indeed date back to 1715-16, works began in 1717 and in 1731 the church was opened to worship.

The parish church of Superga.

To build the religious complex the top of the hill had to be flattened and the parish church lying on the site since XIV century had to be destroyed: it was soon rebuilt in the neighbourhoods, near to the human settlement. In 1780 near to the parish church, a small cemetery for the community was created. In 1848 the parish church was refurbished and redecorated under Carlo Alberto's commissioning. The church is today located at the edge of the basilica large square.

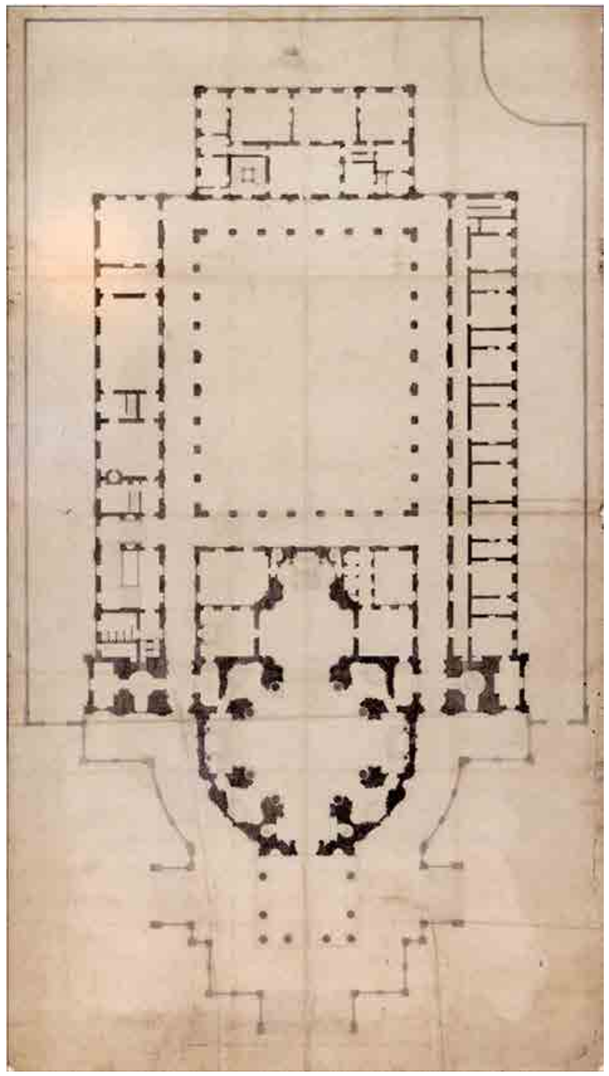
When establishing the Superga design Juvarra made reference to many roman models: the Pantheon and the twin churches in Piazza del Popolo for the general idea of a building with a central ground plan preceded by pronaos; Borromini's church of Santa Agnese in Agone in Piazza Navona for the location of the bell towers and San Pietro in Vaticano and San Carlo al Corso for the drum and the dome. Other models were likely some European churches with dome and two bell towers as Karlskirche in Wien by Fisher von Erlach.

In the actual building, Juvarra introduced few changes to the initial design (it is possible to acknowledge them, thanks to a wooden model that is kept inside the Basilica itself and that was crafted by the wood craftman Carlo Maria Ugliengo in 1716) to have a better visibility from far away and a better integration with the territory: he extended the portico by three spans, as in the Pantheon, and he further increased the drum's height, so that pronaos, bell towers and dome were clearly identifiable when passing far away.

As of today Superga church has a pronaos with four columns with the central opening that is wider than the side ones. The lower part of the bell towers belong to the structure of the convent itself, while the cells for the bells stand out in the sky, with a very light effect, thanks to the columns at the corners.

The interior is characterised by an important vertical push: the height is about three times the width. The transition from the lower octagonal part with alternated different sides, to the high drum and the colossal dome is seamless: in front of the chapels entrances there are eight big columns, in grey marble from Frabosa, that support directly the cylinder of the drum, and allow to directly pass from the octagonal body to the cylinder of the drum, eliminating the traditional pendentives. A straight line links directly the lower columns with the upper structure of the dome. The interior is bright thanks to the diaphanous light that enters from the wide openings at the top both in the dome and in the drum. This feature is typical of Juvarra's work and of his way of playing with the light: he gave it a functional value, using it as an active element in the composition.

Since the very first Juvarra's designs, a location for the royal burial monuments[3] was envisioned in the cellars of the Basilica. The project was anyway actually realized only from 1773 onwards, when the architect Francesco Martinez, Juvarra's nephew, built under the sacristy a crypt with a latin cross ground plan, where to bury Savoy's corpses.



Filippo Juvarra, Plan of the Basilica and convent of Superga (AST, *Palazzi Reali*, *Disegni Superga*).

Behind the church there's the convent. Initially it was conceived at a different level on the hill and with a square ground plan, the actual shape was then elongated as the section destined to the royal residence was moved on the exterior side of the convent and no longer inserted in its eastern side. The convent develops then around a rectangular court and is surrounded by a sequence of overlapped arches – nine on the longer sides and seven on the shorter ones – vertically divided by two orders of order pillars, ionic at the ground floor and composite at the first one.

At the two short ends it is delimited by the church and the royal residence. This building, that should have been the place for the prayer and the spiritual recollection of Vittorio Amedeo II, remained uncompleted: just cellars were built. It's now possible to see the walls that should have delimited the hall and the great hall on top of it.

During the Restoration following the French Revolution and Napoleon in 1814, after the coming back of the Savoy's family to Turin, a royal apartment was prepared at the first floor of the convent; today the royal apartment occupies some rooms at the ground floor in the southern side.

3 For the architecture and the construction of the royal graves refer to Elena Gianasso, *Committenza reale per un'architettura dinastica*, on Valerio Piero Corino (ed.), *La Reale Basilica di Superga* cit., pp. 17 – 25.

A view of the convent behind the Basilica, with the uncompleted building on the back.

In the second half of the Eighteenth century, important works were realized on the Superga hill, both referred to its religious and its dynastic role. Between 1755 and 1758 Carlo Emanuele III commissioned the new road to Superga, whose plan is represented in its essential shape in a drawing[4] kept at the *Archivio Storico della Città di Torino* (Historical Archives of Turin City). It shows evidently that since its origins the arrival point on the large square was not in axis with the entrance to the Basilica.

