

“Satellite leisure in linear natural reserves”, a planning model for tourism resorts. Learnings from the GATCPAC Resting City

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Abstract

In this article we explain the landscape and legal resources that characterized the GATCPAC Resting and Vacation City (1931-38) of Barcelona – a never built project – with the aim of depicting a suitable model for other areas. This model, named as “satellite leisure on linear natural reserves”, departs from the premise of placing those settlements that are potentially aggressive to the landscape, such as tourist resorts, in protected zones. The model is specially thought for interior and natural tourism. In the article we will explain the objectives of the GATCPAC project, its characteristics and the relation between those characteristics and other contemporary urban models. After that, we will find out which parameters are still useful for the actual landscape paradigm, drawing up an extrapolation to the Catalan region.

Keywords: resort, landscape, tourism, GATCPAC, Resting City

Introduction

The Resting and Vacation City (1931-1938) was a GATCPAC (Catalan Group of Architects for the Contemporary Architecture Progress) project that was meant to be a space for leisure, rest and vacations for Barcelona’s working class. Historically, it was one of the first vacation cities in Europe mainly inspired by de Moscow Green City competition experience (1929-1930), but also by other German urban projects like Römerstadt in Frankfurt (1929) and Le Corbusier’s theories. The authors had the firm intention of building the City and developed a rigorous and complete project with graphic documentation, reports and budgets. In parallel, Catalan civil organizations – labor unions, sports federations, tourism secretariat, cultural entities – created a cooperative association to promote the City, which had more than 800.000 supporters¹. As is well known, the project was never built because the Spanish Civil War interrupted the processing of planning permissions.

The aim of this article is not to explain the organization of the GATCPAC’s work, or the historic background of the project (something that I’ve done somewhere else), but to present some of my research conclusions, and mainly the extrapolation of the GATCPAC experience in a “model” that could be useful nowadays. Thus, on the first place, we will describe the characteristics of the Resting City; on the second place, we will explore its social goals; and finally, we will depict the abstraction of some basic parameters that could link that historical experience with the actual landscape paradigm.

¹ The Cooperative was approximately established by 17 civil organizations and 140 individuals. The 800.000 supporters is the sum of the civil organizations’ members.

1. The Resting and Vacation City (RVC)

When GATCPAC started the RVC work in 1931 Le Corbusier had already presented his *Ville Radieuse* at the CIRPAC meeting in Brussels². Six years before, the same architect spoke about “the resting hour” in one chapter of his book *Urbanisme*³. It is very plausible that Le Corbusier’ theories influenced GATCPAC research on Barcelona in where the RVC was to be developed, especially considering the friendship between the Swiss architect and the GATCPAC member, Josep Lluís Sert. Nevertheless, if we go into details of the RVC project and try to envision its physical reality, we will have difficulties meeting Le Corbusier influence. That distance between Le Corbusier urbanism and the GATCPAC RVC architecture is related to the City’s goal, that is, to solve Barcelona specific urban problems within a single project.

The RVC project rose in Barcelona’s thirties decade atmosphere; that means that a demographic explosion was taking place (the city had one million citizens by then), the Republican Government passed a public policy on workers’ rights (for the very first time, workers had week-ends), the city or Barcelona was lacking public spaces, parks, and sports facilities, and a serious problem of tuberculosis and other epidemics illness were usual. For the justification of the RVC GATCPAC argued that “*the periodical exodus from the city to the countryside is a natural reaction, human, logic, that of the individual against the feeling of lack of space produced by the rigid discipline of the big cities*”. Citizens “*feel the inevitable need to flee the city to deal with a soothing and restful atmosphere*”⁴. The authors calculated the population that hypothetically could move to the beaches during the week-end to be 300,000⁵.

GATCPAC exposed the RVC ideas in the 7th number of its magazine *AC (Documentos de Actividad Contemporánea)*, published in 1932. In parallel, within the same magazine, they showed a small demountable house for holidays. Both the City and the small house represented two forms to solve the same purpose: to provide qualified resting spaces for the citizens to enjoy their new right of free week-ends. The demountable house was a small scale solution; daily, easy, and fast. The RVC was a large scale response: rational, organized, and democratic. In *AC*, among the slogans and suggestive images of thousands of people spreading along the beaches reachable by train, the authors defended their prototypes, which were an answer to Barcelona deficiencies:

- a- Short term deficiencies: Sports and sanitation facilities.
- b- Long term deficiencies: Space for the week-end and holiday rest. Space for citizens orchards.

