

# LOST AND FOUND

Processes of abandonment of the architectural and urban heritage  
in inner areas. Causes, effects, and narratives (Italy, Albania, Romania)

Edited by Annunziata Maria Oteri

ArchistoR  
EXTRA



## Nuovi insediamenti per antiche comunità delocalizzate. Il trasferimento di Canolo 1951-1955

Marco Mareggi (Politecnico di Milano)

*Il testo restituisce le vicende che portarono alla creazione dell'insediamento di Canolo Nuovo, sull'Aspromonte ionico in Calabria. Dopo una nota metodologica e una rassegna della letteratura disponibile su questo centro calabro, il contributo ripercorre le tappe che dall'alluvione del 1951 portarono al raddoppio del paese sui piani della Milea, in località Schiavone fiorentino, 500 metri più a monte, nel territorio comunale e su terre pubbliche. Il racconto si articola tra un resoconto dell'alluvione, dei danni provocati e delle richieste di intervento da parte degli enti locali al governo nazionale. Segue una disamina delle ragioni della scelta localizzativa, una presentazione del complesso residenziale fondativo realizzato nell'ambito del programma Ina-Casa, la descrizione del piano regolatore per Canolo nuovo e della sua attuazione nell'immediato e una rassegna critica dell'urbanistica del nuovo centro urbano-rurale. In conclusione, si riflette sul processo di trasferimento, sui programmi e strumenti urbanistici messi in campo e sulla forma urbana del nuovo insediamento per sottolineare le energie investite per una rinascita altrove incompiuta.*

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[www.archistor.unirc.it](http://www.archistor.unirc.it)

ArchistoR EXTRA 13 (2024)

ISSN 2384-8898

Supplemento di ArchistoR 19/2023

ISBN 978-88-85479-11-1

DOI: 10.14633/AHR403



# New Settlements for Ancient Delocalized Communities. The Transfer of Canolo 1951-1955

Marco Mareggi

For a long time, both tragic and ordinary events have led to the peculiar phenomenon of settlement abandonment in marginal contexts, resulting in the relocation of most of the population to a different territorial area.

Over the past twenty years, the debate on abandonment in Italy and urban shrinkage in international literature has encompassed both urban, densely populated areas and rural, sparsely populated ones. This discussion originated in the planning sector during the 1970s in the USA<sup>1</sup>, spurred by the profound deindustrialization and suburbanization in the Midwest and along the Atlantic Coast. The theme gained relevance thanks to the international research project *Shrinking Cities*<sup>2</sup>, which emerged from the German debate on post-Fordist and post-socialist transformations. The causes of abandonment are multifaceted. Philipp Oswalt and Tim Rieniets<sup>3</sup> identify four major drivers of urban contraction:

- *destruction*, such as wars, conflicts, or natural disasters (earthquakes, eruptions, floods, droughts, or tsunamis); that can be also ecological and epidemic crises, which force populations to flee or result in significant demographic losses;

1. FOL 2012.

2. OSWALT 2005; 2006.

3. OSWALT, RIENIETS 2006.

- *loss*, which refers to the depletion of resources like jobs, water, or fossil fuels;
- *shifting*, encompassing migrations of businesses and populations due to industrial delocalization or suburbanization;
- *change*, describing radical transformations, whether political or demographic, including changes in life expectancy, natural growth, aging, or economic shifts.

This phenomenon is often analyzed through demographic trends which, despite their unpredictability, indicate – according to some scholars<sup>4</sup> – that depopulation and population redistribution are challenges Western countries must confront. These migrations are closely linked to social and economic changes that exert regressive physical and territorial effects on anthropized environments. In urban areas, contraction does not necessarily equate to a reduction in the global physical extent of urbanized spaces; rather, it manifests as “perforation” and underuse, producing what has been called the “perforated city”<sup>5</sup>. Conversely, in low-density contexts, outcomes range from resident depletion to the disuse of services and infrastructure, culminating in the abandonment of smaller settlements<sup>6</sup>. It is precisely this latter aspect that we aim to address.

In 2008, a national Italian research project examined the ongoing transitions in small villages, exploring conditions that ranged from prosperity to mediocrity and even to housing deprivation. The latter condition is often a precursor to the phenomenon of ghost towns<sup>7</sup>. In this article, however, the focus is on the total or partial abandonment of smaller settlements, where and when a new settlement emerges in a different location, resulting in a population transfer from the previous area.

To develop this theme, a favorable research context has been chosen: Southern Italy. Over the past few decades, a small body of Italian scientific literature has emerged, focusing on the architecture and morphology of abandoned centers<sup>8</sup>. These studies are often connected to anthropological and, to some extent, historical research<sup>9</sup>. In recent years, books and journals have expanded this field with studies showcasing experiments in restoration, conservation<sup>10</sup>, and the revitalization of smaller

4. HOSPERS, REVERDA 2015; GÖTMARK, CAFARO, O’SULLIVAN 2018.

5. PALLAGST, WIECHMANN, MARTINEZ-FERNANDEZ 2014.

6. IBA-BÜRO, BAUHAUS DESSAU FOUNDATION 2010; ANDREASSI 2016; OTERI, SCAMARDÌ 2020.

7. CONFCOMMERCIO, LEGAMBIENTE 2008.

8. For Basilicata, see PEDIO 1990; for Calabria, see COLISTRA 2001.

9. CLEMENTE 1997; TETI 2004, 2017; TARPINO 2012.

10. OTERI, SCAMARDÌ 2020.

abandoned centers<sup>11</sup>. Particular attention has been devoted to Calabria, a region described as lacking «proper cities»<sup>12</sup>, where small and very small centers dominate, and abandonment represents a persistent and enduring issue<sup>13</sup>. The anthropologist Vito Teti suggests that it is possible to trace a distinct history of abandonment in Calabria, as this phenomenon «has assumed and continues to assume a broader, more generalized, and complex character than elsewhere»<sup>14</sup>. At this stage, it is fundamental to highlight those cases where a place is abandoned in favor of resettlement elsewhere. Teti notes that, since ancient times, there has been a dynamic of «abandonments and reconstructions, constant foundations, transfers of anthropological places and centers, desacralization and forgetting of ancient sites, and the sacralization and creation of new ones. The ruins almost always tell, certify, and allude to a construction or a rebirth elsewhere»<sup>15</sup>. The focus of this study is on new foundations that do not follow the typical cycle of birth, death, and revival of settlements within the same territorial context<sup>16</sup>. Instead, these cases involve villages that “switch off” and regenerate in a different area, which appears to provide greater sustainability for the community’s settlement.

This phenomenon, defined in Calabria as the “double villages”<sup>17</sup>, involves a form of “geographical mobility” or “geographical migration”. In this process, the population of a settlement migrates to a new location after abandonment, carrying with them names, institutions, and memories. Sometimes both twin villages, founded at different times, remain active and functional; at other times, one is abandoned in favor of the other. Vito Teti identifies two primary patterns of abandonment and reconstruction: along the coastline (e.g., Africo, Casalnuovo, later Roghudi, and Badolato); In the interior (e.g., Natile, Careri, Canolo, Badolato, and Nardodipace)<sup>18</sup>.

The author<sup>19</sup> has synthesized the geography of these movements into four modalities:

- transfer, predominant in modern times, where inhabited centers move *from the mountains to*

11. E.g., BERIZZI, ROCCELLI 2019; BERTINOTTI 2019, 2020; GASTALDI, CAMERIN 2023.

12. GAMBI 1965, p. 475

13. GIOVANNINI 2001

14. TETI 2017, p. 182.

15. *Ibidem*.

16. VAN DEN BERG *et al.* 1982.

17. MELELLI 2004.

18. TETI 2018.

19. MAREGGI, ROMBOLÀ 2024.

*the sea*, creating the phenomenon of *maritime towns*<sup>20</sup>. These often arise within the same river valley and municipal territory of the abandoned settlement;

- *new coastal foundations*, located several kilometers away from the original sites and outside their municipal boundaries;

- *relocation near the original settlement*, preserving the hilly or mountainous context;

- creation of *doubled villages in the mountains*, with new houses built on plateaus. This last typology is the specific focus of this article, particularly concerning the settlement of *Canolo Nuovo*.

As previously mentioned, although the transfer of inhabitants has historically characterized the Calabria region, it intensified with the enactment of central government legislative measures issued in response to catastrophic events such as earthquakes and floods. The first measure, Law N. 255/1906 *Provvedimento a favore della Calabria (Measures for Calabria)*, initiated the compilation of a list of locations damaged by the 1905 earthquake. Following the 1908 earthquake, whose epicenter was in the Messina Strait, Law N. 445/1908 *Provvedimenti per la Calabria e la Basilicata (Measures for Calabria and Basilicata)* decreed the relocation of numerous settlements due to landslide risks or unstable hydrogeological conditions. For Calabria alone, the initial list included 62 small towns and 27 hamlets, 24 of which were in the province of Reggio Calabria. This list was subsequently supplemented and expanded<sup>21</sup>. After the floods in the summer and autumn of 1951 – when the devastating consequences in the Polesine region of Emilia-Romagna and Veneto diverted attention from Southern Italian regions – Law N. 9/1952 was enacted: *Provvedimenti per le aree danneggiate dalle alluvioni e mareggiate dell'estate e dell'autunno 1951 in Calabria, Sicilia, Sardegna, Liguria, Piemonte, Lombardia, Veneto, Emilia, Toscana, Puglia e Campania (Measures for the Areas Damaged by the Floods and High Tides of the Summer and Autumn of 1951 in Calabria, Sicily, Sardinia, Liguria, Piedmont, Lombardy, Veneto, Emilia, Tuscany, Apulia, and Campania)*.

This national legislative measure authorized the Ministry of Public Works to address the restoration of damages caused by floods and high tides. On one hand, this involved public and hydraulic works; on the other, it included granting contributions for the repair or reconstruction of privately-owned houses and artisan-commercial businesses, limited to essential works ensuring habitability and usability. Contributions, which could cover up to 90% of costs, varied based on the socio-economic conditions of families. Moreover, the Ministry was tasked with the consolidation or

20. KISH 1953.

21. See SULFARO in this volume, pp. 44-89.

relocation of settlements, even if they were not included in the lists of previous laws. In particular, for settlements marked for relocation, the construction of essential infrastructure was authorized, including water supply, sewage systems, internal roads, electric lighting, as well as public buildings such as churches, rectories, cemeteries, schools, and public housing for needy and homeless families. Lastly, notwithstanding existing regulations, the master plan for relocated settlements was to be approved by the competent Office of Public Works.

Subsequently, following the floods of 1953, Law N. 938/1953, *Provvedimenti per le aree danneggiate dalle alluvioni in Calabria (Provisions for the Areas Damaged by the Floods in Calabria)*, was approved. This law, specific to the region, updated the list of small towns and villages to be relocated or repaired, as outlined in Law N. 455/1908. Furthermore, it established contributions for the repair or reconstruction of private residences, which could also be undertaken by the state, with a repayment period of 10 years for contributions due from the beneficiaries. Among the eligible expenses was the purchase of new buildable land, which could be expropriated if deemed to be in the public interest. However, Law N. 1177/1955, *Provvedimenti straordinari per la Calabria (Extraordinary Provisions for Calabria)*, encouraged the development of a 12-year plan for Calabria (1955-1967). This plan involved extraordinary works for hydraulic and forestry arrangements, river courses, and mountain slopes. The results, however, were sporadic and partial<sup>22</sup>.

If these interventions did not ensure the safety and economic stability of the inhabitants, the law provided, on the one hand, for the partial or total relocation of the towns, or, on the other, for the consolidation of the settlements. With this law, the state shifted from an emergency response approach – focused on existing settlements – to a «concrete program» that aimed «not only to repair the damage [...] but, primarily, to prevent new and further dangerous damage»<sup>23</sup>. Additionally, the law allocated financial resources to municipalities and confirmed the previous economic contributions for the construction of new residences and the acquisition of land, which could be expropriated in cases of recognized public interest<sup>24</sup>.

This set of post-disaster measures, providing both guidance and administrative support for urban rebuilding, relocation, and consolidation in good faith, once again underscores the prominence of Calabria in Italian legislative interventions related to regional territory, which are updated and specified for this region.

22. DE GIORGIO DONATO 1983.

23. CASSA PER IL MEZZOGIORNO 1961, p. 14.

24. For a more in-depth analysis of the legal framework, see SULFARO in this volume, pp. 44-89.

The chronological choice of the referenced legislation is driven by the historical events reinterpreted in this article, specifically focusing on the partial relocation of a small village in the Calabrian Apennines following the floods of the 1950s. The village of Canolo was selected as an illustrative example to explore and test a history-based research interpretative model<sup>25</sup> on the relocation of settlements following the abandonment of part of the town. This case was chosen because it exemplifies rapid settlement transformations – with the emergence of a new centre – following a meteorological event and subsequent flood in October 1951. Canolo’s relocation offers several points of interest:

- a new settlement was relocated upstream to a plateau compared to its previous location, which was perched on a rocky spur. During this historical phase, the choice of location upstream was less common compared to relocating a new town downstream and often near the coastline;
- the relocation occurred within the same municipality’s territory, less documented in scientific literature compared to relocations outside the municipality, such as Africo in 1951<sup>26</sup> and Roghudi in 1971-1972<sup>27</sup>;
- the new location allowed the continuation of customary socio-economic activities, particularly agricultural, forestry, and pastoral practices, maintaining a socio-economic regime similar to that of the old settlement;
- the abandonment only partially affected the old nucleus, with part of it being abandoned due to its disrepair, which was officially declared uninhabitable in 1952<sup>28</sup>.

The following text provides an account of the events that led to the creation of the Canolo Nuovo settlement. After a brief methodological note and a review of the available literature on this Calabrian village, the article retraces key steps in the events that resulted in the doubling of the town on the plains of Milea following the disastrous flood of October 1951, in the locality of Schiavone Fiorentino, 500 meters upstream. This new location remained within the municipal territory and largely on municipal or public lands. The narrative progresses by first reporting on the flood and the damages incurred, followed by an examination of the initial requests for intervention by local authorities directed at the national government. This is then followed by an analysis of the reasons behind the choice of a new settlement location, a presentation of the social housing complex created

25. See OTERI in this volume, pp. 8-39.

26. ZANOTTI BIANCO 1954, 1959; STAIANO 1979.

27. CRUPI 1981; TETI 2004.

28. Ministerial Decree of 2 April 1952, «Gazzetta Ufficiale» N. 123/1952.

as part of the INA-Casa program, and a detailed description of the master plan for Canolo Nuovo and its immediate implementation. Furthermore, the article offers a critical review of the urban planning strategies used in the development of the new urban-rural center. In conclusion, reflections are provided on the relocation process, the urban planning programs and tools implemented, and the organizational and spatial planning of the new settlement, emphasizing the efforts made toward an incomplete rebirth elsewhere.

## 2. *The Transfer to Canolo Nuovo: A Scarce Literature and an Archival Document-Based Narrative*

The settlement of Canolo Nuovo has been briefly, effectively, and informatively recounted by Vito Teti in *Il senso dei luoghi: Memoria e storia dei paesi abbandonati (The sense of places: memory and history of abandoned villages)*<sup>29</sup>, in the chapter dedicated to the complex story of Africo and the geographical and economic extraterritoriality of its relocation. In the few lines that conclude the section *Dove andare? Diversi scenari per un paese nuovo (Where to go? Different Scenarios for a New Town)*, Canolo is presented as one of the few settlements for which the relocation was carried out «taking into account the ancient productive and economic forms of the population, as well as public and municipal properties»<sup>30</sup>.