Between 1794 and 1795, fifteen votive pillars[5] were built in the last section of the new road (between Tetti Giovannini and the Basilica), dedicated to the mysteries of the Holy Rosary, according to the *Sacri Monti* model. They were designed by the

4 [Anonymous], *Pianta dimostrativa della strada Reale di Superga*, n.d., Archivio Storico della Città di Torino, *Carte sciolte*, n. 1829. For the new road to Superga, refer to Maria Carla Visconti Cherasco, *Il colle di Superga: nuovi elementi per la lettura delle sue trasformazioni*, on Clara Palmas (ed.), *La basilica di Superga. Restauri 1989-1990*, Allemandi, Turin 1990, pp. 33-49. See also Vittorio Defabiani, *Strada e struttura del territorio collinare torinese*, on Politecnico di Torino, Dipartimento Casa-città (chair for the research Vera Comoli), *Beni culturali ambientali nel Comune di Torino*, 2 voll., Società degli Ingegneri e degli Architetti in Torino, Turin 1984, I, pp. 777-784.

5 For more information on votive pillars, see also Elisabetta Bellini, *I piloni votivi. Indagine preliminare in attesa di un restauro*, on Lucetta Fontanella Vitale-Brovarone (ed.), *Superga. Storia e memoria*, Celid, Turin 1994, pp. 195-205.

Anonymous, view of Turin and Superga hill, with the notation of the old and new ways leading to the Basilica (ASCT, *Carte sciolte*, n. 1829).
On the right: A votive pillar on the road to the Basilica.

architect Francesco Valeriano Dellala di Beinasco on the will of the *Congregazione della Basilica* [6].

The road system around the Basilica didn't undergo major modifications until the end of the XIX century. In 1884 the funicular railway "Agudio" was inaugurated, fifty years later it was replaced by the tram-denture (*tramvia a dentiera*) that is still in use.

Notwithstanding the major changes to the hillside landscape, due to the loosely controlled building activity after the Second World War, the hill of Superga continues to be characterized by the presence of the "roofs" ("tetti")[7], clusters of rural houses, that were already documented in the early XVIII century cartography. They are named from the families that used to own them: among the oldest ones it is possible to mention "Tetti Giovannini" and "Tetti Bertoglio".

Some villas and vigne[8] from XVIII century are still present: they were built when Superga hill underwent a major development related to the construction of the Basilica (as an example, villa Beria Grande, Villa Cannone, Villa Gambino, Villa Bocca and Villa Richelmy). These buildings, often with an architectural and historical value, lies inside the *Parco Naturale della Collina di Superga*. It encompasses the woods between the municipalities of Torino, San Mauro, Baldissero and Pino Torinese, and was established in 1991 to preserve and promote an area that is very important for its landscape and architecture.

Maria Vittoria Cattaneo

6 The *Reale Congregazione di Superga* was established in 1730 from Vittorio Amedeo II. It was set up by twelve priests from Savoy Kingdom, that had to celebrate the sacred functions in the Basilica and were destined to managing roles in the dioceses of the Kingdom. See also Padre Benedetto Marengo and Padre Venanzio Ramasso, *I padri Servi di Maria e il complesso demaniale della Basilica*, on Valerio Piero Corino (ed.), *La Reale Basilica di Superga* cit., pp. 41-51.

7 For the origin of settlements and their development on the hills surrounding Turin and the origin of the "roof" system, see also Stefano Benedetto, *La collina torinese tra medioevo e rinascimento*, on Lucetta Fontanella Vitale-Brovarone (ed.), *Superga. Storia e memoria* cit., pp. 11-15.

8 For more details, see the contribution by Maria Vittoria Cattaneo and Chiara Devoti on this book.

DESIGN TOPICS
the ways to superga

Walking in the open landscape, our perception of the overlapped traces of the land transformation and development are difficult to detect and understand. Even in the better known cases, natural and artificial signs are mixed up, often not permitting a clear understanding of the age and consistency of the existing signs. On the contrary, many nowadays latent traces shaped the landscape, directly related to environmental features (geology, climate...) or to the historical development and site transformation.

The unveil and reuse of traces requires a deep knowledge and investigation of the site, from the ancient cartography to the more recent satellite views, from the historical documentation to the oral stories of the living population, getting contributions from a wide range of disciplines and their different views. It requires also slowness and time, qualities in opposition with the contemporary rush to get quick results as soon as possible, and the capacity of going further on than just propose the rebuilding of lost architectures. The use of the existing traces as supporting elements in not literal ways give roots and add meaning to present interventions, considering a territory as a tale to continue starting from its present shape, not just a base for overlapping a new story that ignores the past ones.

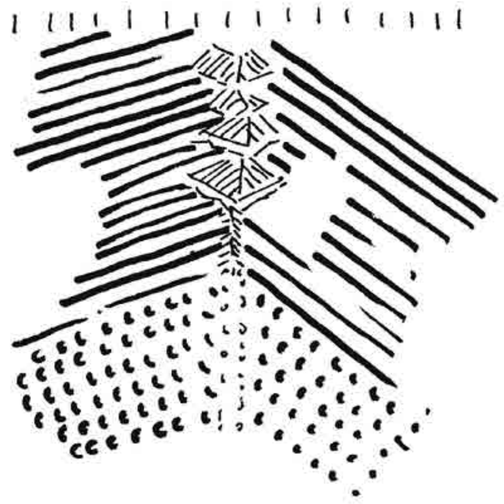
Here are presented three different approaches: the first one deals with the existing lines on the ground, retracing and transforming them in volumes. The second approach preserves the footprints of past developments as spatial memories, the last one deals with the evocation of the past with interactive spaces and devices.

Lines above the Ground

In 1729 Filippo Juvarra was asked to design a new hunting pavilion for the Savoy Kings in Stupinigi woods, 10 km out from the south gate of the city of Torino. Only one year after, with the passage from king Vittorio Amedeo II to Carlo Emanuele III, the pavilion was converted in an articulated palace for the court leisure. Juvarra transformed existing geometries: lines on the ground become volumes and spaces, the palace rises at the intersection of two hunting routes, which orientation is kept in the wings that branch off the elliptical central hall, first sides to close the front court and open branches towards the back yard. The relation to the site is strictly related to its changes, the paths become part of the rooms, indirectly remaining related to hunting. The new building complex is at the same time starting point and geometrical prosecution of the routes network and the fields pattern[1].

Stupinigi

Stupinigi palace is an *unicum* in the Savoy royal residences that clearly shows how in the baroque age architecture could be clearly connected to a territory and its ways[2].



