

# Adriano, the Church, and the City. Olivetti and the Religious Architectural Patronage between 1950s and 1960s in Ivrea

ARTICLE

*Olivetti Architectural Patronage, Ivrea, Modernism, Form and Structure, Religious Pluralism*

## /Abstract

The study aims to investigate the relation between the Olivetti company and its patronage in religious architecture which constitutes a rarity that has still to be read within Olivetti's social commitment. Described by Bruno Zevi as a "cocktail" of Judaism, Waldism, and Catholicism, the Olivetti represented the synthesis of these three spiritualities, with consequences in terms of architectural project.

Since its 1908 foundation in Ivrea (Turin), especially under the presidency of Adriano Olivetti (1938-1960), the company adopted a holistic approach regarding the themes of production and work. Starting from the ideal of Comunità theorized by Adriano, the company committed itself with the synergic promotion of the factory's growth, territory and society. In this framework, the planning of new settlements – whose realization is wanted by the company – becomes relevant.

The study analyzes the changes of the role of religious architecture from a relative centrality in the 1930s to a progressive marginalization in the first two decades after the World War II. This change is considered within the progressive loss of sense of community in the 1960s, when the Olivetti company lost its main guide – Adriano suddenly died in 1960 – and the Church faced a crucial crisis after the Concilio Vaticano II (1962-1965).

This critical moment is described through the analysis of the Canton Vesco district in Ivrea: here, between the 1950s and the 1960s, the Sacro Cuore (Nizzoli - Oliveri studio, Favini), and the San Francesco (Boschetti, De Carlo, Giovannini, Livadiotti) Catholic churches, and the Waldensian Evangelical Temple (Koenig - Messina) were designed and built.

The essay aims at highlighting the relation between these architectures and the urban context, also considering the influence they had – or did not have – on the contextual planning of the Canavese area, which was particularly subjected to religious reformism.

## /Author

**Martina Ulbar**  
Dipartimento di Architettura e Design Politecnico di Torino  
martina.ulbar@polito.it

**Giorgio Nepote Vesin**  
Dipartimento di Architettura Università degli Studi Roma Tre  
giorgio.nepotevesin@uniroma3.it

Martina Ulbar graduated in Architecture at the University of Ferrara in 2021. She is a PhD student in the XXXVIII cycle in the "Architectural and Landscape Heritage" course at the Polytechnic University of Turin. Her research field is the History of Architecture (ICAR-18): starting from Eduardo Vittoria, she is investigating the development of industrialisation between architecture and design. Supervisor prof. Elena Dellapiana (DAD, Politecnico di Torino).

Giorgio Nepote Vesin graduated at Politecnico di Torino in 2021. He is currently a PhD student in the XXXVII cycle of the "Architettura: innovazione e patrimonio" curriculum (PON scholarship) at the Università degli Studi Roma Tre in Roma, with an original research project titled "Olivetti digitale: architetture sperimentali e paesaggi industriali (1960-1974)/ Digital Olivetti: experimental architectures and industrial landscapes (1960-1974)", Supervisor prof. Maddalena Scimemi (DARC, Università degli Studi Roma Tre).

## Introduction

Among the various industrial families that have shaped the Italian landscape throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Olivetti stands out as a highly atypical model. Established in 1908 in Ivrea for the production of typewriters, Olivetti is characterized not only by its extraordinary commitment to graphic design and industrial design but also by a pronounced sensitivity towards political, economic, and social issues. In the company's vision, architecture and urban planning become the privileged tools aimed at restoring – from the Canavese region to overseas territories – the “social image”<sup>1</sup> of a company that, by proposing an enlightened intervention, seeks to build a system of certainties for a society undergoing rapid transformation in the post-World War II era. In this regard, the topic of ecclesiastical buildings – both realized and unrealized – in the city of Ivrea between the 1950s and 1970s aims to serve as a lens for exploring the broader discourse concerning architectural commissioning as managed by a unique industrial enterprise. Additionally, it seeks to open up a reflection on the relationship – simultaneously abstract and factual – with the religious sphere, an indispensable authority in the Italian context.

The Olivetti world stands at a singular confluence of three religious' creeds, with consequent implications for the complex spirituality of Adriano, the company's president from 1938 until he died in 1960 – a period during which he also theorised its unique development model. Adriano's father, Camillo, grew up in a Jewish family but adopted an agnostic and anticlerical stance in adulthood, which was also imparted to his son during his formative years. On the other hand, Adriano's mother was Waldensian as well as the daughter of Jean Daniel Revel, the pastor who founded the Waldensian community in the Ivrea area. Alongside the Catholicism Adriano embraced in 1950 when he received baptism, these diverse religious influences “alternately influenced his conceptions [...] [and] nourished his moral and intellectual world”<sup>2</sup>. The Olivetti development model – a ‘third way’ between state socialism and liberalism – is indeed rooted in the complex spirituality of its leader: the idea of Community, the cornerstone of a new territorial order for Ivrea and its satellite realities, is openly inspired by Christian principles. However, Adriano's inclusive attitude towards non-believers and his political and social reformism – two aspects divergent from Catholicism – furthered the gap between the individual and the Church.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Manfredi Tafuri, “Aufklärung I. Adriano Olivetti e la *communitas* dell'intelletto,” in *Storia dell'architettura italiana. 1944-1985*, ed. Manfredi Tafuri (Torino: Einaudi, 1998), 47. The literature on the Olivetti company history is extensive, an important witness of Olivetti approach to production, territory, and Community is in: Marcello Fabbri, and Antonella Greco, eds., *La comunità concreta: progetto e immagine. Il pensiero e le iniziative di Adriano Olivetti nella formazione della cultura urbanistica ed architettonica italiana* (Milano/Roma: Edizioni di Comunità, 1988).

2 Ernesto Nathan Rogers, “L'unità di Adriano Olivetti,” *Casabella-continuità*, no. 270 (December 1962). The religious influences on the complex personality of Adriano Olivetti are thoroughly examined in: Beatrice Nuti, “Adriano Olivetti. Un cristianesimo politico ed economico” (post-graduate's thesis, Scuola Normale Superiore, 2018), <https://ricerca.sns.it/handle/11384/86058> (last accessed November 2024); Marco Maffioletti, ed., “La famiglia” and “Tra religione e misticismo,” in *L'impresa ideale tra fabbrica e Comunità. Una biografia intellettuale di Adriano Olivetti* (Roma: Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, 2016).

3 The fundamental works in which Adriano Olivetti articulate his political, economic and social project are *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* (Ivrea: Nuove Edizioni Ivrea, 1945) and *Società, Stato, Comunità: per un'economia politica e comunitaria* (Milano/Roma: Edizioni di Comunità, 1952).

The resulting relationship between the company and moral authority is thus characterized by a profound underlying ambiguity that, besides constituting a unique phenomenon in the national context,<sup>4</sup> has evident repercussions on the architectural and urban planning level within the city, especially in the urban quadrant chosen as a case study, the Canton Vesco neighbourhood.

### The Ambiguity of Adriano Olivetti, the Cumbersome Presence in the Diocese of Ivrea

It is February 7, 1955, when Don Luigi Gioga – in charge of Sacro Cuore di Gesù Church in Canton Vesco – addresses Adriano Olivetti for the first time: the situation in the suburb “is delicate and serious” and, invoking the centuries-old experience of San Giovanni Bosco, he requests from the engineer the donation of an oratory in order to carry out “a work of moral and social re-education”<sup>5</sup> for the residents.

Nearly twenty years after the elaboration of the initial urban plans for the *Eparediese* area, Canton Vesco – a satellite to the south of the city planned to create a community for employees of the Olivetti company – has over three thousand inhabitants still lacking the collective facilities that were initially planned. On the eve of the agreement between the parish priest and Adriano regarding the construction of the place of worship, only the residential buildings have been completed – designed by Ugo Sissa and Italo Lauro, and later by Marcello Nizzoli with Mario Oliveri – while the construction process for a kindergarten and an elementary school combined with commercial spaces is yet to be undertaken.<sup>6</sup> The only gathering place for residents turns out to be a tool shed owned by Olivetti, which – following the decree “De erectione Paroeciae SS.mi Cordis Jesu in Civitate Eparediensis”<sup>7</sup> granted by Monsignor Paolo Rostagno, Bishop of Ivrea – is adapted to fulfil religious functions, thus accommodating both the spiritual needs of the community and a catechetical plan developed by the ecclesiastical hierarchies for the entire national territory.<sup>8</sup> The ‘shack’ – as it is nicknamed by the faithful of Canton Vesco – thus aligns with the experiences of Catho-

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4 In post-World War II Italy, albeit with due differences, there were essentially two companies comparable to Olivetti in terms of scale and approach to corporate welfare: ENI and FIAT. In both cases, unlike the ambiguous Olivetti story, there is an overt closeness between the industrial leadership, the Church and the Christian Democrats Party. See: Dorothea Deschermeier, “Il ruolo della religione e le chiese dell’Eni,” in *Impero ENI: l’architettura aziendale e l’urbanistica di Enrico Mattei*, ed. Dorothea Deschermeier (Brescia: Damiani, 2008), 98-105. Marta Margotti, *La fabbrica dei cattolici. Chiesa, industria e organizzazioni operaie a Torino (1948-1965)*. (Torino: Edizioni Angolo Manzoni, 2012).

5 AASO, SO, DS, Corr. Pres., Parrocchia S. Cuore – Ivrea, 2357. Letter from Don Luigi Gioga to Adriano Olivetti, February 7, 1955. This need is also stressed in the correspondence between the Bishopric of Ivrea and the Holy See: AAV, Archivio Campane, Capo I, 694, f. 1. Letter from Monsignor Paolo Rostagno to Pontifical Commission, June 28, 1954.

6 Giorgio Ciucci, “Ivrea ou la communauté des clercs,” *L’Architecture d’Aujourd’hui*, no. 188 (December 1976): 37; Enrico Giacomelli, “Scuola elementare di Canton Vesco. Ivrea 1956-1963. Ludovico Quaroni, Adolfo De Carlo,” *DOCOMOMO Italia Giornale*, no. 29 (November 2011): 5.

7 The decree was signed by the Bishop of Ivrea on 25 June 1954 and marked the separation from the main church located in the Borghetto neighbourhood of Ivrea. See: Tiziano Passera, “Cinquant’anni di storia,” in *I primi cinquant’anni di vita e di cammino*, ed. Parrocchia del Sacro Cuore di Gesù in Ivrea (Ivrea: 2004): 11-12.

8 AAV, Archivio Campane, Capo I, 694, f. 3. Letter from Monsignor Paolo Rostagno to Ministry of Public Works, May 15, 1956.

lic mobilization carried out in the suburbs, where, even before monumental works, a series of temporary chapels are erected. Moreover, on a formal level, the initial nucleus of the Sacro Cuore Church seems to fully integrate into this programmatic operation, which results in small constructions of a strongly provisional nature that recall the work of Giorgio Trebbi – one of the leading interpreters in the same years of this approach within the Bolognese diocese<sup>9</sup> [Fig. 1].

Faced with the ongoing transformations in society, however, the mere celebration of the liturgy is no longer sufficient to stem the political ‘deviations’ of the resident workers: throughout the 1950s, in Piedmont – and particularly in the Canavese area – there is a widespread migration from rural areas to industrial centres, where Marxist and socialist ideologies circulate vigorously. In Ivrea, as in the rest of Italy, efforts are made to “halt the advance of the Bolshevik class struggle”<sup>10</sup> by leveraging interclass and intergenerational Catholic associationism and creating new spaces for activism among the population. In this context, the pervasive presence of the Olivetti company in the territory has profound implications for the epochal transition process.<sup>11</sup> Despite the core ambiguity that hovers around the idea of Community, the divergence of views regarding the ecclesiastical environment never escalates into open conflict but rather into an underlying tension that manifests as apparent mutual indifference. Although religious fervour is central within the Olivetti project – demonstrated by the fact that the Gospel is embraced as “the supreme law of the Community”<sup>12</sup> and the churches are consistently included in urban plans since the 1930s – Adriano openly rejects the value system advocated by the Christian Democracy and



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9 Giulia Veronesi, “Chiese nuove: la situazione a Milano,” *Comunità*, no. 68 (1959): 48-65. The author notes how the city peripheries are dotted with these prefabricated chapels, which almost become symbols of the “human fragility” of the new era.

10 Andrea Longhi, “Cultura architettonica, vita ecclesiale e associazionismo cattolico dal dopoguerra al Concilio Vaticano II,” in *Architettura Chiesa e Società in Italia 1948-1978*, ed. Andrea Longhi and Carlo Tosco (Roma: Edizioni Studium, 2010), 130.