Otherwise, Antonio Marando – writing in *Nord e Sud*, the monthly journal directed by Francesco Compagna – narrates the story in a detailed manner within the context of the political representation system and electoral behaviours<sup>31</sup>. In Canolo, the social-communist coalition dominated: many voters supported the Italian Communist Party (PCI), while the representation of the national government, entrusted to the Christian Democracy (DC), was subordinate, both before and after the flood and the relocation of the settlement. In the 1950s, the town was experiencing constant demographic growth and emigration (an average of 50 people per year). For this reason, the author focuses on the need for the education of the many children (over 200 out of a population of 2,213 inhabitants between the old and new towns, with 1,329 registered on the electoral rolls in 1958) and the inadequacy of the school facilities. In Canolo, schools were rented, unsanitary, or held in homes, while Canolo Nuovo had proper classrooms for elementary classes and a kindergarten. The author's words convey a positive judgment regarding the new settlement, but he does not fail to

29. TETI 2004.

30. *Ivi*, p. 233.

31. MARANDO 1958.

highlight the differing opinions among politicians and residents regarding the location of the new town: «Many would have preferred the town to be rebuilt closer to the municipality’s territory, so as not to cut off the *Canolesi* who were relocated from their natural work areas. Others – and it seems they are the majority – insist on the complete reconstruction of Canolo on the Milea plains, where the first cluster of buildings emerged. Another road, connecting Old Canolo and New Canolo, would solve the problem and break the isolation to the north as well, linking the two centers with State Road 111, Gioia Tauro-Locri»<sup>32</sup>.

Domenico Romeo also provides some information on the birth of Canolo Nuovo in his recent text<sup>33</sup>. Thanks to some archival resources<sup>34</sup>, he recalls that «the families that decided to move to Canolo Nuovo were initially 12; in 1954, there were a total of 40 families with around 170 people»<sup>35</sup>. He also highlights the hardships caused by the relocation to higher ground. Some families rejected it due to the difficulties of the climate and houses «not suitable for retaining heat in the winter months»<sup>36</sup>. Again in 1954, discontent led the mayor to request subsidies for the flood victims who were relocated to new housing.

These fragments of the story touch upon various aspects: the reasons behind the choice of the site for the twin village, the debated positions regarding staying or moving, and the continuity of the left-wing political line. However, they only partially address the physical and urban transformations of the settlement, except for the road network. These aspects will be of interest in subsequent research.

The initiative was part of the Lost and Found research funded by the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies (DASU) of the Politecnico di Milano within the RIBA program 2021, which aims to investigate the processes of abandonment of architectural and urban heritage in inner areas, examining their causes, effects, and narratives in three European countries (Italy, Albania, Romania). The information presented here is based on archival research conducted in January and February 2023 at the Municipal Archive of Canolo (ACC)<sup>37</sup> and the State Archive of Reggio Calabria (ASRC), specifically

32. *Ivi*, p. 118.

33. ROMEO 2007.

34. The information is taken from the State Archive of Reggio Calabria (ASRC), *Prefettura Alluvione 1951-1953*, busta 52, fascicolo 18.

35. ROMEO 2007, p. 116.

36. *Ibidem*.

37. At the Municipal Archive of Canolo (ACC), I consulted the dossiers related to the years 1950-1954 and the town-

the Civil Engineering Corps Archive of Reggio Calabria, series 1.2.26, *Opere di consolidamento e trasferimento dei centri abitati (Consolidation and Relocation Works)*, documentation that has not been reordered or catalogued. Additionally, parliamentary records from 1947 to 1958 and a selection of press reviews from 1951 to 1978<sup>38</sup> were consulted. All these allowed access to original and unpublished material. Archival research was complemented by a study of the literature on the local context, abandoned towns in Southern Italy, and post-World War II urban planning in Italy, conducted between July and September 2022. Despite the documentation obtained, the availability of material regarding how the local community, the municipal council, and the local press reported and discussed the projects for the new settlement was limited. Furthermore, the documentation related to the projects remains unsystematically organized. In contrast, site visits conducted in June 2022 and February 2023 provided further insights into the situation of the established settlement, its conformity to and deviations from the planned projects and programs, and its status as a twinned and partially abandoned inhabited centre.

### 3. The Cartographic Evidence a Few Years After the “Devastating Flood”

1954. The Quadrant IV North-East section A of Sheet 255 of the Italian Map at a scale of 1:10,000, titled Cànolo<sup>39</sup>, depicts a dual settlement (fig. 1). To the east, Cànolo is visible as an urban cluster with a dense building pattern, located on a slope ranging from 370 to 450 meters above sea level. The settlement is organized according to the terrain’s topography and bordered by a winding road that leads to the small town. The compact built space clearly defines the urban form. The old settlement lies below a rugged ridge, frequently incised by numerous streams that flow into the Novito stream’s water basin on the Ionian slope, where agriculture represents the only economic activity, «from which the population derives their very meager livelihood»<sup>40</sup>. To the west, in the locality of Schiavone, at approximately 900 meters above sea level – where contour lines become

planning documents of the transfer to Canolo Nuovo, which was donated to the Municipality by the family of the technical office surveyor Pasquale Gangemi, who drew up an allotment plan (presumed date 1955-56). I also consulted the town planning instruments stored at the Municipality’s technical office of Canolo.

38. The collection of parliamentary acts (1<sup>st</sup> legislature 1948-53; 2nd legislature 1953-1958) and the press review was conducted by Antonio Buttiglione.

39. The map was produced in 1958, thanks to the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno under the Special Law for Calabria, Law N. 1177/1955 and with the technical assistance of the Istituto Geografico Militare, based on aerophotos taken in 1954.

40. CASSA PER IL MEZZOGIORNO 1961, p. 372.

sparse – the Milea plains are depicted, showing Cànolo Nuovo. The new settlement is represented by a road grid within which two groups of buildings are organized: the first group follows an orthogonal pattern aligned with the aqueduct line and features the same building form replicated eight times, while the second building complex exhibits a road layout that extends linearly beyond the town, containing buildings of various shapes. Open spaces and roadways characterize the new settlement.

Official cartography documents the new urban configuration: the old town and its duplicate at a higher altitude. This was achieved despite only three years having passed since the «disastrous flood»<sup>41</sup> of October 15-18, 1951, which affected not only Canolo but also Southern Italy and its islands with a severe and exceptional volume of water. The flood caused casualties and posed significant dangers to houses (many collapsed or damaged), aqueducts, roads, and bridges that collapsed. The severe weather, «from October 15 to 20, 1951, raged throughout the Province of Reggio Calabria, causing varying degrees of damage to 75 municipalities»<sup>42</sup>.

Immediately, on October 18, 1951, Canolo's Mayor, Giovanni Lupis, wrote to the prefect, the Provincial Administration, and the Civil Engineering Office in Reggio Calabria regarding the «damages that have assumed hyperbolic forms, and more are expected»<sup>43</sup>. In addition to one casualty, the damages included the interruption of telegraph, telephone, and postal lines, the collapse and interruption of the Canolo-Siderno Marina provincial road at various points, the Pachina bridge over the Novito stream on the verge of collapse, and a rock overhanging the inhabited area that threatened to fall onto houses in the upper part of the town. Some of these houses were damaged, and many were left without roofs. The countryside also suffered significant damage. The situation prompted an evacuation order the following day, October 19, 1951, to ensure “public safety” for homes deemed dangerous, while at the same time vacant homes were requisitioned to accommodate the homeless<sup>44</sup>. On October 20, 1951, a detailed list was compiled, reporting: 12 collapsed houses in the countryside (64 people), 7 collapsed houses in the town (25 people), 37 families evacuated from

41. ACC, *Richiesta di urgenti opere di sostegno da parte di cittadini delle contrade*, sent to the Mayor of Canolo, November 6, 1951, manuscript.

42. ZANOTTI BIANCO 1954, p. 455.

43. ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Segnalazione per pronto intervento*, letter sent to the Provincial Administration and to the Civil Engineering Office, October 18, 1951.

44. ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Alloggi per sinistrati sfollati*, letter sent to the Mayor of Siderno Marina, November 6, 1951, prot. N. 1963, manuscript.

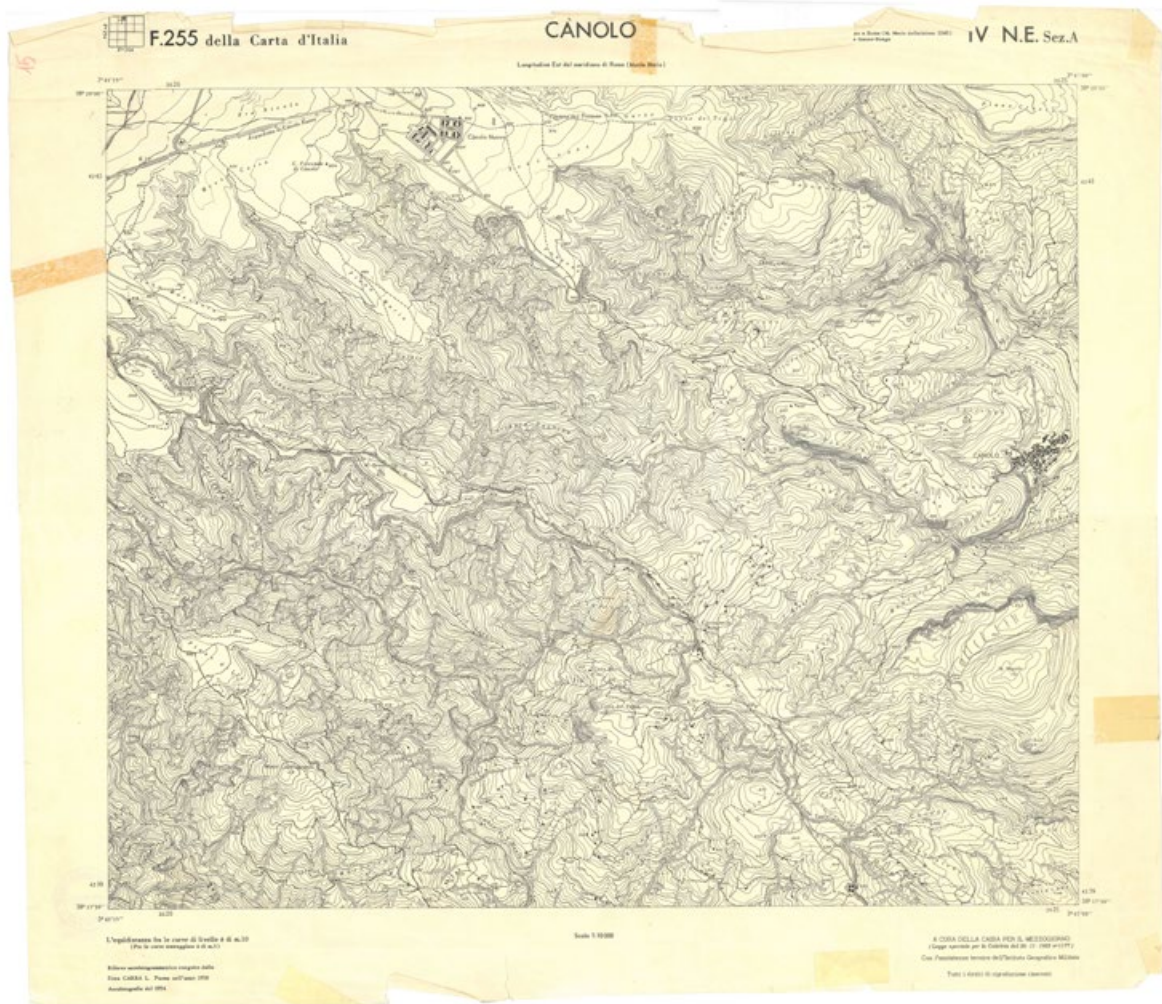


Figure 1. The twin village of Canolo. In Canolo Nuovo the development of the first batch (48 units) and the second batch (32 units) of public housing, the kindergarten, and part of the private terraced houses are represented (Carra L. Company, 1958, drawing, 1:10000. Aerial photographs, 1954).

dangerous houses below the rocky mass (74 people), 12 houses at risk of landslides (35 people), and 33 damaged houses (125 people)<sup>45</sup>. On the same day, a meeting was convened with representatives of the Italian Socialist Party, Christian Democracy, Italian Communist Party, INCA, the labour union, the Combatants' Section, the Italian Red Cross, agricultural representatives, the elementary school trustee, the merchants' representative, the health officer, the municipal collaborator, the parish priest, the Carabinieri station commander, two teachers, the municipal tax collector, and representatives of free unions, forming a Citizens' Committee for Relief (*Comitato cittadino per i soccorsi*)<sup>46</sup>. As president of the committee, the mayor sent a telegram to the prefect of Reggio Calabria, the Ministry of the Interior in Rome, the Public Works Superintendent of Catanzaro, and the Ministry of Public Works, reporting that the «situation has worsened, with 1,500 homeless people due to the evacuation of their homes, which have collapsed and are uninhabitable. It is impossible to provide houses for the population, which is agitated; immediate measures are urgently needed. We disclaim responsibility for any riots and further disasters»<sup>47</sup>.

On the prefect's instructions, a commission composed of the mayor, parish priest, Carabinieri commander, and ECA president was tasked with providing immediate assistance to the affected families, compiling a list of destroyed or evacuated houses, and arranging for housing and food distribution<sup>48</sup>.

On October 29, 1951, the Civil Engineering Office examined the situation regarding the landslide and «the demolition and removal of dangerous rocks, the stability of the retaining wall under construction [...], and the stationary conditions of the Crisimo ridge», confirming that «the only area of the town to be evacuated as a protective measure is delimited by the line [...] starting from the foot of the Crisimo cliff, following the northern front of the D'Agostino house and the uphill side of Castello, Anacor Staltari, Crisimo streets, and Primo Crisimo Street, until it reaches the Longo house. Furthermore, the first row of houses along Cimitero Street and below the Palombaro cliff must be evacuated due to a potential landslide. All houses with precarious stability must be evacuated»<sup>49</sup>.

45. ACC, *Elenco delle case crollate, danneggiate, pericolanti e lesionate*, October 20, 1951.

46. ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Invito alla riunione per discutere argomenti inerenti gli ingentissimi danni verificatisi a seguito delle alluvioni degli scorsi giorni*, October 20, 1951, prot. N. 1855.

47. ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Aggravamento della situazione relativa agli sgomberi delle abitazioni*, letter sent to the prefect of Reggio Calabria, Minister of the Interior, Public Works Superintendent of Catanzaro, Minister of Public Works, October 21, 1951.

48. ACC, *Circolare del Prefetto di Reggio Calabria ai sindaci*, telegram, N. 7, October 23, 1951.

49. ACC, Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Zone dell'abitato da sgomberare*, engineer Ungaro Comincio, letter

It was again the mayor who acted as the spokesperson for the Citizens' Committee for Flood Relief, formally petitioning the Ministries of the Interior and Public Works. Additionally, he urged parliamentarians and government officials to address the «urgent need to construct housing for the homeless»<sup>50</sup> in Canolo. During those years, significant attention was given to the situation in Canolo by Calabrian deputies or those connected to the Calabrian context. This attention predominantly came from socialist and communist politicians, possibly due to Canolo being one of the strongholds of the left in that area.