Bicocca

The volumetric transformation of two dimensional geometries guides the shaping of a more recent project. The *Centuriatio*, the Roman modular system organizing the agricultural areas mainly in the flat lands, is still surviving in different Italian regions, appearing as a geometrical guideline followed by further divisions or buildings. Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola used this never erased matrix for the Pirelli-Bicocca competition project (1986) in the northern outskirts of Milano, an abandoned industrial site to be transformed in a technology district with laboratories, research centres, offices and housing. A huge ground modelling design, where the orientation of

1 The relation between Stupinigi and the territory is very clear in the satellite photos and in the hunting maps contemporary to its construction, like the *Carta topografica della Caccia*, 1761-66, Torino, Archivio di Stato, reproduced in Vera Comoli Mandracci and Andreina Griseri (eds.), *Filippo Juvarra. Architetto delle capitali da Torino a Madrid 1714-1736*, Fabbri, Milan 1995, p. 67.

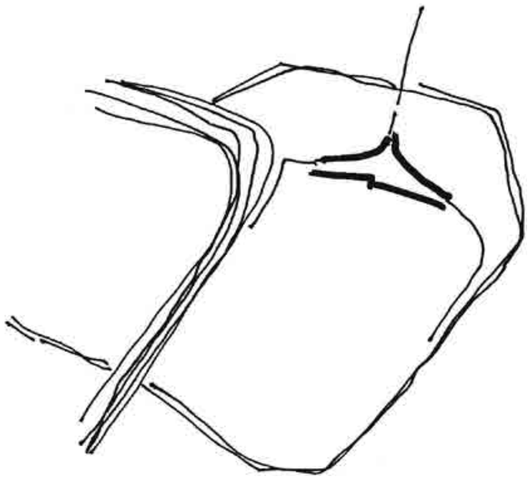
2 Beatriz Blasco Esquivias describes the elliptical central hall as the place where “we can better appreciate the open and centrifugal character of this Juvarra architecture and the fluidity and reciprocity that make inner and outer space merge and incorporate themselves”. Beatriz Blasco Esquivias, *La Palazzina di caccia di Stupinigi*, in Vera Comoli Mandracci and Andreina Griseri (eds.), *Filippo Juvarra*, p. 372.

the left traces of the *Centuriatio* guides the formation of a new landscape[3] in which long stripes of buildings and open spaces converge to a central axis and the green roofs define a wavy surface that redesign the ground following the ancient pattern.

In both these cases, linear and two dimensional traces are lifted over the ground, transformed in volumes that keep the ground textures in their shaping. The routes get mass at Stupinigi, the field divisions define the new ground modelling as an agricultural work in giant scale at Bicocca.

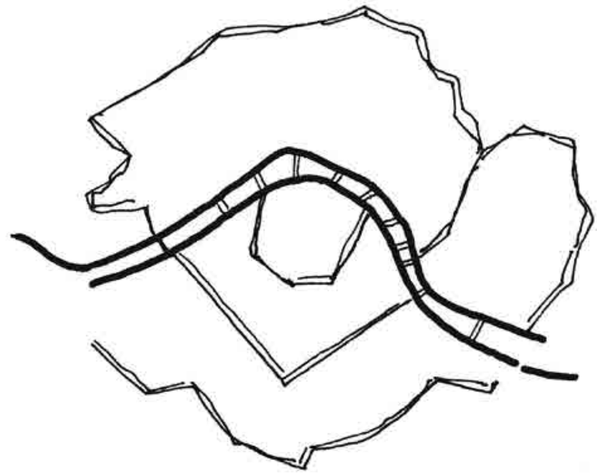
Memory Keeping Spaces

The memory of the shape of past spaces can be more easily kept in vast areas transformations, although these huge footprints need a strong design control and management. The Spoornoord park in Antwerp (Bernardo Secchi and Paola Viganò, 2004) is the rehabilitation of a 24 hectares railway area transformed in a public park, a gathering site composed of meeting and exchange places "that interpret e represent the new modes of use of space"[4]. This porous open space is mainly empty, marked by a subtle but clear ground design that defines large zones open to various activity choices. The void that marked the railway area is still the main characteristics of the new park, the flow of trains is replaced by the flow of people, in more free and not definable configurations. Secchi and Viganò aimed to create a flexible space, their abstract definition of large surfaces spotted along the linear park contributes to perceive the vastness and the emptiness of the land, the view can flow free along the extended space.



Antwerp

A very different approach is on the contrary that inspiring one of the most known interventions across a city centre in Europe: the Rio Turia park in Valencia (Ricardo Bofill, 1984), placed on the empty bed of the Turia river, previously diverted outside the city to better control its irregular stream. Bofill designed a a new stream of trees,



Valencia

a compact regular wood containing a series of central public areas: squares, pavilions, arcades, lakes, all characterized by classical references and placed inside a rigid geometrical general pattern that gave a unity to the long park strip. This clear design and continuity was lost in the construction: the project, divided in eighteen lots, became a collection of locations, only a few of them respecting the original project, the loss of unity meant also that of a link with the vanished river, that could be represented by a different continuity of stream[5].

History and Stories

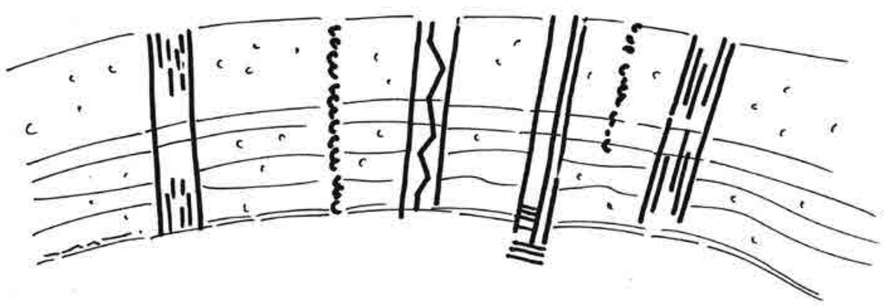
Can a specific design help to understand the history of places? If a small dimension memorial can converge emotions in an intimate space, interventions in open lands have to find an interpretation key to give to users. The retracing of past geometries is not enough to create connections to memories, the use of sounds and images can help as additional tools, but the need is of a widespread concept to permeate all the context.

3 Twenty architecture firms were invited to redesign the abandoned Pirelli industrial site, 18 projects were submitted (1986). Gabetti and Isola's entry, in team with Mario Carrara, Guido Drocco, Luigi Falco, Piero Gastaldo, was selected for the second stage of the competition with the Vittorio Gregotti and Gino Valle's ones. Gregotti's scheme was selected and became the basis for the area masterplan (1988). For the project chronology, see Luca Barello, *Schede*, in Carlo Olmo, *Gabetti e Isola. Architetture*, Allemandi, Turin 1993, pp. 223-224; for the competition entries see the catalogue of the first stage, *Pirelli Bicocca*, Electa, Milan 1986, pp. 104-115.

