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**The story of Mediterranean living.
 Narration and project in Ponti's "ideario" of architecture**

Abstract

The essay comes from a reflection on narrative structures of architectural project. It is dedicated to architecture domestic Mediterranean in the work of Gio Ponti. A case study in which the affinity between architectural design and design methodology emerges as an element characterizing not only the creative process, but also the relationship between architecture and narration forms. In the history of Ponti's architectural imaginary, in his "ideario" of architecture, the mise en page of Mediterranean living, from graphic interventions on drawing to photographic sequences, to textual commentary, highlights correspondences between drawing and literary imaginary. The narrative structure of living is individual in different phases of the project, from the ideation of the place to the graphic formalization, to the dialogue between the image of architecture and its textual commentary in the editorial communication. The narrative dimension is highlighted as a clarifying factor of the creative process of Mediterranean architecture, which is itself a form of narrativity.

Parole Chiave

Mediterranean architecture — Architectural drawing — Gio Ponti

Narration and cultures of the sketch

The sketches of architecture are not only an important archival heritage to reconstruct the design process, but they constitute a precious material to identify, in the representation of the architectural works, different forms of 'narration'. Considering the material designs from this optics, the attention moves to the different iconologies of the sketches, to the methods and the techniques of graphic representation.

I will take in examination an exemplary episode: the project of the 'Mediterranean' living, imagined and created by Ponti in the second half of the thirties. These drawings express, in an integrated way, the different phases of the design process and communicate the ideation process¹.

The identification of the preference for a certain and determined form of project's presentation, the study of the methods of figuration and the examination of the scriptures, are indispensable methodological premises to understand the different cultural models and the intellectual purpose of the author, and to finally understand, the complex system of relationships between the designer and the visual culture of his time.

The style of representation, the format, the graphic sign are testimonies of the author's intellectual intentions. «Through the interpretation of the techniques, the cuts, the use of light, it's possible to retrace the ideological and cultural attitude both of individual authors and schools of thought».²

Fabio Lanfranchi distinguishes between prose and poetics: the former canonical and conventional representation, while the poetic architectural representation would assume its own vocabulary, its own metric. The design used poetically would communicate the ideal aspects of the project, such as the emotional ones present in the moment of ideation. "Now, although

**Fig.1**

Gio Ponti. Untitled (Villa Marchesano a Bordighera), s.d. (1938). Prospectus towards the sea
Drawing for publication
mm.310x540 - china on glossy
Gio Ponti Archive, CSAC-Sezione Progetto.

the figurative moment of the representation defined as poetic, is framed, in all the effects, in the design “communicative” phase however, it finds its own references in the antecedent “ideational” phase.³

I believe, however, that the formal outcomes of this type of representation must be framed in a communicative context for dissemination purposes. I also believe that the field of application can not be limited to the design process, but should be extended to the communication of architecture aimed at hypothetical inhabitants and users, and, generally, to readers of sector magazines, but not only.

In Ponti’s case, it can even be said that the ideational and communicative phases largely coincide, especially since the editors of *Domus* and the architectural firm are a single place and a single source of ideas.

The Mediterranean domestic project as it emerges from the observation of the drawings preserved in the Gio Ponti Archive fund conserved at CSAC and the reading of the tables published in «*Domus*» is a case study and at the same time of verification, in which the structural affinity between the narration and the representation of architecture emerges as an element characterizing the creative process.

In Ponti’s design path, in his “ideario” of architecture, the mise en page of the Mediterranean project, from the graphic writing of the drawing to the photographic sequences, to the textual commentary, brings out unexpected correspondences between architectural text and literary imaginary. The narrative dimension has a clarifying function in the different design phases: from the ideation to the graphic formalization, to the dialogue between the image of the structure and its textual commentary in the editorial communication. Ponti has an excellent ability referring to different skills and fields, from photography to contemporary art, from literature to anthropology, so that drawing and photography, although in the diversity of the scriptures, transcribe the ritual and conviviality of the Mediterranean living, in a correspondence between methods and tools of representation. His approach, which we could define as metadisciplinary, born from a deep vision of the ways of being and living, of its theoretical premises and its rituals.

In the drawings for the Hotel in the woods on Capri’s island, studied in collaboration with Bernardo Rudofsky in 1937, and in the projects of seaside houses conceived by Ponti in the thirties and in the first years of the following decade, the essential connection between the creative process and

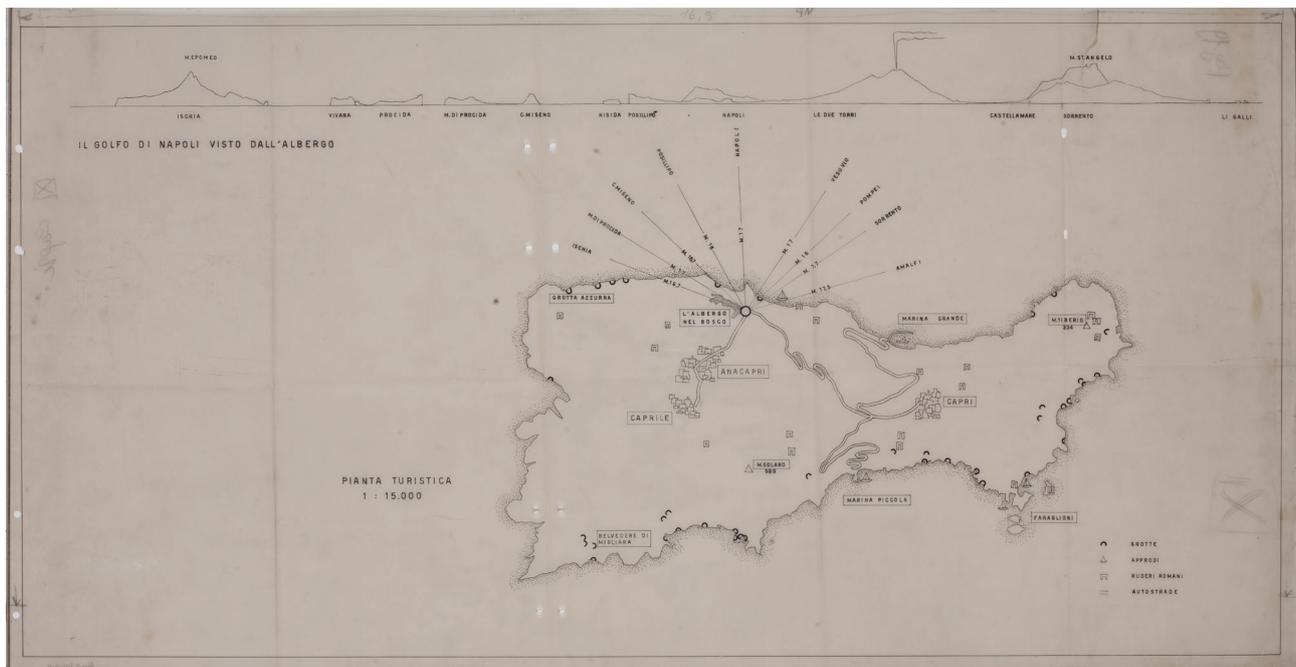


Fig.2

Gio Ponti. Hotel of San Michele on the island of Capri, (1938)
Tourist plant. Drawing for publication. China on glossy - mm.530x1012
Gio Ponti Archive, CSAC-Sezione Progetto.

story emerges.

The “Mediterranean” Ponti project is the expression of an architecture of the other modernity that highlights “a broader, less functionalistic and deterministic rationality, able to accommodate the elaboration of symbolic themes and to produce solid references for the collective imagination». (Crippa 2007, p.20).

Imagining the Mediterranean

The order of the speech about Mediterranean architecture, is a form of narrativity⁴.

