

The Ricardo Bofill’s Proposal for the Waterfront Revitalization of Salerno (Italy)

Star-architecture, Port-city, Seafront, Decision-making, Planning visions

/Abstract

This paper reflects on the proposals elaborated by the *Ricardo Bofill Taller de Arquitectura* for the waterfront revitalization of the Italian city of Salerno in the attempt to replicate two of his previous architectural projects, i.e. the crescent- and sail-shaped buildings.

By the review of planning documentations and the scientific and non-scientific literature, this work highlights the challenges regarding the building of the Crescent and the failed implementation of the Sail. The case study analysis provides new insights on the role of star-architecture in triggering waterfront revitalization in a second-tier city following the tendency of public authorities to translate ideas and approaches from other international cities.

In particular, this work demonstrates that the elaboration of spectacular projects designed by international architectural firms cannot automatically adapt successful projects implemented in other contexts, but needs assemblage with the local urban, social, and environmental facets. Furthermore, it is observed that the success or failure of these types of projects may be attributable not just to the mere transposition of identical schemes and the political legitimization, but also from the inadequate implementation of architectural and urban design that face criticism by the public opinion.

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After achieving the Bachelor and Master degrees in spatial planning at the Università Iuav di Venezia (2014), I was a researcher in 2014-15 and 2016-17 at the same University through two annual research grants in urbanism. Between 2017 and 2020 I was Early Stage Researcher in the frame of the European Horizon-2020 project ‘urbanHist’ through the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action - Innovative Training Networks programme, obtaining the double degree of Doctor in Architecture (University of Valladolid, UVa) and Ph.D. (Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, Germany).

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Introduction

The copy-and-paste of star architecture buildings has played a remarkable role in the revitalization of urban waterfronts and port cities since the 1980s¹. In fact, the emulation of such dynamics from first-tier port cities to second-tier ones seems to be a global phenomenon, although recent literature insists that further evidence is needed to enrich the broad spectrum of star architecture projects’ effects and their origins in the project.²

This paper contributes to add new knowledge to star architecture projects implemented in medium-sized cities by adopting a qualitative single case-study approach, specifically using the projects elaborated by *Ricardo Bofill Taller de Arquitectura* (RBTA) in Salerno, Italy, as a case study. This work comprised a qualitative content analysis of white (peer-reviewed works such as books or journal articles) and grey literature (literature that is not formally published after a double peer-review, thus including local government’s planning schemes, newspaper articles, local associations’ manifesto). In particular, the analysis outlines the main characteristics of RBTA’s proposal within the wider discourses related to Salerno’s waterfront revitalization³ and detects the main factors contributing to its partially failed implementation.

The city of Salerno constitutes a proper example because since the mid-1990s underwent a huge transformation with the objective of becoming the “Barcelona of the Tyrrhenian Sea” according to the four-time Mayor Vincenzo De Luca (1993-1997, 1997-2002, 2006-2011 and 2011-2015). As detailed in the book “Another Italy between old bureaucracies and new cities”,⁴ the then-Mayor’s vision of Salerno was anchored in European urban models, drawing parallels with prominent cities such as Barcelona, Berlin, and London. This aspiration was encapsulated in the idea of a “permanent architectural laboratory,” a term that draws parallels with Barcelona during its hosting of the Olympics.⁵ This long-standing ambition has demonstrated a resolute and unyielding commitment to its realization as Salerno first enlisted the MBM Arquitectes studio to implement the ideas previously realized for the Barcelona’s waterfront in occasion of the 1992

1 Ponzini Davide and Mina Akhavan, “Star Architecture Spreads in Europe: Culture-Led Waterfront Projects Between 1990 and 2015,” in *About Star Architecture: Reflecting on Cities in Europe*, ed. Nadia Alaily-Mattar, Davide Ponzini, and Alain Thierstein (Basel: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 71-72.

2 Dreher Johannes, Nadia Alaily-Mattar and Alain Thierstein, “Star architecture projects and their effects: tracing the evidence.” *Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability* 16, no. 1 (2021): 65-83.

3 Giorgia Iovino, *Riqualificazione urbana e sviluppo locale a Salerno. Attori, strumenti e risorse di una città in trasformazione* (Napoli, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2002), 155-188; Giorgia Iovino, “La rigenerazione del waterfront nelle città marittimo-portuali. L’esperienza di Salerno,” *Bollettino dell’Associazione Italiana di Cartografia*, no. 157 (2016), 41–43; Maurizio Russo, *Il progetto urbano nella città contemporanea. L’esperienza di Salerno nel panorama europeo* (Napols: CLEAN, 2011), 143-162.

