



Giovanni Pellegrini's Rural Villages in Libya

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The work of Giovanni Pellegrini, a graduate of the Politecnico of Milan who moved to Libya in the early 1930s, concerns the ideation of some rural villages commissioned by and executed for the Opere Pubbliche (Public Works) offices of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania. In occasion of the first intensive demographic colonization (the so-called 'host of twenty-thousand' of 1938), within the initiatives of the Ente di Colonizzazione della Libia (Institution for the Colonization of Libya), he planned the Baracca Village in Gebel of Cyrenaica and, in collaboration with Umberto di Segni, the Crispi Village in the province of Misurata in eastern Tripolitania. Then, in occasion of the second migratory wave of 1939, within the initiatives of the Istituto Nazionale Fascista di Previdenza Sociale (National Fascist Institute of Social Security), he realized the villages of Marconi and Corradini and, in collaboration with Di Segni, he also realized the Tazzoli Village in Tripolitania. Compared to towns realized by other architects, often characterized by rigid axial plans, Pellegrini's villages exhibit a freer layout and a more attentive integration into the environment, while the public buildings, with different axes and directions, respond more consistently to functional principals. Likewise, his architectonic solutions, such as long continuous porticos to delimit public squares, avoid referring to the "Roman" arch and its monumental rhetoric, in favour of 'Berber' arches and 'low arched porticos', reminding the tradition of Arab fonduk, and assuring a better protection from the harmful environment. The Pellegrini's villages in Libya give a possibility to apply, at urban scale, the principles asserted in his *Manifesto dell'architettura coloniale* (Manifesto of Colonial Architecture), in which the author refuses the folkloristic architecture in favour of a sincere modernism that affords gaining from local traditions the solutions and motifs suited to geographical and climatic conditions.

KEY WORDS: Urban design, urban forms, Italy.