

Rome's Landscape

LE:NOTRE Landscape Forum 2013



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LE:NOTRE Landscape Monographs

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Designing the Rome LE:NOTRE Landscape Forum

Fabio Di Carlo and Richard Stiles

This volume is the main tangible outcome of the second LE: NOTRE Landscape Forum, held in Rome in April 2013, and hosted by the Faculty of Architecture of La Sapienza University.

The format of the Forum was ‘road-tested’ for the first time the previous year in the context of the 2012 LE:NOTRE Landscape Forum which took place in Antalya and was hosted by Akdeniz University. This represented the initial attempt to fashion and try out a new ‘species’ of academic event type that differs substantially from the familiar academic conference in both its structure and its dramaturgy. Its goal was to break down the rigid relationship between speakers and audience with the explicit intention of responding positively to the overall desire for more active involvement and participation by all concerned.

All the experience gained in the course of the project LENOTRE, since 2002, starting with the Spring Workshops and the previous Summer School, can be said to have led us towards focusing on the current model of the Forum as it was staged in Rome in April 2013. Previously, a number of different approaches were used to structure the annual meeting of the Network. At the beginning, the primary focus was a rather introspective one. The meeting was seen as providing a common opportunity for the representatives of the Network member organisations to meet and work together in small thematic groups, with the simple aim of making progress in the preparation of the various project outputs.

With the inception of the new format, the annual meeting of the Network changed its character fundamentally. One of the main motivations for recon-

sidering the nature of the event was the growing need to look beyond the end of the LE:NOTRE Project as a European Union co-funded event. At the Antalya Forum, during the presentation made by the representative of the EACEA, the agency which manages the ERASMUS Programme on behalf of the European Union, it was officially confirmed that there would be no more funding for networks of the LE:NOTRE type during the forthcoming 2014-2020 programme period. Luckily this merely echoed a decision which had already been taken by the LE:NOTRE Steering Committee in advance of the previous funding application, that there would be no ‘LE:NOTRE IV’ bid, and that from the end of LE:NOTRE III, the network would have to do its best to become self-sufficient.

Depending on how one looked at it, this drive for freedom and independence from European Union funding or alternatively, the imperative for the project to become sustainable, suggested the need to re-think the format of the annual meeting well in advance of the formal end of the project. The outcome of the resulting deliberations was a concept involving an event which concentrated on integrating theoretical approaches with the acquisition of new knowledge, coupled with the analysis of the landscape of a specific place, and finally the synthesis of these aspects into a joint planning and design response on the part of the participants. The whole process was designed to encourage the sharing of knowledge and experience between the participants, who would be colleagues from different cultural backgrounds and academic disciplines. In other words, the event was to do more to capitalise on the nature of the broader network into which LE:NOTRE had evolved over the course of its life.

Specifically, the event was to offer more space and time for debate and discussion by way of a response to what is one of the most frequent reactions to the majority of academic events, which all too often are characterised by bringing together people from different countries and specialisms, but failing to provide sufficient opportunities for them to interact, except perhaps in the coffee breaks. In its first year, the LE:NOTRE Landscape Forum sought actively to compensate for this deficiency and the Rome Forum, the last meeting of the LE:NOTRE III Project and of the LE:NOTRE Network as a whole, intended to continue and intensify this approach in a meeting which would be the culmination of the project – all roads led, as it were, to the Rome Forum!

The intention, however, was to do more than merely repeat the success of the Antalya Forum in other surrounding, instead the organisers aimed to build on the experience gained there and to continue with the evolution of the idea of the Forum, something which is reflected in the expanded format of this publication.

In order to place discussion, dialogue and discourse even more firmly at the centre of the event, the number of formal keynote presentations was limited, and these were focussed on giving focused introductions to the four main issues to be addressed by the Forum. These were complemented by presentations aimed at providing particular information on the situation prevailing in the local Roman landscape. Similarly, the four round table discussions were designed to stimulate the work of the four thematic groups so that these would be in a position to integrate the introductory information provided by the local experts from the host university with their own background knowledge in the light of the impressions which were gained from the field visits to the four areas chosen for investigation and of the discussions which took place in the plenary sessions.

A further important characteristic of the Forum was the way in which it was designed to respond to the perceived need to broaden the basis of discourse on landscape issues at the international level and simultaneously to begin to overcome some of the cultural and academic barriers which have developed between the landscape disciplines over time. In recognition of this goal, the theme for the Forum was chosen as:

‘Meeting in the middle – A point of contact for different landscape cultures’

This emphasis on the role of ‘landscape cultures’, rather than simply focussing on ‘cultural landscapes’, provided the Rome Forum with an important further opportunity for innovation. Thus it was the intention of the Forum to find new ‘common ground’ in a number of ways. In particular it aimed to bridge the often separate worlds of landscape education, research and practice. A further innovative aspect concerned the direct engagement with the local landscape as an exemplar for wider issues and concerns. Finally, although the initiative for the event has come from landscape architecture, there was to be a stress on the broader trans-disciplinary nature of landscape, as a field of practice and research.

Behind all these considerations the stimulus to the discipline which has been provided by the European Landscape Convention could be clearly sensed. In this sense, the title of the Forum 2013 well expressed the intention of LE:NOTRE to build strong connections between different organizations and initiatives which, in recent decades, have dealt with landscape issues in education and research and practice, including amongst others ECLAS, the Landscape Biennials of Barcelona and the Canary Islands, IALE, UNISCAPE, IFLA Europe. From this perspective, ECLAS and the LE:NOTRE project, together with teachers and professionals, academics, designers and stakeholders outside the



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Images from Rome. Acknowledgements and introduction to Part 1.

Fabio Di Carlo

LE:NOTRE Landscape Forum 2013 offered a further opportunity to reflect on the complexity and layered structure which characterize the landscape of Rome, and how such complexity is a growing and evolving element.

The strong dialectic - which often seems a conflict between forms, elements and values of the territory and the development of human settlements - has shown the connotative and contradictory picture of the overall strong human landscape, often messy and rude, which dialogues with the ruins of a natural landscape, strong but not invasive, often abandoned. Such is the urban sedimentation of Rome, from the Emperors to the Popes, home to noble families as well as lower classes immigrated to find better living conditions.

Ludovico Quaroni, who had taught and designed for a long time in Rome, perfectly understood that aspect described in *Picture of Rome* (1976). Also, Pierpaolo Pasolini was aware of it when he settled his stories on the labour class outskirts of Rome after World War II.

The First Part of the present publication offers a partial representation of such complexity. It aims to provide all the participants of LLF 2013 with some basic information to enable them to get further elements and impressions from the place, to join the workshops of the Forum

and elaborate their ideas.

To me, as anyone else who was born, grown and educated in Rome, the organization of the workshop and especially the construction of the First Part of this publication, allowed to check information, common thoughts, and – obviously – consolidated representations of the city.

Such knowledge, however, substantially differed from the most part of the friends and colleagues of ECLAS. In fact, the comparison was not based on the well-known parts of the city, but it focused on remarkable parts not usually studied as excluded from the main touristic routes.