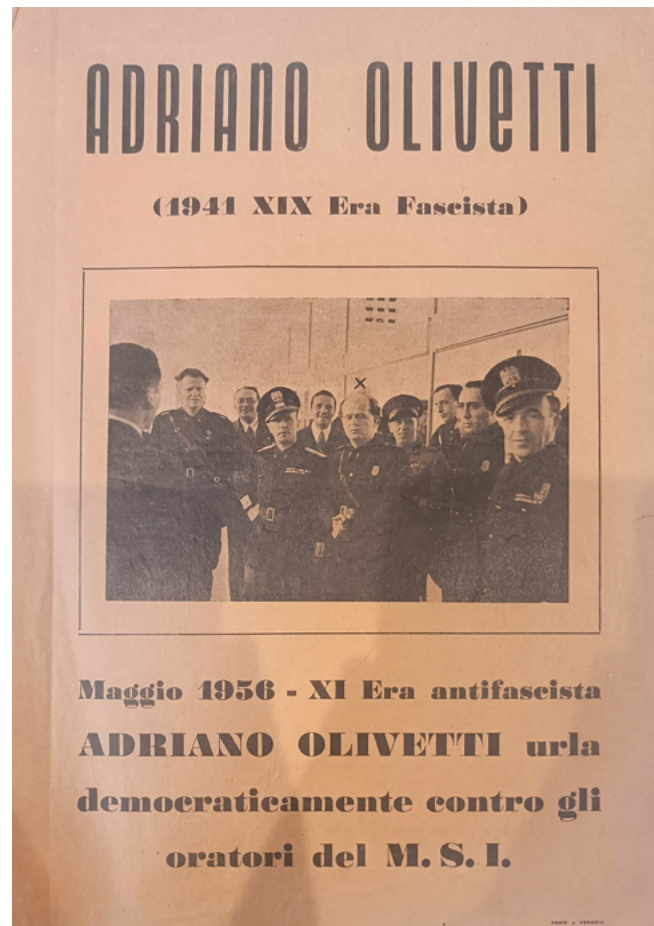
11 For a more in-depth analysis of the transformations that occurred in the post-World War II period in a region where the Olivetti Company was predominant – and the consequent impacts on the religious sphere – see: Marta Margotti, “Lequivoco ‘olivettiano’. Il mondo cattolico canavesano e l’Olivetti attraverso ‘Il risveglio popolare’ (1945-1965),” in *Olivetti è ancora una sfida. Lavoro, personale, territorio in un’impresa responsabile*, ed. Diocesi di Ivrea (Ivrea: 2010), 227-242; Mario Rey, “Adriano Olivetti e il mondo cattolico eporediese: contrapposizioni e continuità,” in *Olivetti è ancora una sfida*, ed. Diocesi di Ivrea (Ivrea: 2010), 243-258; Marta Margotti, “Una scelta di campo. L’Azione cattolica di Ivrea alla prova del Concilio,” in *Il Concilio in azione. La recezione dell’Azione cattolica nelle chiese d’Italia*, ed. Raffaele Cananzi and Paolo Trionfini (Roma: AVE, 2019), 89-90.

12 Olivetti, *Società, Stato, Comunità: per un’economia politica e comunitaria*. For an overview of the urban planning in Ivrea promoted by Adriano Olivetti, see: Paolo Scrivano, “La comunità e la sua difficile realizzazione. Adriano Olivetti e l’urbanistica nel Canavese,” in *Costruire la città dell’uomo. Adriano Olivetti e l’urbanistica*, ed. Carlo Olmo (Torino: Einaudi, 2001), 83-112.

Fig. 1  
The prefabricated shack where the ritual was held until the inauguration of the Sacred Heart Church in 1961 (source: *I primi cinquant’anni di vita e di cammino*, edited by Parrocchia del Sacro Cuore di Gesù in Ivrea, Ivrea, 2004, 13).

ecclesiastical authorities, deeming them excessively regressive compared to his model. This ambiguity – exacerbated by the plurality of actors within the Olivetti world, including Adriano, his family, and the company, each having their own position and decision-making power – seems to disorient the clergy, which cannot openly oppose the Olivetti “third way” as it does with communist and socialist policies [Fig. 2].

This is the framework in which agreements are reached for the realization of one of the rare examples of religious architecture under Olivetti management: a context marked by an ideological distance between the two poles, which becomes even deeper in the months immediately following the request made by Don Luigi Gioga. On the union front, in fact, in May 1955, the Comunità di Fabbrica union was established, which reduced adherence to the CISL, while on the political front, in 1956, Adriano himself – along with other members of Movimento di Comunità – joined the administration of the Municipality of Ivrea, leading to a significant erosion of support for the Christian Democracy<sup>13</sup>. On both fronts, there emerges not an open opposition to ecclesiastical authority but rather a complete indifference, and consequently, a total autonomy of action directly reflected in the design process of Sacro Cuore. While the Diocesan Ordinary requests financial assistance for a gathering space that could be built by the community itself – so that “the work would also rise with their contribution and, in addition to being more heartfelt, it would be an excellent morale boost for its effectiveness”<sup>14</sup> – Adriano bypasses the request by deciding to provide both the land and the project free of charge.<sup>15</sup> Until 1960 – the year of his death – in the Canavese territory, in that ideal triangle that sees the community, the designer, and the client at its vertices,<sup>16</sup> the latter is no longer represented either by the Diocese – enlightened cases being those of the Curia of Bologna or Milan – nor by a consortium with an industrial authority – as is the case, for example, with the Comitato Nuove Chiese directed by Enrico Mattei. Olivetti disengages from the approval of the Church, leaving it on the sidelines



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13 Margotti, “L’equivoco ‘olivettiano,’” 237-238.

14 AASO, SO, DS, Corr. Pres., Parrocchia S. Cuore – Ivrea, 2357. Letter from Don Luigi Gioga to Adriano Olivetti, February 7, 1955.

15 AAV, Archivio Campano, Capo I, 694, f. 2. Notary deed for the Sacro Cuore Church, December 30, 1955; AASO, SO, DS, Corr. Pres., Parrocchia S. Cuore – Ivrea, 2357. Letter from Don Luigi Gioga to Adriano Olivetti, October 13, 1955; AASO, SO, DS, Corr. Pres., Parrocchia S. Cuore – Ivrea, 2357. Letter from prof. Umberto Rossi to dr. Giuseppe Motta, March 2, 1965.

16 Carlo Tosco, “Architettura di chiese: un percorso italiano,” in *Architettura Chiesa e Società in Italia 1948-1978*, eds. Andrea Longhi and Carlo Tosco (Roma: Studium, 2010), 3.

Fig. 2  
A 1956 manifesto that shows the ambiguity of Adriano Olivetti’s position (source: Archivio Diocesano, Ivrea).

of decision-making processes, and appropriates the initiative: the request turns out to be an opportunity to add another piece to Adriano's collection, as well as to experiment with the engagement of new professionals.

### **Between the Church and the Social Centre: the "Heart of the City" in the 1950s**

The strong political tension between Adriano and the Church described above is also made explicit in the different interpretation given to the 'Heart of the City', the subject of the VIII CIAM in Hoddesdon (London) in 1951.<sup>17</sup> This difference can be clearly read in the titles of two newly founded magazines "Centro sociale" ("Social centre") and "Ch&Q - Chiesa e Quartiere" ("Church and Neighbourhood").<sup>18</sup> [Fig. 3, 4]

Founded in 1954 and funded by Adriano Olivetti through the First Council of UNRRA-Casas – of which he was vice-president<sup>19</sup> –, "Centro sociale" was set up with the aim of giving "impetus to world-wide critical exchange of ideas and experiences in the field of community development [...] program of meetings, conferences and seminars in which lay community leaders, sociologists and professionally trained community workers from every country"<sup>20</sup>. It is important to point out that the Italian edition of the VIII CIAM's proceedings saw the light in 1954.<sup>21</sup> On the initiative of Cardinal Giacomo Lercaro of Bologna, the publication of "Ch&Q" began in November 1955. It was created to collect the results of the debate that emerged at the First National Congress of Sacred Architecture held in Bologna that same year, and in which the disciplinary boundaries and the role of the architect within the new institution were discussed.<sup>22</sup> Other important initiatives linked to the figures of Lercaro in Bologna and Cardinal Giovanni Battista Montini in Milan followed in the very next years – respectively the "Study and Information Centre for Sacred Architecture" and the "Study Centre for Architecture for the Christian Community", alongside the "New Churches Committee" –, aiming at the spatial, spiritual and also political definition of the relationship between church and city in post-World War II Italy.<sup>23</sup>

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17 Josep Lluís Sert, Ernesto Nathan Rogers and Jacqueline Tyrwhitt, eds., *The heart of the city: towards the humanisation of urban life* (New York/London-Bradford, Pellegrini and Cudahy/Lund Humphries, 1952).

18 For a critical reconstruction of the history of the two magazines see respectively: Michela Maguolo, "La comunità e il suo centro. Una rivista, un tema, un dibattito," *Engramma*, no. 166 (2019): 241-266; Glauco Gresleri, Maria Beatrice Bettazzi and Giuliano Gresleri, eds., *Chiesa e Quartiere: storia di una rivista e di un movimento per l'architettura a Bologna* (Bologna: Compositori, 2004).

19 Marida Talamona, "Dieci anni di politica dell'Unrra Casas: dalle case dei senzatetto ai borghi rurali nel Mezzogiorno d'Italia (1945-1955). Il ruolo di Adriano Olivetti," in *Costruire la città dell'uomo: Adriano Olivetti e l'urbanistica*, ed. Carlo Olmo (Torino: Einaudi, 2001), 173-204.

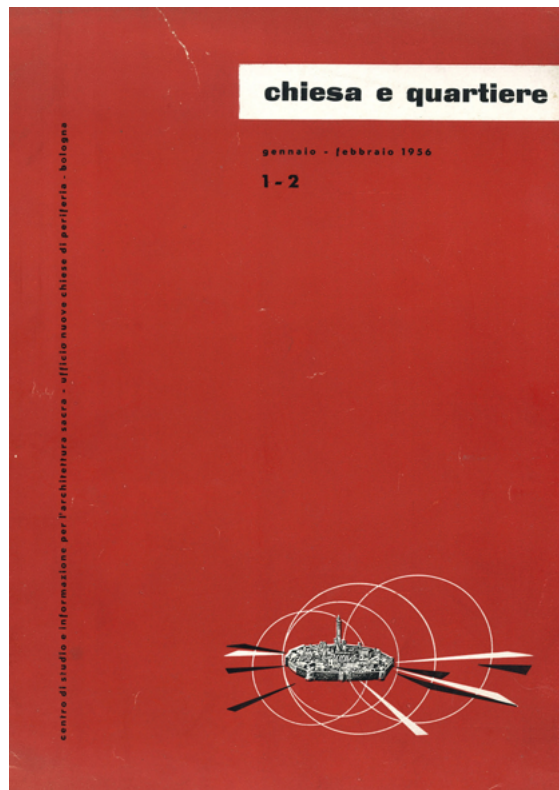
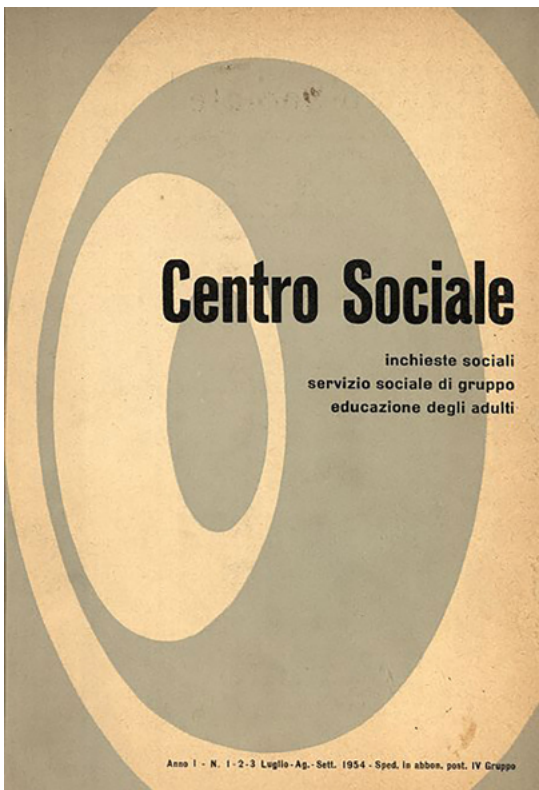
20 "Presentazione," *Centro sociale*, no. 32-33 (1960): 4. The magazine was edited by the Olivettian Paolo Volponi, while Adriano became a member, as a representative of the Community Movement, of the editorial board of the international edition from its foundation in 1957. See: Paolo Volponi, "L'UNRRA CASAS e i Centri Sociali," *Centro sociale*, no. 1-3 (1954): 7-16.

21 Josep Lluís Sert, Ernesto Nathan Rogers and Jacqueline Tyrwhitt, eds., *Il cuore della città: per una vita più umana delle comunità*, trans. Julia Banfi Bertolotti (Milano: Hoepli, 1954). See also Enzo Paci, "Il cuore della città," *Casabella Continuità*, no. 202 (1954): VII-X.

22 See the "Statuto del Centro Studi," dated 1956 and published in *Chiesa e Quartiere*, no. 19 (September 1961): 43-49.

23 Andrea Longhi, "Il ruolo del vescovo e l'azione dei centri di studio diocesani," in *Architettura Chiesa e Società*





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It is worth underlining that some of the architects involved by Lercaro, including Ludovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Ignazio Gardella and Ludovico Quaroni, are by all accounts includable among 'Olivetti's architects', to whom Adriano turned to entrust the company's architecture (and image) since the 1930s.<sup>24</sup> First among them is Luigi Figini, "tireless animator" of the "considerable Milanese group [of architects]"<sup>25</sup> of the editorial board of "Ch&Q", and one of the eldest collaborators of Adriano.<sup>26</sup> To Figini is owed Olivetti's financial intervention in support of the magazine through products and Edizioni di Comunità advertising from 1959 – when the architect officially joined the editorial board – to 1968.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, Adriano Olivetti is one of the few people, if not the only one, outside the purely Catholic world of art and architecture whose death is commemorated within the magazine.<sup>28</sup>

*in Italia 1948-1978*, eds., Andrea Longhi and Carlo Tosco (Roma: Edizioni Studium, 2010), 170-174.

24 See: Rossano Astarita, *Gli architetti di Olivetti: una storia di committenza industriale* (Milano: Franco Angeli, 2012); see also Daniele Boltri, Giovanni Maggia, Enrico Papa, Pier Paride Vidari, eds., *Architetture olivettiane a Ivrea: i luoghi del lavoro e i servizi socio-assistenziali di fabbrica* (Roma, Gangemi, 1998); Patrizia Bonifazio and Paolo Scrivano, eds., *Olivetti costruisce: architettura moderna a Ivrea: guida al museo a cielo aperto* (Milano: Skira, 2001); Olmo, *Costruire la città dell'uomo: Adriano Olivetti e l'urbanistica*.

