

## Track 1: Transforming built heritage and landscapes

(Draft)

### Built heritage and landscape role in the Rome metropolitan plan

Lucia Nucci

<sup>1</sup>*Departement of Architecture, University of Roma Tre, lucia.nucci@uniroma3.it*

**Abstract:** Built Heritage and landscape are long-term cultural and material memories constantly re-interpreted by the contemporaries. Both are considered as fundamental level for local and regional development in the Rome's Metropolitan Plan (Piano Territoriale Provinciale Generale PTPG). The Plan interpret nature, built heritage and landscape as key value that characterize the metropolitan identities. Settlement's transformations in the plan arise from the physical and historical form of the territory and encourage a double polycentrism (Rome and 120 municipalities). One of the general objective of the plan is to reorganize present settlement in made the most of existing patterns rules and peculiarities by using principles of the compact city. The paper would like to point out how built heritage and landscape development have to re-shapes the territories of our dispersal contemporary city.

**Keywords:** Rome's Metropolitan Plan, Built heritage, Piano Territoriale Provinciale Generale.

#### Introduction

This paper is part of a research project Between Rome and the Sea: cultural and environmental heritage, sustainable development and active citizenship. The territory between Rome and the sea is one of the most dynamic. The area is defined to the north by the Roman countryside of Maccarese and to the southeast by the Appia park and to the west by the Tyrrhenian Sea, crossed by the Tiber River. From the unification of Italy this part of the territory was made up of swamps and marshes. The main transformations took place at the end of the nineteenth century with the reclamation of the Agro, the location of an industrial (Ostiense) and the opening of the Agency for the Industrial Maritime Development of Rome (Ente autonomo per lo sviluppo marittimo ed industriale di Roma, SMIR). During the Fascist period, the opening of the railway from Rome to Ostia and the construction of the via del Mare gave a strong boost to the urbanisation. Since 1938, the area has been further equipped with the construction of the underground connecting Termini station to the Esposizione Universale Roma EUR neighbourhood, and the opening of the Ostiense railway station. The residential expansion between Rome and the sea will be supported in the post-war years, especially along Via Cristoforo Colombo. In the early sixties, the airport and the Rome-Fiumicino highway were added to the impressive infrastructure system. The strategic position and the infrastructures make this territory particularly attractive for offices. The area is characterized by the discontinuity of the urban settlement. From the environmental point of view, the area is characterized by the presence of two ... Archaeological complexes, such as Ostia Antica and Porto, await adequate enhancement as part of an effective integrated project.

#### The Research Project Background and Purpose

The interdisciplinary research analyzes the historical and contemporary reality highlighting cultural, environmental, urban values and problems. The aims is to offer a unified reading of the transformations that have taken place in the metropolitan territory in a long-term perspective.



## **Area of study: its characteristics and problems**

Even at the beginning of the twentieth century the landscape of the Agro towards the sea was poorly urbanized: basically agricultural land, marshes affected by reclamation work. From the 1920s, the activity of the farmhands gave impetus to the rural building works and to the land reclamation. The system of canals created for the reclamation served as a basis for the appoderage of settlements. The first informal settlement was the Borgata Saline. In 1913 began the construction of the rural village of Acilia. The urban growth is characterized by discontinuity. Close to the 'historic' city, città storica, there are several neighbourhood such as Garbatella or EUR and important examples of modern architecture such as the INCIS district of Decima, or the social housing (PEEP) complex of Corviale and Laurentino<sup>38</sup>, other suburbs, such as Spinaceto, Acilia, Dragoncello, Portuense and private neighbourhoods as Magliana, built in a flooding area, or Casal Palocco, built by the Società generale immobiliare, which offered the middle and upper classes a model inspired by the American suburbs, with villas and cottages and a wide range of services and green spaces. The fragmentation of the open territory is due to the urban sprawl that has profoundly modified the characteristics of the morphological-environmental system. The phenomenon is impressive: Isola Sacra, Ostia Antica, Casal Palocco, Infernetto, Dragoncello, Acilia, Centro Gianico, Casal Bernocchi, Viterbo, are a continuum of settlements that thicken along the main lines of connection with Rome, and then dispersed in the territory.