4 Paola Viganò, *The Territories of Urbanism*, in "Lotus International", 150, July 2012, p. 110.

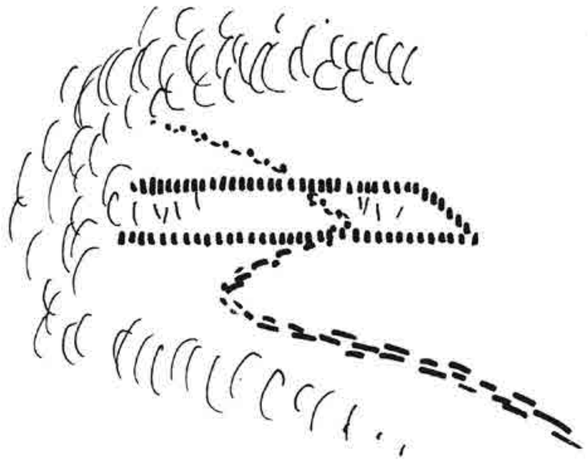
5 On Bofill project see Ricardo Bofill, *El jardì del Turia*, Ajuntament de Valencia, Valencia 1982.

The west bank of St. Lawrence river reaching Quebec City is an irregular strip of land at the base of the cliff on which edge the town was settled. From the XIX century the bays along the river became a crowded dockland signed by the piers rhythm and devoted to timber shipment, lately also to ship building. The wood piles were replaced by oil tanks in the 30s, later the bays became a long urban beach, until the building of a new fast avenue in the 60s. To celebrate the 400th anniversary of the city foundation, it was decided to give the river bank back to the population creating a long urban park, the Promenade Samuel De-Champlain (Daoust Lestage, Williams Asselin Ackaoui and Option aménagement, 2010) just before the still existing port and the actual centre[6]. A set of interlaced 2,5 km long ways and elongated spaces meets four transversal strips, as memories of the ancient piers, dedicated to mists, waves, winds and men, conceived to give sensory experiences of the river and the water. The new piers are not just signs on the ground but places conceived to rest, look towards selected framed views, reach the river shoreline, feel the natural elements. At the western end, the Quai de Cageux, rehabilitation of an existing pier, hosts a tower as a privileged observation point closer to the river centre. The site memory is a permanence of signs, the abandoned area transformed from a working space into a leisure one keeps its projection towards the river and the water as a continuity line from age to age.



Québec

Evocation is also the keyword of the Kalkriese Archaeological Museum in Osnabruck, Germany (Gigon Guyer and Zulauff Seipel Schweingruber, 2002) dedicated to the Teutoburg Forest battle of 9 A.D., the “Battle of Varus” between the Roman army and the local populations[7]. The battlefield site is still a countryside open space of woods and fields where the archaeologists found some traces of the ferocious clash. Field installations show the ramparts, the armies placement and routes, while small pavilions give the perception of the battle atmosphere. All the installations are simple forms in rough cor-ten steel: corrugated walls and poles, ground plates, boxes. Here the memory is a story to tell, enriched by the few devices of the perception pavilions to capture sounds, a directed view or the confusion atmosphere (respectively with a big ear, a giant eye and a series of videos), but it's walking in the fields and meeting the rusty added elements that you can feel to walk on a battlefield.



Kalkriese

Either working on new volumes, ground modelling, footprint keeping or stories evoking, all these interventions give an interpretation to the left traces: they show that also in open areas there are possibilities to design spaces for contemporary uses able to keep a memory of the past. They present some of the characters of the un-volumetric architecture[8], like flexibility, attraction to different kind of users and visitors, dialogue with the overlapped existing patterns, but their main meaning is to be firmly anchored to the previous history of the sites. They are based on a deep analysis and knowledge, most of them are developed in cross disciplinary groups, including historians and landscapers, presenting the wider look through time that working on landscapes calls. They demonstrate that reworking existing material and immaterial matters can shape new attractive places to live, new landscapes, all containing clearly evident or subtly latent memories.

Luca Barello

6 A detailed survey on the intervention is on Quebec city National capital commission website: http://www.capitale.gouv.qc.ca/realisations/promenade-samuel-champlain/, last visit Sept. 2013.

7 The project is a competition winning scheme (1998). The museum website gives a detailed description of the battle. See http://www.kalkriese-varusschlacht.de/index/getlang/en, last visit Sept. 2013.

8 Aldo Aymonino and Valerio Paolo Mosco (eds.), *Spazi pubblici contemporanei. Architettura a volume zero*, Skira, Milan 2006, English translation *Contemporary public space: un-volumetric architecture*, Skira, Milan 2006.

The transformations of public parks are the results of territorial and social changes. They follow different human attitudes towards the environment and our needs and concept of leisure. Many traditional parks had been adapted to public use but actually they were born for other purposes, for instance as private garden or the castle yard “only for the few”. The late Nineteenth-century urban transformations define the spaces as "public green" and place them close to the buildings but strictly separated from them. These parks today are transformed by users who dictate spaces and uses.

Let’s think about the *Parco del Valentino* in Turin: built between 1630-1660 and designed by Carlo and Amedeo di Castellamonte for the Valentino palace itself; redesigned by Barillet-Deschamps as a public green in "English style" for walking, with avenues, groves, artificial valleys; and now reinterpreted by the users themselves that decide the space destinations (e.g. fields are used for concerts and spontaneous gym classes and the pedestrian pathways for skateboarding and cycling).

Left behind the aggressive way of building of the last century that sacrificed every free space, we start to design and re-think again the green, trying to correct the mistakes of the recent past. The new landscape urbanism proposes an unified design for built and green, this one no longer occupies just the space "between" the built, but becomes useful to rethink the gaps, to connect not only the material parts of the city but also the social ones.

We realized that we have a landscape that has been damaged by human interventions, full of empty spaces and jagged edges of town. These gaps are created by abandoned factories, contaminated sites and exhausted dumps; the border is between the consolidated town and its surroundings – the suburbs, the countryside, the natural environment – but also between infrastructure and landscape. These boundaries may also include different social conditions as well the territorial ones.

The availability of these areas had been an opportunity to rethink the green and its use, spotting of a new perception of the landscape. Environmental awareness obliges to rethink the materials (low-cost, low-maintenance) and the use of the public park. The user asks for more specific parks and spaces "full" of activities, in which “to do something” but also in which he can find an intimate shelter to hide from the downtown chaos.

The parks built in the last twenty years, whit their variety of aspects, show the changing of the concept of public green, display and represent the complexity of contemporary society.

In *Battery Park*, a downtown park in New York (Olin, Friedberg, Child Associates, 1984-1995), we find a relation between the buildings and the edges, in this case the river; in *Parc de Besos*, a suburban park in Barcelona (Viaplana Pinon Arquitectes, 1987) we try to recover the marginal "no one's" territories that now can be used by citizens.

