# HPA

Histories of Postwar Architecture

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## Architecture:
## War and Peace

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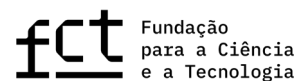
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# Architecture: War and Peace

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**Paulo Pereira**

# War. Catastrophe and Disaster

I believe that catastrophic vigor is best perceived in the context of war: not Nature but men in Nature and human nature are the main agents of catastrophe and especially of heritage and cultural catastrophe through war.

Strictly speaking, it is useless to make any consideration about a possible dichotomy between "art", as an intellectual and cultural expression, on the one hand, and "war" on the other, understood as a fatality in which the face of barbarism. In fact, art is associated with all human activities, in the same way that war is inscribed, therefore, and also, as one of the unavoidable dimensions of the human – and in contrast, dimensions of dehumanization  inhuman, in the determining field of biopolitics. Therefore, if we assume ourselves as agents of culture in the field of arts, architecture and heritage, it will be useful to attend to a diagnosis, which already affects "our" time in an irrefragable way.

It is worth saying that the anathematization of war - especially in the so-called West - took place from the 18$^{th}$ century onwards with late-Enlightenment and revolutionary (or post-revolutionary) ideologies - war began to be considered as a lesser evil until the 20th century. In my opinion, it is only in the nineteenth century context that this anathematization will take place, with concrete ideological support, based on the massive tragic results of the Great War and, above

all, with the Second World War and its procession of incredible inequities. And it is, above all, from the 19th century onwards with photography, and especially in the 20th century with cinema, - after those two terrible episodes -, that art, in a conscious way, established itself as an eventual focus of resistance and criticism to warmongering, illustrating it, reporting it and demonstrating its cruelty. It is at this point that we find what we can call a constellation of "art against war" more or less militantly taken up by several artists and concomitantly shaped by "patrimonialism" and heritage ideology.

However, this reality cannot hide another, still in force in the 20th century – and apparently in the 21st century – which is the fact that art also follows war as its exaltation and sublimation. Let us not lose sight, therefore, of the interest "on" objects of art and heritage in general, in their relationship with war.

In the same way, a typology could be used that addresses the theme of war, whether as a reality, or as a metaphor or metonymy. But[1]) that was recorded, at least openly, until the 18th century[2].

Naturally, in the field of war objects, other fields are thus discovered, which stem from an ontological consequence, or a phenomenological dimension[3].

But other wars cannot be left aside[4].

Among these, loss looms large in importance, which unfortunately gives war a second catastrophist aura that never hurts to remember. Thus, I keep in mind

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1    We would thus have an art and architecture(s) of war (which results, objectively, from the crossing of artistic genres with military practices), very close to military iconography (which, often, unintentionally serves as a source and document), a art and architecture for war (which is structured as propaganda, related to commissions that extol warrior feats). And art against war, which came from an ideological context only evident from the 19th century onwards..

2    We suggest, even so, a kind of outline, a guide, for an approach to the objects of war and their effects, starting only from the moment of maximum developments in pyroballistics. We will thus have several fields of work depending on the various stages of "realization" of the war:
  a.    Military architecture and military urbanism (17th-18th century) – pyrobalistic evolution: static fortresses (bulwarks, ravelins; horny works, nets), terraces and undergrounds; external breastplates; outer forts
  b.    Transitional military architecture/design and urbanism, late 19th century: the great lines of defense; integration of static architecture and moving architecture; the great land batteries and warships;
  c.    Military architecture and design of the 1st World War: the "trench war" (1914-1918): biological weapons; the first armored vehicles and aerial warfare;
  d.    Military design: the impasse "between wars"; research; the growth of aerial warfare
  e.    and. Military architecture: reinforced protection – new bunkers and new static defensive lines: the end of trenches and entrenchment camps
  f.    1st stage of the Second World War - Informal military architecture: Urban War; War of movement; aerial warfare; long-range bombing;
  g.    2nd stage of the Second World War – "carpet bomb"; "dam busters" air supremacy; flaks (anti-aircraft); the spotlights; tracer bullets; massive bombs;
  h.    3rd stage: the radar; the night flight; recognition and target acquisition via infrared;
  i.    4th stage: globalizing annihilation: the atomic bomb;
  j.    5th stage: the "defeat of war"; the balance of fear
  k.    Cold War: the balance of permanent fear: new strategies; secrecy and development of the military industries; high-tech; export of military hi-tech to consumer electronics.
  l.    Portable warfare/terrorism: autonomous and individualization of the act of war: terror
  m.    War without "contact"/contactless/i-phone: drones and super-drones; precision missiles; stratospheric missiles: "star wars".

3    i) War as virile heroization; ii) War as a tragic lament; iii) the War in the Visual Arts; iv) Uniforms, more uniforms, flags and banners: from the butler to the tailor (the Hugo Boss case); iv) War and Fashion; v) Heraldry, symbols and emblems; vi) The Cinema of War: from drama to propaganda; vii) Magazines, magazines and newspapers; viii) Revolutions of perception: War as cinema; ix) Cinema and technologies of War; x) War and gender; xi) War of "occultism"/esotericism/mythical geography; drone warfare…

4    a) Oil War; b) Bank war; c) Water War; d) Grain war; e) Gas War; f) Cyber wars; g) The War of the Walls: the persistence and invention of "walls" h) Social networks at war I) War of Refugees (again: the persistence and invention of "walls"); j) War and Science: from phrenology to Nazi experimentalism; the HAARP project.

several heritage disasters resulting from war and "terrorism" – it is worth re-membering these other sites of dread and fear, of death and suffering: Aus-chwitz (and the topography of death, or death as an industry), Roben Island, Bamyan, Twin Towers, Vukovar, Bosnia-Herzgovina, Beirut in the civil war, Syria – (Erbil, Palmyra, Dura-Europos), Iraq (Nineveh, Khorsabad) – Beirut again, with the mega-catastrophe of the port in a city already fractional – southern Ukraine (up to Odessa), border Israel, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank... .

What is certain is that at the end of the day, we have to admit: every time a building is demolished (imploded, for example; or bombed) there is a spectacle that is "mediatizable, antinomic, the result of a violent, tribal, but human (?) act. with a very clear objective; assume a war of identity with the aim of neutralizing architecture, erasing heritage (patrimicide), destroying culture...

Some of these places merited memorials, commemorative buildings; other places (and respective events) were "museumized" (the monuments to the Sho-ah by Peter Eisenmann or Daniel Liebeskind, in Berlin; the Nazi Documentation Center, by Georg Scheel Wetzel, in Munich)...

Among the most poignant exercises of affection and remembrance recon-ciliation are also the – as someone has called them – "architectural novels" – by W.G. Sebald (1944-2001) who rethinks the post-war period in devastated Germany and leads us to reflect on less conventional building structures and the spectral movement of people in this process based on a witnessable life experience.

And it is here in these places that this dialectic between History and Memory is understood; between Oblivion and Remembrance: between catastrophe and human redemption, between the costs of a dangerous humanity - which puts itself in danger - and which takes time to resolve problems such as isolation (the pandemic), or refugees, or victims of inclemency of nature, in this moment of unsustainability.

That all this and more of what is to come always becomes current, as the present moment confirms to us, that is what is unsettling.

Alessandra Veropalumbo, Maria Ines Pascariello

# A Military Building Project for the Defense of Naples in the Post-Unification 19th Century

*ISCAG, Camaldoli, Landscape, Militarisation, Digital Model*

## /Abstract

After the Unification of Italy, the city of Naples did not suffer any particular militarisation. In addition to the reinforcement of castle defences, the monasteries suppressed during the French Decade and the subsequent Bourbon era underwent a change of use into care centres as a result of the damage caused by the war. The few new projects for city defence structures arose in strategic positions, allowing control of the territory in all directions.

The Istituto Storico e di Cultura dell'Arma del Genio (ISCAG) preserves around four hundred cartographies of the Neapolitan territory, which depict the military presence in the city since the early 19th century. Among the reproductions, a project from the 1880s concerning a territorial area that was profoundly modified in the following centuries is of particular interest.

The project relates to a closed construction to be built on the Camaldoli hill, containing plans and sections of the new fortification to be erected, and complete with a conservative variant concerning the preservation of the 16th-century church. The contribution intends to analyse the militarisation projects that were to be established in pleasant, panoramic and uncontaminated places in the Neapolitan landscape, which within a few decades would no longer be recognisable due to the damage caused above all by post-war speculation.

Through the critical investigation of graphic and iconographic sources, the final objective of this work is the construction of a digital model of the projects that, appropriately inserted into a digital territorial context, will make it possible to visualise the Neapolitan hills in the particular connotation that the new interventions would have given them.

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**Maria Ines Pascariello** is Associate professor for the science-disciplinary ICAR/17-Design at Civil Construction Environment Department of Engineering at the federico II University of Naples. Since 2001 performs Teaching Activities, both Architecture and Engineering Department. The main fields of research and interest are survey and documentation for conservation and development, urban and landscape scale, in order to save and promote cultural heritage. The studies, after graduation to date, the science-disciplinary, deals with the study of Perspective, in particular architectural perspectives and painted architecture of Roman in Pompeii.

### Introduction[1]

Naples' architectural and urban transformations following the Unification of Italy involved different types of interventions. Numerous experimental, visionary, and not always easily realizable projects were drafted for the city's modernization. Its first results appeared in the Naples Rehabilitation and Expansion Plan, incorporating the new dictates that called for eclectic structures. In addition, with the suppression of religious orders in 1866, monasteries and convents took on public or military use, hardly respecting the built heritage. These were compounded by militarization work involving the built heritage and ex-novo buildings. This is precisely the case with the fortification of Camaldoli, designed in 1881 at peace in a place that allowed total control of the Neapolitan territory and its expansion routes. Unsurprisingly, the site had been chosen by Camaldoli monks, who sought total isolation from the surrounding reality and were then expelled after Unification.

The project would have ensured the city's defense: from the hill, it would have been possible to spot enemy incursions not only from the sea but especially from inland, along the directions of Capua, Caserta, and Benevento. However, the return of the Camaldoli monks in 1885 did not allow for the fortification to be built.

### Historical background. Post-unification 19th century in Naples and interventions in the city

The Unification of Italy, sanctioned in a formal sitting on May 17, 1861, by the Parliament in Turin, brought about several changes and transformations in the bureaucratic and administrative apparatuses of that time. With the loss of its role as the capital of the Regno delle Due Sicilie, Naples also lost its function as the seat of the central bodies of the state. The City Council replaced the Decurionate and the City Corps was replaced by the Municipal Giunta, chaired by the mayor and composed of twelve aldermen.[2] To have a more regular army distribution in the former Bourbon territories, the VI Grand Command was established in Naples, replacing the General Military Command of all the Neapolitan Provinces, and relocated to Palazzo Salerno.[3] The last decades of the 19th century were an interesting scene of architectural and urban experimentation. Architects and engineers attempted to redesign and modernize the city, coming up with overall ideas for the development of the territory and its focal points to make the city

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1   Paragraphs: Historical background. Post-unification 19th century in Naples and interventions in the city; Camaldoli, a place of isolation and control; The project of a 'Fortification' at Camaldoli in the ISCAG Archives are by Alessandra Veropalumbo. Paragraphs: The project drawings; Architectural drawings during the 19th century: role and diffusion; Reflections on drawing/seeing/imagining the city at war are by Maria Ines Pascariello.

2   Alfredo Buccaro, *Istituzioni e trasformazioni urbane nella Napoli dell'Ottocento* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1985), 87.

3   Vincenzo Cuomo, "I Comandi militari a Palazzo Salerno. Dall'Unità d'Italia a oggi", in *Palazzo Salerno. Dai complessi religiosi ai comandi militari*, eds. Leonardo Di Mauro, Alba Irollo (Sassari: Carlo Delfino editore, 2017), 143.

'European' in line with the economic-social conditions of other urban contexts.[4]

The Archives of the Prefecture of the Royal Corps of Civil Engineers, which replaced the Corps of Bridges and Roads in 1861, document the work of architects and engineers who designed new public works and infrastructure while restoring old buildings.[5]

The plans and programs drafted since the early post-unification years, with no tangible outcome yet a concerted logic, converged in the Naples Rehabilitation and Expansion Plan.[6] These revolved around the need to connect the ancient center through tunnels in the hills with the western sector and the lower part of the city with Vomero and Posillipo by funicular railways, widen the shore of Chiaia, and build a working-class neighborhood to the east to support the iron and steel industry, port, and commercial activities, and massive disembowelment.[7]

A little more than a decade earlier, several designers participated in the competition for the 1871 Master Plan. Their proposals were heterogeneous yet shared the attempt to redefine an adequate network of connections and redesign the most emblematic places.

