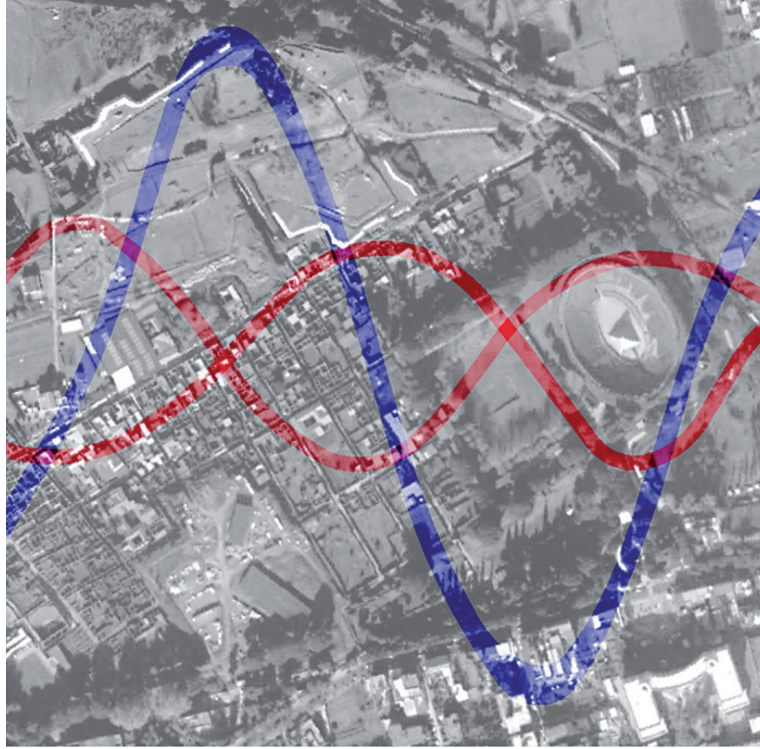


ARCHITECTURE HERITAGE and DESIGN

Carmine Gambardella

XVII INTERNATIONAL FORUM

Le Vie dei
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Le Vie dei Mercanti
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Conference report 300 abstracts and 650 authors from 39 countries:

Albania, Australia, Benin, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brasil, Bulgaria, California, Chile, China, Cipro, Cuba, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kosovo, Lalaysia, Malta, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montserrat, New Jersey, New York, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Texas, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom.

Preface

The XVII Forum “World Heritage and Heritage” addresses the issue of the handed down in the sense of transmission over time of generation, at the state of knowledge, the material and immaterial heritage that comes from the past. A generational commitment to operate, in the cyclical temporal process, in order to preserve and protect the cultural heritage; a duty of the present generations to deliver to the future generations the legacy of the past at least in the same conditions in which it is received.

A commitment that takes on an even more meaningful significance in a historical moment that is crossed by destructive and iconoclastic wars and by great migration phenomena involving abandonment of territories undermining the identities of places, traditions, material and immaterial culture, which characterize the Cultural Landscapes. A re-appropriation by humanity of the value of a biological continuity that is traceable in its genetic complexity as a custodian and bearer of the memory of the past and, at the same time, belonging to those who live in the future by living the present. Moreover, “to the state of knowledge” should not be interpreted as a limitation but as an exhortation not to live on the position income and above all to remind men that they were not “made to live like brutes but to follow virtues and knowledge”.

Knowledge therefore contains an evolutionary value in the history of progress. Where knowledge is substituted by acts or policies conducted by brutal and unreasonable actions against Humanity and its Patrimony, a fracture on historical continuity is created, which produces a negative value due to the great expenditure of economic resources and loss of human values. Therefore, in the awareness that the value produced by the past generations, which have given us and above all entrusted as heritage to be transmitted to the future is not commensurable to the value of time to re-establish and restore continuity to the regenerative space of the common good, it is impossible to activate more and more moments of reflection and I would say to monitor the behavior of supranational cultural policies.

This in the spirit of inducing to avoid the disastrous temporal intervals that involve serious losses of the human heritage, which break the glue that binds the generations. Architecture, Cities, Infrastructures and Landscape not only represent the form of time but all the disciplines that have contributed to and contribute to their characterization. The form of time is the body of a cultural program of society and the modification project makes use of the knowledge at the date. Economics, mathematics, physics, in one the sciences are always traceable in the construction of man’s works, from the simple artifact to monumental architectures, to cities, to large infrastructures. In fact, with

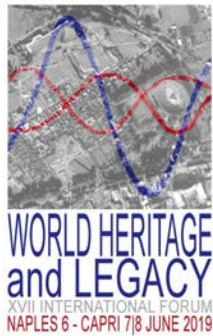
the previous sixteen editions of the International Forum “Le Vie dei Mercanti” an interdisciplinary community has been created of about 6000 scholars and researchers, coming from over 50 Countries of the World. These have presented realized projects, theoretical research, good practices, technological innovations, which are recognized in the principles and actions to be carried out so that the Planet with its species can always adapt itself to the needs of humanity in a sustainable reciprocal relationship for the salvation of the same Planet. And if Beauty will save the world, the principles and actions shared in these sixteen previous years will find with the seventeenth Forum a moment of evaluation of the state of art so that they can increasingly reach, interest and belong to as many people as possible such as Governments, Institutions, Universities, and Enterprises.

This is to create and disseminate a new Humanism that acts as a generational glue through a review of the inheritance concept, or of an ongoing heritage formed by resources intended as lot, which, declined as an income statement, create solidarity, peace, trust, work with art and quality of life.

For these reasons and for the history of the Forum, I am sure that the scientific community will establish a debate in Naples and Capri on 6th, 7th and 8th of June which will bring further richness to the discussion among researchers who have faced the protection and safeguard of heritage handed down to us and the researchers who through their works will be the bearers of the future legacy.