There are also several thematic parks bound to the area in which they are located or to the activities that take place inside them (*Parque Historico Culhuacán*, Grupo de Diseno urban, Iztapalapa, Mexico, 1992; *Parco Agricolo Sud Milano*, Italy).

In these last years we moved progressively from artificial and not-recyclable materials towards natural, recyclable and low-maintenance ones; now we use perishable and alive materials too, that, of course, live, change and alter themselves over the time, keeping to transform continuously the landscape (the bioscultures of Brookner and Ciotti in *Dreher Park*, West Palm Beach Florida, 2003-2004 and the installations with vegetal elements of *ArteSella*, Borgo Valsugana, Trento, Italy, since 1986).

Two examples seem to clear better than others the complexity of the themes.

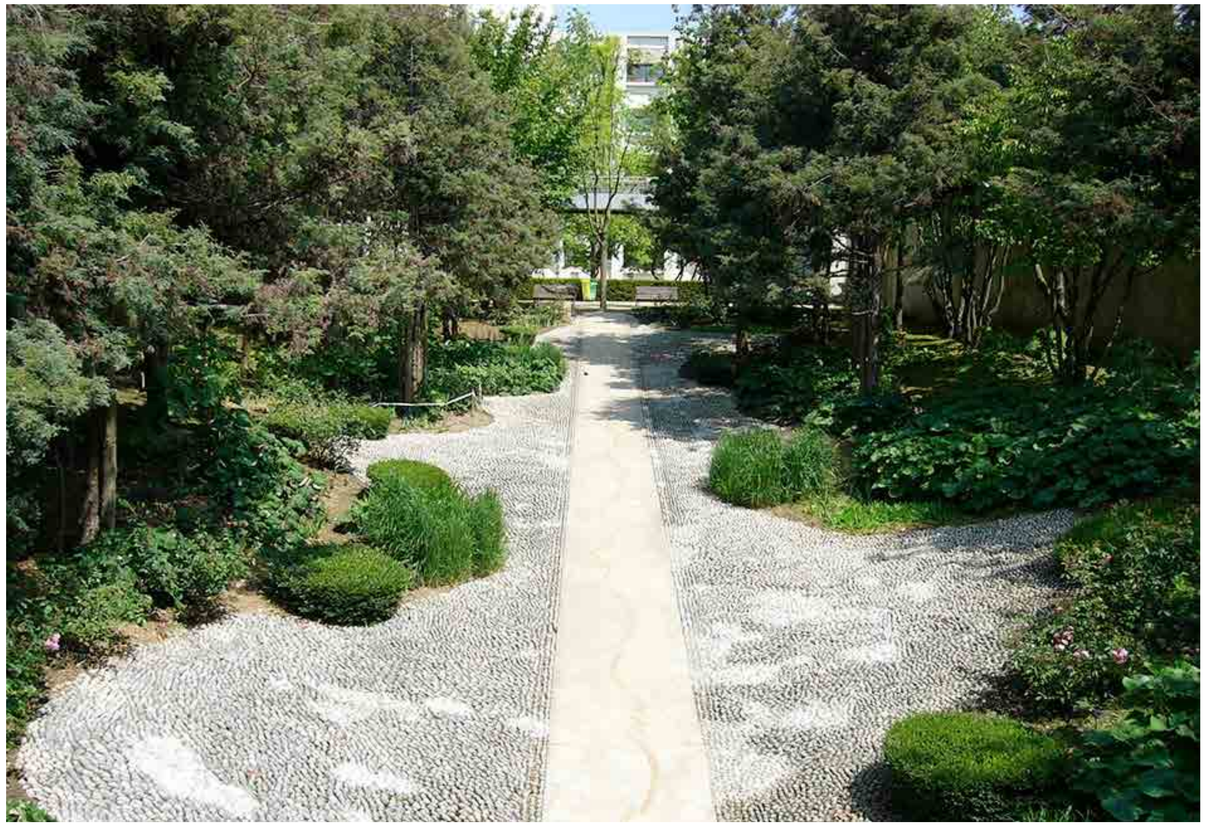
Multifunctional Park

The first is *Parc André Citröen* in Paris (Clément, Viguier; Jodry, Provost, Berger, 1992) built in a degraded and abandoned industrial site; the designers tried to improve the area, attracting different kinds of users. Visiting it, everyone has the feeling to find its own dimension of entertainment.

The large central lawn that from the entrance slopes down to the Seine is defined by a more collective and noisy use of the green and by the strong presence of the city in the background. On the opposite, the spaces around – gardens and woods in which the designers plays with light and shadow, colours and scents of different green – are more quiet and here the city seems to disappear.

The main central lawn.

The stone garden.



The stone garden.

The lake.

The intimate garden.

Becoming Park

The second example is *Parc de La Confluence* in Lyon, designed by Michel Desvigne. Here the landscape architect repeats themes already experienced in *Parc Urban d'Issodoun* and in *Thomson Industry* outdoors in Guyancourt, but implements them with new environmental issues.

As in Issodoun, the grid design of the consolidated town and the new urban zones become the new organizing system of spaces and paths, green areas, space activities and flowerbeds. In Lyon many of these spaces are also filled with environmental sustainable elements: the pond that separates the built area from the river is a place of biodiversity that attracts animals but also retains rainwater for the flowers. The green areas between the buildings have simple and inexpensive urban furniture and are used as teaching tools “not only for children”: wood cases in which vegetables grow, small wooden houses in which you can learn about small animals and insects life.

The vegetation is extremely common, such as ferns and graminaceous plants, but with the meaningful purpose of purifying air and soil.

The most innovative aspect can be, however, grasped now, during the construction phase. The sequence of temporary plantings that will turn in work-free areas has effectively been carefully tailored: the rotation allows us to mitigate the negative aspects of the yard and lets the park immediately available, already open to the population.

General view.

The avenues leading from the city towards the river; at the end the transformation from green to building yard is already starting.

The pedestrian paths with spaces for the soil purification with drainage material and ferns.

Eco-friendly furniture: tanks for the small vegetation and boxes for insects.

Twenty years passed between these two projects. In this period it has matured the environmental and economic crisis we are experiencing.

In this context, at least in Europe, an environmental friendly approach appears to designers more attractive than a functionalist one: the "natural park" responds to the new criteria of environmental awareness and sustainability and also better meets the demand of lower construction and maintenance costs for the public administrations.

In *Parc Citröen* were employed economic and technical means now difficult to propose, especially in view of future maintenance costs.

The idea to have a common, natural and perishable green emerges stronger and stronger together with the idea that, in some cases, should be up to the citizens themselves to take care of it as it happens with the vegetables tanks in *Parc de la Confluence*[1].