For the Rehabilitation Plan, the great historics of the time, such as Benedetto Croce and Bartolommeo Capasso, accepted the transformations being advocated as necessary for improving sanitary conditions, albeit with some regret for the ongoing destruction. As early as 1861, the governor-president of the Consiglio Edilizio Enrico Cenni, had expressed to Mayor Colonna the need for an organic plan for the lower districts since, previously, both Ferdinando II and Francesco II had promoted only punctual interventions.[8]

The new buildings followed the rules in the 'Regolamento,' which called for replacing the Precetti d'Arte with the then-widespread eclecticism.[9] Regulations on building heights, architectural and typological elements dimensions, and building materials remained valid; however, «any manner of architecture»[10] was also declared valid as long as it had «enough logic, attractiveness, and

4   Fabio Mangone, "*Antica ma moderna. Il disegno della forma urbana per Napoli dopo l'Unità*, 1861-1961", Neapolis, no. 14 (December 2011): 19, 26.

5   Adriana Scalera, "Profile Casa monumentale dei Girolamini", in *Scienziati-artisti. Formazione e ruolo degli ingegneri nelle fonti dell'Archivio di Stato e della Facoltà d'Ingegneria di Napoli*, eds. Alfredo Buccaro, Fausto De Mattia (Naples: Electa Napoli, 2003), 263.

6   Giancarlo Alisio, *Napoli e il risanamento edilizio. Recupero di una struttura urbana* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1981).

7   Cesare de Seta, *Napoli. Dalle origini all'Ottocento* (Naples: Arte'm, 2016), 232.

8   Alfredo Buccaro, *Istituzioni e trasformazioni urbane nella Napoli dell'Ottocento* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1985), 88.

9   Alessandra Veropalumbo, "Progetti inediti tardo-ottocenteschi per l'analisi del tessuto urbano dell'area orientale di Napoli", in *La città globale. La condizione urbana come fenomeno pervasivo/The Global City. The urban condition as a pervasive phenomenon*, eds. Marco Pretelli, Rosa Tamborrino, Ines Tolic (Turin: AISU international, 2020), 97.

10   Translated by the author. 'qualunque maniera di architettura'. ASMuN, *OO.PP.*, minutes of the session of the Giunta of July 4, 1879.
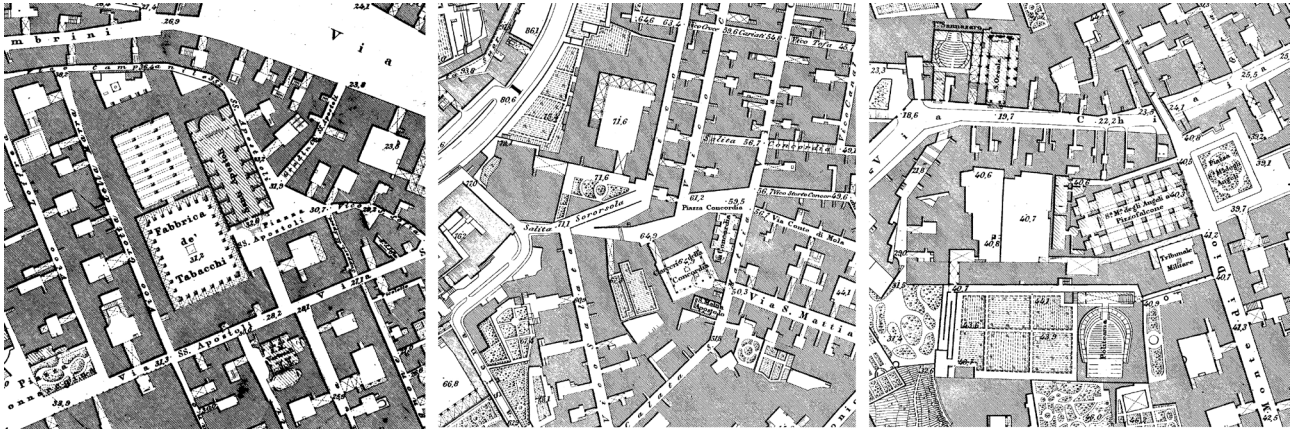
appropriateness».[11] The Regolamento, approved by the Giunta but not presented to the City Council, were adopted in 1885 following the enactment of the Law for the Rehabilitation of the City of Naples.[12]

In the same period, the 1866 suppression of religious orders, which had already taken place in the city of Naples during the French Decade, gave a fundamental impetus to the transformation of monasteries, convents, and religious complexes not used for worship into public buildings.[13]

This enabled both governments to acquire considerable assets and real estate. The text of the law of July 7, 1866, no. 3036 recites:

> «Regular and secular religious Orders, corporations, congregations, conservatories, and retreats, which import common life and have a pastoral character, are no longer recognized in the state. The houses and establishments belonging to the aforementioned Orders, Corporations, Congregations, and Conservatories and Retreats are suppressed»[14] (Article 1).

> «When vacated by the religious, the buildings of the convents suppressed by this and previous Laws shall be granted to the municipalities and provinces, provided that a request is made within the term of one year from the publication of this Law, and the need and use of schools, kindergartens, begging shelters, hospitals, or other charitable and public works are justified in the report of the municipalities and provinces»[15] (Article 20).

11    Translated by the author. 'sufficiente ragione, avvenenza ed opportunità'. ASMuN, *OO.PP.*, minutes of the session of the Giunta of July 4, 1879.

12    Giuseppe Bruno, Renato De Fusco, *Errico Alvino. Architetto e urbanista napoletano dell'800* (Naples: L'Arte Tipografica, 1962), 78.

13    Maria Perone, "Le trasformazioni nei complessi conventuali salernitani", in *Falsi Restauri. Trasformazioni architettoniche e urbane nell'Ottocento in Campania*, ed. Stella Casiello (Rome: Gangemi Editore, 1999), 79.

14    Translated by the author. 'Non sono più riconosciuti nello Stato gli Ordini, le Corporazioni e le Congregazioni religiose regolari e secolari, ed i Conservatorii e Ritiri, i quali importino vita comune ed abbiano carattere ecclesiastico. Le case e gli stabilimenti appartenenti agli Ordini, alle Corporazioni, alle Congregazioni ed ai Conservatorii e Ritiri anzidetti sono soppressi'.

15    Translated by the author. 'I fabbricati dei conventi soppressi da questa e dalle precedenti Leggi, quando sieno sgombri dai religiosi, saranno conceduti ai Comuni ed alle Provincie, purché ne sia fatta dimanda entro il termine di un anno dalla pubblicazione di questa Legge, e sia giustificato il bisogno e l'uso di scuole, di asili infantili, di ricoveri di mendicità, di ospedali, o di altre opere di beneficenza e di pubblica utilità nel rapporto dei Comuni e delle Provincie'.

Fig. 1

Detail of cartography made by Federico Schiavoni, *Pianta topografica della città di Napoli*, Firenze, Istituto Geografico Militare, relating to three cases of conversion of religious buildings to public or military use. From left to right: SS. Apostoli (foglio 13, 1877), S. Maria della Concordia (foglio 17, 1879), S. Maria degli Angeli a Pizzofalcone (foglio 17, 1879).

As early as the law of Dec. 22, 1861, the government was granted the power to occupy the Houses of Religious Corporations. This measure allowed for implementing urban-scale projects that had previously been unfeasible because they fell within areas of religious property or were occupied by convent complexes. Making immediately available spaces for new administrations and the needs of the 19th-century city incentivized the redevelopment of convents for new uses. The Houses were converted into barracks, slaughterhouses, prisons, hospitals, museums, town halls, schools, and libraries[16], yet without establishing any methodological-operational scientific criteria.[17] **[Fig. 1]**

The interventions conducted on religious buildings to establish the new functions in the old complexes were rarely respectful of the pre-existing buildings, providing structures that did not perfectly meet the new functional needs, so much so that Carlo Afan de Rivera said, «The reduction of an old building to an entirely different use must always be avoided. For economic savings, former monasteries or convents were often turned into Intendency or Sub-Intendency palaces, Civil and Criminal Courts, prisons, and Gendarmerie barracks. As the needs were different according to the different use, not only was the distribution changed by opening new rooms and closing the old ones, but some old walls were demolished and replaced by new ones to create large halls, galleries, and chambers, and achieve a suitable distribution for the new use. With all these successive modifications, the old walls, tormented and instigated, did not adhere with the new, threatening ruin».[18]

The lack of guidelines for interventions on the built heritage had traumatic effects on many of the confiscated buildings. Along with eclectic choices, it was the practice to resort to gutting and demolition to restore the original style of the building. Reusing convents and monasteries involved transforming them from static religious insulae to dynamic spaces with new functions.[19] The goal was to give the city new dignity and awareness through the presence of state representative buildings.

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16    Renata Picone, Laura Donadono, "I restauri otto-novecenteschi della chiesa e del convento dei Girolamini a Napoli (1869-1926)" in *Falsi Restauri. Trasformazioni architettoniche e urbane nell'Ottocento in Campania*, ed. Stella Casiello (Rome: Gangemi Editore, 1999), 23; Renata Picone, "Da conventi ad attrezzature per la nuova città borghese: il caso del Gesù e Maria a Napoli", in *Falsi Restauri. Trasformazioni architettoniche e urbane nell'Ottocento in Campania*, ed. Stella Casiello (Rome: Gangemi Editore, 1999), 33.

17    Giancarlo Alisio, "La distruzione del patrimonio artistico religioso tra soppressione degli Ordini e sisma del 1980", in *G.A. Galante, Guida sacra della città di Napoli*, reprinted by Nicola Spinosa (Naples: Società Editrice Napoletana, 1985), XXI-XXIX.

18    Translated by the author. 'Bisogna evitar sempre la riduzione di un vecchio edificio ad un uso affatto diverso. Sotto le vedute di risparmio si è voluto spesso trasformare gli antichi monisteri o conventi in palazzi d'Intendenza o Sotto-Intendenza, in Corti Civili e Criminali, in prigioni ed in caserme di Gendarmeria. Essendo diversi i bisogni secondo la diversa destinazione, non solamente si è cambiata la distribuzione, aprendo nuovi vani, e chiudendosi gli antichi, ma demolendosi alcuni muri antichi se ne sono rimpiazzati altri nuovi, per formare grandi sale, gallerie e cameroni, e per procurare una distribuzione conveniente al nuovo uso. Con tutte queste successive modificazioni i muri vecchi tormentati e scatenati, non formando adesione coi nuovi, han minacciato rovina', from (General Directorate of Bridges and Roads and Water and Forests and Hunting, *Circolari concernenti il servizio degl'Ingegneri di Acque e Strade*, Naples 1840 in Alfredo Buccaro, *Istituzioni e trasformazioni urbane nella Napoli dell'Ottocento* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1985), 49.

19    Ersilia Carelli, "Trasformazioni e restauri nell'ex monastero di S, Patrizia a Napoli", in *Falsi Restauri. Trasformazioni architettoniche e urbane nell'Ottocento in Campania*, ed. Stella Casiello (Rome: Gangemi Editore, 1999), 47-48.

In 1863, specific bodies were established to ensure the protection of monuments. In 1866, they merged into the Permanent Commission for the Preservation of Municipal Monuments. This commission was composed of historians, architects, archaeologists, and artists, who, in 1871, drafted the first inventory of buildings of historical and artistic interest to be safeguarded, which was supposed to ensure the beginning of proper management and protection of this heritage.[20]

The militarization intervention to control and defend the territory was another element that changed the architectural and urban environment. Indeed, the late 18th-century experiences with the Repubblica Partenopea, the interlude of the French Decade from 1806 to 1815 during the long Bourbon rule lasting until the Unification of Italy, showed the poor functionality of the bodies for the protection of the reign. Under Giuseppe Bonaparte, possible defenses for the capital of the reign of Naples were studied, fostered by Napoleone. Tasked with identifying useful areas for the location of military facilities, General Campredon examined the locations in the gulf, emphasizing their poor adherence to the desired canons and, in parallel, the importance of local knowledge. Modern criteria shifted protection away from population centers and expanded the need for military

20     Renata Picone, Massimo Rosi, "La Commissione municipale per la conservazione dei monumenti di Napoli", in *Tutela e restauro dei monumenti in Campania, 1860-1900*, ed. Giuseppe Fiengo (Naples: Electa Napoli, 1993).

Fig. 2
Reale Officio Topografico della Guerra, *Pianta della città di Napoli e de' suoi contorni*, 1828-1873. Archivio ISCAG.

quarters and services for troops and weapons, leading to the solution of 'campi tricerati' (entrenched camps). He selected the large hilly areas of Naples, namely Camaldoli, San Martino, Vomero, Arenella, and San Pietro a Patierno, discarding Posillipo and Capodimonte as too small. The goal was to create a large military plaza by placing entrenched camps of different widths, connections, and security levels.