25 "Editoriale," *Chiesa e Quartiere*, no. 1 (March 1957): 2. Translation by the authors.

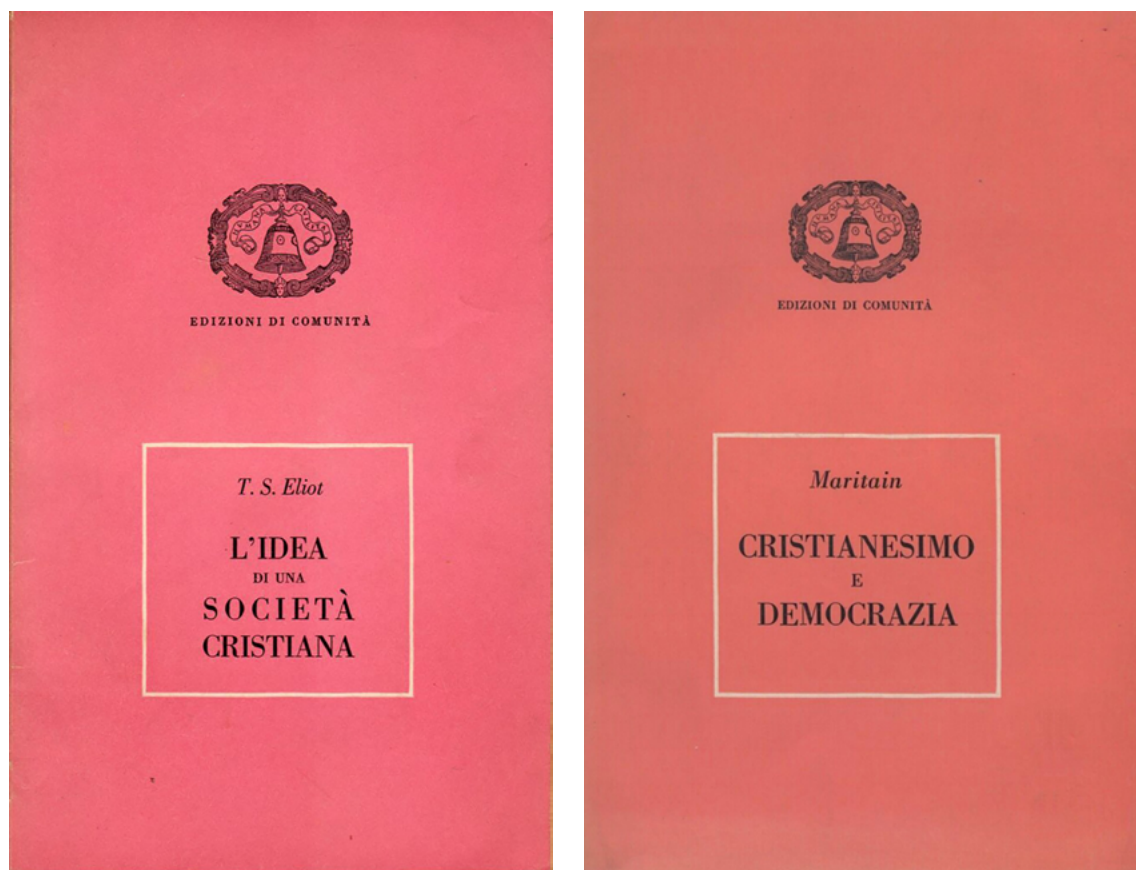
26 In 1934 Luigi Figini (with Gino Pollini) was entrusted for the study of the Aosta Valley Master Plan (*Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta*), financed by Adriano, along with Antonio Banfi, Ludovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Piero Bottoni, Enrico Peressutti, and Ernesto Nathan Rogers, with Renato Zveterevich and Italo Lauro. Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini, "Piano regolatore della città di Ivrea (architetti Figini e Pollini)," and Adriano Olivetti, "Architettura al servizio sociale," *Casabella*, no. 101 (May 1936): 6-11; Giorgio Ciucci, "Le premesse del Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta," in Olmo, *Costruire la città dell'uomo: Adriano Olivetti e l'urbanistica*, 55-82, and Paolo Scrivano, "La comunità e la sua difficile realizzazione. Adriano Olivetti e l'urbanistica nel Canavese".

27 See Mariano Apa, "La questione dell'arte in 'Ch&Q,'" in *Chiesa e Quartiere: storia di una rivista e di un movimento per l'architettura a Bologna*, eds. Giuliano Gresleri and Beatrice Bettazzi (Bologna: Compositori, 2004), 134-159.

28 Luigi Figini, "Ricordo di Adriano Olivetti," *Chiesa e Quartiere*, no. 13 (1960): 98.

Fig. 3  
Egidio Bonfante, cover of the first number of the review *Centro sociale*, no. 1-2-3 (July-August-September 1954).

Fig. 4  
The cover of the first number of the review "Chiesa e Quartiere". "Chiesa e Quartiere," no. 1-2 (January-February 1956).



The real *trait d'union* between Olivetti and the Church was Ludovico Quaroni, actively involved in Adriano's Movimento di Comunità since its very beginning, and very active in the debate around the Congress of Sacred Architecture in 1955, promoted by cardinal Lercaro. Crucial was also his presence in both the reviews "Ch&Q" and "Centro sociale" since their foundation. In the article *Il Centro sociale come edificio* published in the first issue of "Centro sociale" in 1954, Quaroni defended the dignity of this new institution as "the *social position* of these buildings, if I may be allowed the phrase, is such that it gives us absolute certainty of the cultural validity of social centres and related buildings."<sup>29</sup> The Social Centre is also chosen as an experimental model to "be particularly taken into consideration by those who are concerned with architecture, to see if it might not be possible, through it, to better trace the origins and forms of the current crisis in architecture".<sup>30</sup> It was aimed at "removing everyone, and young people in a special way, from the brutishness of bar lights and the partisan polemics of confessional organisations, whether religious or just party", but at the same time "it will not have an easy life [...] being easily prey, through funding and administrative, political and police controls [...] of those same confessional organisations it claimed to fight".<sup>31</sup>

29 Ludovico Quaroni, "Il Centro sociale come edificio," *Centro sociale*, no. 1-3 (1954): 27. Translation by the authors.

30 Quaroni, "Il centro sociale come edificio," 28. Translation by the authors.

31 Ludovico Quaroni, "Città e quartiere nell'attuale fase critica di cultura," *La Casa. Quaderno a cura dell'Incis*, no.

Fig. 5

The cover of the first Italian edition of Thomas Stearns Eliot *The idea of a Christian society* (London: Faber and Faber, 1939), edited by the Edizioni di Comunità in 1948. Thomas Stearns Eliot, *L'idea di una società cristiana* (Milano: Edizioni di Comunità, 1948), transl. edited by Luciano Foà and Arrigo Linder.

Fig. 6

The cover of the first Italian edition of Jacques Maritain *Christianisme et démocratie* (Paris: Hartmann, 1943) edited by the Edizioni di Comunità in 1953. Jacques Maritain, *Cristianesimo e democrazia* (Milano: Edizioni di Comunità, 1953) transl. by Luciana Frapiselli.



Harsher is Angela Zucconi, “historian, linguist, writer, passionate experimenter of community projects”<sup>32</sup>, who denounced the difficulties that “in many cases illusory the most characteristic element of the social centre, “namely openness to all regardless of membership of a religious denomination or political party”<sup>33</sup>. The increasingly less veiled hostility of the Catholic side towards the first experiments on Social Centres is perhaps to be found precisely in the irreconcilability between the need for control by the Church institution over the services provided to the community through the actions of the parishes, and this need for intellectual - and operational - independence mentioned by Zucconi. Almost in a critical and polemical response to the instances advocated in “Centro sociale”, through “Ch&Q” Lercaro defended the absolute centrality – also on a spatial level – of the parish (and therefore of the church building) in the new neighbourhoods: “The neighbourhood [...] cannot be just an agglomeration of buildings” but “has to be the foundation of human coexistence, which cannot do without creating social relations”, while the church “already works to give the neighbourhood its soul”<sup>34</sup>.

Although there are no direct references to Olivetti’s experiences, such an initiative – widespread in much of continental Europe (and tending to be Protestant) – is strongly opposed by Lercaro, who in 1958 accused “agnostic social centres” of playing a role in “cementing spirits [but] not going so far as to create a soul”<sup>35</sup>. Lercaro also demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of the articles published in ‘Urbanistica’, the journal of INU – Istituto Nazionale Urbanistica’s, a national institute chaired by Adriano Olivetti from 1950 to 1960<sup>36</sup>. Actually, the theoretical structure underlying the urban planning model proposed by Adriano and shared by his collaborators – among whom, alongside Quaroni, are Nello Renacco, Giovanni Astengo, Carlo Doglio and Luigi Piccinato – was rooted in the thought of Jacques Maritain, Simone Weil and Lewis Mumford, in particular through their Italian translations first published by Olivetti’s publishing house Edizioni di Comunità, which in turn constituted a reference even for the Catholic world.<sup>37</sup> [Fig. 5, 6]. Moreover, the parish-market system is identified as the heart of the new city, in which the church embodies the true “cuore del cuore del

3 (October 1956). Translation by the authors.

32 Maguolo, “La comunità e il suo centro. Una rivista, un tema, un dibattito,” 242. Cf. Angela Zucconi, *Cinquant’anni nell’utopia, il resto nell’aldilà* (Roma: L’Ancora, 2000).

33 Angela Zucconi, “Centri sociali in Italia,” *Centro sociale*, no. 1-3 (1954): 5. Translation and italic by the authors.

34 From a Lercaro’s lesson (Turin, 1958). Giacomo Lercaro, “Chiesa e Quartiere,” *Chiesa e Quartiere*, no. 5 (March 1958): 27. Translation by the authors. A similar topic was discussed few months earlier by Antonio Savioli, “Aspetti del problema dei rapporti fra chiesa e collettività,” *Chiesa e Quartiere*, no. 1 (March 1957): 47-50.

35 Lercaro, “Chiesa e Quartiere,” 27. Lercaro continued by citing the centre of Vällingby near Stockholm, which in 1958 still lacked a church and which “in the abundance of everything, lacked a soul.” Despite Lercaro’s words, two churches have been built in Vällingby in those same years, the St. Thomas church design by Peter Celsing, and the Västerorts kyrkan by Carl Nyrén, respectively opened in 1956 and 1959. The ‘lack of soul’ was highlighted also by Mario Roggero in “Problemi di organizzazione parrocchiale di una città industriale,” *Chiesa e Quartiere*, no. 6 (June 1958): 45-49.

36 See: Mario Piccinini ed., *Adriano Olivetti: il lascito* (Roma: INU, 2014).

37 Aleardo Mazzoli, “Elementi e criteri informativi di un ‘planning’ parrocchiale,” *Chiesa e Quartiere*, no. 19 (September 1961): 69-89.

quartiere",<sup>38</sup> an urban model that will be very widespread in the new neighbourhoods of the "great reconstruction". This model was adopted in almost all the new residential districts in Turin, Milan and Bologna, respectively influenced by the strong personalities of the Cardinals Michele Pellegrino, Giovanni Montini and Giacomo Lercaro.<sup>39</sup>

When Quaroni was invited as a lecturer to the Bologna Congress in 1955, he pointed out how, in the construction of new churches, there was a need for "a modern cultural action that is both spirituality, moral charity and modern consistency and modern mysticism leading, as has already been done for so many other things, to the revival of the values of Christian civilisation from the beginning"<sup>40</sup>. If this is still lacking in Italy, it is because "there is a lack of a modern civilisation, in Italy at least, of the Catholic religion", and because of "the spiritual poverty of the world in which we live".<sup>41</sup> A few months earlier, in "Centro sociale" he had denounced a widespread separation "in time and space, namely in architecture" between material and spiritual functions, "as if such a separation existed in the life of man outside the patterns and limits towards which a misuse of the brain has led man himself".<sup>42</sup> The unity between spiritual and material is the same unity that Quaroni sought in the plan for La Martella in Southern Italy a few years earlier (1951-1954), a project entrusted by Adriano Olivetti as vice-president of UNRRA-Casas.<sup>43</sup> In La Martella urban plan, the church and community facilities occupied not only the geographical centre of the new settlement but also its morphologically highest position.<sup>44</sup> The case of Matera turns out to be a significant case of the ambiguity of Adriano's religious position: "In the 'Eco di Matera' (a monthly periodical of Lucanian Catholics), the parish priest Don Giovanni Mele wrote: 'From whom will the rule for this community come, from Togliatti, from Nenni, from Lauro, from Covelli, or from the Jew Olivetti?'"<sup>45</sup>

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38 Lercaro, "Chiesa e Quartiere," 30.

39 See: Paola Di Biagi ed., *La grande ricostruzione: il piano Ina-Casa e l'Italia degli anni cinquanta* (Roma: Donzelli, 2001), in part. the "Parte Terza. Itinerari": 263-478. See for Milan, Red., "Dieci nuove chiese a Milano," *Chiesa e Quartiere*, no. 9-10 (1958): 30-88; for Turin, Carla Zito, *Casa tra le case: architettura di chiese a Torino durante l'episcopato del cardinale Michele Pellegrino (1965-1977)* (Torino: Effatà, 2013). See also Luca Tedesco, "Chiesa cattolica e Unrra Casas," *Studium*, no. 2 (2010), 233-246.

40 Ludovico Quaroni, "La Chiesa, lo spazio interno," Official Report to the Congress of Sacred Architecture, Bologna, 23-25 September 1955, published in *Casabella-continuità*, no. 208 (1955): 31-34. Translation by the authors. See: Manfredo Tafuri, *Ludovico Quaroni e lo sviluppo dell'architettura moderna in Italia* (Milano: Edizioni di Comunità, 1964), 82-84.