A linguistic and visual formulation whose genealogy has been carefully reconstructed in the recent critical debate. In the interventions of authors who discussed the different and often conflicting statements of the discourse, committed to deconstructing the elaboration and production of the ambiguous notion of Mediterranean, the theoretical contributions of Fernand Braudel (1949), Predrag Matvejevic, certainly weighed (1987) and David Abulafia (2003). The Mediterranean has been interpreted on two levels, an historical-empirical and a symbolic-initiatory one.⁵

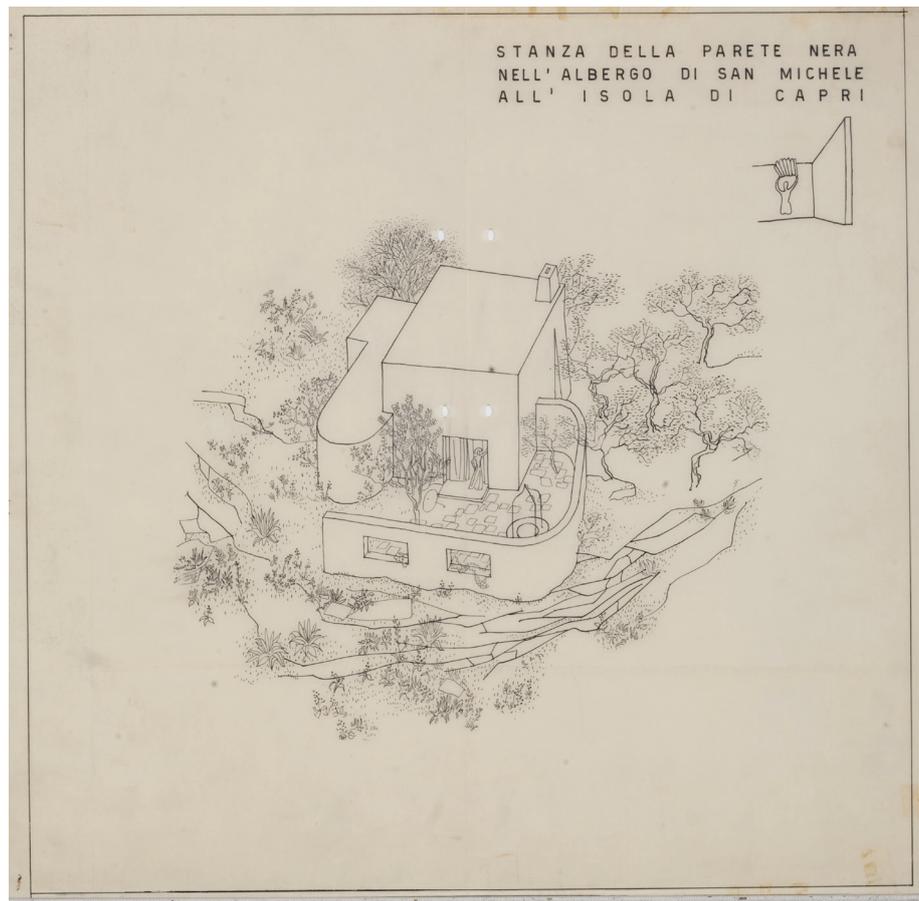
Plans, however, are difficult to separate, since the use of mythology and oneiric discussions, combines in a single plot what is real and what is imaginary. In the last decade we have also witnessed an increase in studies and conferences that addressed many questions related to the cultural construction of the “myth”.

The suggestive and often cited definition of Fernand Braudel - «the Mediterranean is a thousand things together, not a landscape, but innumerable landscapes, not a sea, but a succession of seas, not a civilization but successive civilizations piled one over the another »- that still today, almost seventy years after its first publication, leads us to reflect on the geopolitics of this space, is taken up and updated by scholars convinced, as stated Walter Benjamin, «that history is the subject of a building whose place is not the homogeneous and empty time, but the one full of current events». ⁶ So, for example, in the introduction to the conference *Imagining the Mediterranean*, we read: «during the twentieth century, in the Mediterranean enclave, in places once mythopoetic and today tragically wet by a” basin

Fig.3

Gio Ponti. Room of the black wall in the hotel of San Michele at the island of Capri, (1938). Perspective view. Publicity design on glossy - mm.420x420.

Gio Ponti Archive, CSAC-Sezione Progetto.

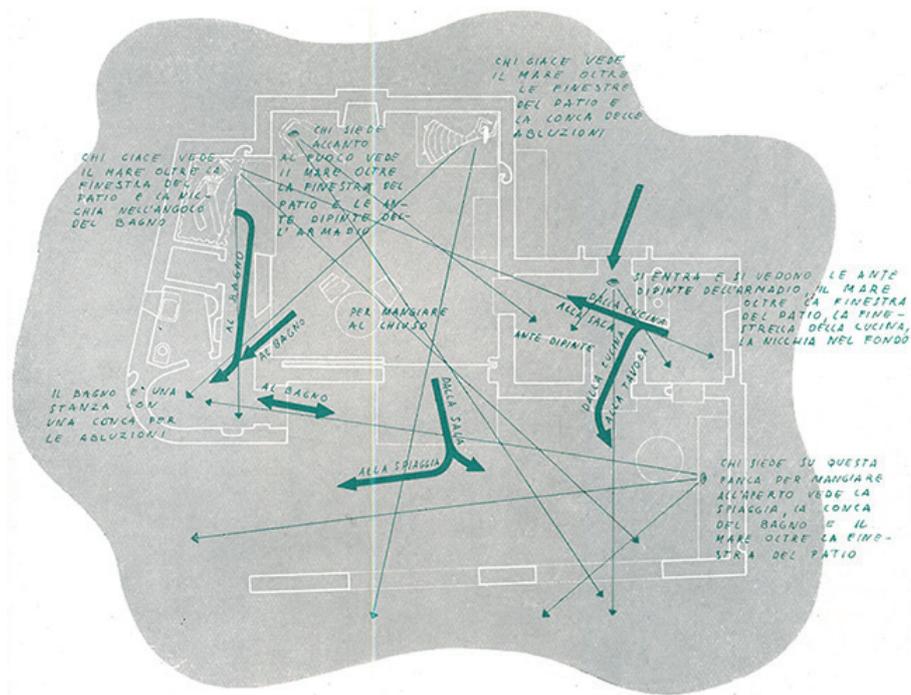
**Fig.4**

Gio Ponti, Bernard Rudofsky
Hotel San Michele in Capri
"Stile". Style in the home and furnishings. n. August 8, 1941.



Fig.5
 Gio Ponti, A small ideal house,
 "Domus", n.138, June 1939, p.41.
 Perspective view, plan with paths
 and views.

Fig.6
 Gio Ponti, A small ideal house,
 "Domus", n.138, June 1939, p.41.
 Detail of the plant with paths and
 views.



**Fig.7**

Gio Ponti, A small ideal house, "Domus", n.138, June 1939, p.41. Perspective view of the interior and the plant. "Small niches in the walls for the game of composing still lifes with curious objects", "the majolica floor offers the happiest resources of color: you would not love this "harlequin".

of death "have materialized on various occasions real experiential islands, not necessarily coinciding with their strictly geographical connotation".⁷ Having cleared the field from semantic ambiguities, what does the conceptual term "the Mediterranean" really mean, which is used to characterize the phenomena of artistic representation? And, once recognized - with Fernand Braudel - the legitimacy of the assumption of the "Mediterranean civilization" as an object of historical analysis, making our own the question posed by Benedetto Gravagnuolo (2010), we wonder if it is possible to identify a Mediterranean culture of living?

A first consideration: the places have no meaning or value in themselves, taking on each time the contours delimited by a system of co-essential beliefs to the historical-cultural sphere of reference. Landscape is a space produced both by experience and by the ability to read the place as a system of signs.⁸ It is a story, a form of writing, a visual catalog deposited in our imagination.

And, in this imaginary, Capri is an exemplary textual and visual construction. It is the place of a consoling Mediterranean "utopia", an idyllic landscape environment, where the architectural pre-existences interact with the visual arts and literary culture. And the lyrical interpretation of the native culture is associated with a renewed semantics coming both from the popular and the tradition.

In the Twenties and Thirties, the minor interest, spontaneous or vernacular, was the center of this intense debate and contributes to the cultural reforming of the Mediterranean "myth". The exponents of rationalism tend to recognize the parameters that lead the modern architectural language, the traditionalists aim to trace the forms to be inspired in the search for a new style based on the Italian constructive tradition.