On November 1, 1951, the mayors of Canolo, Grotteria, Mortone, Marina di Gioiosa, and Siderno jointly requested both immediate and long-term interventions. Immediate measures included «the urgent construction of any type of shelter in safe areas as close as possible to the old buildings to accommodate the homeless, which can be summarized as follows: Canolo 300 families, Siderno 137 families, Marina di Gioiosa 60 families, Mortone 10 families, Grotteria 150 families». In addition, they called for long-term measures for «definitive and radical solutions» related to: a) reforestation of mountainous areas; b) the «consolidation of inhabited centers to save what is still salvageable and relocate some of them to areas more suitable for the economic interests of the populations living there»; c) «upstream containment and downstream embankment works to discipline the waters of rivers and numerous streams»; d) the construction of aqueducts, sewer systems capable of managing rainwater, and improving and making road networks more efficient; e) «intensifying the construction of homes for workers according to the plan entrusted to INA-Casa, and substantially supporting private initiatives, especially in small villages»<sup>51</sup>.

From the documents, on one hand, it becomes evident that the local government was capable of swiftly mobilizing to request support and communicate the critical situation. This action involved broad participation from all community stakeholders, who were considered to have specific interests and a clear role within the community. On the other hand, requests for long-term measures were equally prompt and demonstrated the ability to promote political initiatives beyond local interests.

sent to the Mayor of Canolo, October 29, 1951.

50. The Mayor of Canolo has urged: the honourable Filippo Murdaca, Undersecretary of State, November 20, 1951; the honourable Francesco Geraci, Giacomo Mancini, Vittorio Pugliese, November 22, 1951; the Undersecretary of State for Mails and Telecommunications Vito G. Galati, November 22, 1951 (ACC, Letters and their replies); and the honourable Spoleto who ensures the fast construction of inhabited buildings, November 27, 1951 (ACC, Telegram). In the same period also communist senator Eugenio Musolino took interest in the transfer of Canolo.

51. ACC, Comune di Siderno, *Provvedimenti urgenti e di lungo periodo*, minutes signed by Mayors of Canolo, Grotteria, Mortone, Marina di Gioiosa and Siderno, November 1, 1951, prot. N. 8067.

It is worth noting, however, that the immediate interventions requested were standard and recurring needs in post-disaster situations (ranging from food and blankets to shelter for all). Meanwhile, the long-term interventions – including the consolidation or relocation of settlements and hydrogeological prevention measures – were based on principles of economic management and anthropogenic control of the water system, with less focus on preserving the architectural heritage and addressing hydrogeological risks resulting from improper human interference. Beyond political acumen and social cohesion driven by the emergency, some issues related to changes in the territory and their urban planning implications are evident.

#### 4. *The Reasons for the Choice of Location*

The decision-making process following the event was active not only at the inter-municipal level but also at the local and national levels.

While finding accommodations for the homeless was challenging in the immediate aftermath for all nearby municipalities<sup>52</sup>, the decision-making process regarding the relocation of the settlement was more effective. On November 6, 1951, the Citizens' Committee (composed of 20 participants) convened «to discuss and approve the following agenda: the possible relocation of the Canolo Center settlement to a more stable location»<sup>53</sup>. According to the meeting minutes, there was a need to «*establish and choose the location for the construction of new homes for the disaster victims and the homeless [...] and it is considered that the entire urban centre should be relocated to the selected location due to its susceptibility to landslides*»<sup>54</sup>.

The arguments in favour of choosing the Milea plains in Schiavone Fiorentino included:

- the danger posed to the old settlement by the overhanging rock and the instability of the terrain, where a consolidation intervention «would not provide any guarantee for a safe and definitive settlement of the town»<sup>55</sup>;

52. ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Brevi cenni di relazione sulle condizioni dal lato economico finanziario del Comune in relazione alla nuova situazione delineatasi in seguito al nubifragio abbattutosi recentemente*, November 15, 1951, prot. N. 2023.

53. ACC, Invite of Mayor Lupis to the Citizens' Committee for the eventual transfer of Canolo in a stronger location, November 6, 1951, manuscript.

54. ACC, Minutes of Citizens' Committee's meeting to choose the locality to put the houses for the victims, November 6, 1951. The italics in the text are ours.

55. *Ibidem*.

- the enormous costs of the consolidation project;
- the necessity to tap the aquifer under the settlement, which would result in the disappearance of the kitchen gardens below, «to the serious detriment of the population, which would not find it convenient to stay in the area»<sup>56</sup>;

- employment reasons, as «the main activity of the farmers is carried out in the vast Milea plains»<sup>57</sup>.

The Citizens' Committee, consisting of representatives from all trade union and political factions, unanimously approved the choice. However, some individuals did not intend to relocate. The committee committed to maintaining the decision even if higher authorities did not accept the town's relocation.

Evidence of transformations in Canolo is also present in parliamentary records. In the Chamber of Deputies, on November 12, 1951, Calabrian Deputy Francesco Geraci noted that the new settlement would be facilitated by the extension of the «road connection of provincial road N. 17 Canolo-Siderno, already planned with funding from the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno*»<sup>58</sup>. To reinforce the arguments for the relocation to the Milea plains, on January 22, 1953, arguments were presented in the Italian Senate. Calabrian Senator Eugenio Musolino declared that the areas involved were not only communal property but also «suitable for cultivation, sufficient to provide an economic base for the population, and with prospects for tourist development due to the beauty of the places, the healthiness of the climate, and the freshness of drinking water»<sup>59</sup>. The government's response, however, was more cautious. Undersecretary of State Ludovico Camangi noted that, pending technical assessments by the Italian Geological Institute, «the suggested relocation of the settlement to the Milea plains does not seem advisable»<sup>60</sup> because:

- the altitude of 900 meters above sea level, due to snow, wind, and harsh winters, allows agricultural activity only for a few months a year;
- the need to verify the presence of irrigation water in summer, which was presumed to be scarce;
- the location's inaccessibility, as it «is about three hours away from Canolo via mule track, and in that area, the construction of shelters can only be carried out during the summer months»<sup>61</sup>.

56. *Ibidem*.

57. *Ibidem*.

58. Camera dei Deputati, *Atti Parlamentari, Discussioni*, session of November 12, 1951, p. 32965.

59. Senato della Repubblica, *Atti Parlamentari, Discussioni*, 1948-52, session DCCXLVIII, January 22, 1952, p. 29960.

60. *Ibidem*.

61. *Ibidem*.

Additionally, due to the severity of floods and inundations in Northern Italy in November 1951, which added to the previous disasters in the South, two national laws were approved on January 10, 1952, in favour of damaged agricultural enterprises (Law N. 3/1952) and disaster-stricken areas (Law N. 9/1952), due to floods and high tides<sup>62</sup>. Among other provisions, these laws provided financial contributions to private individuals for the damages.

At the same time, on January 12, 1952, the Municipal Council of Canolo<sup>63</sup> deliberated on the area designated for construction interventions to build public housing under the INA-Casa program in the locality of Schiavone Fiorentino. The land, owned by the Municipality, was transferred to INA-Casa management<sup>64</sup>. This intervention fell within the framework of the Four-Year Plan for INA-Casa Constructions (P.Q.C.) and represented a formal response to the previous request to participate in the INA-Casa construction plan (Law N. 43/1949). In fact, as early as March 1951, before the flood, the Committee for the implementation of the *Plan for Increasing Workers' Employment-Houses (Piano di incremento dell'occupazione operaia-Case per lavoratori)* had proposed to the Municipality of Canolo to identify an area of approximately 650 sqm. The proposal emphasized that the selection of the area and its gratuitous transfer would be a preferential factor for inclusion in the investment program (8 million lire) and for the allocation of funds<sup>65</sup>. The deliberation also mentioned the ongoing

62. Law N. 3/1952, *Provvidenze a favore delle aziende agricole danneggiate dalle alluvioni e mareggiate dell'estate e autunno 1951 (Measures for Agricultural Enterprises Damaged by Floods and High Tides During Summer and Autumn 1951)* and law N. 9/1952, *Provvidenze in favore delle zone disastrose dalle alluvioni e mareggiate dell'estate e dell'autunno 1951 in Calabria, Sicilia, Sardegna, Liguria, Piemonte, Lombardia, Veneto, Emilia, Toscana, nelle Puglie e in Campania (Measures for the Areas Damaged by the Floods and High Tides of the Summer and Autumn of 1951 in Calabria, Sicily, Sardinia, Liguria, Piedmont, Lombardy, Veneto, Emilia, Tuscany, Apulia and Campania)*.

63. Comune di Canolo, *Designazione di area edificatoria per la costruzione di alloggi popolari INA-Casa in contrada Schiavone Fiorentino del Comune di Canolo*, Resolution of the Municipal Council of Canolo N. 4, January 12, 1952. It's interesting to underline that the designation of the P.Q.C. area for the Ina-Casa construction was approved by the G.P.A. after more than a year and a half, on June 26, 1953, subjecting the formal concession to the approval of the master plan by the technical bodies; ACC, Prefetto di Reggio Calabria, 8 luglio 1953.

64. INCIS, *Istituto nazionale per le case degli impiegati dello stato, Piano quadriennale Costruzioni INA-Casa, area Comune di Canolo*, 7 agosto 1953, ACC, *Designazione di area edificatoria per la costruzione di alloggi popolari INA-Casa in contrada Schiavone fiorentino del Comune di Canolo*, busta Eredi Ufficio tecnico geometra Pasquale Gangemi.

65. Piano incremento occupazione operaia, Case per lavoratori, Comitato di attuazione, *Programma di costruzioni INA-Casa, Legge 28 febbraio 1949, n. 43*, rif. 13567, document sent to the Mayor of Canolo, August 4, 1951, ACC, busta Eredi Ufficio tecnico geometra Pasquale Gangemi. It was only over a year later, on September 24, 1953, that the president of the Committee for the Implementation of the Plan for increasing Workers'- Housing communicated to the Municipality and the Prefecture the allocation (8 million from the 1952-56 program) for the implementation of the project. The document stated that the area had been chosen, and the project had been prepared using a typology that had already been experimented

process at the Ministry of Public Works regarding a «possible relocation of the town center to the same hamlet of Schiavone Fiorentino, where the municipally-owned building area is designated for the construction of public housing necessary for employees and workers of the mine»<sup>66</sup>. The attached site plan is particularly interesting (fig. 2). The document proposed an area of 1,000 square meters in a rectangular shape (40 m x 25 m), surrounded by newly planned streets “to be opened” 8 meters wide. The area was flat, without elevation differences, and included an indication of the prevailing winds coming from the west. The map did not include the buildings to be designed «due to the precarious and anomalous state of this municipality»<sup>67</sup> or those in the surrounding areas, as no nearby structures existed. Furthermore, the Municipality committed «to equipping the proposed area with the necessary public infrastructure, specifically the essential services required for the new town where it was to be built»<sup>68</sup>.

The Civil Engineering Corps of Reggio Calabria also addressed the reasons for choosing the Milea plains «for the construction of stable shelters to be allocated to the displaced people of the Crisimo district»<sup>69</sup> in the report dated March 24, 1952. The report, prepared by geologist-engineer Alberto Ducci, appointed by the Ministry of Public Works, supported this choice. He «verified the necessity of partially relocating the town of Canolo toward the mountain»<sup>70</sup>. The decision was motivated by the fact that the area is «flat over a wide surface and possesses good stability characteristics for foundations. It is sheltered from winds thanks to the presence of small nearby hill mounds, and it is

with (Piano incremento occupazione operaia, Case per lavoratori, Comitato di attuazione, *Stanziamiento nel Piano del 5° anno, Delibera del Comitato n. 178 del 24 settembre 1953*, rif. 13567, document sent to INA-Casa office, prefect of Reggio Calabria and Mayor of Canolo, September 24, 1953, ACC, *Designazione di area edificatoria per la costruzione di alloggi popolari INA-Casa in contrada Schiavone fiorentino del Comune di Canolo*, busta Eredi Ufficio tecnico geometra Pasquale Gangemi).

66. ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Designazione di area edificatoria per la costruzione di alloggi popolari INA-Casa in contrada Schiavone Fiorentino del Comune di Canolo*, Resolution of the Municipal Council N. 4, January 12, 1952.

67. *Ibidem*.

68. *Ibidem*.

69. Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Opere di riparazione danni alluvionali (Legge 10/1/1952 n. 9). Lavori per la costruzione di 48 ricoveri stabili per le famiglie del Comune di Canolo non abbienti e non proprietarie rimaste senza tetto*, report signed by chief engineer A. Brath, March 24, 1952, Archivio di Stato di Reggio Calabria, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

70. Response from Undersecretary of State Ludovico Camangi to the parliamentary question by Giacomo Mancini to the Minister of Public Works (6711), presented during the session on November 22, 1951, Camera dei Deputati, *Atti Parlamentari, Discussioni*, afternoon session on October 10, 1952, p. 41.355.

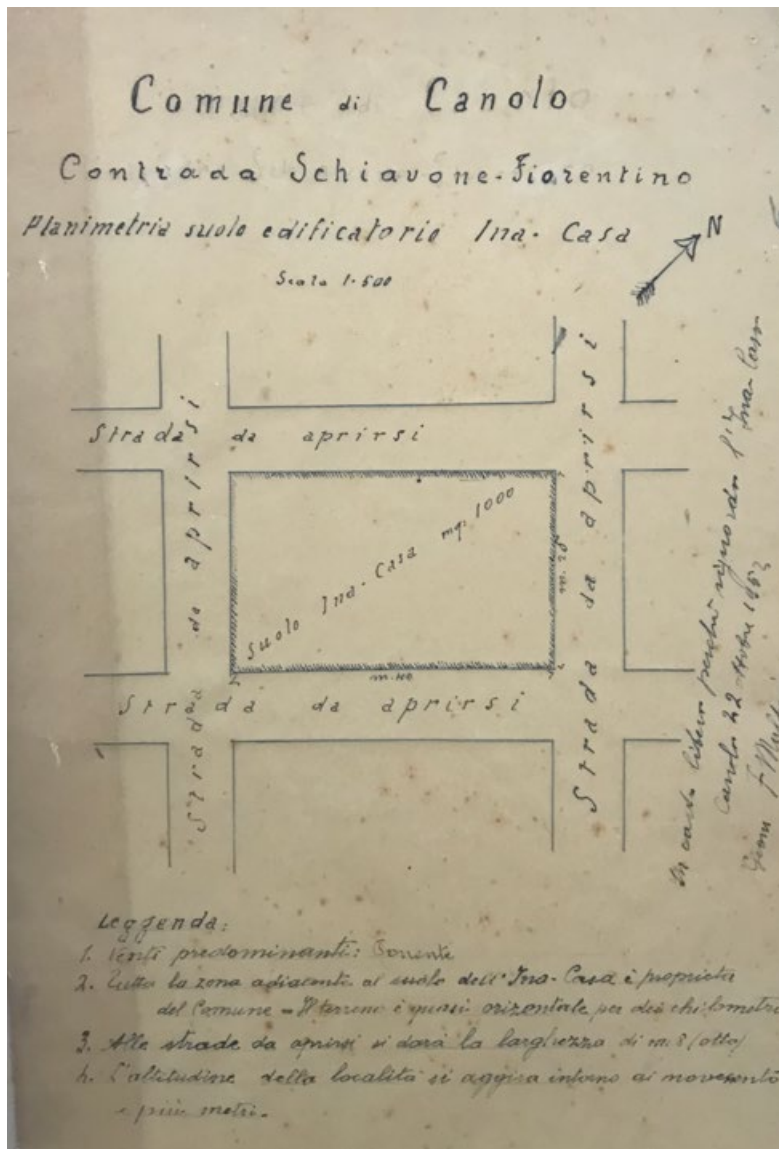


Figure 2. Canolo Municipality, Site Plan of INA-Casa in the Schiavone Fiorentino Area. Map drawn up by the surveyor Filippo Multari (ACC, Designazione di area edificatoria per la costruzione di alloggi popolari INA-Casa in contrada Schiavone Fiorentino del Comune di Canolo, fascicolo Eredi technical office surveyor Pasquale Gangemi).

possible to provide drinking water from three small perennial springs located about one kilometer away, which yield an abundant flow – even during low-flow periods – of approximately one liter per second»<sup>71</sup>.