The reflection on those particular needs resulted in very singular project. No others resting resorts – the Green City for Moscow competition, the vacation resort of Le Corbusier Alger “A” project, the vacation centers designed by the Germany National-Socialism Government for workers (like Prora Island), the Italian “fascio” interventions in the Alps, the Dutch parks on some city boundaries, etc – combined daily activities, like gardening an orchard, with long term facilities for vacation, or made compatible recreation with sanitation (the RVC included an amusement park, as well as an area for tuberculosis sanatoriums). As expected, to gather all purposes in a single project required a large space. GATCPAC found that singular place along a beach by the Llobregat River Delta. The natural conditions of the chosen site and the absence of any surrounding construction were what would allow individuals to find a “*repairing and soothing*” environment: “*a big beach delimited by trees in an absolutely virgin state, no buildings, or*

² LE CORBUSIER: *La Ville Radieuse*. París: Ed. Vincent, 1964.

³ LE CORBUSIER: *Urbanisme*. París: Ed. Arthaud, 1925.

⁴ GATEPAC: *AC, Documentos de Actividad Contemporánea*, Nº7. Enero 1934, pp. 25.

⁵ Report of the project, 1933. Economical studies. They found that number comparing Barcelona with London week-end phenomenon. Fons GATCPAC. Arxiu Històric Demarcació Barcelona COAC.

casinos, or houses that would prevent the implementation of the program we propose”⁶. The area was 8.5 kilometers long and 1.6 wide. The diagonal avenue sketched in the Cerdà Plan for Barcelona was also taken into account in the project (fig. 1 and 2).

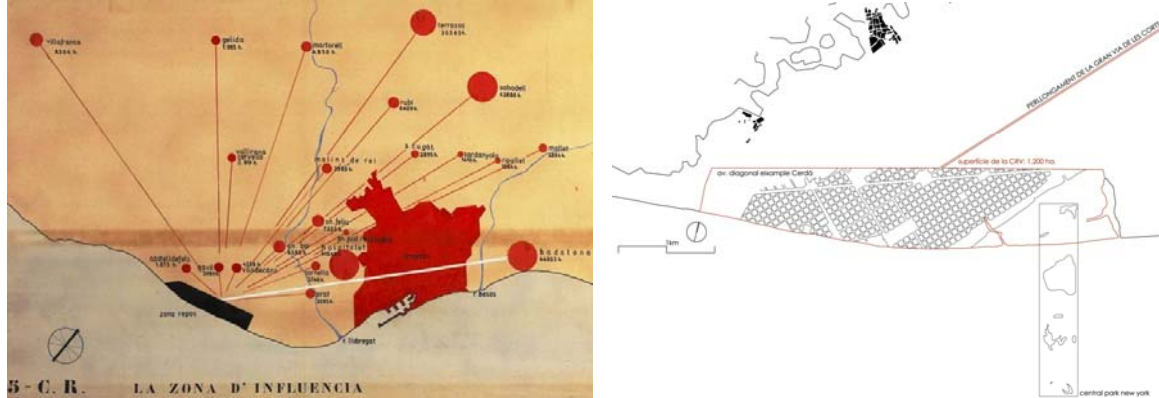


Figure 1: The RVC (left below) influence area (from the 1933 exposition, Arxiu Històric COAC). Figure 2: The Cerdà grid applied to the RVC area, in comparison with the New York Central Park area (author elaboration).

The virginity of the site was one of the premises of their research. During the project development, the architects tried to create a landscape setting antithetic to traditional urbanism. Citizens resting feeling was directly related with the distance from an urban atmosphere. That led GATPAC members to explore architectural insertion forms based on dispersion criteria and respect for the preexistent landscape. For that purpose it was essential to find a legal figure of urban classification that could allow some development while providing certain guarantees to preserve the site, that is, to avoid an excess of construction. This figure became a declaration and classification of that specific setting as a Natural Park zone. Those surroundings were named *Parc Marítim*, but it was also known as landscape reservoir or national park, as the analyzed documentation show.