For all the twenties, the myth of the construction of Capri - rising to its own category and erroneously separated from the context of the rural architecture in the more general area of the Neapolitan to which it belongs - assumes a central importance in the national architectural culture, with some echoes on the foreign press. On the one hand, the study of its spontaneous traditional construction, to which the attributes of sincere, rational, essential, emblematic of that cherished “Mediterraneanness”, are passionate for many young architects, convinced to find the most ancient roots on the national soil of modernity (Mangone 2015).

Sector magazines play a fundamental role in the debate on the Mediterranean origins of modern architecture⁹. Gio Ponti in the pages of “Domus” wrote interventions on rural architecture and contributions to the debate on ‘Mediterraneity’¹⁰. In order to give spaces to the quarrel between Luigi Figini and Carlo Enrico Rava¹¹. The last one explains to the readers of the magazine that his intention is to identify “*Mediterranean architecture*” in contemporary architecture of every country, even in contemporary colonial architecture, considered as an aspect of the more general problem of modern architecture.

In judging the projects for the architectural arrangement of one of the main squares of Tripoli, Rava sentenced, in fact, in agreement with the examining jury, that the buildings must “reaffirm, in colony, the stylistic imprint of the imperial domination of Rome”¹².

And there are traces of this domination “in our Mediterranean colonies” that Rava undertakes to trace, identifying even in Arab houses the legacy of the “most rational classical plant of the ancient Roman house”.

On the southern shore of the Mediterranean, the Roman heritage lives again in the Mediterranean spirit of rationalist architecture; on the Italian coasts, the Mediterranean inspiration in rustic architecture, that of Capri, peculiarly, imbued with literary and pictorial quotations, permeates the architecture of the house near the sea. We can consider colonial architecture as the counterpart of the Mediterranean domestic project. They are apparently opposed narratives and discourses, but in reality complementary.

Federico Portanova, in an intervention published in 1934 on «Domus», reconnects the architecture of Capri to an ancient, Pelasgian and Hellenic tradition. And he warns the reader that those architectural forms, despite the styles of the past eras, «are always classical, if by classical we mean that the artistic completeness allows an era to reach the maximum balance of its expression and to be understood by all the others»¹³. In order to clarify better this parallelism, the author recurs to the analogy between spontaneous caprese architecture and the improvisation of a popular song “of which he has all the spontaneous freshness, the power of feeling, almost even the anonymous paternity, yet he obeys to such logical criteria that it makes, without at all proclaiming it, a rationality that is entirely in keeping with the needs of our times»¹⁴.

The photographs published, a Greek house on the island of Santorini, two rustic houses in the marina of Capri, two projects by Adolf Loos, are an effective visual synthesis of the ‘Mediterranean’ genealogy of the modern house. As Gravaguolo (1994, 2010) pointed out, Mediterraneanity in the field of design is repeatable, or at least it has always been proposed only through a transfiguration, from the eighteenth century rediscovery of *goût grec*, to travels to the south by Karl Friedrich Schinkel, to whom the first recognition of the ancient and authentic Mediterranean culture of construction, the studies on vernacular architecture by Josef Hoffmann and Adolf Loos (Sabatino 2010, Strappa 2004).

How much it has contributed to the rediscovery of the Mediterranean, the experience of the travel in the south of Italy of northern European painters and architects were the subject of his in-depth studies¹⁵. Also for the Austrian architect Bernard Rudofsky, key figure in the story of the Mediterranean pontian living, the Mediterranean area remains the main reference, especially as a result of the important experience of the stay in the '30s in Naples, Capri, Procida and Positano (Como 2017), and the meeting with Luigi Cosenza¹⁶.

«Simple houses for days of the rest and vacation»

From the beginning “Domus” has been part of the debate on the Latin and Mediterranean origins of modern habitation. The pontiano project of the Italian house, which recovers elements of the Pompeian domus adapted to private construction, is both the cultural construction of a “myth” and the search for an ideal indigenous character of domestic architecture. In its definition of modern living, the Latin dwelling flows together, combining well with the elements of modern rationalism, the examples of the English country house and contemporary Austrian architecture (Miodini 2001, 2017). In the spontaneous construction of the Mediterranean basin, Ponti discovers more Italian and traditional forms, but also the correspondence to the style of a new way of living, updating the type of holiday home. The Pompeian house, published in “Domus” in 1934, is “the example of a house, which, next to a good operation and a not very expensive construction, also brings us closer to what our spirit wishes: it takes place at the Pompeian, around a courtyard open on one side, an extremely beautiful and intimate arrangement that must return to normal and which Italians must still love” (Ponti 1934, p.18). Ponti writes: “our country houses must respond to the characteristics of our time: the love of motion and the air, and the desire to escape from everyday worries, that is the thirst for poetic life: the demands of physical life, needs of spiritual life»

And, a few years later, he warns in an editorial that “the house is our essential, individual possession, family reign, the place of the most complete happiness, reading” Domus “does not only mean finding practical suggestions for the home, it also means adhering to Italian expression of a more civilized concept of life and giving greater strength to the national body in which the most select production of Italian art and ingenuity is represented. [...] you have noted the efforts to make our publication more accurate, documentary and inciting” (Ponti 1936, p.25).

The typological research of the holiday home has been approached in a systematic way by Ponti since the second half of the Twenties. From the country house, where it offers new housing solutions by mediating the study of Serlio and Palladio, conducted primarily on the treaties, with the interest for the Pompeian house and the Anglo-Saxon domestic architecture (Miodini 2001, p 54) to the proposals for houses at the sea of the second half of the Thirties, the history of a typology is outlined, the holiday home, theme, not by chance, of a competition announced on the occasion of the IV Triennale. The architectural typologies for the time of the loisir accompany both the evolution of tourism, from holiday to vacation, and the spatial transformations of places, defining the coordinates of the social distinction of modern tourism.

Tourism and holidays are at the base of a fundamental phenomena of nineteenth and twentieth century architecture and urban planning. As a primary and recurrent theme, the construction and consolidation of the im-

aginary places of tourism emerged, influenced by the enduring tradition of the Grand Tour and the odeporic literature (Mangone 2015).

The local tradition expressed in the rural architecture of Capri responds, we read in «Domus», «the needs of a life oriented towards the countryside, with simple houses, for the days of rest and vacation, natural cures or occupations of the land»¹⁷. In the same magazine, Maria Teresa Parpagliolo, dedicates an article to the garden of Casa Orlandi in Anacapri, writing «The origin of many of the most beautiful classic villas is due to the bourgeois habit of leaving the city in the summer months to retreat in the neighborhood more pleasant to enjoy a simple life full of rural occupations. Casa Orlandi in Anacapri has terraces overlooking the sea, pergolas for shade, the garden, around the house, with the rose garden, a citrus grove with vegetable garden, the orchard, a garden of flowers, vines and pergolas, and the olive grove that extends all around»¹⁸. The article is illustrated by photographs of the Orlandi house and scenes of ‘Capri’ life, to which the description of Capri which Fernand Gregorovius gives us in his *Ricordi storici e pittorici d’Italia* (1865) as well suited. To the German historian «all those little houses seem to be the seat of happiness, tranquility, solitary and hermit life», and on the island “«it is necessary to see these beautiful features [of the women of Capri], grouped together, or contemplate them when they descend from the mountain bringing on the head jugs of water of ancient forms»¹⁹.

If there is a continuity in the typological research, even if in the different formal solutions resulting from a complex process of critical interpretation, the iconography of architectural design and the form of presentation of the project are innovative. The first phase that gives shape to the Mediterranean evocation is the planimetric study of the existing plantations and of the best views on the landscape. The most illustrative method of graphic representation of Mediterranean architecture is the design of the plant “with topographical indication of the various ways of living suggested by the marine environment” (Irace 1988, page 142) and the intricate network of internal perspectives. An example of this is the plan of Villa Marchesano in Bordighera (1937-1938) published in «Domus», printing two overlaid transparencies projects of Ponti conserved at CSAC, the plant and a drawing with the only figures and visuals. In the poetic captions we read, for example: “who sits by the fire sees the sea beyond the window of the patio and the painted doors of the wardrobe”. The project expresses the indissoluble continuity of the environment between the external landscape and the interior of the house: a continuity obtained not only by opening numerous large windows in the sea fronts, but also with a series of devices that allow you to enjoy the view of the sea even from the innermost rooms of the building. A house that Ponti wanted to enter into the character of the landscape, and it is precisely the aspects of the landscape that, from this moment, assumed importance in architectural design.