Carmine Gambardella

President and Founder of the Forum



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Naples 6 - Capri 7|8 June 2019

Rebuilding a Cultural Legacy in a New Town. Reshape Physical and Cultural Continuity between Old and New Town of Gibellina

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Abstract

In one night the town of Gibellina was destroyed by the earthquake that hit the Belice Valley in January 1968. Enthusiastically embracing the urban theories/utopias that were on trend in the 1960s, with, however, excessive and not realistic confidence, the city was rebuilt from scratch in another site. The article analyses the emblematic case of the post-earthquake reconstruction of the city of Gibellina. In the present case, the reconstruction process has led to serious errors caused by numerous wrong choices; most of these derive from the fact that the cultural heritage expressed by the places and the population was not taken into consideration.

To restore the threads of memory broken by the earthquake, a research was carried out – by the writer – aimed at the reconstruction of the image of the old Gibellina; the old city, definitively erased from the ground, has been recomposed through the interpretation of the cadastral and statistical data and literary, iconographic, cartographic and oral sources.

Keywords: Earthquake; Cultural Legacy; Gibellina; Belice Valley; Old Gibellina

1. The earthquake as a fracture on historical continuity

The causes of the destruction of cultural heritage can be many; they produce a discontinuity in the process of historical evolution of communities and settlements. These causes can be intentional, such as wars, iconoclastic struggles, genocide, exodus and migration due to economic, political or environmental issues; or the causes can derive from unpredictable natural disasters, such as earthquakes.

The management of the reconstruction process after an earthquake is an extremely delicate issue: in fact, it can produce deep intergenerational interruptions due to the long reconstruction times and due to the loss of cultural heritage. Reconstruction must be able to restore, to the inhabitants, the quality of an environment that reflects the culture, traditions and lifestyle that make up the identity of a community.

The new city of Gibellina, destroyed by the earthquake that hit the Belice Valley in 1968, was rebuilt on another site based on a "modernist" plan drawn up by ministerial technical offices. The Plan was mainly aimed at the functional aspects of the city, underestimating the need to establish a good economic base and prefigure a new identity. Starting in the 1980s, thanks to the visionary impulse of the mayor Ludovico Corrao, Gibellina was reborn "from the creative breath of art", giving life to a unique city where architecture and hundreds of contemporary works of art are localized *en-plein-air* in the urban landscape and in museums as creative cells to regenerate a new community (Badami, 2008).

Not a few questions are asked today about the ways in which to metabolize the whole flow of innovation – in many ways foreign to local traditions – introduced by the most advanced urban, architectonic and artistic culture. It is necessary to reflect on how to insert it into the cultural legacy of the Gibellinians and translate it into a heritage in which to recognize oneself, to share as a common good, to be safeguarded as a value, to be increased and passed on (Carta M., 2018, a).

1.1 The earthquake in the Belice Valley in 1968

The earthquake in the Belice Valley in 1968 was the first episode of massive natural disasters that occurred after the establishment of the Italian Republic. The urban centers where the earthquake caused the greatest damage were 14, four of which were almost completely destroyed: Gibellina, Poggioreale, Salaparuta and Montevago. The victims were over 370, more than 1,000 wounded, over 98,000 homeless, about 100,000 people with damaged houses (AA. VV., 1976).

But the real numbers of the earthquake were very different. The causes that added new victims were: the difficulty of immediately reaching the earthquake victims due to the collapse and damage of the road network; the lack of a civil protection system; the very long periods spent in tents and barracks (Barbera, 1969; Barbera, 1980). These were the real factors that determined the true numbers of the earthquake: 1,150 people lost their lives, of which only 30% due to the collapse of buildings (Cagnoni, 1976).

The spotlights that had lit up on the Belice Valley had brought to light the real conditions of the Sicilian inland countries, showing the guilty failures of the State against southern Italy. The Government decided to tackle the problem radically: "The Belice Valley, an example of 'underdevelopment' and 'backwardness' that still persisted in many parts of the Italy of the miracle, had to become, in a specular and opposite way, the example of capacity of the republican institutions to win those conditions" (Parrinello, 2015).

At that time, no civil protection services had been organized at national level in Italy and, under current state regulations, it was the responsibility of the State to intervene directly in emergencies. According to the decree law of 9 December 1926, n. 2389, and of the legislative decree 12 April 1948, n. 1010, the Ministry of Public Works was commissioned to provide relief (Senato della Repubblica, 1981).

1.2 Reconstruction as a State affair

Under Law 241/68 (special law for the reconstruction of the earthquake-stricken areas of the Belice Valley), the Ministry of Public Works became the undisputed protagonist of the reconstruction, not only bypassing the institutional skills of the Sicilian Region, but also excluding any interlocution with local authorities and populations.

Also the Sicilian Region intervened immediately with urgent and urban-territorial measures that, in fact, immediately entered into conflict with the state intervention. The result was an unsuccessful duplication of roles, such that "the future of the Belice Valley created a competition between the ambitions of autonomy of the Sicilian Region and the prerogatives of intervention claimed by the State at the expense of the attempts of participation of the local population" (Parrinello, 2015).

The State also wanted to intervene in socio-economic planning and in infrastructural, territorial and urban planning: "in the reconstruction came the expectations of an entire season of public intervention and planning, animated by the idea that only a careful organization of the territory, population, activities and resources, could guarantee a harmonious development and put an end to the centuries-old disadvantage of the South. In this context, a part of Italian architectural and urban culture found (or believed to find) an ideal terrain in Belice to test its theories on the guiding role of urban planning in development planning" (Parrinello, 2015).