As shown by a plan preserved at the Service historique de l'armeé e de terre-Vincennes, the new forts were located on the hills of Miradois, Posillipo, and Camaldoli, and to reinforce Vigliena, the defenses of Castel dell'Ovo and the pier battery as well as with the construction of an artificial island to cover the area between Vigliena and the castle[21]. But despite various proposals, little was built in the Decade and during the Restoration. During the reign of Francesco I in 1828-1829, Captain Colella proposed a reinterpretation of the urban structure and identified points in the city where to intervene to defend against enemies.[22] The defense of the reign required the cooperation of all fortified defense structures, from ancient castles to urban town walls, placing numerous military posts in the layout of the territory, 'militarizing' it.[23] [Fig. 2] Also, under Ferdinando II, much attention was devoted to establishing the army and navy, with large allocations leading to significant increases in men and equipment, although the Neapolitan defenses remained weak.[24]

At the end of the Reign of the Two Sicilies, fighting occurred around the strongholds, which surrendered between February and March 1861. Meanwhile, Garibaldi, moving up the peninsula, arrived in Naples on Sept. 7, 1860, then provided military adjustments in 1866 only to the battery of Castel Dell'Ovo.

Notably, Naples – and Italy, more generally – kept a 'peaceful' climate. Under Vittorio Emanuele II, the Third Italian War of Independence in 1866 and the annexation of the Papal States, with the subsequent seizure of Rome (September 20, 1870), did not affect the city's security. In 1878, with Umberto I, the balance was endangered by the outcome of the Russo-Turkish war. However, Chancellor Bismarck, concerned about this, urgently convened a conference in Berlin, participated by Foreign Minister Luigi Corti as the representative of the Reign of Italy. At this congress, the Reign of Italy declared its neutrality. Therefore, the main danger lay in the brigandage phenomena that involved southern Italy following its annexation to the Savoy reign, which developed or continued to be present in several regions of Italy between the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century.[25]

21    Vincennes, SHAT, 37/1405, *Cartes*, ff. 35-36, 1807.

22    Maria Raffaela Pessolano, "Napoli e il regno fra antiche fortezze e nuove proposte," in *Territorio, fortificazioni, città. Difese del Regno di Napoli e della sua capitale in età borbonica*, eds. Giosi Amirante, Maria Raffaela Pessolano, (Naples-Rome: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2008), 38-39.

23    Colella Domenico, *Rapporto ragionato su' la classificazione,e Riconoscenza generale delle Piazze, Forti, Castelli e Batterie […]*, 2 agosto 1828, BNN, Mss. Bibli. Prov., vol. 18, 1-74; Colella Domenico, *Memoria militare ragionata su la piazza e posizione di Napoli*, 1829, BNN, Mss. Bibl. Prov., vol. 21,1-119.

24    Mariano D'Ayala, *Napoli militare* (Naples: Stamperia dell'Iride, 1847).

25    Giovanni De Matteo, *Brigantaggio e Risorgimento. Legittimisti e briganti tra i Borboni e i Savoia* (Naples: Guida

## Camaldoli, a place of isolation and control

Due to their orographic position and the pristine nature of the soils, Camaldoli represented an ideal place both for the settlement of hermit monks and as a military stronghold for the defense of the territory.

According to what Celano wrote: «from this place, all the loveliest shores of our Tyrrhenian Sea could be seen»,[26] and it is no coincidence that the first name was 'Prospetto' (Prospect) because of the magnificence of the view.

The first construction, founded in the 5th century by St. Gaudioso, bishop of Abitina, and dedicated to the Most Holy Savior, was replaced in 1585 by the Hermitage of the Camaldoli congregation of Montecorona. At that time, the hill took on the name that still marks it today. In a late Renaissance style, the work is attributed to Domenico Fontana, who constructed the Santa Maria Scala Coeli church on the ruins of the first core – community rooms and sixteen cells. It was completed in five years. The acquisition of the area was possible thanks to the lord of Nazareth and the entire summit part of the mountain, Giovan Battista Crispo – who had the church ceded and donated it to the Camaldoli hermits along with the surrounding territory – and to Giovanni d'Avalos, nephew of the king of Naples Ferdinando I of Aragon and son of the Marquis of Vasto, who made significant contributions for the new construction. In the 17th century, the hermitage was greatly expanded and became the most important in southern Italy.[27]

In historical iconography, the Camaldoli have played a particularly prominent role in defining the Neapolitan *skyline*. We find them in many 18th-century views depicting Vesuvius on fire when the volcano's eruptive activity was intense and frequent. Some examples are the one by Francesco Geri and Filippo Morghen in 1752 or the one by Pietro Fabris in 1776, where the hill stands out in the panorama of the Neapolitan *hinterland*. [Fig. 3] In the same year, the latter artist also represented the view from the hill of Camaldoli toward the Campi Flegrei, starting a strand of open representations from the hinterland toward the gulf. Its landscape *tópoi* did not include just Vesuvius but also the pristine character and morphology of the places. This latter viewpoint was then portrayed by Jakob Philipp Hackert, a Bourbon court painter, in 1792 [Fig. 4] and appreciated in the 19th century by Consalvo Carelli in 1842 and Gianni Girolamo in 1863. Instead, the view toward Vesuvius is found in numerous *gouaches* from the first half of the 19th century,[28] as well as in Anton Sminck Pitloo's 1836 painting.[29] [Fig. 5]

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Editore, 2000), 263.

26    Translated by the author. 'da questo luogo si scorgevano tutti i più ameni lidi del nostro Tirreno' in Carlo Celano, *Delle Notitie del bello, dell'antico e del curioso della città di Napoli per i signori forastieri date dal canonico Carlo Celano napoletano, divise in dieci giornate* (Naples: Nella stamperia di Giacomo Raillard, 1692), vol. VI, 62.

27    Augusto Crocco, *L'Eremo di Camaldoli, breve guida storico-artistica* (Naples: Tiresia, 1984).

28    Renato Mammucari, *Napoli. Il paradiso visto dall'Inferno* (Marigliano: Ler Editrice, 2006), 188, 196.

29    Antonio Smink Pitloo, *Luci e colori del paesaggio napoletano*, eds. Marina Causa Picone, Stefano Causa (Naples: Electa Napoli, 2004), 182.

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Fig. 3
Pietro Fabris, *L'Eruzione del Vesuvio dal 23 dicembre 1760 al 5 gennaio 1761*, 1776.

Fig. 4
Jakob Philipp Hackert, *Veduta dei Campi Flegrei dall'Eremo dei Camaldoli in Napoli*, 1797.

Fig. 5
Anton Sminck Pitloo, *Il Vesuvio dai Camaldoli*, 1836.

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7



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Fig. 6
Alessandro Baratta, *Fidelissimae Urbis Neapolitanae cum Omnibus Viis Accurata et Nova Delineatio*, 1629, Bibliotèque nationale de France, département Estampes et photographie, detail. The number 146 is indicated in the legend as 'S.M. Scala Celi in Nazareth'.

Fig. 7
Giovanni Carafa duca di Noja, *Mappa topografica della città di Napoli e de' suoi contorni*, 1750-1775. Napoli, Museo Nazionale di San Martino, detail of the *Veduta scenografica a ponente della città di Napoli in Campagna felice*.

Fig. 8
Giovanni Carafa duca di Noja, *Mappa topografica della città di Napoli e de' suoi contorni*, 1750-1775. Napoli, Museo Nazionale di San Martino, detail of 'Eremo dei PP. Camaldolesi detto Il Salvatore'.

In historical cartography, Alessandro Baratta's 1629 landscape portrait *Fidelissimae urbis* shows a detailed reproduction of the Camaldoli hill with a legenda reporting the indication of the church of 'S.M. Scala Celi a Nazareth.' [Fig. 6] Instead, the *Mappa topografica della città di Napoli e de' suoi contorni* (Topographic map of Naples and its surroundings) by Giovanni Carafa, Duke of Noja, from 1750-1775, shows a barely sketched outline.[30] [Fig. 7] However, in the plan, the 'Eremo de' PP. Camaldolesi detto Il S. Salvatore' (Hermitage of the Camaldoli monks known as Il Salvatore) is represented in detail among the settlement buildings, in the enclosure wall, and the indication of cultivated and forest land. The *Mappa* also shows a network of trails tracing the ancient paths made carriageable, rectified, and widened during the 20th century. [Fig. 8]

The situation reported in 18th-century cartography is the same that can still be read today. [Fig. 9] The monastery's entrance portal is in the wall that encloses the churchyard to the church's left. There are the monks' dwellings, now occupied by Brigidine nuns or guests, consisting of low one-story houses covered with trusses, surrounded by a boundary wall with a small plot of land on the pattern of the *hortus conclusus*, functional to the Benedictine rule, and divided into those "of the Novitiate" or of the monks.

Fig. 9

*Carta austriaca. Regno di Napoli*, portion of the province of Naples of Terra di Lavoro and Principato Citra, section 7 column IV. Years 1821-1847.

30    Leonardo Recchia, Renato Ruotolo, eds., *Parco Metropolitano delle Colline di Napoli. Guida agli aspetti naturalistici, storici e artistici*, (1-4), *La Collina dei Camaldoli. I Casali di Soccavo e Pianura, La Vigna di San Martino*, vol. 4 (Naples: Clean Edizioni, 2010), vol. 4, 20-21.

After the expulsions in 1808 based on the laws on ecclesiastical property promulgated by Giuseppe Bonaparte during the French Decade and in 1860 relating to those of the Italian state, the Camaldoli monks always managed to return to their structure. The first time was in 1820, under Ferdinando I's reign, then in 1885, thanks to Cardinal Sanfelice's intercession of Cardinal Sanfelice.[31] Finally, in 1998, they were replaced by Brigidine nuns.

Until the mid-20th century, the hill still had a rural character, covered with forests, farms, and villages. This changed since the '20s, with the urbanization of large areas and the opening of new roads.


## The project of a 'Fortification' at Camaldoli in the ISCAG Archives

Useful materials for the project of transforming the hermitage into a military structure are preserved at the Archives of the Historical and Cultural Institute of the Corps of Engineers. ISCAG is based in Rome, at the Lungotevere della Vittoria. It was under the Ministry of War and the Inspectorate of the Engineer Corps within the latter.

It was Luigi Durant de La Penne who had the idea of using it as a Museum of Weapons, later the Italian Military Engineering Museum, to rescue Castel Sant'Angelo from the degradation of its use as barracks; thus, by 1902, exhibition materials began to flow from all parts of Italy. In 1911, on the occasion of the Exposition for the Fiftieth Anniversary of Rome's Capital City, the museum was moved to Urbano VIII's Casermette, wishing to use the fortress as a venue for retrospective exhibitions. It took the name of the Historical Museum of the Military Engineers, officially recognized by the February 5, 1911 decree. In 1928, the Institute of Military Architecture was added in-house and dependent on the same museum.

Both were based at Castel Sant'Angelo until 1932-1933, when the demolition of the Casermette was carried out according to the master plan of that time. In 1934, the museum materials and the Institute's headquarters were moved to Piave barracks, with the unification of the Historical Museum of Military Engineering and the Institute of Military Architecture sanctioned by the Royal Decree of June 28. By 1940, the thus-formed Historical and Cultural Institute of the Engineer Corps was moved to its present location.[32]

The documentary material preserved in ISCAG is divided into three sections: museum, library, and archives. The archive consists of photos, documents, and drawings. Moreover, it collects valuable iconographic and cartographic material for analyzing urban and territorial history from the mid-16th to the 20th century. The drawings include about 1,500 tables, divided among prints, military buildings, and fortifications from all over Italy.

Fig. 10
Francesco De Martino, *S. Domenico Soriano. Padiglione per alloggi d'Ufficiali in servizio attivo*, 1871. Archivio ISCAG.

Fig. 11
Francesco De Martino, *S. Caterina a Chiaia. Padiglione per alloggi di ufficiali, impiegati militari in attività di servizio e Bass. Ufficiali Veterani*, 1871. Archivio ISCAG.