In the case-rooms of the Hotel in Capri, whose first studies dated back to 1937, we find many references to the spontaneous Caprese building that seems to summarize, in the Thirties, the characteristics of the ideal home “of a perfect physical value, in a continuous exaltation of joy, living largely in the open air, closest to nature, enjoying the natural medicines of the air, the sun and the sea in a continuous physical exercise, to which the sea itself, the rock and the fields offer magnificent gym alternating contemplation with activity». The suggestions of the place are intertwined in these words, transmitted in the pictorial and literary repertoire, the cult of the

body and the rituals of healthy life in the open air, the result of the prodromes of modern biopolitics²⁰.

The landscape, an integral part of the domestic environment, starts to become a cultural consumer good, an ideal place. The landscape is fabulation, metaphor of the dream: “in this key the landscape project is a device for simulating ideas and references outside the ordinary perception of space and time [...] the territory becomes landscape due to the visual experience that is an observer: it is this that recognizes the geographical entity of the territory as an aesthetic and cultural entity, therefore as a landscape »²¹. And in the 1930s, examples of ‘landscape’ architecture, the projects conceived by Bernard Rudofsky and Gio Ponti (Condello 2017, p.388).

Architecture in the landscape, landscape architecture

The hotel in the woods, to quote Rudofsky, does not suggest a new way of building, but a new way of life. The spontaneous Caprese architecture would ‘feel’ the suggestions of the natural environment and would conform to the needs of those who must live there, to the needs of adapting at the conformation of the soil and natural possibilities. Capri is a field of architectural experimentation and its native architecture “gains an important place in the reflection first European and then Italian [and] its territory becomes an area and privileged place of experimentation of peculiar lines, and sometimes avant-garde, its specific conformation raises broad issues concerning the relationship between architecture and landscape “(Magone 2015, p.237).

A precise and unavoidable starting point, in the rediscovery of the typical features of the landscape in defense of both the rural architecture of Capri and the landscape of the island, is the Conference on Landscape conceived and organized by Edwin Cerio (1875-1960) on 9-11 July 1922²².

Also Virgilio Marchi, who intervenes during the Convention representing Futurist architects, will dedicate a chapter to Caprese primitivism in his *New Italy - New Architecture* (1931). Perhaps, more than the Convention are the architectures of Cerio, *La casa del Solitaria* in Marina Piccola (1920), in Rosaio a Caprile (1921), which could still be admired in the 1930, arousing the interest of the designers. «Cerio with the Rosaio, Ceas with his studies and later with his family village, Ponti and Rudofsky with their pioneering project of hotel bungalows, full of poetic ideas, are not satisfied with the merely architectural scale but try to make Mediterranean lesson is a micro-urbanistic system, devoid of those rigidities typical of functionalist urbanism» (Magone 2015, page 255).

The defense of spontaneous Caprese architecture is also part of a broad sense of landscape, as well as, at the same time, the house of Capri is seen as an integral part of the garden.

Rosaio, which welcomes many European artists at the beginning of the Century, was born from the rock in the middle of the green forest. Cerio’s house appears to us as one of the possible models for the small houses in the San Michele wood designed by Ponti and Rudofsky that had to rise along the slopes of Monte Solaro. The “stracasa” of the Milanese Emilio Vismara, finished in 1929, was also visited by Le Corbusier with Rudofsky and Cosenza.

The very ancient constructions «are made for ‘that’ landscape for ‘that’ sea, nor could we imagine them elsewhere, formed with local material, whose shapes, whose color with the dominant candor only befits the olive, the cactus, the deep blue, the gray celestial, the scorched earth, the sunny

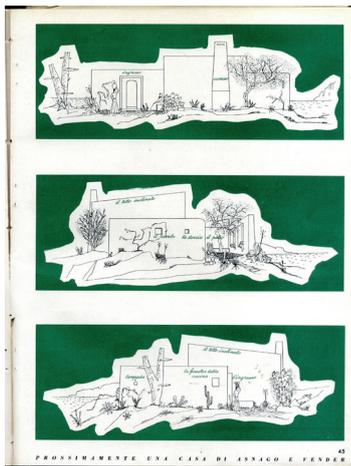


Fig.8
Gio Ponti, A small ideal house, "Domus", n.138, June 1939, p.41. Façade.

horizon, nature, 'that' nature in short»²³.

In the light of the accent placed on the relationship between architecture and landscape, we can better understand the representation of natural elements in the project design. The complete plant architecture, with its decorative character, the building, and the garden integrates the house into the landscape. Already in 1922, Cerio, in fact, highlights that "the garden and the house complete the work of nature, giving the landscape the peculiar imprint of the culture and taste of a people, the extent of its civilization, the expression of its character"²⁴.

On the other hand, Ponti dedicates important columns to the garden and the landscape, making use of authoritative collaborators. To Maria Teresa Parpagliolo (1903-1974)²⁵, architect-landscape designer, who signs articles on the design of the gardens, Ponti entrusted from 1930 to 1938 the heading "Giardino fiorito". Also in "Domus" since 1937 the contribution, albeit occasional, of Pietro Porcinai (1910-1986) begins. The landscape is an integral part of the project also for another collaborator of Ponti, Lina Bo Bardi (1914-1992) who, since 1939, with articles and illustrations contributed to the creation of «Domus» and later «Stile»²⁶. We can state that Lina Bo Bardi, a progressive interpreter of the local tradition, represents "a dialectical and plural modernity that rejects rigid conceptual oppositions and considers the values of innovation and tradition not necessarily alternative between them" (Viola 2017, p. 357).

The writings of the 'mediterranean' project

The interest in the landscape and the spontaneous architecture of the Mediterranean basin, strengthened by the interest, also anthropological, for the ways of living, are well represented in the drawings of the 'Mediterranean' projects, characterized by an evident narrative connotation. The ideal of life at the sea converges myths, imaginaries, iconographies, composite models and methods of representation.

In the planimetric studies of the beach house the *punctum* is the landscape.²⁷ In plants there is the indication «topographical of the various ways of living suggested by the marine environment».

When Ponti elaborates the composition of the spaces, a very important design theme, he always imagines the places to pass and those to stay, in a connected network of views inside the house and from the domestic environment towards the surrounding landscape. The continuity between inside and outside is orchestrated in a skilful play of perspectives.

Right from the ideational stage, Ponti designed the perception of the inseparable link between landscape and ²⁸ built space. An aesthetic of the appearance that produces an articulation of the environments that the inhabitant has to cross slowly. The progressive "disappearance of the wall" is interpreted from time to time in a different way, and the external and internal relationship is substantiated by surfaces treated like vibrating sheets crossed by light (Crippa 2007, p.23).

