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Untopical Modernity in Neighbourhood Churches by Marcello Canino

/Abstract

In the years of post-war reconstruction, the Italian authorities decided to expand the cities with suburban settlements for the lower classes. The popular neighborhoods had to include the essential social services, such as schools, sports facilities and parish centres. In particular, the law 18 December 1952 n. 2522 provided to allocate state funds to Italian dioceses for the construction of neighbourhood churches. For this reason, many architects and urban planners, including Marcello Canino, were commissioned to design types of ecclesiastical buildings suitables for the new popular districts.

In a cultural milieu characterised by contrasts between tendencies prone to either tradition or modernity, Marcello Canino is distinguished among architects who were inspired by the past in the search for new types of ecclesiastical buildings. He was a professor of architectural design from 1930 to 1969 and Dean of the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Naples from 1943 to 1952. As an interpreter of an architectural renewal in the direction of a balance between the permanence of forms derived from classicism and the introduction of the constructive rationality of the Modern Movement, he produced some interesting projects for new neighbourhood churches. During the 1950s and '60s, he chose to revisit in a modern and personal key typologies and languages derived from the Italian architecture of the Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque periods. He interpreted the history of Italian architecture in the forms of a modern classicism, distant both from the present and from the past, defined untopical modernity by his disciple Michele Capobianco.

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Neighbourhood Churches in Post-War Italian Reconstruction

Because of the heavy damage by Italian cities and territories during the Second World War, in the period of post-war reconstruction architects and planners faced the problem of a radical renewal of many urban and regional contexts.[1] In a period of severe social crisis worsened by a high percentage of unemployment, the political authorities decided to expand the historic cities with suburban settlements close to the new industrial districts. Thus, urban planners designing the new working-class neighbourhoods were required to provide low-cost housing for the mass of immigrants that moved to the cities from the countryside.[2] The aim was to build popular neighbourhoods where the living conditions were guaranteed to be at least dignified. Accordingly, the new suburbs had to include essential social services such as schools, sports facilities and parish centres. The presence of ecclesiastical complexes in the middle of new neighbourhoods derives from a political choice. The Italian government, led by the political party Democrazia Cristiana, pursued the goal of uniting social development to the practicing of Catholicism to avoid any dangerous propensities towards the communist ideology of the working class.[3] For this reason, was issued the law 18 December 1952 n. 2522 (Legge Aldisio), presented in National parliament by the minister of public works Salvatore Aldisio but inspired by monsignor Giovanni Costantini, from 1943 to 1956 president of the Pontificia Commissione Centrale per l'Arte Sacra in Italia.[4] The Pontificia Commissione, established in 1924 by Pope Pius XI to protect the immense heritage of Christian art, in the period of post-war reconstruction it was charged to evaluate the projects of the new parish centers, admitted to state funding only after its approval[5]. However, the Legge Aldisio did not guarantee the coverage of all construction costs, but it assigned to Italian dioceses the necessary funds for the purchase of land and to complete the structural works. As a result, the bishops and parish priests should then provide with their own resources to complete the works.

The new parish complexes, spiritual meeting points in growing and rapidly expanding cities, needed to be buildings of the highest architectural quality in suburban neighbourhoods. Consequently, some of the most important architects and urban planners of the time faced the difficult issue of designing

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1   Valerio Castronuovo, "Il periodo della ricostruzione," in *Storia d'Italia Einaudi*, vol. IV, t. I. (Milano: Fabbri, 1985), 351-398; Francesco Dal Co, "La ricostruzione. Introduzione alla storia dell'architettura italiana del secondo Novecento," in *Storia dell'architettura italiana. Il secondo Novecento*, ed. Francesco Dal Co (Milano: Electa, 1997), 11-56; Paola Di Biagi, *La grande ricostruzione: Il piano Ina-Casa e l'Italia degli anni cinquanta* (Roma: Donzelli, 2010); Carlo Melograni, *Architetture nell'Italia della ricostruzione. Modernità versus modernizzazione 1945-1960* (Macerata: Quodlibet, 2021); Manfredo Tafuri, *Storia dell'architettura italiana. 1944-1985* (Torino: Einaudi, 1982).

2   Giovanni Astengo, "Nuovi quartieri in Italia," *Urbanistica*, no. 7 (1951): 9-41; Pietro Bottoni, *La casa a chi lavora* (Milano: Görlich, 1945); Giancarlo De Carlo, "Il problema della casa," *Volontà*, no. 10-11 (1948): 41-49; Ernesto N. Rogers, "Una casa a ciascuno". *Il Politecnico. Settimanale di cultura contemporanea*, no. 4 (1954): 105-108.

3   *Atti e documenti della Democrazia Cristiana, 1943-1967*. vol. I (Roma: Cinque Lune, 1968), 231-254; Gabriele De Rosa, *Fanfani e la casa. Gli anni Cinquanta e il modello italiano di welfare state. Il piano Ina-Casa* (Soveria Mannelli (CZ): Rubettino, 2002).

4   Salvatore Aldisio, *Concorso dello Stato nella costruzione delle nuove chiese: legge 18 dicembre 1952, no. 2522* (Roma: Tipografia A. Staderini, 1953).

5   Daniele De Marchis, *Archivio della Commissione per l'Arte Sacra in Italia. Inventario* (Città del Vaticano: Edizioni dell'Archivio Segreto Vaticano, 2013), 1-88.

innovative shapes for new ecclesiastical buildings, while still responding to traditional types. It was decided that the new residential districts scattered among the suburbs of cities and metropolises should reflect the typical settlements of ancient Italian cities, aggregated around the churches but in a modern key. Regarding the architectural language, the designers were allowed to operate with a certain freedom of expression, but their choices were submitted for the approval of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.[6] The bishops, heads of the dioceses, were the commissioners of the new ecclesiastical buildings and could choose projects that were inclined towards either traditional or modern solutions. Once the plans of the new parishes had been drawn up according to the preferences of the bishops, they were submitted to the Commissione Pontificia that could approve, reject or request further changes.[7]

Many bishops were concerned primarily with the speed and cost of construction; a few others, endowed with a sensitivity for art and architecture, carefully paid attention to the aesthetics of the new ecclesiastical buildings, which should have been compliant with the architectural language of the surrounding environment. Among the Italian bishops who built new churches in the 1950s and '60s, Giacomo Lercaro, the archbishop of Bologna, and Giovanni Battista Montini, the archbishop of Milan, were distinguished for their interest in modern architecture. They considered the suburbs as mission lands and, in agreement with talented architects such as Giuseppe Vaccaro, Luigi Figini, Giò Ponti, Giovanni Michelucci and many others, they decided to adopt an innovative architectural language to realise ecclesiastical buildings representing the collective identity in the social housing neighborhoods at the time being built in urban suburbs.[8]

Other Italian dioceses were also carrying out interesting projects of designing new ecclesiastical complexes. Among the ecclesiastical building projects realised in the post-war reconstruction period, there is no unitary or predominant path, but it is possible to recognise some architectural works that are very different from each other. In a cultural milieu characterised by contrasts between tendencies prone to either tradition or modernity, the absence of guidelines and prevailing cultural orientations allowed architects not only to try to achieve an optimal use of the ecclesiastical space, but also to express their creativity in different forms. Decidedly, many architects embraced a modern path. Among these, some developed the aesthetic qualities of reinforced concrete structures combined with exposed brick walls, as in the nearby residential buildings. Others gave expressive autonomy to ecclesiastical buildings made of reinforced concrete frames and sails, thus differentiating them from the surrounding urban environment. On the other hand, some architects remained faithful to the fascist architecture principles by continuing to take inspiration from the classical and

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6   Andrea Longhi and Carlo Tosco, *Architettura, chiesa e società in Italia (1948-1978)* (Roma: Edizioni Studium, 2010).

7   De Marchis, *Archivio della Commissione per l'Arte Sacra in Italia*, 1-88.

8   Beatrice Bettazzi, Giuliano Gresleri and Glauco Gresleri, eds., *Chiesa e quartiere. Storia di una rivista e di un movimento per l'architettura a Bologna (2004)* (Bologna; Editrice Compositori, 2004); Claudia Manenti, *Il cardinale Lercaro e la città contemporanea* (Bologna: Editrice Compositori, 2004); Massimo Zorzin, *Giovanni Battista Montini: Un'idea di chiesa le sue chiese* (Rome: Edizioni Studium, 2018).

ancient architecture, in the best cases managing to articulate models derived from the past into original forms.

Education, Professional Carrer and University Teaching of Marcello Canino

Marcello Canino (Naples, 3 July 1895 – Rome, 2 October 1970) was born into an upper middle-class Neapolitan family. His father Vincenzo was an engineer employed with managerial roles in the "Società pel Risanamento di Napoli", the company founded in 1888 to rebuild the lower-city districts affected by a devastating cholera epidemic in 1885. The young Canino, after graduating from the classical high school "Antonio Genovesi", enrolled at the "Reale Scuola Politecnica", where he attended civil engineering courses. From 1915 to 1919 he interrupted his studies to participate in the First World War as an officer in air force. Finished the war, he wanted to attend the "Scuola Superiore di Architettura" founded in 1919 in Rome but he could not move from Naples. In 1922 he graduated in civil engineering from the "Reale Scuola Politecnica" of Naples, and right after began his professional apprenticeship in the study of the engineer baron Gaetano Costa.[9]

Canino approached the study of architecture as an autodidact in a period of crisis for Italian architectural culture. In fact, in the years between the First and Second World War architectural production in Italy was still dependent on a late nineteenth-century historicist eclecticism distant from advancements of the international modernism. The national widespread crisis was more serious in Naples, relegated to a marginal role in the rising debate on the renewal of Italian architecture.[10] At the time in cities and provinces of southern Italy it continued to build in the way of a neo-Renaissance eccletism introduced in Naples by the Società pel Risanamento in the late nineteenth-century.[11] In the twenties Canino tried to separeted himself from provincialism of the local scene, looking for new openings in Italy and abroad. Through a significant relationship with Gustavo Giovannoni and Marcello Piacentini, founders of the Reale Scuola di Architettura of Rome and protagonists of fascist architecture, initially he developed an architectural language influenced by a neo-baroque formalism derived from 17th century Roman architecture.[12] Subsequently, fashinated by the aesthetic philosophy of Benedetto Croce, he directed his architectural research on the principles of subjectivity and freedom of artistic expression.[13] Attentive reader of Italian and foreign architecture magazines, particularly German, he opened his exper-

9   Carola Coppo, "Biografia," in *Marcello Canino 1895/1970*, ed. Sergio Stenti (Napoli: CLEAN, 2005), 230-231.

10   Cesare De Seta, *L'architettura a Napoli tra le due guerre* (Napoli: Napoli Electa, 1999).

11   Giancarlo Alisio, *Napoli e il risanamento: recupero di una struttura urbana* (Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1980).

