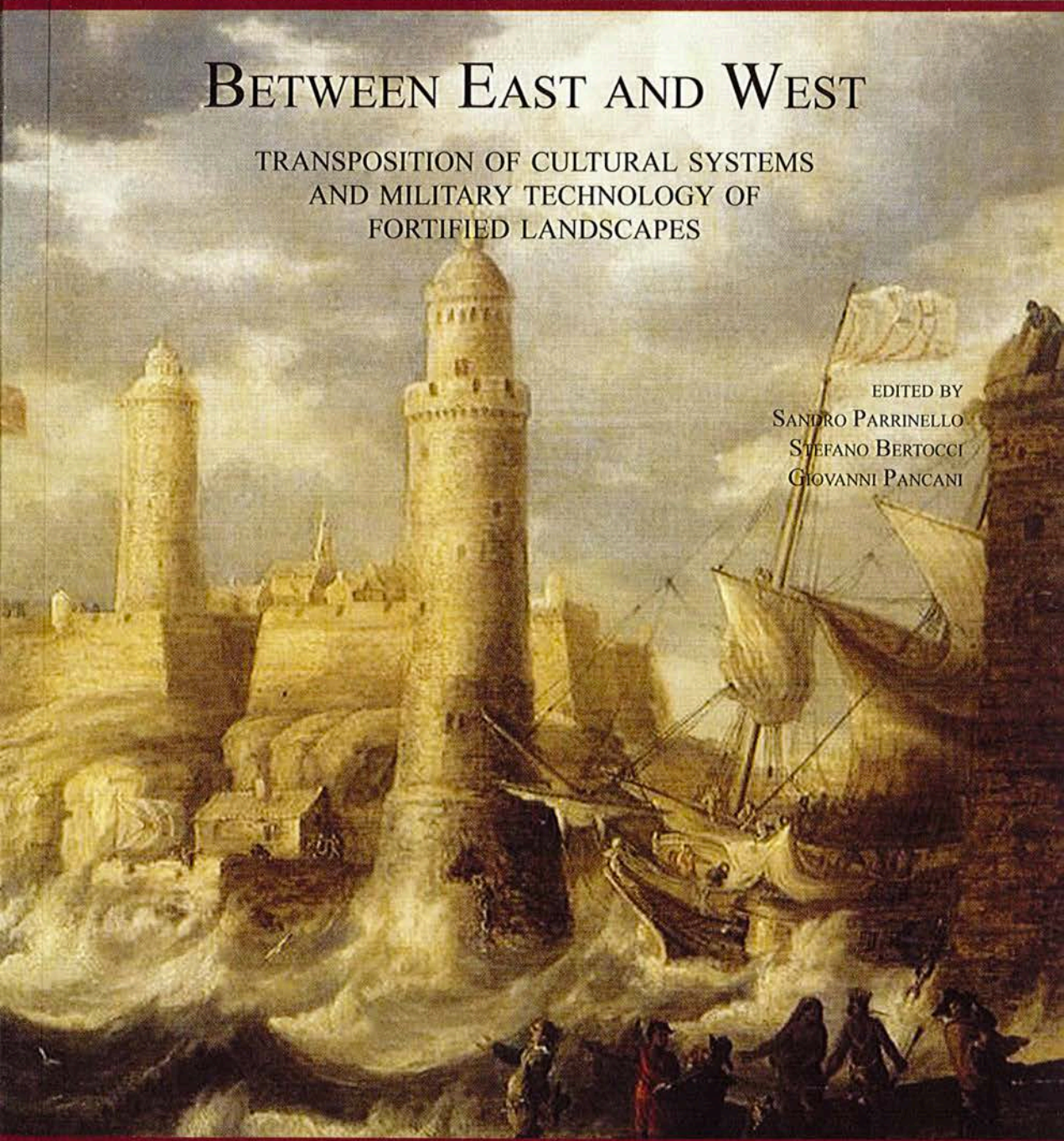


BETWEEN EAST AND WEST

TRANSPPOSITION OF CULTURAL SYSTEMS
AND MILITARY TECHNOLOGY OF
FORTIFIED LANDSCAPES

EDITED BY
SANDRO PARRINELLO
STEFANO BERTOCCHI
GIOVANNI PANCANI



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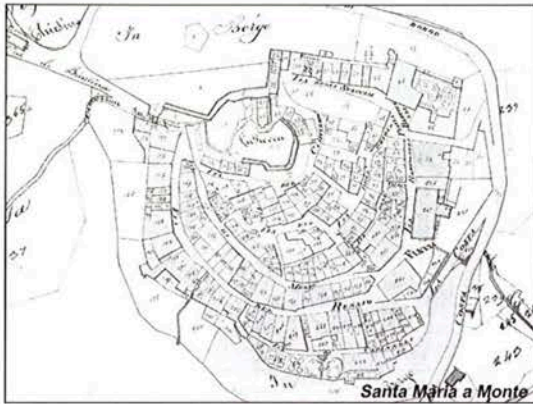
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AN “ANTE LITTERAM” NEWFOUNDLAND: THE CASTLE OF PIETRABUONA