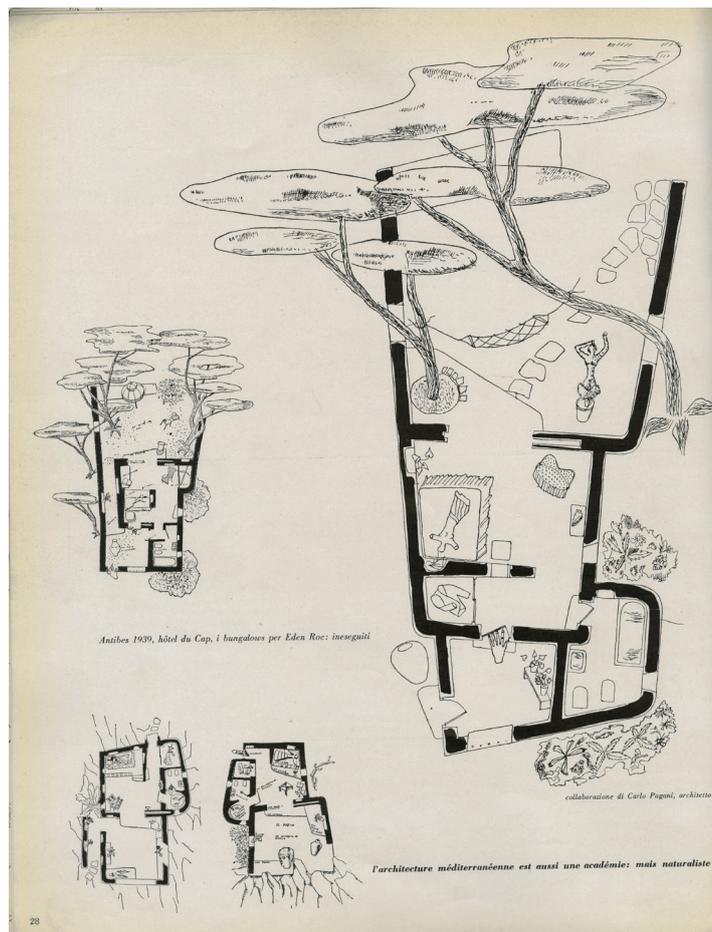
The act of seeing is an active gesture, which involves the use of memory. "Each vision is part of a performance framework that combines spatial, historical and artistic experience" (Violi 1991). Seeing 'architects' forms involves reading, memory and criticism, to observe and understand at the same time. In the Mediterranean landscape, the disparate coefficients of perception are linked to each other, collaborating in an inseparable relationship. If we remember that the Archaic Mediterranean is a territory of enclosures (Strappa 2004 pp. 19-21) we can better understand the shell

Fig.9

Gio Ponti. Untitled (hôtel du Cap, bungalows project for Eden Roc, Antibes), 1939. Perspective view and perspective view of the interior. mm.480x535 - heliographic copy with pencil, tempera and watercolor. Gio Ponti Archive, CSAC-Sezione Progetto.

**Fig.10**

Antibes 1939, hôtel du Cap, bungalows for Eden Roc Air of Italy. Expression of Gio Ponti, Daria Guarnati publisher, Milan 1954, p.28.



shape of many small houses in the woods articulated in enclosed open spaces.

An in-depth study deserves the different writing of drawings made or modified for publication. A choice that introduces reflections on the recipient of this story. The putting in page of the drawings transforms the design material into a structured iconotext, characterized by the interaction between the image and the didactic apparatus. The reader is induced to cooperate in the proper functioning of the text. The figures that Ponti inserts in architectural design are not concrete inhabitants, introduced as silhouettes to understand the dimensions of space, but allude to an imaginary life that takes shape.

The sketches and the drawings are part of a graphic and theoretical process that focuses on a range of possible readings. Among these, the drawings made for publication have a didactic, but also an informative function, of elements connoted into a narrative sense. In a perspective view, the representation of natural elements, the design of lush vegetation, frames and enters the architecture. The close relationship between architecture and nature identifies perspective views, as well as the system of glances in planimeters, which promote the interpenetration of landscape architectures.

The drawings of the project, unrealized, for Albergo San Michele in the woods on the island of Capri are, perhaps, the most convincing example of architecture-storytelling: the perspective view of the central building that “ventilates a natural agglomerate as it is in Martina piccola”. It tells about “village and marine” life forms, a complete and lyrical escape from the forms of city life. The picturesque village is accessed by a road between two walls crossed by a calash. The hotel’s lodgings “inspired by the most sensitive understanding of Mediterranean architecture and the life of Capri” are scattered in the woods. The guests thus enjoy an isolated life, each one has “his hermit, and feeld separate, happy, free and alone in the enchantment of incomparable nature [...] .People of the place serves the rooms-houses through the paths that have the function of corridors in the usual hotels ». In the elevations facing upstream we do not find female figures on the threshold to admire the landscape and the view on the gulf, but figures of women who bring on the head jugs of water or basket containing food, as the scenes of Capri life in the paintings of the painters of Resina school.

On the threshold

«We architects - Ponti writes (1941) - want to architect and furnishish-ing to make a scene, the best possible, for *actions*, that is for the presence of the inhabitants». A modus operandi that takes shape in the Mediterranean domestic architecture. We have a first essay in the drawings of Villa Marchesano, a project in which the distribution choices and visual leaks coincide. The project of his ideal house by the sea comes from the research of internal and external views. The architect starts from the ideation of a skilful game of perspectives that benefits the continuity between inside and outside. And, in the planimetric studies, in the drawings of the plants “with topographic indication of the various ways of living suggested by the marine environment”, in the network of internal perspectives, its Mediterranean evocation is expressed. «Plants with the visuals of those who live there, suggest paths, framing views, [...] bright and chromatic densities, plant presences, atmospheric values, identifying the space constructed as a real narrative machine» (Mucelli 2017, page 158).

The ‘Mediterranean’ dwellings, which arise from the inspiration of the

place, draw a living space, where actions and behaviors are, from the preliminary phase, a necessary presence, internal to the idea of architecture itself. An exemplary case is the project of the Albergo di San Michele or in the woods on the island of Capri (1939): in the room-houses scattered on the slopes of Mount Solaro, the sequence of interior spaces finds its natural counterpoint in the vastness of the landscape of the gulf on which the view opens without ever ‘closing the prospects’, as is evident in the demonstration plan of Capri and the Gulf of Naples, which indicates the views towards the main coast resorts and the distance in miles. Mucelli (2017) examines the room of the black wall, with the intent of creating a scale model from Ponti’s original drawings, and carefully considers the indication of the two visuals that suggest privileged views: the vertex of the first coincides with the position of the bed and turns to the patio through the large door that leads to the outside, and to the opening that frames Vesuvius. The summit of the second cone is located outside the same door and crosses the wall of the patio through the small opening that frames the glimpse of Capo Miseno and Posillipo. This second perspective is further emphasized “by the presence of a female figure, in a vestal dress, which, in a far from casual, appears at the corner of the door, both in the design of the section on the patio and in the perspective view” (Mucelli 2017, p.159). The architectures “are designed with the invention of a painter to create a vague scenario for the human presence and a ready show for the eye” (Ponti 1939). Ponti always draws figures facing the threshold in the seaside houses. The very idea of threshold implies a passage, a communication between two places. The inside and the outside can be represented only in relation to what puts them in communication. The threshold alludes to “that passage that can not fail to happen, to that crossing that allows access to a new and unexpected horizon” (Tarditi 2012, p.18). It is the symbolic place of the exchange and of the relationship between ‘internality’ and ‘externality’²⁹; a space of meeting and exchange, where an event can happen, a representation is expressed, or constructs a narration. It is here, in fact, on the threshold of the house that the women depicted by Ponti give body to his design idea. They are mediating figures who, like the intermediate spaces, have the power to become symbols of exchanges and meetings.³⁰ For women, the door is an invitation, an entrance to the house: “The door is hospitality and the house is a dream. Architecture for them [women] is not a crystal, it’s a shell. The house in the soul, that is, in the female judgment does not belong only to the possible achievements of architecture, to that which is of the Architect, but belongs to something more intimate, even impossible; to a complex of desires and abandonments and beauties that you think will never be satisfied. A dream” (Ponti 1957, p.143). The threshold (window or door) is the framing that allows a “story” to be given. It makes architecture a scene. The door that gives access, in the design of the hotel in Capri, to the rooms in the woods, is the condition for there to be something to tell or describe. Without framing, notes Monica Sassatelli, there would be neither *Stimmung* nor landscape because there would be no individualisation of a part that becomes totality; nevertheless the totality thus obtained is precisely cut out, not arbitrarily created. Through this boundary delimitation - which is already a modern tear - some parts are identified (individualized) and separated from the rest (Sassatelli 2006). In the plants published in «Domus», Ponti represents the gaze, albeit implicitly. The images, in turn, attract our eyes, stimulated by the desire to relive the perceptual experience referred to by the figures drawn. «An image

of the gaze is therefore characterized by the very fact that our own gaze becomes an image [...] The expectation of finding our gaze in an image is conditioned by cultural assumptions that have determined in the course of history our exchange with mirrors and windows “(Belting 2008, pp. 6-7). The window, but also the door, is an architectural and symbolic threshold that arises between the world and the gaze. In narrative painting, gazes played both a communicative and emotional role, making the viewer participate in meaning. Even in architectural design it is possible to recognize a plot of glances: as shown by plants in the indication of the visuals that reveals the communicative and narrative function of the gaze.

