Regenerating the Hidden Cultural Heritage: The Case of the Campo Trincerato in Rome

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Abstract. The development of contemporary cities is characterized by increasing heterogeneity and dispersion of settlements, activities and services, and public spaces. Urban regeneration can play a key role in the revitalization of marginal or declining urban areas, enhancing the cultural patrimony as a structural component and promoting identity, social inclusion and the local economy. A particular case in point is the nineteenth- and twentieth-century military fortifications of Rome's Campo Trincerato, a system of fifteen forts and three batteries of great historical and documentary value. The forts, today mostly in the process of being decommissioned, can represent, if viewed from a network perspective, an opportunity to configure an offer of spaces for culture capable of activating a process of regeneration of physical and immaterial relations, promoting shared paths of valorization and re-functionalization. Reasoning about the regeneration of this system means not only refunctionalizing structures, but also recomposing contextual, environmental, urban, social, and cultural relationships to restore urban quality and redefine the landscape of the contemporary city's suburbs.

Keywords: Cultural heritage · 20th-century military architecture · Urban regeneration

1 Phenomena and Consequences of Metropolization

Metropolization is the result of a complex set of phenomena and actions concerning the evolutionary process of large urban areas and the territories they cover [1–4]. "*It constitutes a model in which the processes of concentration, commandment, control, coordination, and the creation of codes prevail over other modes of regulation*" [5] (p. 253).

The processes of metropolization that have affected Italian and European cities in recent decades have induced significant transformations in spatial arrangements, as well as changed the meaning of issues related to urban planning, environment and landscape. As a result of these processes, the contemporary city, connoted by a territorially unlimited dimension, is still strongly characterized by the presence of signs of its past (monuments, but also walls, tracks, aqueducts, etc.). Aspects of strong heterogeneity and fragmentation of tissues prevail, as well as a structural lack of public spaces.

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This creates localised conditions of social, economic, cultural and environmental marginality that affect peripheral urban areas as well as central ones, and that feed a deep sense of insecurity, often making the identity ties between settled communities and the territory fragile [6].On the other hand, the new urban issue proposes a concept of 'periphery,' no longer understood as a physical distance in opposition to central areas, but as a "*transversal condition that includes all those more densely populated areas, where phenomena of degradation, marginality, social discomfort, insecurity and poverty are detectable*" [7] (p. 22). These profound changes are the result of the processes of metropolization [8–10] and lead one to reflect on the significance of issues related to urban planning, landscape and environment and recall the urgency of implementing policies, strategies, procedures and tools that provide integrated solutions to the instances of environmental, social, cultural and economic regeneration of the city [11].

2 Heritage-Led Urban Regeneration Strategies

The notion of "heritage" is subject to debate and may be subject to different interpretations. Cultural heritage is configured as the custodian of the historical-identity memory of the user subjects who have preserved, safeguarded and administered it over time [12–15], representing a manifestation of the dynamic interaction between communities and the contextual place of reference [15, 16]. Cultural heritage is the result of an evolutionary process that has matured through progress and interacting conflicts. It includes not only the tangible evidence of the past, but also contemporary cultural expressions [17], which the community recognizes as the source of its cultural identity [18–21]. In addition, it incorporates values, ideals and traditions, representing a dynamic element capable to adapt to societal transformations and transmit condivised meanings across generations. Cultural heritage can ultimately be considered a cultural practice, intimately linked to the construction and regolation of shared values and meanings. Its very definition is the result of a discursive process that not only interprets cultural heritage but also becomes an integral part of it, influencing and shaping the cultural and social dynamics that constitute it [22].

Cultural heritage can have a significant impact on the revitalization of the contemporary city [23]. Starting from the structuring character of permanences enables the construction of a network of diversified public spaces capable of stitching together the relationships between cities and the permanences themselves, in architectural but also social terms, reconfiguring uneven and fragmented areas to implement a broader regeneration of urban form. It enables the initiation of new unified, integrated and interscalar strategies of public governance that play an effective directing role aimed at initiating processes of urban and territorial rebalancing [24]. Urban regeneration becomes a strategy of reference, not only urban planning, but of social inclusion and local economic development [25], which assumes cultural heritage, as the supporting framework in the definition of a new and more balanced territorial arrangement based on a system of networks, historical and environmental, interactive and integrated; it becomes a framework of coherence of the strategic choices of a process of regeneration of contemporary cities. A process that has as its main objective the priority of the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage, on which to refound the quality of the urban environment, the historical-cultural identity of communities and the very sense of the collective.