The law 241/68, also, established the General Inspectorate for the areas hit by the earthquakes of January 1968; the Inspectorate constituted, in fact, a plenipotentiary office with exclusive delegations on the approval of all plans, programs and projects, with a declaration of 'indifferibility and urgency of all the works' (Cannarozzo, 1996). Almost all of the study, planning and implementation of the reconstruction of the 14 municipalities affected by the earthquake was managed by the Institute for social housing development (ISES). The institute was under the supervision of the Ministry of Public Works and was based in Rome (Renna, De Bonis, Gangemi, 1979).

1.3 Local traditions, culture and entrepreneurship were not taken into consideration in reconstruction process

In the Belice Valley it was not the earthquake that 'moved the waters'. The earthquake of 1968 was not the first element of rupture, or mobilization, in a situation, in many aspects, quite similar to the general reality of the 'underdeveloped' areas. In these areas the State has not foreseen and has never achieved agricultural improvements or industrial settlements. Unlike other 'underdeveloped' areas of southern Italy, since the 1950s in the Belice Valley there have been popular battles for development, for dams, for roads, for reforestation (Cagnoni, 1976).

Even before the seismic event, the inhabitants had carried out initiatives and made their voices heard even in the distant ears of the State through demonstrations, marches and proposing concrete programs consistent with the economic and social development of the community and the territory (Barbera, 1980).

Since the mid-fifties, Danilo Dolci and Lorenzo Barbera were the promoters of this popular participation. Danilo Dolci was among the first to speak of 'incomplete democracy' in Sicily, in a society where power was administered by a few to the detriment of entire populations subjected to

harassment by the mafia, to fight for water in homes and in the fields, to fight – even beyond the middle of the twentieth century – against the *latifundia* and the *enfiteusi* (Dolci, 1960).

Dolci founded in Partinico, a small Sicilian rural center, the *Center for Studies and Initiatives for the Full Occupation of Western Sicily*, to make the inhabitants aware of their strength and their denied rights (Carta M., 2018, b). For Dolci “a country can be rich in natural resources, good energy sources, good water and labor, but remain poor. Goods are wasted, poverty saddens its inhabitants, emigration bleeds, the economy stagnates, no initiatives capable of promoting healthy development arise: because a poor country is poor above all of capable, qualified professionals” (Dolci, 1968). He expressed his activity through non-violent disputes with the institutions; for this reason he was given the name *Gandhi of Partinico*.

The methodology of the work was based essentially on the questioning and listening of those directly involved, namely the farmers, the workers, the artisans, the merchants, the small entrepreneurs, the women, the elderly. From this extraordinary experience of popular participation, another 18 *City Committees* were born for the development of the Belice Valley and, in 1965, the *Inter-Communal Committee for the organic planning of the Belice Valley* was established: this experience marked the birth, in Sicily, of integrated and sustainable local development (Barbera, 1980).

Thanks to the ample documentation acquired in the years prior to the earthquake, relating to the real needs of the population and to the hypotheses of development practicable in the territories of the Belice Valley, the *Study Center* could quickly start the work for the drafting of programming and planning tools whose necessity, after the earthquake, had become an emergency.

Immediately after the earthquake, from 10 February 1968, Danilo Dolci summoned professionals, sociologists and experts from the area. Together with the peasants, the workers and the women of the Belice, work began and, on 7 April 1969, the *Plan of democratic development of Belice-Carboj-Jato Valley* was presented. The plan (Carta G., 1970), drafted under the aegis of Dolci by the architect Giuseppe Carta and the economist Marziano Di Maio, aimed at the creation of a 'city-territory' in the Belice Valley, that is a network of settlements capable of integrate with each other in a structure with urban functions, without however determining a concentration of population and living in a single center. The plan incorporated most of the proposals produced by the Committees since 1962, in particular the construction of a dam on the Belice and a series of plants for processing agricultural products, and integrated them with the new needs arising from the earthquake.

“Therefore, the post-earthquake democratic development plan was rooted in consultations, studies and almost ten-year proposals. Nevertheless, [...] the committees and their representatives were excluded from any formal participation in the planning process” (Parrinello, 2015).

2. Reconstruction through destruction. Erase the past to rebuild a future without a present

The designers of the ISES, who drafted the reconstruction plans, followed principles that reflected a particular moment of reflection on urban and territorial planning aimed at a profound revision of the criteria; they thought they had to design a 'modern city', projected towards the needs of a new society. With the project, they wanted to free populations from the social dynamics of the past, characterized by a lifestyle based on the transmission of a predominantly agricultural economic model and "in conditions still heavily influenced by an ancient and recent history of poverty, inertia and enslavement" (ISES, 1972).

2.1 The ghost of a vanished city: recomposition of the image of old Gibellina

90% of the city of Gibellina was destroyed by the earthquake in 1968; the remaining part was soon demolished due to public security issues. In the 1980s, the rubble was covered by the Great Cretto by Alberto Burri. The original topography of Gibellina was therefore definitively removed from the ground.

Through a research – conducted by the writer –, the image of the old city of Gibellina has been carefully reconstructed through the interpretation of cartographic, cadastral, iconographic, statistical and literary sources and the geolocation of oral testimonies collected by the inhabitants.

Before the destruction, the city was inhabited by just over 6,000 inhabitants, mainly employed in agricultural work. The territorial surface of the Municipality was of 330 hectares while the constructed surface extended for 20.25 hectares; the population density of the city was around 300 inhabitants per hectare (Fig. 1).

The city was very compact and was structured on the intersection of two main roads, Via Roma (also called Via delle corse) and Via Umberto I; the latter was the main course and was also the widest road (at the widest point it measured 15 meters). The other streets were narrower and followed the course of the hill on which the city stood. Because of the slope, there were stairs in many streets; many houses had external stairs to access the first floor, leaning against the facades and often built above the arches. The houses were of modest dimensions, mostly with two floors, leaning against each other and built in sandstone and plaster (Ingoglia, 1915).