4 Vincenzo De Luca, *Un'altra Italia tra vecchie burocrazie e nuove città* (Bari-Rome: Laterza, 1999).

5 Roberto Gerundo , “Salerno: un’urbanistica spericolata/Salerno: a daring approach to town planning,” *Urbanistica*, no. 122 (2003), 28-31; Roberto Gerundo and Isidoro Fasolino, “Nuove centralità costiere. La costa salernitana nella pianificazione urbanistica e territoriale”, in *Waterfront d’Italia. Piani, politiche, progetti*, ed. Michelangelo Savino (Milano, Franco Angeli, 2010), 172-175.



Summer Olympics.⁶ Then, the Mayor enlisted the expertise of renowned architectural studios to create landmark buildings, i.e. David Chipperfield Architects for the Palace of Justice (1999–2018),⁷ Zaha Hadid Architects for the maritime station (2000–2016),⁸ Ateliers Jean Nouvel for the redevelopment of the former Antonio Amato pasta factory (2007–2017 but not implemented), Santiago Calatrava Architects & Engineers for the Marina di Arechi port-island (2008–2024), and RBTA for the waterfront revitalization of the sector comprising Santa Teresa and Piazza della Concordia squares (2008–2023, partially implemented).

Here the research question arises as to whether this perspective was too focused on the immediate economic development and image-making of post-industrial cities, potentially overlooking broader, long-term implications. Is it appropriate for second-tier cities to make comparisons and implement resembling strategies of those adopted by such distant metropolitan realities? The case study analysis of the RBTA's proposal for Salerno seafront serves to demonstrate that the fundamental error of this strategy appears to lie in the attempt to emulate realities other than the original, yet De Luca aspired to elevate Salerno to a global metropolis, establishing it as a point of reference for the South and Italy as a whole.⁹ Moreover, De Luca had been elected for various term as Mayor, and had consistently garnered appreciation from the citizenry for his efforts to reinstate dignity and identity to the city of Salerno, which has historically been regarded as the "little sister" of Naples.¹⁰ In response to any criticism or reproach, De Luca posited that the city revitalization should rely on European models

6 Oriol Bohigas, Joseph Martorell, David Mackay, Albert Puigdomènech and Oriol Capdevila, Salerno. *Nuova coscienza di identità, nuova esigenza di urbanità. Documento Programmatico* (Salerno: Comune di Salerno, 1994), 2–5.

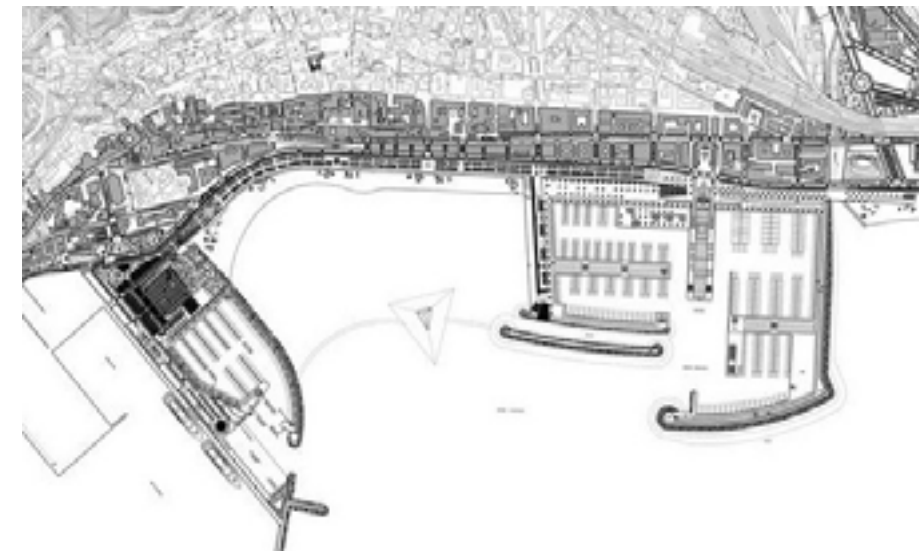
7 <https://davidchipperfield.com/projects/salerno-palace-of-justice> (last accessed March 2025).