Land consumption is growing steadily: in more than a third of residential areas, the coefficient of land occupation is less than 10%. In the last three decades, public intervention has considerably reduced, while new private neighbourhoods was built beyond the borders of the Grande Raccordo Anulare (ring road). The landscape of the Agro still retains some of its distinctive features. Very important elements of the discontinuity of the metropolitan area are the great environmental systems consisting of the national parks of the Roman coast and Castel Porziano and the regional parks of the Tenuta dei Massimi, Valle dei Casali, Laurentina-Acqua Acetosa, Decima-Malafede. The research group is focused on the 'ordinary' urban heritage those types of residential settlements and landscapes in the Agro, interesting for their diachronic and multidisciplinary character.

## **Methods**

For the purposes of historical reconstruction, the research will be aimed at the recovery and processing of documentary material of cartographic, pictorial, design and photographic type present in National and Local Historical Archives, as well as in libraries, private historical funds, metropolitan and local authorities (General Provincial Territorial Plan). The documentation and interpretation of the natural environment will be carried out from the descriptive point of view. This material will be elaborated in order to give back a diachronic image of the territorial transformations adopting GIS techniques that allow a precise analysis of the present realities. For the settlement system, the diachronic perimeter of the land occupation (PTPG) will be carried out at a detailed scale compared to the synthetic elaborations already present in the literature.

The research will increase the knowledge of different realities of the historical and contemporary city, considering that villages and centers of colonization as the elements that marking the phases of the transformation of the Roman Agro. On the level of historical research, thanks to the still unpublished documentation kept in various archives (such as the Central State Archives, the State Archives of Rome and the Capitoline Historical Archive) it will be possible to investigate economic-financial, demographic and environmental aspects related to the agricultural origins of the Roman suburbs. On the socio-economic level, the research will provide timely data on the selected systems allowing to test relationships and historical and current trends; on the territorial one, it will be possible to trace the theme of the models of settlement development in the different realities; on the environmental one, the selection of appropriate indicators will allow to evaluate peculiarities, differences and criticalities related to the phenomena of urbanization in progress. In terms of method, the research will provide comparative assessments through the development of a system of indicators



that will allow an understanding of the interactions between the different components and the creation of models capable of analyzing complex realities. A comparison with other European urban realities is also planned, which will be useful in the context of local policy perspectives. In the final phase, it is expected to undertake an active relationship with the municipalities that will aim to raise awareness of the citizen, with a hoped-for impact on the policies of management of the reality. The integration between historical-humanistic research and scientific-technological and design research aims to provide a model of territorial analysis that can also be compared at the international level. The importance of some compact city arguments for the project of the dispersal contemporary city.

### **Objectives and results that the project aims to achieve**

The general aims of the project is to analyze - on the environmental, economic, social and with particular attention to historical, urban and settlement aspects – the territory between the city and the sea. The analysis will be aimed first at the acquisition of useful data for the description of the urban realities, including the types of the settlement construction, as identified in the Rome's metropolitan Plan (PTPG). At a later stage it will be possible to make comparative assessments by developing a system of indicators selected using appropriate statistical methods derived from the methods used in ecological modeling. The analysis and processing of data will be aimed not only at the description of the system, but also at the understanding of the interactions between the different components and the creation of models that can create a system able to analyze complex realities. The possibility of a comparison with comparable urban centers - in particular with other European cities - will be evaluated in parallel, thanks to a careful analysis of the literature able to show the dynamics underway. The integration of knowledge is expected to contribute to the knowledge of the territory, in an action that will aim to raise awareness of the citizen, with a hoped incidence in the management policies of urban reality. These operational aspects will be undertaken in the final phase by means of an active relationship with the Municipalities involved and thanks to the models developed both in the analysis of the Roman system and in other international experiences.

The research will allow to increase the knowledge of different realities of the historical and contemporary city, considering that villages and colonization centers have been the first stable settlement nucleus born in the context of reclamation, marking the phases of the transformation of the Roman Agro from territory malarial and uncultivated in urban suburbs. In terms of historical research, thanks to the unpublished documentation stored in various archives (such as the Central State Archives of the State Archives of Rome and the Capitoline Historical Archives) it will be possible to study economic, financial, demographic and environmental aspects related to agricultural origins of the Roman suburbs. On the socio-economic level, the research will provide precise data on the selected systems allowing to test historical and current reports and trends; on the territorial one it will be possible to trace with punctuality the theme of the models of settlement development in the different realities; on the environmental one, the selection of adequate indicators will allow to evaluate peculiarities, differences and critical issues related to the urbanization phenomena underway. In terms of the method, the research will provide comparative assessments through the development of a system of indicators that will allow an understanding of the interactions between the different components and the creation of models capable of analyzing complex realities. A comparison with other European urban realities is also envisaged, useful in the context of local policy perspectives.