Therefore, the main task was to organize and convey information about the reality, so clear and usual to us, thus often ignored or scarcely considered. Beauties and weaknesses were told, unfinished transformation processes and urban planning failures were illustrated. Moreover, illegal and spontaneous growth of the suburbs were explained. Finally, the absence of widespread improvement of the landscape was highlighted, despite the permanence of areas of remarkable natural value.

The preparation of Part 1 was a choral work with many collaborators, from Sapienza University and external experts. My words would firstly thank all those who contributed to this work.





I cannot start without a warm thanking all the PhD student of the 27th PhD course in Environmental Design of Sapienza University, who have been working for a long time on writing and scientific documentation, graphics, and photographs. I would highlight that the graphic and photographic documentation - with the exception of iconographic, historical, and regional planning maps - are original and made for this publication. Most of the abovementioned PhD students are architects, and only some of them have experience in landscape architecture. Thus, their interest in a new field of study should be eulogized.

In thanking them, I am also grateful to their PhD course coordinator prof. Eliana Cangelli, for her support to the project, and prof. Romeo Di Pietro, botanist and ecologist, for his scientific contribution.

The first contribution was written by the architect and landscape designer Mirella Di Giovine, titled "Trends in contemporary landscape in Rome" (Chapter 1). Mirella Di Giovine is an experienced manager at the Town Council of Rome. In her career, she has worked in management and design of urban spaces, parks and gardens. For the Forum, she delivered an overview of the current state of planning and management of landscapes in Rome.

In Chapter 2, there are two contributions by eminent experts. As architect and landscape designer, Massimo De Vico Fallani served for many years as superintendent of the Archaeological and Historic Gardens. Prof. Carlo Pavolini, archaeologist, coordinated archaeological excavations of great importance, including some campaigns in Ostia Antica. Both them have worked within the dialectic between heritage and landscape, interpreting the natural relationships of these elements in the Roman area. Similarly, they always had to deal with the great dichotomy between the need of knowledge and conservation, and the needs of development.

The following contribution was written by the PhD stu-

dents in Environmental Design, divided in four thematic chapters.

Slightly changing the usual order to present the topics, we started with a section of images mainly focused on the key points and elements of the urban and natural landscape of Rome. Chapter 3, "Roman landscapes and selected Portraits", collects many of these images, often imprinted in people common imaginary as determined by centuries of international tourism in Rome, and in numerous representations resulting from history and literature as well as cinematography and photography. Several famous Neorealist films for instance directed by Federico Fellini and international masterpieces such as Wyler's *Roman Holiday* with Audrey Hapburn were set in the study areas. Chapter 4, "Environment, ecology and natural structure", has been introduced by prof. Romeo Di Pietro - a botanist who has always taught in the landscape courses of our faculty - to present scientific data on the environment through the time, both in terms of floristic knowledge and geographical-hydrological structure of the area. Chapter 5, "Configuration and transformation of the urban landscape in Rome", analyzes the evolution of the urban landscape from the Roman era to the current one, investigating on the morphological structure of the plain shaped by the river Tiber through meticulous map reconstructions based on historical iconography. Finally, Chapter 6 "Rome and its territory" summarizes the main events of urban transformation and offers a report on the current status of urban planning, particularly regarding the landscape.

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Chapter 1

TRENDS IN CONTEMPORARY LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE IN ROME

Arch. Mirella Di Giovine

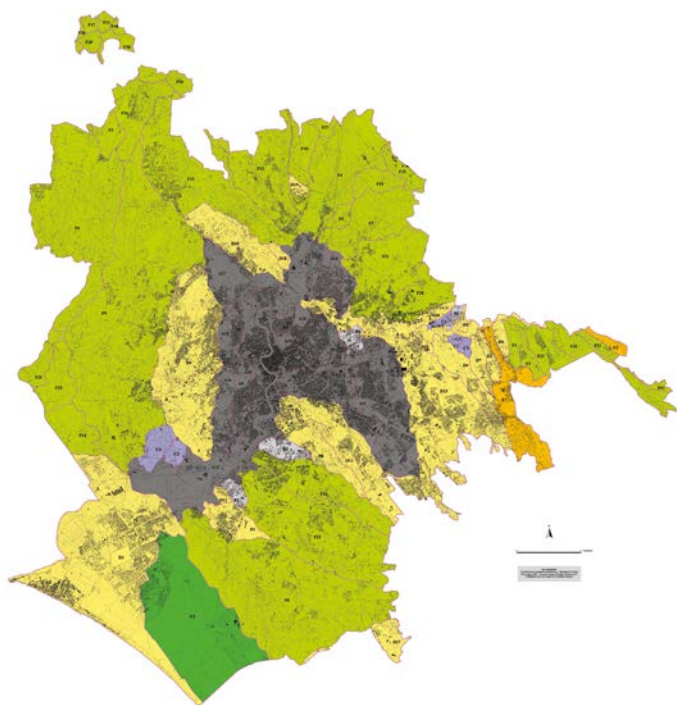


Fig.1_ Units of the Landscape of Rome

Today, Rome is a large conurbation with over four million inhabitants, sprawling over 128.000 hectares, with a discontinuous urban fabric. The Township area is empty in parts and full in others – large and small woodlands, grazing land, vineyards, even large ones, olive groves, vegetable gardens and orchards are interspersed with blocks of houses, terraced houses and buildings, crossed by infrastructures and moats, on hills and plains, still perceptible in the vast territory surrounding the city.

Rome is a city that has preserved extraordinary archaeological testimonies of the various stages of

its history, from the great Roman Empire to historical villas where old noble families have lived since the 14th century, or prestigious spaces that were a symbol of the old power (the Vatican gardens, the Quirinale gardens, etc.).

Part of the peri-urban area contains cultivations and/or grazing land, but also a housing sprawl – of formerly illegal settlements - often a result of the spontaneous expansion in the “agro romano” (countryside around Rome*) of small agricultural villages, or the disorderly expansion over old areas of artisans’ settlements. Within the “agro romano”, disrupted by bouts of urban fabric, we can still see today traces of archaeological remains, medieval towers, traces of roads and farmsteads, which define a landscape where history, nature and urbanization intertwine, a very striking and unique feature for a European capital. Because of its history and nature, Rome’s countryside has been and still is a significant part of the landscape of the contemporary city.

1.1 The structure of the identity landscape – the ancient Rome

When talking about identity and landscape, we have to bear in mind that for Rome both can be traced back a long time. Indeed, the design of the historical city was deeply influenced by topography (the seven hills are the most famous example of the complex orography of Rome’s countryside) and by the presence of natural resources (of all of them, just think of the Tiber, water, and the complex system of aqueducts). People didn’t settle only in the most densely urbanized part, which was enclosed within city walls only later on, but leaned on a tight network of production villas, villages and suburban areas, the memory of which has been handed down to us through the organization of fields, architectural ruins and toponymy.

The most significant Roman landscapes are mostly found at the periphery of the city, a testimony of the suburbs of ancient Rome. In the most resplendent centuries of its urban planning history, from Cesar to the Severans, Rome had no walls, instead it was an open city, where the green got right into the heart of the city through huge gardens, lawns, public and private parks of grand villas, and where the built up area extended and thinned out, becoming integrated in the countryside, diluted in a territory without apparent visual limits, then joining up again with the buildings of near-by towns on the hills. Some very significant examples are the archaeological parks of Villa dei Quintili, Villa Sette Bassi, placed at the outskirts of the city.