In recent years, the new focus on cultural heritage enhancement strategies in the broader context of urban and environmental regeneration has seen the convergence of numerous researches and experiences conducted at national and international level [26]. Researches and experiences that draw the attention of a multiplicity of knowledge, and that have produced new points of view, in any case characterized by the tendency to overcome traditional approaches, linked to the concepts of separation and opposition between protection and transformation, in favor of a dimension connoted in terms of integration, interscalarity, interdisciplinarity, and iterativity, which restores and is well suited to the characteristics proper to regeneration strategies [27].

3 The Campo Trincerato: Rise and Decay of a Modern Fortification

Rome's system of military forts was originated with the issue of defending the capital of the newly formed Italian state in 1870. After the Breach of Porta Pia, with the consequent installation of King Victor Emmanuel in the Quirinal Palace, the former papal seat, from 1871 it became necessary for the new capital of the Kingdom to raf - fortify the city's fortifications, then protected only by the old imperial walls, through the construction of ten or twelve forts, possibly supplemented by second-line batteries. For this purpose, between 1871 and 1876, several plans were submitted, and on August 12, 1877, fearing a coming fresh French attack on Rome from the sea at Civitavecchia, the Royal Decree (No. 4007) was approved, which resolved the defense of the capital by means of an entrenched camp consisting initially of 10 forts and five batteries, possibly supplemented by occasional reinforcing works, along the principal walls. The idea of a permanent entrenched camp, with a circumference of about forty kilometers, prevailed, with forts placed at the main arteries of access to the city, which coincided, in practice, with the ancient Roman consular roads, or on intermediate heights.

Work on the first forts began in October 1877. The direction of these works was entrusted to Luigi Garavaglia, director of the Army Corps of Engineers. The first to be built, fearing a French attack from the sea of Civitavecchia or Anzio, were, to the left of the Tiber, Fort Appia Antica (the first ever), and, to the right of the river, forts Monte Mario, Casal Braschi, Boccea, Aurelia Antica, Bravetta and Portuense, in order to control precisely the territory and connections with the sea of Fiumicino and Civitavecchia. Two years later, with the allocation of additional funds by Parliament, the Ardeatina, Casilina, Prenestina, Tiburtina and Pietralata forts, all on the left side of the Tiber, saw the light of day. After two more years the defensive belt was completed with the forts Ostiense, Monte Antenne and, lastly, Trionfale. The names that were assigned to the forts derived, for the most part, from the areas in which they stood or from the roads, mostly Roman consular, that they presided over.

In 1882, the construction of the connecting roads, even underground, between the various forts was launched and, in July, it was decided to reinforce the 'southern front' with the construction of an additional fort in the Trullo area. At the same time, construction work began on the Appia Pignatelli, Nomentana and Porta Furba batteries (in addition to the Tevere battery near Monte Mario), as well as the Ostiense, Trionfale and Monte Antenne forts. In only five years, the entrenched camp of Rome was completed, at an expense of approximately twenty-three million lire. However, the planned connecting roads were not built (Fig. 1).