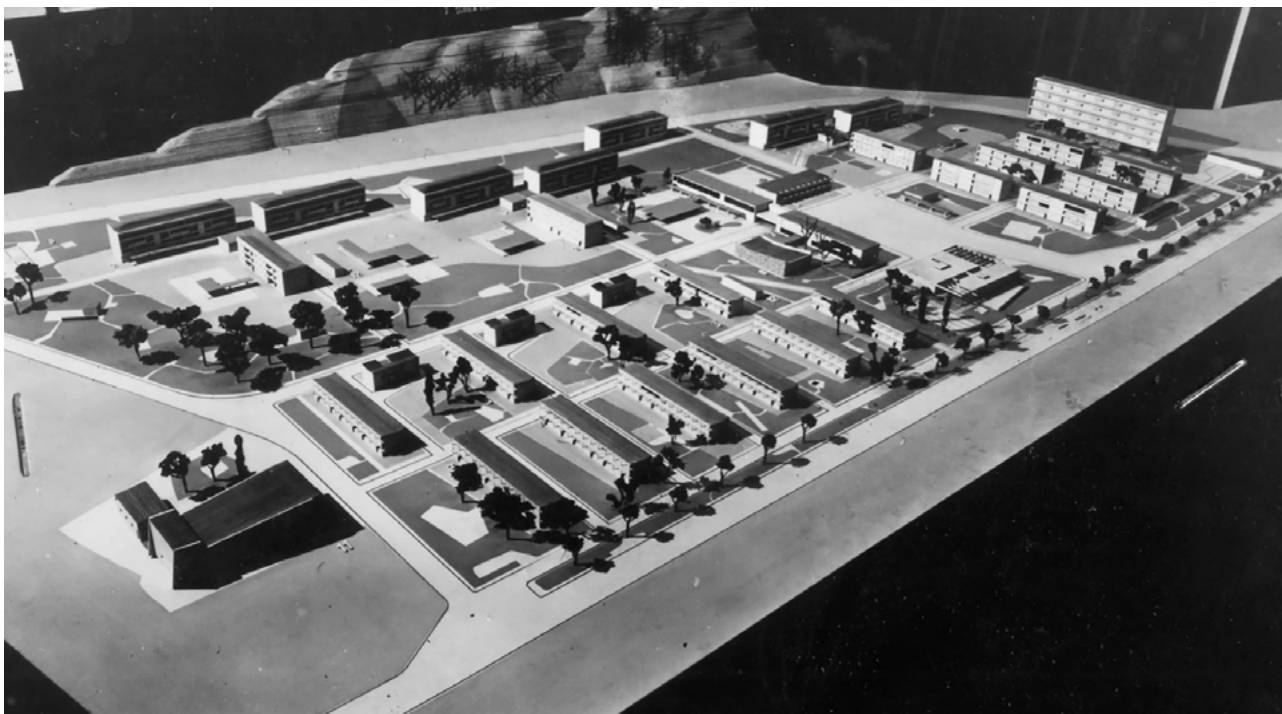
41 Tafuri, *Ludovico Quaroni e lo sviluppo dell'architettura moderna in Italia*, 84, inner quotation by Quaroni, "La Chiesa, lo spazio interno", 33. Translation by the authors.

42 Quaroni, "Il Centro sociale come edificio," 28.

43 Federico Bilò and Ettore Vadini, eds., *Matera e Adriano Olivetti: testimonianze su un'idea per il riscatto del Mezzogiorno* (Roma/Milano: Edizioni di Comunità, 2016); Lindsay Harris, "The Human Face of Big Business: American Documentary Photography in Matera (1948-1954)," *rivista di studi di fotografia rsf*, no. 9 (2019): 30-53.

44 Ludovico Quaroni, "La chiesa del villaggio La Martella," *Casabella-continuità*, no. 208 (1955): 30-39. See also: Manfredo Tafuri, "L'esperienza di La Martella," in *Ludovico Quaroni e lo sviluppo dell'architettura moderna in Italia*, ed. Manfredo Tafuri (Milano: Edizioni di comunità, 1964), 105-116.

45 Angela Zucconi, "La Martella: l'assistenza sociale al servizio della pianificazione urbanistica," in *Matera e Adriano Olivetti: testimonianze su un'idea per il riscatto del Mezzogiorno*, eds. Federico Bilò and Ettore Vadini (Roma/Milano: Edizioni di Comunità, 2016), 83. Inner quotation from Don Giovanni Mele, parish priest of La Martella, "Ombre e luci nella polemica su La Martella, i giudici sono gli imputati," *Leco di Matera*, (March 1995): 3.



In the mystical dimension in which Quaroni places himself, Tafuri identified a clear “secular’ conception of the religious spirit”<sup>46</sup>, a conception that, together with the search for unity, brings the architect closer to Adriano’s thought and places him further at a hinge with the Church-held positions. In Ivrea, the spatial dynamics are reversed. Submitted in 1954, the proposal of the GTCUC - Gruppo Tecnico per il Coordinamento Urbanistico del Canavese (Technical Group for the Urban Coordination of the Canavese) – a team formed on Adriano’s initiative in 1952 (collaborators Nello Renacco, Ludovico Quaroni, Annibale Fiocchi, Luciano Giovannini, Adolfo Ronco and Carlo Doglio)<sup>47</sup> – was finally rejected in 1955 by a Christian Democrats assembly.<sup>48</sup> The plan for Canton Vesco region was developed following previous studies by Fiocchi and Nizzoli dated back to the late 1940s. [Fig. 7] Even if still at the conceptual stage, the church occupied an eccentric position with respect to the built-up area. Such a layout confirms a settlement model promoted by Adriano since the first plan proposals for the city of Ivrea in 1934<sup>49</sup> and perpetrated – for instance - up to Luigi Piccinato and Vittoria Girardi’s proposals for the Bellavista Quarter (1956-1958)<sup>50</sup>. In all these

46 Tafuri, *Ludovico Quaroni e lo sviluppo dell’architettura moderna in Italia*, 84.

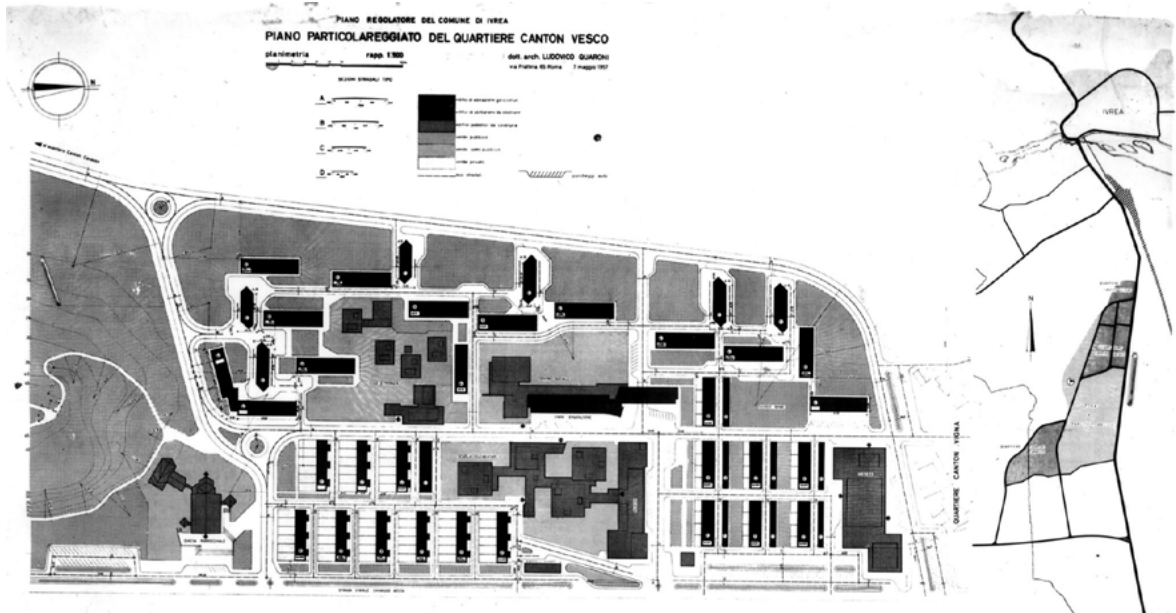
47 Fabrizio Brunetti and Paolo Milani, *Perché si pianifica? I lavori del gruppo tecnico per il coordinamento urbanistico del Canavese. Una cronaca ragionata (1951-1954)* (Ivrea: Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, 1995). See also: Carlo Olmo, *Urbanistica e società civile* (Roma/Ivrea: Edizioni di Comunità, 1992), in part. chapter “Le strategie tentate di una diversità”.

48 A very unfavourable opinions were also expressed by the union CISL. See: Carlo Doglio, “Ragioni, stranezze e incognite del voto sul piano regolatore,” *La Sentinella del Canavese*, April 8, 1955; “Respinto dal Consiglio di Ivrea il progetto di Piano regolatore. Era destinato a favorire la Olivetti,” *L’Unità* (Piedmontese edition), March 24, 1955. The first critical analysis of the outcomes of the plan and its contextualisation in the Italian landscape was conducted by Manfredo Tafuri, “L’urbanistica italiana negli anni ‘50: il piano di Ivrea,” in *Ludovico Quaroni e lo sviluppo dell’architettura moderna in Italia* (Milano: Edizioni di Comunità, 1964), 116-125.

49 The plan for Ivrea was part of the larger Aosta Valley Master Plan (*Piano Regolatore della Valle d’Aosta*), financed by Adriano in 1934. Cf. note 24.

50 For Bellavista’s plan cf. Luigi Piccinato and Vittoria Girardi, *Quartiere Bellavista a Ivrea*, 1956-1958, held in ALP,

Fig. 7  
Annibale Fiocchi, Marcello Nizzoli, Canton Vesco district urban plan, *maquette*, 1951. the church building, isolated from the residential context and still in the first axial configuration, stands in the foreground (bottom left), while the social services right in the centre of the neighbourhood (source: AASO, CO, FO, FMO-Cde, *planimetria*. Coll: V-C-A-4-5).



plan designs, the ever-present church building tended to be scenically located at the far end of the main road axis, but in a peripheral position, generally close to a ridge, a topography that effectively prevents the building's later incorporation into the urban tissue. The social facilities are the hinge around which the other buildings are arranged. Following the rejection of the GTCUC's plan proposal by the municipality, in 1955 Ludovico Quaroni was commissioned to complete the Canton Vesco district plan. In a letter dated 1957, the client pointed out the urgent need of a place where to host the social services, seen as "a natural meeting place for these people, and thus be open to the flow of people and their ideas."<sup>51</sup> Confirming the previous general concept, he "placed a 'heart' composed of a series of services converging on the primary schools, shops and the Social centre located in the centre of the complex"<sup>52</sup>. [Fig. 8] The project would have been realized – simplified and reduced – only in the second half of the 1960s through the construction of the elementary school (with Adolfo De Carlo), and completed by Mario Ridolfi and Wolfgang Frankl's kindergarten – respectively inaugurated in 1963 and 1964 –, placed again in the centre of the housing development.

It is worth noting the words used by Bruno Zevi to reject the political commitment to the Movimento di Comunità:

Dear engineer, you epitomise three religions: paternal Jewish messianism; puritanism coming from your Waldensian mother; and, to season the dish, double Catholic truth [...]. This cocktail reverberates in your vision of

Fig. 8  
Ludovico Quaroni, Canton Vesco district urban plan, May 1957. The church building maintains its excentric position (bottom left), while the centre of the residential neighbourhood (in black) is occupied by the two schools, the social services, and shops (in grey) (source: AASO, CO, FO, FMO-Cde, *planimetria*. Coll: V-C-A-4-5).

01.02\_174, and AASO, CO, FO, FMO-Cde, *planimetria*. Coll: V-C-A-4-5.

51 Letter from Paolo Volponi to Ludovico Quaroni, June, 4 1957. In AASO, SO, D, DSSS-C, "Alloggi dipendenti e strutture connesse. Prestiti, Quartiere Bellavista," issue 766, *Quartiere Bellavista. Centro Sociale*, 1957-1962. Translation by the authors. The studies on the Social Centre and the Civic Centre had an important reverberation in the papers published by Olivetti; among them, a 1958 study by Koenig is of particular interest. See: Giovanni K. Koenig, "Origine e forme del centro civico," *Comunità*, no. 64 (November 1958): 58.

52 Tafuri, *Ludovico Quaroni e lo sviluppo dell'architettura moderna in Italia*, 135-137.

town planning. You believe in garden cities, but wish to build them not with the money of enlightened industrialists, yours for example, but with those of the state, UNRRA-Casa, Gescal, Cassa per il Mezzogiorno, and so on. Perfect crime, so much so that it doesn't work.<sup>53</sup>

Maintaining – and perhaps amplifying – its aggregative and community values, in the equation parish=heart Adriano replaced the church building with the Social Services Centre, which morally and physically constitutes the true lay soul of the neighbourhood. Regarding the position of the church in the borough, the distance found between the outcomes achieved in La Martella and the slightly later proposals for the Canton Vesco urban plan in Ivrea tend to confirm the role of absolute prominence and control exercised by Adriano in the Canavese reality. The city becomes an experimental 1:1 scale model of the urban and social theories that mature within the experience of the Movimento di Comunità, and which has in Canton Vesco an emblematic case study, the only one that sees the realization of the religious center according to the settlement principles described.

### The Church of the Sacro Cuore: Patronage, Spaces, Structure

By the end of November 1955, agreements between Don Luigi Gioga and Olivetti were firmly established: in addition to the donation of the land and the project, the latter committed to supporting the construction according to a financing model already tested with the new hospital in Ivrea, whereby the company would contribute twice the amount donated by parishioners. For this reason, a campaign “pro erigenda Chiesa Sacro Cuore” is considered initially to be spread through local newspapers<sup>54</sup> – *Il Risveglio Popolare* and *La Sentinella del Canavese* – followed by the proposal from the priest to “exhibit a small model of the project [...] in the place where [...] Mass is celebrated”<sup>55</sup> in order to stimulate a broader response from the Canton Vesco community, by a centuries-old tradition of displaying the architectural model to the faithful [Fig. 9].