The residential areas extended largely along the consular roads, following a centrifugal radial system, competing for space first with monumental areas, public parks and residential villas, then with the great cemeteries, thus making up neighbourhoods, hamlets, hubs that got more and more dispersed in the countryside.

This evolution of the urban structure is confirmed by the abrupt passage from the enclosed configuration of the old republican city to the open one of the imperial city, rich in green and free areas, integrated into a productive countryside.

It is interesting to note that this interpretation, that looks at ancient Rome as inspiration for works in the current city, suggests to steer the work in areas to be redeveloped towards an approach to the landscape that integrates city and countryside, to propose once again a wide-spread urban quality such as it emerges from the pattern of the ancient metropolis, that is able to read the sedimentation that took place over the centuries.

These surviving traces of agricultural activities and historical settlement, within an extraordinary evocative scenery, can, in some cases, need careful reconstruction and repurposing with a modern take, but their rediscovery, protection and enhancement as sedimentation is not only a necessity for historical and archaeological culture, but offers interesting and multiple possibilities to those reconstruction projects of the landscape and the identity of the contemporary city as a whole, to be shared with the interested parties, i.e. the citizens.

1.2 The ecologic network underlying the landscape

Starting from the urban ecosystem we can build a new green public and private structure, not only to optimize the current condition, but to make it dynamic too, in view of its future development, integrating it with other natural resources, such as the hydrographic grid, the system of protected areas and natural reserves, farming areas, the sys-

tem of green city areas, and from this setting comes what the General Town Planning of Rome calls the “ecologic network” of the area of Rome.

This network includes and links up areas, linear and areal elements, and the most important environmental units with a different naturalistic degree, with above surface hydrographic grids (even lesser ones), and takes into account the ecologic flows and dynamics that can improve the environmental situation on the whole. The whole of Rome’s green areas - protected natural areas, green city areas and farming areas – covers 86.000 hectares, equal to 67% of the entire territory.

In general terms, an ecosystem is a system of relationships between the various components of the environment and the description of the dynamic processes that determine its evolution. So if we see the city as an ecosystem, the possible actions and transformations of a certain area can’t be considered exclusively in relation to its characteristics, limitations and peculiarities, but must be identified and assessed taking into account the role that this area plays within the whole system.

It is a pioneering approach on which the sustainability of an urban environment is based. The assessment of the quality of a single element, or rather an “environmental unit”, be it ordinary or exceptional, comes second place to the assessment of the role and the dynamic relationships with the other components of the system of which it is part, in order to guarantee the cycles of water, air and soil.

1.3 The objectives of the ecologic network – green corridors

The objectives that have brought about the ecologic network are therefore more complex than the simple protection, conservation or reproduction of a specific natural resource, where one exists, and can be summarized as follows:

1. protection and enhancement of important ecological systems through land-use restrictions, creation of protected areas and the protection of those that already exist;
2. protection, enhancement and reinstatement of the hydrographic grid;
3. environmental enhancement, recovery of farming areas;
4. recovery of degraded, even abandoned areas, that are strategically placed for the construction of the network;
5. protection and enhancement of specific characteristics of linear elements, the so-called “corridoi verdi” (green corridors), even if strongly anthropized, to take into account what their functions are or could be in the dynamic functioning of the network (integration, filter or link);

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Chapter 2

ARCHAEOLOGY AS A VARIABLE COMPONENT OF THE IMAGE AND THE TOWN-PLANNING OF ROME

Massimo de Vico Fallani, Carlo Pavolini

In 1991 David Coffin thought about the physical and mental association between the ruins and the image of Rome as one of the original grounds for the making of papal and cardinal's Renaissance gardens (Gardens and Gardening in Papal Rome, Princeton, New Jersey, 1991). Brought it back again to the contemporary Rome, such observation seems absolutely still relevant. The Aurelian Walls, built towards the end of the 3rd century A.C., convey the ideas of "in" and "out" to the today's citizens, a city centre distinct from the outskirts. On the contrary, until their lacerating construction, Rome extended to the Agro (countryside) uninterruptedly, taking the urban tissue in the same areas which, from the Second World War on, have been invaded by low quality and cynical building, to which the innumerable and scattered ruins mainly represented an annoying impediment.

Mostly thanks to associations such as *Italia Nostra*, and to the contribution of Neorealist literature and cinema, with the films of Vittorio De Sica, Renzo Rossellini, and subsequently Pier Paolo Pasolini, the ruins on the outskirts, or rather the outskirts themselves as a congenital association between ruins and buildings, have been revalued not only by the researchers, and the finally hypostatized archaeology has been considered as one of the most authentic timeless symbols of the image and urban design of Rome.

The vegetation is an integral part of the association between ruins and modern construction, and

the interplay of such three elements is a variable foundation of the image through time. The green areas of the Imperial Rome were zoned in *horti*, *gymnasia*, *viridaria*, or *colonnades*, but since the Middle Ages Nature rendered an image that after the Renaissance has been considered a monumental value, like the pre-Romantic vision of *Roma quanta fuit ipsa ruina docet* (How great Rome was, its ruins teach). From the 18th century on, the new-born Archaeology, which was conceptually hostile to the parasitic vegetation, clean the ruins to study and preserve them. In the following century, two trends may be observed. On one hand, the purist and illuminist approach made Luigi Canina (1795-1856) see the ancient Via Appia completely free from vegetation. On the other hand, an active concept increased to enhance the role of the association between ruins and vegetation as a project aim.

The initiator was Giacomo Boni (1859-1925), director of the excavations of the Roman Forum and the Palatine hill, pupil of John Ruskin. He partially disagreed with his master, landscaped the Roman Forum and the Palatine with trees and shrubs, according to the strict method which he elaborated and entitled: «*Flora dei monumenti romani*» (Flora of the Roman monuments).

In his method, together with a 'naturalistic' compositional concept that was not entirely new as close to the so-called 'Landscape Gardening' and to its classical pastoral roots, the reclamation of the ancient topiary art is identifiable as a tool for the

restoration of monuments. Giacomo Boni himself made use of landscape works at the Roman Foro, as well as in the early years of the 20th century Raffaele de Vico (1881-1969) did in the Garden of Colle Oppio and some years later Antonio Muñoz (1884-1960) in the Venus and Roma Temple.

Furthermore, a few years later the archaeological park of Ostia Antica, which deserves an accurate analysis, appears full of charm. On this point, during the presentation for the Workshop some extraordinary and partly unpublished images, kindly available from the Archives of the Archaeological Superintendence of Ostia, will be rapidly shown. Such pictures highlight how the great experts who succeeded to the excavations in those crucial years – first of all, Rodolfo Lanciani and Dante Vaglieri between 1880 and 1913 – conceived and partly made some landscape works which aimed to integrate the contemporary perception of the classical ruins, yet with shapes that would have been deeply changed by the final and current arrangement.