12   Piero Cimbolli Spagnesi, "Fino a La Sapienza: fondamenti normativi dell'insegnamento dell'architettura a Roma e in Italia, 1871-1935", *Quaderno dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Architettura*, special issue "Le nuove sedi universitarie e la città" (Roma, L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2018), 39-64.

13   Alberto Cuomo, "Come un Gropius che ha letto Croce," in *Marcello Canino 1895/1970,* ed. Sergio Stenti (Napoli: CLEAN, 2005), 69-75.

imentations to the central European and Scandinavian rationalist architecture. He appreciated Ludvig Hoffmann and Peter Behrens, Gunnar Asplund, Sven Markelius and other exponents of architectural currents developed in northern Europe but generated by a critical reflection on Mediterranean traditions. On the other side, he studied with passion the homeland history of architecture. As a result, the best expressions of historical Italian architecture – in diachronic sequences from the classicism of ancient Rome to Romanesque tradition, and from the rationality of Renaissance to geometric experiments of Baroque – were absorbed in his architectural language not as exact quotations but as autonomous elaborations of elements coming from the past and reworked into contemporary forms.[14]

In the period of the fascist regime Canino participated, but in secondary roles, in the affirmation of a state architecture inspired by the monumentalism of ancient Rome. In 1930 he joined the fascist party and registered in the Sindacato Nazionale Fascista Architetti. Alberto Calza Bini, head of the architects' syndicate and first Dean of the Real Scuola Superiore di Architettura, founded in Naples in 1930, entrusted him with the first university teaching assignments, introducing Canino in an academic career that would lead him to main roles at the Neapolitan University. Canino, at the time a lecturer of technical architecture, in 1936 he was qualified for the role of ordinary professor partecipating in the competitions for professorships in the Univerities of Torino and Rome, controlled by Marcello Piacentini in agreement with Alberto Calza Bini and Gustavo Giovannoni. He was a professor of architectural design from 1930 to 1969 and Dean of the Faculty of Architecture from 1943 to 1952.[15] Master of Neapolitan architects born in the twenties and thirties of the twentieth century, transmitting to students his knowledge of contemporary architectural movements, in particular of Northern Europe, in the period of post-war reconstruction he led the difficult path towards the modernity of architectural culture in southern Italy.

In addition to his academic work, Canino was engaged in intense professional activity. As interpreter of an architectural renewal in the direction of a balance between the permanence of forms and languages derived from classicism and the introduction of the constructive rationality of the Modern Movement, he realised buildings of great architectural significance and urban impact. During the fascist period, he participated in the urban renewal of Naples by drafting buildings projects of the Province (1935-1936), the Financial Offices (1935-1937) and the INA Istituto Nazionale Assicurazioni (1935-1937).[16] In his project research, the rationalist component was limited and conditioned by the permanence of architectural caracters linked to the tradition. The distance of Canino from other Italian architects declared rationalists, who in 1928 founded the MIAR (Movimento Italiano per l'Architettura Razionale), found expression in Giuseppe

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14   Sergio Stenti, "Un costruttore di città e di palazzi," in *Marcello Canino 1895/1970*, ed. Sergio Stenti (Napoli: CLEAN, 2005), 16-39.

15   Coppo, "Biografia", 230-231.

16   Stenti, "Un costruttore di città e palazzi",16-39.

Pagano's harsh criticism of the INA building. Prominent figure in the diffusion of rational architecture in Italy and director of the architecture magazine Casabella, Pagano defined the building designed by Canino «an example of the degrading consequences of compromises» due to the presence of twin columns and alternating arches and lintels in the main façade.[17] Canino really never renounced the use of decorative items derived from ancient architecture, however it does not seem right to reduce his project research to a simple revival of historic styles. His pupil Michele Capobianco, known as a protagonist of Neapolitan architecture of the late twentieth century and professor of design at the University of Naples, witnessed the freedom of the master in seeking a new path in his own architectural research. As Capobianco testified, during the fascism Canino chose to keep himself out of trend groups, both traditionalists and modernists, to preserve his cultural independence. As a result of his studies on the masterpieces of ancient and modern architecture and the knowledge of the architectural movements of his time, Canino developed an autonomous language, difficult to categorize. On the basis of the deep knowledge of the work of his master, Capobianco gave an appropriate definition of the architectural style of Canino, calling it "modernità inattuale".[18] It is difficult to translate the exact meaning of this expression, but it could correspond to outdated modernity or rather untopical modernity. Effectively, many buildings designed by Canino convey a sense of estrangement from any contextualization. As you will see in his neighbourhood churches built between the fifties and seventies, references to antiquity are never related to local pre-existences but derive from languages and types of past eras, taken as theoretical models and reworked in original and modern forms. Likewise, geometric shapes, colours, finishes and building materials, clearly distinguish the architectures of Canino from the surrounding environment. The distance of Canino's works from related setting, however, does not represent isolation but establishes a hierarchy based on mutual respect for roles in a rational planning of new suburban neighborhoods.

The attitude to lead demonstrated by Canino in the academic carrer was reflected in professional practice, as he headed on several occasions groups of architects in charge of newly founded neighborhoods projects. A large-scale urban intervention coordinated by Canino during the fascist period was the Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare in Fuorigrotta suburb, in the eastern outskirts of Naples, realized between 1937 and 1940.[19] Perhaps the most significant operation of political promotion carried out by the fascist government in southern Italy, the exhibition centre was built in a large area outside the city according to the masterplan drawn up by Canino, who commissioned the best young architects trained at the Real Scuola Superiore di Architettura of Naples

17   Giuseppe Pagano, "Chi si ferma è perduto," *Casabella Costruzioni*, no. 128 (1938): 2-3.

18   Michele Capobianco, "Marcello Canino tra le due guerre o della modernità inattuale," *ArQ Architettura Quaderni*, no. 3 (1990): 7-38. Michele Capobianco, "Modernità inattuale," in *Marcello Canino 1895/1970,* ed. Sergio Stenti (Napoli: CLEAN, 2005), 40-48.

19   Aldo, Aveta Alessandro Castagnaro and Fabio Mangone, *La Mostra d'Oltremare. Ricerche storiche e restauro del moderno* (Napoli: FedOAPress and Editori Paparo, 2021).

to design pavilions and buildings that formed the settlement.[20]

His moral rectitude and distance from political extremism allowed Canino to continue without repercussions the academic and professional activities after the transition to Republican government, unlike other architects compromised with the fascist regime. As he done in the years of fascism, during the post-war reconstruction period his commitment to the profession was highly productive. The best works of this second phase of his career include the Thermae Building in Castellamare di Stabia (1946-1955) and the Bank of Italy Building (1951-1956), along with some residential buildings in Naples (1950-1953) and the Courthouse in Avellino (1962-1977). These buildings, freed from the emphasis of fascist architecture, are distinguished by the rationality of the plano-volumetric systems and the balanced composition of the façades, prospecting on public spaces of crucial importance in new urban assets.[21]