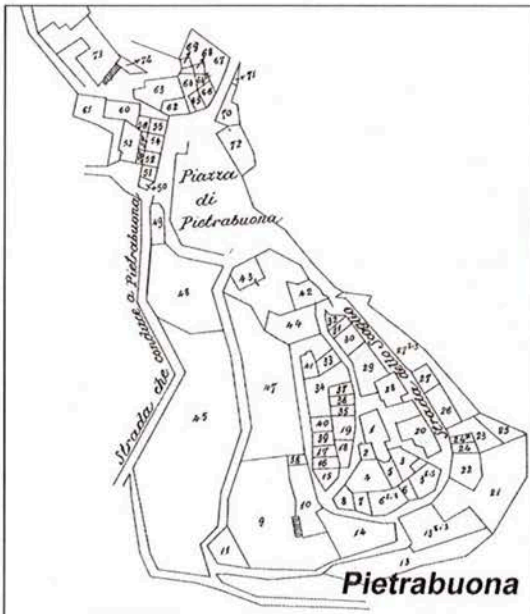
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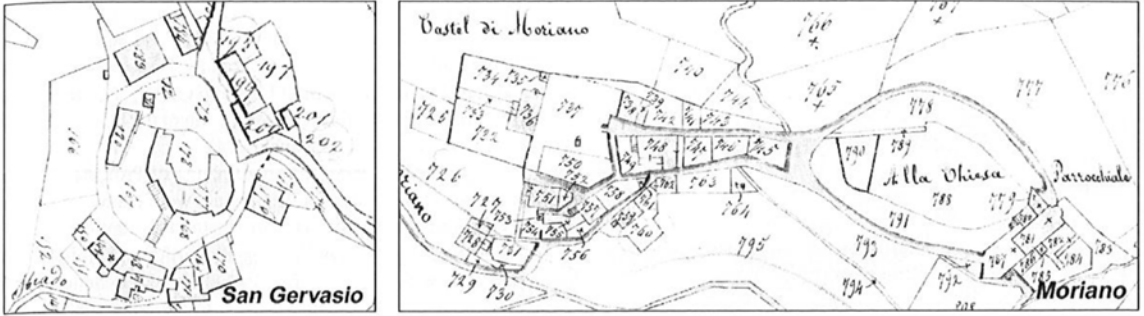
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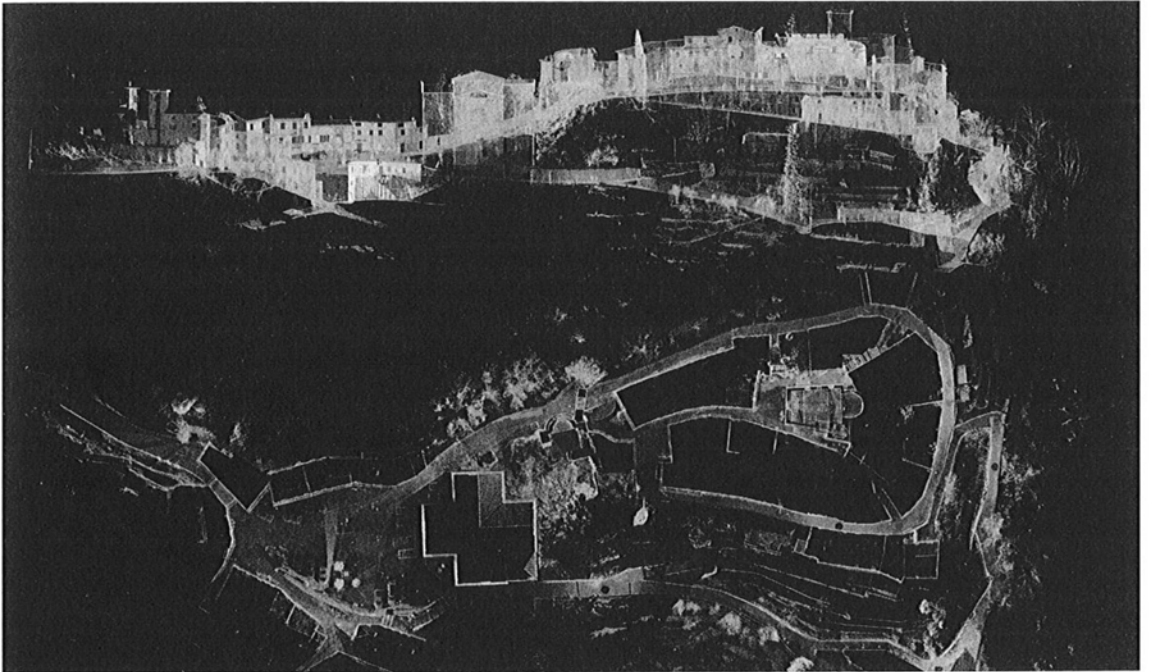
Comparison between Pietrabuona and the centres of S. Maria a Monte, Sorana, S. Gervasio and Moriano.