8 <https://www.zaha-hadid.com/architecture/maritime-terminal-salerno/> (last accessed March 2025).

9 De Luca, *Un'altra Italia tra vecchie burocrazie e nuove città*, 6–9.

10 De Luca, *Un'altra Italia tra vecchie burocrazie e nuove città*, 3.

Fig. 1
Salerno's waterfront in 2007.
Source: Author's elaboration
from Google Earth (2025).



based on the fact that «We are the solely reality in Europe where the concept of Europe is being worked on. What we have planned is a concrete transformation, which is complicated to achieve in a country like Italy. Here, thinking and decision-making is a business, with decision-makers obstructing projects and poisoned democratic process. We are here for enabling an act of democratic transparency».¹¹

Santa Teresa's Crescent and Piazza della Concordia's Sail

Salerno's coastline redevelopment was initially drafted by MBM Arquitectes with a number of amendments until its inclusion in the 2003 General Master Plan [Fig. 1].¹² However, this planning tool had to be adapted to the new 2004 Regional Planning Law and this process involved substantial changes, among which the removal of the MBM Arquitectes' proposal [Fig. 2].¹³

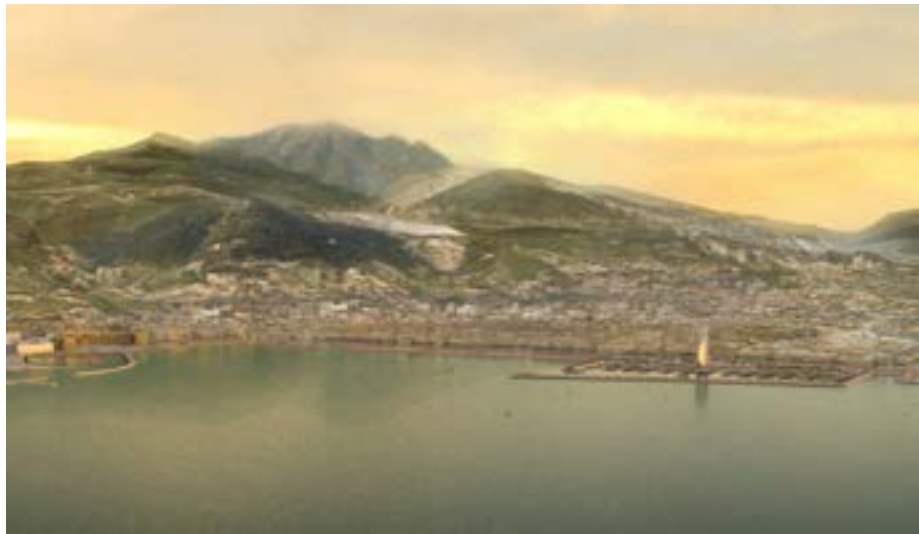
In 2007, the City Council launched the international design competition "*Fronte del mare–Area e Piazza Santa Teresa ed Area e Piazza della Concordia*" for the waterfront redevelopment comprising the seafront from the Manfredi docks to the Masuccio Salernitano touristic port. With an expenditure of €115,000,000, the competition aimed to find solutions for the «most appropriate use of the city's seafront, which has been discussed on multiple occasions over the past years due to the urban, social and economic significance ... In particular, the centrality of the extreme points of the project areas, St. Teresa and Concordia, makes them functional centers

11 Vincenzo De Luca, Parte 1 Presentazione De Luca Piazza della Libertà Salerno, 2009, March 29. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xd5tF0qAPx0> (last access March 2025).

12 Alessandro Dal Piaz, "Progetti urbani a Salerno. L'attività di programmazione delle trasformazioni urbane a Salerno," *Archivio di studi Urbani e Regionali*, no. 69 (2000), 9–14; Ornella Albolino and Fabio Amato, "La riqualificazione di Salerno tra progetti e realtà. Un esempio di turisticità al servizio di aree limitrofe," in *Turismo e competitività urbana Cagliari, Sassari, Salerno, Bari, Lecce, Catania, Palermo, Siracusa*, ed. Luca Ruggiero and Luigi Scrofani (Milano: Franco Angeli, 2011), 58–63.

13 Comune di Salerno, Piano Regolatore Generale-Bozza dicembre 2002 (2002); Comune di Salerno, Piano Urbanistico Comunale 2005, 2005.