From the available documentation, there is clear evidence of a well-defined interest on the part of the local community's representatives regarding the choice of location for the new settlement following the catastrophe. The decision on transfer and new location was not imposed externally; instead, it was determined by an authoritative group of active citizens within the town, supported by the technical expertise of the Civil Engineering Corps and legitimate concerns about the inaccessibility of certain buildings in the old town. The reasons behind the choice reflect a deep familiarity with the proposed location – due to its use for agricultural work and its municipal ownership – as well as significant hopes regarding the availability of effective transportation infrastructure, agricultural viability, and tourism potential. However, the documentation also reveals doubts and contradictions, such as concerns about the harsh winter climate, limited cultivation opportunities, the personal reluctance of some decision-makers to relocate, and challenges related to road connectivity.

A significant impetus for the decision was provided by the plan to locate INA-Casa social housing in the locality of Schiavone Fiorentino, which anticipated, influenced, and guided the choice to move the community further upstream.

It was the ministerial decree of April 2, 1952<sup>72</sup>, that determined which inhabited areas were to be relocated at the State's expense, in accordance with Law N. 9/1952. For Canolo, a partial relocation was stipulated, limited to the area bounded by Tucci, Castello, and Camosanto streets, as well as the overlying mountainous zone. Moreover, the decree had already been anticipated by Law N. 9/1952, which authorized the Ministry of Public Works to consolidate and relocate inhabited areas not included in the provisions of Laws N. 255/1906 and N. 445/1908. The law also authorized the construction of aqueducts, sewage systems, schools, cemeteries, essential services, and internal roads in the new settlements. However, by April 1952, the design of the first lot of INA-Casa housing in the Milea plains had already been completed, and the implementation phase was underway.

71. Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Opere di riparazione danni alluvionali (Legge 10/1/1952 n. 9). Lavori per la costruzione di 48 ricoveri stabili per le famiglie del Comune di Canolo non abbienti e non proprietarie rimaste senza tetto*, report signed by the chief engineer A. Brath, March 24, 1952, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

72. The ministerial decree of April 2, 1952 was registered with the Court of Auditors (*Corte dei Conti*) on May 8, 1952, under registration number 12 LL.PP. fol. 143, and published in the «Official Gazette», N. 123, on May 28, 1952

## 5. The Public Housing of the INA-Casa Plan: The Founding Nucleus of Canolo Nuovo

The founding act of Canolo Nuovo was the construction of two-story buildings comprising 48 «stable shelters» – 8 buildings with 6 apartments each – (fig. 3), intended for «families of the Municipality of Canolo who were not well-off, did not own property, and had been left homeless»<sup>73</sup>. In the project drafted by the Civil Engineering Corps, dated March 24, 1952, the dwellings were planned with concrete foundation blocks, walls made of split stonework and cement mortar, reinforced with conglomerate bands and intermissions at the level of the stringcourse and eaves to create suitable reinforced concrete frames. The floors were designed with prefabricated reinforced brick beams topped with a concrete conglomerate layer, while the roof was to be covered with wooden tiles.

The construction works were awarded<sup>74</sup> and assigned to the company on July 12, 1952<sup>75</sup>, at which point the foundations of four buildings had already been completed<sup>76</sup>. The project (fig. 4) proposed two types of buildings (fig. 4). The first type, Type A, features a complex front composition and a simple rear facade. The floor plan is compact and symmetrical. Each of the six apartments has independent access directly from the street level and the main front. Each dwelling includes a living-dining area with an adjoining kitchen, one or two bedrooms, and a bathroom. In case of necessity, the project

73. Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Opere di riparazione danni alluvionali (Legge 10/1/1952 n. 9). Lavori per la costruzione di 48 ricoveri stabili per le famiglie del Comune di Canolo non abbienti e non proprietarie rimaste senza tetto*, report signed by the chief engineer A. Brath, March 24, 1952, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1

74. ACC, Ministero dei Lavori Pubblici, Provveditorato regionale alle opere pubbliche per la Calabria, *Costruzione di 48 case popolari per le famiglie rimaste senza tetto in dipendenza delle alluvioni ottobre 1951 – importo 87.560.000*, letter sent to the Municipality of Canolo and the Civil Engineering Office of Reggio Calabria, July 11, 1952.

75. The contract was signed in August 1952. Ministero dei Lavori Pubblici, Ufficio del Genio civile di Reggio Calabria e impresa Licandro rag. Francesco (Reggio Calabria), *Lavori per la costruzione di 48 alloggi stabili per le famiglie del Comune di Canolo non abbienti e non proprietarie rimaste senza tetto. Opere di riparazione danni alluvioni. L. n. 9 del 10 gennaio 1952*, Contract, August 19, 1952, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1

76. Despite the start-up of the construction site, on August 8, 1952, the Prefecture of Reggio Calabria wrote to the Mayor of Canolo and the Civil Engineering Corps, stating that the latter could not provide an opinion regarding the construction of INA-Casa's public housing because «everything is subject to the approval by higher authorities of the proposal made by this office itself for the partial relocation of the Canolo settlement», Prefettura di Reggio Calabria, *Pianta planimetrica in scala 1.500 in triplice copia della Zona relativa all'area offerta per la costruzione di alloggi popolari dell'INA-Casa (deliberazione n. 4 del Consiglio Comunale del 12.1.1942)*, letter sent to the Mayor of Canolo and the Civil Engineering Corps, August 7, 1952, prot. 21309, ACC, *Designazione di area edificatoria per la costruzione di alloggi popolari INA-Casa in contrada Schiavone fiorentino del Comune di Canolo*, busta Eredi Ufficio tecnico geometra Pasquale Gangemi.

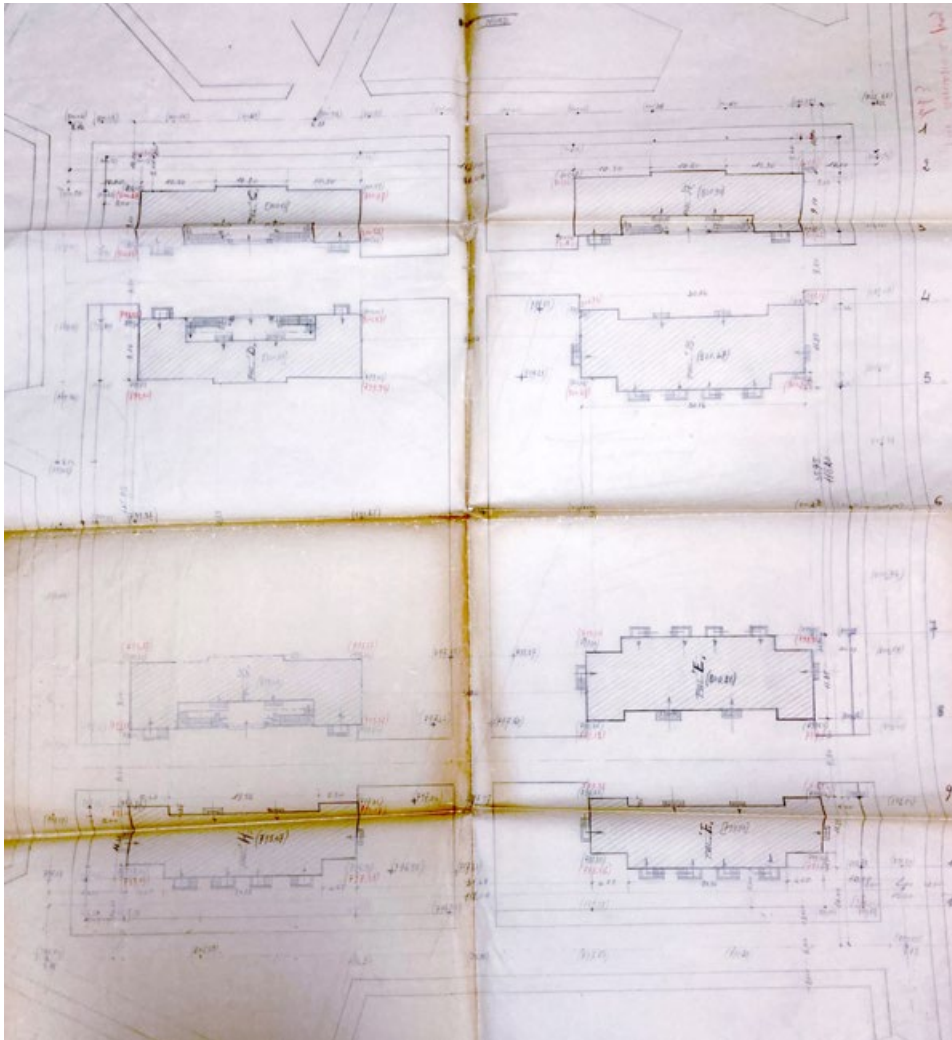


Figure 3. The spatial and planimetric distribution of the eight apartment buildings in the new residential center of Canolo, tied to the adjacent roads. Plan 1:200 (ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8 *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari nel 1952-1953* (3096), Canolo - *Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1).

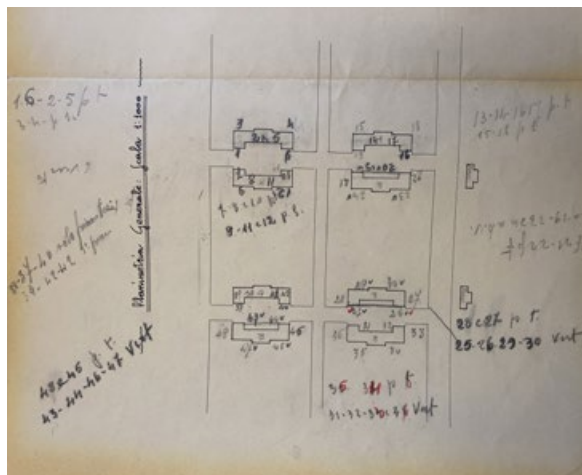


Figure 4. Ministry of Public Works, Office of Civil Engineering in Reggio Calabria, General plan and layouts of 48 housing units for flood victims in the Municipality of Canolo. The project is endorsed by Civil Engineering Corps, State Property, I.A.C.P., the Municipality, the construction company, the State Technical Office (*Ufficio tecnico erariale*), and the chief engineer of Civil Engineering Corps. General plan (ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.17 *Alluvione del 1951: Canolo 1953-1956* (4155), busta 74, fascicolo 1).

allowed for modifications to the internal layout of the apartments, ensuring the availability of houses with one to three bedrooms. Furthermore, on August 1, 1952, a project variant relocated the two external staircases leading to the upper floor «under an arcade covered by the building's roof itself, which, with this modification, acquires a more regular shape and becomes more convenient for snow removal»<sup>77</sup> (fig. 5a-b). The second type, Type B, also has a compact and symmetrical floor plan, as illustrated by the drawing of half of the building. These buildings are modified row houses with a simpler front composition compared to Type A. As with Type A, access to the apartments is independent from street level, with two units facing the building's sides. The two side-access units are on the ground floor and feature a living-dining-kitchen area, two bedrooms, and a bathroom. The four front-access units are arranged on two floors, also including a combined living-dining-kitchen area, two or three bedrooms, and a bathroom (fig. 6a-b). All the buildings face each other in pairs, with the open space at the rear being larger than the front space. No design of the open space is provided, except for the lot boundaries delineating the streets. The overall composition of the complex includes two community

77. Genio civile di Reggio Calabria, *Opere di riparazione danni alluvionali (Legge 10/1/1952 n. 9). Lavori per la costruzione di 48 ricoveri stabili per le famiglie del Comune di Canolo non abbienti e non proprietarie rimaste senza tetto*, variant to the project, report, August 1, 1952, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

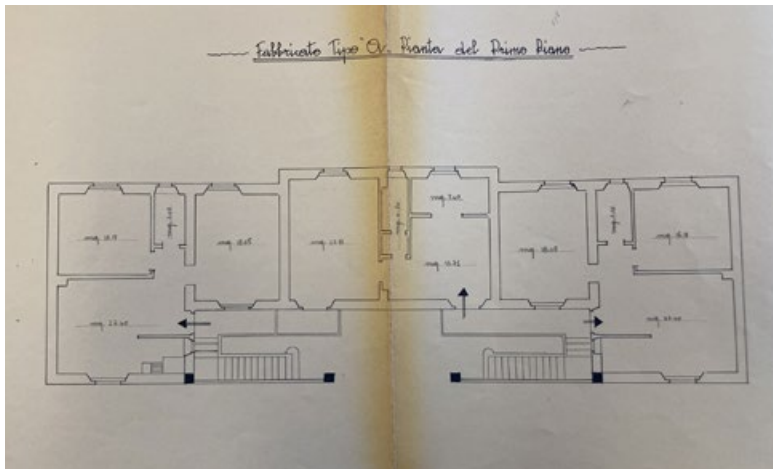
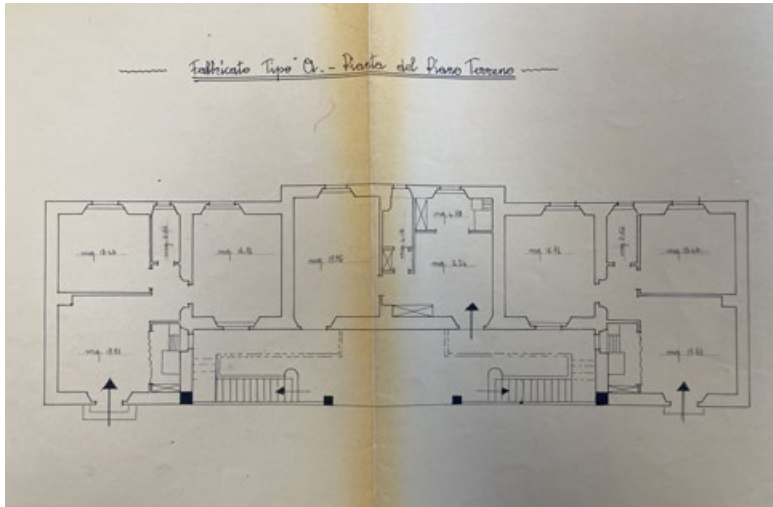


Figure 5a-b. Ministry of Public Works, Office of Civil Engineering in Reggio Calabria, General plan and layouts of 48 housing units for flood victims in the Municipality of Canolo. The project is endorsed by Civil Engineering Corps, State Property, I.A.C.P., the Municipality, the construction company, the State Technical Office (*Ufficio tecnico erariale*), and the chief engineer of Civil Engineering Corps. Plants of the typical building A (ground floor and first floor) (ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.17 *Alluvione del 1951: Canolo 1953-1956 (4155)*, busta 74, fascicolo 1).