The zenith of such event can be seen in the

wonderful watercolours of the landscape design of Ostia, by Michele Busiri Vici. He was involved when the big excavation for the EUR (Universal Exposition of Rome) was already completed, in 1941, and proposed his model and solutions which were very close to those actually adopted. Identity and differences with regard to what can be still seen whilst walking in Ostia represent two mirror elements, but addressed to arouse equal interest. It is true especially where signs of the concept of “ancient garden” can be perceived which, after a few decades, are already part of the history of archaeology and culture more than the current approach.

In the recent years, architects of the staff of the Local Council of Rome such as Mirella Di Giovine, have focused with remarkable and contemporary sensibility the relationships between ruins and the town sprawl in several peri-urban areas, i.e. the Park of Caffarella, the Aqueduct Alessandrino, the Aurelian Walls along via Carlo Felice, and other projects.



Fig. 1_The Ostia Antica Archeological area today (Googlemap)

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Chapter 3

ROMAN LANDSCAPES AND SELECTED PORTRAITS

Viola Albino, Maria Beatrice Andreucci (Coordinator), Filippo Calcerano,
Sonja Radovic-Jelovacv: PhD candidates in Environmental Design at «La Sapienza»

The narrative of the following chapter is to present Rome directly through a selection of snapshots, recently taken by the authors, depicting in a spontaneous and non-guided way, the variety of its landscapes, thus leaving the readers with the possibility to fill the blanks with their own, unique, imaginative captions. The declination of the chapter in three sections - Nature, History and Contemporary - reflects the categories which have been investigated throughout the research work.

3.1 Selected portraits

3.1.1.a Nature

Since its foundation, Rome has always been rich of woods and forests, which were mostly admired and respected by Romans. Being aware of the power of plants, they soon emanated special laws to protect nature and trees. Woods became temples and this tradition lasted for long times, even when Rome expanded both geographically and in terms of political power.

As of today, 70% of the municipal territory is dedicated to natural environment, with a total of 88,000 hectares of green areas. For high percentage of agricultural lands - over 60,000 hectares - Rome is the first agricultural municipality in Italy.

Roman countryside is not only around the city but also penetrates deeply in its hearth, with large green wedges often linked to gardens and public parks, thus creating ecological corridors, as key connections to preserve bio-diversity.

50% of Roman green areas are protected by law,

to preserve and promote environmental, aesthetic and landscape values throughout the Region.

In the Capital City, there are 20 protected parks, reserves and marine areas, counting for over 41,000 hectares, 15 of which are directly managed by the Regional Authority, RomaNatura.

The system comprises:

- a) 9 Natural Reserves, created by Regional Law n. 29/97:
- b) 2 Regional Parks created before RomaNatura
- c) 3 Natural Monuments

Riserva Naturale della Marcigliana (ha 4696) (1)
Riserva Naturale della Valle dell'Aniene (ha 620) (3)
Riserva Naturale di Decima-Malafede (ha 6145) (4)
Riserva Naturale del Laurentino – Acqua Acetosa (ha 152) (5)
Riserva Naturale della Tenuta dei Massimi (ha 774) (7)
Riserva Naturale della Valle dei Casali (ha 469) (6)
Riserva Naturale dell'Acquafredda (ha 249) (8)
Riserva Naturale di Monte Mario (ha 204) (10)
Riserva Naturale dell'Insugherata (a 697) (11)

Parco Regionale Urbano di Aguzzano (created in 1989 – ha 60) (2)
Parco Regionale Urbano del Pineto (created in 1987 – ha 243) (9)

Monumento naturale di Mazzalupetto - Quarto degli Ebrei (ha 180) (12)

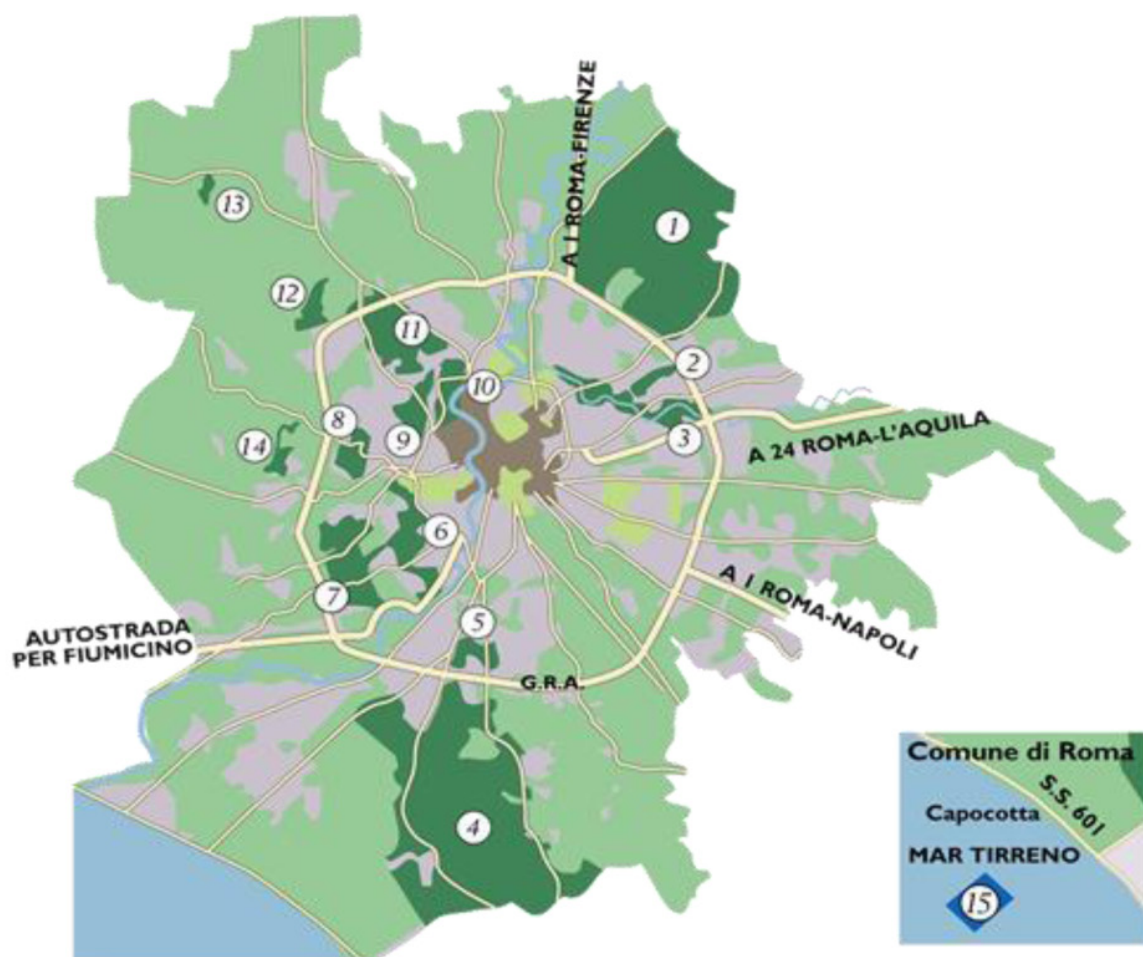


Fig. 1_Parks and nature reserves

Monumento Naturale di Galeria Antica (ha 40) (13)
 Monumento Naturale Parco della Cellulosa (ha 100) (14)

1 Protected Marine Area, created by Decreto del Ministero dell'Ambiente, 29 novembre 2000

•Area Marina protetta delle Secche di Tor Paterno (ha 1200) (15)

3.1.1.b Regional Parks

1. The area of the natural reserve of Monte Mario with its height of 139 meters is the highest hill of the Monti della Farnesina and represents for its environmental features a true mosaic of biological diversity now rare in Rome.