Fig. 2
MBM Arquitectes' proposal
for the waterfront revitaliza-
tion. Source: MBM Arquitect-
es (2005).



in relation to the waterfront revitalization. The sector involving Piazza della Concordia, Piazza Mazzini, and Masuccio Salernitano touristic port plays a crucial role in relation to the functions allocated in the urban centre, such as the Santa Teresa future sports port and the future activities».¹⁴

RBTA-designed masterplan was awarded with the prize of €2,673,900 with two main solutions located at the two extremes of the project area [Fig. 3].

On the one hand, the redevelopment of a 72,000-sqm area comprising Piazza della Concordia, Piazza Mazzini, and Masuccio Salernitano was centered on the so-called Sail. This structure was a 75-meter skyscraper resembling the W Hotel of Barcelona (2009), along with other existing sail-shaped buildings devoted to luxury tourist accommodation, symptom of an established tendency to replicate similar spectacular pieces of architecture across the world [Fig. 4].¹⁵ The Sail comprised 17 floors, of which six devoted to offices, while the remaining to 100-berth hotel without any housing units [Fig. 5]. The project foresaw the unification of Concordia Square with Mazzini Square, and the Masuccio Salernitano port would double its size, with the square extending towards the sea. This transformation involved also the construction of soft barriers to create a new beachfront connecting this port with the new one to build in Santa Teresa and two gangplanks extending 80 meters into the sea equipped with two restaurants offering panoramic views. Furthermore, two interventions on mobility regarded the proximity of Piazza della Concordia: the burying of 260 meters of streets and the building of 100 parking lots [Fig. 6]. The total estimated cost of the project was €220 million, with €70 million allocated for the construction of the Sail and €150 million for the development of its surroundings.

14 Comune di Salerno, *Fronte del mare–Area e Piazza Santa Teresa ed Area e Piazza della Concordia. Relazione illustrativa* (Salerno: Comune di Salerno, 2007), 3.

15 <https://www.spanish-architects.com/es/ricardo-bofill-taller-de-arquitectura-barcelona/project/w-barcelona-hotel> (last accessed March 2025)

Fig. 3
RBTA's masterplan winner of the 2007 international design competition. Source: <http://www.progesengineering.com/project/piazza-della-concordia-sea-front/>.

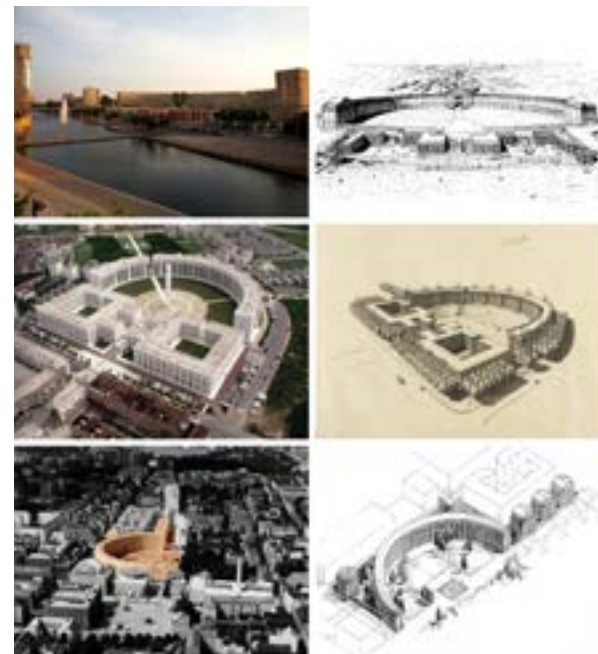


Fig. 4
From left to right are the pre-cursors of all the sail-shaped hotels: InterContinental Yokohama Grand Hotel (Japan, 1998); Burj Al Arab Hotel (Dubai, 1999), Haifa's Sail Tower (Israel, 2002), Barcelona's W Hotel (Spain, 2009), Ulaanbaatar's Blue Sky Tower (Mongolia, 2010), and Trump Ocean Club International Hotel & Tower (Panama, 2012).

Fig. 5
The Sail. Source: <http://www.progesengineering.com/project/piazza-della-concordia-sea-front/>.

Fig. 6
Public spaces resulting from the burying of street infrastructure. Source: <http://www.progesengineering.com/project/piazza-della-concordia-sea-front/>.