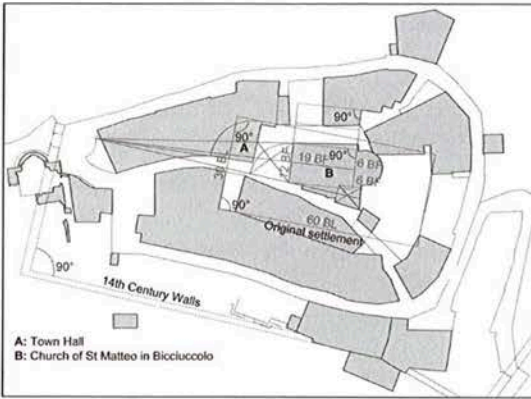
The Castle of Pietrabuona (Pescia - PT), documented since 914¹, was commissioned by the Bishop of Lucca, Pietro II (896 - 933), to defend the eastern border of the diocesan estate. A review of archival sources, metrological information from the integrated survey campaign² and stratigraphic surveys of the walls have given an indication of the layout of the original castle and the changes it had gone through over the years, which also corroborated the assumption that a walled settlement must have been built anew, just like the contemporary castles of Moriano, Santa Maria a Monte and San Gervasio³. The urban layout of the castle grew up in Pietrabuona around an original planned centre, assumedly bound by a wooden fencing and composed of two parallel rows of buildings, with a steward's building at the bottom – the latter most likely planned but not built until much later⁴–, expanding in larger and larger circles until it took up all the free areas within the 14th century walls. So, the traditional early medieval settlement at the head of a ridge, consisting of a main track settled at the sides, with the lord's palace at the bottom, slowly turned into a larger inhabited centre, consisting of a belt of new buildings erected on the eastern side, at the back of the original circle of walls, and joined around a ring-shaped track that follows the contour line at 175 metres above sea level. Such expansion, which most likely happened in the 14th century after Pietrabuona was taken over by Florence (1364), is in turn surrounded by a circle of walls with two outstanding town gates: the north gate to Medicina and the south gate to Pescia. Assumptions about the original settlement, as substantiated by lots of line-ups of the oldest buildings, are actually supported by material evidence in the form of fragments of walls from the 14th century defensive system. Parts of the circle of walls are still visible in some places along the southern and eastern sides of the hill, while a large part of the westward constructions were annexed to the residential buildings,



which, because of the slow dying out of the strictly defensive role of such system, were built very close to or even astride it. In the north, the building folded into a fortified redoubt that defended one of the two entrances to the castle; such construction, also known as “la Rocca”, consisted of a massive tower that rises out of a rectangular base, built in the fourteenth century by leaning three of its four walls against the fragments of the older Church of St Matteo. Such building, which is currently being studied, shows some interesting traces of a Romanesque architecture that is fairly unusual for the area and that is suggestive of the same style as that of many churches on the Pistoia side of the Apennines⁵, although the proportions of the *fabrica* confirm that the plan must have been devised in the area of Lucca. The Church of St. Matteo in Biciuccolo and the Town Hall, both opening on to the main square of the village and mutually placed so as to make the former more prominent than the latter⁶, thus emphasising the primacy of religious power over lay power, also date back to the age of the city states.



Screenshot of the plan and axonometric view of the point cloud model of Pietrabuona.



Schematic map showing the original settlement of Pietrabuona.

CASTILLO J.A., *La Valdnievole nel medioevo. "Incastellamento" e archeologia del potere nei secoli X-XII*, Pisa 1999, pages 164-168.

² Actually, the original castle was deserted early, just fifty years after it was built. Taken over by the estate of the *Plebs de Piscia* (the first documents about such conveyance are the Cadastral Surveys of the Diocese of Lucca, BSLU, *Libellus extimi Lucanae dyocesis MCCLX*, ms.135), the settlement was eventually inhabited again and played a key role in the monitoring of men and goods passing through, while heading for the mountain villages along the valley of the torrent Pescia Maggiore and the major thoroughfare between the Cassia Clodia Way and the Lima Valley.

⁵ REDI F., AMENDOLA A. 1991, *Chiese medievali del Pistoiese*, Amilcare Pizzi Editore, Milano, pages 64-220.