At the time of the request, January 31, 1956, the name Marcello Nizzoli – as the appointed designer of the work – emerged in the company's internal correspondence. Together with Giuseppe Mario Oliveri – his collaborator since 1947 –, Nizzoli played a central role in shaping the company's image through his contributions spanning both architecture and design: at the time of the construction of the Sacro Cuore, projects from his studio encompass the Divisumma 14, the Lexicon 80, the famous Lettera 22, as well as various housing units for Olivetti employees, including those in Canton Vesco itself.<sup>56</sup> Being familiar with a ration-

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53 Bruno Zevi, *Zevi su Zevi: architettura come profezia* (Venezia: Marsilio, 1993), 68. Translation by the authors.

54 AASO, SO, DS, Corr. Pres., Parrocchia S. Cuore – Ivrea, 2357. Letter from Don Luigi Gioga to Adriano Olivetti, November 21, 1955. A testimony of the campaign can also be found in: Parrocchia del Sacro Cuore – Ivrea, *La voce del Sacro Cuore*, no. 5 (October 1956): 3-5.

55 AASO, SO, DS, Corr. Pres., Parrocchia S. Cuore – Ivrea, 2357. Letter from Umberto Rossi to Geno Pampaloni, January 31, 1956.

56 For an overview on the careers of Nizzoli and Oliveri and to delve into the interdisciplinary contributions



alist urban layout still under construction, the two professionals were involved as ‘internal’ figures in the area’s development and, more generally, of the company. In the meantime, Aldo Favini – a young engineer at the forefront of concrete precompression experimentation in Italy – was called upon to collaborate from the external architectural landscape with the Olivetti community. The path to the Church project’s approval proves that Nizzoli and Oliveri had already drawn up a draft in 1954, probably due to their proximity to the company and the neighbourhood. However, that proposal generated doubts regarding the “statics of the roof” and “the general proportions of the Church [that] do not give a genuine religious spirit to the building”<sup>57</sup> – aspects for which Favini’s contribution may have been considered necessary.

Favini, who graduated in Civil-Structural Engineering from Rome in 1942, was part of Gustavo Colonnetti’s entourage at the Vevey University Campus in Lausanne, where he sought refuge between 1943 and 1945. That was a dynamic environment where some of the most brilliant minds – later playing critical roles in Italy’s reconstruction period – converged, fostering interdisciplinary debate between engineering and architecture disciplines. Among the group sharing this sort of cultural experiment – including Ernesto Nathan Rogers, Vito Latis, Angelo Mangiarotti, Vico Magistretti, Giulio Minoletti, Alberto Rosselli, and Silvano Zorzi – Favini is involved in technical experiments while also developing his sensitivity towards the theme of form and learning to apply to structural design the same precision that belongs to the world of design – an approach to which he was already introduced during his apprenticeship years in Mario Ridolfi’s studio.<sup>58</sup> The various research conducted within this framework converges in the *Bollettino Centro Studi per l’Edilizia* where alongside Favini’s technical studies – “Volte sottili in cemento armato” and “Lezioni di cemento armato” – there is also space for the first political formulations by Adriano Olivetti on the theme of Community.<sup>59</sup> The latter, who had also spent



between architecture and design within the Olivetti company, see: Benedetto Gravagnuolo, *Gli studi Nizzoli: architettura e design. 1948-1983* (Milano: Electa, 1983); Arturo C. Quintavalle, *Marcello Nizzoli* (Milano: Electa, 1990); Luigi Spinelli, *G. Mario Oliveri e gli studi Nizzoli* (Milano: Editoriale Domus, 2001).

57 AAV, Archivio Campano, Capo I, 694, f. 1. Extract from the record of the meeting held by the Pontifical Commission in the Chancellery Palace, July 1, 1954.

58 A comprehensive dissertation on the biography and works of Aldo Favini is contained in: Andrea Alpini, "Aldo Favini. Architettura e costruzione" (master's thesis, Politecnico di Milano, 2010), <https://www.calameo.com/books/0011435017330a9c313f8> (last accessed November 2024); Giulio Barazzetta, ed., *Aldo Favini. Architettura e ingegneria in opera* (Milano: CLUP, 2004). As outlined in the two monographs, the experience in the Vevey University Campus was undoubtedly a pivotal moment for the development of his project conception. For further insights into the exile experience of significant Italian figures, see: Tullia Iori, "Angelo Mangiarotti e la Scuola di Vevey," in *Angelo Mangiarotti. Quando le strutture prendono forma*, ed. Fulvio Irace (Milano: Electa, 2023), 162-169.

59 The journal – directed by Ernesto Nathan Rogers – aimed at compiling studies conducted by architects, engineers, and intellectuals during the exile. See: Pier Paolo Peruccio, "Il design della Ricostruzione: Italiani a

Fig. 9  
The cover of the parish bulletin *La voce del Sacro Cuore* showing the model of the Church (source: AASO, SO, DS, Corr. Pres., Parrocchia S. Cuore – Ivrea, 2357).

between 1944 and 1955 a long period of exile in Switzerland, had experienced firsthand the characteristic dynamism of university campuses and closely followed the rising career of this auspicious group of young professionals in the immediate post-war period.

The initial grounding of the engineer's studies occurred in 1949 with the project of the Aquila service station in Sesto San Giovanni (Milan) – a wavy reinforced concrete roof just 5 cm thick leaning on two fork supports with which he earned the final approval of Rogers – opening the way for an intense period of experimentation.<sup>60</sup> In 1950, together with Silvano Zorzi, he visited the Freyssinet laboratories – where the precompression techniques were first invented – and in less than three years, he put his own patent on the market, thus positioning himself among the founders of the precompressed culture alongside Zorzi himself and Riccardo Morandi.<sup>61</sup> The resonance of Favini's name in the 1950s is further enhanced by his fruitful collaborations with essential architects in the Milanese scene: in 1955, he designed, together with Giovanni Muzio, the covering of the canteen in the Bocconi University dormitory<sup>62</sup> – whose structure of hollow prisms with triangular section seems to anticipate the more elaborate study for the church in Ivrea – and, at the same time, with the project of an office building in Genoa, he started a long-lasting partnership with Angelo Mangiarotti and Bruno Morassutti. Aware of the Swiss lesson on the relationship between engineering and architecture, he overcame the impasse between figuration and structure by designing “forme dall'apparenza nuda”<sup>63</sup>: his capability led him to occupy the pages of the main architectural magazines of those years, marking, in 1956, his definitive consecration with the project for the Mater Misericordiae Church in Baranzate (Milan), considered “the boldest” in the diocese of Milan.<sup>64</sup>

When, in the first half of 1956, Adriano Olivetti decides to convene him to Ivrea to confer the task of the Sacro Cuore project, he presumably did so in light of these two crucial biographical facts that have marked Favini's career: his experience in Switzerland under the guidance of Colonnetti – and in this regard, he reminds him of their first meeting that took place precisely in that context – and his fervent collaboration with the world of architecture, also learned beyond the Alps and then successfully applied in the Lombardy region. At the time of the

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Losanna (1944-1950),” *Ais/Design*, no. 2 (2013): 105-111.

60 Andrea Alpini, “Conversazione con Aldo Favini. 30 settembre 2010” in Alpini, “Aldo Favini. Architettura e costruzione,” 310. For pictures and more detailed information of the project, see: AL.FA. Fondazione Aldo Favini e Anna Gatta, “Stazione di servizio carburanti,” <https://www.fondazionefavini.it/opere/stazione-di-servizio-carburanti/> (last accessed November 2024).

61 With the “Sistema Favini,” the engineer patented special anchoring systems for pre-stressed concrete cables, which enabled him to design structures with spans exceeding 30 meters. The experiments began as early as the late 1950s, but the certificate of originality and authenticity for the work was only issued on June 25, 1953. This is just the first of the nine patents invented by Aldo Favini between 1953 and 1969. Alpini, “Aldo Favini. Architettura e costruzione,” 20-43.

62 For pictures and more detailed information of the project, see: AL.FA. Fondazione Aldo Favini e Anna Gatta, “Mensa pensionato Università Bocconi,” <https://www.fondazionefavini.it/opere/mensa-pensionato-universita-bocconi/> (last accessed November 2024).

63 Giulio Barazzetta, “Forme dall'apparenza nuda” in Barazzetta, *Aldo Favini. Architettura e ingegneria in opera*, 8.

64 Veronesi, “Chiese nuove: la situazione a Milano,” 57. Despite the Mater Misericordiae Church is the most well-known, it is not the only building for which the three designers have collaborated. Aldo Favini worked with both Mangiarotti and Morassutti on more than ten projects, demonstrating the prolific nature of their partnership.

interview, the designs for the Baranzate Church had not yet been made public, but nonetheless, the reputation of his previous experiments with concrete preceded him. Adriano, indeed, chose him to have a structure in Canton Vesco “like the ones [Favini] makes”<sup>65</sup> – a more fitting decision when considering the modernism of the already built portion of the neighbourhood. Furthermore, it is worth noting the echoes that Milanese professionals – many of whom were already involved in the world of Olivetti, such as Ignazio Gardella or Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini – were having in the rest of Italy regarding the design of ecclesiastical spaces. Under the auspices of Cardinal Schuster first, and then Cardinal Montini, exploring the new possibilities offered by technique seems to emerge as a trend, seen symbolically as a sign of a “living religion [...] [that] demands novelty”<sup>66</sup>. Based on these premises, the exceptional nature of the case of the Sacro Cuore – in addition to the almost total absence of religious buildings among those commissioned by the Ivrea-based company – lies in the deliberate collaboration with an engineer who was external to the company’s technical office: the aim is sparking a dialogue open to the most contemporary researches that both the ‘Olivettians’ and external professionals – who, like meteors, make their fleeting appearance in Ivrea – are called to respond to. This *modus operandi* is reiterated, for example, with the 1957 project for a bridge over the Dora river – where Adolfo De Carlo, Ludovico Quaroni, and Bruno Zevi are joined by Sergio Musmeci – and in 1962 with the initial proposal for the Scarmagno factory – which sees Eduardo Vittoria and Marco Zanuso working alongside Silvano Zorzi.

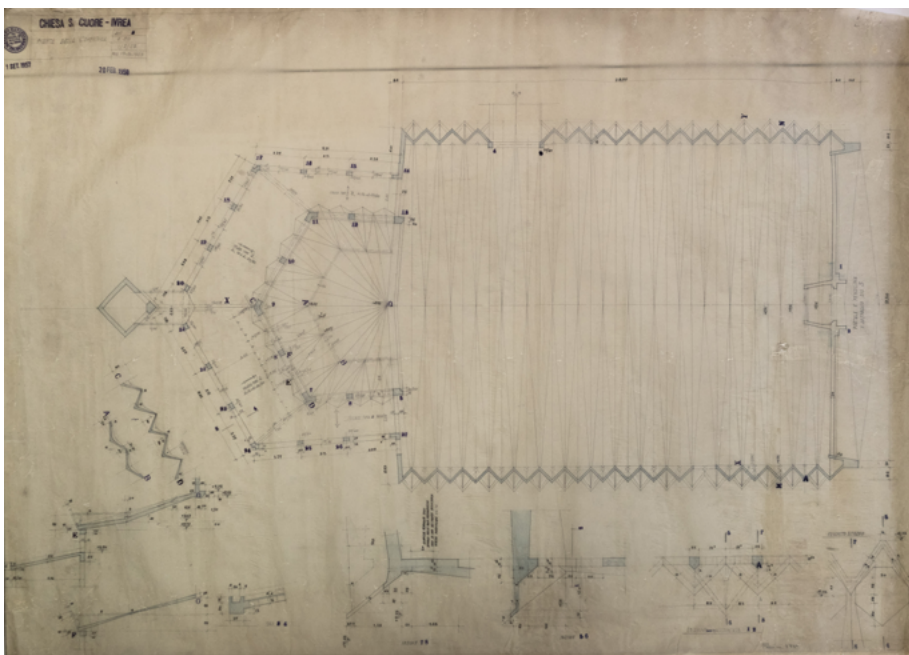
The first outcome of the collaboration between Favini and Nizzoli – the engineer mentions in his memoirs that he met Oliveri only once – occurs in October 1956 when the photo of the model of the new parish complex appears on the cover of *La Voce del Sacro Cuore*, the church bulletin. Although the general configuration would undergo modifications during the four years of construction (1957-1961) – the rectory would take on a different layout and the project for a glass facade, as well as the external arrangement of the area with three large water tanks, would be downsized – it is already possible to observe the corrugated envelope that characterizes the main hall of the church and reflects into the surrounding spaces through the use of a polygonal form.<sup>67</sup> Having learned the basic dimensions of the area, Favini works on defining “Disegno 1”: following his operational practice, the first step is defining the standard bay –

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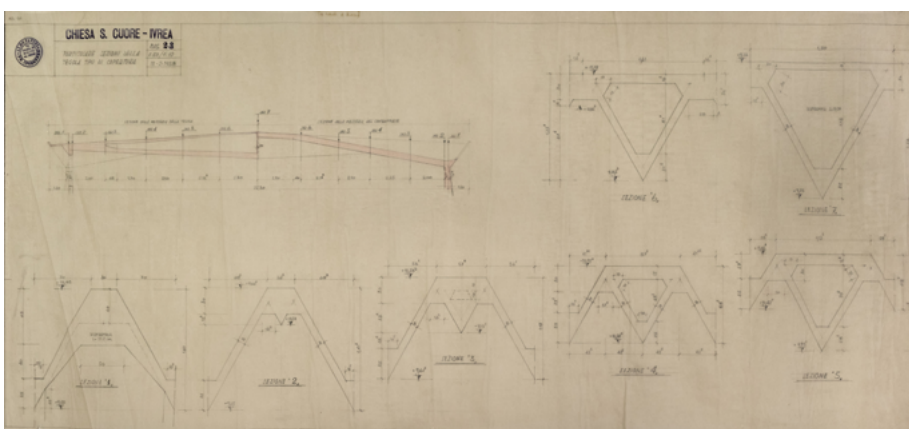
65 Servizio Archivi Storici e Attività Museali, Politecnico di Milano, ACL. Fondo “Aldo Favini”. Chiesa del Sacro Cuore, Ivrea. Folder 6. Lettera da opere scelte [2004]; Andrea Alpini, “Conversazione con Aldo Favini. 30 settembre 2010” in “Aldo Favini. Architettura e costruzione,” 305. In particular, the work on the Mater Misericordiae Church began in 1956, when Favini had already been called to Ivrea and this is an important aspect that demonstrates there is no connection between the commissions for the two church projects. Adriano Olivetti wanted to involve Favini not merely as the designer of the Church of Baranzate, but as a skilled structural designer. For the events related to the church in Baranzate, see: Giulio Barazzetta, “Milano anni ‘50: tecnica e architettura. Morassutti, Mangiarotti, Favini,” *Casabella*, no. 721 (April 2004): 82-93.