On the other hand, the crescent-shaped building¹⁶ devoted to luxury housing in Santa Teresa. It evoked previous RBTA-designed buildings for accommodating social housing units in Montpellier (Port Juvenal, 1989),¹⁷ Cergy-Pontoise (Les Colonnes de Saint-Christophe, 1986),¹⁸ and Stockholm (Pa Soder Crescent, 1992).¹⁹ These kinds of buildings, resembling amphitheaters facing a large plaza acting as a congregation point for local residents and as a venue for recreational and representative activities, use of classical/symmetrical planning and building strategies to create a new area of centrality. [Fig. 7]



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The proposal regarded the implementation of the action plan approved in 2007 by the City Council,²⁰ and was different from the one planned by MBM Arquitects in the frame of the 2005 General Master Plan [Fig. 8]. It regarded the construction of a large semicircular square, conceived as a panoramic terrace overlooking the sea and a monumental gateway to the city. The idea was to surround a square, which is to be constructed beneath a two-level subterranean parking facility, by a classical hemicycle, the Crescent, with a glass facade overlaid by a double-order colonnade. The crescent-shaped edifice would stand 33 meters in height and encompass an area of 300 meters, inclusive of two 33-meter towers set apart from the central body [Fig. 9]. The structure, with a total volume of 190,000 cubic meters, was designed to accommodate 120 high-end residential dwellings, 50 offices, and 26 commercial boutiques situated beneath the primary arcade. A variety of commercial enterprises, including bars, restaurants and stores, would be situated in the area between the slightly elevated square and the height of the marina, where a promenade was planned. These interventions included the sealing of 4,865 sqm of sea and beach, which implied the deviation of the Fusandola stream, historically linked to destructive floods, without a proper environmental assessment.

The estimated expenditure for the construction of the plaza, the underlying parking lot and the urbanization works was €28 million, in addition to a further €10 million allocated for the property transfer of the state-owned land. This amount was covered by European funds (€14 million)

16 The term 'crescent' is used to denote a series of housing units arranged in rows to form a unitary block along a semicircular perimeter.

17 <https://architecture-history.org/architects/architects/BOFILL/OBJ/1989,%20Port%20Juvenal,%20Montpellier,%20France.html> (last accessed March 2025).

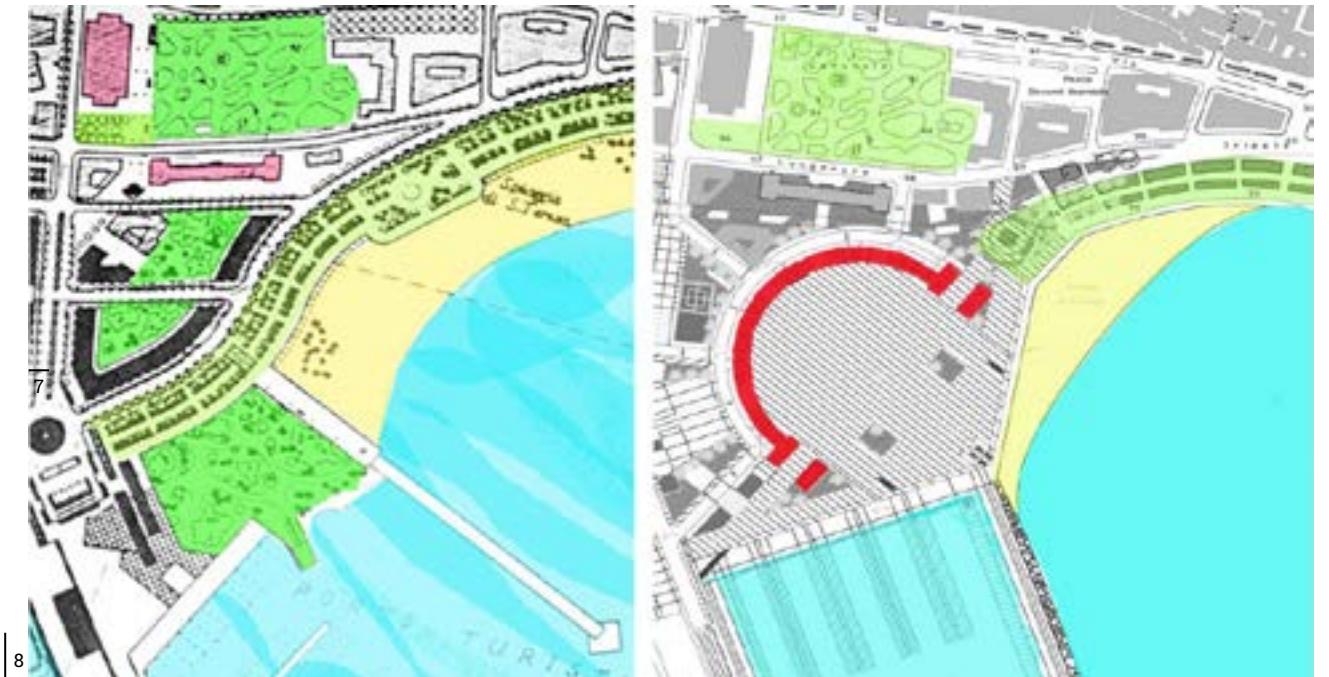
18 <https://architecture-history.org/architects/architects/BOFILL/OBJ/1986,%20LES%20COLONNES%20DE%20SAINT-CHRISTOPHE,%20CERGY-PONTOISE,%20FRANCE.html> (last accessed March 2025).