1.1. Characteristics of the RVC

GATCPAC presented the RVC divided in four parts, each of them linked to a functional division of the project: “bathing zone”, “week-end zone”, “residential zone”, and “resting zone”. Nevertheless, for the purpose of this article, we will examine the whole project from a landscape creation perspective, analyzing the project as a unity. Moreover, there were different versions of the project: an initial version from 1932 and a more technical project from 1935. These two projects are essentially the same ones; little additions and changes were made between those dates. Likewise, we will use here the first version of the project as it is more cohesive and has clearer rules, thus being adequate for the purposes of the present article. To describe physically the city we will start with the urban parameters:

Table 1: The urban parameters of the RVC

RVC surface	building occupation	built surface	occupation	edification	beds
12,126,605.00m ²	88,729.39m ²	266,689.36m ²	0.7%	0.02m ² /m ² sur	12,370

Source: own calculations

⁶ Ídem note 4, pp. 27.

As we can see, buildings occupation was negligible. Also, the number of beds does not match with the number of people that theoretically would use the place during the week-end: 300,000. These numbers demonstrate, on the first hand, that GATCPAC considered a lot of people going to the RVC only for one day (the “bathing zone” was thought for that kind of use, as it lacked any residential building) and, on the second hand, that the use of demountable houses to sleep would be extensive, providing a total freedom sensation if placed under the trees of the beach forest.

The physical characteristics of the city were directly connected with the landscape purpose of being a city into a park. We can summarize those characteristics in seven “laws”:

- A- Placing the architecture following the rules of the existing landscape
- B- Maintaining the existing vegetation as much as possible
- C- Containing human activities within few buildings
- D- Leaving large areas with no use assigned
- E- Avoiding the urbanization of any street, pavement, boulevard
- F- Avoiding the area division and fencing into lots
- G- Surrounding the city with an agricultural belt

Thus, the landscape of the CRV is the result of the application of those laws. In short, it is a big area, with the sea on the south, organized in strips that are (from south to north): a beach, a pine forest, an open space, and an agricultural belt (fig. 3). The buildings are widely spaced (almost 300 meters between them) so there is a lot of empty space in between, the streets are only paths, there are no fences, and the sensation that one could have is that he is far away from Barcelona, as for reaching the City one must cross a large expanse with 2,700 orchards for renting.