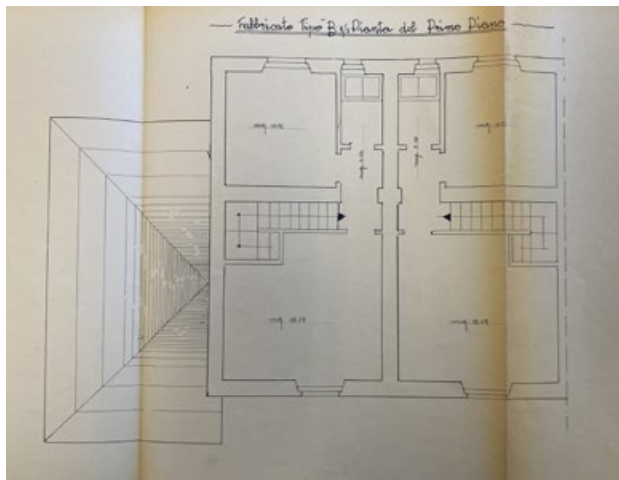
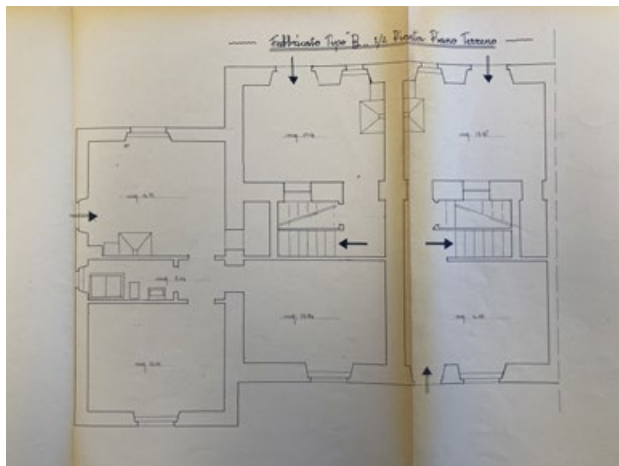


Figure 6a-b. Ministry of Public Works, Office of Civil Engineering in Reggio Calabria, General plan and layouts of 48 housing units for flood victims in the Municipality of Canolo. The project is endorsed by Civil Engineering Corps, State Property, I.A.C.P., the Municipality, the construction company, the State Technical Office (*Ufficio tecnico erariale*), and the chief engineer of Civil Engineering Corps. Plants of the typical building B (ground floor and first floor) (ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.17 *Alluvione del 1951: Canolo 1953-1956 (4155)*, busta 74, fascicolo 1).

buildings functioning as “bread ovens”. Each of these buildings features two chimneys and dedicated spaces for wood storage and processing (fig. 7).

During the construction phase, the company submitted frequent reports on the progress of the work and the interruptions encountered. In September 1952, activities continued «without any interruption with 60 workers»<sup>78</sup>, as there was an ample supply of concrete. However, on November 10, 1952, work at the construction site was suspended<sup>79</sup>, and a three-month extension to the construction contract was granted<sup>80</sup>. Work resumed on May 4, 1953, with 95 workers registered on May 16, 1953<sup>81</sup>, and the workforce increasing to 102 workers by May 28, 1953<sup>82</sup>. An additional extension was requested and granted on August 24, 1953<sup>83</sup>.

It quickly became clear that the buildings under construction were «clearly insufficient in number to provide housing for the homeless, namely all the people who lived in the 200 dwellings in the aforementioned area bounded by Tucci Street, Anacore Stallari Street, Crisimo Street, Castello

78. Ditta Licandro, *Cantiere per la costruzione di n. 48 alloggi per famiglie alluvionate nel Comune di Canolo. Rapporto dei lavori*, sent to the Civil Engineering Corps, September 3, 1952, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

79. Provveditorato regionale alle opere pubbliche per la Calabria, Catanzaro, *Alluvione 1951. Canolo. Lavori per la costruzione di 48 ricoveri stabili per famiglie non abbienti e non proprietarie rimaste senza tetto. Impresa Licandro rag. Francesco. Contratto 19/8/1952 n. 2859*, sent to the Civil Engineering Corps, January 17, 1953, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

80. On November 13, 1952, a 3-month extension was granted for the completion of the 48 housing units, Provveditorato regionale alle opere pubbliche per la Calabria, Catanzaro, *Alluvione 1951. Canolo. Costruzione di n. 48 ricoveri stabili per le famiglie non abbienti e non proprietarie rimaste senza tetto. Contratto 19/8/1952 n. 2859. Impresa Licandro rag. Francesco*, sent to the Civil Engineering Corps, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

81. Ditta Licandro, *Cantiere per la costruzione di n. 48 alloggi per famiglie alluvionate nel Comune di Canolo. 1° rapporto dalla ripresa 4-5-1953*, sent to the Civil Engineering Corps, May 6, 1953, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

82. Ditta Licandro, *Cantiere per la costruzione di n. 48 alloggi per famiglie alluvionate nel Comune di Canolo. 2° rapporto dalla ripresa*, to the Civil Engineering Corps, May 28, 1953, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

83. Provveditorato regionale alle opere pubbliche per la Calabria, Catanzaro, *Alluvione 1951. Canolo. Lavori per la costruzione di n. 48 ricoveri stabili per famiglie non abbienti e non proprietarie rimaste senza tetto. Contratto 19/8/1952 n. 2859 di rep. Impresa Licandro Francesco*, sent to the Civil Engineering Corps, August 24, 1953, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8 *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

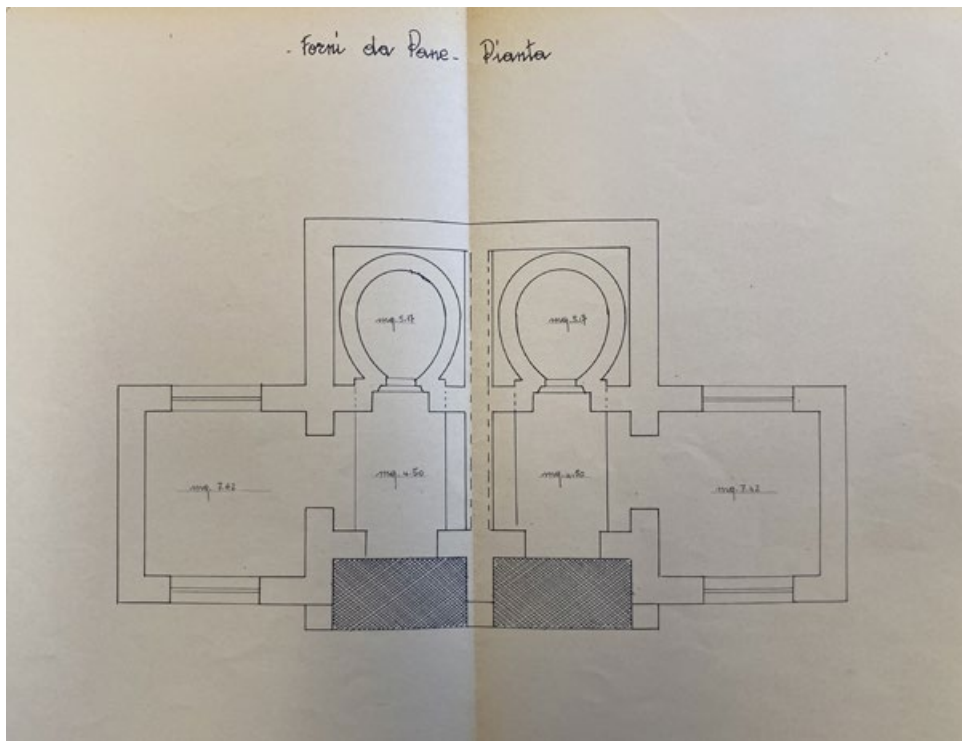


Figure 7. Ministry of Public Works, Office of Civil Engineering in Reggio Calabria, General plan and layouts of 48 housing units for flood victims in the Municipality of Canolo. The project is endorsed by Civil Engineering Corps, State Property, I.A.C.P., the Municipality, the construction company, the State Technical Office (*Ufficio tecnico erariale*), and the chief engineer of Civil Engineering Corps. Plant of the bread oven (ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.17 *Alluvione del 1951: Canolo 1953-1956 (4155)*, busta 74, fascicolo 1).

Street, and Camposanto Street, as well as in the overlying mountainous area». Consequently, on September 22, 1952, the Municipal Council of Canolo resolved «with the utmost urgency to commence the construction of at least a second batch of dwellings in the same location»<sup>84</sup>. To fulfill this mandate, on January 24, 1953, Mayor Giuseppe Lupis urged various institutions – including the Ministry of Public Works, the prefect, the Civil Engineering Corps, and others – to complete the work on the first batch of 48 dwellings, which had been insufficient for the disaster-stricken families and interrupted due to the harsh winter, and contract a second batch of 32 dwellings «to provide shelter for the homeless, evacuees, and disaster victims who, unfortunately, live in unhygienic and overcrowded conditions, with a considerable number of people in each room»<sup>85</sup>. This urgency was confirmed by chief engineer A. Brath of the Civil Engineering Corps, who wrote on March 20, 1953: «As soon as possible [...] the design of another 32 dwellings, already assigned by the Superior Directorate of Public Works to a private professional, will follow, as this office, due to the immense workload, is not in a position to address all the needs caused by the flood with the speed that would be required»<sup>86</sup>.

By January 1953, transfers began, and «34 flood-affected families from 1951 were sent [...] to the dwellings of Canolo Nuovo»<sup>87</sup>.

As mentioned, the initial houses in Canolo Nuovo were realized through the combined efforts of local actors and national government entities, which successfully channeled the resources of the «grand housing machine»<sup>88</sup> – the INA-Casa Plan (1949-1963), also known as the Fanfani Plan (Law N. 43/1949)<sup>89</sup> – towards the intervention in the Melia area. Just like in the rest of Italy, the INA-Casa

84. ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Secondo lotto di alloggi popolari per i senza tetto in contrada Schiavone Fiorentino*, Resolution of Municipal Council N. 26, September 22, 1952.

85. ACC, *Costruzione 2° lotto di case popolari per gli alluvionati senza tetto del Comune di Canolo*, Letter from the Mayor sent to the Minister of Public Works (Rome), Regional Public Works Administration (Catanzaro), Prefecture of Reggio Calabria, and Civil Engineering Corps of Reggio Calabria, January 24, 1953.

86. ACC, Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Canolo. Danni maltempo*, letter from Chief Engineer A. Brath to the Prefect of Reggio Calabria, Regional Public Works Administration (Catanzaro), Mayor of Canolo, March 20, 1953, protocol No 7561.

87. ACC, Comitato comunale per l'assistenza ai sinistrati e sfollati, *Liquidazione spese*, deliberazione in bozza, 1954. The document is neither signed nor dated. Subsequently, in the current text, it is stated that the allocations were made in November-December 1953. It is assumed that some displaced families of workers were residing there from January 1953.

88. SAMONÀ 1949.

89. L. 43/1947, *Provvedimenti per incrementare l'occupazione operaia, agevolando la costruzione di case per lavoratori (Measures to increase employment, facilitating the construction of workers' housing)*.

Plan contributed to the reconstruction of the housing stock here.

While it is true that, in the case of Canolo, reconstruction needs were particularly evident, it is important to emphasize the parallel but significant employment opportunities generated by the construction site in this depressed mountain area. This aligns with the primary objective of the plan, promoted by Amintore Fanfani (then Minister of Labour), who viewed the construction of houses for workers – even before the goal of meeting housing needs – as a means to boost employment through the construction sector<sup>90</sup>.

Other aspects that reflect the fundamental characteristics of INA-Casa interventions are also evident in Canolo. The two basic directives for the design of houses are adhered to: «contain housing costs without compromising quality [...] and promote the standardization of construction elements»<sup>91</sup>. The first aspect emerges in the construction solutions, which feature a balanced combination of wall elements (using stone in Canolo, although bricks were typically employed elsewhere) and reinforced concrete components, primarily built in situ. This system, traditional in Italy during that specific historical phase, is characterized by high labor investment and low technological innovation, except for the innovative precast concrete floors serving as structural bracing<sup>92</sup>. Regarding the second aspect, the repetition of building types in the Canolo complex is evident. As noted by the Civil Engineering Corps, these typologies, while tested<sup>93</sup>, appear more articulated than the «ideal types»<sup>94</sup> proposed in the INA-Casa design guides. In Type A, the aggregation of dwellings creates a semi-private double-height arcade space on the façade. This solution simplifies the roof plan while modulating the depths of the main building front with straightforward elegance. However, in the writer's opinion, the articulation of the façade continues to adhere to the criterion of «simplicity and straightforwardness of architectural forms [...] [without] departing from the strictest criteria of economy»<sup>95</sup>.

During construction, material choices were adapted, and criticism emerged regarding the

90. DI BIAGI 2001.

91. PIANO INCREMENTO OCCUPAZIONE OPERAIA. CASE PER LAVORATORI 1950, p. 39.

92. PORETTI 2001.

93. Piano incremento occupazione operaia, Case per lavoratori, Comitato di attuazione, *Stanziamiento nel Piano del 5° anno, Delibera del Comitato n. 178 del 24 settembre 1953*, rif. 13567, document sent to INA-Casa office, Prefect of Reggio Calabria and Mayor of Canolo, September 24, 1953; ACC, *Designazione di area edificatoria per la costruzione di alloggi popolari INA-Casa in contrada Schiavone fiorentino del Comune di Canolo*, busta Eredi Ufficio tecnico geometra Pasquale Gangemi.

94. GABELLINI 2001, p. 103

95. PIANO INCREMENTO OCCUPAZIONE OPERAIA. CASE PER LAVORATORI 1950, p. 40.

buildings' suitability, with some noting that these «houses were ill-suited to withstand the harsh winter climate»<sup>96</sup>.

Overall, these apartment buildings depart from the urban model of the compact villages – the “nativity scene towns” (*paesi-presepe*) of Aspromonte – and introduce modern floor plan patterns of free construction in relation to the street grid. Furthermore, this small complex serves as an example of a limited intervention in a smaller center under the INA-Casa program, in contrast to the many large-scale social housing neighborhoods built in Italy's large and medium-sized cities. Ultimately, this complex represents the founding settlement of Canolo Nuovo and offers an opportunity to understand its integration into the emerging urban context.

### 6. *The Master Plan of Canolo Nuovo*

A year after the devastating flood, on October 10, 1952, at the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Undersecretary of State Ludovico Camangi responded to an inquiry submitted by Giacomo Mancini of Cosenza on November 22, 1951. Camangi outlined the measures implemented and ongoing in favor of the Municipality of Canolo: a «first intervention to safeguard the settlement against landslide threats», the «restoration of traffic on the provincial road Siderno-Agnana-Canolo», the «partial relocation of the Canolo settlement towards the mountains» in the Schiavone Fiorentino area on the Melia plains, «near the provincial road», where «48 homes [were under construction], while another 32 would start as soon as possible». Additionally, he mentioned the «preparation of the master plan, for which an expenditure of 10 million Italian»<sup>97</sup> lire was planned.