19 <https://architecture-history.org/architects/architects/BOFILL/OBJ/1992,%20Pa%20Soder%20Crescent,%20Stockholm,%20Sweden.html> (last accessed March 2025).

20 Comune di Salerno, *Indirizzi per la redazione del Pua di Santa Teresa*, May 25, 2007.

Fig. 7

From top to down, an image (on the right) and a sketch of respectively Port Juvenal, Les Colonnes de Saint-Christophe and Pa Soder Crescent. Source: Bofill Taller de Arquitectura.



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and municipal funds coming from a loan of €24 million from the Italian bank Cassa Depositi e Prestiti).

Controversy and Disputes over RBTA's Masterplan: from Crescent Retention to Sail Cancellation

Despite being awarded in 2007, the final version of the RBTA's project was showed only in a public presentation held on 18 March 2009 in Salerno City Hall.²¹ Afterwards, controversy and dissent had emerged, leading to the formation of the "NoCrescent Committee", which was actively supported by Italia Nostra and joined by other associations, both at local (*I figli delle Chianchiarelle*) and national levels, including *Legambiente*, the *Stop al consumo di suolo* (Stop Soil Consumption) and *Salviamo il paesaggio* (Let's Save the Landscape) (Comitato NoCrescent, 2013). In addition, a total of 50 among academics and intellectuals, including Salvatore Settis (1941) and the planner Pier Luigi Cervellati (1936), issued an appeal to the Minister of Culture to publicly expressed their opposition to the masterplan, claimed to be «a speculative intervention of enormous proportions that, by bending to the logic of profiting from public land ... has already resulted in very serious damage to the protected heritage».²²

The RBTA masterplan for the waterfront revitalization was blamed to

21 De Luca, *Parte 1 Presentazione De Luca Piazza della Libertà Salerno*; Vincenzo De Luca, *Parte 2 Presentazione De Luca Piazza della Libertà Salerno*, 2009.

22 Italia Nostra, *Crescent: un appello al Ministro Franceschini*, May 14, 2014, 1.



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Fig. 8

In the left-hand design, MBM Arquitectes' proposal entails the continuation of the sea-front promenade in the direction of the marina, whilst maintaining the integrity of Santa Teresa beach. In the right-hand design, the RBTA's Crescent proposal. Source: Comune di Salerno (2007).

Fig. 9

The Crescent mockup, with Vincenzo De Luca and Riccardo Bofill. Source: Comune di Salerno (2009).

lack territorial coherence for the following reasons.²³ Firstly, the creation of a new urban environment out of context and out of scale with respect to the existing urban fabric, obstructing sea views, and overshadowing the city's historic center. Secondly, the privatization of strategic public sectors and open spaces for placing luxury functions. Thirdly, the excessive costs associated with land purchase, RBTA fees, and engineering and environmental complexities due to massive anthropization (including the sealing of sea, beach and Fusandola stream in a city hit by a fatal earthquake in 1980). Eventually, the top-down approach to the waterfront revitalization, with nor transparency or democratic engagement.