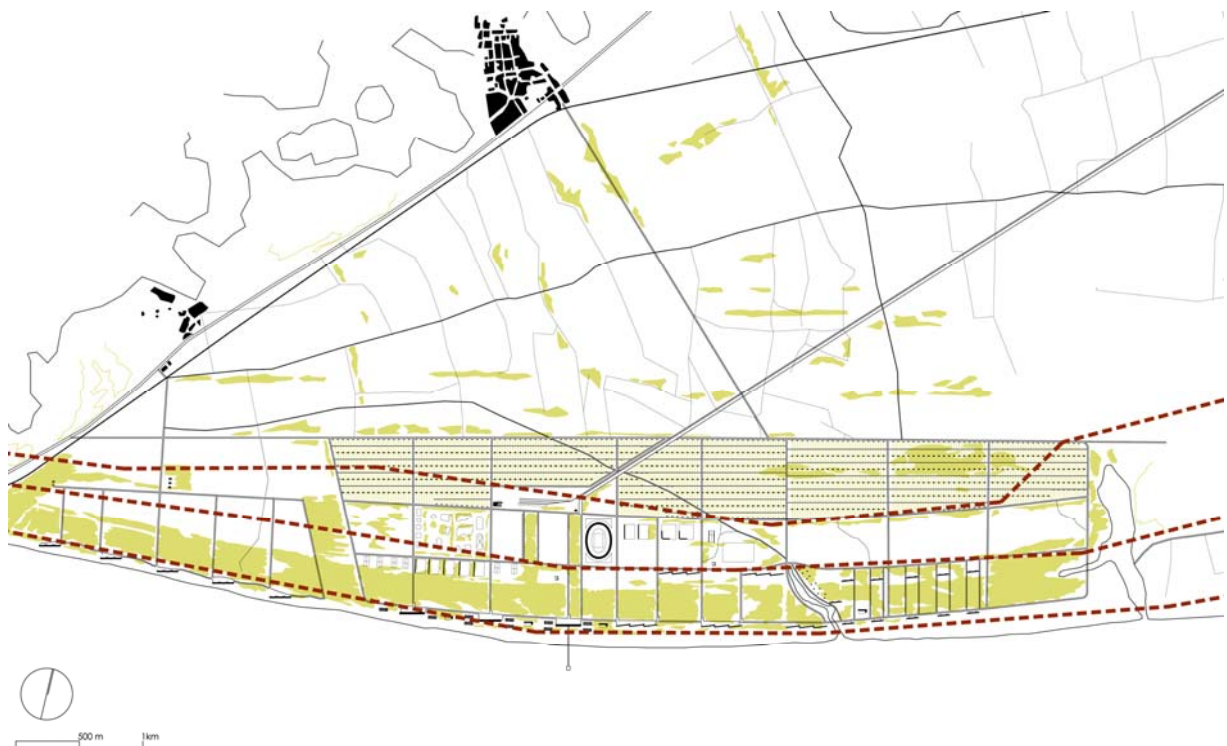


Figure 3: The RVC underlining the four strips (beach, pine wood, open space and agricultural) with the buildings and vegetation (author elaboration).

2. Generating a model

Can the RVC project be a model that illuminates some current challenges? Rather than an example, which is mainly a literal description of two resembled realities, a model is a theoretical proposition that can be helpful to extrapolate main important characteristics of a project to similar cases, and a way of analyzing current, as well as old planning settings. To generate a general model based on GATCPAC project, we have found several abstract dimensions, that is, particularities of the project that can be thought as being universal and contemporary.

2.1. Objectives



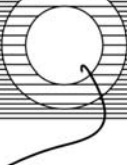

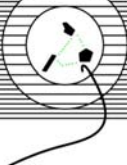
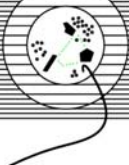
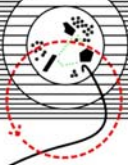
If we talk about the objectives, we certainly see that some of the RVC goals are obsolete: for instance, providing Barcelona city with sport facilities, tuberculosis sanatoriums, etc. But there are universal objectives that are still compatible with our cities. The most generic ones are listed below:

- A- To qualify resting areas promoting a closer contact between citizens and nature
- B- To preserve the landscape
- C- To provide cities with a nearby venue for holidays (interior tourism)
- D- To bring the rural and urban realities and activities closer
- E- To promote the values of cooperation and coexistence

2.2. Model characteristics

From the analysis of the project we have distilled seven progressive characteristics that define the RVC model. Every characteristic is linked to a scheme to make the point more evident. Nevertheless, the drawings are only a tool for the comprehension model of the model that is, without embracing neither the complexity of the model itself, nor proposing a formal planning design. These schemes are then only for analyzing purposes; to use the model effectively, it is necessary to take it as an abstract decalogue of good practices, practices that are depicted in table 2.

Table 2: model characteristics

landscape preservation	agricultural surroundings	satellite settlement	building permeability	minimum urbanization	ephemeral architecture	rotation
						

These generic characteristics are in the focus of the CRV idea of “tourism of proximity”. We will see each one of those characteristics in greater detail in what follows, specifying its influences and current meanings.

Landscape preservation:

As we have mentioned, GATCPAC was obsessed to declare the RVC area a Natural Reserve. That obsession came from the real danger of the speculation: “*it would be unconceivable that the city*

authorities let this area be transformed in an inorganic group of partial developments”⁷. In one of the panels elaborated for an exposition to shown the project to Barcelona citizens in 1933, they wrote down: “that kind of urbanization does not mean the landscape destruction, on the contrary, it is the guarantee of its preservation”⁸. For GATCPAC, preservation means public control of the settlement growth, means no land speculation. The decision of considering the area as a Natural Reserve – *Parc Marítim* – was clearly influenced by the National Parks system of United States, a system that Josep Lluís Sert defended in his *Can our cities survive?*⁹.

Agricultural surrounding:

One of the curiosities of GATCPAC thinking is the importance that they gave to some popular activities, like amateur gardening. In the Rapport of the project they wrote: “the city growth invaded those vegetable gardens areas to build houses and we are losing that deeply rooted tradition. In the RVC, we have not neglect that aspiration and have set an important extension of land to that purpose, that, moreover, has another interesting aim: to guarantee the isolation of the resting zone from the city itself, because Barcelona buildings will be close to this “Park” soon”¹⁰. So, the agricultural areas have these two purposes, keeping the popular tradition of cultivating and isolating the RVC from Barcelona’s growth. Both considerations were related with the Garden City theories embedded in the Catalan culture, a perspective that the Garden City Civic Society (a civil entity) was promoting between 1914 and 1920. The myth of the garden in the Catalan Culture became also a political argument. Conservative politicians consider it a moral guarantor. For the anarchists, a tool for the worker class freedom, a means for self-sufficient productivity¹¹.