66 Carlo Tosco, “Architettura di chiese: un percorso italiano” in *Architettura Chiesa e Società in Italia 1948-1978*, 33. See also: Maria A. Crippa, “Architettura sacra a Milano,” and Gillo Dorfles, “A proposito di dieci recenti chiese lombarde,” in *Chiesa e Quartiere: storia di una rivista e di un movimento per l’architettura a Bologna*, eds. Giuliano Gresleri and Beatrice Bettazzi (Bologna: Compositori, 2004).

67 For the first layout of the Church, see: AASO, Coll. V-C-A-4-5, photos of the Church model; Parrocchia del Sacro Cuore – Ivrea, *La voce del Sacro Cuore*, cover; Quintavalle, *Marcello Nizzoli*, 352.



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repeated 17 times to compose the unique nave – consisting of a hollow beam resting on a tapered pier shaped like a V at the base. Thanks to the use of the ‘Favini System’ for precompression of concrete, the two construction elements acquire a certain degree of engineering complexity, with thin thicknesses such as 15 cm for the side walls and 8 to 15 cm for the roof. The beams, covering a span of 22.30 m with a spacing of 1.7 m, have a variable but symmetrical section relative to the median line of the hall: from the support point with a hollow V-shaped section, it transitions to an M-shaped section, and in the middle, it reaches a triangle with the vertex at the bottom<sup>68</sup>. The geometry formed at the intersection between the roof and the side walls allows for a series of octagonal openings, through which filtered light accentuates the tension created by the embroidery of the upper shell [Fig. 10, 11]. The distance between formal exploration and structural principle vanishes as the two aspects become intertwined

68 Servizio Archivi Storici e Attività Museali, Politecnico di Milano, ACL. Fondo “Aldo Favini”. [Chiesa del Sacro Cuore, Ivrea. Disegni] s.d. [1957-1958], T146. See also: “Chiesa del ‘Sacro Cuore’ ad Ivrea (Torino)” in *IV Congresso Internazionale del Precompresso. Realizzazioni italiane in cemento armato precompresso*, ed. AITEC (Roma: AITEC, 1962), 313-315.

Fig. 10, 11  
Sacro Cuore church, Ivrea  
s.d. [1957-1958], draws, T146  
(source: Servizio Archivi Storici  
e Attività Museali, Politecnico  
di Milano, ACL. Fondo “Aldo  
Favini”).





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to the extent that the creative process seems to find its *raison d'être* in structural calculation. For this reason, in addition to recalling some notable experiences in the Milanese area, such as the Santa Maria Nascente Church by Vico Magistretti and Mario Tedeschi (1947-1955), the Madonna dei Poveri Church by Figini and Pollini (1952-1956), or the San Francesco Church by Gardella (1954-1959), Favini's design can also be linked to contemporaneous experiments on contoured surfaces by Morandi – the San Luca Evangelista Church of in Rome in collaboration with Studio Passarelli (1955-1958) – or on corrugated membranes by Musmeci – the Chapel for the Railwaymen in Vicenza (1957) [Fig. 12]. By the end of 1956, after establishing the main volumes, the design process for the complex continued for another two years, at least until late 1959, when the residents began to see “the first pilasters, then one sidewall, then another, then the roof, the bell tower, and the apse. The structure was standing [...] less than a year after the start of construction”<sup>69</sup>. Alongside Favini's work on the main hall, Nizzoli and Oliveri contributed to the design of the apse, the remaining bodies of the parish complex – for which the engineer's contribution was limited to structural calculations – and the entire liturgical furnishings, thus bringing the transdisciplinary approach typical of post-war architect-designers into the Sacro Cuore project.<sup>70</sup> [Fig. 13, 14]

A first moment of celebration was organized at the time of the building's completion: on Pentecost day in 1959, the bells were blessed in the presence of both Adriano Olivetti and Monsignor Rostagno. However, to celebrate the rite inside

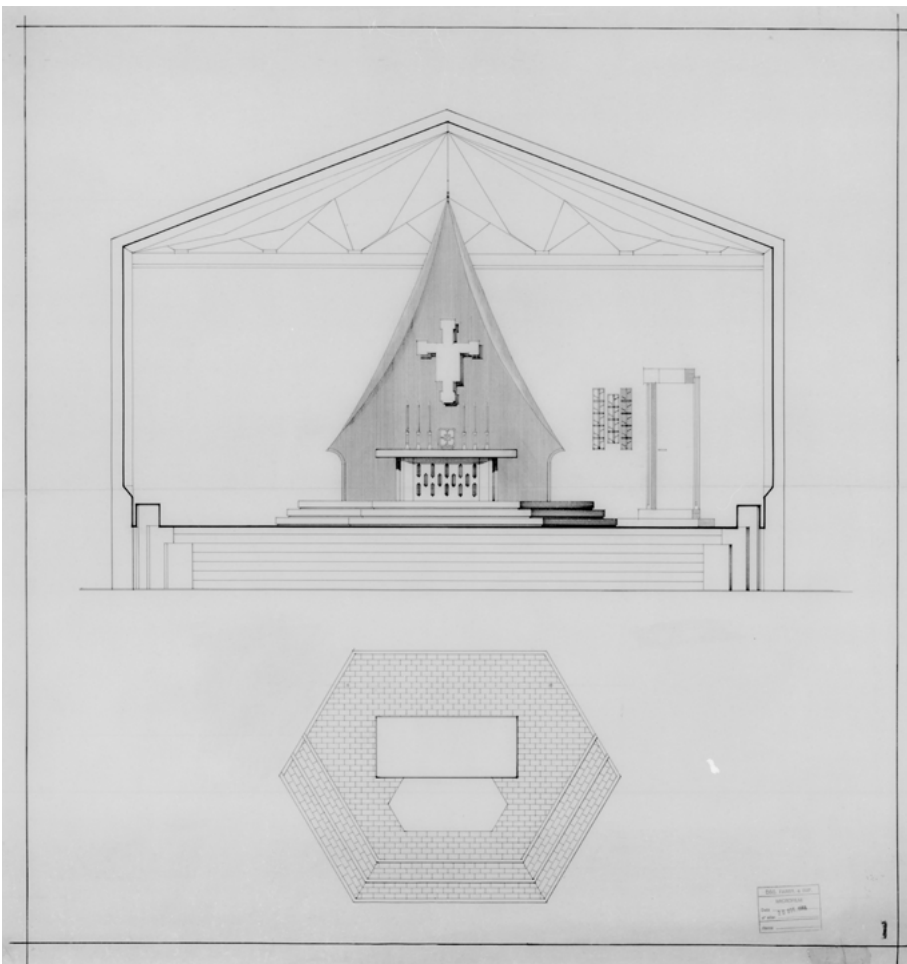
69 Passera, “Cinquant'anni di storia,” 24.

70 AASO, SO-D, MDIO, UTO-PP, 42, 1, *Comune di Ivrea - Stab. di Ivrea – Settore Chiesa del Sacro Cuore*. The entire series of drawings testifies to the work done by Nizzoli and Oliveri between design and architecture to complete Favini's concept. The transcalar approach to the project is typical of the designers belonging to the Milanese area, see: Fiorella Bulegato and Elena Dellapiana, *Il design degli architetti italiani. 1920-200* (Milano: Electa, 2014). Furthermore, important artworks were commissioned for the Sacro Cuore Church: the *Via Crucis* and the candelabra sculpted by Giò Pomodoro and the crucifix made by Roberto Crippa. A more in-depth analysis of the furnishings and the liturgical objects inside has yet to be carried out.

Fig. 12  
The interior of Sacro Cuore Church (Photo by the authors, 2024).

Fig. 13, 14  
The *Via Crucis* by Giò Pomodoro and the pulpit, designed by Nizzoli and Oliveri (Photo by the authors, 2024).





the Church, two more years were needed – the first Mass was celebrated at Easter in 1961 – during which interventions at a smaller scale were fine-tuned.<sup>71</sup> In its final configuration, the single nave – the focal point of Favini's design – culminates in an elevated pentagonal apse, closed on the outside by a larger structure housing the sacristy rooms. The roofing of the terminal portion reprises the theme of the corrugated surface but opens up into a broader drapery, leaving room for interpretation that the building symbolizes the tent of the people of Israel, where the breath of the Holy Spirit would have inflated the side towards the tabernacle. Supporting this thesis is also the design of the metal partition – with a draped cloth – placed at the posterior limit of the presbytery as a scenic backdrop for the altar. This arrangement, together with the presence of the steps, marks a separation between the celebrant and the assembly and suggests that he still performed the rite with his back to the people – a characteristic also found in the side chapel and the crypt beneath the apse area [Fig. 15].

Contrary to what is stated in the literature, despite the origin of the designers from the Milan area, there is no 'Ambrosian' influence in the celebration at the parish of Canton Vesco<sup>72</sup>, a characteristic instead found in the presence of the pul-

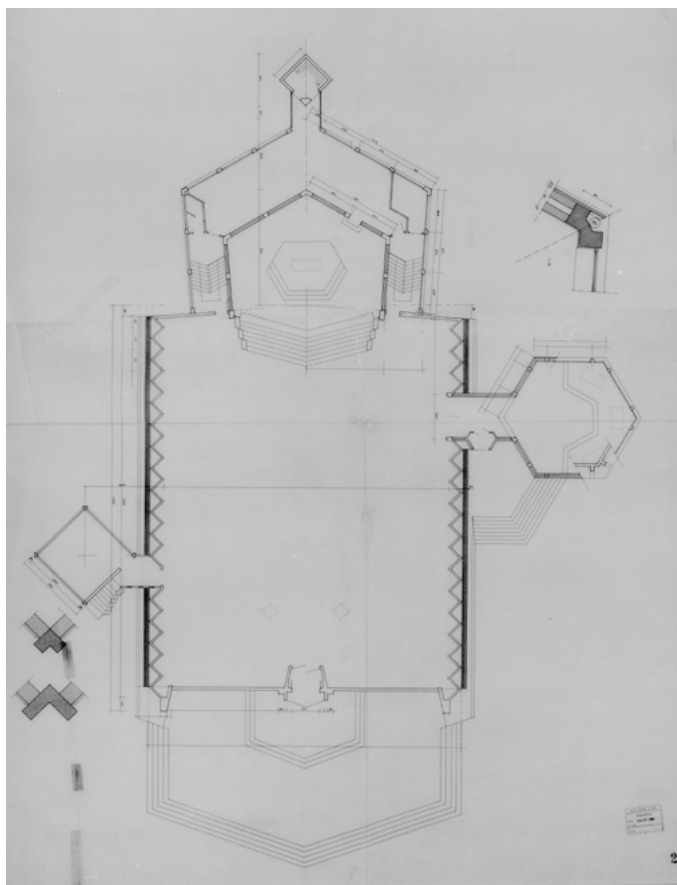
71 Passera, "Cinquant'anni di storia," 21-27.

72 While the volume Quintavalle, *Marcello Nizzoli*, 351 claims that the rite followed the Ambrosian tradition, historical photos and archive documents show a different modality of celebration. See: AASO, SO-D, MDIO, UTO-PP, 42, 1, *Comune di Ivrea - Stab. di Ivrea - Settore Chiesa del Sacro Cuore*.

Fig. 15  
First configuration of the apse with the curtain serving as a backdrop (source: AASO, SO-D, MDIO, UTO-PP, 42, 1, *Comune di Ivrea - Stab. di Ivrea - Settore Chiesa del Sacro Cuore*).

pit in a pivotal area between the nave and the presbytery. A sculptural element in reinforced concrete, present already in the early stages of the Church's construction, serves as a reference to medieval traditions, as well as reaffirming a dual polarity of the liturgy. Four autonomous volumes, harmonizing with the central space through the repetition of triangular geometry, connect to the central area. On the North side is the chapel, reserved for special devotions: three altars set against the sides of the octagon would have allowed for the simultaneous performance of multiple rites. On the opposite side, the baptistery is positioned – a square plan rotated 45° relative to the axis of the Church – which can also be accessed from the outside, recalling a secular tradition that conceives it as a passage space for the community. Both the baptismal font and the wrought iron gate – on the passage towards the main hall – are designed by the two architects. The theme of the rotated square also animates the structure of the bell tower, which occupies the central outer corner of the apse. On the South side, there are the parish house and the oratory [Fig. 16].