A large presence of typical Mediterranean vegetation, in the lower zones (Ilex, Cork and Rockrose) is accompanied by the typical vegetation of sub-mountain conditions in the higher areas (hornbeam, Linden, Maple, Ash, Hazel, Privet and Dogwood). The development of the area has greatly disturbed the original fauna present today: rodents (Dormouse, Woodmouse) and birds (Robin, Blackbird, Long-tailed tit, Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Jackdaw and Starling). Already in Roman times

the Hill housed the residential villas and noble poets and was crossed by the armies returning from military campaigns along the via Trionfale crossed also by the pilgrims on their way to Rome, becoming the last stretch of the via Francigena, the medieval route from Canterbury to Saint Peter and down to Jerusalem. The area includes historical villas, including Villa Mazzanti, RomaNatura, and Villa Mellini, home of the famous Astronomical Observatory.

2. The natural reserve of the Insugherata stretching between the districts arose in the East, along the Cassia, and the via Trionfale, in the West, represents an important natural corridor between urban boundaries to the North of the city and the great system Veio – Cesano, included in the area of the drainage basin of the Acqua Traversa.

Along these two boundary lines are numerous archaeological remains of Roman villas and tombs. The vegetation is very articulate. Slopes exposed to the South host the downy oak, Cork oak or holm oak on rocky hills, while those on the West side present a vegetation completely different, with mixed forests consisting mainly of hornbeam, manna-

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Chapter 4

ENVIRONMENT, ECOLOGY AND NATURAL STRUCTURE

Prof. Romeo Di Pietro, botanist and ecologist

PHD students: Maria Luigia Fiorentino (Coordinator),

Manuela Crespi, Sandra Persiani, Davide Ventura

4.1 Introduction

The vegetation's biodiversity in Rome's area

Prof. Romeo Di Pietro

The Province of Rome is an area characterized by a significant diversity of flora and vegetation, certainly among the most varied and interesting of those inherent in the Italian territory.

It is in fact a real mosaic of species and plant communities that unfold in relation to subtle changes in lithology, microclimate, soil and morphology. There are several factors that determine the high degree of floristic and vegetational diver-

sity that is found today in the province of Rome.

The Bioclimatic factors (Blasi, 1994): The Province of Rome is characterized by the presence of four macroclimatic regions (Temperate, Temperate Transition, Mediterranean Transition, Mediterranean), Edaphic factors: Factors Litomorphology.

Finally, over 2000 species of vascular plants that currently can be found in the province of Rome are the result of causes phytogeographic current and past. Rome, Lazio, and more generally, represent a crossroads (Montelucci 1976), where we can meet Biocore from different backgrounds. The quota W-Mediterranean and Atlantic present mainly in the coastal area (*Quercus suber*, *Rubia peregrina*,



Fig. 1_ *Cercis siliquastrum* (Photo Maria B Andreucci)

Ilex aquifolium, *Erica arborea*...) counterbalanced by the European contingent SE-Illyrian-Pontic instead characterizes the hilly areas (*Ostrya Carpinifolia*, *Fraxinus ornus*, *Carpinus orientalis*, *Pa-liurus plug-Christi*, *Cercis siliquastrum*...) In corotipo stenosis that characterizes the Mediterranean coastal landscape with a large number of species in leaf sclerofillica (*Quercus ilex*, *Phillyrea latifolia*, *Rhamnus alaternus*, *Smilax aspera*, *Myrtus communis*...) meets the quota or Orofilo Circumboreal south-European summit this in the areas of pre-and Apennines Apennines (*Juniperus nana*, *Arc-tostaphylos uva-ursi*, *Rosa pendulina*, *Daphne oleoides*, *Cotoneaster tomentosum*...).

However, the most interesting aspect is that of the Roman as well as presenting a very marked heterogeneity of the real landscape (not surprising given the age-old human activities in these places) and it shows a potential heterogeneity equally varied.

For this reason, in relatively restricted spaces is possible to observe different types of potential vegetation in close contact with each other. The interesting thing is that this phenomenon is not limited only to the most natural of the province which usually coincide with those located further away from urban settlements and therefore less affected by the environmental point of view, but it invests directly across the metropolitan area of Rome. For example, in urban park dell'Insugherata in the NW quadrant of Rome (distance as the crow flies just over a mile from the dome of St. Peter), you can see a transect vegetation in the space of 500 meters meet six types of forest vegetation in potential contact with each other ie: evergreen Woods, *Quercus suber* slope facing south, Woods thermophilous, *Quercus pubescens*, *Q. cerris* and

Fraxinus ornus areas summit, mesophilic forest of *Quercus cerris* and *Ostrya carpinifolia* of north-facing slopes, lowland forest of *Quercus robur* and *Carpinus betulus* in the valley, forest ravine in *Corylus avellana* and *Sambucus nigra*, riparian forest with *Salix alba*.

On the basis of the well known principles of integrated Phytosociology (Gehu & Rivas-Martínez 1981) each type of natural vegetation potential is at the head of a series of vegetation composed of well-defined stages successional that vary significantly passing from one series to another. Thus, the great heterogeneity of potential dell'Insugherata Park (as well as that of other urban parks such as the Park of Veii, Tenth Malafede Acquafredda etcv.).

We can observe today a mosaic fitocenotico extremely varied in key cenologica that over the woods provides grasslands pseudo -steppes in *Dasypyrum villosum* (Fanelli, 1998), mesic grasslands in *Cynosurus cristatus* and *Lolium perenne*, Pratelli terofitici to *Trachynia distachya* and *Trifolium scabrum*, cloaks ecotone in *Rubus ulmifolius* and *Rosa sempervirens*, scrub neutron basifili to *Spatium junceum*, scrub acidophilus *Cytisus scoparius*, garrigue *Cistus salvifolius*, pre-woods with *Acer campestre* and *Ulmus minor* and *Pyrus spinosa*. Clearly it is sufficient to leave a few kilometers from the territories that are closely with the City of Rome, join in the neighboring areas of his province that there has been a further increase in the diversity fitocenotica to which is added a dutiful reporting of certain types almost unique in the Italy peninsular. It 's the case of thermophilous oak forests, beech forests to the depressed areas and acerete *Acer monspessulanum* of Monti della Tolfa (Di Pietro et al., 2010), to the ripisilve and to



Fig.2_ *Pinus Pinea* (Photo Maria B. Andreucci)

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Chapter 5

CONFORMATION AND TRANSFORMATION OF THE URBAN LANDSCAPE IN ROME

PhD Students: Michele Conteduca (Coordinator), Francesco Antinori, Elnaz Behnam Kia, Dorina Pllumbi

1. Introduction

«The map stands as the most direct and faithful interpretation of the image of the city as it has evolved» (Italo Insolera, 1996).