Satellite settlement:

The authors of the RVC always envisioned the City settled at the end of a transportation infrastructure. In different articles they defended that it was good for people to “go there on purpose”. They also argued that “the parks settlement has to be away of any road, avoiding to break them”¹². When the group reflected on the Moscow Green City competition experience they talked about a “satellite city”¹³. Satellite settlements connected with the importance of amateur agricultural hobby as we have seen, demonstrates the strong linkage between the Catalan modern architectonic movement and the predecessor Green City movement.

Building permeability:

The singular characteristics of the RVC emerged from the contradiction of being a natural park – allowing for an effective feeling of being away from the city – and being a City itself – that means including conditioned spaces for residences, recreation areas, sports facilities, etc. In the search of a particular urban model that combines both aspirations (to be a park, and a city) the Russian discussions of de-urbanism were revealing and inspiring. The paper published in the first AC number (GATEPAC, 1931, 30-31) on “The Moscow Green City” was about that Russian Resting Resort competition, and it included a very similar program to the RVC one. De-urbanism Russian cities developed by OSA group of architects were linear human settlements, that followed some kind of infrastructure (train, motorway), characterized by the dispersion of their architectures. The aim was to dissolve the city in the countryside, as Marx and Engels argued in their 1848 Communist Manifesto. GATCPAC seemed inspired for the graphics of those

⁷ Ídem note 4, pp. 27.

⁸ GATEPAC: AC, Documentos de Actividad Contemporánea, N°7. Enero 1934, pp. 27.

⁹ SERT, Josep Lluís: *Poden sobreviure les nostres ciutats?* Barcelona: Ed. Generalitat de Catalunya, 1983.

¹⁰ Report of the project, 1933. Arxiu Històric Demarcació Barcelona COAC.

¹¹ MASJUAN, Eduard: *La ecología humana en el anarquismo ibérico. Urbanismo “orgánico” o ecológico, neomalthusianismo y naturismo social.* Barcelona: Ed. Icaria, 2000, pp. 146-178.

¹² Report of the project, 1933. “*Parc Marítim*” section. Arxiu Històric Demarcació Barcelona COAC.

¹³ For instance in the AC magazine (GATEPAC, 1932, 25), in the project report and in other articles.

examples, despite the rejection of Le Corbusier. There is curious anecdote on the architectonic discussions between the urbanism and de-urbanism supporters. In a letter from Le Corbusier to Ginzburg the Swiss wrote: “some architects suggest building straw huts; what a fantastic idea, but only for the week-end!”¹⁴. Curiously GATCPAC use de-urbanism influence only in the RVC.

Minimum urbanization:

Another consequence of the de-urbanism influence is to consider humankind needing for a direct contact with the environment, the earth, the nature. That idea was also spread by other Modern groups as the Dutch *De 8 en Opbouw*, or the German magazine *Das Neue Frankfurt*, who translated the contemporary bathing suits fashion (minimal) into the naked decoration architecture. GATCPAC wrote also about the RVC urbanization stating that it was necessary to avoid a built “seafront” because it was important to keep the physical direct contact between the city and the beach.

Ephemeral architecture:

As we have mentioned, GATCPAC developed a demountable house prototype besides the RVC project development. The Russian de-urbanism cities were also characterized by vernacular and light constructions with the aim to economize the building process. Some of de-urbanism constructions were also demountables. OSA group defended the individualization of the residences in small cells that could be grouped¹⁵ later on, becoming housing complexes. The stationary needs of the population would change them. Demountable pieces, as standardization, light construction, etc, focused the architectural discussions during the thirties and numerous examples were published in magazines, so the GATCPAC research was caught and influenced by all those inputs. The demountable GATCPAC house meant to them population freedom, showing up especially during the holiday. It also represented a new light technology preventing for an aggressive architecture implementation on the landscape.