From the mid-forties to the seventies Canino directed groups of architectsd in charge of designing neighborhoods of public housing. Between 1946 and 1948 Canino designed, in collaboration with the architect Alfredo Sbriziolo, the Gemito district on the Vomero hill in Naples. Later, between 1955 and 1952, he drew the master plan of the INA Casa district of Soccavo-Canzanella (1955-1962). In 1957 the CEP (Coordinamento per l'Edilizia Popolare) commissioned him to design the masterplan of rione Traiano, a new residential district for 30,000 inhabitants that would be built in Soccavo suburb east of Naples.[22] The new settlement was to accommodate the inhabitants of the historic center, who had lost their homes due to the bombing of the United States Army Air Forces. The neighborhood masterplan foresaw a system of tree-lined avenues inspired by the Scandinavian suburbs and North American parkways. It was designed to be a modern model of low-cost social housing, but unfortunately it took on the signs of the dehumanising degradation of the worst metropolitan suburbs within a few years since its construction.
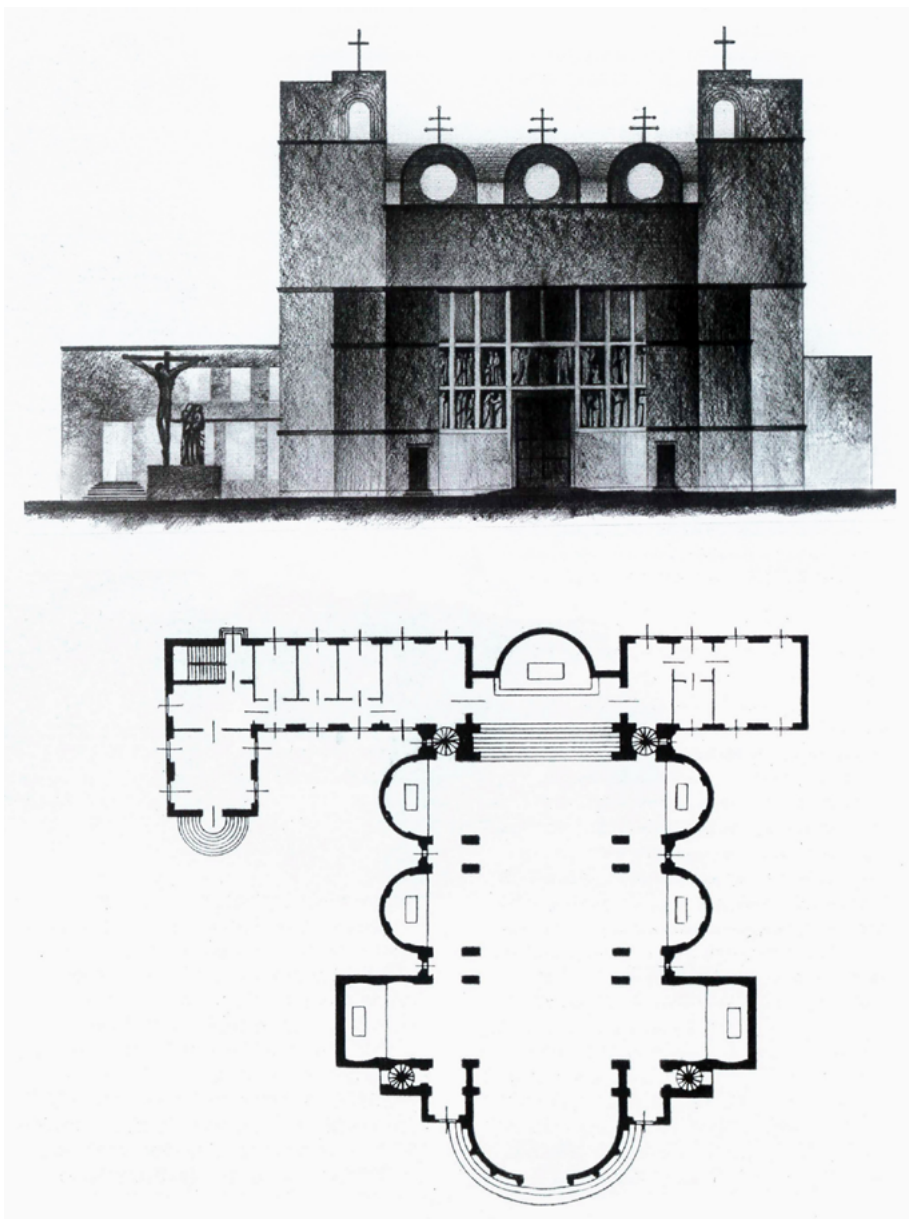
Despite the fundamental role in the university education of generations of architects and the many works realized during his long career, it must be admitted, in a final analysis, that his position as a protagonist of Italian architecture of the twentieth century is not yet adequately recognized by critics, outside the Neapolitan context. For this reason, it seems appropriate to deepen some aspects of the architectural research of Canino – in this case the design of ecclesiastical buildings – in order to affirm the relevant significance of his architectural research in a wider context.

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20   Paolo Nicoloso, *Marcello Piacentini. Architettura e potere: una biografia* (Udine: Gaspari Editore, 2018), 197-198.

21   Stenti, "Un costruttore di città e palazzi", 16-39.

22   Carolina Cigala, "Quartieri residenziali e il villaggio al Faito," in *Marcello Canino 1895/1970,* ed. Sergio Stenti (Napoli: CLEAN, 2005), 221-228; Gianluca Frediani, "Il quartiere Traiano di Marcello Canino. Distruzione di un modello," *ArQ Architettura Quaderni*, no. 2 (1990): 67-77; Giada Limongi, "Rione Traiano," in *The Social City. Urban Development and Housing Projects in Berlin and Naples in the Post-War Era. A Comparison: Theoretical Models, Implemented Projects, Social and Political Impacts Today*, ed. Antonello Scopacasa (Berlin: TU Universitätsverlag, 2022), 102-107.

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Projects in Design Competitions for Ecclesiastical Buildings

During his long professional career, Marcello Canino dealt several times with the theme of ecclesiastical architecture project.[23] His first commitment in the field dates back to the period between the First and Second World War, precisely 1932, with the victorious participation in the competition for the church of Maria Maddalena in Messina.[24] At that juncture, in Italy the political rise of fascism required a radical revision of architectural style aimed at affirming the national identity, which would be concretized in buildings made in the forms of a modern classicism, mainly inspired by Roman architecture but also the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Just one year before the competition for the Maria Maddalena church, Marcello Piacentini, polemicizing against the art critic Pietro Maria Bardi,

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23   Carola Coppo, "Edifici religiosi," in *Marcello Canino 1895/1970,* ed.Sergio Stenti (Napoli: CLEAN, 2005), 214-220.

24   Coppo, "Edifici religiosi", 214-220.

stigmatized the Rationalist movement by calling it purposely Bolshevik.[25] It is therefore understandable that a climate of mistrust developed among italian architects towards a rationalism of Corbusian derivation, that it could have been interpreted by the fascist regime as a propensity to communist ideology. For this reason, the search for a different modernity did not seek a distance from styles and typologies of ancient architecture, as in other Western European nations.[26] In Italy, the architects engaged in the renewal of the discipline had instead tried to establish deep links with the past by revisiting in modern terms the principles of classical antiquity. However, while architectural works commissioned by the Government predominantly reflected the models of the ancient Rome, the researchs on modernization of ecclesiastical buildings were mainly inspired by Medieval and Renaissance prototypes, affirming national identity in other ways. Regarding the participation of Canino in the design competition for the church of Maddalena, he proposed an original basilical space composed of an alternation of parallelepiped, cylindrical and hemispherical extradosed bodies that, according to Carlo Cresti, revisited the forms of the Sicilian Arab-Norman cathedrals.[27] The use of a modern material, such as reinforced concrete, allowed him to create shapes derived from the past architecture, but characterized by proportions and decorative finishes decidedly untopical [Fig. 1]. In this project, he used reinforced concrete in an innovative way, because at the time load-bearing structures were often hidden in the ecclesiastical buildings by envelopes apparently according with the constructive tradition of wall surfaces plastered and decored with stuccoes or covered with precious marble slabs. In this project by Canino, on the contrary, unordinary dimensions of pillars and architraves, as well as the slender shell of vaults, demonstrated clearly the potential of new materials and construction techniques in creating innovative architectural shapes.

Almost twenty years later, in 1951, he participated in the design competition for the church of San Giovanni Bosco in Rome, organized by the Salesian order under the supervision of the Pontificia Commissione Centrale per l'Arte Sacra, submitting a project ranked third out of one hundred and two competitors.[28] The new church, designed to serve the community and the scholastic institute of the Salesian Fathers, was to serve as the parish church of the new Cinecittà district, inside the Tuscolano suburb. The competition call for proposals did not require a particular type or architectural style, but invited the designers to respect the noble character that distinguished over the centuries the sacred architecture of
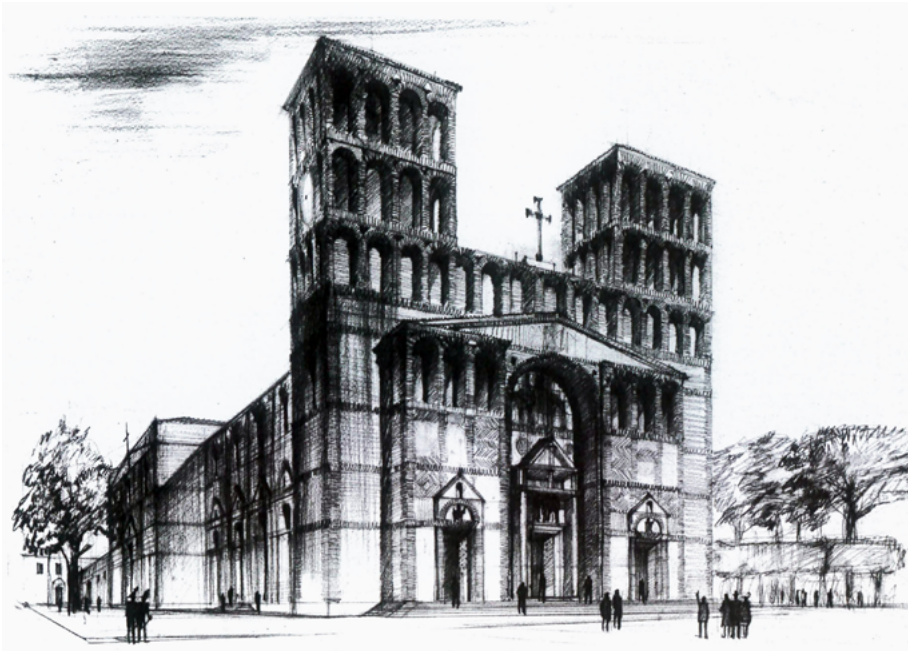
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25   Marcello Piacentini, "Difesa dell'architettura italiana," *Il Giornale d'Italia*, May 2, 1931.

26   Marcucci Laura, "Presentazione," in *L'architettura dell'"altra modernità". Atti del XXVI Congresso di Storia dell'Architettura* edited by Marina Docci and Maria Grazia Turco (Roma: Gangemi Editore, 2010) 13-15; Laura Marcucci. "Introduzione," in *L'altra modernità nella cultura architettonica del XX secolo. Progetto e città nell'architettura italiana,* Laura Marcucci, ed., vol. 2, (Roma: Gangemi Editore, 2012), 7-8; Maria Luisa Neri, "Introduzione," in *L'altra modernità nella cultura architettonica del XX secolo. Dibattito internazionale e realtà locali,* Maria Luisa Neri, ed., vol. 1, (Roma: Gangemi Editore, 2012), 7-8.