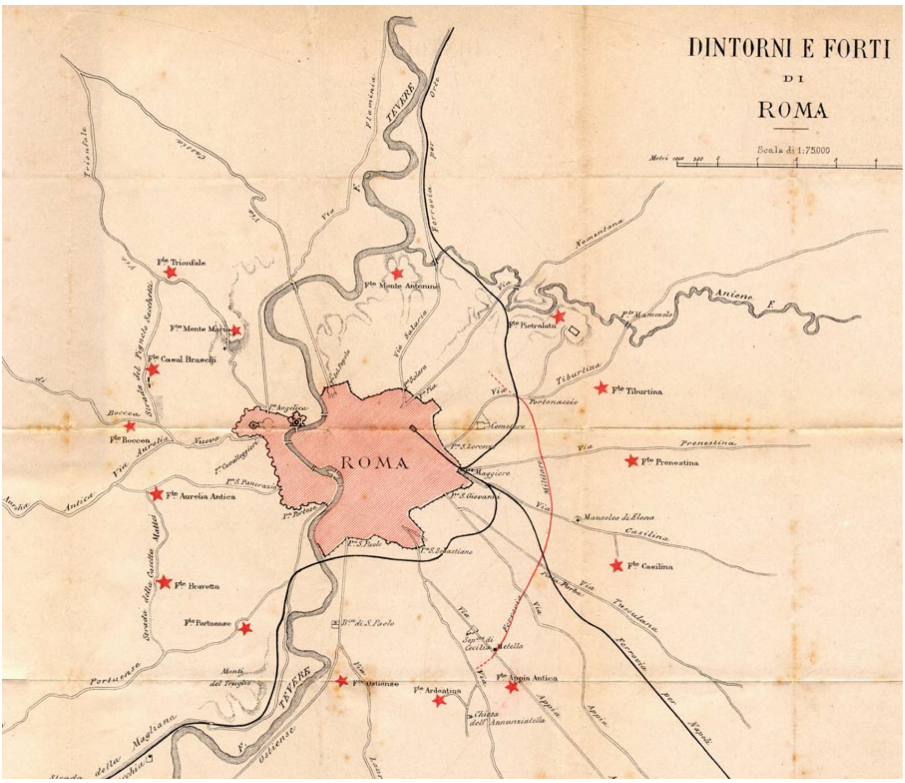

Fig. 1. The forts of Rome in 1883. Source https://www.rerumromanarum.com/2019/02/i-forti-di-roma.html

All the forts had an almost identical, trapezoidal structure, with a "head front" (the side facing outward) one hundred to two hundred meters long and presidated by several gun emplacements, two oblique sides, also manned by artillery batteries, and a "throat front" (the long side of the fort facing the center of the city and in which was the gateway to the fort itself): the center of the head-front, as well as all the corners and the entrance gate, were protected by caponiers (semicircular emplacements in which short-range artillery batteries and machine guns were arranged). The few differences that characterized the various forts were, for the most part, related to the characteristics of the territory on which each was erected: for some the angle of the oblique sides was accentuated or decreased, for others a straight ravine front was preferred, while for still others it was structured with a slightly concave V shape ("tenagliato"), or access was moved to one side of the ravine front rather than to the center of it; some fronts had the ravine front protected by outer embankments, others, where the ground did not allow it, had to be protected by armed caponiers, just as some forts had Carnot-like outer walls manned by riflemen, while others had walls uncovered to possible enemy assaults [28] (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. The now ruined structure of Monte Antenne in the northern part of Rome's Campo Trincerato. Fonte: https://ilcaffediroma.it/162129/162129-2/

. The Forts of Rome were officially removed from the list of state fortifications by Royal Decree No. 2179 of October 9, 1919, following the recommendation of the then Minister of War [29–31]. This decision marked a significant transformation: the forts ceased to constitute a system of interdependent elements and assumed an isolated configuration. Over time, the spaces between the different structures became progressively denser, extending to encompass the compendium areas, i.e., the buffer zones that originally complemented and supported the fortifications [30].

Since that moment, having become incorporated into the urban fabric, the forts have taken on various functions or have been temporarily abandoned (Table 1):

- among the forts currently or partially abandoned are Monte Mario, Casilina;
- among the forts are Trionfale, Boccea, Bravetta, Portuense, Ardeatina, Monte Antenne;
- among the forts used as barracks are Braschi, Aurelia, Ostiense, Tiburtina, Pietralata;
- among the forts used for Air Force activities are Appia Antica, Casilina;
- among the forts, the only one to have assumed the function of a social cen-tre, as a place of sociability, meeting, entertainment and organization of collective time, and of exchange of ideas, visions, energies and knowledge, is Forte Prenestina.

Table 1. List of the Forts of Rome [32]

Forts of Rome	Years of construction	Surface area (ha)**	Municipality	Current use	Restriction
Monte Mario	1877–1882	8.4	I	Italian Army—8th Infrastructure Department (abandoned)	D.M. *06.08.2008
Trionfale	1882–1888	21.0	XIV	Italian Public Property Agency - Ex-Barracks "Arnaldo Ulivelli" (being delivered to Rome Capital, IT)	D.M. * 23.11-2007
Braschi	1877–1881	8.2	XIV	Italian Army—Barracks "Casal Forte Braschi—Nicola Calipari"	D.M. * 06.08.2008
Boccea	1877–1881	7.3	XIII	Italian Public Property Agency - Ex-Military Prison Forte Boccea (being delivered to Rome Capital, IT)	D.M. * 28.04.2008
Aurelia Antica	1877–1881	5.7	XII	Italian Finance Police - Barracks "Cefalonia Corfu"	D.M. * 11.08.2008
Bravetta	1877–1883	10.6	XII	Italian Public Property Agency (being delivered to Rome Capital, IT)	D.M. * 28.04.2008
Portuense	1877–1881	5.2	XI	Italian Public Property Agency (being delivered to Rome Capital, IT)	D.M. * 13.07.1984
Ostiense	1882–1884	8.8	IX	Italian Police -Barracks "F. Ostiense"	D.M. * 15.11.1975