31    Assessorato all'ambiente, ed., *Il Parco dei Camaldoli* (Naples: Electa, 1999), 4.

32    Amelio Fara, Caterina Zannella, *La città dei militari. Roma Capitale nell'Archivio dell'ISCAG*, eds. Enrico Guidoni, Ilario Principe (Rome: Edizioni Kappa, 1984), 27.
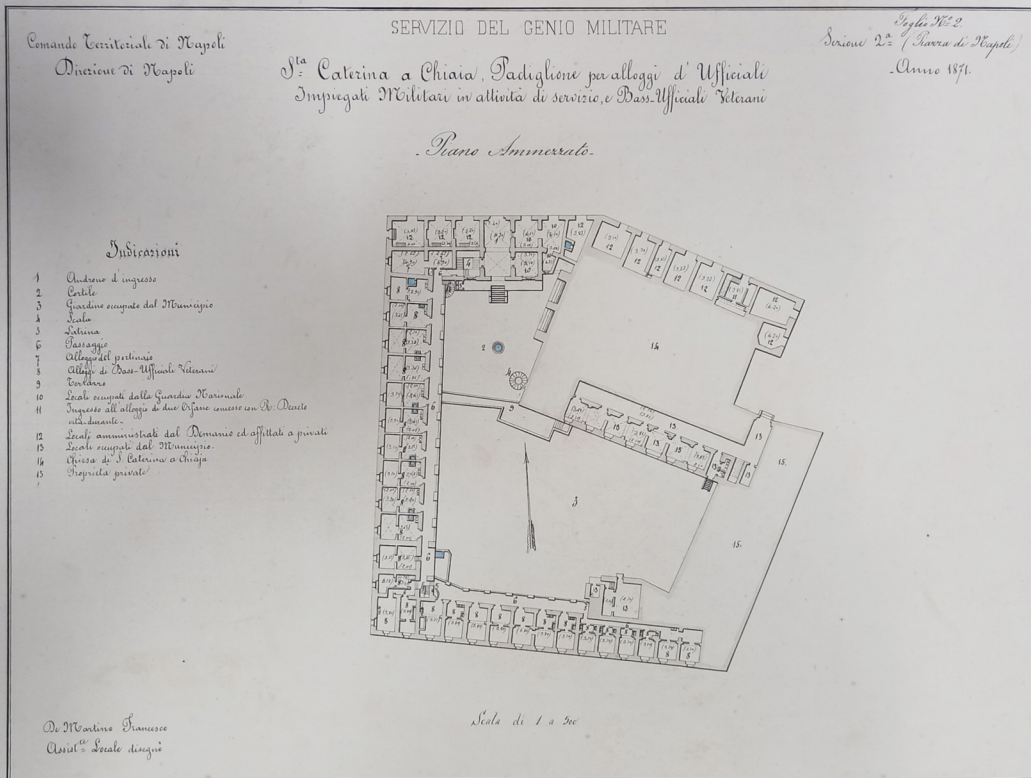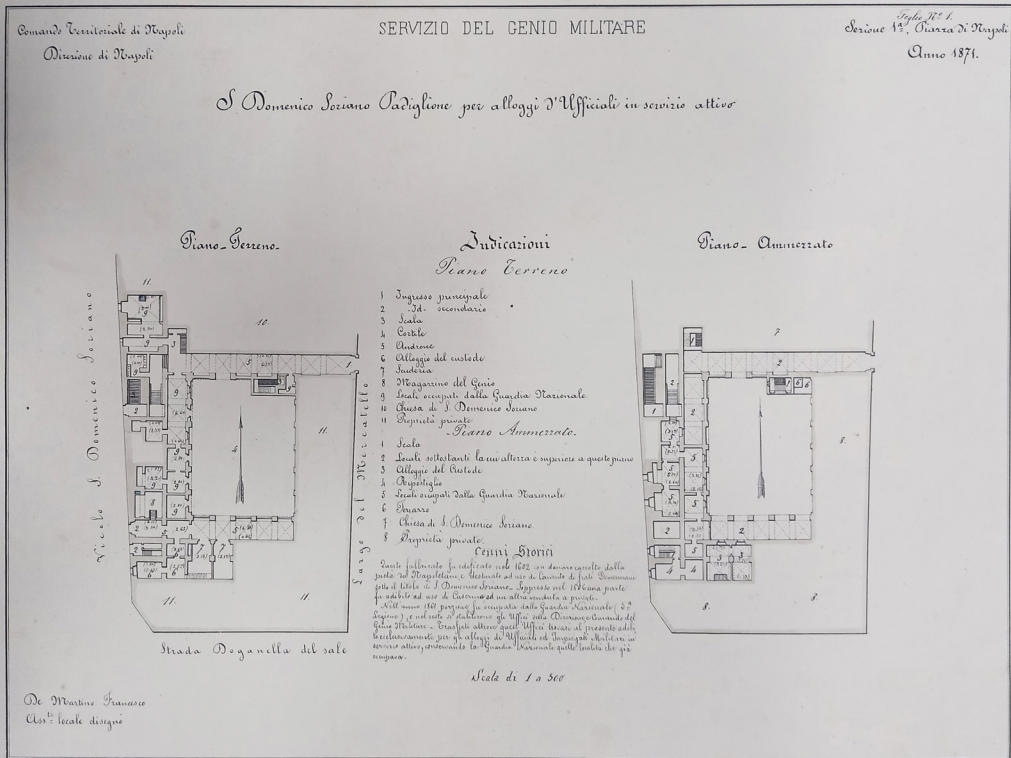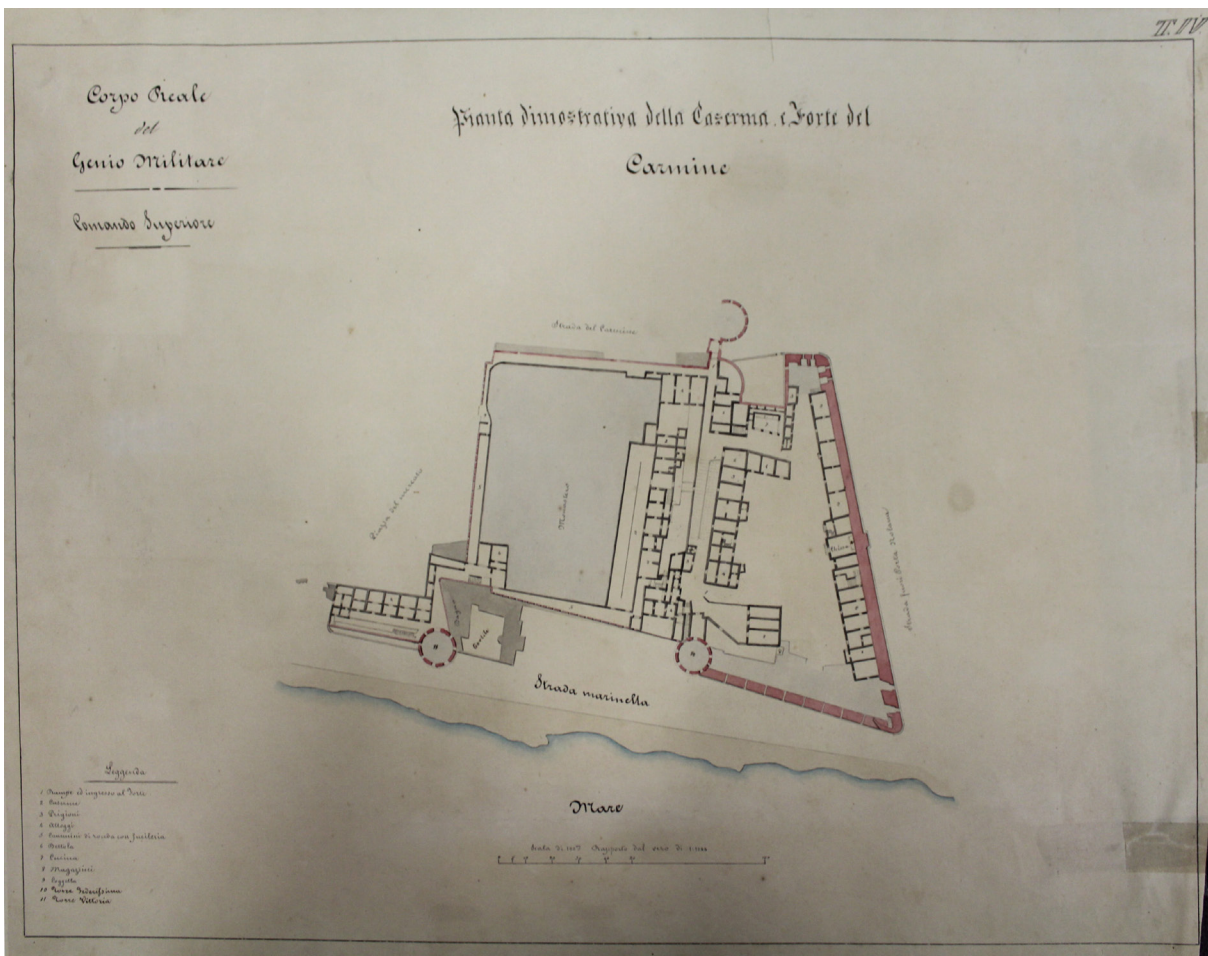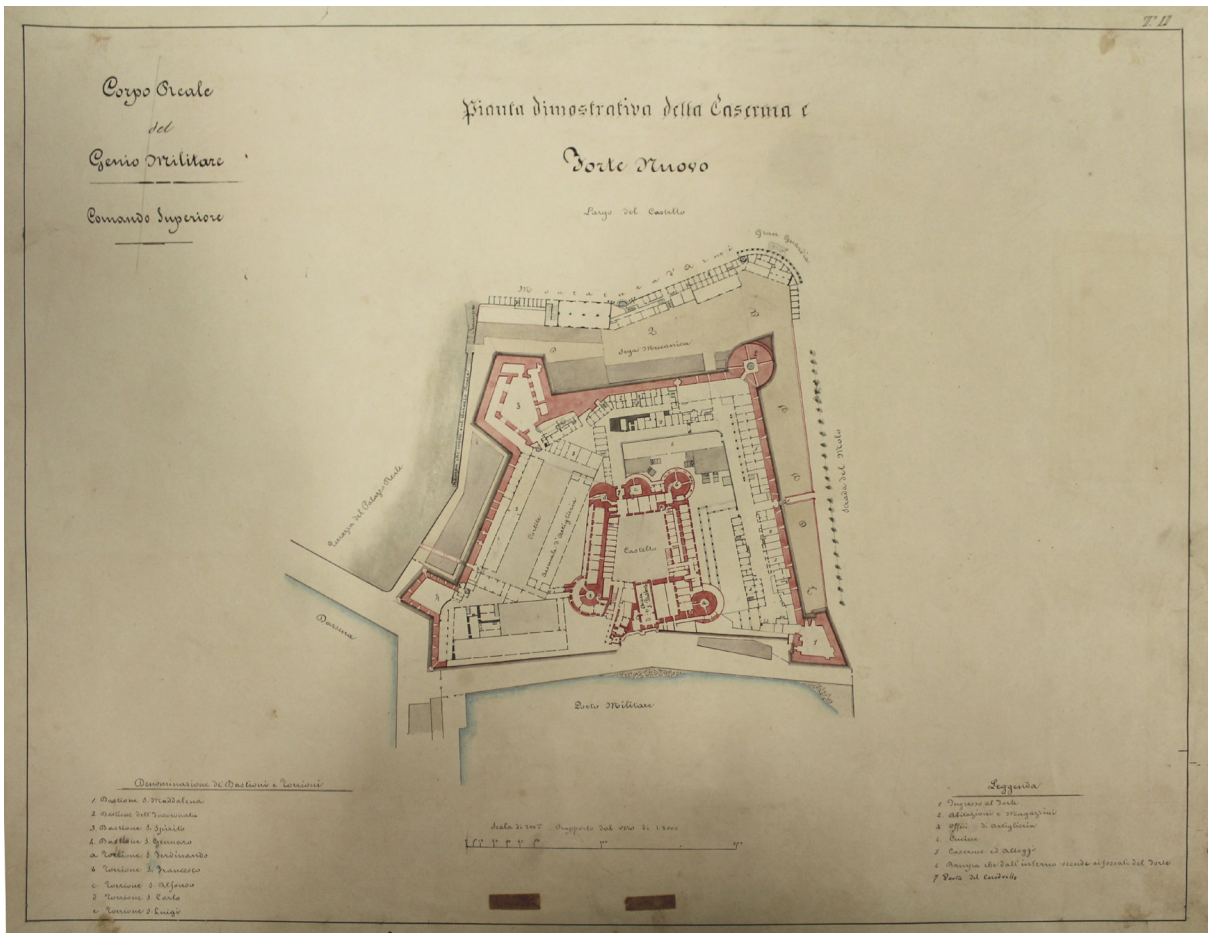
The second category concerns barracks or military buildings within urban centers or suburbs. In addition to building-scale and urban-scale military engineering projects, the last includes entrenched camps.[33]

In the '80s, the Historical Institute received funding from the Ministry of Education for research on studying and cataloging the archived material, which led to exciting results for several regions of the peninsula.[34]

Drawings and prints related to the Campania region allow reconstruction of the military presence in the territory since the early 19th century, thanks to many projects from the pre-unification period.