As announced in Parliament, during the same months, the master plan for the new settlement in Canolo Nuovo was indeed prepared. According to Law N. 445/1908, Article 70, the Office of the Civil Engineering Corps was responsible for preparing the master plan for the construction of new settlements for abandoned towns. The plan held the status of a detailed plan in relation to expropriation law. Furthermore, as stipulated by Law N. 9/1952, Article 2: «For the settlements to be relocated, the master plan is approved by the competent Directorate for Public Works or the Water Authority, bypassing all the rules and formalities prescribed by Law N. 445 of July 9, 1908». The

96. BRANCIFORTI 1987, p. 7.

97. Response from Undersecretary of State Ludovico Camangi to the parliamentary question by Giacomo Mancini to the Minister of Public Works (6711), presented during the session on November 22, 1951, Camera dei Deputati, *Atti Parlamentari, Discussioni*, afternoon session of October 10, 1952, p. 41.355.

recently approved Urban Planning Law N. 1150/1942 did not apply in this case. It was mandatory only for a specific list of municipalities, instead in Canolo the design was focused solely on the Schiavone Fiorentino location.

Thus, on June 1, 1953, «the master plan, dated October 27, 1952, for the “Contrada Schiavoni” location, selected for the partial relocation of the mentioned settlement [Canolo], prepared by this Office [Ministry of Public Works, Regional Directorate for Public Works for Calabria], was approved in all respects»<sup>98</sup>. The site plan was signed by architect Franco Armogida<sup>99</sup>. The master plan exclusively pertains to the new settlement and not to the entire municipality<sup>100</sup>.

The designer envisions a predominantly open residential center (fig. 8), consisting primarily of row houses with varying sizes of open spaces associated with the residences. In some cases, the grouping of residences forms open or closed courtyards of various shapes, creating urban blocks with a continuous street front; in other, more frequent cases, the buildings are arranged freely. The project includes two hierarchies of roads. The primary roads have a width of 9 meters, with sidewalks of 1.5 meters on each side, accompanied by open spaces associated with the residences. Where houses have direct street access, sidewalks are widened to 3 meters. The secondary residential roads feature a carriageway width of 6 meters, with 1.5 meter sidewalks on each side. The project also incorporates commercial structures – shops, a market, a hotel-restaurant, and truck parking – as well as an extensive range of services, including primary schools, a nursery, a municipal delegation, a church, a sports field, a public garden, recreational facilities, trade unions, a theater hall, a garage,

98. Provveditorato Regionale alle Opere Pubbliche per la Calabria, *Alluvioni autunno 1951. Trasferimento parziale abitati di Canolo. Piano Regolatore*, letter sent to the Civil Engineering Corps, July 14, 1953, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, Serie 1.3.26, *Trasferimento e consolidamento abitati, Canolo*. The master plan signed on October 27, 1952, was approved by Provisional Decree N. 8139 on June 1, 1953, and registered with the Court of Auditors on June 30, 1953, under registration number 8 LL.PP. fol. 342, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, Serie 1.3.26, *Trasferimento e consolidamento abitati, Canolo*.

99. Franco Armogida (1905-1957), born in S. Andrea Ionico, graduated from the School of Architecture in Rome in 1936. He passed the state examination in Venice in 1936 (belonging to the National Fascist Party since 1932; listed in the professional register in 1939; and held the position of Syndic in 1939) (Confederazione fascista dei professionisti e degli artisti 1940-1941). He was sometimes referred to as Francesco Armogida.

100. In fact, on May 7, 1954, in response to the request from the Prefect of Reggio Calabria (div. 4, prot. N. 793, dated April 1, 1954) to know if the municipality has a master plan (Law 1150/1942) and its status of implementation, the Mayor of Canolo replied that «this municipality has never had a master plan. However, a master plan for the new settlement of Canolo, located on the Milea plain, has been prepared by the Civil Engineering Corps of Reggio Calabria» (ACC, *Formazione elenchi di cui all'art. 2 della legge urbanistica 17/8/1942 n. 1150*; letter from the Mayor sent to the Prefecture of Reggio Calabria, May 7, 1954).

and a bus station. The orthogonal road grid in the central part of the new settlement does not align with the orientation of the INA-Casa complex, which remains fenced off and under construction at the edge of the plan. Notably, the buildings designated as bread ovens were completed and put into operation in August 1955<sup>101</sup>. To the north of the new urban development, sports facilities are situated. On the northeastern edge, the remaining service infrastructure – such as the church, town hall, and market – creates a series of public squares or courtyards. Beyond this area, to shield against prevailing winds, a strip of tall forest has been planned. The western boundary is defined by row houses and some isolated houses on large lots facing a road that integrates into the road network in a semicircle. Schools and the public garden are located “among the houses”, particularly adjacent to the INA-Casa buildings, either already constructed or in the design and construction phase at the time of the plan’s preparation. To the south, the road grid design anticipates potential expansion along a consistent orthogonal layout.

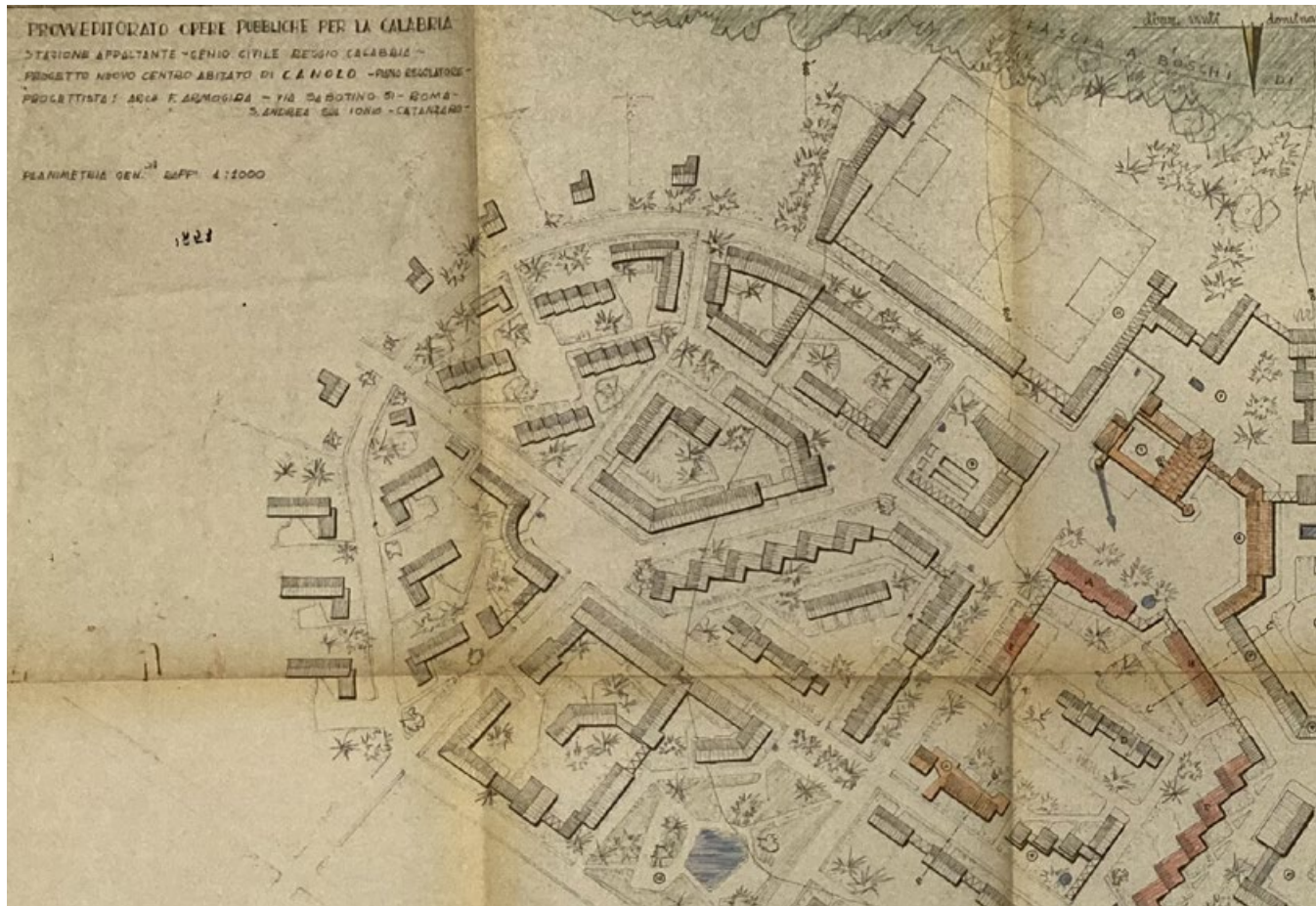
In addition to the master plan, Franco Armogida was commissioned by the Ministry of Public Works, Regional Directorate for Public Works for Calabria (Catanzaro), to design several public buildings (a school, the church, and the town hall) as well as residential buildings<sup>102</sup> that would implement the plan. Regarding the residential construction, the project concerns the second batch of homes intended for disaster-stricken families who were left homeless. Following an explicit request from the designer, the mayor granted him design freedom to define the building types<sup>103</sup>. The result is a «project that envisions the construction of 32 homes of five different types, according to the drawings»<sup>104</sup> (fig. 9). Each building consists of two floors, with each apartment including three or four

101. Comune di Canolo, *Consegna forni*, letter sent to the Civil Engineering Corps of Reggio Calabria and Prefect of Reggio Calabria, July 29, 1955, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

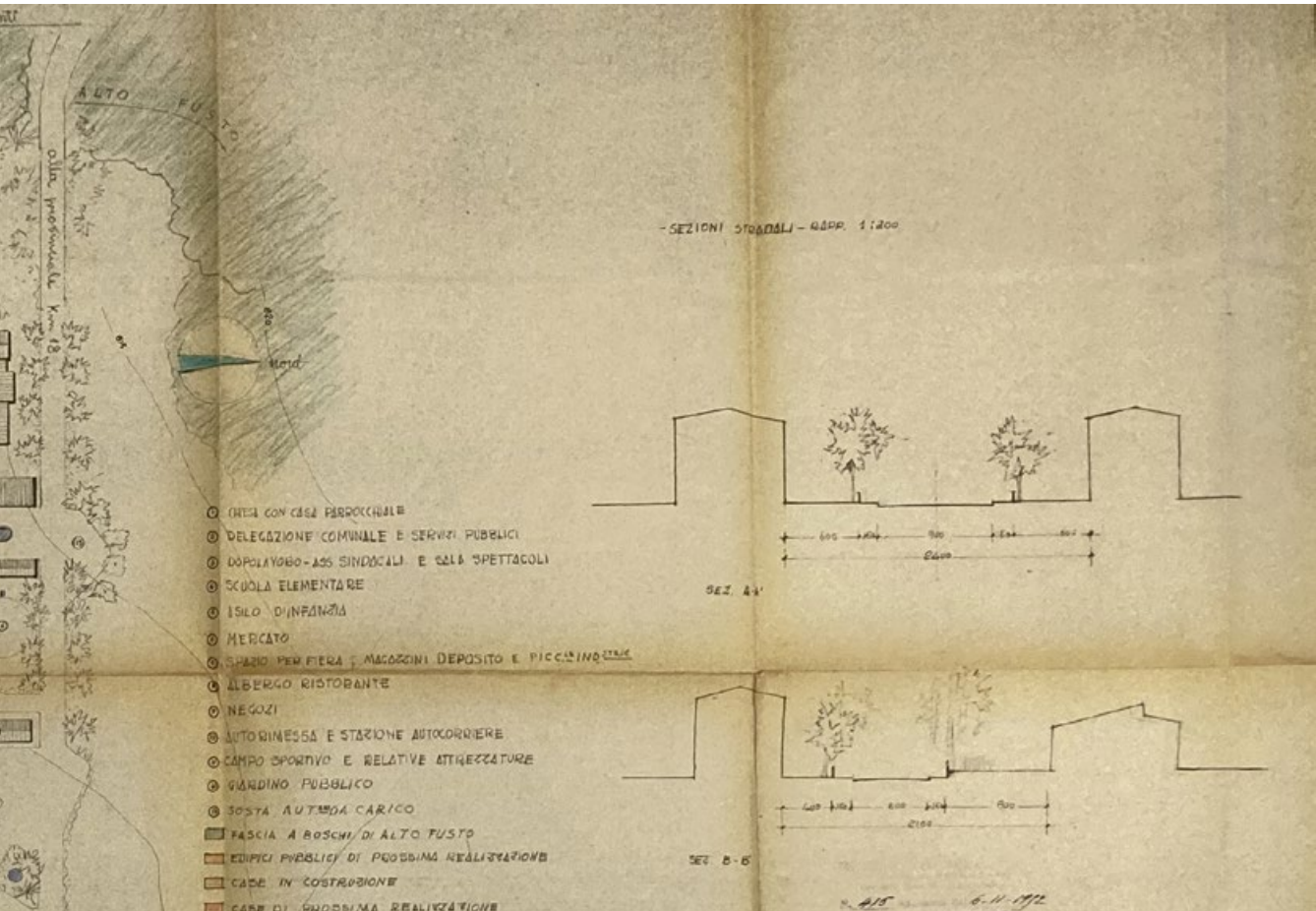
102. Ministero dei Lavori pubblici, Provveditorato Regionale alle opere pubbliche per la Calabria (Catanzaro), *Alluvione 1951. Canolo. Costruzione alloggi per senza tetto*, letter sent to the Ministry of Public Works, Prefecture of Reggio Calabria, Mayor of Canolo, Civil Engineering Corps of Reggio Calabria, February 12, 1953, protocol N. 3701, ACC. And Provveditorato opere pubbliche per la Calabria (Catanzaro), Ufficio tecnico del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Progetto per la costruzione di 32 alloggi per famiglie alluvionate nel Comune di Canolo (R. Calabria), per un edificio scolastico, una Delegazione Comunale ed una Chiesa da costruire tra la Piana S. Nicola, Schiavone e Ticchio alla altitudine di m. 881. Prog. Arch. Franco Armogida, S. Andrea Jonio (Catanzaro) V. Sabotino 31 – Roma. Contratto d'appalto*, May 13, 1953, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.17, *Alluvione del 1951: Canolo 1953-1956 (4155)*, busta 74, fascicolo 1.

103. Business card of architect Armogida to the Mayor of Canolo and response letter from Mayor Lupis to architect Armogida, December 4, 1952, ACC.

104. Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Opere dipendenti dall'alluvione dell'ottobre 1951. Legge 10/1/1952 n. 9, Progetto dei lavori di costruzione di n. 32 alloggi per ricovero di famiglie rimaste senza tetto nel Comune di Canolo*, report



On this and the next page, figure 8. Project for the new residential centre of Canolo. Master plan (Architect F. Armogida), Regional Public Works Administration for Calabria, contracting station Civil Engineering Corps of Reggio Calabria, October 27, 1952 (ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, Serie 1.3.26, *Trasferimento e consolidamento abitati, Canolo*).