### **The landscapes**

The study area is characterized in the PTPG by the presence of two landscapes: Agricultural landscape of the Roman countryside beyond the Tiber; Agricultural landscape of the coastal reclamation Land (PTPG a, 2010).

Agricultural landscape of the Roman countryside beyond the Tiber. The landscape of this undulating plain located north-west of Rome is characterized by an extensive hydrographic network that has shaped the



orography of the area in a system of reliefs and valleys. In the larger valleys there are permanent waterways, often modified by the hydraulic reclamation (Consorzio di Bonifica del Tevere e dell'Agro Romano). Agricultural lands, in particular cereals and fodder are intended for the feeding of livestock farms (cattle and sheep). The morphology is characterized by a plot of small mountains but capable of dividing the territory into flat strips of elongated shape. The wooded areas are limited by agricultural activities, they appear very fragmented and follow the trend of the reliefs. These strips of wood are generally made up of evergreen or two broadleaf trees, mainly oaks. This type of forest represents an important natural reserve for the metropolitan area, hosting numerous plant and animal species.

Agricultural landscape of the coastal reclamation Land. These lands in the past was different. The marshy areas and the woodlands had a wide diffusion in the plain of Maccarese, inhabited and with a low density of rural settlements. These marshy and unhealthy areas was a national problem. The beginning of the reclamation has started in 1880. The agricultural reclamation has started this process of transformation of the landscape (9000 Ha) along the Arrone, definitively removed from the swamps only after the war. The present landscape of this part of the Agro Portuense is characterised by the presence of crops and agricultural settlements important for the metropolitan area. The agricultural production is variegated: it is mainly fruits, vegetables, cereals, fodder and zootechnics products (milk, meat,...). The agricultural landscape of these flat lands is characterized by the geometry of the cultivated plots, the canals and the streets in relief. The alluvial morphology guarantees ideal conditions for the cultivation of fruit and vegetable. Farmers from the northern Italy have encouraged the introduction of new techniques for these lands. Fields are surrounded by eucalyptus and poplar as wind-break and sometimes also rural buildings are characterized by the presence of these trees. This area preserves many archaeological testimonies. Urban settlements where they have fragmented the roman countryside in coastal areas. In the post-war period these marshy areas have been assigned to the farmers. This allocation affected a large area of agricultural land, divided into parcels, averaging 15 Ha. Over time further fragmentation of agricultural funds has been generated and this in some cases has led the abandonment of agriculture and the consequent transformation of the agricultural settlements in constructions.

### **The Central coast conurbation**

The Central Coast conurbation is bounded to the north-west by agricultural land reclaimed (aree agricole di bonifica), to the north by the Tiber and the river plain behind the GRA, to the east of the Castel Porziano farm (Tenuta agricola) and south of the Castelfusano pine forest (pineta di Castelfusano). It is characterized by the three urban settlements of Fiumicino, Ostia and Acilia (located along Roma Fiumicino highway/Via Portuense/Via Ostiense/Via del Mare/Ferrovia Roma Lido/Via Cristoforo Colombo) and from the contiguity with the highway axis Rome-Fiumicino, director of connection with the airport and support of functions of metropolitan relevance (the airport, the interport centers, business and exhibition centres, large shopping centres, etc.) (PTPG b, 2010).

It is consistent the presence of additional metropolitan functions outside or mixed within the urban pattern (two marinas of Ostia and Fiumicino, the intensification area of Acilia Madonnetta, ...). Despite the significant environmental discontinuities (Tiber, River plain, green corridor and Castelfusano pine forest) that stand in between and separate the settlements, the tendency is to form a single suburbs, consisting of a composite patchwork settlement, largely determined by illegal building, where intensification area and manufacturing or commercial activities related to construction are confused in the suburbs and urban fringes.

The trend in local plans (piani regolatori generali PRG) is to establish along the Rome-Fiumicino highway and in the parallel Via Portuense activities of strategic interest, innovative functions related to the logistics, large shopping centers, large residential neighbourhoods. Decentralized along the Cristoforo Colombo, the old public neighbourhoods fit into private neighbourhoods recent or new. Along the coast, the trend in local plans is to develop tourism, boating and bathing, enhancing ports and existing facilities or offering new berths and new

opportunities for coastal accommodation without any coordination interventions in terms of environmental protection, planning, accessibility.