27   Carlo Cresti, *Architettura e fascismo* (Firenze: Vallecchi Editore, 1986).

28   Coppo, "Edifici religiosi", 214-220; Riccardo Serraglio, "La basilica di San Giovanni Bosco a Roma fulcro delle trasformazioni urbanistiche del quartiere Cinecittà negli anni della ricostruzione post-bellica," in *La città che si rinnova. Dal manufatto architettonico alla forma urbana edited by* Chiara Ingrosso, Elena Manzo, Luca Molinari, and Riccardo Serraglio (Napoli: La scuola di Pitagora, 2018), 33-51.

the Roman church. After the selection board examined all the projects, that of a basilica church surmounted by an imposing dome, presented by Sicilian architect Gaetano Rapisardi, won the competition. The project presented by Canino ranked third, behind those of Rapisardi and Vittorio Ballio Morpurgo.[29]

To compete for the project of the new church of the Salesian order, Canino designed a basilica plant covered by a big dome and characterized by a spacious trilobed transept [Fig. 2], to allow the faithful to attend close to central altar the holy mass, taking into account mind the changes happening in the celebration of religious rites. In this project, as in the previous one and subsequents, the architect elaborated different influences in original forms. An exceptional visual memory allowed him to remember the shapes and features of buildings he knew well, because he seen them directly or through the books of art history he studied in the years of formation. This extraordinary ability is witnessed by the drawings of neapolitan churches, palaces and squares, outlined exclusively on his memories when in 1943 he took refuge in Sorrento for a few months with his family, to escape the bombings that devastated the city.[30] His design process merged manifold impressions of past into new forms, generating architectures that could not be defined modern but not even traditionalist. Therefore, his first plans of ecclesiastical buildings can be defined as untopical, according to Michele Capobianco,[31] or deliberately outdated, as Benedetto Gravagnuolo called other works of Canino.[32] We can try to recognize the architectural matrices of these projects but never with certainty, because probably
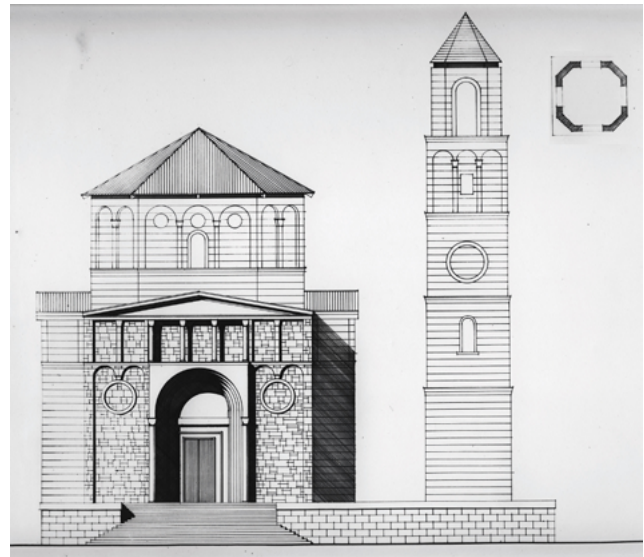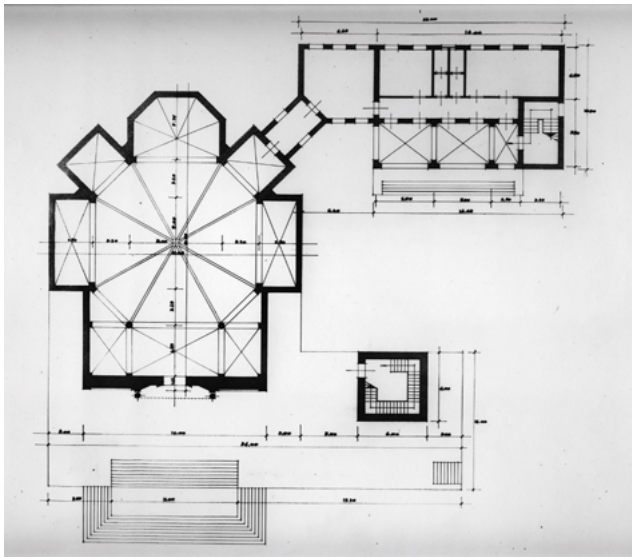
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29   Serraglio, "La basilica di San Giovanni Bosco", 33-51.

30   Marcello Canino and Riccardo Filangieri, *Napoli visioni d'arte e di vita nei disegni di Marcello Canino commentati da Riccardo Filangieri* (Napoli: ILTE Industria Libraria Tipografica Editrice, 1954).

31   Capobianco, "Marcello Canino tra le due guerre o della modernità inattuale", 7-38; Capobianco, "Modernità Inattuale", 40-48.

32   Gravagnuolo Benedetto. "L'architettura della ricostruzione tra continuità e sperimentazione," in Pasquale Belfiore and Benedetto Gravagnuolo, eds., *Architetture dal 1945 a oggi a Napoli e provincia* (Naples: Ermes Multimedia, 2004-2005), 1-26.

Fig. 2
Marcello Canino, perspective view of the church of San Giovanni Bosco in Rome (Private archive of Marcello Canino)

the architect did not think of particular cases but rather he drew inspiration from ideal models derived from reality and purified by peculiarities of the individual buildings. Thus, we cannot determine whether the façades with symmetrical side-towers were inspired by the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, the highest expression of the French Gothic, otherwise by the Cefalù cathedral in Sicily, or by the Trinità dei Monti church in Rome. In a similar way, we could recognize in the three-lobed crowning of the La Maddalena church a reworking of the façade of the San Marco basilica in Venice, and in the overlapping arcades of the San Giovanni Bosco church a memory of the Pisa cathedral, and still many other references. Perhaps Canino was inspired by these architectural masterpieces and many others, processed in his projects in autonomous and original modes. In the end, we can already recognize from these early designs the method of Marcello Canino, based on knowledge of the past reworked in forms of an untopical modernity.

Neighbourhood Churches Projects and Achievements

After the approval of the law 18 December 1952 n. 2522, the mentioned Legge Aldisio, Canino actively participated in the design of new parish churches, developing research lines anticipated in the described competitions, based on reinterpretations in a modern and personal key of typologies and languages derived from the Italian architecture of the Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque periods. In the projects of new neighborhood churches drawn up between the fifties and sixties, he separated his personal architectural research from the prevailing National trend tending towards innovations of modernist style. On the contrary, he interpreted the hystorical models of the basilica, the central and oval plan, inspired by the tradition of Italian architecture, in the forms of a modern classicism. In fact, Canino distinguished himself among architects engaged in the renewal of ecclesiastical architecture because, unlike the others, did not want to experiment with the invention of unconventional forms. In contrast, he preferred

Fig. 3
Marcello Canino, plan of the parish church of the Vergine del Rosario in Serramazzoni (Private archive of Marcello Canino).

Fig. 4
Marcello Canino, elevation of the parish church of the Vergine del Rosario in Serramazzoni (Private archive of Marcello Canino).

to be inspired by the authority of historical architecture in the search for renewed types of ecclesiastical buildings.[33]

Unlike the competitions usually organized to select the best projects for the most important churches, the Legge Aldisio allowed the Italian bishops to directly appoint the architects in charge of drawing up the plans and quickly start construction work of the new parish centers. Documents from the archive of the Pontificia Commissione Centrale per l'Arte Sacra testify to Canino's participation in the design of about ten neighbourhood churches, from the preliminary acquisition of buildable areas to drafting of the projects submitted to the commission, which in many cases required variants.[34] Half of the neighbourhood churches projects drawn up by Canino were actually realized, but in no case he took care of the execution of the work. Consequently, while the original projects are stored in the Vatican archives, documents relating to the construction of the buildings are kept in parish and diocesan technical offices and in the provincial agencies of the Genio Civile, a public body under the authority of the Ministry of Public Works responsible for monitoring structural projects.

In the spring of 1954, on commission from the Bishop of Modena Cesare Boccoleri (Rapallo, 21 March 1875 – Modena, 31 October 1956), Canino drew up the plans for the new parish churches of San Lazzaro in Modena and the Vergine del Rosario in Serramazzoni, but only the second one was built.[35] The project of the parish of Serramazoni was probably the result of a confrontation

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33   Gianluca Frediani, "Marcello Canino e il rinnovamento della tradizione. Il palazzo degli Uffici Finanziari di Napoli," *ArQ Architettura Quaderni*, no. 3 (1989): 44-50; Stenti, "Un costruttore di città e palazzi", 16-39.

34   Riccardo Serraglio, "Neighbourhood churches in the post-war reconstruction: projects and achievements by Marcello Canino," in *The Social City. Urban Development and Housing Projects in Berlin and Naples in the Post-War Era. A Comparison: Theoretical Models, Implemented Projects, Social and Political Impacts Today,* ed. Antonello Scopacasa (Berlin: Universitätsverlag der TU Berlin, 2022), 307-313; Riccardo Serraglio, "Marcello Canino progettista di chiese di quartiere nel periodo della ricostruzione postbellica", in *Città e guerra. Difese, distruzioni, permanenze delle memorie e dell'immagine urbana,* eds. Francesca Capano, Emma Maglio and Massimo Visone (Naples: Federico II University Press, 2023), 1425-1435.