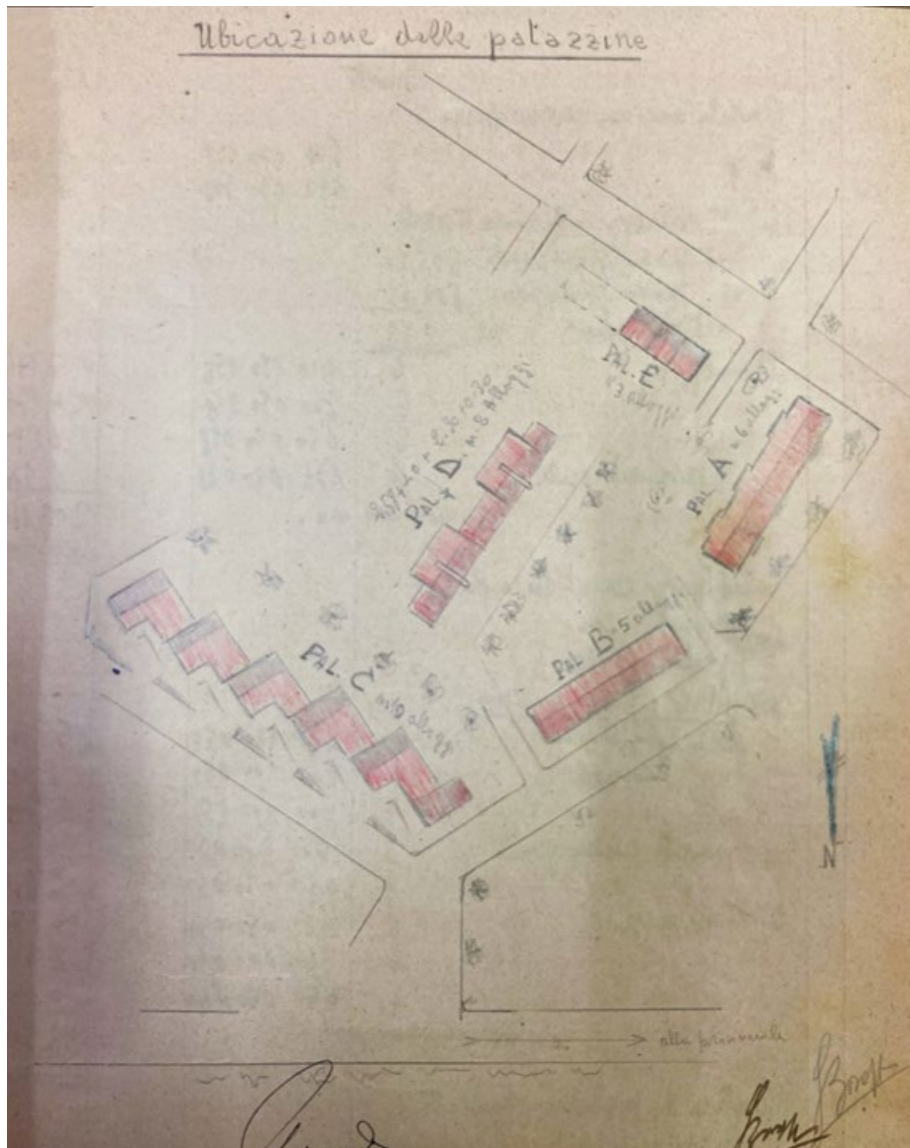


Figure 9. Project of 32 housing units distributed in 5 separate buildings with different architectural typologies (the so-called “second batch”). Attached to the “Booklet of Measurements” compiled by the Civil Engineering Corps on April 1, 1954, designer architect Franco Armogida. (ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.17 *Alluvione del 1951: Canolo 1953-1956* (4155), busta 74, fascicolo 1).

rooms, in addition to a kitchen and a bathroom. The structure is made of stone masonry and cement mortar on concrete foundations, with asbestos cement sheets laid in the Roman style on wooden boards for the roofs<sup>105</sup>.

By resolution dated October 29, 1952, the Municipal Council granted, free of charge, the land needed for the «construction of public buildings, stable shelters, an aqueduct, and a cemetery, for the families of the Municipality of Canolo who are not well-off, do not own property, and remain homeless». Additionally, the Council formally declared «ownership of the friar Nicola spring, transferring it for the construction of the new aqueduct»<sup>106</sup>. This formal resolution allowed the planning and execution of the aforementioned works to proceed in accordance with the master plan, which, though still pending approval, had already been prepared, as noted earlier.

Despite the municipality's diligence, the acquisition of the projects for both public services and housing took considerable time. In the early months of 1953, Mayor Lupis urged the delivery of the projects to «comrade Armogida», stating the need to «address the situation with utmost urgency

of chief engineer A. Brath, May 13, 1953, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.17, *Alluvione del 1951: Canolo 1953-1956 (4155)*, busta 74, fascicolo 1.

105. ACC, Ministero dei Lavori Pubblici, Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Opere dipendenti dall'alluvione 1951 (Legge 10-1-1952 n. 9). Verbale di consegna da parte del Genio Civile all'Istituto Autonomo per le Case Popolari in Provincia di Reggio Calabria del gruppo di case popolari costruito nel Comune di Canolo località Canolo nuovo, composto di n. 5 fabbricati con complessivi n. 32 alloggi*, February 1, 1956.

106. ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Concessione gratuita di suoli edificatori di parte delle seguenti particelle del foglio n. 7 – n.ri 25, 26, 7, 14, 20, 16, 17 e 18 per i lavori di costruzione di ricoveri stabili ai senza tetto*, resolution of the Municipality Council, N. 33, October 29, 1952 (ACC\_Feb\_1952\_10\_29\_DelCC33\_CostruzioneRicoveriStabili: 1-2). Regarding the ownership of the lands granted for free by the municipality for the implementation of the master plan, it's important to note that resolution N. 33 of 1952 will be partially questioned in relation to a cadastral parcel (parcel 14 of sheet 7) because it is listed at the head of the Bishop's Mess in Geraci according to cadastral sources (ACC, Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Attuazione del piano regolatore per il parziale spostamento dell'abitato*, letter from Chief Engineer R. Accinni to the Mayor of Canolo, September 16, 1954, N. 18450). This pending matter will be regulated by the Civil Engineering Corps of Reggio Calabria on July 18, 1955, through an expropriation for public utility «for the works to implement the master plan for the partial relocation of the Canolo settlement due to the 1951 flood» (Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Espropriazioni per causa di pubblica utilità. Elenco n. 1 descrittivo dei beni da espropriare per i lavori di attuazione del Piano regolatore per il parziale spostamento dell'abitato di Canolo in dipendenza dell'alluvione 1951*, July 18, 1955, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, Serie 1.3.26, *Trasferimento e consolidamento abitati, Canolo*) and reported again on January 21, 1986 (Ufficio del Genio Civile, *Espropriazione per i lavori di attuazione del Piano regolatore per il parziale spostamento dell'abitato di Canolo Alluvione 1951*, letter sent to the Municipality of Canolo, January 21, 1986, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, Serie 1.3.26, *Trasferimento e consolidamento abitati, Canolo*). The process involves an extensive folder at the State Archive of Reggio Calabria, which has allowed the reconstruction of many steps related to the partial relocation of Canolo, thanks to the systematic documentation it contains.

to assist the homeless in this municipality, also because the population is aware that the project has been entrusted to the hands of a communist, and it is our intention to avoid giving rise to false propaganda by our opponents»<sup>107</sup>. On July 7, 1953, following the awarding of the works, the Office of the Civil Engineering Corps wrote to architect Armogida, requesting him to «send copies of the drawings for house types A, B, C, D, and E (32 apartments), as well as for the school building and the master plan»<sup>108</sup>. As for the church and town hall, on November 18, 1954, the mayor once again urged the Civil Engineering Corps<sup>109</sup>, and on January 29, 1955, he reiterated the request to the designer through Member of Parliament Eugenio Musolino at the Chamber of Deputies, reaffirming the political affiliation of «our comrade» Armogida<sup>110</sup>.

The dual necessity – on one hand, for the approval of the master plan to ensure a formal legal process, secure resources, and provide coherence to the interventions, and on the other, the urgency of delivering houses and essential services to the residents of the new settlement – contributed to shaping a new concept of a “village” in Canolo.

Firstly, the proposed urban-rural model differs significantly from the traditional one found in the hill-mountain towns of Calabria, such as the *paese-presepe* (nativity scene village)<sup>111</sup>. Canolo Vecchio, perched on steep terrain, features a compact layout that has adapted over centuries to the slopes of the pre-Aspromonte hills and to slow, incremental construction. The buildings follow an organic settlement pattern, with continuous street-front facades. The roads, designed before the advent of automobiles, are generally narrow, lack sidewalks, and include small dimensions. On steep slopes, connections are made through stairs or stepped pathways. The predominant buildings are modest and ordinary, with few monumental structures. The main services, such as the municipality and post office, align along the main drivable road axis, which connects the town to the Ionian

107. ACC, Letters from Mayor Lupis urging the architect “comrade Armogida” to submit designs for the construction of the 2nd batch of housing for the homeless, January 25 and March 13, 1953.

108. Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Lavori nuovo centro abitato di Canolo, Lettera inviata all'architetto Armogida*, July 7, 1953, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.17 *Alluvione del 1951: Canolo 1953-1956 (4155)*, busta 74, fascicolo 1.

109. Comune di Canolo, *Costruzione chiesa ed edificio municipale in Canolo nuovo. Redazione progetti*, letter sent to the provincial office of Civil Engineering Corps, November 18, 1954, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

110. ACC, Letters from Mayor Lupis sent to honorable Musolino to act as an intermediary and request the project plans from architect Armogida, January 29, 1955.

111. SORIERO 1985.

coast. This traditional urban model contrasts fundamentally with the planned village envisioned for Canolo Nuovo. The establishment of the INA-Casa residential complex led to a reconsideration of building typologies, which are distinct from the traditional houses of the *paese-presepe*. Modern architectural principles – albeit applied in a modest and minimal form – introduced for instance essential technical service spaces and necessary ventilation systems. The master plan proposes an entirely different settlement form, blending elements reminiscent of Howard’s Garden City<sup>112</sup> and rural villages developed through agrarian reform<sup>113</sup>, or the contemporary experience of Ludovico Quaroni in La Martella, Matera<sup>114</sup>. It is worth noting that both Armogida and Quaroni lived in Rome, but we have not information of respective influences. However, in the absence of drawings of residential typologies or a detailed plan report – which were likely not requested – it is impossible to confirm whether the dwellings retained a rural character. What is certain, however, is that the INA-Casa homes did not incorporate any functional combination of living and agricultural work. Finally, the morphology of the terrain also played a significant role in creating a radically different urban layout compared to the traditional hill and mountain towns of Calabria.

Secondly, it is worth noting the apparent indifference of the master plan towards the INA-Casa intervention. In the urban planning document, the INA-Casa complex is considered an external presence, with only the perimeter of the buildings outlined in a single related lot, surrounded by roads and lacking any dialogue with the proposed new context. It appears almost as though it were an insignificant pre-existence, despite its axial alignment with the provincial connecting road clearly delineated in the plan.

Thirdly, it is important to emphasize the extensive provision of services aimed at creating a self-sustaining urban context, encompassing both private and public offerings. However, the list of planned services appears to lack collective facilities appropriate for an agricultural and artisanal context and instead seems more consistent with a modestly sized urban context.

Fourthly, the planning process presented here demonstrates that the idea of a future village primarily results from professional technical work, in the absence of broader local collective discussion. The designer conducted a site visit<sup>115</sup> and, based on the available documentation,

112. HOWARD 1902.

113. PONTRANDOLFI, RAGUSO 2022.

114. QUARONI 1981

115. ACC, Business card of architect Armogida to the Mayor of Canolo and response letter from Mayor Lupis to architect Armogida, December 4, 1952.

the limited dialogue – while respecting areas of expertise – was primarily between the designer Armogida, parliamentarian Musolino, mayor Lupis, and the Civil Engineering Corps, acting as the client. It should be noted that the first three had political affiliations within the same party, as evidenced in the available correspondence.

Finally, there is a continuous interplay of references between planning, formal approval, and implementation of interventions, where in several cases realization precedes formal acts. For instance, construction begins before the formal contract is signed, or the master plan influences the space even before its formal approval.

### 7. *The Construction Site Delivers Houses, Services, and Employment*

According to periodic reports on the state of the construction site, by October 1953, the first 48 housing units were in the final stages of completion<sup>116</sup>, while roads, the school, the second phase of housing (five buildings), and the sewage system were under construction<sup>117</sup>, with the sewage system completed only in December 1955<sup>118</sup>. The flood of October 20-23, 1953, caused damage to the construction sites but without significant setbacks<sup>119</sup>.

It was only in the spring of 1954 that the designs for the electrical and public lighting systems were prepared<sup>120</sup>, and designs for the church, the municipality, and the barracks were solicited, with the

116. Impresa Francesco Licandro, *Rapporto sull'avanzamento del cantiere di Canolo*, sent to the Civil Engineering Office, October 23, 1953, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

117. Impresa Francesco Licandro, *Rapporto sull'avanzamento del cantiere di Canolo*, sent to the Civil Engineering Office, October 9, 1953, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

118. *Richiesta di riassegnazione di una casa per famiglie numerose a Canolo nuovo*, lettera di Carlo Marini inviata al Comune di Canolo, December 23, 1955, ACC, busta Eredi Ufficio tecnico geometra Pasquale Gangemi and Ministero dei Lavori Pubblici, Provveditorato Regionale alle opere pubbliche per la Calabria, Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Lavori per la costruzione di n. 32 alloggi per famiglie alluvionate nel Comune di Canolo*, report, inspection's minutes, and certification of testing, October 26, 1956, ASRC, Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.17, *Alluvione del 1951: Canolo 1953-1956 (4155)*, busta 74, fascicolo 1.

119. Impresa Francesco Licandro, *Rapporto sull'avanzamento del cantiere di Canolo*, sent to the Civil Engineering Office, October 23, 1953, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

120. Prefettura di Reggio Calabria, *Opere pubbliche in Canolo nuovo*, letter sent to the Civil Engineering Department, Regional Public Works Administration, Mayor of Canolo, March 13, 1954, prot. 10237, ACC, busta Canolo nuovo Opere

«related projects [...] entrusted to the dear colleague Armogida»<sup>121</sup>. The urgency of these requests stemmed from the fact that, once the housing construction was completed, the residents of the new center would be left unemployed<sup>122</sup>. Additionally, in June 1954, the mayor urged the completion of the civic aqueduct and the water distribution network to individual homes<sup>123</sup>. On September 30, 1954, the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno (Southern Italy Development Fund) announced that it would take charge of building the nursery<sup>124</sup>.

On November 8, 1953, the Civil Engineering Office formally transferred the new housing units to the municipal administration<sup>125</sup>, and between November and December, the allocation of housing units to 48 displaced families began<sup>126</sup>. The process of allocating the constructed housing units<sup>127</sup> and land to private individuals for new home construction constitutes a separate study supported by available archival documents. It is worth noting that the allocation of land followed a subdivision plan that abandoned Armogida's open urban layout design in favor of a continuous row house design

pubbliche 1954 and Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Opere pubbliche in Canolo nuovo*, letter sent to the Prefecture of Reggio Calabria and to the Municipality of Canolo, May 4, 1954, n. 13848, ACC, busta Canolo nuovo Opere pubbliche 1954.

121. *Costruzione di edifici pubblici nel nuovo abitato di Canolo*, letter of Mayor Lupis sent to the «dear comrade Armogida», March 28, 1954, ACC, busta Canolo nuovo Opere pubbliche 1954.

122. *Costruzione edificio municipale e chiesa*, letters of the Municipality of Canolo sent to architect Armogida, September 1, 1954, prot. 2032, ACC, busta Canolo nuovo Opere pubbliche 1954.

123. ACC, *Abitato di Canolo nuovo. Distribuzione idrica nelle abitazioni*, letter of the Mayor to the chief engineer of Reggio Calabria's Civil Engineering Corps, June 4, 1954.