Overall, the relationship between Rome and the sea does not seem to be resolved. At the same time, in the absence of a polycentric organization, municipalities are offering single plots for residential and non residential development. All major problems still remain open: the three urban settlements, the "sustainable" tourism along the coast and in the protected areas, the organisation of the axis of specialised metropolitan functions and the organisation of quality beach tourism in terms of equipment (backward in relation to the coast) and infrastructure (specialised and equipped with interchange points for public transport by rail and road).

### **City of the Sea (Municipalities of Rome and Fiumicino)**

The aim of the metropolitan plan is: the design of an inter-municipal settlement that aims to strengthen the character of the three different neighbourhoods (Ostia, Acilia, Fiumicino), contrasting the tendency of a single metropolitan suburbs from Rome to the sea. In order to achieve this objective, the PTPG redevelops in a differentiated and coordinated way the different parts of the "city of the sea" (residential, seaside tourism, nautical tourism, cultural tourism,...), strengthening the elements of functional integration (road and rail network subway, urban services, seaside tourism services,...), morphological and environmental (coastal environmental system, Roman coastal nature reserve, Castel Porziano and Decima-Malafede, the Tiber river system). At the same time, keeps the "city of the sea" separate from the urban construction of Rome using as discontinuity the natural reserves of Castel Porziano and Decima-Malafede and the Tiber Valley, which in addition to constituting a large environmental reserve, is the evidence of one of the historical landscapes in the Roman countryside. The metropolitan functions along the Rome-Fiumicino highway must be organised in a separated distinct from the "city of the sea" due to the presence of the airport. The plan considers it as a privileged axis of localization for large equipment, very qualified and reinforces this specialization, excluding not compatible use and proposing the organisation of a dedicated mobility.

The plan provides the following guidelines for the design of the intermunicipal settlement structure (see Table TP2).

For the environmental system: to protect and to enhance agricultural areas with residual natural values (green belts) evidence of the historical landscape, in order to use these components giving order of settlement constructions and continuity (see REP) of protected areas (Reserve of the Coast, Tiber River Park, Castel Porziano, Decima-Malafede).

For the morphological settlement system: articulate the intermunicipal city in three neighbourhoods, distinct from each other and from Rome. The metropolitan plan expect the regeneration of the various parts of the 'city of the sea' (consolidated parts: Acilia, Lido di Ostia, Isola Sacra, Fiumicino; recent neighbourhoods along Via Portuense Via Ostiense-Via del Mare, Cristoforo Colombo,...) with interventions on public space, promotion of commercial high streets,... In particular, for the environmental and settlement requalification of coastal settlements the plan identifies a unitary project of reorganization of the settlement for the equipment of the Ostia promenade and some connection between the sea and the railway station. For the Ostia Borghetto - idroscalo buildings that have arisen spontaneously must be gradually replaced by the shipbuilding industry close to the spaces for leisure and cultural activities. For the settlements of Isola Sacra, Ostia Levante, it is necessary the prohibition of caravan deposits, barracks by encouraging the inclusion of areas equipped with small urban services.

For the functional system: to organize strategic metropolitan activities and services in four specialised cluster coherent and linked to the airport, separated by environmental discontinuities (see art. 69 PSM2) and accessible to the metropolitan mobility circuit; to organise the tourism in different models: quality, efficient and value-compatible bathing functions environmental (seafront equipment, nature areas and routes, cycle paths, circuit of

slow mobility,...) which are distinct even if they are related to those of the and to those of culture (routes, areas, etc.) archaeological and historical sites.

For the mobility system: provide for the interchange at Ponte Galeria between the new railway service FR9 (Nettuno-Campoleone-Ladispoli-Cerveteri); organize the road system, specializing in the Rome Fiumicino highway with other dedicated infrastructure to support strategic services (airport, Cargo City, Fiera di Roma, Commerciti,...); organise the metropolitan road network (Via Ostiense, Via C.Colombo) together with the railway system (FM1, FM5-FM6) for the connection of the "city of the sea".

### **Acknowledgements**

This paper is part of a research project Between Rome and the Sea: cultural and environmental heritage, sustainable development and active citizenship founded by the University of Roma Tre.

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