Rachele Vicario

1 Main references: *Lyon Confluence Images et plans 66 repères*, Lyon Confluence Grand Lyon, January 2012, (City council booklet); “Lotus”, 150, September 2011 (monographic issue on *Landscape Urbanism*); Alessandro Rocca (ed.), *Architettura naturale*, 22publishing, Milan, 2006, English translation *Natural Architecture*, Princeton Architectural Pr, Princeton, 2007; Aldo Aymonino and Valerio Paolo Mosco (eds.), *Spazi pubblici contemporanei. Architettura a volume zero*, Skira, Milan 2006, English translation *Contemporary public space: un-volumetric architecture*, Skira, Milan 2006; Pierluigi Nicolin and Francesco Rephisti (eds.), *Dizionario dei nuovi paesaggisti*, Skira, Milan 2003, English translation *Dictionary of Today’s Landscape Designers*, Skira, Milan 2003; Paco Asenzio, Ivan Barcedo and Aurora Cuito (eds.), *Atlante di architettura contemporanea*, Könemann, Köln 2000, English translation *The world of contemporary Architecture*, Könemann, Köln 2000; Parc de la Confluence, still under construction, is part of the main project *Lyon Confluence* that will transform the wide industrial areas located on the south side of the railway station and will connect the rest of the town with the rivers Rhône and Saone, planning a strong new urban design.

He climbed down the terraces and examined the glasshouses and hotbeds on his way past, until he came to the water, and then took a path to the place where it divided into two arms leading to the new grounds. He did not take the one which went by the graveyard fairly directly to the cliff, but went by the other path which wound its way up gently on the left through pleasant shrubs; at the spot where the two paths met again he sat down for a moment on a convenient seat, then stepped up the slope itself which led him by means of all kinds of steps and terraces along the path, which sometimes narrowed until it finally reached the arbour.[1]

Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*

Although written two centuries ago, this brief paragraph contains two fundamental issues that must always be kept in mind during the design along all the ways.

In this description, the path becomes a central value, which is necessary in order to exploit and perceive the landscape. The way is designed as an experience[2] capable of revealing the overall scene that unfolds itself in front of the user and amazes him at every turn. The path is not just a line drawn in the landscape, but it is also dotted with small interventions appropriately placed to create an easier and more interesting climb to the hut. These two elements, the path as an experience and the design and construction of small architectures, are essential not to let ways becoming a simple connection between two points.

Of course it is easier to design along roads and paths into the nature, where the landscape is an element of surprise for the traveller and where the goal of small architectures is not to come into conflict with the landscape, but it's more difficult, if not impossible to design along the main roads, dotted with houses and industrial zones, symptoms of an urban sprawl. But, as stated by Aldo Aymonino[3], *roads become a fundamental element of the public space* in the new polycentric settlement, alongside the traditional public spaces[4], and they are *able to express new centralities and values, becoming tools for rethinking the territory*.

Since roads are the most common element built on the territory, it becomes imperative to appropriately design along them.

Thus roads and paths may provide users, travelling at different speeds, to a positive experience and at the same time a tool for transformation of places.

It is necessary, then, to consider the way as a visual and sensory "tale"[5] and to design it accordingly. The new urban and natural objects placed along ways should be "actors" of the trip, while the way should provide the line, the type of movement, the speed, the rhythms and the pauses of the "tale"[6]: users can enter and exit at any point meeting various objects and installations, intermediate elements to reach and visit before going on.

For this reason all the new small architectures along roads and paths should qualify the spaces in which they are placed, thoroughly investigating the real possibilities of interference and cohesion with the site. Not only is necessary to draw attention, but at the same time we should take a respectful attitude towards the surroundings. Finally, small architectures should engage users through different potential and never hidden uses[7]. Then, the road could be designed in every detail: surface, edges, isolated elements.

Here are presented some examples of architectures along roads and paths classified by design forms, having the features and qualities exposed in this text: a road and a path project are described for each category[8].

1 Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (1809), the English translation here used is *Elective affinities*, Oneworld Classics, Wimbledon 2008, p. 17.

2 According to Enrich J. Leed, considering the journey as an experience comes from texts of the fifteenth century in which who had 'travelled a lot' was qualified as an "expert". Enrich J. Leed, *The Mind of the Traveller. From Gilgamesh to Global Tourism*, Basic book, New York 1991.

3 Aldo Aymonino, *Introduzione. Più spazio, meno volume: un racconto in movimento*, in Aldo Aymonino, Valerio Paolo Mosco, *Spazi pubblici contemporanei. Architettura a volume zero*, Skira, Milan 2006, pp. 15-23; English translation *Contemporary public space: un-volumetric architecture*, Skira, Milano 2006. The traditional public spaces are often cluttered with functions different from those of rest, leisure and play and they are nowadays replaced by the areas along the infrastructures.

4 Squares, streets, avenues...

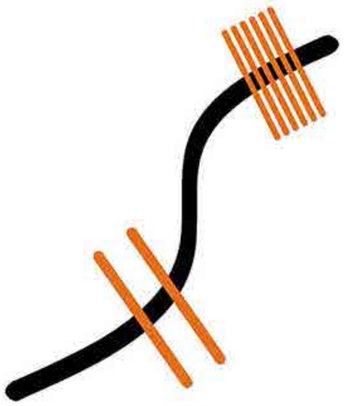
5 Donald Appleyard, Kevin Lynch and John R. Myer, *The View from the Road*, M.I.T. Press, Cambridge - Massachusetts 1964.

6 A climb can become the introduction to a new phase of the "tale", a gallery or a wood can be breaks in the "tale", the space between two buildings can become an open frame to the landscape.

7 Aldo Aymonino, *Introduzione* cit., pp.22-23

8 Other main references: Francesco Careri, *Walkscapes. Camminare come pratica estetica*, Giulio Einaudi, Turin 2006, English translation *Walkscapes. Walking as an Aesthetic Practice*, Editorial Gustavo Gili, Barcelona 2001; Matteo Vercelloni, *Giocando con la Natura*, in "Casabella", 795, November 2010, pp.4-5.

Design the Surface

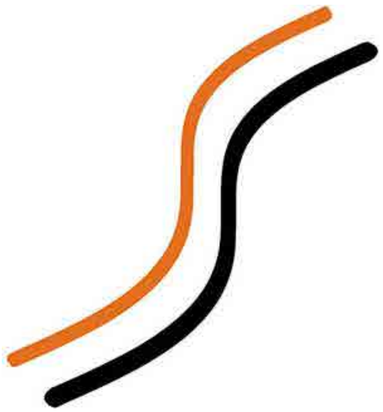


Travelling on a road, often we forget that the surface may become an interesting and pleasant element, able to convey a lot of information with the use of colours, texts, traffic islands, rumble strips, changes of size.