124. ACC, Prefettura di Reggio Calabria, *Utilizzazione dei cantieri di lavoro per la costruzione di scuole elementari e materne. Determinazione intervento Cassa Mezzogiorno*, September 30, 1954, N. 40588.

125. Fonogram N. 92 from the Locri Section to the Civil Engineering Corps of Reggio Calabria, November 8, 1953, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, serie 1.3.8, *Lavori di costruzione di case popolari in 1952-1953 (3096) Canolo – Contabilità finale*, busta 309, fascicolo 1.

126. ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Verbale di assegnazione provvisoria di 12 alloggi costruiti nel nuovo abitato di Canolo*, November 10, 1953, busta Eredi Ufficio tecnico geometra Pasquale Gangemi and Comune di Canolo, *Elenco delle famiglie sfollate da questo centro per essere avviate nel nuovo abitato di Canolo*, December 18, 1953.

127. In 1954 the *Commission for the temporary allocation of housing in the new settlement of Canolo* (48 units) was composed of the designated prefecture official, the Mayor, the commander of the Carabinieri Station, and the parish priest. The allocation was done through a lottery (ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Verbale di assegnazione provvisoria di numero 35 alloggi costruiti nel nuovo abitato di Canolo*, January 14, 1954, busta Eredi Ufficio tecnico geometra Pasquale Gangemi). Instead, for the allocation of the subsequent 32 housing units in 1956, the commission comprised the Mayor, the Carabinieri brigadier, a flood victim, and a prefectural official (ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Assegnazione case agli alluvionati*, February 28, 1956, busta Eredi Ufficio tecnico geometra Pasquale Gangemi).

along the road front. This orthogonal grid formalized the urban layout into a sequence of low, linear buildings<sup>128</sup>.

The vitality of Canolo Nuovo can be confirmed, in the author's opinion, by noting, on the one hand, the mayor's directive to the doctor to provide medical assistance «in the new settlement of Canolo (Melia), twice a week, to the resident families». This prompted the doctor, on November 13, 1953, to request the «establishment of a regularly equipped clinic and the temporary allocation of housing consisting of three rooms: one for the clinic, one for sanitary needs, and the third for the midwife's use»<sup>129</sup>. On the other hand, confirmation comes from the mayor's request on February 8, 1954, to the prefect to establish a pharmacy in Canolo Nuovo, where 231 people lived, compared to 1,881 residents in Canolo Vecchio<sup>130</sup>.

At the local level, the relocation seemed to be an opportunity for many residents. On January 19, 1954, the Municipal Council requested the complete relocation of Canolo's settlement<sup>131</sup>. However, the prefecture refused, stating that «no new events have occurred that could affect another part of the settlement beyond the "Crisimo" district, for which the relocation has already been decreed»<sup>132</sup> following the flood of 1951.

This underscores the duality of the town of Canolo. Both places in this dual village have houses and services, both are alive and have a history – one ancient and the other recent – and share a common, recognizable characteristic: both were primarily engaged in rural agricultural and silvo-pastoral economies that primarily occurred outside the residential center, which notably lacked rural features. The urban development undertaken in the early 1950s serves as clear evidence of this. This non-rural character was accentuated by the fact that, in those years, the construction sector became the main source of employment for residents in Canolo Nuovo.

#### 8. *Some Criticisms of the Urban Planning in Canolo Nuovo*

128. Ministero dei Lavori Pubblici, Ufficio del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, *Piano regolatore di Canolo. Piano di lottizzazione degli scomparti*, map 1:500, 1956 or 1958, ASRC, Fondo del Genio Civile di Reggio Calabria, Serie 1.3.26, *Canolo*.

129. ACC, Letter from the local doctor sent to the Mayor of Canolo, November 13, 1953.

130. ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Assistenza farmaceutica*, February 8, 1954, prot. 263.

131. ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Richiesta di spostamento totale dell'abitato di Canolo*, Resolution of the Municipal Council N. 4, January 19, 1954, busta Canolo nuovo Opere pubbliche 1954. At the current state of the research, the first page is available, but not the text of the resolution.

132. ACC, Prefettura di Reggio Calabria, *Richiesta di spostamento totale dell'abitato*, letter sent to the Mayor of Canolo, March 20, 1954, prot. 7738, busta Canolo nuovo Opere pubbliche 1954.

Following the partial implementation of the master plan on October 27, 1952, and the subsequent relocation of residents, it is useful to examine critical opinions about the urban layout of this settlement.

In the 1973 Building Plan (*Piano di fabbricazione*) report, it is argued that it was «an intervention of rare urban myopia [...] in which a modest urban layout was supplemented by a construction project where the squalor of the typological aspect is made even more evident by the poor execution. The result is a sort of military-looking satellite town that not only raises doubts about its precise purpose but also ends up distorting the remarkable landscape qualities of the area»<sup>133</sup>. The criticism is broad, addressing the choice of location, the urban layout, and the design of residential buildings. Observations highlight long periods of inactivity, attributed to a «predominantly agricultural-forestry economy [...] which leaves the village semi-abandoned during the winter season»<sup>134</sup>.

Indeed, the 1971 census records 1,479 inhabitants in the municipality of Canolo, with 860 habitable units occupied and 894 unoccupied. Among these, there were 678 residents in Canolo town (with 380 habitable units occupied and 262 unoccupied), 271 residents in Canolo Nuovo (with 167 habitable units occupied and 423 unoccupied), and 530 residents in the countryside (with 313 habitable units occupied and 209 unoccupied)<sup>135</sup>. This prompted Carlo Lissoni, the designer of the 1973 *Piano di fabbricazione*, to propose an expansion of the hillside settlement for a different purpose. Since in 1972 over 400 construction requests were submitted to the Municipality, there was a suggestion to build tourist residences<sup>136</sup>, echoing a previously made proposal by Senator Musolino.

Another criticism concerns Canolo and several other new towns in Calabria designed during those years. Their «layouts [...] are [...] anonymous and do not reflect any formal intention [...], as there is no discernible intervention logic»<sup>137</sup>. In the same volume on relocated towns in Sicily and Calabria following abandonment, these phenomena are considered forms of violent transformation, resulting in urban models disconnected from the traditional settlement systems<sup>138</sup>.

Although not explicitly referring to Canolo, Giuseppe Soriero, in the book *La Calabria*, part of the *History*

133. ACC, Comune di Canolo, *Piano di fabbricazione. Relazione*, Resolution of the Municipal Council N. 63, May 16, 1973, p. 5.

134. *Ivi*, p. 9.

135. *Ivi*, p. 8.

136. *Ivi*, p. 16.

137. BRANCIFORTI 1987, p. 15.

138. BELLAGAMBA 1987.

of Italy (*Storia d'Italia. Le regioni dall'Unità ad oggi*) series published by Einaudi, expresses doubts about the relocation of inland towns. He discusses the «violence of the disarray and [...] the alien nature of the new settlements. One image represents the territory; another idea emerges from those constructions. The new interventions, in fact, within this framework of structural backwardness that persists, overlap without integrating with the environment. It is the effect resulting from the limited inclination to address the reasons underlying the decay»<sup>139</sup>. These reasons are attributed to both the public intervention of the state and the actions of those who inhabit these spaces. He reiterates that, in essence, «external models are superimposed on that environment, reaffirming the idea of temporariness»<sup>140</sup>, assigning an environmental precariousness to the new neighborhoods built by the state.

These reflections, whether specific to Canolo or more general, invite consideration of the diversity in settlement patterns, which only partially depends on the specific mountainous-hilly context. In the view of the author, in a more radical sense, two models of urban spatiality are being questioned. On the one hand, the traditional model of the compact historic city is characterized by the dominance of “contact space”, as Françoise Choay<sup>141</sup> considers it the defining feature of the medieval European city. Continuity, proximity, dense patterns, compressed fabric, and limited fields of vision define a spatial relationship where everything is interconnected, and where full and empty spaces play identical roles. In Europe, human corporeality has a long-standing familiarity with this figure of space; it is instinctively recognized. On the other hand, there is the space of the modern city, where the street separates from the nearby buildings, and open space shapes the relationships between parts, with emptiness prevailing over fullness. Circulation, functionality, ventilation, health, and individuality are the defining characteristics of modernity that shape the small and large cities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Introducing this new spatial articulation into the “backward” Calabrian context represents a significant logical and perceptual leap, which many observers perceive as foreign.

### 9. Conclusions: *Energies for an Unfinished Rebirth Elsewhere*

In 1951, the Municipality of Canolo had 2,267 inhabitants distributed between the historic town and the countryside. Following the flood in late October of the same year, the community began the process of establishing a new settlement. Although it became a dual town, the area's population declined. By 1961, the population had decreased to approximately 1,900, in 1971 to

139. SORIERO 1985, p. 758.

140. *Ibidem*.

141. CHOAY 2003.

1,550, and by 2016, approximately 722 inhabitants – roughly one-third of the 1951 population – were distributed among Old Canolo Centro (193), New Canolo (311), and the countryside (218)<sup>142</sup>. The new settlement gained greater demographic weight over time.

Tracing the events of the relocation takes on significant meaning. The attempt at rebirth elsewhere, albeit only partially completed, has been reconstructed thanks to the archival documentation discovered. This has highlighted the efforts, intelligence, and expertise involved, as well as the spaces created during the founding years of Canolo Nuovo. Three key aspects are worth summarizing.

### 9.1 About the Decision-Making Process

The first aspect concerns the decision-making process that unfolded in conjunction with the calamitous event and the relocation project, where emergency management decisions were closely intertwined with plans for the community's future.

Firstly, a *variety of local and national institutional actors*, along with influential members of the local community – such as the doctor, parish priest, commander of the carabinieri barracks, teachers, unionists, and others – were involved in significant decisions, such as selecting the location for the new settlement. The allocation of housing to families was similarly a shared responsibility of civil and religious authorities. Expert opinions, both decisive and respected, were balanced between professional competence and political pressures.

Secondly, the *alignment of local and national parliamentary pressures* illustrates effective political interaction in addressing local demands at the central government level. Close political-party relationships between left-wing parliamentary representatives and local administrators contributed to this, as did the lobbying abilities of elected officials from Calabria. A narrative of these relationships could be the subject of further research beyond this study.

Thirdly, the *catastrophe served as an opportunity to implement previously discussed ideas*, such as the choice of location for the new center. This location was already under consideration before the flood, both at the institutional level (it was the hypothesized site for an INA-Casa intervention) and within the local community (which was familiar with the area for agriculture and forestry). The Citizens' Committee for post-flood relief ratified the choice and proposed the location to higher-level authorities. Similarly, the State had already suggested housing resources (INA-Casa) for small settlements, not solely in response to disasters, though such events catalyzed decision-making.

142. Data source: Municipality of Canolo, Registry Office, historical series.

Lastly, *public works in this case served as an employment strategy* rather than merely a response to housing emergencies, echoing the practices of the 1950s Calabrian countryside, where the «big construction site» for infrastructure (roads, hydraulic forestry works, services) aimed «to create “alternative circuits” in the labor market»<sup>143</sup>, with the construction sector playing a prominent role.

In summary, the process, as reconstructed from archival records, challenges recurring descriptions of post-disaster new settlement phenomena as purely top-down processes, dominated solely by technical expertise and decisions made exclusively after dramatic events. Instead, it underscores that construction is not solely a settlement necessity but also a strategy for generating employment with high levels of widespread employability.

### 9.2 About Urban Planning Programs and Tools

The second aspect highlights the urban planning programs and tools employed, despite their partial implementation and experimental nature, both to address emergencies and due to the inherent limitations of a small municipality. In this case, the concurrent national launch of the INA-Casa public housing program in 1949 (Fanfani Plan), interventions promoted and financed by the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno*, established in 1950, and urban planning guidelines introduced through special laws for floods and Calabria, turned the relocation of abandoned towns into an opportunity for centralized, state-led design. This was not directly connected to the urban planning reforms introduced by Law N. 1150 of 1942.

The Municipality of Canolo acted strategically to seize the opportunities provided by these national tools and programs. Through the Worker Employment Increment Plan-Worker Housing (*Piano di incremento dell'occupazione operaia-Case per lavoratori*), the community accessed economic resources and external technical expertise to begin constructing a new settlement on more geologically secure ground. The *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* provided resources for nurseries, roads, and other infrastructure projects. These programs ensured both public works and employment opportunities for residents. The Canolo Nuovo master plan established the legal framework necessary to implement these interventions, utilizing expertise unavailable within the small municipal administration.

In summary, well-directed local efforts effectively leveraged national tools and programs to achieve local goals. However, it should be acknowledged that these opportunities to secure resources or develop stable skills were not fully utilized.

143. SORIERO 1985, p. 744.

### 9.3 About Organization and Urban Form

The third and final aspect concerns the organization and urban form of the houses, services, and open spaces in the new settlement.

The territorial layout of the new center features an urban-rural character, with open building layouts arranged on a gentle slope, in stark contrast to the compact, mountainous urban system of the historic settlement, which conformed to the steep terrain. A rich system of basic services – including a church, school, nursery, and communal ovens – was partially realized in dedicated constructions within a «healthy and hygienic environment»<sup>144</sup>. By contrast, in Old Canolo, for example, classrooms were cramped within the town hall and operated in shifts, with only one class («2 A») having its own dedicated classroom, «which belonged to the teacher»<sup>145</sup>. In the hamlets, lessons were held in «narrow and unhealthy huts, thatched huts»<sup>146</sup>. This spatial and functional design of New Canolo implicitly drew from national and international models, which, although delayed compared to Modern Movement proposals, also spread in post-war Italy. Central institutions (the Ministry of Public Works and the Civil Engineering Corps), with the involvement of professionals from Rome – albeit of Calabrian origin – played a key role in introducing elements of disruption and disconnection from the local context. The prevailing concept of the town appeared more suburban than agricultural, prioritizing forms and functions alien to the local culture of living. The design of open spaces, building typologies, and basic facilities, as well as the overall urban layout, continues to exhibit minimal dialogue with the local context, possibly due to the flat topography.

Similarly, the *residential building typologies* introduced aggregated models – row houses and multifamily complexes, freely arranged on grassy areas – distinctly different from the traditional houses of the historic town. Public housing projects in the early 1950s showcased diversity, typological innovation, and a sense of «urban “personality”»<sup>147</sup>, thanks in part to INA-Casa’s specific manuals<sup>148</sup>. However, subsequent private construction, supported by public resources (Law N. 1177/1955), tended to replicate single row-house types aligned along roads, undermining the concept of a town shaped by open space. So, the INA-Casa innovations do not appear to have contaminated subsequent

144. MARANDO 1958, p. 117.

145. *Ivi*, p. 118.

146. *Ibidem*.

147. GABELLINI 2001, p. 99.

148. PIANO INCREMENTO OCCUPAZIONE OPERAIA. CASE PER LAVORATORI 1950; DI BIAGI 2001.

local construction. Also the Canolo Nuovo master plan, developed around the same time, ignored these innovations.

It should be noted that each unified design intervention (INA-Casa, second phase, land development plan of 1956-1958) proposed different, non-integrated forms of aggregation while maintaining a consistent two-story height. In summary, the urban design and early buildings of Canolo Nuovo represent a minor example of decontextualized modern architecture and urban planning that failed to influence the spatial development of a small town.

The history-based research conducted has brought forgotten documents to light, challenged common assumptions about the relocation of partially abandoned towns as non-dramatic and entirely exogenous developments, and emphasized the efforts undertaken during the post-abandonment phase. The challenge for many twin towns remains to sustain these efforts beyond the initial drama.

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