(*continued*)

Table 1. (*continued*)

Forts of Rome	Years of construction	Surface area (ha)**	Municipality	Current use	Restriction
Ardeatina	1879–1882	11.2	VIII	Italian Public Property Agency (being delivered to Rome Capital, IT)	D.M. * 28.04.2008
Appia Antica	1877–1880	16.5	VIII	Italian Air Force - Re.S.I.A	D.M. * 05.08.2008
Casilina	1881–1882	3.8	V	Italian Air Force - Ex-Air Base Centocelle "Francesco Baracca"	D.M. * 23.02.1984
Prenestina	1880–1884	13.4	V	Italian Public Property Agency -CSOA Forte Prenestino	D.M. * 28.04.2008
Tiburtina	1880–1884	23.8	IV	Italian Army - Barracks "Albanese Ruffo"	D.M. * 29.04.2004
Pietralata	1881–1885	25.4	IV	Italian Army - Barracks "A. Gandin"	D.M. * 23.04.2012
Monte Antenne	1882–1891	2.5	II	Rome Capital, IT	D.M. * 06.8.2008

* Ministerial decree. ** This information was taken from the Wikipedia page Forts of Rome

4 Valorisation of Cultural Heritage for the Care of Territory

The articulation of the museum offer today responds to a change in the forms of use and fruition of the territory - spatial but also cultural - that reflects the evolution of society. The 'museum' institution takes on a dynamic configuration reformulating contents and spatial boundaries and becomes the bearer of an identity proposal: a 'place of memory' that collects, orders and transmits the evidence of a more or less remote past that carries with it messages for the future; a privileged place for maintaining and enhancing a living and active dialogue between what has been, what is and what will be; between cultural values and educational and social inclusion values of a community [33]. This necessary adaptation of the museum institution to the evolution of society and of the forms of enjoyment of cultural heritage has favoured an evolution of its role and its territorialisation, responding to the flexibility and ductility of the museum itself in lending itself "*to be interpreted and thus to change image and frame abruptly*"[34] (p. 10), if not

even to allow itself to be conditioned in its 'political' but also social role by the narrative capacity of a society and of a given historical moment [35].

From these premises derives the innovative concept of Ecomuseum, which was born in 1971 from the mind of museologist G.H. Rivière, at the IX conference of the International Council of Museums: "*An exploded, wall-less, interdisciplinary museum, showing man in time and space, in his natural and cultural environment, inviting the entire population to participate in its development by various means of expression, based essentially on the reality of places and buildings that express more than words or images that invade our lives*" The concept of the ecomuseum is proper to the new way of conceiving the territory and the people who dispose and enjoy its assets, where knowledge extends and branches out over time: it embraces all expressions and testimonies of human culture and the concepts of territory and identity [36, 37]. It emerges from the traditional idea of a museum because it is conceived as "*an institution concerned with studying, preserving, enhancing and presenting the collective memory of a community and its host territory, outlining coherent lines for future development*" [38; 2].

The innovative perspective lies in both the functions and objectives of cultural representation and production practices. The fundamental role of local institutions must go hand in hand with the broad involvement of citizens. It is a shared pro-ject with the community, through which one is committed to taking care of one's cultural heritage, not only from the point of view of preserving the material asset, but also from the point of view of enhancing the historical identity (Table 2).

An ecomuseum is composed of a complex layering of environmental, cultural, and social elements that define a specific local cultural heritage. Its components are [39]:

- a reference territory, conceived as a space of valorization, protection, development, identity and innovation;
- heritage as a set of components that communities recognize, protect and promote;
- the communities that recognize, protect and promote the ecomuseum project, because they are moved by a sense of belonging to that particular territory.

Table 2. Museum versus Ecomuseum: a brief summary

Criteria	Museum	Ecomuseum
Reference space	building	territory
Focus	collection of objects	cultural heritage valorization
Organizational priorities	disciplinary	interdisciplinary
Target Audience	visitors	comunity
Political Control	museum institutions	collettivity

The ecomuseum becomes an instrument of knowledge and communication of the cultural heritage and its specific interrelationships with the context, according to a temporal perspective that moves from the past to the present. It is configured as a cultural project capable of transforming and enhancing the 'sense of place', exploiting the local

identity and potential of the area. The objective is to foster its economic growth from a tourist and cultural point of view, mobilising the resources present in the area and helping them to form a system (Table 3). *"Making an 'Ecomuseum' means changing the development perspective of a territory, starting from the identification of cultural assets, linking them together in a continuous process of reading and interpretation, which does not aim at the 'museum case', but at the creation of a fluid and diffuse space. An everywhere that can be travelled and used freely, capable of setting in motion unprecedented scenarios of economic development"* [40].