In this chapter, is proposed to address the issue of the development and transformation of the urban landscape of the city of Rome through the identification of key historical moments. This will allow us to understand the different phases that led to the current image, through the collection of maps and views and historic photographs.

The research starts from these documents, or the image of them that has been handed down over time, with the objective of showing the evolution of the primitive nucleus of the city, the consolidation of its dominant structure, and following the subsequent transformations of the city, through a chronological sequence.

The cartographic analysis, the historical and socio-political analysis, and the accompanying literature have led to the identification of seven key moments that have influenced the development of the urban landscape of the city of Rome. These are presented as Summary Maps –and for some of them there are additional explanatory schemes of the fundamental phases of the urban and landscape transformations.

The ancient city has experienced a steady development culminating in the imperial period, reaching its maximum expansion in the IV century AD.

After the fall of the Roman Empire there was a gradual decline of the urban centre that continued

throughout the medieval period. Only after the return of the the Papacy in the XIV century, has the city experienced a new development, although the inhabited area would remain confined to the nuclei of the Campo Martio, Rinascimento, Trastevere and Borgo districts until the XIX century.

In this large space of time the structure of the historic city took shape through new public spaces and perspectives, and was surrounded by villas and country estates.

After the Unification of Italy Rome experienced its first expansion outside the city walls towards the countryside, the so-called «Campagna Romana». This process, now marked by various planning instruments, has continued uninterrupted to contemporary times, and still today the territory of Roma Capitale has still a large number of protected areas of high naturalistic value, which need to be preserved from an often uncontrolled expansion, and constitutes, together with the historical and archaeological heritage, the memory of Rome's urban landscape for the next generation.

2. Ancient Rome

2.1. Ancient Rome_ VIII c. B.C. – V c. A.D.

The urban nucleus of Rome experienced a millenary evolution during the Roman Age, from the foundation of the city, which took place on the Palatine hill, through the Republican enlargement, reaching its peak during the imperial period and, which, with one million inhabitants, was the largest

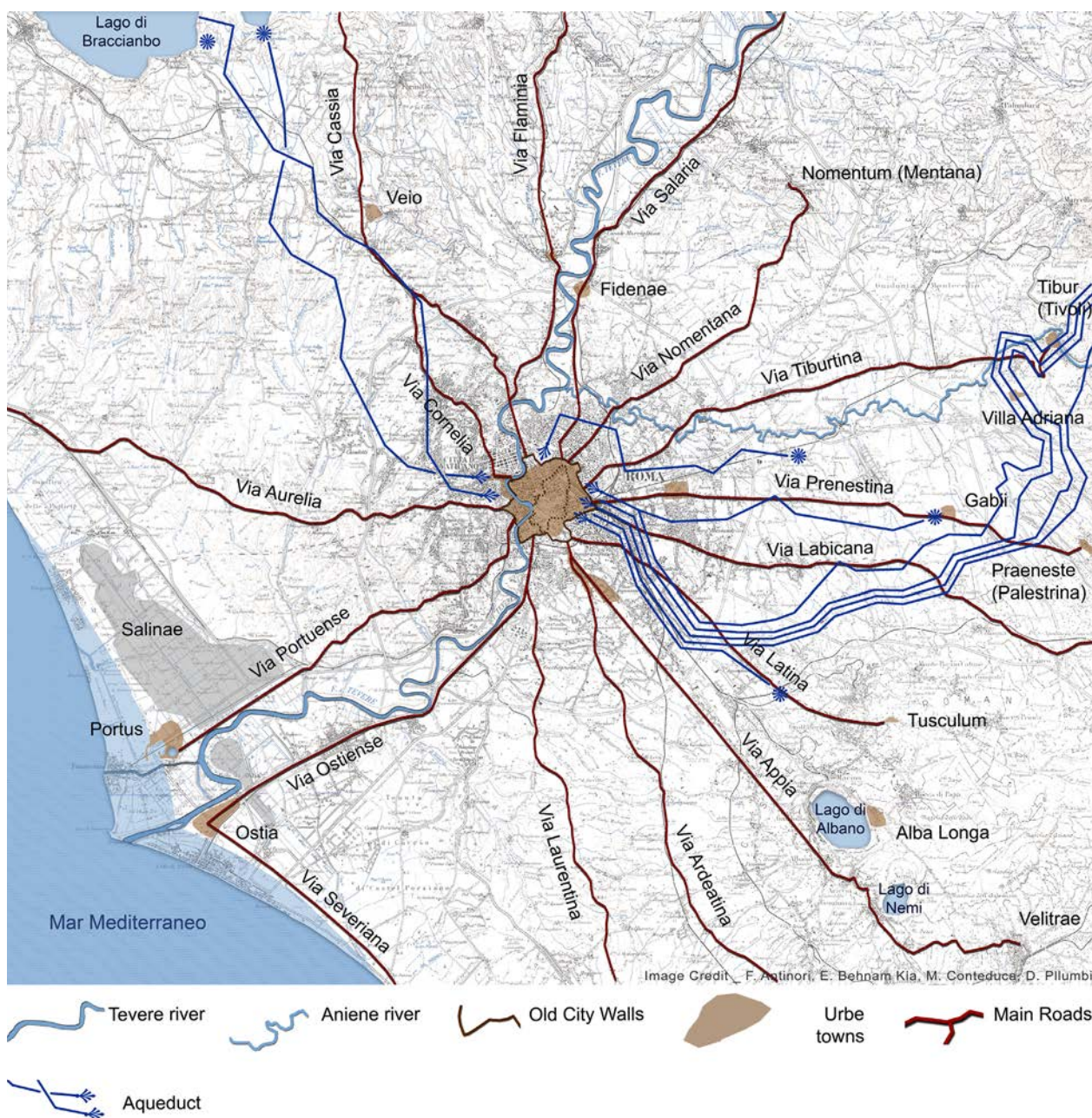


Fig. 1 _ Summary map _ Ancient Rome_ IV century A.D.

metropolis of antiquity.

The ancient town, surrounded by walls, appears as very compact and dense, while the suburban areas are crossed by the aqueducts and the main communication routes, Vie Consolari, along which there are villas, mausoleums and important sites, of which today it is possible to retrace the structure: Tivoli and its sanctuaries, the imperial Villa of Hadrian, Ostia Antica and Harbours of Trajan and Claudio. Note the different course of the river Tiber near Ostia, and the retreat of the coastline, along which were the Saline.

2.1.1. Foundation Age _ VIII c. B.C.

The primitive nucleus of the city of Rome was built on the heights of the Palatine Hill and

Capitoline Hill, both for epic and holy reasons, both for defensive reasons, both for defensive purposes, and because they were close to the point where the river Tiber had, and still has its lower level, where the main routes of communication were located. The Town consisted of two fortified citadels, the landscape was characterized by a quite complex landform, crossed by many rivers, and it can still associated with the seven hills.