In 1915 (based on the data reported by Ingoglia), there were thirteen churches, a convent, a noble palace belonging to the Di Lorenzo family. The Chiaramonte castle was in a state of ruin; the castle was medieval and had given rise to the city; on the northern side of the ruins was a fountain composed of a dolphin-shaped sculpture from which water came out, an upper shell-shaped basin and a large stone basin below.

Almost all the commercial, accommodation, recreational and public services were lined up along the main course, running north-south between the Mother Church and the Madonna of Itria Church. Among these: the newsstand, the bar, the Recreational Social Club, the Hunters Social Club, the Civilians Social Club, the Military Social Club, the headquarters of the Italian Social Movement, the headquarters of the Communist Party, the headquarters of the Agricultural Society, the Ferro barber, the Tamburello barber, the Barraco barber, the Messina travel agency, the Fontana pharmacy, the Rubino carpentry shop, the Litticheri fabric shop.

The fulcrum of the city was the Piazza Matrice, at the end of Corso Umberto I, where there was the Town Hall and the Mother Church, the pharmacy, the tailor's shop, the butcher's shop and the Christian Democracy Club (Fig. 2).

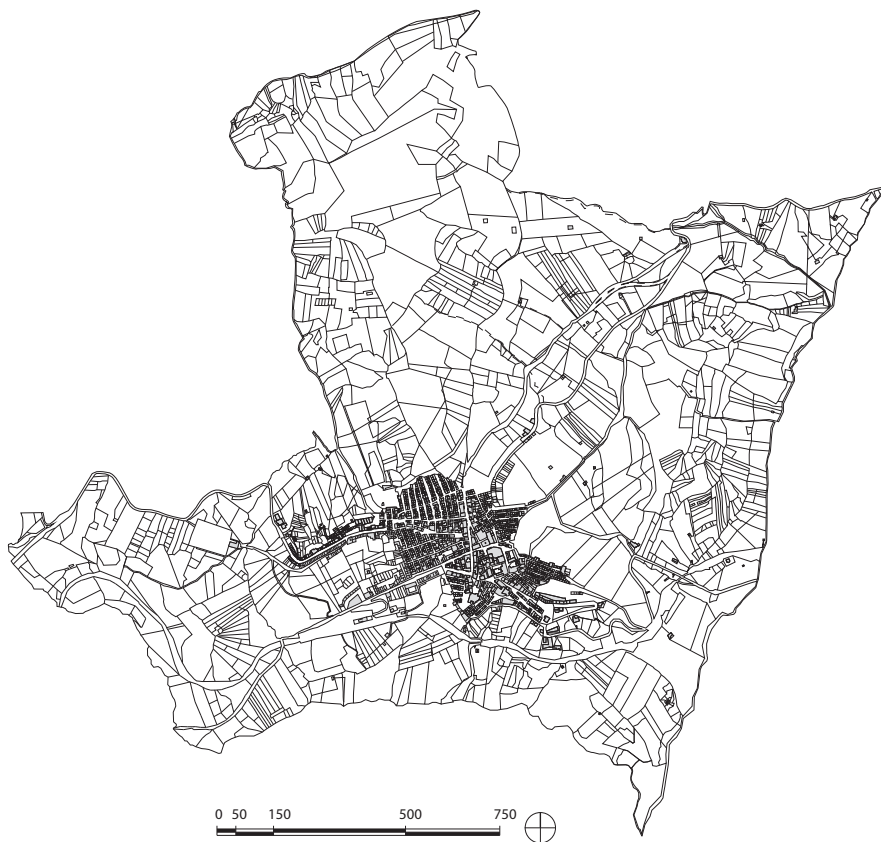


Fig. 1: Reconstruction of the missing topography of old Gibellina. The city and the municipal area.