In the redevelopment of the *Muro di Sormano* (IFDESIGN studio, Italy, 2006), the road surface is textured with texts, symbols, to describe selected characteristics of the landscape and give information about the road.

The *Paseo Maritimo* of Benidorm (OAB, Spain, 2009), designed as a dynamic space, allows users to walk and look at the sea. It's organized in different areas highlighted by different flooring colours. The sinuous lines of the path, alternated with green islands, give direct access to the beach, creating a new structure between the city and the landscape.

Design the Edges

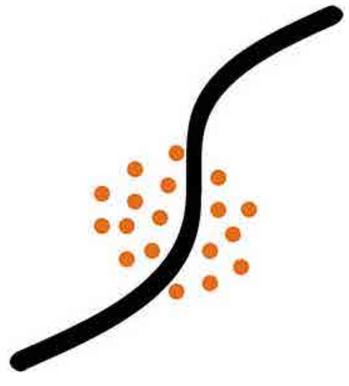


Perhaps the easiest way to enhance a path or a road is to strengthen its edges: a series of vertical elements increase the sense of speed[9], a wall directs the view to the end of the way, a low wall defines the way allowing to observe the landscape, a frame in built edges draws attention to a defined element...

A series of wooden poles of different lengths highlight the opening of the *Vadeggio-Cassarate gallery* (Cino Zucchi Architetti, Italy, 2012) on the Milano-Zurich motorway. The new border is a sinuous surface partly permeable and partly opaque according to the point of view, changing with the undulation of the surface and emphasizing the tunnel gate.

A long *Red Ribbon* (Turenscape, China, 2005-2008) inserted into the natural corridor along the Tanghe River in the city of Qinhuangdao, manages to reorganize the landscape with a single connecting element, a signal which integrates the functions of lighting, offering a seat and helping in orientation, preserving at the same time the natural characteristics of the site.

Design around



Paths and roads are often perceived only as links between two points, but designing spaces for different activities along them, beyond the simply stay, relax or watch, enriches the travel experience .

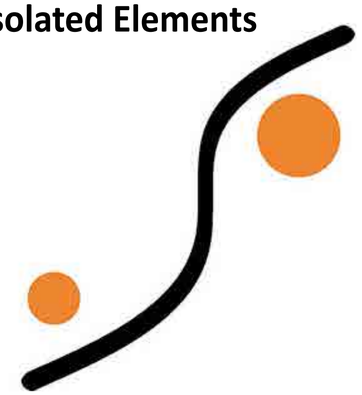
The remodelling of the *Passeig de St Joan* in Barcelona (Lola Domènech, Spain, 2012) reorganizes the street space turning part of the road into a large pedestrian area and a cycle lane. The intervention creates leisure zones under the trees on both the sides of the existing boulevard: recreational areas with benches, children's playgrounds and bar terraces. The cycle lane is separated and protected, located in the middle of the road.

The paths in the *Cardada mountain area*[10] near Locarno (Paolo Bürgi, Switzerland, 1999-2000) have been enriched by a series of little architectures in different areas: the square of arrival, the landscape headland, the play trail and the geological observatory. An overhanging steel walkway allows the visitor to see the Maggiore Lake and the Alps; a series of games, based on physics principles, engage the visitors; shallow steps lead to a large concrete upper platform, elevated viewpoint divided in two sectors including specimens of the minerals composing the surrounding mountains to explain the geological formation of the site.

9 We do not forget that the movement at different speeds influences the perception of the individual elements into the landscape and then is important the way in which objects are arranged along its edge, their depth in relation to it, the size of the objects to see and the message to communicate. Periodic elements placed near the road, like a row of trees or lighting poles help to greatly increase the sense of speed and focus attention on the focal point of the way. Two isolated elements or a space between two continuous walls can frame a landscape, attracting the attention of the traveller. An isolated element and visible all along the way can be an incentive to reach it or an element of boredom if its view is extended. Pierluigi Nicolin, Alessandro Rocca, *The view from the road. 1964-2003*, in "Lotus Navigator", January 2003, p.12 (monographic issue on *Il paesaggio delle freeway*).

10 http://www.cardada.ch/

Isolated Elements

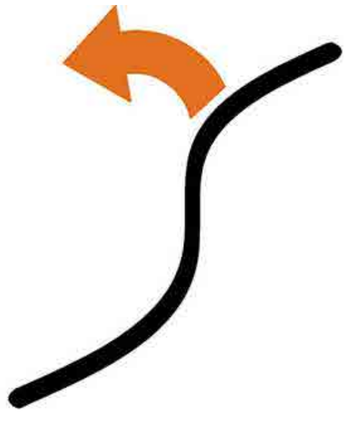


Roads and paths surrounded by natural landscapes easily invite to the inclusion of isolated architectures, performing different functions, landmarks[11] as starting points for the area knowledge and exploration.

Along the *Timmelsjoch (Passo del Rombo) road*[12] (Werner Tscholl, Italy and Austria, 2010) we find a system information and view points designed as outstanding objects to attract the traveller's attention with their materials, shapes and colours. Easy to be seen along the road, they are stations dedicated to selected landscape views and a first discovery of the local history.

On the *Ruta del Peregrino*[13] (Dellekamp Arquitectos + Periférica, Elemental, HHF Architekten, Luis Aldrete, Fake Design, Tatiana Bilbao, Mexico, 2011) nine architects designed and built seven *Landmarks* to provide shelter, services and viewpoints for the pilgrims, in an effort to provide them a more comfortable way. Each *Landmark* is designed not only as an isolated element, but allows the pilgrim to orientate along the path providing also a multifunctional flexible space.

Bringing out



Not always ways go through elements of natural and cultural interest, in this case it could be necessary to attract the attention of the traveller towards selected points, not only with an often intrusive signposting, but, as along the *National Tourist Roads*[14] in Norway, even with changes of flooring, walkways that meander in nature or small architectures[15].

In the *Tungeneset rest area* on the island of Senja (Code Arkitekter, Norway, 2007), a long wooden bridge takes the people from the tourist road down to the sea across the rocks. The bridge ends in a rest-area, where different sitting arrangements offer several ways of use.

On the walking path near the tourist road of Sauda (Haga Grov and Helge Schelderup, Norway, 2007) a corten steel stair leads upwards along the river to the main fall of Svandalsfossen and a concrete stair leads down to the fjord: two simple architectures allow tourists to get to otherwise unreachable places.

In all the described projects the basic idea is that the way is an organic and continuous system strongly related to the landscape. In particular, the organization, the structure of the context, the articulation of the elements and their relevance to the way, become instruments of knowledge and discovery of local peculiarities and an opportunity to give an emotional experience to the traveller.