2.1.2. Republican Age_ VI century B.C.–I century B.C.

In the five centuries of the Republican Age the growth of the urban area makes it necessary to build larger City walls, the Servian Walls. The Consular routes were traced through the valleys between

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Chapter 6

ROME AND ITS TERRITORY

Ata Aminian, Giorgio Tosato (coordinator), Juljan Veleshnja

6.1 Foreward

The structure of Rome territory planning is ruled by a system of hierarchy, based on three levels corresponding to the three levels of local government: the “Piano Regolatore Generale” (City Plan at the municipal level), the “Piano Territoriale Provinciale Generale” (Provincial Plan) and the “Piano Territoriale Paesistico Regionale” (Landscape Plan at Regional level). These plans are in force together with the “Piano di Bacino” (Basin Plan), an extra-territorial tool, ruling the area of

influence of the Tiber River.

In this chapter, the above Plans will be analysed, with particular focus on the landscape perspectives of each, leaving out other aspects that – although fundamental to the management of a metropolitan city, like Rome – are less significant for the purposes of this publication. We conclude highlighting that all of the texts in the following paragraphs are taken by the technical reports and documentation of the individual plans analysed; we believe that a summary re-elaboration of these documents produced by designers is the best way to proceed in this brief analysis. We suggest a comprehensive study of the plans and specific readings to those wanting to have a complete knowledge and / or deepen some issues.

6.2 The “Plan of certainties”

The Municipality of Rome extends over about 129,000 hectares and its present structure is due to the “Plan of Certainties”, a variance to the former City Plan approved in 1999. The new lay-out resulted, although improved in the new City Plan (which we will discuss later in this chapter), is still basis in the management of Rome territory, which can be considered as divided into three major areas of reference to design the urban transformation processes: Suburban Area, Consolidated City, City to complete and transform.

The first, Suburban Area, consists mainly of the system of large parks and roman agricultural areas (which form the green belt and wedges) for

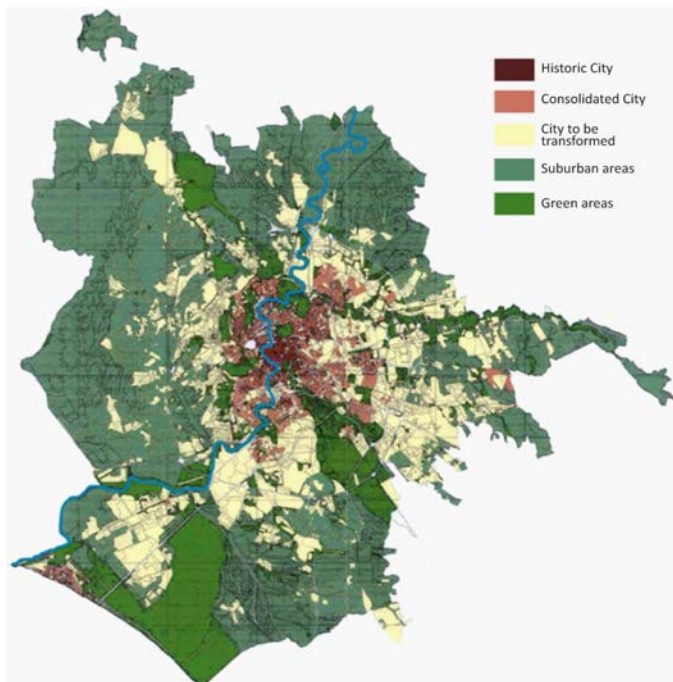


Fig. 1_ The “Plan of Certainties” (1997)

a total of over 82,000 hectares, equal to the 64% of the entire territory. In these zones the main theme is environment protection, enhancement and promotion of agricultural or similar activities. The new rules include a strong reduction of new constructions, allowing only compatible changes, even not directly linked to agricultural purposes, only throughout special procedures of environment defence (PAMA, Environmental Plan for Agricultural Improving, and VAP, Prior Environmental Assessment). The classification of Suburban Areas for protection and inclusion of the so-called «essential areas» moves from environmental criteria based on the presence of binding constraints and forecasts of Landscape Plans.

The second area, Consolidated City, extends for about 6,700 hectares and includes the historic centre (where only Restoration and Conservation interventions are allowed) as well as other central areas with a structured urban fabric and a well defined roads net, for a total of 5% of the entire territory. In these areas, the urban law regulates the transformation processes throughout the procedure of direct construction license and the freedom of splitting large apartments in smaller units, in order to subsidize the re-use of existing building heritage. This legislation foresees a classification in high and low level protection areas, the first ones with allowed interventions limited to Demolition and Reconstruction. This

strategy aims to extend the idea of historic centre, expanding from the actual boundary to a new border which includes more recently constructed neighbourhoods, valid reference of urban models.

The final reference area extends for the remaining 31% of Roman territory, about 40,000 hectares, and includes a variety of zones (built and not-built) described by the absence of a distinguished plan. We are talking of the so-called “city / not-city”, where partially realised zones for social housing exist near spontaneous neighbourhoods, industrial areas, empty urban spaces never developed and city service hubs. The “City to Complete and Transform”, therefore, contains all new possible volumes, an occasion to be used for a general requalification process of the entire periphery.

It is very clear from all above that the “green” system is now the main structure of the municipality and joins all environmental interest areas (from all point of view), where the biological cycle of nature takes place and history happens. Up to 18 areas (Natural Reserves, Natural Monuments, Parks and Restricted Zones) have been defined and are now subject to special protection system, which highlight “the green vocation” of Roman territory plans. Even for other areas outside the above perimeters, similar rules individuate protected parts, where only developments and new destinations in line with environment safety and sustainability are allowed.