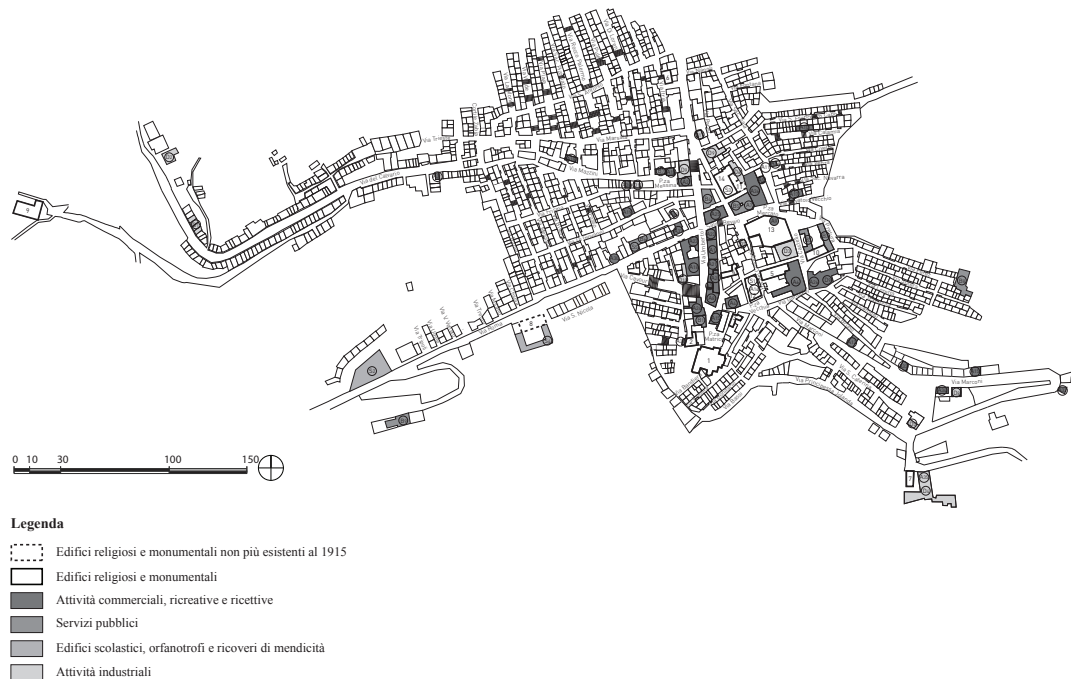


Fig. 2: Reconstruction of the old town of Gibellina. Indication of place name. Location of religious and monumental buildings; of commercial, recreational and receptive activities; public services; school buildings, orphanages and begging shelters; of industrial activities.

2.2 The Gibellina Total Transfer Plan

After the earthquake, the state decided to rebuild a new city 18 km away from the original site. Much convinced that the urban structure of the old city was obsolete, the state offices imitated the most popular models in the 1960s elaborated by the urbanistic theories of a predominantly Scandinavian-Anglo-Saxon matrix.

The characteristics of the new settlement imposed by the plan (elaborated in 1969 by the engineer Marcello Fabbrì of the ISES) (Fig. 3) were the following:

- Low building density: the covered area of the new city is 187.5 hectares; sized to accommodate 6,000 inhabitants, it provides a density of 32 inhabitants per hectare; in comparison with the old Gibellina data, the population/surface ratio has been almost tenfold.
- Differentiation of roads in driveways and pedestrian ways: the plan provided for a definite separation of traffic, sizing large road sections for driveways (the distance between the houses, on average, exceeds 30 meters) with characteristics of extra-urban roads with interchanges and roundabouts within the city. The driveway system gave access to all parts of the city and ended in the garage of private homes, whose construction was planned along the edge of the garden road. According to the drafters of the plan, the inhabitants would have had to reach their home by car, park it in the garage and then entertain social relations and carry out commercial activities in the pedestrian streets. This model, drawn from cultures foreign to local traditions, has not been accepted and has not been adopted by the inhabitants of Gibellina, who still perceive the facades overlooking the driveways as the main ones.
- Terraced single-family dwellings with gardens: the main facades should have opened towards the pedestrian streets, while the secondary facades on the gardens which are accessed from driveways. The traditional residential typology of Sicilian rural centers never included a garden around the houses because there was a clear separation between the built city and the countryside; furthermore, the road was always suitable for vehicles, where the presence of stairs due to excessive slope or other obstacles did not prevent it, and was experienced as the place of social relations on which the main facades of the houses stood.
- Public and commercial services grouped in macro-units: the plan concentrated all the commercial, directional, cultural and social activities within a single macrostructure along the median axis that runs through the city in an east-west direction. The costs for the construction and management of this macrostructure are clearly unsustainable for a community of 6,000 inhabitants; in fact, only a few elements included in the plan have been realized (City Hall, Mother Church), others are still

under construction (Theater) (Cucinella, 2018) and many are no longer on the agenda of public works of the Municipality. This absolute concentration of commercial activities in the center has also emptied the rest of the city of the necessary proximity services.

- Single-purpose urban areas: for Gibellina, in addition to the shopping and business center described above, three school centers, a large area for sports equipment, two large park areas and an industrial area were planned. The zoning is very rigid and no area accommodates mixed functions. This is a totally foreign urban structure in comparison with the rural urban centers of Sicily, characterized by variety and multi-functionality. The number and size of public services is oversized compared to the population, with consequent difficulties in management and maintenance by the Municipality.
- Vast urban surfaces have been destined to green, in clear contradiction with the urban tradition of Sicilian rural centers which, due to the economy of urban space, concentrated the building without alternating it with gardens and green areas. All the pedestrian streets have green flowerbeds, the maintenance of which by the Municipality requires a continuous and considerable expense, difficult to sustain.
- Building compartments: a new standard was imposed for the construction of housing units that did not include the approval of individual projects. The private owners would have had to join together to present a single project for the building sector. Theoretically, the standard had its own urban consistency since it prefigured the creation of sectors with homogeneous building characteristics; in practice, it clashed with the different economic possibilities of individual owners and with scepticism towards forms of consortium collaboration. Consequently, this rule was immediately rejected.
- The ISES had developed specific standard architectural types for private buildings. The application of standard systems developed for northern European contexts in the local reality of the Belice has brought out quite a few problems: in particular, the typology of the terraced house with garden is foreign to the architectural tradition of the place; the traditional home-road relationship is interrupted; the local climatic characteristics (temperatures, sunshine, rainfall, intensity and direction of the winds, humidity), elements at the base of urban and architectural design, were not taken into consideration. The change in scale of the buildings (ten times larger to contain the same number of inhabitants), the consequent reduction in population density, the great distances between the houses, have caused negative social and economic repercussions, causing also repercussions on the health of the inhabitants (the sense of isolation caused by urban rarefaction has registered an incidence rate of the percentage of elderly population affected by aging disorders, such as Alzheimer's and senile dementia, greater than the regional average).
- In support of the city's economy, the Italian State had repeatedly promised the construction of factories; the factories were never built and Gibellina did not have productive activities capable of financially supporting the population or attracting new inhabitants. The phenomenon of emigration is constantly increasing and affects mainly the young generations (students over 14 with relative families) and the active population (from 18 to 65 years).
- These characteristics derive from the *Garden City* theory, defined at the end of the nineteenth century to disperse the density of English industrial cities. These criteria did not take into account the urbanistic and socio-economic characteristics of the Belice Valley: in this place there was no pre-existing industrial city or urban centers to be thinned out. The project of an idea of a city that is foreign to the local urban traditions has resulted in an urban landscape characterized by two-storey buildings, one different from the other, and many abandoned houses that open onto vast empty spaces.