At the inauguration of the entire complex on June 29, 1961, neither the Bishop, who passed away on December 8, 1959, nor Adriano, who died in the following months, were present, and this aspect appears to have influenced the completion of the project in its envisioned form five years earlier. The entrance vestibule – the final detail to be resolved – was supposed to, according to Annibale Fiocchi's 1948 plan, align with the current Viale Monthey to serve as the neighbourhood's closing element. However, due to issues with Olivetti company's land acquisition for construction, the designers were compelled in 1956 to reconsider its configuration, favouring the space facing the Turin State Road for the entrance, thereby compromising the overall perception of the work. The design of the external arrangements by Nizzoli and Oliveri was also predicated on the assumption of future acquisition of the last remaining trapezoid of land for private use.<sup>73</sup> [Fig. 17] This process extended for fifty years and culminated in the construction of the churchyard in 2010 through the economic initiative of the residents, suggesting that the prolonged timeline is symptomatic of the collapse of the Olivetti community project and the religious crisis that afflicted the Church after the Second Vatican Council – two events that marked the history of Ivrea in the 1960s.

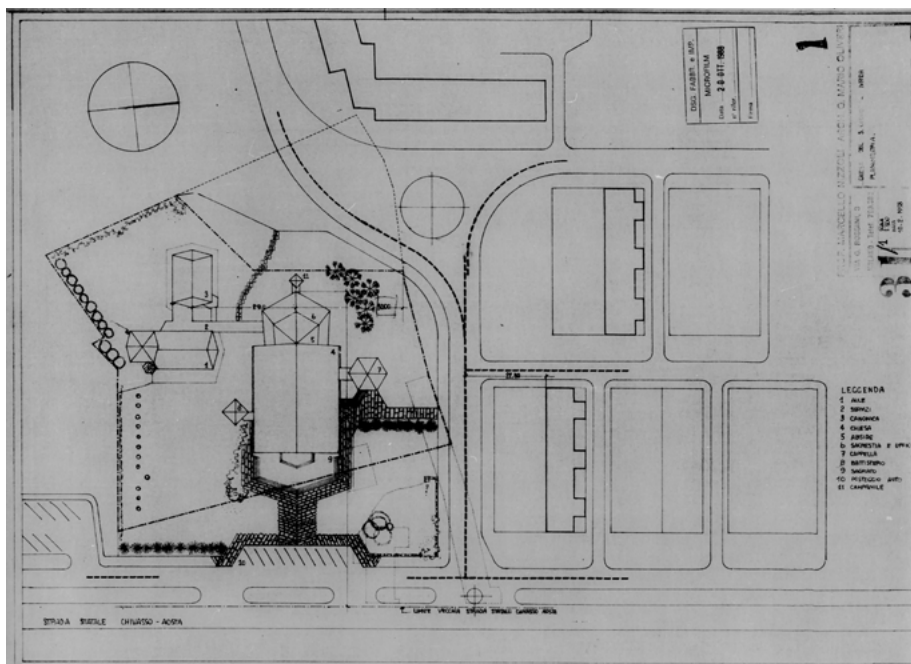


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Fig. 16  
Ground floor plan of the Sacro Cuore Church (source: AASO, SO-D, MDIO, UTO-PP, 42, 1, *Comune di Ivrea - Stab. di Ivrea - Settore Chiesa del Sacro Cuore*).

42, 1, *Comune di Ivrea - Stab. di Ivrea - Settore Chiesa del Sacro Cuore*; Passera, "Cinquant'anni di storia," 25-27.

73 Montanari, "L'architettura sacra nella diocesi di Ivrea nel Novecento," 495-496; Diego Ferrero-Aprato, "La Chiesa del Sacro Cuore di Gesù," in *I primi cinquant'anni di vita e di cammino*, ed. Parrocchia del Sacro Cuore di Gesù in Ivrea, (Ivrea, 2004), 89-93.



## Realignments. Church and Neighbourhood in Ivrea in the 1960s

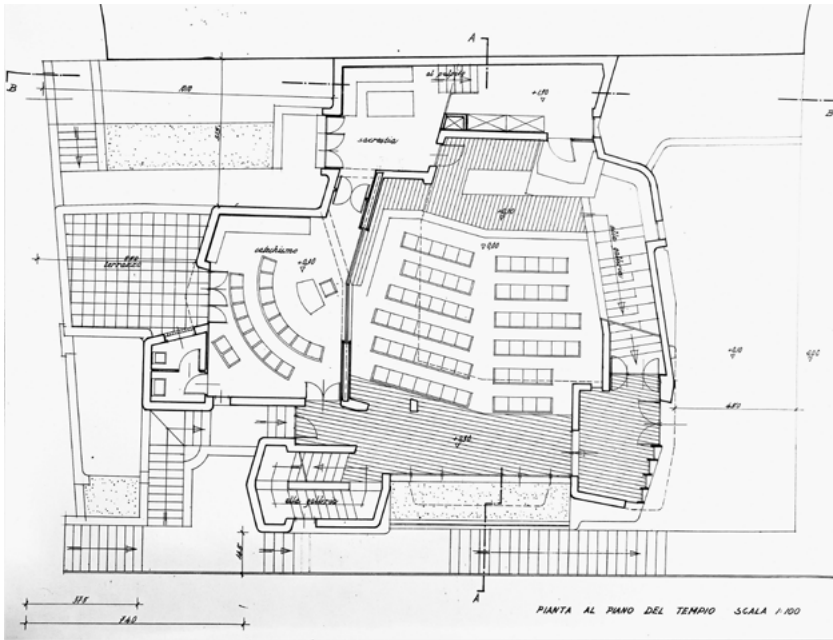
Adriano's death in 1960 marked a moment of crisis and the end of a very personal way of understanding and managing the district/church relation.

The difficulties – especially bureaucratic – faced by the implementation of the master plan approved in 1959 are also evident in the continuous migration of the church building within the new quarters: in the 1960s and 1970s there was a general inversion of their spatial relationship. Constant, however, is the barycentric position of the building: in the various projects, the church tended to occupy the spaces left free by the houses and other social services already built (or planned) according to the previous plans, no longer on the periphery but in the heart of the new residential area. At the beginning of the decade, in the aftermath of the inauguration of Sacro Cuore church, there were as many as two church projects promoted by communities in the neighbourhood of La Sacca, adjacent to Canton Vesco: on the one hand, the Waldensian Temple, and on the other, the Catholic Church of San Francesco.

The Waldensian Temple constitutes the first of its kind in Ivrea and was designed and built between 1963 and 1970 at the behest of the Waldensian community, founded by Pastor Daniele Revel, Adriano's maternal grandfather, in 1875. The relationship between the Olivetti family and the Waldensian community would always be very strong, especially with regard to the Torre Pellice Table, to which Adriano addressed the Community Movement's political elections, reaping a fair success in that area.<sup>74</sup> As the number of worshippers increased, in the early 1960s, the Waldensian community decided to

Fig. 17  
Final urban configuration of the Church in relation to the rest of Canton Vesco (source: AASO, SO-D, MDIO, UTO-PP, 42, 1, *Comune di Ivrea - Stab. di Ivrea - Settore Chiesa del Sacro Cuore*).

<sup>74</sup> See the correspondence between Adriano and the Moderators, in AASO, SO, P, CP, 22.310, issue 95, "Enrico Geymet."



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equip itself with a Temple for worship, which previously took place in make-shift buildings, for a time freely rented in Olivetti-owned premises.<sup>75</sup> The episode of the Temple's construction helps to highlight a distinct type of Olivetti's influence from the previous "Adrianian period". Indeed, the client fully realized that he could not ignore the extreme architectural quality of the context.<sup>76</sup> The architectural design is therefore entrusted to the firm of Giovanni Klaus Koenig and Claudio Messina, both Waldensians, precisely because of their great ability to read the context and design architectures of extraordinary spatial quality.<sup>77</sup> The choice is also driven by the firm's well-established relationship with the Tavola, thanks to Koenig's collaboration with Leonardo Ricci, with whom he graduated, a Waldensian architect who was the author of the ecumenical centre in Prali, Piedmont, and on the other hand by family connections.<sup>78</sup> The project that consecrated the firm Koenig-Messina was the San Secondo di Pinerolo temple, inaugurated in 1958, which was followed by the competition for the Prali temple in 1959, for which they won first prize *ex equo*. The Ivrea's building constitutes the first application of a "spatial" Temple model, designed by Koenig to make up for the lack of references for Waldensian worship.<sup>79</sup> [Fig. 18, 19]

75 See the correspondence between the Pastor of Ivrea and the Moderators, in AUPI-TV, 066B, and in AASO, SO, P, CP, 119, issue 1156, *Chiesa Evangelica Valdese – Comunità di Ivrea*, 1961-1970.

76 Letter of Alberto Ribet to Ermanno Rostan, Moderator, April, 17 1964, in AUPI-TV, 066B.

77 Breaking with established practice, the Pastor Bouchard of Ivrea personally involved the architects, without prior discussion with the Table. See: the polemic correspondence between Giorgio Bouchard, the Moderator Ermanno Rostan, and several members of the Waldensian community in Torre Pellice, Biella and Turin, held in AUPI-TV, 066B. The presentation drawings of the various phases of the project that were progressively submitted to the Table for approval (and later also to Olivetti) are held in AUPI-TV, 066B, and in AASO, SO, P, CP, 22.310, issue 1156, "CHIESA EVANGELICA VALDESE – COMUNITA' DI IVREA, 23/1/1961 – 13/5/1970."

78 Valdo Spini, "Ricordo di Gianni Koenig, architetto valdese," in *Giovanni K. Koenig: un fiorentino nel dibattito nazionale su architettura e design (1924-1989)*, ed. Maria Cristina Tonelli (Firenze: Firenze University Press, 2020), 271-274.

79 A valuable catalogue of Waldensian religious architecture in the Pinerolo valleys is the volume Renzo Bounous, Massimo Lecchi, eds., *I templi delle valli Valdesi* (Torino: Claudiana Editrice, 1988). A history of

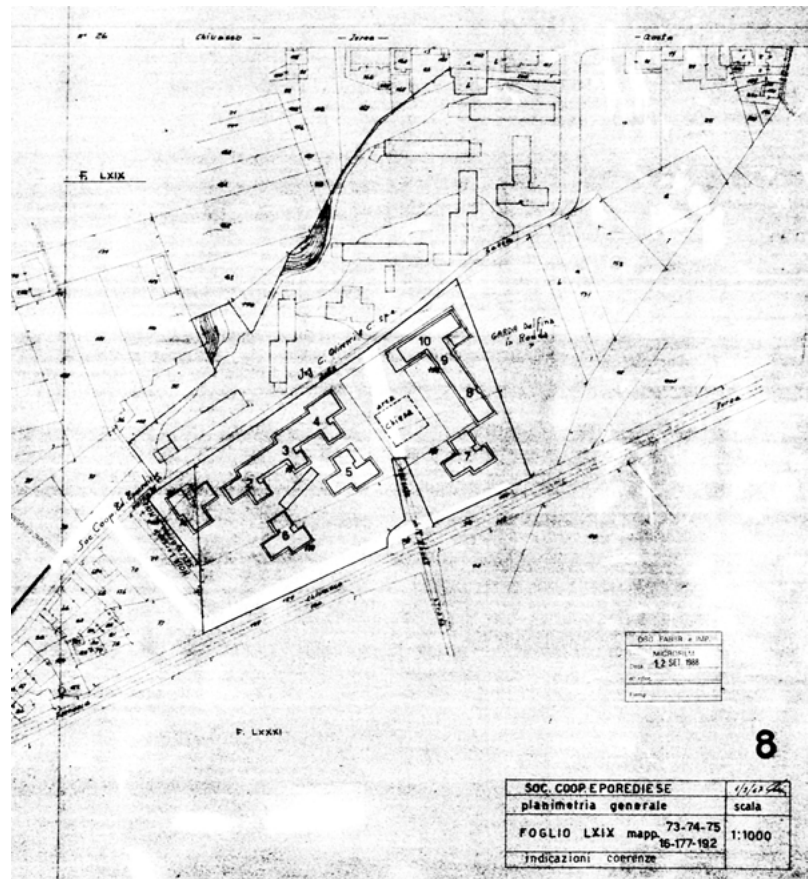
Fig. 18  
Giovanni Klaus Koenig and Claudio Messina, plan of the ground floor of the Waldesian Temple, Ivrea 1965 (source: AASO, SO, P, CP, 22.310, issue 1156, *CHIESA EVANGELICA VALDESE – COMUNITA' DI IVREA*, 23/1/1961 - 13/5/1970).

Fig. 19  
The Waldesian Temple of Ivrea, Eastern elevation (Photo by the authors, 2024).



In Ivrea, the spirituality of the “Catholic” expressionism of Giovanni Michelucci<sup>80</sup> – whose Catholic church on the Autostrada del Sole in Florence was just being inaugurated – was combined with the spatiality of early Waldensian churches (Valle Pellice, Pinerolo, Turin)<sup>81</sup>. This all was enriched by deep research into early Protestant architectural expressionism in Germany studied by Koenig for the *Convegno internazionale di studi sull'espressionismo* held in Florence in May 1964.<sup>82</sup> Olivetti’s direct influence in the architectural project was nil, while the financial aid offered both by the Company – from 1964 in the hands of a new Board of Directors that has almost totally disempowered the Olivetti component – and the Olivetti family, in particular Dino, Adriano’s younger brother, turn out to be crucial.

In 1961, the Catholic community of the La Sacca neighbourhood requested the construction of its own church, which is wanted in the heart of the settlement. Still under construction, the borough had itself been built through cooperative formulas within Olivetti company on the initiative of Catholic trade unionist and missionary Riccardo Lizier.<sup>83</sup> [Fig. 20] Regarding the church – then dedicated to San Francesco –, Lizier personally took care of reaching out to the architects, those same *architetti di Olivetti* who had signed part of the neighbourhood on Adriano’s commission, that is the Roman firm of Massimo Boschetti, Adolfo De Carlo, Luciano Giovannini, and Aldo Livadiotti. Livadiotti in particular was a close collaborator of Ludovico Quaroni even for Ivrea plans since the



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Waldensian architecture in Piedmont and Savoy has been attempted in Paolo Cozzo, Filippo De Pieri and Andrea Merlotti, eds., *Valdesi e protestanti a Torino, XVIII-XX secolo: convegno per i 150 anni del Tempio Valdese, 1853-2003* (Torino: Zamorani, 2005).