Table 3. Methodological framework for ecomuseum implementation

Dimension	Essential components	Operational tools	Critical issues	Resolution paradigms
Financial	Public/private funds Self-financing	Multi-year planning Partnerships	Financial discontinuity	Source diversification
Governance	Multi-stakeholder representation	Inclusive decision-making processes and agreements	Decision-making asymmetries	Polycentric models
Regulatory	Institutional framework	Operational protocols	Bureaucratic complexity	Procedural standards
Heritage	Systemic mapping	Participatory cataloging	Cultural essentialization	Knowledge integration
Informative	Territorial narrative	Integrated multimedia	Media inadequacy	Strategic coordination
Programmatic	Educational offering	Methodological innovation	Standardization	Co-design
Networking	Collaborative networks	Inter-institutional partnerships	Resource disparities	Experience capitalization
Evaluative	Quali-quantitative indicators	Integrated methodologies	Evaluation complexity	Data systematization

5 Conclusions: For an Ecomuseum of the Campo Trincerato

The redevelopment of fortifications is a complex process to be activated in an inter-institutional form in order to initiate a collaborative management among the actors involved. In the first instance, the transfer of assets to local administrations must be completed (Decree-Law 85/2010, State Federalism; Decree-Law 34/2020, the 'Relaunch' Decree). integrated and participative governance tools must be experimented, which include the possible use of private capital. Among these, Rome's PRG profiles the Integrated Intervention Programme (Rome PRG, 2008, NTA, Art. 14).

If, in general, cultural heritage can be understood as a 'shared resource and common good' for its 'intrinsic value' (aesthetic, spiritual, intellectual) and 'instrumental' (social and economic benefits), the system of modern fortifications presents its own characteristics: a diffuse heritage of 'hidden' structures, multi-scalar architectures placed in the landscape. context. Addressing the theme of the regeneration of fortified places thus becomes a concrete opportunity to refound a new sense of community belonging to history and to experiment with new forms of use; not only by stitching together fragments of the city but by prefiguring new urban identity landscapes. Such structures, especially if systematically read through the concept of historical frame, can constitute the framework for redesigning the form and quality of places and become influential elements in the reconfiguration of the fragmented and discontinuous arrangements of the peripheral areas of the contemporary city.

The theme of the Campo Trincerato, if read at the territorial scale, offers the opportunity for a reflection on the role and possible transformations, from their "functional fall" to their gradual "Patrimonial Growth": the fortifications, having lost their function, remain today in the landscape of the Roman periphery powerful signs in their stylistic identity, but totally dysfunctional in their uses and create voids and urban margins on which today it is possible to make a rethinking in terms of urban and landscape regeneration.

Activating possible regeneration strategies means, from a systemic and multiscalar perspective, contributing to give a new meaning to this heritage and operating according to a new urban paradigm: from closed defensive structures, hidden from view to places of inclusion, knowledge and innovative communication open to the community [31]. In this sense, an innovative territorial museum model could be applied, capable of responding to multiple aspects concerning both the reuse of containers and the definition of new integrated urban landscapes:

- initiating processes of social, functional and landscape recontextualisation of forts, which are all too often inaccessible today
- trigger innovative projects capable of recognising and enhancing historical, cultural and environmental resources and promoting them by developing local economies,
- use technologies of virtual space - 3D digital modelling, interactive and three-dimensional graphic animation, etc. - to restore a memory and a cultural heritage. - to restore a collective memory and identity to the forts and to reconfigure a widespread territorial network that embraces the entire circumference of the Roman periphery.

To make this vast heritage of spaces and meanings usable and accessible again, in addition to the possible forms of reuse, recovering containers and spaces, it will be necessary to overcome the distance between space, time and meaning of these places. If we consider cultural heritage as the historical product of the interaction between community and territory, regeneration processes centered on its enhancement can help design virtuous relationships between settlement, society and heritage itself, reconfiguring the territorial ecosystem in its entirety [41]. All this in an overall network arrangement that links the architectural scale to the urban scale, breaking down and recomposing figures and relations that have often been inaccessible and faded until now, revealing and recontextualising places and architectures as significant and intelligible parts [42]. In other words, rethinking an overall urban project resulting from the redefinition of the relations

between "*architectures and open spaces, between architectures and natural elements, between architectures and infra-structures of the territory, between architectures and landscape, principles useful to define the places of contemporaneity*".

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