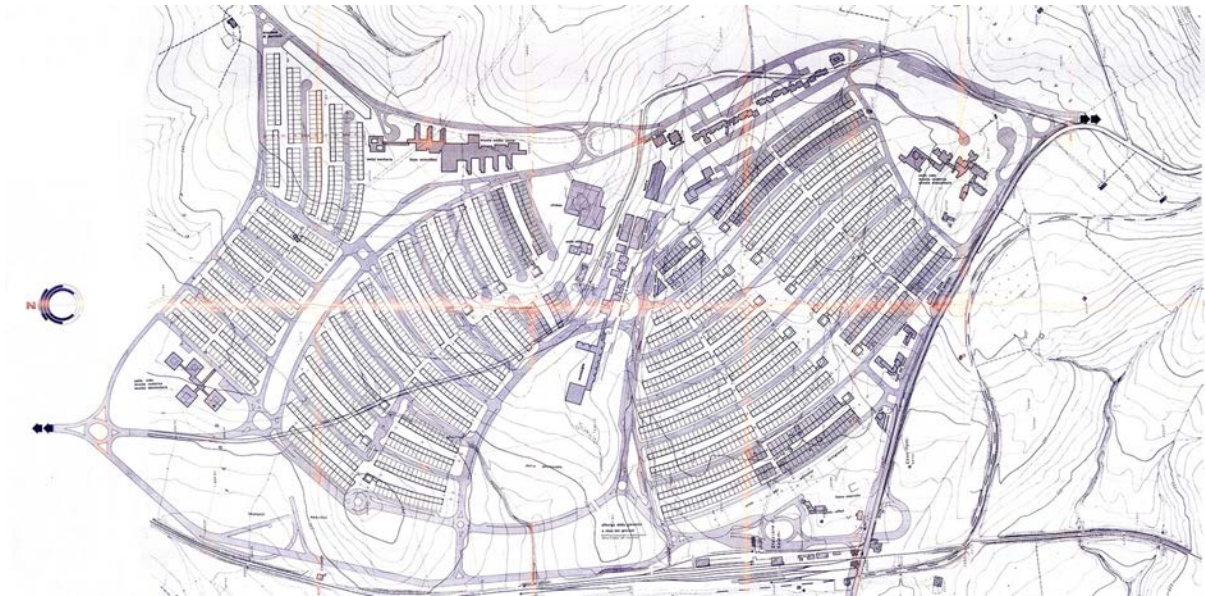


Fig. 3: ISES, Intervention program for earthquake zones. Law Decree 27/02/1968 converted into law 18/03/1968 n.241. Western Sicily, Municipality of Gibellina. Total Transfer Plan drawn up on behalf of the Ministry of Public Works, General Inspectorate of Earthquake-Free Zones, Palermo. Original planimetry scale 1: 1000, year 1969. Source: State Archives of Palermo.

3. The poetics of the fragment: recomposition of memory through urban finds

Ludovico Corrao, a recognized leading figure in the international cultural scene, became mayor of Gibellina after the earthquake of 1968. His main concern was to create a new identity for the city that was rising from scratch, designed by technicians trained on the basis of manuals written in Northern European contexts, on a territory that had never before been urbanized and that should have welcomed a wounded Sicilian rural community from the traumas of the earthquake (Corrao, 2010).

His personal nature led him to invest in contemporary art and culture, wanting to build, through the presence of art, a new identity and a shared memory that could somehow make up for the destruction of the city's past and feed the souls of the citizens. To this end, he invited numerous artists, architects and authors of the performing arts to participate in the construction of a new identity for the new city.

Many artists responded to his appeal and created extraordinary site-specific works of art, now exhibited in museums or accessible in the new city. The most important architects were called to design public and private buildings, including Vittorio Gregotti, Giuseppe and Alberto Samonà, Ludovico Quaroni, Laura Thermes, Francesco Purini, Pierluigi Nicolini, Giovanni Pirrone, Oswald Mathias Ungers, etc.

Some architects and artists wanted to express themselves through the re-memory of the destroyed city with the recomposition of architectural fragments recovered from the rubble of the city or the reinterpretation of material and immaterial culture.

Among these: Alessandro Mendini, who designed the *Civic Tower* (fig. 4) as a musical instrument, a twenty-meter high concrete shell that functions as a sound box to spread the songs, cries and sounds of the Sicilian peasant tradition, collected by the Institute of Anthropology of the University of Palermo (project of Davide Mosconi's sounds with Megaphone). Alighiero Boetti, who reinterpreted the *prisenti*, the long strips of decorated fabric carried by the faithful in procession during the feast of San Rocco (the patron saint of Gibellina), thanks to the collaboration of the women embroiderer cooperative of Gibellina. Mimmo Paladino with the scenography of the *Mountain of Salt* (fig. 5), designed for the theatrical work *The bride of Messina*, where the incinerated horses-rams that laboriously emerge from a dry white mountain of salt represent the metaphor of the inhabitants of Gibellina, forced to re-emerge from the rubble after the earthquake (today this scenography is rearranged, permanently, at the Baglio Di Stefano). And again, Francesco Venezia and Nanda Vigo, whose actions are described below.



Fig. 4: Alessandro Mendini, Civic Tower. Piazza XV Gennaio 1968, Gibellina.



Fig. 5: Mimmo Paladino, Mountain of Salt. Permanent set design, Baglio Di Stefano, Gibellina.