35   Vatican Secret Archive, Archives of the Commissione per l'Arte Sacra in Italia, Diocesi di Modena, *Serramazzoni: Nuova chiesa parrocchiale e locali di ministero parrocchiale*, Folders 3-4, 1954-1957; Private archive of Marcello Canino, *Progetto della chiesa parrocchiale della Vergine del Rosario a Serramazzoni*, undated drawings.

Fig. 5
Vintage picture of the parish church of the Vergine del Rosario in Serramazzoni (Private archive of Marcello Canino).

Fig. 6
Interior of the parish church of the Vergine del Rosario in Serramazzoni (photograph by Riccardo Serraglio).

between the bishop and the architect. Monsignor Boccoleri, refined intellectual of the upper middle class in Liguria, he had actively participated in the "Terza settimana d'arte sacra per il clero" (Ferrara, 13-20 October 1935) with a report on the cathedral churches, whose high-quality architecture had to be appropriate to the social relevance of episcopal sees.[36] He shared with Canino a previous adherence to fascism government and, in the post-war period, a moderate diffidence towards excessive modernity, in the renewal of the civil society as well as the architectural culture. It is worth mentioning that in 1907 Boccoleri entrusted the Milanese architect Gaetano Moretti with the rebuilding of the Romanesque basilica of Saints Gervasio and Protasio in Rapallo (Genova) heavily damaged by a flood at the end of the eighteenth and partially restored in the fifties of the nineteenth century.[37] In the renovated basilca church, disarticulated parts were unified around the imposing new dome, erected over an unusual octagonal tambour with length of oblique sides equal to half of the straights. It can be reasonably assumed that the composition designed by Canino for the new parish church in Serramazzoni, it derived from the geometry of the unusual layout of the renewed basilica in Rapallo. The architect indeed composed a central octagonal space lengthwise dilated, preceded by a narthex at the entrance and ended by a polygonal apse on the opposite side [Fig. 3, 4, 5, 6]. The visual perception of a central-plan church, disturbed by the elongation of the medial octagon, whose oblique sides in this case measured just over half of the other four, it was partially recovered by the symmetrical radial chapels arranged laterally to the ecclesiastical hall. It can be assumed that the singular layout of this small parish church, tending towards the typological hybridisation between the central and longitudinal scheme, it was aimed at an efficient setup of the architectural space to allow the assembly of the faithful to congregate close to the main altar. As for the architectural language, it does not seem correct to look for references to famous historical monuments near the new church, such as the Romanesque cathedral of Modena, but also in this case it is possible to recognise a personal interpretation by the architect of typical elements of medieval and Renaissance Italian architecture.

On commission from the Bishop of Caserta, Bartolomeo Mangino (Pagani, 2 December 1883 – Caserta, 25 May 1965), Canino designed the parish church of San Biagio in the small rural village of Limatola, starting in 1952.[38] The new parish centre, composed of the church, the oratory and the rectory, was to be built in a rural area, at that time devoid of housing settlements. Around the church, conceived as the community center, a new neighborhood would have developed between the sixties and eighties of the last century, downstream from the ancient village below the baronial castle on the hill of Gallo Piccolo.
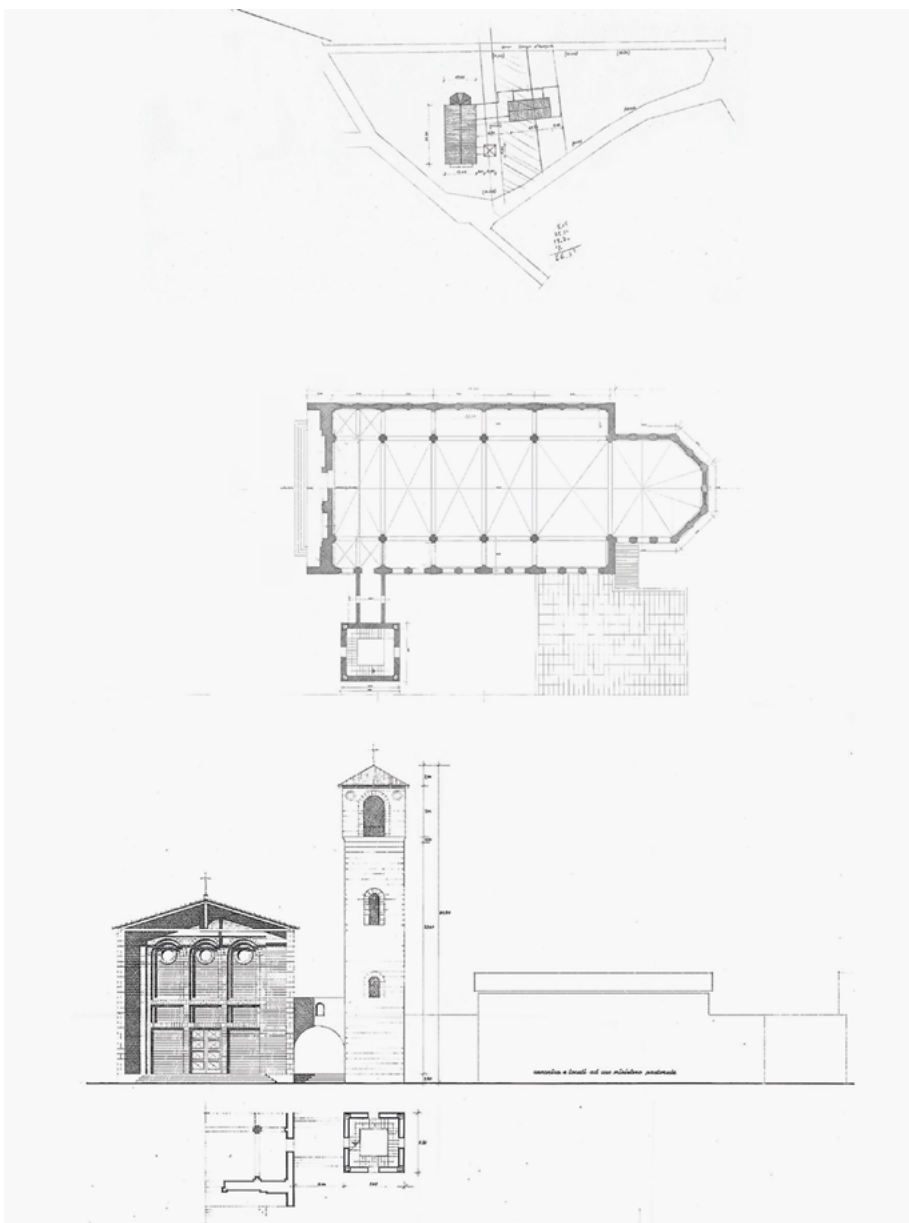
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36   Cesare Boccoleri, *La cattedrale nella vita religiosa e civile del popolo* (Spoleto: Arti grafiche Panetto & Petrelli, 1936).

37   Matteo Capurro and Daniele Sanguineti, eds., *Santi Gervasio e Protasio a Rapallo. Il patrimonio artistico della basilica* (Genova: Sagep, 2020).

38   Vatican Secret Archive, Archives of the Commissione per l'Arte Sacra in Italia, Diocesi di Caserta, *Limatola: Nuova chiesa parrocchiale di San Biagio, casa canonica e locali di ministero pastorale*, folders 1-2, 1953-1959.

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Without any conditioning by the bishop and using a costruction area totally free, Canino chose to rework the traditional typology of a three-nave basilica ended by a polygonal apse, with a lateral bell-tower separed from the church [Fig. 7, 8, 9]. In the internal space, bounded by symmetrical arcades and covered by cross vaults, the architect revisited in contemporary forms structural and decorative elements inspired by the architecture of medieval churches. In this way, the stone ribs of cross vaults and polystile pillars were replaced by concrete curbs. The church hall is completed by a series of classical aedicules, arranged on the side walls, and the presbytery, embellished by blind stone-arches on the inner walls of the apse, in an architectural composition characterized by proportions and ornamental motifs that can be defined as untopical. Similar considerations can be applied to the main façade, characterized by three large arches, and also to the bell tower and exterior walls, decorated with sequences of double and triple arch windows. As regards possible references to known architectural models, it can be recognize in the plan of the church a distant memory of the

Fig. 7
Final project of the parish church of San Biagio in Limatola (Archive of the Genio Civile di Benevento).

basilica of abbot Desiderio in Monte Cassino (1058-1087), which became an architectural model adopted in the abbey church of Sant'Angelo in Formis, in the cathedral of Casertavecchia and in many other medieval churches in Campania. The polygonal apse rather recalls the Angevin church of Sant'Eligio al Mercato in Naples, but also geographically more distant examples such as the cathedral of Milan or the basilica of San Francesco d'Assisi in Palermo. The exposed tuff stones masonry of external walls represents a significant link with local building traditions. In 1957, the architect drew up the final design but the construction of the church required several structural modifications due to the instability of the foundation soil.[39] The building was completed in 1962 but, due to lack of financial resources, finishing work lasted until 1965, when the church was opened to the faithful.