The ISCAG collection is interesting due to drawings that cannot be found elsewhere, illustrating destroyed or profoundly transformed buildings, such as the Serraglio and the cavalry barracks at the Magdalena Bridge.

A large part of the collection concerns religious buildings, convents, and monasteries that were converted into military architecture following their suppression, such as St. Domenico Soriano, [Fig. 10] St. Caterina da Siena, [Fig. 11] St. Potito, St. Maria di Bethlehem, the convent of Monte di Dio, and the Trinità delle Monache complex. The tables also include some interesting historical notes that contextualize the various evolutionary phases of the buildings.

In addition, there are the projects for converted palaces, such as Palazzo Croce, Palazzo Salerno, Caserma Vittoria barracks, or the new fortifications of Neapolitan castles, such as Castelnuovo, [Fig. 12] Carmine Castle, [Fig. 13] and Castel Sant'Elmo.

The object of study is the *Progetto di Massima di un'Opera chiusa da costruirsi sull'altura dei Camaldoli* (Preliminary Project of a Fortification to be constructed on the Camaldoli hill) stored in the archives of the Historical and Cultural Institute of the Engineer Corps. The project is dated October 25, 1881. It consists of a *pianta d'insieme* (general plan) (tab. 1), a *pianta della batteria* (plan of the battery) (tab. 2), a *pianta dei ricoveri e delle riservette* (plan of shelters and artillery storages) (tab. 3), a *pianta delle murature e del piano basso* (wall and lower floor plan) (tab. 4), *sezioni longitudinali e trasversali* (longitudinal and cross sections) (tab. 5), *variante conservando intatta la chiesa dei Camaldoli* (variant preserving the Camaldoli church) (tab. 6).[35]

All tables, drawn in red, blue, and black ink, include dimensions and metric scales.

33    Tiziana Ancarola, "*Piante e vedute di città nella collezione delle stampe dell'Istituto Storico di Cultura dell'Arma del Genio di Roma (ISCAG)*" (Ph.D. Thesis in Architectural and Urban History, tutor Alfredo Buccaro, co-tutor Ilario Principe, University of Naples Federico II, 2007-2008), 15-16.

34    Amelio Fara, Caterina Zannella, *La città dei militari. Roma Capitale nell'Archivio dell'ISCAG*, eds. Enrico Guidoni, Ilario Principe (Rome: Edizioni Kappa, 1984); Ilario Principe, *La città dei militari. Calabria, Basilicata, Sicilia* (Vibo Valentia: Edizioni Mapograf, 1986); Caterina Zannella, *La città dei militari. Abruzzo Molise* (Vibo Valentia: Edizioni Mapograf, 1986); Leonardo Di Mauro, Isabella Di Resta, Paolo Mascilli Migliorini, Maria Perone, *La città dei militari. Campania* (Vibo Valentia: Edizioni Mapograf, 1987).

35    ISCAG, *Napoli, Fortificazioni*. F. 4545-4550.

Fig. 12
*Pianta dimostrativa della caserma e Forte Nuovo.* Archivio ISCAG.

Fig. 13
*Pianta dimostrativa della caserma e Forte del Carmine.* Archivio ISCAG.

The plan of the fortification is an irregular pentagon. Table 1[36] shows the state of the site, including the project of the fortified work to be settled. The choice of Camaldoli Hill was strategic as its approximate 450-meter height allowed a 360-degree view. The goal was to control the gulf, the Neapolitan hinterland, with the roads from Capua, Caserta, and Benevento.

The project would be located between the properties of the Camaldoli monks, Marquis Auletta's and Giovanni Casolari's properties, placed between Cupa Camaldoli and the northeastern hill park, calculating a total expropriated area of 12,000 sqm. The project also required the construction of a new road adjacent to the fortification called the 'Strada di Nazareth' ('Strada di Nazareth') with a water channel along its route and the cancellation of the pre-existing 'strada della selva Ricciardi' (Ricciardi's Forest Road). The sections and contour lines show the impervious orography of the sites, useful both for the primary destination – hermit monks' retreat – and for the control and defense of the Neapolitan territory. [Fig. 14]

There is a variant of the project preserving the Camaldoli church; however, it involved demolishing the guest quarters, monks' cells, infirmary, library, kitchen, and telegraph. The church would have fallen within the fortified work's boundaries, and the territory to be expropriated would have been greatly reduced, affecting only Camaldoli monks' properties [Fig. 15].

The project reports sight radii, section lines, and measurements[37]. From the second half of the 19th century, significant technological innovations led to new defensive possibilities related to the use of cannons. The range increased significantly, as well as accuracy and speed. [Fig. 16]

The longitudinal and cross sections[38] show that the troop quarters would have been arranged along two underground levels, reaching a depth of ten meters. The aboveground construction was placed within trenches that would not exceed four meters in height, including natural barriers and the designed masonry walls. The nature of the soil, composed of white and yellow tuff – the Archiphlegraean stratigraphy – easily allowed drilling to create these cavities.

Thus, the project was for an underground fort with an entrenched camp placed above. The spaces consisted of offices, two dormitories for non-commissioned officers, and twenty-eight for troops, artillery and food storage, prisons, and stables. Specifically, the dormitories were designed with 80 cm of wall per man and a total capacity of 600 men.

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36    ISCAG, *Napoli, Fortificazioni*. F. 4550. *Piano d'insieme.*

37    ISCAG, *Napoli, Fortificazioni*. F. 4545. *Pianta della batteria.*

38    ISCAG, *Napoli, Fortificazioni*. F. 4547. *Sezioni longitudinali e trasversali: sulla AB, sulla CD, sulla EF, sulla GH, sulla LM, sulla NO, sulla PQ, sulla RS.*
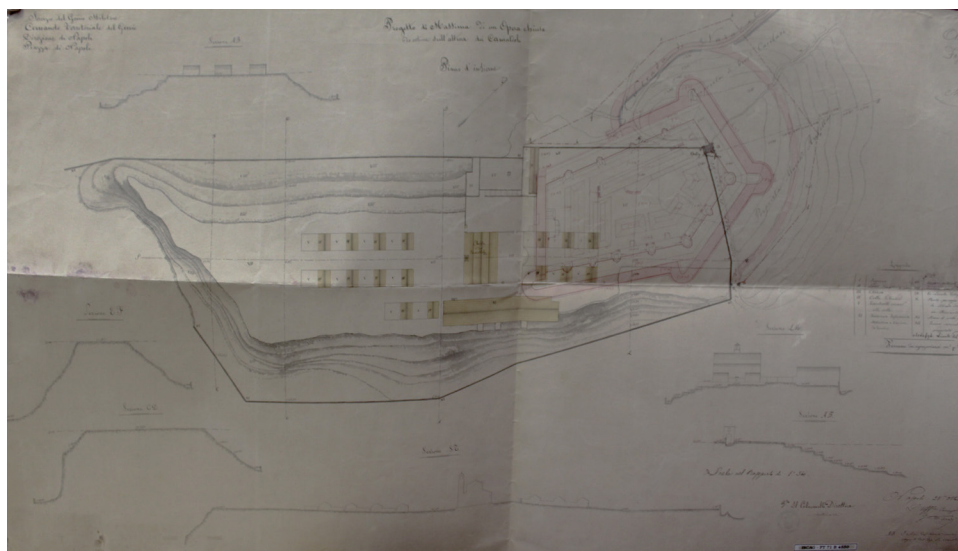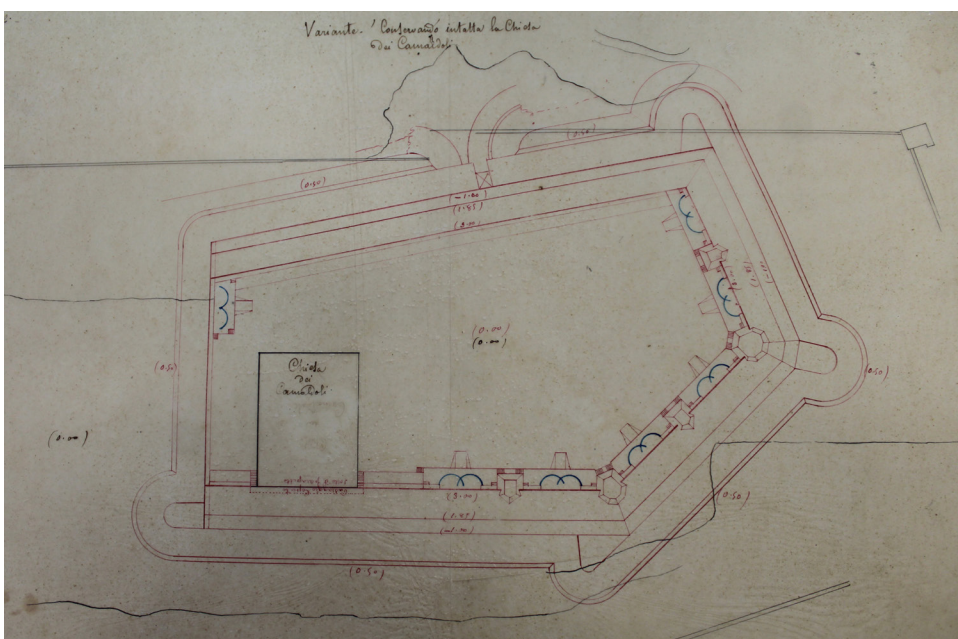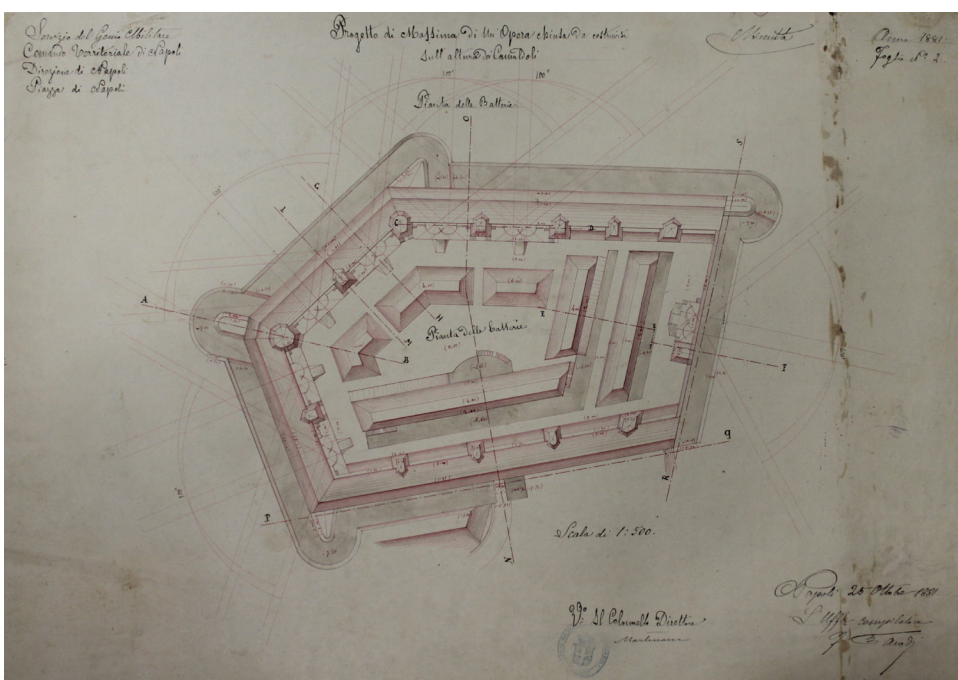
Fig. 14

*Progetto di Massima di un'Opera chiusa da costruirsi sull'altura dei Camaldoli. Piano d'insieme* (tav. 1). 25 ottobre 1881. Archivio ISCAG.

Fig. 15

*Progetto di Massima di un'Opera chiusa da costruirsi sull'altura dei Camaldoli. Variante conservando intatta la Chiesa dei Camaldoli* (tav. 6). 25 ottobre 1881. Archivio ISCAG.

Fig. 16

*Progetto di Massima di un'Opera chiusa da costruirsi sull'altura dei Camaldoli. Pianta della batteria* (tav. 2). Archivio ISCAG.

**The project drawings**

Constructed by the projective principles of orthogonal projections, the project drawings avoid deception; instead, they are rooted in construction logic and respectful of visual principles. Thanks to appropriate graphic choices, the drawings express the smallest configurational details of architectural components while making them visible in a single glance.