From 2009 to 2014, the NoCrescent Committee and Italia Nostra submitted over 30 complaints to the judicial authorities, citing numerous illegitimacies.²⁴ These included the incomplete clearance of the area, irregularities in the authorization process, and lack of the environmental impact assessment, which was never requested by the Regional Commission despite the detour of the Fusandola stream encumbered by at least three constraints.

The situation was further complicated by the collapse of 12 support pillars in the parking lot below the Crescent square due to design errors. In December 2013, the square was placed under seizure and only partially released in October 2014 to allow for safety works. In December 2014,



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Salerno City Council approved the modification of the Santa Teresa project in compliance with the prescriptions of the Superintendence.²⁵ This modification provided for a partial downsizing of the Crescent, entailing the elimination of the two towers, the reduction of the hemicycle to a 28-m height to not exceeding the city skyline, and other minor interventions [Fig. 10, 11]. Furthermore, the investigation into alleged irregularities

23 Marco Preve and Ferruccio Sansa, *La colata. Il partito del cemento che sta cancellando l'Italia e il suo futuro* (Milan: Chiarelettere, 2010), 419-438; Gaetano Troisi, *La grande Muraglia nel porto di Salerno. Come si sfregia una città* (Napoli: Contracorrente, 2013); Irina Di Ruocco, "The waterfront of Salerno: from product of urban regeneration to diffuser of sustainable urban equity," in *Partecipazione, inclusione e gestione dei conflitti nei processi di governo del territorio*, vol. 07, ed. Tedesco Carla and Elena Marchigiani (Rome-Milan: Planum Publisher e Società Italiana degli Urbanisti, 2024), 115-118.

24 Pietro De Rosa, "La riqualificazione urbana della città di Salerno e il caso del Crescent," *Amministrativ@mente*, no. 5-6 (2014): 11-15.

25 Comune di Salerno, Piano Urbanistico Attuativo: Variante al sub_1 del Comparto CPS_1 Area S. Teresa di recepimento delle prescrizioni del parere BAP di SA_AV del 27.10.2014 n. 168052, (2014).

Fig. 10, 11

Renders of the modified project for the Crescent (2018). Source: <http://www.crescent-salerno.it/gallery-e-rendering/>.

in the building of the Crescent commenced on 23 December 2014, with a total of 57 hearings held prior to the initial ruling in September 2018. Further 22 hearings were held for the Appeals trial. The first-instance trial in September 2018 culminated in acquittals, as did the appeal trial in July 2021.²⁶ In September 2022, the Supreme Court of Cassation upheld the ruling of the Salerno Court of Appeals, which had recognized the full legitimacy of the actions of then-Mayor Vincenzo De Luca, who was accused of abuse of office, and all the others – politicians and technicians – variously involved.²⁷

While the project for the Crescent was modified and eventually completed in 2021 [Fig. 12], the City Council cancelled the RFTA's ideas for the Piazza della Concordia, Piazza Mazzini, and Masuccio Salernitano sector [Fig. 13], including the Sail tower, because its «construction in the central area of Salerno, occupying one of the few remaining open spaces in the city centre, would profoundly and irreversibly impacting the urban landscape ... A more rational and consistent approach would be to construct an extensive subterranean multi-level parking facility to fund the environmentally sustainable redevelopment of Mazzini Square».²⁸

During the entire process, it is remarkable the persistence of the former Mayor towards the design and implementation of the RBTA's ideas. De Luca expressed a strong conviction in the merits of the project, perceiving it as a catalyst for the city's future development, up to the point that «I have conceptualized the city of the future with the Sail as a center of attraction, but the extraordinary thing is that it is not just a dream»,²⁹ because it «marks the beginning of modern Salerno since the 1960s and a functional place destined to become a symbol of Campania, the Southern Italy and the whole country»³⁰ and «it is a work worth my life...it must be our Plebiscite Square, our Colosseum...to stop it they will have to shoot me».³¹ However, it remained questionable the absence of the RBTA in the local

26 "De Luca assolto anche in Appello nel processo Crescent, crollano ancora le accuse della Procura", *Il Riformista*, July 23, 2022.

27 "Cassazione assolve De Luca e chiude la lunga vicenda giudiziaria del complesso immobiliare Crescent", *Occhi su Salerno*, September 15, 2022.