In Frasso Telesino, not far from Limatola, during the episcopate of Monsignor Costantino Caminada (Melegnano, 21 July 1962 – Ferentino, 6 November 1972), Canino designed the church of Santa Giuliana, built between 1958 and 1964 after the demolition of an earlier fifteenth-century church.[40] It is known that in 1960 Monsignor Caminada was transferred from Sant'Agata de' Goti to Syracuse as auxiliary bishop to oversee the construction of the Madonna delle Lacrime sanctuary, designed in 1957 by the French architects Michel Andrault and Pierre Parat following an international competition. Because of its unusual shape and extraordinary dimensions, the sanctuary of Syracuse has been a work discussed by critics with controversial judgments. However, there is no reason to assume a relationship between the construction of this building and the previous collaboration between Canino and Monsignor Caminada. In FrassoTelesino, the availability of a large building area allowed the architect to design a larger single-nave church rotated ninety degrees compared to the existing, concluded by a spacious rectangular apse covered with a cross vault [Fig. 10, 11, 12]. As in the church of San Biagio in Limatola, the architectural language of the new
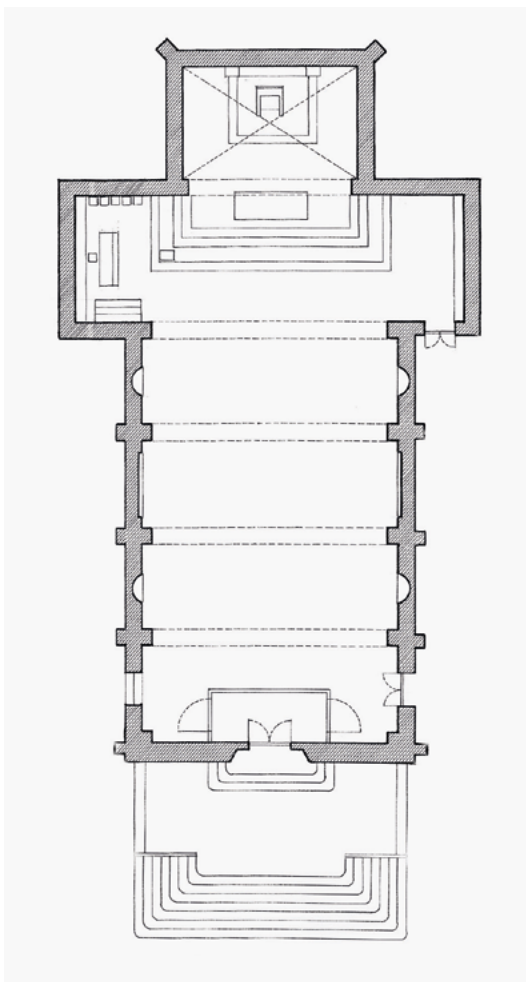
39   Archive of the Genio Civile di Benevento, *Progetto strutturale della chiesa di San Biagio a Limatola*, uncatalogued documents, 1953-1962.

40   Vatican Secret Archive, Archives of the Commissione per l'Arte Sacra in Italia, Diocesi di Sant'Agata de' Goti, *Frasso Telesino: Nuovo complesso parrocchiale di Santa Giuliana*, folders 1-3, 1957-1967; Archive of the parish church of San Giuliana in Frasso Telesino, plan of the church in its current state.

Fig. 8
Internal view of the parish church of San Biagio in Limatola (photograph by Riccardo Serraglio).

Fig. 9 External view of the parish church of San Biagio in Limatola (photograph by Riccardo Serraglio).

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parish church manifests a historicist matrix elaborated by simplifying stylistic elements referring to Romanesque and Renaissance architecture [Fig. 13]. The middle bell-gable with a double-arched window and the double order of overlapping archedes, assembled in the façade in an unorthodox manner, demonstrate an architectural composition inspired by antiquity but free from preconceived ideas. Inside the church, the ecclesiastical hall is divided by a regular sequence of transverse arches whose reduced section states the use of reinforced concrete. Within the apse's center, the classical altar recalls the forms of the Tuscan Renaissance, while the geometrical pattern outlined on the wall surfaces it seems to be inspired by the Romanesque façades of San Miniato al Monte church and San Giovanni Baptistery in Florence.

In 1966, during the episcopate of Monsignor Vito Roberti (Matera, 11 September 1911 – Matera, 1 August 1998), Canino presented the final project of San Pietro in Cattedra church in rione Tescione, a social housing district in Caserta [Fig. 14, 15, 16]. To be precise, the commitment of the architect to design a new parish church on the outskirts of town dates back to the early fifties, on account of the aforementioned bishop Bartolomeo Mangino. Between 1953 and 1961 Canino presented preliminary designs of a parish church for rione Patturelli, a social housing district built in the same years east of the city center, but the

Fig. 10
Plan of the parish church of Santa Giuliana in its current state (Archive of the parish church of San Giuliana in Frasso Telesino).

Fig. 11
External view of the parish church of Santa Giuliana in Frasso Telesino (photograph by Riccardo Serraglio).

project was not carried out due to the lack of a buildable area.[41] However, in 1961 the diocesan curia of Caserta identified a free area, close to the mentioned rione Tescione on the northern outskirts of the city, suitable for the construction of a new neighbourhood church. As a consequence, the final project of the San Pietro in Cattedra church was probably a resumption of the previous ones.[42] Moving the building from one housing project to another was not a problem, because the architect designed it without looking for close relationships with the surrounding environment. Indeed, the choice of an elliptical plan demonstrates the intention to design a building cleary different from others composing the neighborhood. The interpretation in a modern way of the elliptical plan establishes an interesting relationship in design research between Canino and the famous architect Marcello Piacentini. As previously noted, Piacentini esteemed Canino since the time of fascist government, when he supported him in the appointment to the position of

ordinary professor in the Univerity of Naples, in 1936, and in the assignment of the Mostra d'Oltremare masterplan, in 1937. As is known, in 1947 Piacentini designed an elliptical chapel for the Città Universitaria La Sapienza in Rome.[43] Consequently, Canino was aware that he would have to confront the work of Piacentini during the conception of his project. However, while the two buildings presents a aesthetic assonance in the use of exposed brickwork on external walls, their respective floor plans were layouted in opposite ways [Fig. 17]. Indeed, while in the church designed by Piacentini the altar was installed at the end of the major axis of the ellipse, on the contrary in that designed by Canino it was placed at the end of the minor axis. In both cases the adoption of the elliptical system probably responded to the need to gather the faithful near the celebrant during the holy mass, but while Piacentini elaboratated a reduction of longitudinal development of a basilica scheme, on the contrary Canino worked on lengthening the horizontal side of a central plant. It is possible that both were inspired by masterpieces of the Roman baroque: Piacentini from the church of San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, Canino form that of Sant'Andrea al Quirinale [Fig. 18]. In the first, Francesco Borromini placed the main altar at the end of the long axis of the elliptical plant, just as Piacentini would have done in the chapel of the Divina Sapienza. In the second, Gian Lorenzo Bernini placed it at the end

41   Vatican Secret Archive, Archives of the Commissione per l'Arte Sacra in Italia, *Diocesi di Caserta, Caserta: Nuova chiesa parrocchiale di San Pietro in Cattedra, casa canonica e locali di ministero pastorale*, folders 1-2, 1961-1966.
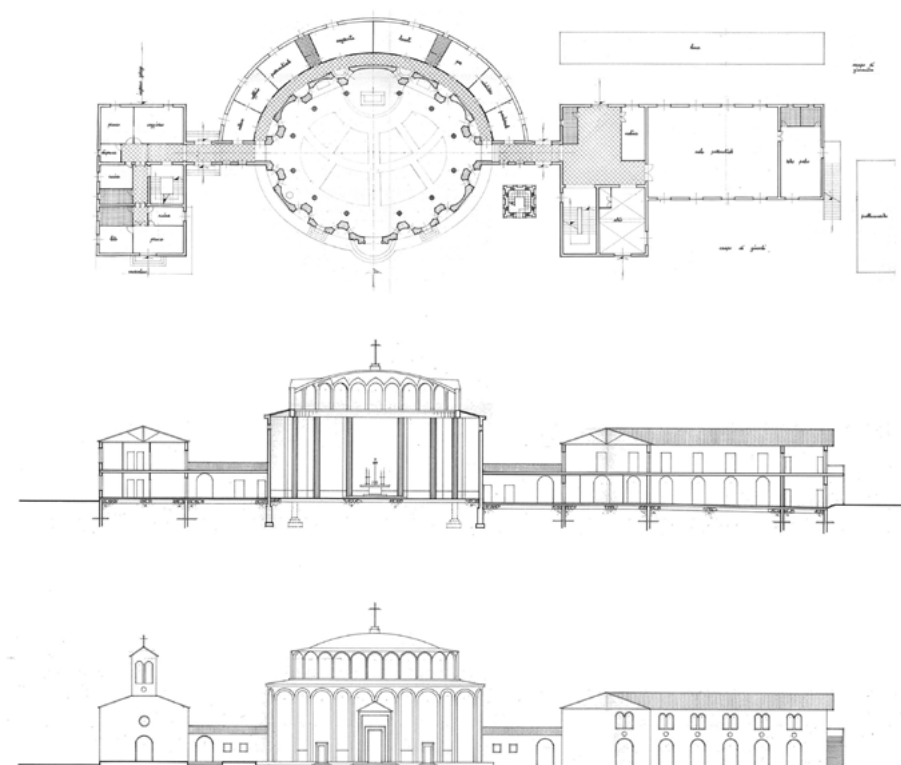
42   Archive of the Ufficio Tecnico della Diocesi di Caserta, *Progetto del complesso parrocchiale di San Pietro in Cattedra*, drawings, 1966.

43   Sandro Benedetti, ed. *La Cappella della Divina Sapienza* (Roma: Gangemi Editore, 1998).

Fig. 12
Internal view of the parish church of Santa Giuliana in Frasso Telesino (photograph by Riccardo Serraglio).

of the short axis, as he would have done Canino in the neighborhood church of San Pietro in Cattedra. Significant relationships between the San Pietro in Cattedra project and the Berninian model of Sant'Andrea al Quirinale were not limited to the shape of floor plan, but they also concerned the structure of the windowed dome and, consequently, the lighting from above of the internal space. More than in other neighbourhood churches he designed, in that of San Pietro in Cattedra Canino assembled in original forms heterogeneous architectural elements. The masonry of exposed bricks of external walls, observed in the mentioned churches of San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane and Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, it represents a significant link with the Roman baroque architecture. The sequence of blind arches and niches that articulate the wall perimeter inside and outside the church, it can be considered a reference of the Tempietto di San

Fig. 13
Comparison between the façades of the cathedral of Pisa and the parish church of Santa Giuliana in Frasso Telesino (graphic presentation by Riccardo Serraglio).