Rotation:

For the smooth running of the RVC and for its economic sustainability it was essential to systematize all the works and managerial activities of the city within a unique entity. That was the function of a cooperative society called RVC. It dealt with construction permits, as well as the staff or human resources for the City, the renting fees, franchises, etc. In the RVC there were no properties. Every inch of the land was to be one single unit under public running after its expropriation by the Government, something that never happened. The Cooperative looked for the full occupation of the city’s beds interspersing normal families’ reservations with scholar holiday requests¹⁶.

3. The model today

Are the parameters of the RVC still useful today? We will start this section with a Catalan paradigmatic case: the *Club Mediterrané*¹⁷. That resort was criminalized because it was placed in the Natural Reserve of Cap de Creus. The popular pressure movement forced to demolish it, and two years ago it was destroyed. But, paradoxically, it was the only touristic resort in the region that could not expand because the preservation laws of its surroundings prevented it from becoming bigger. Even though its architectonic resolution differs from the GATCPAC RVC, its way of laying on the landscape follows the

¹⁴ GINZBURG, Moisei: *Moisei Ginzburg escritos. 1923-1930*. Madrid: Ed. El Croquis, 2007, pp. 403.

¹⁵ In the Russian Group OSA magazine, *Sovremenniaia Arkhitektura*, was published a range of de-urbanism cities examples, especially in numbers 1-2 and 6 in 1930.

¹⁶ Report of the project, 1933. “Program” section. Arxiu Històric Demarcació Barcelona COAC.

¹⁷ A touristic resort designed in 1960-62, with a capacity for 800 people, setted in the Pla de Tudela and Cala Tulip in the Cap de Creus Natural Reserve. The architects were Pelayo Martínez and Jean Weiler (Musquera, 2003, 188).

spirit of the model we have just described. For instance, its resolution in small and separated constructions makes the adaptation of built pieces to the land relief, as the RVC suited the strips order of the Llobregat Delta landscape. Besides of that, the division of the program in two bungalow groups made the resort more permeable to the ecologic flows of the area.

Those mechanisms do not seem to be found in any other contemporary case. Nearby to the *Club Med* we find Empuriabrava development. That settlement had fifty years ago the same original conditions of the RVC: a marshy terrain, with ponds, dunes and pines close to the beach. But its architectonic order differed a lot from the GATPAC project. It has the typical suburban urbanization with lots, single-family houses, fences at the plots, streets with pavements, a huge built seafront, big hotels, etc., a more aggressive kind of urbanism for the landscape that the small Cap de Creus *Club Med*. But its placement is absolutely lawful and, theoretically, it can grow if the planning changes. Nowadays Empuriabrava is partially surrounded by natural reserves but its interior is not protected, so it can become more and more compact, dense, and if some any other day the political color of the municipality changes, it may grow with no legal problems.

These two cases show us that some of the RVC values are still valid. The first one, preservation, is, from my point of view, transcendental to control landscape disasters in touristic areas like the well-known case of the Catalan coastline, but also most recent disasters like the serious landscape aggression prompted by Vall Fosca second residences settlements, in the Pyrenees. The second one is the way to distribute the architecture within the resorts, something that can have a positive or negative impact on the ecological environment. In this sense, parameters as “permeability” or “ephemeral construction” can be helpful for a good implementation of touristic resorts. Nevertheless, we have to say that the model is not only applicable to the construction of new resorts. On the contrary, preservation probably means today to take advantage of old infrastructures, old strip mines, old facilities, old industrial constructions... for a touristic purpose. Iñaki Ábalos pointed out in his *Atlas pintoresco* what are the current landscape challenges in relation with the post industrial era we are immersed in. He talked about “*the national park systems, the biosphere reserves, the relation between the economic resources and the affected population, the necessity of preserving the ecosystems, the abandoned traditional agricultural areas, the research of a new productivity linked with the landscape and the population, the big infrastructures’ impact and its effects on the landscape and on the ecosystems, the cultural and historic tracings, the redefinition of the productive ecosystems in a context of environmental tourism are some of the current subjects that need treatment*”¹⁸.

It is true that nowadays it has no sense to develop a touristic resort as big as was the RVC was. But the model that emerges from the GATCPAC experience does not require a minimum dimension. On the contrary, it is dimensionless. It might be seen, more or less, like a roadmap. In fact, we can find the main linkage between the past GATCPAC experience and the present touristic situation in the objective of the RVC itself: to provide citizens with spaces for resting and recreating in direct contact with nature avoiding being aggressive to the territory. This is an aim still valid to deal with interior tourism or proximity leisure, the same kind of purpose that RVC sought to satisfy. To explore how that model fits in the contemporary Catalan landscape paradigm we will analyze and made some observations of every model parameters.