Luca Malvicino

11 Due to their communication capabilities, Landmarks enable the traveller to recognize the location and to orient themselves into the space, their arrangement can give rhythm to the road or path and they can become series of goals or milestones to reach and overcome. Pierluigi Nicolin, Alessandro Rocca, *op. cit.*, p. 10

12 http://www.timmelsjoch.com/it/

13 http://www.rutadelperegrino.com.mx/

14 http://www.nasjonaleturistveger.no/en

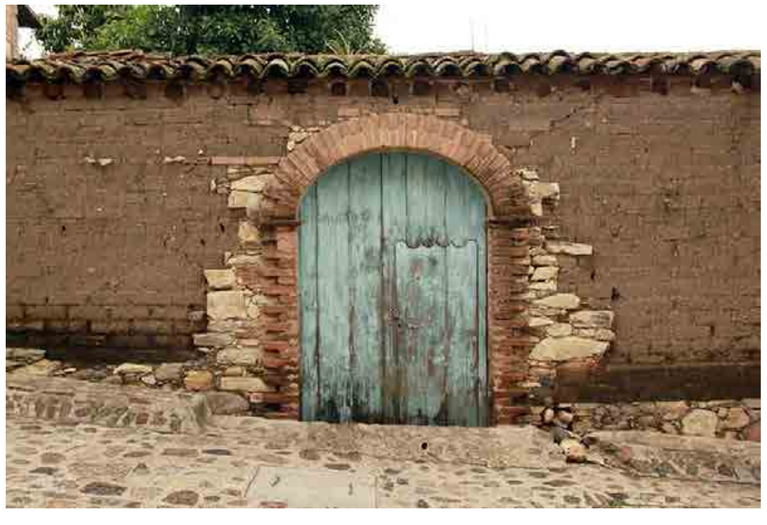
15 Nina Berre (ed.), *Detour. Architecture and Design along 18 National Tourist Routes*, Norsk form, Oslo 2006.

Oaxaca, Mexico

How far a little Mexican village can be from the typical occidental *developed* city, according to our common sense and personal knowledge? If we focus on cars, street lights, Internet cafés and several other details, we won't find any big difference! Globalization has already reached almost all forgotten corners of planet Earth, with its positive and negative influences on local culture and traditions, in a process that seems to be irreversible.

On the other hand, looking around a bit more carefully, you will discover an incredibly rich and wise culture: just sharing a meal with local people, talking with the elders inside their *adobe* houses or playing soccer with some children in any backyards rounded by refined reed fences.

Historians, architects and anthropologists have been rediscovering a huge mount of traces of local traditions from all over the world, released through articles, drawings, photos and documentaries. In particular, attention had raised towards Vernacular Architecture (i.e. *Architecture without architects*, 1964, by Bernard Rudofky), leaving the old concept of an architecture of the poor. Since then this type of Architecture has been considered as a real wise sustainable way of doing Architecture: using mostly local and natural materials, with traditional techniques in auto-construction, through a participative design process.



Rootstudio (Joao Caeiro and Fulvio Capurso) works and investigates these concerns, trying to unify both academic theory and practice, many times forgotten during our training.

For instance, manual labour has vital importance for the correct understanding of any material and of the way to design with it, outside the intellectual boundary of the large metropolis.

Since 2008 we are working in Oaxaca (Mexico) together with local architects, students and people from different countries, focusing our efforts in a constant knowledge exchange between traditional builders' wisdom and the contemporary building culture. It's incredible how in each project we discover the power of ancient technical solutions that solve several problems at the same time, with simplicity, efficiency and beauty. Each time we realize how arrogant professional architects' attitude can be, most of the time for ignorance of what has already been built in hundreds of years.

Universities and professional research represents a solid base for new generations and at the same time contemporary technologies and materials have a great potential. The problem appears when economy comes in and transforms a particular solution in a mass product, mystifying information about its properties and construction use, as in the case of concrete. Here we have a clear example. In front of evidences, made of experiments and scientific evaluations about its negative impact on the environment and its dangerous behaviour during earthquakes, we can see a very slow shift in thinking and attitude by enterprises, professionals and Universities.

Adobe and earth construction is still perceived by most of people as poor architecture. One of our goals is trying to change this point of view and dignify natural materials, in urban universities as in rural communities.

Below you can find, in chronological order, a synthetic description of the last rural projects carried out in Oaxaca by *Rootstudio*.

Zaachila Educational Center

A little construction for the women civil association Yu Xunaxii, engaged in local education, organizing workshops on food health, organic farming, recycling and offer traditional thermal baths (*temazcal*) inside an adobe dome.

Bamboo and reeds roof structure, compressed earth block loading walls, adobe dome protected under a corrugated sheet roof.

Walls have been built with local labour, while the roof bamboo structure during a 1-week workshop organized with the Faculty of Architecture of Oaxaca.

San Isidro Chapel

The Chapel was built by the local agricultural workers together with the architects. It's the place for local farmers to perform their prayer *to call* for rain and abundant harvest. During the meetings between the different parties involved, it was decided to incorporate the chapel in a paved plaza, so that the whole complex could work as a place of contemplation, reflection, gathering and celebration on the day of Saint Isidro on May 15th.

Rammed earth loading walls, concrete head beams, wooden-board beams roof structure, brick and concrete roof, reeds and metal shadow structure, local stone pavement and metal cross.

San Pedro Apóstol Rural Sport Center

Supported by the *Gamechangers* funding (1st price in the Architecture for Humanity Competition), *Rootstudio* team collaborates with the local community and university students, organizing skills training and workshops.

The project intends to strengthen the social, economic and cultural development of the city and the community, through sport, recreation, entertainment and commerce.

It's composed by a regular soccer field and a basket ball one, served by two small earth buildings (in adobe and rammed earth) that house dry bathrooms, infirmary, changing rooms, a store for kayaks and a little *lorena* open-air kitchen. A 20 x 10m bamboo roof structure complete the complex protecting from the sun and the summer rain a multifunctional area situated between fields and support services.

Adobe for Women, San Juan Mixtepec

AFW is a non-profit association founded in 2011 with the Portuguese firm *blaanc borderless architecture*. Its first project has been developed in the Municipality of San Juan Mixtepec, one of the poorest in the country. Approximately 60% of the men immigrate to the USA, looking for work and better life conditions. Most of their women are abandoned, with small incomes, more than one child to take care and forced to live in their parents house.

The project, almost completed, consists in the auto-construction of 20 adobe houses for 20 women of the community, together with students and volunteers, that periodically help to build while learning traditional building techniques[1].

Fulvio Capurso

1 For more detailed information: http://berootstudio.wordpress.com/.
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