Fig. 14
Final project of the parish complex of San Pietro in Cattedra in Caserta (Archive of the Ufficio Tecnico della Diocesi di Caserta).

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Pietro in Montorio by Donato Bramante, reproduced in the architecture treatises by Sebastiano Serlio, Andrea Palladio and Pietro Cataneo.[44] On the other hand, the slender circular columns arranged around the ecclesiastical hall, similar in their features to the pilotis invented by Le Corbusier, can be interpreted as a rare quotation from the famous Swiss architect in the architecture of Canino.

The church of rione Traiano in Naples, dedicated to San Giovanni Battista, is distinguished by the urban significance of the surrounding settlement. The new district indeed was built under the oversight of the Comitato per l'Edilizia Popolare (CEP), a public body established in 1954 to coordinate the Institutes – Iacp, Incis, Unrra Casas, Ina Casa – appointed by the Italian State to develop social housing projects during the post-war reconstruction period. The Piano Regolatore Generale, approved by the City Council of Naples in 1958 but then rejected by the Ministry of Public Works, allocated to the new district an area of about 130 hectares near the rural village of Soccavo, in the eastern suburb of the city.[45] Canino was commissioned to design the masterplan of rione Traiano, one of the thirty-one self-sufficient settlements programmed for Italian cities by the CEP. He took inspiration from northern European models of the 1950s, in particular from the completely indipendent Vällingby district, built in a green area about 20 km from Stockholm on project of Sven Markelius according to the 1952 city masterplan. Canino developed a project strongly influenced by the

Fig. 15
External view of the parish church of San Pietro in Cattedra in Caserta (photograph by Riccardo Serraglio).

Fig. 16
Internal view of the parish church of San Pietro in Cattedra in Caserta (photograph by Riccardo Serraglio).
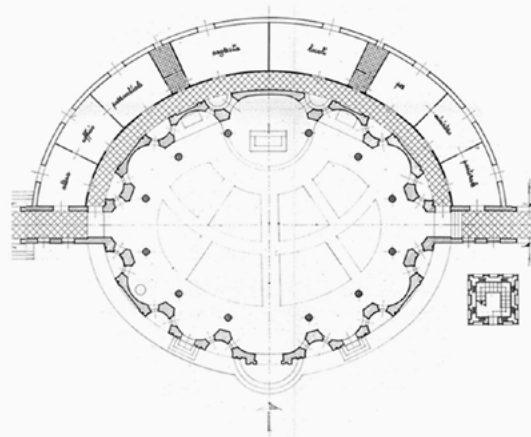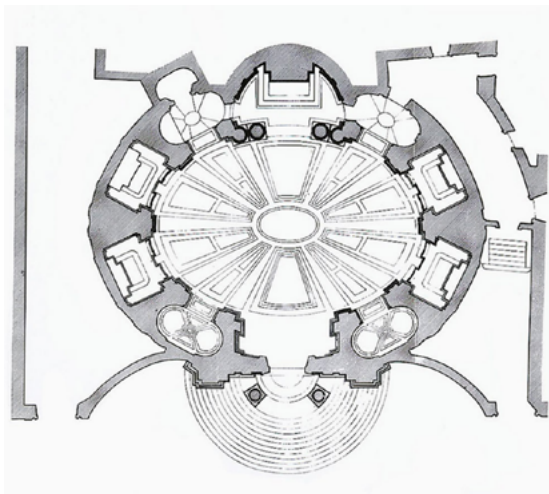
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44   Flavia Cantatore, ed., *Il tempietto di Bramante nel Monastero di San Pietro in Montorio* (Roma: Quasar, 2017).

45   Cigala, "Quartieri residenziali e il villaggio al Faito", 221-228; Frediani, "Il quartiere Traiano di Marcello Canino," 67-77; Limongi, "Rione Traiano", 102-107.
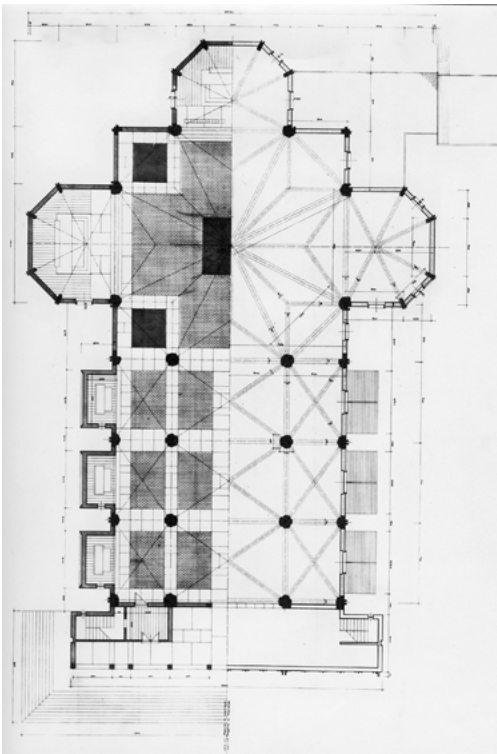
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morphological complexity of territory, composed by a directional center located in a middle flat zone, comprising the church, the public offices and social actvities, and seven residential units surrounded by greenery, arranged on the areas delimitad by the existing and deep rills that cross the site. Due to the failure to approve the aforementioned Piano Regolatore Generale, the number of inhabitants in the rione Traiano was reduced from 30,000 to 24,000, in order to achieve a lower urban density. As a result, in 1959 the initial project was scaled down and in 1961 also the central area, where the church should have been built, was redesigned by Canino. In 1966 the architetct finally designed the neighbourhood church, in collaboration with his former student Filippo Alison.[46] The parish complex, located in the middle of the urban settlement, in the intentions of Canino should have divided the surrounding area into a system of two squares, commercial and religious, according to a separation of social functions typical of Italian tradition.

The design of the San Giovanni Battista church can be considered the full expression of a research on the classical three-nave basilica type carried out by Canino since the competition projects for La Maddalena churche in 1930s. The project graphs [Fig. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25], preserved by the heirs of Canino, exhibit a

46   Vatican Secret Archive, Archives of the Commissione per l'Arte Sacra in Italia, *Diocesi di Pozzuoli, Napoli: Chiesa madre del quartiere Traiano*, folder 9, 1960; Private archive of Marcello Canino, Progetto della chiesa parrocchiale di San Giovanni Battista al Rione Traiano, undated drawings.
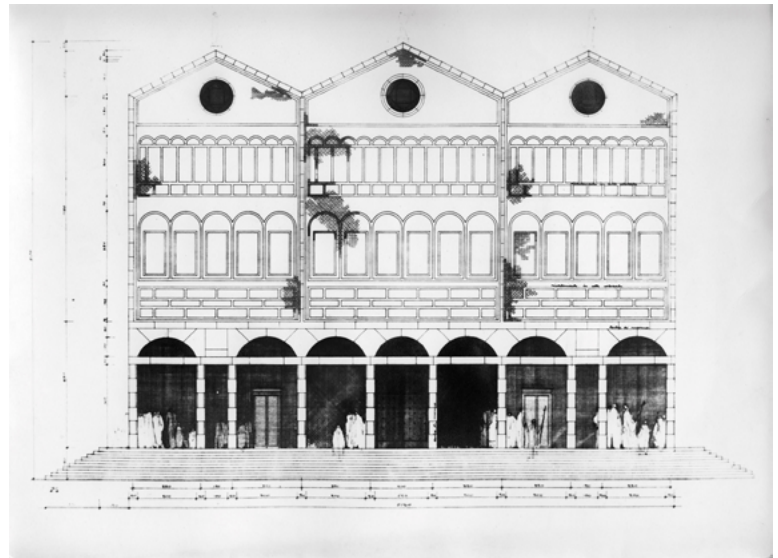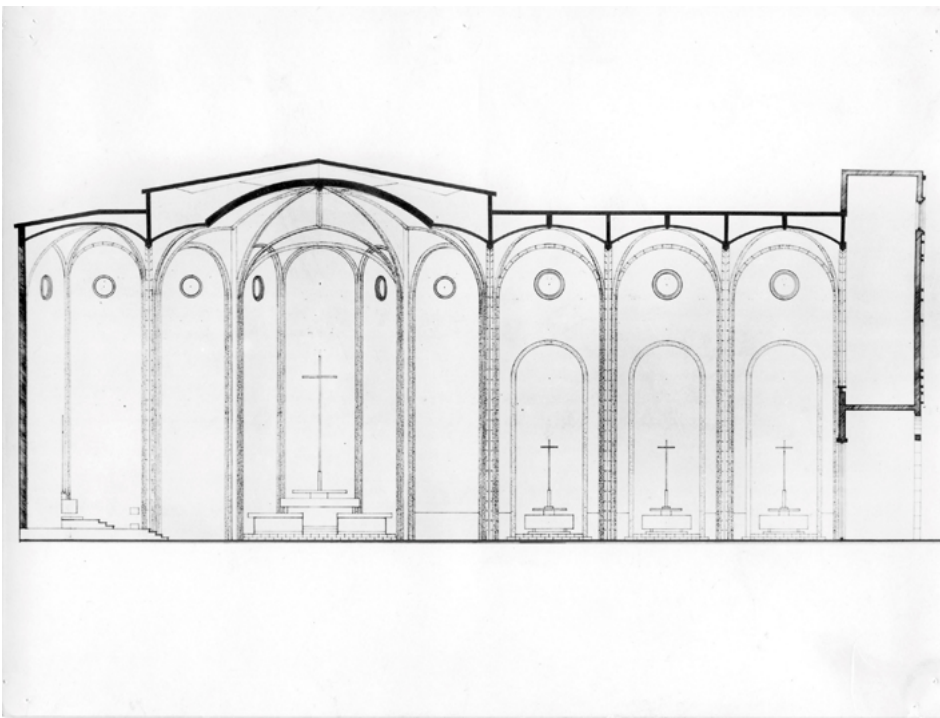
Fig. 17
Comparison between the façades of the chapel of Divina Sapienza in Rome and the parish church of San Pietro in Cattedra in Caserta (graphic presentation by Riccardo Serraglio).