<sup>80</sup> The intellectual debt to Michelucci has been expressed by Koenig himself in “Il consumo del razionalismo italiano,” parts I, II and III, *L'architettura, cronache e storia*, no. 73-74-75 (1962).

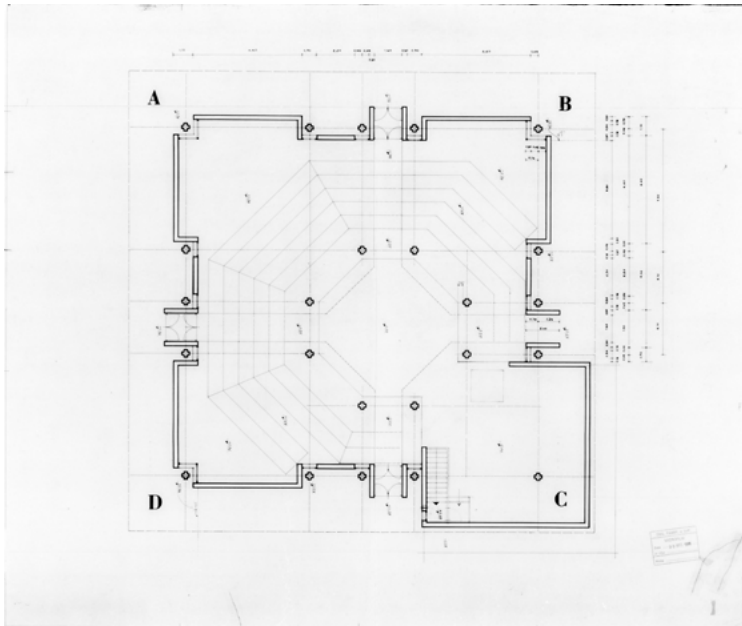
<sup>81</sup> See the theoretical premises of the project, in Giovanni K. Koenig and Claudio Messina, *Progetto del tempio valdese. Ivrea – Canton Vesco*, [1963], in AUIPI-TV, 066B.

<sup>82</sup> The results of Koenig’s studies on German architecture partly flowed into the volume *Architettura tedesca del secondo dopoguerra* (Bologna: Cappelli, 1965). See: the essays by François Burkhardt (“Giovanni K. Koenig e l’architettura in Germania,” 199-204) ed Ezio Godoli (“Il ruolo di Koenig nella storiografia dell’architettura dell’espressionismo,” 213-224), in Tonelli, *Giovanni K. Koenig: un fiorentino nel dibattito nazionale su architettura e design (1924-1989)*.

<sup>83</sup> See the correspondence between Riccardo Lizier and the various Olivetti offices held in AASO, SO, DS, Corr. Pres., issue 2044, *LIZIER Sig. RICCARDO*, 1962-1974; AASO, PSO, AO, 22.3.1, issue 1399, *Riccardo Lizier – Cooperativa “La Familiare,”* 1955-1956. The project drawings (structural and installation) are stored in AASO, SO, DS, MDUTO-PP, 42, *Comune di Ivrea - Stab. di Ivrea (La Sacca) – Settore Chiesa San Francesco*, 1964-1965.

Fig. 20  
La Sacca district urban plan, designed by Società Cooperativa Eporediese directed by Riccardo Lizier, 1967. Note the church building footprint (dashed line) in the very centre of the new residential district (source: AASO, SO, DS, MDUTO-PP, 36, *Comune di Ivrea - INA casa - Regione “La Sacca,” planimetrie*).

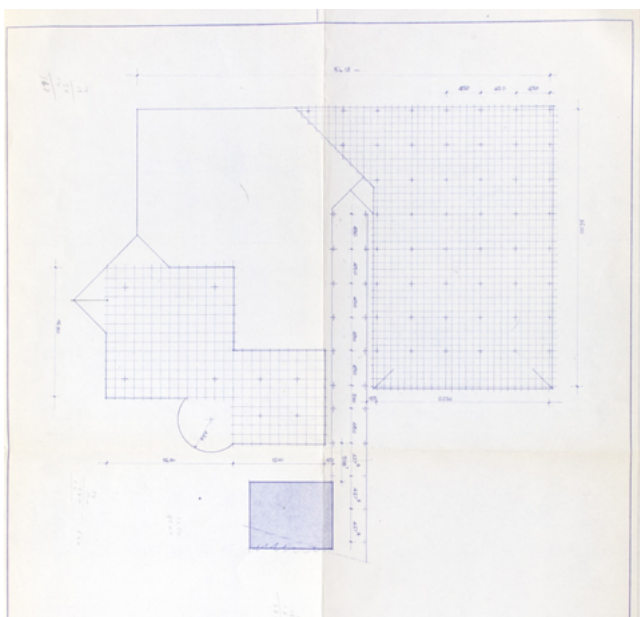




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Fig. 21  
Massimo Boschetti, Adolfo De Carlo, Luciano Giovannini, and Aldo Livadiotti, ground floor plan of the church of San Francesco alla Sacca, Ivrea n.d. [1964] (source: AASO, SO, DS, MDUTO-PP, 42, *Comune di Ivrea - Stab. di Ivrea (La Sacca) - Settore Chiesa San Francesco*, 1964-1965).

Fig. 22  
The church of San Francesco alla Sacca, entrance elevation (Photo by the authors, 2024).

Fig. 23  
Ezio Sgrelli (with Ottavio Cascio), ground floor scheme of the Olivetti Civic Centre for Bellavista, 1971. The church building (bottom left) can be recognised by the semicircular shape of one of the rooms, an area probably intended for the baptistery (source: AASO, As, Cascio, B-Poc, issue 70, (B76) *Olivetti Centro Civico, Ivrea - Progetto dell'arch. Ezio Sgrelli*, 1970-1972).

early 1950s<sup>84</sup>, while Adolfo De Carlo collaborated with Quaroni on the design of the church of the Sacra Famiglia in Genoa (1956-1959) and – for Olivetti client – of the elementary school for the Canton Vesco of Ivrea, under construction in the same years (1956-1963). Furthermore, in the late 1950s the firm has signed the design of the Movimento di Comunità Centre in Terracina in Lazio.<sup>85</sup> The building proposed meets the needs of a domestic, intimate place of worship; favouring horizontality as well as centrality of layout, it fits quietly among the residential towers, almost as a counterpoint to the sought-after monumentality of Sacro Cuore.<sup>86</sup> [Fig. 21, 22] The church is built over a period of more than two decades almost exclusively with funds raised within the community, and a room for condominium meetings is also housed inside the building.<sup>87</sup> A double short-circuit is highlighted here. On the one hand, the involvement of Giovannini and De Carlo's firm is a direct emanation of that "diffuse quality" of spaces and architecture so intelligently promoted by Adriano since the 1930s, which is reflected in the design of a neighbourhood church that can almost be defined as "spontaneous" if not "self-constructed." On the other side, the barycentric placement relatively to the surrounding neighbourhood discards the logics previously planned/imposed by Adriano - which, in the case of religious buildings, are top-down -, thus going – paradoxically – to respond to the real needs of a Community that, after all, is the custodian and heir of the Olivettian awareness. In the second half of the 1960s, the Bellavista area (South of Canton Vesco) still needed a church, as Piccinato's 1956 project was not realized. In this case Annibale Focchi was entrusted with the task, and he presented a design for a magnificent building placed once again in the heart of the neighborhood. Neither would this project be followed up in Bellavista, but would be realized, partially modified, in another suburb north of Ivrea a decade later, while Bellavista would not have a church until the 2010s.<sup>88</sup>

## Conclusions

If compared to the 1950s ones, the processes that took place in the 1960s described above tended to realign the case of Ivrea with the debate that informed the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). During those same years,

84 On Giovannini see Claudio Baldoni, "L'architettura di Luciano Giovannini (1924-1993)" (PhD diss., Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata, 2010), in part. the chapters "La relazione con Ludovico Quaroni e la partecipazione al GTCUC" and "Luciano Giovannini 'architetto di Olivetti'" 23-62. To be noticed that Giovannini was also the (co-)author of two volumes edited by the GTCUC for Ivrea general plan GTUC, *Collana di studi e ricerche per il coordinamento urbanistico del Canavese*, 15 voll.: (with Carlo Doglio), *Storia di Ivrea urbana*, vol. X, and *L'ambiente dell'Eporediese*, vol. XIII.

85 Claudio Baldoni, "Una realizzazione del Movimento Comunità nel territorio Pontino. Adriano Olivetti e la Biblioteca Comunale di Terracina," *Lazio Ieri e Oggi*, no. 4-6 (2018): 3-18.

86 It is a square-based central layout model that was very common in religious architecture in the late 1950s, which can be found in the churches of San Pio X in Bologna (Giorgio Trebbi, 1957-1962) or of San Giuseppe Cottolengo in Turin (Mario Roggero, 1959-1965).

87 The church still lacks a systematic study. A description of some social aspects related to its construction can be found in Rolando Argentero, *I percorsi della fede in Canavese. Ivrea & Canavese Orientale* (Ivrea: Hever, 2015), 54.

88 AASO, Aa, Focchi, SV, Poc, fold. 49, *Chiesa di Santa Chiara – Progetto – Quartiere Bellavista, Ivrea (TO)*; see the architectural record of the church in Daniele Boltri, Enrico Papa, eds., *Architetture olivettiane a Ivrea – I progetti non realizzati* (Cernobbio: Archivio Cattaneo Editore, forthcoming).

the Church was in fact questioning the distribution, role and spaces of religious service within the contemporary city, and the concept of the *integrated city* was investigated, as were the breakthroughs derived from Team X and the Archigram or, from Japan's Metabolists with Tange Kenzo, who had, not surprisingly, a crucial role in Lercaro's Bologna in the 1960s.<sup>89</sup>

The journal "Chiesa e Quartiere" once again constitutes the privileged observatory, with particular reference to No. 39 of September 1966, specifically devoted to these issues, with articles by, among others, Yona Friedman and Ludovico Quaroni on the *Parrocchia del futuro*.<sup>90</sup> The definition of a new "pastoral planning" leads to considering the "parish system" as an increasingly integral part of the social centre of the new cities. This became necessary in order to cope with the rapid transformations observed within society, particularly regarding the processes of demographic explosion, inter-regional or even inter-borough emigration, and the cultural level of the new working-class neighbourhoods in terms of basic schooling.<sup>91</sup> The difficulties of the parish centre in fulfilling social functions, and the late 1960s social crisis was emblematically reflected in the cessation of the publication of "Chiesa e Quartiere" in 1968.<sup>92</sup>

It is significant to highlight how the trajectory of the Olivetti-Church relationship comes to an end with the early 1970s un-built project of a Civic Center for Bellavista district designed by the architect Ezio Sgrelli on behalf of Olivetti company.<sup>93</sup> The building housed the main social functions (restaurant, market, shops, theatre) as well as a space for worship. The new church would have a seamless structure within the civic centre housing the social services, echoing Quaroni's research on the church-social centre unity of the early 1950s [Fig. 23].

What has been attempted to demonstrate in this paper is the strong eccentricity of the model proposed by Adriano in the 1950s for "his" Ivrea in terms of the church-borough relation, with respect to the general national situation of the post war "economic miracle" and the reconstruction, highlighting the role of absolute protagonism and control exercised by Adriano in terms of both urban planning and architectural design. The city of Ivrea – and the territory of Ivrea in general – became a field of social and urban experimentation, a real attempt to import into Italy a model that elsewhere would not have had the strength to

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89 A direct reference to these movements is proposed in Piero Bulgheroni and Raffaele Selleri, "La parrocchia nella città contemporanea," *Chiesa e Quartiere*, no. 39 (September 1966), 34-39.

90 See the essays: Yona Friedman, "La theorie des systèmes compréhensibles et son application à l'urbanisme," *Ch&Q*, no. 39 (September 1966): 10-11; Ludovico Quaroni, "Cultura e realizzazioni urbanistiche," *Chiesa e quartiere*, no. 39 (September 1966): 12-15; Silvano Buralassi, "Religiosità e mutamento sociale," *Chiesa e quartiere*, no. 39 (September 1966): 16-21; Joseph Fitzpatrick, "La parrocchia del futuro," *Chiesa e quartiere*, no. 39 (September 1966): 40-49.

91 The debate began at the beginning of the decade – Mazzoli, "Elementi e criteri informativi di un 'planning' parrocchiale," 69-89 – and grew in the following years; an early critical summary is presented, in the Italian context, in Bulgheroni and Selleri, "La parrocchia nella città contemporanea," 34-39.

92 See also: Giorgio Pecorini, "Una crisi di coscienza cattolica. A chi giova il concordato?," *Comunità*, no. 144-145 (1967): 38-40; Andrea Longhi, "Movimenti, associazioni e spazi liturgici nel postconcilio: prospettive di ricerca," in *Architettura Chiesa e Società in Italia 1948-1978*, eds. Andrea Longhi and Carlo Tosco (Roma: Studium, 2010), 179-188.

93 The first Civic Centre project by Sgrelli, though without a religious component, dates back to 1962. See AASO, SO, DS, MDUTO-PP, 30, issues 1-100, *Case di civile abitazione - Quartiere Bellavista*. Some drawings of the last project are held in AASO, As, Cascio, B-Poc, issue 70, (B76) *Olivetti Centro Civico, Ivrea - Progetto dell'arch. Ezio Sgrelli, 1970-1972*.

impose itself. With his death in 1960, a decade of realignment began, but this took the form of punctual and isolated realities, which escaped the logic of integrated urban and territorial planning promoted by Adriano since the 1930s and only assimilated at national level thirty years later.

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