3.1 Francesco Venezia's projects

Francesco Venezia was the author for Gibellina of a series of interesting architectural works that are intentionally emptied of every function and, inspired by the celebration of the memory of the ancient city, are translated into an experience of high poetic value. This series includes: the two Secret Gardens, the Palazzo Di Lorenzo and the theatrical space at the Grande Cretto (this last project has not yet been realized) (Venezia, 2006).

The stylistic code that unites the two Secret Gardens and the Palazzo Di Lorenzo is the recomposition of some fragments recovered from the rubble of the original site in architectures that could be defined as 'poetic reaction', dedicated to the creation of spaces built exclusively for memory or the personal imagination of the past of the lost city.

The fragments of five arches and a column recovered from the remains of old Gibellina, after the earthquake and before the intervention of Burri for the construction of the Great Cretto, have been reassembled in the Secret Garden I (Fig. 6-8).

In the Secret Garden II the large basin of the stone fountain, once leaning against the walls of the Chiaramonte castle in old Gibellina, was set outside one of the perimeter walls (Fig. 9-12).

Five old openings surmounted by round arches in stone, two openings surmounted by triangular tympanums and a third, whose crowning remains only the horizontal base of the tympanum, have been recovered from the old noble palace Di Lorenzo of Gibellina. These architectural fragments were recomposed by Francesco Venezia in the Palazzo Di Lorenzo complex in new Gibellina, a building-enclosure inside which the fragments were placed no longer on the external facade but on an inner side of the court, as kept at the inside of a casket, to underline the historical and cultural distance that separates the facades of the buildings of the new city from the urban landscape of the lost city (Venezia, 1982) (Fig. 13-16).



Fig. 6: Francesco Venezia, Secret Garden I. Interior view, Gibellina.



Fig. 7-8: Francesco Venezia, Secret Garden I. Interior views, Gibellina.



Fig. 9: Fountain in front of the Chiamonte castle. Old Gibellina. Engraving from: *L'Illustrazione Italiana*, 1894.



Fig. 10: Francesco Venezia, Secret Garden II. View of the old Gibellina basin reassembled on an external wall of the Garden. Gibellina.



Fig. 11: Francesco Venezia, Secret Garden II. Detail of the old Gibellina basin reassembled on an external wall of the Garden. Gibellina.



Fig. 12: Francesco Venezia, Secret Garden II. Detail of an internal wall of the Garden. Gibellina.



Fig. 13: Palazzo Di Lorenzo. Old Gibellina. Historical photo.



Fig. 14: Francesco Venezia, Palazzo Di Lorenzo. Architectural fragments recomposed in an inner wall of the courtyard. Gibellina.



Fig. 15: Francesco Venezia, Palazzo Di Lorenzo. Detail of the bronze snake (no longer in situ since it was stolen). Gibellina.



Fig. 16: Francesco Venezia, Palazzo Di Lorenzo. Detail of the horse-ram by Mimmo Paladino in the outdoor garden (today no longer in situ due to the risk of theft). Gibellina.

3.2 Nanda Vigo's projects

A similar poetic can be found in the works made in Gibellina by Nanda Vigo, which creates a series of works called *Tracce antropomorfe*. The works of art are always made starting from the recovery of architectural elements taken from the site of old Gibellina.

An installation is now accessible at the beginning of the System of Squares (a complex designed by arch. Purini and Thermes) and consists of the reconstruction of a pointed arch in stone surmounted by an overlying staircase. The complex emulates the traditional system of connection between the street level and the entrance on the first floor of the old houses of old Gibellina. In the village built on the hill, the ground floor was the mule's stable, while in the upper floor were the house; for the slope of the streets, external staircases were built supported by arches, a device that also allowed a saving of internal space (Fig. 17-19).

Another installation near the Botanical Garden is composed of a wall of limestone blocks on which some fragments recovered from the fountain of the Chiaramonte castle of old Gibellina are set: the stone gargoyle in the form of a dolphin and the shell-shaped basin (Fig. 20).

A third installation, also near the Botanical Garden, has a circular concrete base with two steps on which rest the remains of five columns recovered from the churches of old Gibellina (Stella, 2006) (Fig. 21).



Fig. 17: Nanda Vigo, *Tracce antropomorfe*. Piazza Rivolta del 26 giugno 1937, Gibellina.



Fig. 18: Nanda Vigo, Tracce antropomorfe. **Fig. 19:** Via Messina. Old Gibellina. Historical photo. Particular.



Fig. 20: Nanda Vigo, Tracce antropomorfe. Recomposition of the dolphin-shaped gargoyle and the shell-shaped basin originally placed in the old Gibellina fountain. Via San Rocco, Gibellina.

Fig. 21: Nanda Vigo, Tracce antropomorfe. Recomposition of columns and capitals from the ruins of old Gibellina. Via San Rocco – Via Finocchiaro Aprile, Gibellina.

3.3 The rediscovery of the ancient topography of old Gibellina in the plots of the Great Cretto by Alberto Burri

The Great Cretto represents the most extensive Land Art work in the world, defined by Maurizio Calvesi as the most important chapter of Italian art in the second half of the twentieth century, and among the most extraordinary of art in the world.

The work stems from a great intuition of the Umbrian artist Alberto Burri; he was invited to Gibellina in the mid-1980s by Ludovico Corrao, who wanted him to make a work of art for the new city. Burri, instead of devoting himself to the new city, was fascinated by the panorama offered by the ruins and decided to create a monumental work dedicated to the memory of the center destroyed by the earthquake with the same ashes of old Gibellina (Cruciata, 2008).

The project involved covering the ruins with a flow of white cement of an approximately rectangular shape, 280 meters long and 350 wide, covering an area of 98,000 square meters. Work began in 1985 and was completed in 2015, repeatedly interrupted due to lack of funds.