Starting from two orthogonal axes, a modular grid is established in the drawings. It takes the role of a structural spatial warp, where architectural elements are hierarchically ordered. Structural supports, walls, foundations, openings, and floor slabs are at the first level. At the second level are the parts produced by horizontal and vertical combinations of the elements, i.e., porches, atriums, vestibules, courtyards, stairways, and rooms. At the third level are the sets, i.e., buildings as wholes. It is, therefore, an objective process aimed at the search for truth.

These are not views but actual constructions, where the designer breaks down architectural space and splits architecture into often simultaneous or overlapping representations that aid in its investigation and comprehension.

Drawing is useful to take consciousness of one's ideas, both when studying architecture and when composing building plans; it is useful to consolidate one's ideas, to re-examine them at one's leisure and, if necessary, correct them; finally, it is useful to communicate those ideas. To offer a complete idea of a building, three drawings have to be produced, which are called plan, section, and elevation; the first represents the horizontal section of the building, the second its vertical design or construction appearance, and finally, the third, which is and can only be the result of the other two, represents its exterior. There is no use of atmospheric or shadow effects to allude to the real three-dimensionality, crushed and eluded altogether in Mongian images, nor of watercolor, which is preferred by those who believe that the purpose of architectural drawing is to provide images close to vision.[39]

In parallel projections, the object is at the center of representation, and figuration requires total respect for the natural form of things and for the calligraphic gesture that poetically evokes their essence. This marks the most profound difference between the so-called "convergent" method – the Perspective – and the "parallel" method: indeed, while through representation with a single, finite center of view, the drawing relies on a form that accepts to be deformed to be beautiful, using the center of projection to infinity the drawing places the observer or, instead, the observation in a privileged position of panoramic and instantaneous view, in which, already at first glance, everything is provided immediately and simultaneously. The preservation of parallelism then coincides

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39    We find this concept in Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand, *Précis des leçons d'architecture*, Paris 1813, 32-33. There is, however, an earlier edition of 1802-1805, where Durand's position toward Monge's method is anything but benevolent, attributing the task of providing the precise image of a building only to perspective. We can read in Vittorio Ugo essay, *Fondamenti della rappresentazione architettonica*, Bologna, 1994, 101-102.
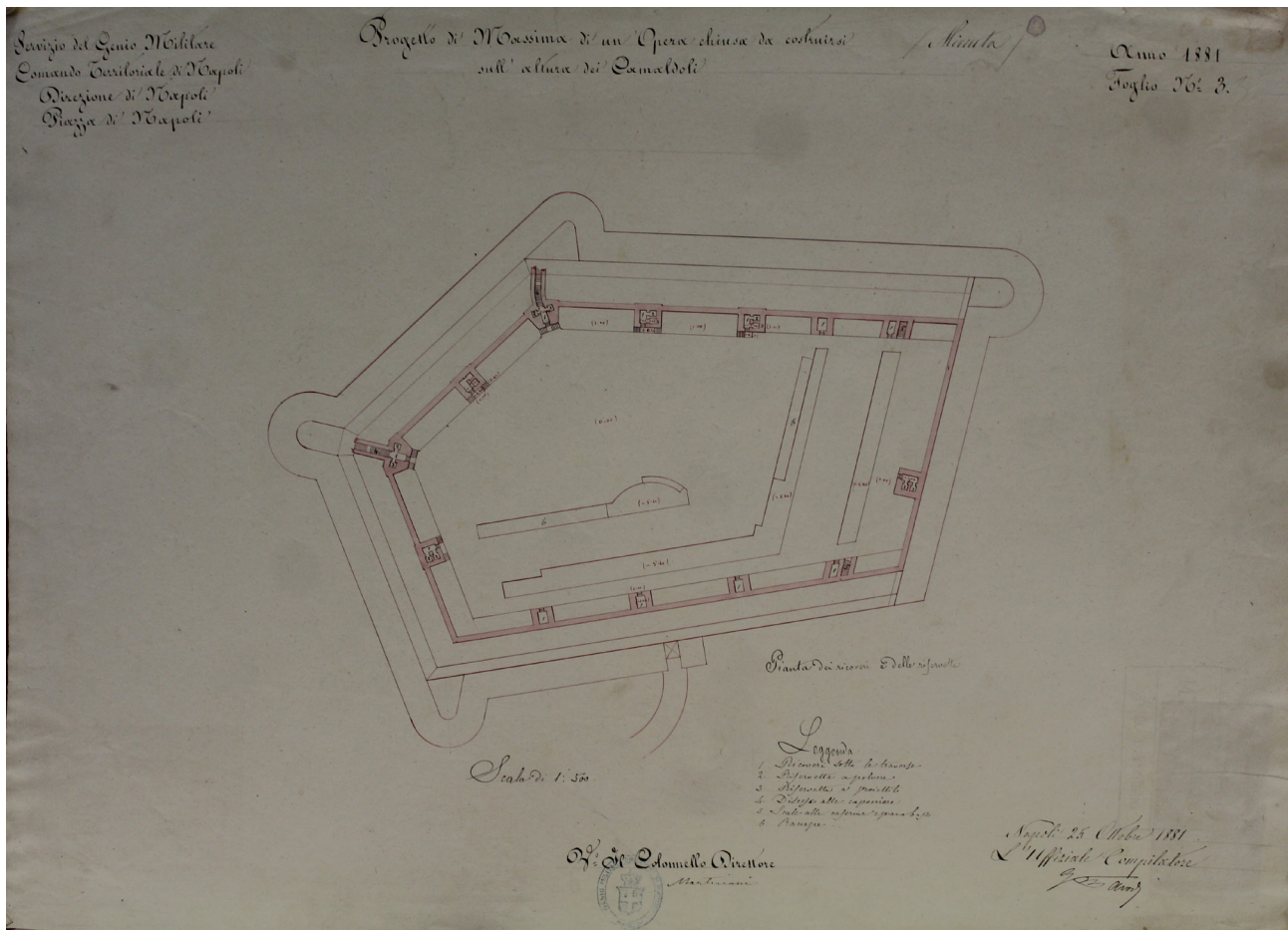
with the preservation of the measurability of the object, intended at the same time as the possibility of its visual control, as the spatial and configurational domain of the object, and as faithful adherence to actual metrical and formal characteristics. The figures of measurement have no viewpoint: they are traces, prints. [Fig. 17]

Since everything far away is indeterminate and, therefore, imperfect, the only view true to reality is the close-up view; then, to be an objective image, objects must be drawn in a close-up view, in all details, without shadows and depth. The eye must thus become similar to the object. The latter, in turn, must be observed and represented through an inner eye that cancels all space between observer and object, where there are no points of view but only directions.

In particular, parallel projection is chosen more or less consciously among the representation methods when, rather than the object in space, the object's space is the attempt of the representation, favoring its real three-dimensional characteristics. It is a different representation outside the centrality of the pictorial view. It is more like a particular view of the world, art, and artwork; it is an expression of a non-anthropocentric world, which is not ordered by any view but consists of infinite points radiating rays. In the projection from a center placed at an infinite distance, there are no privileged viewpoints but only directions that make convergent representation completely impractical and the idea of a single, finite point at which the visual rays concur impossible.

Fig. 17
*Pianta dei ricoveri e delle riservette* (tav. 3). 25 ottobre 1881. Archivio ISCAG.
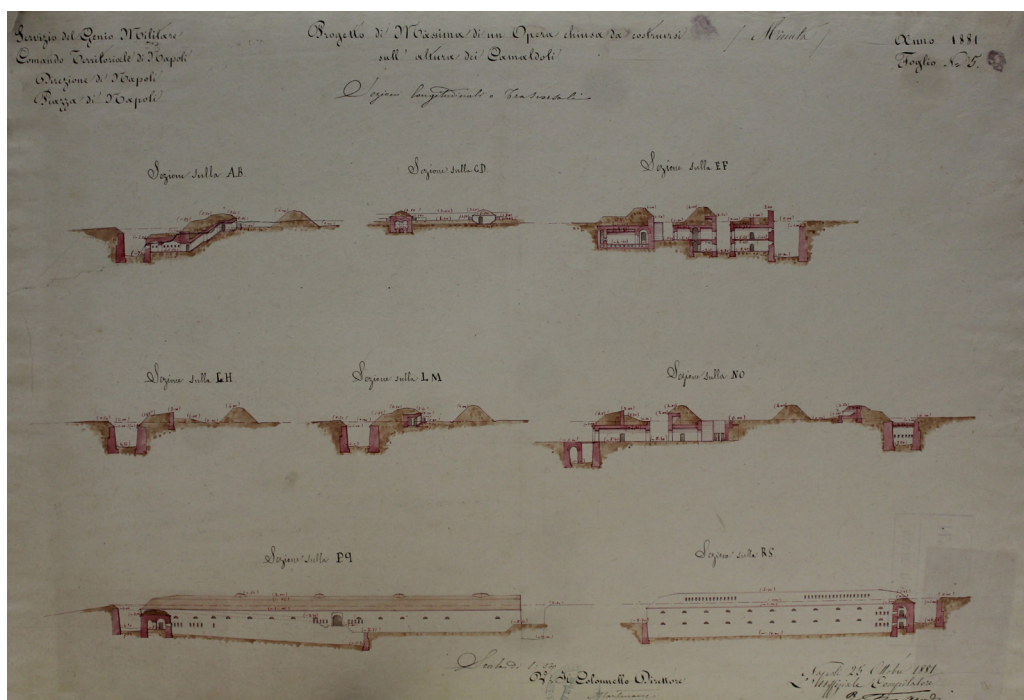
As early as the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a revolutionary era for vision and its various related scientific apparatuses was approaching. In this period, before the advent of photography, the observer's new devices established a new relationship between the observer and the observed object, between interior and exterior, between the inside and the outside, which progressively abandoned their discontinuous relationship to converge into a single seamless perception. This is linked to the coeval interests of optical philosophy and the finalization of tools such as the optical camera.

This relationship is even more decisive when the concept of object representation extends to the representation of space where the object is. First, appropriating architecture and the city by exploring them in the drawing dimension, as a logical consequence of visual and geometric-descriptive methods, allows study images to evoke events distant in time. Moreover, re-elaborating those events through the perceptual relationship established between the observer and the observed object and their graphic representation, consolidating the symbolic code of graphic signs, reveals the substantial structure of space. Drawing is an intellectual opportunity between the parts of this relationship, which reconstructs the memory of places with hypothetical yet concrete forms, capable of developing the faculty of distinguishing configurations often turned into fragments and recognizing their traces even more often erased by time.

Drawing contributes to accustoming the scholar's eye to understand the configurational characteristics and morphological aspects of the observed space, to understand the volumes and surfaces making up space, breaking it down in the mind and recomposing it in the representation, to distinguish intersections between the planes and surfaces that delimit space; to identify geometric primitives and perform a critical description of significant elements. [Figs. 18-19]

Fig. 18
*Progetto di Massima di un'Opera chiusa da costruirsi sull'altura dei Camaldoli. pianta delle murature e del piano basso* (tav. 4). 25 ottobre 1881. Archivio ISCAG.

## Architectural drawings during the 19th century: role and diffusion

Throughout the entire 19th century, drawing production was vast, both in Italy and in Europe. On the one hand, this was contributed by the great events known as Espositions Universelles, exhibiting drawings expressly intended for the general public's enjoyment. On the other hand, it was fostered by the spread of trips to Italy – *Grand Tours*, as in the best-known Anglo-Saxon expression. Previously, they were exclusive to a small group of artists, architects, or scholars; then, they became more accessible.

However, the remarkable drawing production of that century, in which architectural drawing came to compete with architecture itself, was also majorly stimulated by representation methods, which show that the drawing practice is organized according to functional and educational principles. Despite being now well-known and codified, at that time, they had not been reconducted yet to the projective origin.

The idea of subjecting the art and practices of architecture to scientific rules of geometry and mathematics is an aspiration with very ancient origins, which became tangible in the new teachings structured in polytechnic schools as early as the mid-18th century.

The drawings produced according to the rules of Monge's *Géométrie Descriptive* method, which considers the orthogonal triad of plan, elevation, and section

Fig. 19

*Progetto di Massima di un'Opera chiusa da costruirsi sull'altura dei Camaldoli. sezioni longitudinali e trasversali: sulla AB, sulla CD, sulla EF, sulla GH, sulla LM, sulla NO, sulla PQ, sulla RS* (tav. 5). 25 ottobre 1881. Archivio ISCAG.

inseparable and unitary, acquired an objective scientific and quasi-mathematical character. The metric system's introduction produced a renewed approach to architecture, its details, and how it is reproduced in images.

Indeed, the development of representation methods coincides with the development of human culture. The production of images is used to surrogate the observer's visual experience and to translate it into concrete form, ideas, attitudes, and intellectual content. In this sense, the image, rather than an art form, can be likened to an expression of thought. Even better, it can be associated with projecting a way of life: different cultures' ideological and philosophical expression through figuration, intended as a visual and conceptual image.