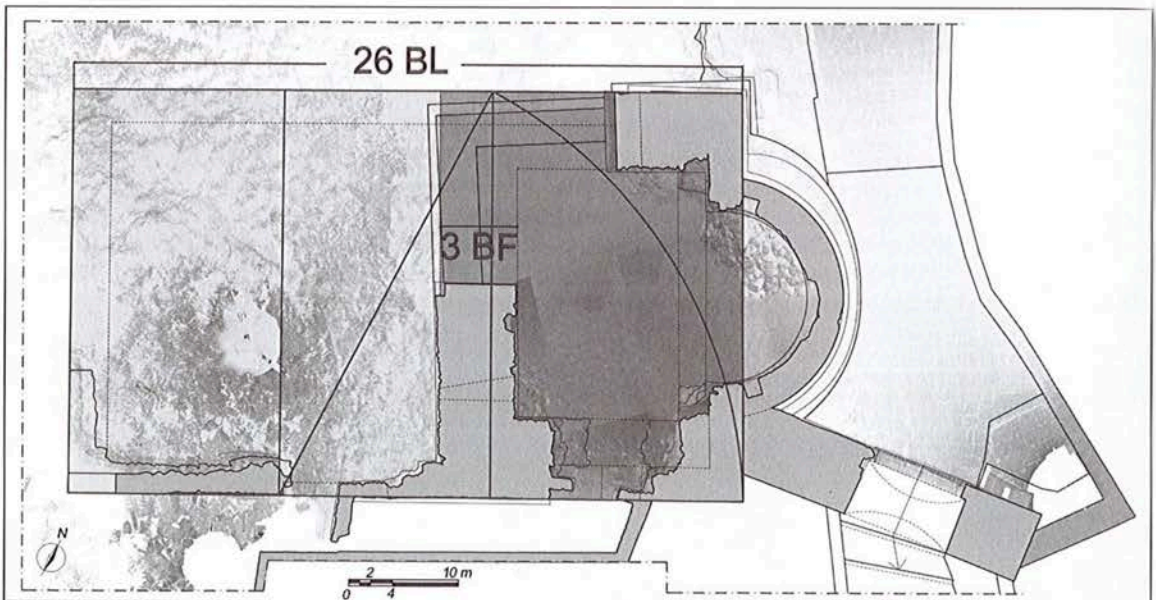
⁶ GUIDONI E. 1967, *Arte e urbanistica in Toscana 1000-1315*, Roma, pages 127-146.

NOTES

¹ The oldest preserved document is the deed for the perpetual lease of one house and a plot of land "*infra castello, quae dicitur Petra Bovula*" owned by the Church of St Frediano in Lucca, issued by the Bishop of Lucca, Pietro II, for Adalprando, son of the late Godalperti (AALU, *Diplomatico*, A54, 4 Gennaio 914).

² The survey campaign, under the coordination of Prof. Alessandro Merlo, was carried out by a cross-disciplinary work team of surveyor architects, landscape architects, art historians, archaeologists, historians and geologists. Pooling together information from the digital survey – with the help of a Faro 8080 laser scanner and a Leica TS02 total station, which was used to lay out a topographic grid prior to scan logging – and information from a direct survey of special buildings, provided a huge amount of information that extensively documented the architectural and urban assets of the whole castle.

³ SPICCIANI A. 1996, *Benefici livelli feudali: intreccio di rapporti tra chierici e laici nella Toscana medievale. La creazione di una società politica*, in "Studi Medioevali, 2", Pisa, pages 154-271; QUIRÓS



Plan of the Rocca di Pietrabuona. The ancient church of St. Matteo is built on a golden rectangle of 26 Braccia Fiorentina. In 14th century inside of the fabrica it was constructed the defensive tower partially conserved.

The international conference "*Between East and West: transposition of cultural systems and military technology of fortified landscapes*" is organized in order to compare the results and the updates about the several researches made by experts of various nationalities, about the theme of cultural routes and fortified landscapes. The scientific knowledge, the analysis, the documentation and the architectural survey of the heritage in all its meanings, are essential instruments for the understanding and the improvement of any information and sign that history and culture has produced in each places or in a specific geographic area. These signs are in any case the result of the transposition of cultural models, of building technologies and offensive and/or defensive strategies, that have been tested, consolidated and exported for a long time, and that have determined the image of whole territories. The implementation of the knowledge, the specific studies and the documentation programs, also constitute the main basis for the exercise of critical and interpretative activities, in order to training and to develop a particular settlement, city or area. Besides, they are also useful for the expectation of the necessary specific planning for the conservation and the improvement, that are aimed at promoting the conscious development of human activities in that places. This international conference aims at comparing the experiences made in this scientific area, that have allowed the development of operational methods for researches useful for the correct understanding of both the architectures and the historical and archaeological complexes. Furthermore, it also aims at taking into consideration the cultural and environmental contexts of the contemporary history, giving essential advices for a critical reading and a proper evaluation about the conservation actions for this important heritage.



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