Often the visual cones show the vertex in correspondence with female figures lying on beds or benches, on the other hand, Rudofsky observes (1938, p.8) “the relaxed position in our concept is a mythological position. Therefore every woman should consider that this is the most advantageous position -all the Venuses, the Dani and the Olimpie made their portraits in a relaxed position. “

The game of looks is calculated and spectacular even in the interior views: in the design of a small ideal house, published in «Domus», as in the Room of the Hotel's Black Wall in the woods, the bathroom is an empty and well-lit room. center of the floor there is a lowering, a basin, which contains water. “The human figure in a costume in the rain of a shower or emerging from the cup of a basin - like from the pool of a stream - or that is behind the waters is sportingly and aesthetically beautiful to see” (Ponti 1939, p.44).

Ponti extends the idea of an architecture-show at the end of the Thirties. “The architecture inside is made to follow it: it must be a continuation of shows: better if it has more views, and from below and from above” (Ponti 1941). When one enters a house designed by Ponti “perspectives remain alive in the mind”. An exemplification is the project for Casa Mazzocchi at Via Claudiano in Milan (1938-1939), unrealized, designed “with a good game for the visuals that moves the architecture”: an internal window opens from the upper gallery of the hall, «Nice thing to see from below (especially if animated by figures) and a beautiful point of view to look from above». A spatial composition that brings to the fore «the conception of a Peripatetic Architecture [...] made up of a sequence, of windows to look out, of stairs [where figures rise or fall]» (Miodini 2001, p 193)³¹. In the drawings published in «Stile», ‘true’ figures that climb the stairs merge with the frescoed figures along the walls of the staircase. Connections emerge between the composition of the spaces and the pictorial composition. You can compare this solution with the sculptures of Arturo Martini and the works of Massimo Campigli, the sculptor and the painter, among all, the most admired by Ponti. And for Campigli I think of works such as *L'Emporio* (1929) or *Villa Belvedere* (1930). Also in the *Vita degli angeli* plate (1935) of the Manifattura Richard Ginori di Doccia depicts women climbing stairs or facing the balcony.

In the early Forties, he poetically affirms: “always imagine the architect for a window, a person at the windowsill, for a door a figure that surpasses it” (Ponti 1941a). And, in environments, governed by lights, colors, and materials, images are always the designer the places to go and those to stay. The probative force of the design project gives the illusion to the reader and the reader of “Domus” to be or have been in first person witness of those views, of that landscape, of being or having been the inhabitant of that “dreamed” house.

The drawings of the plants allude to an aesthetic exercise of the gaze, pro-



Fig.11
 “Stile”. Stile in the home and furnishings. N.23, November 1942. Cover.

jecting on the space and on the structure designed a primary domain of the gaze, linked to the body. An essential dimension, the body dimension, since images are created in the body, even if they are made visible in the media. The body is symbolized in the female figures drawn in the sections, mostly facing the threshold.

In reality, spatiality and vision are, at least, to a certain extent independent: space is not built only and exclusively in visual perception. Moreover, from the point of view of semiotic analysis, the choice of linking space and vision has the side effect of almost necessarily circumscribing the spatial dimension to the sole discursive level, linking the space to the articulation of the gaze and its various perspective inscriptions in the text. As far as space and its perception are concerned, it is not determined solely, or primarily, by sight, but by that “invisible and widespread” sixth sense, which goes by the name of proprioception, which is the perception of our bodily being, of being and dwelling in space. A real extension of the body space the house is almost everywhere invested with a very complex symbolism in which several models are merged (Violi 1991).

The layout of the ‘mediterranean’ project

Architecture is fed by stories through images, its knowledge and understanding are, in fact, conditioned by the graphic and photographic representation. An iconography, therefore, in which the visual part is the prevailing form in putting the project in the page. The photographic story, the photo-text published in the magazines, is an «artifact in which visual signs are mixed to produce a rhetoric that depends on the coexistence of words and images»³². The relationship between image and text proves to be of particular interest in the study of narrative structures. The phototext, we remember with Cometa, plays a fundamental role in the articulation of memory and oblivion (Cometa 2011, p.70). And the act of seeing is an active gesture, which involves the use of memory (Strappa 2014, p.19).

The dialectic between photographs and text seems all the more productive when it calls into question the cognitive and interpretative activity of the spectator’s gaze. The text and the captions play a non-subsidary role in the creative process, telling the reader aspects of life that one imagines can take place in the designed houses. The identification of a narrative structure in the architectural project is present both in the conception process, based on literary procedures (the phase of conception of the place or object that precedes its graphic formalization, defining a program, not only functional, on which joint the project), as in the use of writing in all phases of project development, with particular attention to the relationship between image and written text.

The photographic sequence defines the path suggested to the reader, establishing connections and hierarchies between the spaces and the looks staged in the images. The photographic story is structured as a path, as it is a cinematographic sequence. Undoubtedly, the experience of architecture is linked to body awareness and our movement in space, nevertheless in putting the iconic-textual sequence on the page, the reader is presented with a path constructed like a story. The ‘virtual’ movements in the home are structured according to narrative programs co-articulated with the space³³. Ponti, a fundamental figure in the history of design communication - still largely to be reconstructed - based on identification processes, wants to involve the reader, revitalizing the narration of the place, already connoted in the literary sense. Every place, site, or building brings with it a story,

a story that Ponti recalls, integrating it with new contents. The recipients of the seaside houses and the guests of the Hotel in Capri are, in fact, the readers and readers of “Domus”, inhabitants of the ideal Mediterranean home. It is worth remembering that the editorial office and the architectural studio have complementary roles in the politics of architecture promoted by Ponti.

The convergence between the previsualization of the work and its visualization is the result of a close collaboration between designer and photographer. Photography is a tool able to capture the characteristics of the landscape, the specificity of the places. For many authors photography is an indispensable linguistic intervention in the drafting of the project. An instrument of choice for critical reading of architecture, the city, the landscape. The interpretative-critical potentials of the photographic medium are soon grasped by Ponti, well in advance of the contemporary debate. He understands the specificities of photographic writing and establishes the artistic autonomy of photography

In fact, Ponti writes that photography “gives us a further” view “, an abstract, mediated, composed view, a view that we” see “; an independent, autonomous view, which multiplies, isolates the thing or the moment seen, which fragments them and at the same time [...] fixes them the independence of the photographic view itself has revealed to us again an unprecedented aspect of things. brought a whole new understanding, a whole new sense of them and of interpreting their images “(Ponti 1932, pp. 285-287). The architect is a *metteur en scène* and the photographer, who in the 1930s is Studio Porta, scrupulously follows the designer’s instructions: the insertion of the image in the text, the interdependence between caption and photography, the interruption of textual apparatus, but also the photographic choices, from photo-genic writing to montage. The text-image interrelations are the result of a complex strategy, entrusted to the reading habits introduced and disseminated, since the 1920s, by the magazine. «Domus» already in the first installments proposes to the readers the project of a house. «Is the reading of a plan drawing normal and easy? - asks Ponti - We architects always think so, and we are amazed by the difficulty that some people find in reading a plant and in representing, from it, the appearance of the environments. This presentation of projects will be part of our readers as an introduction to the reading of architectural design, which is essential for those who love the house and wants, through the rapid perception of these drawings, to detect and recognize the characteristics and qualities of a distribution of rooms to be used to their advantage “(Ponti 1928, p.26).