28 Comune di Salerno, Approvazione variante parziale al PUC "Salva Piazza della Concordia", 15.

29 De Luca, Parte 1 Presentazione De Luca Piazza della Libertà Salerno.

30 De Luca, Parte 2 Presentazione De Luca Piazza della Libertà Salerno.

31 Bocca, *Il mostro del golfo di Salerno*.



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Fig. 12

Crescent in 2023. Source: Comune di Salerno.

Fig. 13

Salerno's waterfront today. Source: Author's elaboration from Google Earth (2025).

debate since the award of the international design competition,³² as well as the omission of the project on Salerno waterfront in the architectural firm’s website.³³

Conclusion

According to a strategy that uses architectural firms following the example of global cities based on focus on design excellence, the less-told story of Salerno concentrated on the sea-front revitalization by landmark items that modified the local General Master Plan from the 1990s. The focus of this research lies in a subject that, regrettably, cannot be ascribed exclusively to Salerno or RBTA. This case study is also not the first of its kind, although Mayor De Luca overemphasized its significance as he intensively showed off about his flamboyant urban initiatives, giving the impression to be a sort of pioneer in this strategy of star-architects attracted in medium-sized cities.

As demonstrated by the RBTA masterplan for Salerno waterfront, the success of a star-architecture-led project does not depend on the quality of the designed building or the single urban project, but its relationship with a shared vision of the territory. The solo intervention planned for the Salerno seafront by RBTA imagined a new part of the city that involved a huge modification in terms of land-use and infrastructure without being in dialogue with the entire city. This aspect was in contradiction with what happened in the case of the 1992 Olympics held in Barcelona, whose waterfront revitalization was based on a shared scenario established at metropolitan level according to a system of new areas of centrality. Another critical issue characterizing the case study was whether the allocation of a substantial amount of public funds to the waterfront represented the most efficient use of resources for the benefit of local citizens. Although most of the expenditure was tied to the failed project centered on the Sail, the allocation of a large investment to a private luxury condominium with parking lot (Crescent) constituted a matter of concern. Beyond aesthetic considerations, the Crescent serves as an unfortunate example of private investment in public land triggered by a public entity. The reasons for the lack of public equipment and green spaces in the Crescent’s surroundings, which would have positively impacted its acceptance by the public opinion, remain unclear.

Moreover, a more democratic governance process should have involved citizen participation through instruments such as a referendum or a real participative planning process, which would have facilitated a direct confrontation with the execution of the proposed transformation. The

incongruence of the RBTA project with the previous MBM Architectes-led General Master Plan was a politically-decided change and constituted a pivotal element in the redesign of the waterfront line. Instead of elaborating an impacting and high-costing proposal involving luxury structures like the Crescent and the Sail, others could have been the uses more in line with the territorial identity of Salerno. This is especially true for the Crescent, which, in its previous versions in other countries, was devoted mainly to social housing instead of high-end apartments. Despite these shortcomings, the Crescent constituted an urban intervention that has returned a portion of the city to its citizens, where previously there was only degradation. The strengths and weaknesses of the project can be determined through the use and users of the new spaces of this new sector of Salerno’s waterfront, as well as its capacity to deal with possible threads coming from the fragile ecosystem of the waterfront and earthquakes.

To conclude, a broader investigation of various topics scarcely addressed by this research can involve three further works in order to confirm or clarify the results presented in this paper. Firstly, a more in-depth reflection and a graphic comparison with other projects in which the forms that RBTA resorts to in the Salerno project, such as the hemicycle and the sail, are used. Indeed, from the reflection induced by this comparative exercise, the reasons for the forms used in this project as well might emerge. Secondly, a comparative study in planimetric and volumetric terms of the two proposals by MBM and RBTA using their original drawings. This would allow for a critical judgment regarding urban qualities in support of one or the other proposal that can provide a truly original perspective on the subject. Eventually, surveys of MBM and RBTA architectural studios, policy-makers, citizens and other stakeholders involved in the case study, along with the enlargement of medium-sized cities could prove useful in further studies for detailing insights of the effects and implications related to the replication of star architecture projects from first- to second-tier cities.

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- URBAN.Baukultur: Baukultur urbanística de las ciudades medias españolas: caracterización, perfiles y potencialidades (research project PID2023-146844NB-I00 financed by MCIU / AEI /10.13039/501100011033 / FEDER, UE).

32 Alessandro Castagnaro, ed., “Dossier Salerno,” *Rassegna ANIAI*26, no. 2-3 (2015), 2-105.
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