Landscape preservation; some considerations about the word “protection”:

It could seem a nonsensical proposition and a contradiction to defend placing tourist resorts within “protected areas”, especially for those current protected areas with a delicate situation, that at the same time are fragile, small, and insufficient. Nevertheless the picture changes when thinking from a paradigm of an evolution and extension of natural landscape preservation policy. The Catalan Studies Institute

¹⁸ ÁBALOS, Iñaki: *Atlas Pintoresco, vol. 1. El observatorio*. Barcelona: Ed. Gustavo Gili, 2005, pp. 57.

defines the word “protection” in two different ways: 1) “to defend against some threat” and 2) “to help the prosperity”. I think that nowadays the significance of this word is decanted towards the first definition and provably we could imagine a future stage when protect would mean “help”, “peace”, “conciliation”. In that context the preservation parameter of the GATCPAC tourism model would have sense. In that imagined future protected areas would be generalized and extended along the territory and this expansion would make it possible a diversification of protections; from the most fragile ecosystems to visual agricultural or forest landscape protection. Obviously, new tourism resort do not need to affect the first grade of protection, they can be placed in less fragile landscapes. In Catalonia, natural reserves system takes a linear scheme (fig. 4). It is neither naive to consider that the RVC authors thought about a generalization of their model along the Catalan coastline. We have extrapolated an original scheme of the RVC to show how this territorial strategy would look like (fig. 5).

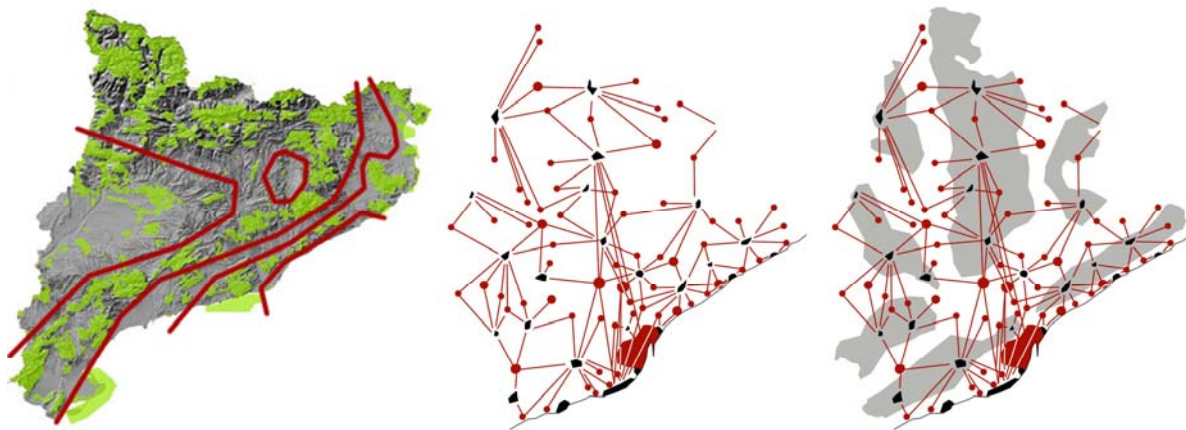


Figure 4: The Catalan Natural Parks system, follows a linear scheme (source: Generalitat de Catalunya web page).
 Figure 5: The graphics of the scheme that used GATCPAC to explain the influence area of the RVC, used for showing the model. On the right, with the linear natural reserves (author elaboration).

Agricultural surrounding and the contemporary interest for the urban orchard:

The city evolution during the XX century tended to separate human life from the earth. In general we can say that urban reality moved away from rural reality. Recently we can observe how citizens want to return to some rural practices like cultivating an urban orchard, even if it is on a balcony. The “rural houses tourism”, the education programs of farm practice knowledge, and the environmental conscience are some of the reasons and consequences of this phenomenon and paradigm shift. In this sense, the GATCPAC decision of planning 2,700 renting orchards in the RVC (1/3 of its extension) has still sense. The agricultural activity in relation with tourism resorts is a guaranty of its anti-urban character, necessary for the population to rest. Moreover, in relation to proximity leisure, as Lewis Mumford defended¹⁹, planning agricultural areas nearby the city are a good way to separate settlements, keep the feeling of being out of the city and bring the population closer to natural life.