Architectural photography, which has been constructed sequentially since the 1930s, is gaining ever greater weight in the narrative of the project. The reader is thus transported within the designed space without however having the possibility to really participate in the scene represented. Nonetheless, Ponti promotes the image of the inhabited architecture as an essential element of the process of creation and communication of architecture.

Architecture and storytelling

In the Mediterranean project is the life of the inhabitants to become a measure of space. The figures, designed by Ponti, perform, nonetheless and first of all, a narrative function. Especially since one of the fundamental functions of narrativity is the semiotization of experience (Ferraro 2015). At the same time they stage the gaze, since the optic of the narrated

landscape is that of observing (Bagnoli 2003).

I conclude by reflecting on the parallelism between narrativity and architecture addressed by Paul Ricoeur (2016), which significantly affects the writing choices implemented by Ponti in 'Mediterranean' projects.

Living, Ricoeur asserts, is the place where narrative and architectural values are exchanged for each other. The construction processes contain the act of staying, of stopping and fixing, just as the paths and stops are an integral part of the act of living, made of rhythms and stops. It follows that the relationship between interior and exterior, symbolized by a threshold, expresses the crossing of the boundaries between an inside and an outside, and the interaction of shadow and light, day and night.

The accent on the system of gestures and rituals appears evident in the drawings of the Hotel in the woods on the island of Capri and in the tables of the seaside projects published in "Domus"; the presentation of the project takes place through a sequence of places where something happens, where something arrives. In the temporal and narrative dimension of the architectural project the functions of living are continually invented and transformed, as can be seen in the sequence of movements invested in the mobility of the gaze that runs through the structure.

Intertextuality in architecture is the environmental context in which the new building is inserted. And if it is true that every architect decides which choice to implement the relationship between tradition and innovation, it can also be said that the new configurative act designs new ways of living that fit into the tangle of past histories of life. The revaluation of the act of inhabitation rests, in fact, with those who live and live the architectural project. But just as significant, in the age of the technical reproducibility of the architectural work, is the role played by the reader. His continuous learning of the juxtaposition of life stories undoubtedly accompanies the desire to enter a story. The Mediterranean project, announced in the journal, inaugurates the capture of its spectator: the object of desire is a new way of living, it is the start of identification and the projection process in architectural design.

Ponti offers to the reader some ideas for the beach house: they are simple ideas that can be easily developed, writes the architect, according to the needs and environmental circumstances; houses to be built among the olive trees, or between some cypresses, or under the maritime pines or on the rocks.

They are houses that can make you, at a low price, a good mason of the place, very simple [...] all are houses that *fan the natural landscape* [...] Dream, or readers, small houses happy as these, and build them. In the ground you have chosen, you will also intervene to trace the walls. The wall of the patio you will trace that imprisons a pine or an olive tree: you will put in the place where the dining table will go, or a sofa or the bed and from there you will have to open a window or a door framing an enchanting landscape (Ponti 1941, p.23).

It is, so to speak, a catalog of bespoke houses, a prêt-à-porter production for the loisir architecture. The small houses by the sea, easily realized by local craftsmen, are not opposed with all the villas designed by renowned architects: the magazine aims, in fact, to show to its public a new way of living, to encourage "that re-education to the nature that customs, travel and sport exert on the new generations".

Addressing the readers, the subscribers, and the friends of «Domus», Ponti

(1936, p.25) notes that this is not a magazine «to make a home for fashion or luxury», but it is « mirroring how much it serves as taste, as utility, as convenience for YOUR [...] Read DOMUS does not only mean searching for practical suggestions for the home, it also means adhering to the Italian expression of a more civilized concept of life ».

Notes

¹ The critical debate on architectural design now has many contributions. On the cultures of design in Gio Ponti's projects and a summary of the themes of the debate, see MIODINI 2001. In the 1960s, semiology was applied to architectural design by Giovanni Klaus Koenig and Renato De Fusco, supporters of the linguistic nature of architecture. Let's remember R. De Fusco, *Architettura come mass medium. Note per una semiologia architettonica*, Dedalo Bari 1967, and of G. K. Koenig, *Architettura e comunicazione*, Florentine Publishing Library, Florence 1970.

² See Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, *La realtà dell'immagine, disegni di architettura del Ventesimo secolo*, Community Editions, Stuttgart 1982.

³ See Fabio Lanfranchi, *Linguaggio di-segni. Considerazioni sulla comunicazione grafica d'architettura*, Aracne Roma 2008. The author affirms the instrumental value of the design in the transmission process from the design idea to the realization of the architectural work. In the period of post-structuralism Lanfranchi affirms, without the mechanics and terminological rigidity of those years, that drawing is a language that shapes design thought in every phase. See also G. Testa and A. De Dancatis, *Rappresentazione e architettura, linguaggio per il rilievo ed il progetto*, Gangemi Editore, Rome 2003; R. De Rubertis, *Il disegno dell'architettura*, La Nuova Italia Scientifica, Rome 1994; M. Cresci, *L'immagine mediata dell'architettura*, in *Icarus*, n. 8, Gangemi 1996.

⁴ I refer of course to Michel Foucault, *L'ordre du discours*, Gallimard Paris 1970; trad. it, *L'ordine del discorso*, Einaudi, Torino 1972

⁵ See Fernand Braudel, *Civiltà e imperi del Mediterraneo nell'età di Federico II* (1949), Torino, Einaudi 1953; Predrag Matvejevic, *Breviario Mediterraneo* (1987), Milano, Hefti 1995; David Abulafia, *Il grande mare. Storia del Mediterraneo* (2003), Milano, Mondadori 2013.

⁶ See Walter Benjamin, *Tesi di filosofia della storia*, in Id, *Angelus Novus. Saggi e frammenti*, Torino Einaudi 1962.

⁷ I refer to the International Convention, *Imagining the Mediterranean. Architecture and the arts*, by Andrea Maglio, Fabio Mangone, Antonio Pizza, held in Naples on 16-17 January 2017.

⁸ I refer to the theoretical contribution of Michel de Certeau (1925-1986), *L'invention del quotidiano* (1974), Rome, Lavoro 2001, which highlighted the narrativity inherent to the form of historiographic writing and the size of fiction that is proper to it, affirming that even space itself is a story. See also M. de Certeau, *The writing of history, edited by Silvano Facioni*, Jaca Book Milano 2006 (headline: *L'Écriture de l'histoire*, Éditions Gallimard, Paris 1975).

⁹ Suffice it to mention the position of Enrico Peressuti, *Mediterranean Architecture*, in "Quadrante", n. 21, January 1935, which sees in the rationalist architectures of the Alps echoes of the typical Mediterranean houses, Italian heritage. For the signatories of the architecture program, the Italian rationalist tendency is the affirmation of "classicism" and "mediterraneity" in the spirit and not in the forms of folklore. The intervention by Giuseppe Pagano, which investigates rural architecture as a collective, anonymous phenomenon: G. Pagano, *Case rurali*, in «Casabella», n. 86, February 1935, pp.8-15; Id., *Architettura rurale italiana*, «Casabella», 96, December 1935, pp.16-23; Id., *Documenti di architettura rurale*, in «Casabella», 35, November 1935, pp.18-25. On the Quadrante group's position, see the chapter *L'idea di Mediterraneanità negli scritti di Carlo Enrico Rava e del Gruppo di Quadrante*, in F. Brunetti, *Architects and Fascism*, Alinea Firenze 1993, pp.203-2016.

¹⁰ The magazine hosts among the first articles on the minor architecture of the Mediterranean basin, G. Michelucci, *Fonti of modern Italian architecture*, in "Domus", n.56, 1932, pp.460-461.

¹¹ See Carlo Enrico Rava, Mirror of rational architecture. VI Conclusion, in “Domus”, n.47, November 1931, pp.34-40. Luigi Figini’s letter was published a few months later: Mediterranean controversy, in “Domus”, n.49, January 1932, p.66.

¹² See Carlo Enrico Rava, *Di un’architettura coloniale moderna, Parte Prima*, in «Domus», n.41, maggio 1931, p.39-43, 89.

¹³ See F. Portanova, *Ragguaglio sull’architettura rustica a Capri*, in «Domus», 74, febbraio 1934, pp.58-60, p.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p.59.