The rubble of the destroyed city was collected in blocks and compacted thanks to the collaboration of the Italian army that made the bulldozers available; the blocks were armed with the insertion of metal

grids and finally covered with white cement made available by Italcementi and with the contribution of the Cassa di Risparmio.

The 122 blocks thus created have a variable height around 1.60 meters. Some of the furrows between the blocks intersect according to a design freely conceived by the artist, while other furrows follow exactly the original streets of old Gibellina. The Cretto, eliminating the perimeter fringes of the town, covers about half of the area originally occupied by the city.

Many Gibellinians still wonder what the traces of their original settlement are, wanting to remember the places of memory. To answer their questions, a recomposition of the old Gibellina plan has been elaborated, reconstructed based on the cadastral data, and has been compared on the Great Cretto.

For the first time, it is now possible to identify the original streets of the city retraced by the Cretto. Thanks to historical-scientific research and topographic-cartographic interpretation, conducted by the writer, today it is possible to follow the furrows of the Cretto with the awareness of passing through the streets of the ghost of the city of Gibellina, recognizing the main course, the alignments of the houses, the toponymy of the streets, the location of commercial activities and public services (Fig. 22-25).

From the first furrow that opens on the south side to the east of the Cretto you can pass through the Via Collegio which, crossing Salita bevaio, flows into Via Umberto I. The latter, the main street of the city, corresponds to the second furrow on the south side to starting from the east and continuing in a northerly direction crossing, almost in a straight line, the whole Cretto.

The diagonal furrow of about 45° that crosses Via Umberto I and heads south-west is Via Roma, or Via delle corse, one of the roads that connected Gibellina to the other urban centers of Belice Valley.

The furrows that intersect further north the Via Umberto I and head west forming almost a triangle are, starting from the south, Via Mazzini, Via Marsala and Via Sant'Antonio. The crosses between Via Marsala and Via Sant'Antonio are, from east to west, the Via Itria, Di Lorenzo, Puleo, Rocco Palermo, Sacerdote Pizzolato, Plaja, Verde, La Monica and Cortile Zabbia.

In the south-west corner of the Cretto, the footprints of the Vie Bivona, Messina, and Bonura follow one after the other, converging to the south on the Via Di Giovanni and to the north at the beginning of Via Calvario, another link to the territory.



Fig. 22: Recomposition of the old Gibellina isolates.



Fig. 23: Aerial photo of the Great Cretto (source: Google Maps). Land Art's work was carried out with the ruins of the destroyed city and covers the original site.



Fig. 24: Overlap of the old Gibellina blocks to the Great Cretto.



Fig. 25: The furrows of the Great Cretto that correspond to the roads of the destroyed city are highlighted in red.

4. Conclusions

The study of the Gibellina case brought to light the fallacy of the utopian-reformist urban theories of the 1960s that placed blind trust in a mirage of modernity conceived as a negation of the past.

The desire to radically change the reality of underdevelopment of the rural communities of the Belice Valley has led to completely denying their past. As has been demonstrated, nothing of the local urban planning traditions has passed through the reconstruction plans; the importation of models unrelated to the local culture and geographical features of the territory have not produced modern cities, but pharaonic infrastructures and mega services that are not needed and do not work. The private homes themselves seem lifeless because they speak a different language than the inhabitants.

While the new urban landscape of Gibellina was being built, the horrendous figure of the city, the daughter of utopia, was already beginning to take shape, to which Corrao wanted to contrast beauty, art and culture as an antidote and strategy of resistance.

Hundreds of architects and artists have responded to Corrao's appeal by creating extraordinary works in Gibellina, in an attempt to reconnect the threads of memory broken by the earthquake and to build a new identity for the city. Many wanted to generate new meanings with the creation of site-specific works, others patiently reassembled fragments of the destroyed city to nourish their memory.

The fire of history still burns guarded in the hearts of his community, but risks slowly extinguishing along with the older inhabitants who experienced the earthquake. This is why we considered the hermeneutic work of rigorous reconstruction of the city's past to be important, carefully recomposing that link between the shape of time and the transition between the old Gibellina and the new Gibellina that the earthquake had broken.

The time has come to reassemble the two cities: the one we reveal under the Great Cretto to narrate it to those who have not lived it, and the one we want to revive, thickening it with new space, using the aggregating force of the new generations who breathed the breath creative art and that today must become the body of the new city. A patient work, never cold or taxonomic, aimed at generating from the bottom the 'third' Gibellina, the one that recomposes, even by counterpoint, memories, forms, spaces and communities of the two cities, both incomplete: the one mythicized ash, the another fiery fire.

We do not believe that it is possible to impose from above a new story, a new memory, a new vision of the world; instead, we believe it is necessary to support the flow of life to obtain real renewals rooted in history, to seek solid economic and social foundations to set in motion a city and nurture its artistic and cultural expressions. The strategies for reversing the current demographic and economic trends, today worryingly negative, foreshadow a polycentric and reticular vision extended to a rur-urban territory-archipelago that can exploit the multiple resources of the Belice Valley considered as a system (Carta M., 2018, b).

This vision is the result of the *Arcipelago Italia research. Projects for the future of the internal territories of the country* (exhibited at the *Italian Pavilion* of the *Biennale di Venezia* in 2018), promoted internationally by Mario Cucinella and followed, by aspects related to the territory of the Belice, by the staff directed by Maurizio Carta.

"To design the future of the Belice it is necessary to start from afar, because this land of agriculture has been a place of experimentation since the 1960s" (Carta M., 2018 b); it is necessary to trace the memory, promote new synergies between economic and social operators and guide the vital forces existing today in the Belice Valley to trace a path of sustainable development for the future grafted onto the solid historical and cultural roots of the past.

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