Satellite settlement and the real situation of potential old structures:

In the landscape paradigm that we have described before, old structures can be potential leisure and vacation resorts. If we observe some abandoned constructions, we realize that a lot of them are at the end of roads. Quarries, mines, industrial colonies, farms... most of them are close to natural resource and normally far away from the main roads. In order to keep the GATCPAC intention of safeguarding the

¹⁹ MUMFORD, Lewis: *La carretera y la ciudad*. Buenos Aires: Ed. Emecé, 1966.

isolation of the RVC, these kind of obsolete structures placed like satellites are useful for new leisure spaces. A curious anecdote is GATCPAC studied the rehabilitation of Puig Industrial Colony along the Llobregat River, for a touristic finality (the Tourist Federation asked them to develop a project). So, in the thirties the authors of the RVC were thinking, like now, in some kind of architectonic re-use.

Building permeability and the scientific studies of “urban ecosystems”:

It is evident that the scientific studies of “urban ecosystems” are becoming important for city planning. Active tools developed to preserve some urban species populations of birds which are descending in number as a direct consequence of new construction systems appearing recently, especially in European Nordic countries. The RVC buildings separation avoided breaking some ecosystem flows. In this sense, the model analyzed invites to pay attention to this subject. Permeability does not mean exclusively building separation. It means being careful and cautious about the settlement impact on the surrounding environment.

Minimum urbanization; surface permeability and holiday activities:

As we have seen, GATCPAC associated the image of the city with streets, pavements, seafronts... Nevertheless, and in relation with the previous point, an excess of urbanization directly affects the permeability of the settlement. To avoid blacktop, pavement and other artificial surfaces it is an effective way to keep the RVC landscape intention of being urban antithetic (necessary for the citizen feeling of resting out from the city) and to add an ecosystem discourse. Besides that, tracks, paths and the like are appropriate for the typical week-end activities like excursions, bicycle tours, etc.

Ephemeral architecture; seasonal camps:

One of the main problems of holiday resorts is their occupation during non tourist seasons. The RVC had resolved that problem with the demountable house: during the winter they were dismantled and the emptiness invaded the pine forest and the beach so the ecosystems could be recovered. Our proposition model uses similar mechanisms. Camping can be a solution but not in the current reality of some campsites, which are a miniature reproduction of some suburban social obsessions like fencing in, stabilizing structures, surfacing... It is important to promote the original spirit of camping, which was associated with trekking and tours in contact with nature, and of a ephemeral type. This spirit is directly related with the resort site on a natural reserve, because it promotes excursions and outdoor activities. Other kind of demountable structures can be used, like bungalows, or prefab houses. Nevertheless, the experience says that is difficult to dismantle them every year.

Rotation; the sharing phenomenon:

Finally we want to connect the current sharing phenomenon that implies cars but also houses for holidays, etc., with the original renting organization of the RVC Cooperative. It is true that today it would be difficult to find out a public property as big as the RVC to develop a new touristic resort. But the growth of the number of cooperatives, for instance for ecologic food consumption, or in the agricultural field, allows to imagine that the society itself can organize its leisure areas under a cooperative model. Network and new technologies have shown us their effectiveness in society self organization. For instance in housing exchange, car sharing, second hand purchase... In that sense it is reasonable to think about replacing the organization of the RVC by a single entity with a well designed web that allows people to be in contact with each other and to search for different resorts as a means to organize their holidays.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we have seen how the RVC designed by GATCPAC in the thirties was planned under some universal ideas that are still current or can be salient in the present urban paradigm. The ideas of landscape preservation (considering the enormous evolution that this concept has experimented since the

thirties), resting needs (to be away from the city), social equality (the cooperative system as the most suitable way of organization) that influenced the project design were translated in some values, tools, rules that can be extrapolated to the present. The model that emerges of that experience can shed light to the debate of the urban proximity leisure areas or interior tourism. The model is dimensionless. It is, like a road map, a collection of progressive parameters that can guide a non aggressive establishment of new touristic resorts. All things considered, it defends satellite settlements, placed in linear protected areas, respectful with the ecosystem flows of the surroundings and allowing for the connection between urban and rural life.