¹⁵ See each other Benedetto Gravagnuolo (1994); Alfredo Buccaro (2007); Fabio Mangone (2003). Paola Carla Verde (1999) It focuses on the image of Eastern Capri established in the second half of the nineteenth century, even Mangone (2015) points out that even in its period of greatest fortune, the imagery of Capri in the East does not eclipse the more durable one of classic Capri, the island from which Tiberius commanded the Roman Empire, received in the vestiges of Villa Jovis.

¹⁶ In recent years numerous contributions have been made to the figure of Bernard Rudofsky, in particular the speeches by Andrea Bocco Guarneri (2003, 2010, 2011) and Ugo Rossi. (2016, 2017). In addition to the bibliography on Luigi Cosenza, among others, Luigi Cosenza today 1905-2005, edited by A. Buccaro, G. Mainini, Napoli Clean 2012; see also N. Braghieri, *Mito and spell of architecture without architects*, in M. Bruzzone, L. Serpagli, edited by, *The anonymous roots of contemporary living*, Franco Angeli, Milan 2012.

¹⁷ F.Portanova, *Ragguaglio sull’architettura rustica a Capri* cit, p.58

¹⁸ Maria Teresa Parpagliolo, *Dei casini di campagna, casa Orlandi, Anacapri*, in «Domus», 73, gennaio 1934, pp.54-55.

¹⁹ See *Ricordi storici e pittorici d’Italia*, per Ferdinando Gregorovius, translation from German of Augusto di Cossilla, 2 voll., Milano, F. Manini 1877. We remember with atrizia Battilani, *Vacanze di pochi, vacanze di tutti. L’evoluzione del turismo europeo*, Bologna Il Mulino 2001 that in Capri in 1840 there were 400 visitors, but already in 1855 the island, included in the Murray guide or travelers in Southern Italy, became a destination for the winter stay of English aristocrats. In 1905 there were 30,000 largely German presences.

²⁰ See R. Campa, *Il culto del corpo. Una prospettiva genealogica e biopolitica*, in *Rivista di scienze sociali*, n.15, Erotica. *Sguardi obliqui di copri dilatati*, a cura di Claudia Scano, 30 aprile 2016.

²¹ See A. Metta, *Paesaggi d’autore: il Novecento in 120 progetti*, Alinea editrice, Firenze 2008.

²² See the figure of Edwin Cerio Gaetana Cantone, *Un caso di “altra” modernità: Edwin Cerio scrittore e architetto a Capri*, in *L’architettura dell’“altra” modernità*, Proceedings of the XXVI Congress of History of Architecture, Roma, 11-13 aprile 2007, edited by Marina Docchi, Maria Grazia Turco, Gangemi Editore Roma, pp.512-523; Andrea Nastri, *Edwin Cerio e la casa caprese*, Clean Edizioni, Napoli 2008. The Il Rosaio house is rated in G. Capponi, *Architettura e accademia a Capri. Il “Rosaio” di Edwin Cerio*, in «Architettura e arti decorative», dicembre 1929. Among the writings of the same E. Cerio, *L’architettura minima nella contrada delle sirene*, in «Architettura», n. 4, 1922, pp.156-176. On Confess of Capri see F. Mangone, *Il convegno di Capri. Architettura e paesaggio nel primo dopoguerra*, in Adorno S., edited by, *Professionisti città territorio. Percorsi di ricerca tra storia dell’urbanistica e città*, Roma, Gangemi, pp.171-178.

²³ A. Giacconi in *Casa d’Amalfi*, in «Natura», 1939, pp.28-31.

²⁴ E. Cerio, *Il giardino e la pergola nel paesaggio di Capri*, Alfieri & Lacroix, Roma 1922.

²⁵ The attention of Italian critics to the figure of Maria Teresa Parpagliolo is scarce, with some mention in Luigi Latini, *Lo sguardo “moderno” sul paesaggio toscano. Porcinai e la cultura progettuale del XX secolo*, in *Paesaggi. Didattica, ricerche e progetti*, edited by Guido Ferrara, Gulio Gino Rizzo, Mariella Zoppi, Firenze University Press 2007 which underlines the contribution of Parpagliolo and Porcinai to La campagna di Domus per il verde, among the numerous interventions by Parpagliolo on the pages of “Domus” see *I principi ordinatori del giardino italiano*, in «Domus», 37, 1931, pp.68-71. The attention reserved to Parpagliolo in the Anglo-Saxon field, in particular, is different, Sonja Dümplemann, *The landscape architect Maria Teresa Parpagliolo Shephard in Britain: her international career 1946-1974*, in Stud-

ies in the History of Garden & Designed Landscapes, 30, 1, 2010, 94-113; Sonja Dümplemann, *Maria Teresa Parpagliolo Shephard (1903-1974): Her Development as a Landscape Architect between Tradition and Modernism*, in *Garden History*, vol.30, n.1 (Spring 2002), pp. 49-73; *Women, modernity, and landscape architecture*, edited by Sonja Dümplemann, and John Beardsley, Routledge London and New York 2015.

²⁶ There are numerous contributions by Italian scholars on the work of Pietro Porcinai, among others see Milena Matteini, *Pietro Porcinai. Architetto del giardino e del paesaggio*, Mondadori Electa, Milano 1991; Luigi Latini, Mariapia Cunico (a cura di), *Pietro Porcinai. Il progetto del paesaggio nel XX secolo*, Marsilio, Venezia 2012.

²⁷ Figure on the whole that marginal, Lina Bo Bardi has been recently re-evaluated, among the contributions Laura Miotto e Savini Nicolini, *Lina Bo Bardi (1914-1992)*, in G. Bassanini e R. Gotti (a cura di), *Le architette*, in «Parametro», n.57, maggio-giugno 2005, pp.48-51; Alessandra Criconia (a cura di), *Lina Bo Bardi. Un'architettura tra Italia e Brasile*, Franco Angeli, Milano 2017, in particolare ivi i saggi di Anna Giovanelli, *Abitare la casa dell'uomo. Paesaggi domestici e Alessandra Muntoni, Il Mediterraneo e l'Atlantico. Dalla casa sul mare alla Casa di Vidro*.

²⁸ I apply the barthesian notion of punctum, a detail present in an apparently but decisive photograph at first glance, to architectural design. See R. Barthes, *La camera chiara. Note sulla fotografia (1980)*, Einaudi, Torino 1980.

²⁹ Threshold as area speaks Walter Benjamin in the incomplete *Passagen-Werk* trad. it., *Parigi, capitale del XIX secolo*, Torino, Einaudi 1986; e I "Passages" di Parigi, Torino, Einaudi 2002), taken from Georges Teyssot, *Soglie e pieghe. Sull'intérieur e l'interiorità* in «Casabella», 681, settembre 2000, pp.26-35. Interesting suggestions in Bassanelli 2015, for a reading of living as a threshold see Aceti 1994.

³⁰ Teyssot takes up the concept of determining a place through a process of legitimation that takes place with the definition of a limit, indicated by Michel De Certeau in *L'invention du quotidien*, cit.. See G. Teyssot, *Le cose perturbanti e nomadiche*, in *Area*, n.79, 2005, pp. 8-13; Bassanelli 2015. Compare the interesting reading of M. Bassanelli, *Interno/esterno: lo spazio soglia come nuovo luogo della domesticità*, in *BDC*,vo.15, n.2,pp. 315-326.

³¹ Gio Ponti speaks of Peripatetic architecture in *L'architettura è un cristallo*, Edit Editore italiano, Milano 1945, p.68.

³² Peter Wagner (editor), *Icons-Texts-Iconotexts. Essays on Ekphrasis and Intermediality*, De Gruyter, Berlin-New York 1996.

³³ Refer to Hammad M., "Dei percorsi: tra manifestazioni non verbali e metalinguaggio semiotico". In: Gianfranco Marrone e Isabella Pezzini (a cura di), *Linguaggi della città. Senso e metropoli II: modelli e proposte d'analisi*, Meltemi, Roma, pp.97-130.

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