Throughout the 19th century, drawing production was intended as an exercise of reality imitation rather than an interpretive tool of the designer's intentions. This is influenced by the relationship with the ancient that permeates the culture of this century, according to which the ancient represents a reality model to replicate/duplicate.

There was a keen interest in the knowledge of architecture, its need to be preserved or restored, and a new way of conceiving the architectural survey.

After all, every civilization, in every age, has included all the imaginary, figurative, and expressive material in the geometric substructure underlying the construction of drawings. Through a logical scheme and graphic language, such material shapes the symbolic content of the representation itself.

Indeed, according to Jean Jacques Wunenburger's famous expression in his essay *Philosophie des images*, in 1997, the image lies somewhere between the concrete and the abstract, between the real and the thought, between the sensible and the intelligible. It allows reproducing and internalizing the world, mirroring it as it is, either on an immaterial level or by virtue of material means; it allows acquiring the real datum of experience but also modifying it, transforming it to the point of producing entirely new data and experiences.

When a culture transfers everything that appears to the eye and exists in real space into figurative action, the natural projective device inherent in the human intellect immediately comes at use. Then, the dialogue between the object in space and the representation of the object begins.

## Reflections on drawing/seeing/imagining the city at war

The novelty is the use of parallel projection by the so-called fort builders – the designers and builders of military forts – who apply orthogonal projections as a three-dimensional demonstration of the manufacturability and functionality of the objects of their representations.

They solve the problem of the metric and functional representation of objects by bringing the space of the object's functionality back into the representation and, using the same method of representation, also give technical legitimacy to

the projection from points at infinity that is thus stably constituted as the statute of scientific-engineering representation. In the history of Representation, practical issues have often provided a stimulus to innovate the spatial coherence of images, reconciling mathematical rigor and vision and devising projective systems first only intuited and then more consciously used and codified.

In operational practice, after establishing the mathematical-geometric aspects of the drawing space, orthogonal projections' image points and image lines allow highlighting both the spatial aspects and formal relationships of an object while visually expressing the phenomenological aspects born by the geometric space.

Mongian projections, which make drawing measurable and executable through rigid orthogonality, take a decisive role in this cultural horizon because of their lack of ostentation and difficulty, enhanced by the possibility of including them all in a single sheet. The distance between object and subject is canceled as the latter identifies with the former, giving rise to a representation where the preservation of parallelism coincides with the preservation of measurability, where the action of representing coincides with the action of measuring, which is more about understanding than seeing.

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**Elisa Pegorin**

# The War for the Air.
# Ilha do Sal Airport, between Fascism
# and Estado Novo

*Ilha do Sal, Fascism, Estado Novo, Airport, Urban planning*

## /Abstract

The Ilha do Sal – one of the islands of the Cabo Verde archipelago – was a matter of strong interest by the Italian fascist government starting in 1935 with a disputed and contentious "war for the air" between Salazar and Mussolini's government and the respective Aviation Ministries. The Portuguese Estado Novo decided to provide the Ilha do Sal for use by the Italian aviation company L.A.T.I. (*Linee Aeree Transcontinentali Italiane*), born from the *Ala Littoria* in 1939 and led by Bruno Mussolini, the Duce son. In fact, Ilha do Sal was essential for Italian aviation to complete the "domination" of airlines in South America because represented the last stopover point on European soil before crossing the Atlantic necessary for aerial technical refueling.

The research investigated the construction of the airport in the Ilha do Sal and the relations between Italy and Portugal. The island – defined a "little stone ship" – became an "aeronautical city" built in only 180 days by Italian technicians, and due to the airport, the infrastructures and a new "non-planned" urbanization, the island in 1940 moved from an almost desert land to a population of seven hundred people. With the beginning of the II World War, a "diplomatic war" broke off the relations between the two countries. Nevertheless, this technical Italian urbanization of the Ilha do Sal was totally ignored by Portuguese historiography of that time. After the II WW, the airport returned to Portuguese ownership and the new Alitalia airlines restarted its flights; but the airport was completely modified, partly erasing the work of Italian engineers.

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## Introduction: from Ala Littoria to LATI

In Naples (Italy) at the exhibition *Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare[1]* held in 1939-40, Enrico Del Debbio with Egisto Pierotti designed the pavilion for the *Linee Aeree Transcontinentali Italiane (LATI)* commissioned by Bruno Mussolini[2]. This pavilion was built as a platform with a small artificial lake that representing the Atlantic Ocean; a large and curved wing with at the top a seagull (the company's symbol) – modeled by the sculptor Romeo Gregori. In the water, a luminescent tube connects Italy and South America, and the interior decorations were designed by F. Variopinti and M. Vucetich. This "line" was a tube that indicated the air route of LATI, which united Rome, passing through Lisbon and arriving in Brazil, and highlighted a point in the middle of the Ocean: the Cabo Verde islands. [Fig. 1] Why so much interest in these islands that belonged to the Portuguese Salazar's government? What was the relationship and the interests of fascist State for the Ilha do Sal?

The LATI aviation company was officially established on September 11, 1939 from the Direzione Autonoma of the Italian national airline Ala Littoria S. A.[3] to connect as postal services Italy and Latin America (especially Brazil and Argentina) and at the behest of the fascist regime for various reasons, including international prestige[4]. [Fig. 2] The Duce's son, Bruno Mussolini, was appointed as "inventor" and head of the company. The company, initially tried to have agreements between the Italian Ala Littoria, Air France and Deutsche Lufthansa, but this idea didn't reach the expected understanding, cause of the political position of France and the hostility of Germany, which didn't want to fly the Italian aircraft over the colonized African territories as stopover points. So, the Italian fascist government decides to find international agreements with Portugal and Spain. Cabo Verde was the last stop on "European" land before crossing the Atlantic and represented at the time an intermediate stopover necessary for the airplanes refueling.

Then it was necessary to build an airport – very quickly – in addition to establishing land bases, to support ships and submarines, with weather stations and radio points on the Atlantic coast for contact with aircraft. The airline provided weekly passage (in both directions) on the route: Roma - Sevilha - Lisboa - Villa

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1    This exhibition was related to the theme of Italian colonies and followed the exhibitions of the *Mostra internazionale d'arte coloniale* in Roma (1931) and in Napoli (1934). Cf. Vargaftig, *Des empires en carton. Le esposizioni coloniali in Portogallo e in Italia* (1918-1940), 2016.

2    Bruno Mussolini (1918-1941) was the son of Benito Mussolini, the Duce. In 1935, he joined the Regia Aeronautica Italiana and became a pilot. At 17 years old, he was Italy's youngest military pilot. He was also one of the directors of the Ala Littoria airline and the "inventor" of the LATI, created to connect Italy and Brazil.

3    Ala Littoria, established, also-if not mainly-by political will, on October 28, 1934, the day of the 12th anniversary of the Marcia su Roma, with the goal of having one big company that would manage civil air transport in Italy and the colonies, enabling regular connections between Italy, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia. This air transport company came into being by changing the name of SAM Società Aerea Mediterranea, created by Italo Balbo, and absorbing, within a short time, several small companies that operated domestically, such as SISA, Transadriatica, AeroEspresso and SANA, or in the Italian colonies, such as the North African Aviation Company.

4    The first fly of LATI was in 1939, and the last one in 1959.
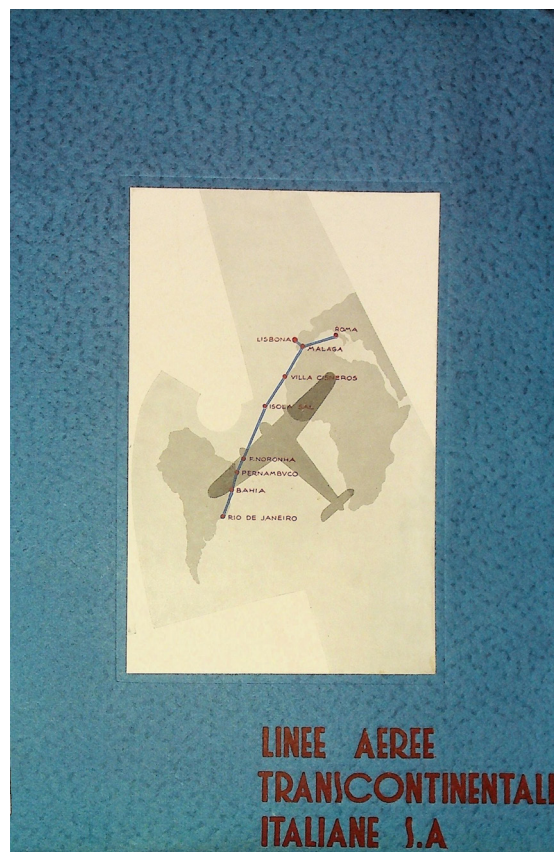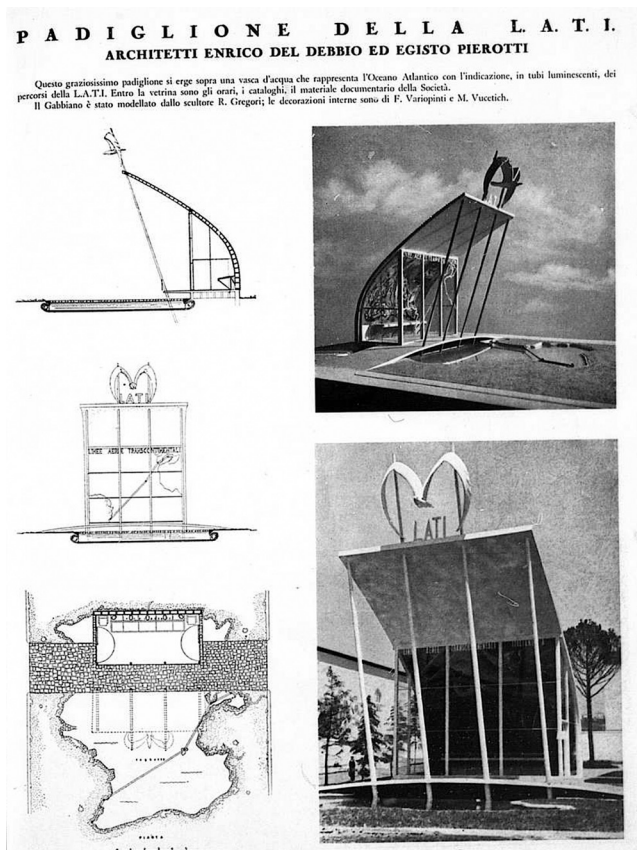
Cisneros - Ilha do Sal - Pernambuco - Rio de Janeiro. It was divided into three sectors: the "European" with three planes between Rome and Ilha do Sal, the "Atlantic" with four planes between Ilha do Sal and Pernambuco, and the "American" with three more aircraft, between Pernambuco and Rio de Janeiro[5]. [Fig. 3]

## The Construction of the Lisbon Airport and the Relationship with Mussolini's Government

During the regime – both in Portugal and Italy – the challenge of flight represented not only a technological advancement and a chance to visit other countries, but also a necessity for trade and mail transportation.

Despite some timely attempts, it was only in the beginning of the 20th century that born the aviation. The first Portuguese flight took place in 1912, which was followed by a rapid evolution of aerial means due to the technological development associated with the war. From that time, several aeroclub structures

Fig. 1
Enrico Del Debbio and Egisto Pierotti, L.A.T.I. Pavilion for the exhibition of Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare, Naples, 1939-40 (*Architettura. Rivista del Sindacato Nazionale Fascista Architetti*, no. 1-2, 1941, 61).

Fig. 2
Cover of the book *In volo da Roma all'America Latina / Linee aeree transcontinentali italiane s.a.* (Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, Ferrara. Fondo Quilici)

5    The inauguration took place on December 24, 1939, with a flight to Rio de Janeiro, but with the loss of an aircraft (Io-ARPA Savoia Marchetti Sm-38), commanded by Colonel Massai, in the area above Mogador in Morocco. The postal service was organized according to this schedule: mail from all over Italy arrived by train in Rome on Wednesday and on Thursday was transported to Guidonia, where it was loaded onto the plane bound for Seville. Here it received Spanish mail. On Friday the mail traveled from Seville to Lisbon and the Ilha do Sal. On Saturday, on the Ilha do Sal, the mail cargo was transported to Pernambuco and Recife. From Recife, via an American plane, it continued to Rio de Janeiro. In the reverse direction, the mail left on Friday and arrived in Guidonia on Monday afternoon, after which it was transported to Rome and from there throughout Europe. From September 1, 1939, when Germany entered the war, the German postal service was entrusted to the Italian-German consortium CONDOR-LATI. From December 24 of 1939, German transportation was carried out by Italian, South American or U.S. aircraft.

began to spring up in Portugal, and in 1910 the *Rivista Aeronáutica* began to be published and started the exchanges with foreign aviators. While military aviation was improving its facilities, civil aviation was beginning to take on greater importance, expanding flights beginning in the 1920s with new routes to Brazil, Cabo Verde, Luanda, and São Tomé.