Fig. 18
Comparison between plants of the church of Sant'Andrea al Quirinale in Rome and the parish church of San Pietro in Cattedra in Caserta (graphic presentation by Riccardo Serraglio).

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basilicale plant with three naves concluded by a large size presbytery, bordered by deep polygonal apses. As well as for the projects commented above, also in this case the search for design references leads to recognize heterogeneous elements, extrapolated without an apparent logical thread from masterpieces of Medieval and Renaissance architecture and reassembled in an original and autonomous way. In the neighbourhood church of San Giovanni in rione Traiano, the plan seems to be a reworking in reduced size of that of the Milan cathedral [Fig. 26]; the ribbed vault of the presbytery could be a quotation from the hall of barons in the Maschio Angioino castle in Naples, attributed to the Majorcan
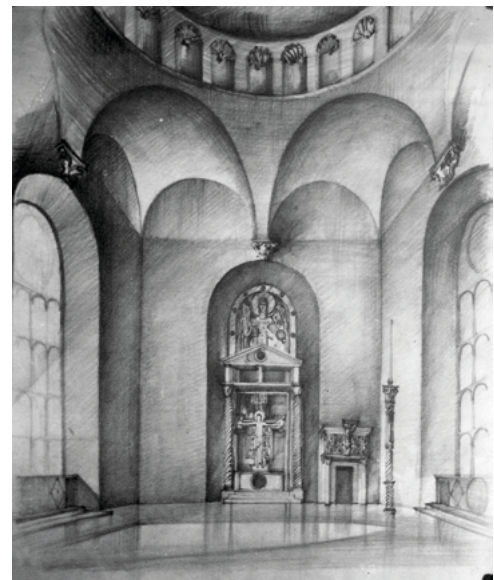
Fig. 19
Marcello Canino, plan of the parish church of San Giovanni Battista in rione Traiano (Private archive of Marcello Canino).

Fig. 20
Marcello Canino, façade of the parish church of San Giovanni Battista in rione Traiano (Private archive of Marcello Canino).

Fig. 21
Marcello Canino, longitudinal section of the parish church of San Giovanni Battista in rione Traiano (Private archive of Marcello Canino).

architect Guillermo Sagrera [Fig. 27]; the façade with three cusps recalls that of the San Giorgio cathedral in Ferrara [Fig. 28]; the geometrical pattern outlined on the external wall surfaces could have been inspired by the Romanesque façades of San Miniato al Monte church and San Giovanni Baptistery in Florence [Fig. 29]; the isolated bell tower, characterized by exposed brick planes outlined with frames in travertine stone, it seems to be a reduction in modern forms of that in Piazza San Marco in Venice [Fig. 30]. The memories evoked by this building, in a final analisys, expresse a deep knowledge of the architecture history, even more than other projects of neighboarhood churches commented on earlier. At the same time, the unusual dimensions of traditional elements manufactured in reinforced concrete and the apparently illogical combination of differen styles, they merged with each other and produced the complete expression of a research path that generated, according to Michele Capobianco,[47] the untopical modernty of Marcello Canino architecture.

Conclusions

Although in the catalog of his architectural pruduction they are unjustly considered as minor works, the neighbourhood churches designed by Marcello Canino are significant testimonies of his project research. As we said, these apparently modest buildings represent the result of a long-standing experimentation on the design of ecclesiastical project aimed to achieve a balance between the permanence of types and languages derived from classicism and the introduction of the constructive rationality of Modern Movement. Each of these works expresses the deep culture of the author and his independence from the prevailing trends in the italian architecture in post-war reconstruction period. They convey, perhaps, more clearly than other buildings he designed, the sense of untopical modernity that Michele Capobianco recognized in the works of his

Fig. 22
Marcello Canino, project photomontage of the parish church of San Giovanni Battista in rione Traiano (Private archive of Marcello Canino).

Fig. 23
Marcello Canino, perspective sketch of the interior of the parish church of San Giovanni Battista in rione Traiano (Private archive of Marcello Canino).

47   Capobianco, "Marcello Canino tra le due guerre o della modernità inattuale", 7-38; Capobianco, "Modernità Inattuale", 40-48.
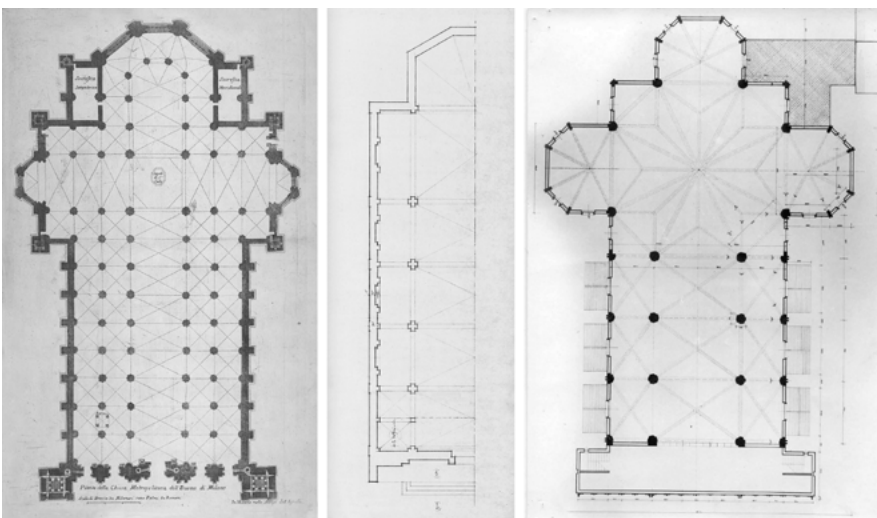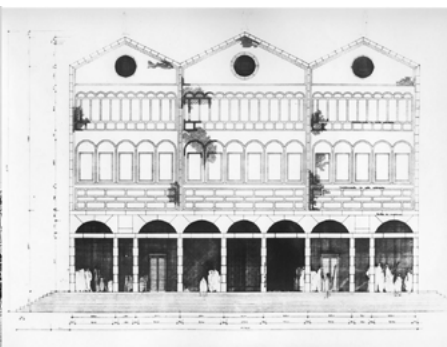
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Fig. 24
Internal view of the parish
church of San Giovanni Battista
in rione Traiano (photograph by
Riccardo Serraglio).

Fig. 25
External view of the parish
church of San Giovanni Battista
in rione Traiano (photograph by
Riccardo Serraglio).

Fig. 26
Comparison between the
plants of the cathedral of Milan,
the parish church of San Biagio
in Limatola and the parish
church of San Giovanni Battista
in rione Traiano (graphic
presentation by Riccardo
Serraglio).

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Fig. 27
Comparison between the ribbed vaults of the hall of barons in the Maschio Angioino castle in Naples and the parish church of San Giovanni Battista in rione Traiano (graphic presentation by Riccardo Serraglio).

Fig. 28
Comparison between the façades of the cathedral of San Giorgio in Ferrara and the parish church of San Giovanni Battista in rione Traiano (graphic presentation by Riccardo Serraglio).

Fig. 29
Comparison between the façades of the church of San Miniato al Monte in Florence and the parish church of San Giovanni Battista in rione Traiano (graphic presentation by Riccardo Serraglio).

Fig. 30
Comparison between the bell towers of the cathedral of San Giorgio in Ferrara and the parish church of San Giovanni Battista in rione Traiano (graphic presentation by Riccardo Serraglio).

master. The distinctly self-referential architectural language and the perception of distance from other buildings composing the built environment of urban suburbs, they reflected the personality of Canino, who his daughter Isabella remembered as a silent man unwilling to dialogue and confidential attitudes.[48] Unfortunately, economic difficulties during construction sometimes required a downsizing of the original plans, because the mentioned Legge Aldisio financed exclusively the structural works. Therefore, the completion of buildings was the responsibility of parish priests, who had to raise the necessary funds through donations from the faithful. Because of this, in many cases costly or unneeded works were replaced with cheaper ones, decorative elements were eliminated, and low quality furniture was selected to complete the decoration of the neighbourhood churches. For example, in Limatola and rione Traiano churches the bell towers were built smaller than the projects. In other cases, as in Serramazzoni and Limatola churches, the bas-relief panels that should have embellish the façades were not realized. In many parish centers, church service buildings and community facilities – oratories, gyms and sports fields, libraries, theaters etc. – were not or only partially carried out.

After the construction, the current use of the parish churchs for more persons than initially planned required in many cases changes or additions that modified their original layout. However, despite the under construction reductions due to limited budgets, and later modifications often made without respect for the original configuration, these works still reflect architectural characters consistent with the original projects. Perhaps, even today the clergy and the population, usual users of these buildings, and especially the institutions responsible for the preservation of architectural heritage, they do not recognize that the neighbourhood churches designed by Marcello Canino represent important testimonies of the Italian ecclesiastical architecture of the twentieth century. For this reason, their cultural value must be affirmed first of all within the scientific community, so that they can be properly protected and valorised by regulations and legislative measures aimed at their conservation.

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48   Isabella Canino, "Mio padre," in *Marcello Canino 1895/1970*, ed. Sergio Stenti (Napoli: CLEAN, 2005), 151-156.

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