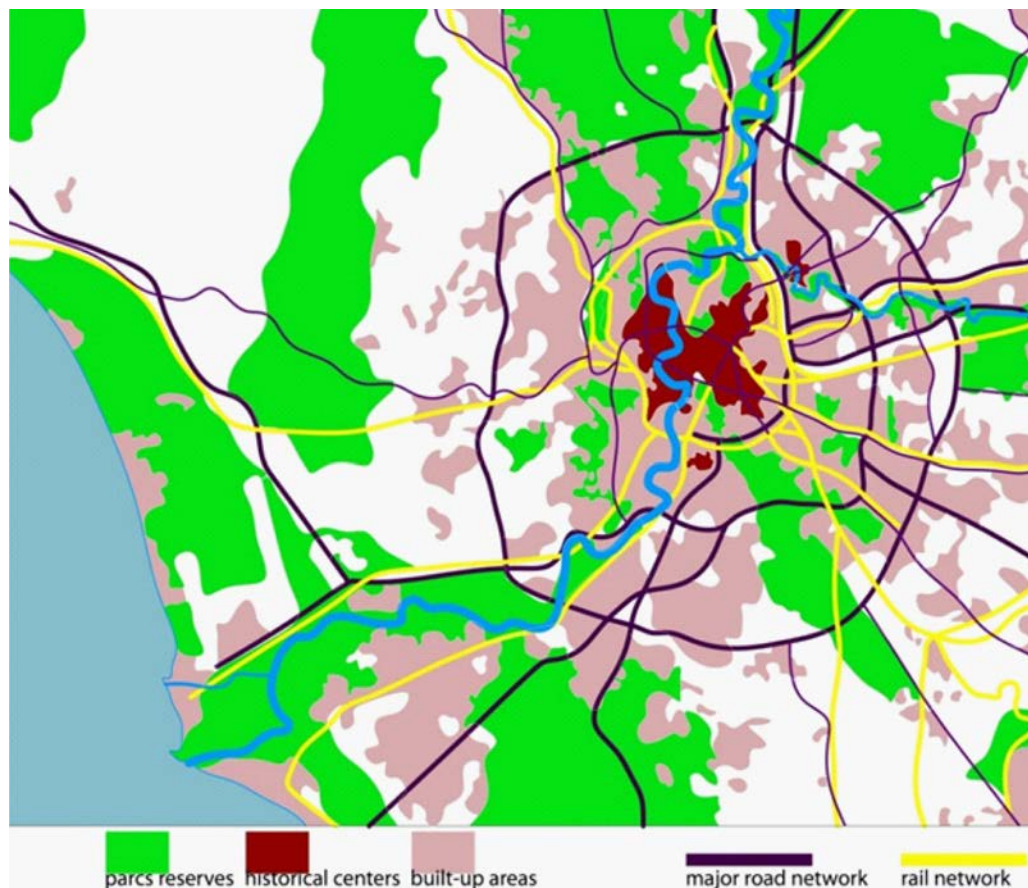


Fig. 2_ City Plan Scheme

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Rome's Landscape

Overall Conclusions

Fabio Di Carlo and Richard Stiles

1. An international landscape Forum in Rome – Fabio Di Carlo

Not since 2006, has Rome hosted a major International Symposium related to landscape architecture. In 2006 the international Symposium “Becoming Landscape Architect in the XXI Century”, provided a helpful occasion for Rome to represent achievements of Italy landscape education in the international scene.

By contrast, the 2013 Landscape Forum in Rome provided an opportunity for a wider debate. During the Forum, over the course of nearly a week, we could observe simultaneously the results of our work and our city landscapes from a different perspective, that of 150 foreign colleagues, who together with us got to know Rome along some less familiar routes.

According to our understanding, our international colleagues were pleased to be able to participate in this unique and challenging experience. Such an exercise compels us to seek to understand the landscapes of Rome as well as simply concerning ourselves with preserving and creating them. Although the landscape of our city, is layered with history and meanings, it is nevertheless fragile as far as maintaining its balance in the time of renewal is concerned.

Similarly, our colleagues have been able to highlight problems that we have not previously been aware of because of being blind to them due to our over-familiarity with the situation. The lack of defined minimum standards for public space as well as the non-suitability of many spaces as compa-

red to the common standards in other countries, are examples of those shortcomings. The distance between the potential quality and actual reality of landscape seems dramatic.

The landscape systems of Rome and of surrounding territory are strong and can be seen to represent a significant resource, if considered from the perspective of the need to overcome the current difficulties.

The Forum was a moment of great significance for us as Italians, who often feel themselves to be stuck in the “suburbs” of contemporary landscape culture. It was, therefore, a moment to be acknowledged by the ‘outside world’, but it was also useful to win some internal recognition of the landscape on the part of Italian culture, as compare to other more established teaching traditions.

Another great result was the creation of a community of young researchers and students in the school of Rome. A large team of people who have collaborated before, during and after the Forum, has become a kind of reference group in the faculty of architecture and continue to collaborate with each other and with me. These include Cristiana Costanzo, Sara Gangemi, Emma Tagliacollo and Paolo Camilletti, the four local experts, but also Ana Horhat, Lorenzo Decembrini, Samaneh Nichayin, Elisa Lumaca, and many others. To all of them my affectionate gratitude.

2. Reflections on the Outcomes of the Rome Landscape Forum – Richard Stiles

As stated in the introduction to this publication, the format of the LE:NOTRE Landscape Forum was 'road-tested' for the first time in Antalya, at the first event bearing this name. Following this year's very successful Rome Forum the format into which so much thought and effort has been invested can be pronounced to be fully 'road worthy'. The first incarnation of the Landscape Forum in Antalya has been shown not just to have been a 'one-off' success, and any residual worries that the format would not be up to meeting the challenge of being transferred to Rome have been shown to be groundless by the success of the second LE:NOTRE Landscape Forum.

But the 2013 Forum was not just the second LE:NOTRE Landscape Forum, it was also particularly significant as it was, in one way at least, the last. It was the final annual meeting of the participants in the long-running LE:NOTRE Project, which had started way back in the autumn of 2002 as a European Union co-funded 'Thematic Network' under the, then, Socrates Programme and then became a so-called 'Academic Network' under the subsequent 'Lifelong Learning Programme'.

The amount of thought that went in to 'designing' the Forum as a new type of event has been outlined in the introduction to this publication, but the success of the Rome event was down to much more than a well conceived format. Above all it was again due – as was the case in Antalya the previous year – to the tireless work, enthusiasm and commitment of the host university: La Sapienza and the many local experts and keynote speakers to whom our thanks are again recorded here. Their support in the selection of the topics and case study areas, as well as their hard work in the planning and organisation of the event helped to ensure, and was integral to its success.

But while it indeed proved possible to replicate the structure and success of the LE:NOTRE Landscape Forum that had been originally conceived and piloted in Antalya, in the end this was not where the ambitions for the Rome Forum stopped. Instead the success of Antalya could be seen almost more as a 'trial run' for what became an altogether more ambitious and larger scale event, which the Rome Forum became. This increase in ambition is to some extent reflected in the scope of this publication. 'Rome's Landscape' has grown significantly as compared to the previous 'Antalya's Landscape'. Three developments in particular stand out, which differentiate this publication from that prepared

following the Antalya Forum. The first of these is the fact that the introduction to the local landscape situation has expanded considerably: it is no longer just a single chapter, but a whole section comprising six separate chapters. The second is the fact that the four chapters contributed by the thematic groups no longer all follow exactly the same format. A degree of 'internal differentiation' has taken place with each of the four groups having developed their own specific approach to dealing with the issues with which they have been concerned, something which can be interpreted as a growing sign of maturity. Finally, the appendices, making up the third part of this publication comprises the posters submitted and accepted on each of the four themes, which is also a new departure and an expansion of the format of the previous publication. The inclusion of a call for posters for the Rome Forum, in spite of the continuing conviction that the Forum should not in any way resemble a traditional academic conference, was nevertheless felt to be an important new introduction to the format.

In particular thanks are due to the efforts and commitment of the large team at La Sapienza University, in particular the group of doctorate students who have been responsible for contributing to the chapters making up the first part of this publication. This can be seen as a unique and excellent primer on the landscape of Rome that currently has no equal in the extensive English language literature about the 'Eternal City'.

Even though the Rome Forum has been successful, not just in its own right, but also in raising the stakes with regard to what it was possible to achieve during the first meeting in Antalya, the possibilities for making yet further improvements have by no means yet been exhausted. The next stage in raising the level of the Forum is, however, perhaps to be sought in educating all participants to understand it should not be viewed as just a one-off event, but as a process, of which the visit to the host city is just a part, albeit a central one. The key to this is to see the thematic groups not just as convenient 'teams' which get together on a one-off basis for a few days during the course of the Forum itself, but rather as standing working groups of people with long term common interests, which can provide a structure within which projects can be developed, research applications made and joint teaching experiments undertaken.