The importance of build an airport in Lisbon was emphasized in an article published in the *Diário de Notícias* on January 12, 1928, in which the idea was to locate it in the Campo Grande area. But the terrain presented some problems related to the geology of the soils and in 1928[6] the Lisbon municipality opted for the construction of the Portela Airport in Sacavém, whose project was drawn up by Francisco Keil do Amaral[7] with the support of Duarte Pacheco, the Minister of Public Works and Communications[8]. In December 1930 - January 1931 there was the first *Crociera aerea transatlantica Italia-Brasile* [Fig. 4] organized by Italo Balbo (Minister of Aeronautics from 1929 to 1933) who visited Lisbon

Fig. 3
*Route line of South Atlantic: in the center the Ilha do Sal in Cabo Verde* (source: In volo da Roma all'America Latina / Linee aeree transcontinentali italiane s.a. - Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, Ferrara. Fondo Quilici)

Fig. 4
Billboard of *Crociera Aerea Transatlantica. aerei in volo tra l'Italia, l'Africa e il Brasile*, 1930, design by Lazzaro Umberto (source: https://catalogo.beniculturali.it/detail/HistoricOrArtisticProperty/0500662744)

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6    There was in 1928 a preliminary project for an air base in Lisbon: submitted by the *Societé d'Études des Ports Aeriens Internationaux du Portugal* for the Lisbon Airport, which included descriptive memorandum, correspondence, basis for the establishment of a land airport in Lisbon, descriptive memorandum of the construction of hangars, areas and services, aircraft repair shops, general plan of construction and facilities, plan of the air terminal, elevations, hotel plan and sections, signed by the engineer M. Fl. Ginder (source: Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, PT/AMLSB/CMLSB/UROB-PU/10/427).

7    Francisco Keil do Amaral (1910-1975) also carried out several airport projects, including the Braga airport (1946), the expansion of the Lisbon airport (1946), the S. Jacinto airport in Aveiro (undated), the radio sounding building at the Lisbon airport, the Luanda airport in Angola (1950), and the director's house and development of the Santa Maria airport in the Açores (1950).

8    Sandra Vaz Costa, *O País a Régua e Esquadro. Urbanismo, Arquitectura e Memória na Obra Pública de Duarte Pacheco* (Lisboa: IST Press 2012).

many times during the 1930s[9] attempting to intensify relations with Salazar's government. While in Lisbon they were beginning to think about the airport project, several Italian airport projects were being publicized in architectural journals as *Casabella*, *Architettura - Rivista del sindacato nazionale fascista architetti*, *Edilizia Moderna*[10], widespread among Portuguese architects. And in 1934 in the exhibition *Esposizione dell'Aeronautica Italiana*[11] in the Palazzo dell'Arte in Milan there was an entire section devoted to the construction of airfields and airports.

In Lisbon, after the choice of the site in Sacavém, Duarte Pacheco strongly supported the airport project: the conditions were favorable, not only because of the type of terrain, but also because of its location in the center of the city, its distance from the Tagus River, its flatness (with no obstacles around it), and the direction of the winds.

In 1938 the Portuguese airplane pilot Humberto Pais in the periodical *Revista do Ar* wrote that "it is necessary to build the airport in Lisbon, but in a modern way"[12]. **[Fig. 5]** While planning the Lusitanian capital's airport for the great Portuguese exposition of 1940, Italian history intersected with the Portuguese one, forcing the need for an airport in Lisbon. Since the 1930s, the Ala Littoria had initiated a series of technical and commercial studies on transatlantic lines connecting Europe to South America[13].

Lisbon represented a very interesting point for Italy as the *Ala Littoria* stopover on the Rome to Rio de Janeiro route. The study for the Lisbon airport – under



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9    Several photos of Italo Balbo in Lisbon are preserved in Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, inside the Journal O Século photo archive: "Chegada de Italo Balbo", 31-12-1931 (PT/TT/EPJS/SF/001-001/0021/1462F); "Visita do General Italo Balbo à Casa dos Italianos", 01-01-1932 (PT/TT/EPJS/SF/001-001/0022/0001G); "O General Italo Balbo e Alberto Tuozzi", 09-08-1933, (PT/TT/EPJS/SF/001-001/0026/0922H); "O General Italo Balbo, acompanhado dos srs. Ministros da Guerra e Marinha", 09-08-1933 (PT/TT/EPJS/SF/001-001/0026/0923H); "O Marechal Italo Balbo com o seu traje de aviador, momentos antes da sua partida para Roma", 12-08-1933 (PT/TT/EPJS/SF/001-001/0026/0929H); "O General Italo Balbo passando à Guarda de Honra", 18-09-1933 (PT/TT/EPJS/SF/001-001/0026/1064H).

10    Italian airports published in the magazines: "Areoporti", *Architettura XII*, no 4, (April 1934): 213-224; "Concorso stazione passeggeri aeroporto di Milano Linate", Arch. Gianluigi Giordani, *Architettura XIII*, no. 4 (April 1935): 222-226; "Stazione per l'aeroporto", Arch. Prampolini, *Edilizia Moderna*, no. 10-11 (August-December 1933): 56-57; "Aeroporti", *Casabella*, no. 80, (August 1934): 24-31; "Areoporto civile - Ing. Guido Fiorini", *Casabella*, no, 80 (August 1934): 32-35; *L'Architecture D'Aujourd'hui*, no. 9, (1936): 34 (Milan airport), 50 (Venice airport).

11    For this exhibition dedicated to Italian Aeronautics – one of the most important celebratory events of the fascist twentieth century – the most important architects were called to work, under the supervision of Giuseppe Pagano: BBPR (Sala dei Primi voli e Sala Forlanini), Marcello Nizzoli e Edoardo Persico (Sala delle Medaglie d'oro), Giuseppe Pagano (Sala d'Icaro), Gio Ponti (Sala "più leggero dell'aria"), Franco Albini (Sala dell'Aerodinamica), Luciano Baldessari (Sala Aviazione e Fascismo e Sala Aviazione civile - turismo aereo - posta aerea). Cf. *Esposizione dell'aeronautica italiana*, catalogo ufficiale (Milano: Edizioni d'arte Emilio Bestetti, 1934).

12    Humberto Pais, "Aeroporto de Lisboa", Revista do Ar, no. 8 (May 1938): 2-5.  (Translation from Portuguese by the author).

13    At that time there were already transatlantic flights operated by Lufthansa and Air France. The difference was that the air service was limited because Lufthansa flew with seaplanes and with the presence of a foothold made by a mechanical arm in the middle of the ocean. In this way, France also had an incomplete service (in air terms) because the planes flew as far as Dakar and then the rest of the crossing was made by ship.

Fig. 5
Cover of *Revista do Ar*, 8, May 1938.
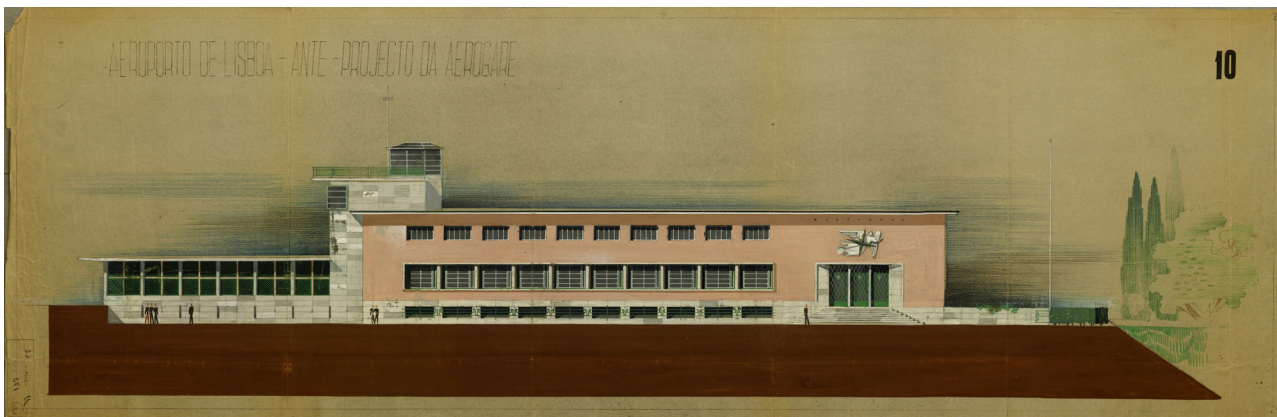
the responsibility of Keil do Amaral with engineers Santos Silva and Lopes Monteiro – began in February 1936, after some studies by Dutch engineers. However, the preliminary project was not delivered until two years later, on September 1, 1938[14]. The architect Keil de Amaral, at that time, enjoyed some government support, having designed the Portuguese pavilion in Paris in 1937, the Parque de Atrações inside the Exposição do Mundo Português in 1940, and being considered "the architect of the city of Lisbon" with the projects for Monsanto, Campo Grande, and Parque Eduardo VII.

In 1939-40 earthworks for the airport were carried out and in 1940-41 the construction of the four paved runways; the construction of the terminal began in 1940-41 and was inaugurated in 1942. The airport building was relatively small, fifty meters long and twenty meters wide, with a traditional pitched roof, a control tower, and two volumes of thirty meters high. It was "a work of great formal richness, but one that showed a certain contradiction in its exterior image, with something traditional and an error of scale"; the scale and domestic language that "while the architect's intention to favor humanistic and welcoming values is clear, (...) the theme of the building was evident only in the discreet counterpoint of the control tower with the rest of the built mass"[15]. [Fig. 6] The external appearance contrasted with the more current and modern-looking interior space, and perhaps this "uncertainty" was due to the year of design – the 1940 – a time of imposition of a certain "nationalistic" architecture desired by Salazar; or perhaps because it was a new typology in that period in Portugal for the public works. Despite this, the airport project was presented as one of the "big events" at the regime's major exhibition of the *15 Anos de Obras Públicas* (1947). [Fig. 7]

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14    On the development of the construction of the Lisbon airport published in the newspapers (surveyed by the author): *Boletim da Câmara Municipal de Lisboa*, no. 135, (1929); *Cumpriu-se o Ar*, catálogo manuscrito da exposição na Torre de Belém (October 17, 1988); *Cinquentenário da Aeronáutica militar*, Secretaria de Estado da Cultura: Lisbona, 1964; *Diário de Notícias* in the days: 30 April 1927; 11 June 1927; 19 July 1927; 12 January 1928; 25 January 1928; 31 January 1928; 15 May 1930; 14 August 1930; 25 October 1934; 14 February 1937; 28 July 1938; 21 February 1940; 16 October 1942; 22 October 1942; Ilustração, no. 17, 1933, 10-11; *Ilustração*, no. 228, 1935, 14-15; *O Notícias Ilustrado*, no. 10, 1928; *Século Ilustrado*, no. 67, 1939; *Revista do Ar*: no. 8, no. 10, no. 15, no. 26, no. 28, no. 31, no. 32, no. 33, no. 34, no. 41, no. 56, no.61, no. 62, no. 64; *Boletim da Ordens dos Engenheiros*, no. 48, December 1940, 551-564.

15    Francisco Pires Keil Do Amaral, ed., *Keil Amaral Arquitecto* 1910-1975 (Lisboa: Associação dos Arquitectos Portugueses 1992), 65.

Fig. 6
Francisco Keil do Amaral, elevation drawing of the Lisbon terminal airport, s.d. (source: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa, Divisão do Arquivo Municipal, ref: PT-AMLSB-CMLSBAH-PURB-002-03937-Folha 41).

## The Italian airport urbanization of Ilha do Sal

The privileged position of the Cabo Verde archipelago in the South Atlantic – as a stopover between Europe, America, and southern Africa – had been evident since the first air travels in 1922: Gago Coutinho and Sacadura Cabral had made stopovers at São Vicente and Ilha de Santiago on their fly across the Atlantic to Brazil. In 1925, the Brazilian seaplane JAHU, flying between Europe and Brazil, had stopped at Ilha de Santiago and in January 1935, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs – through diplomatic representations in Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires – had sent a request to the Portuguese Ministry of Aeronautics, while Air France turned its attentions to the Ilha do Sal.

In 1934, Augusto de Castro of the Portuguese delegation in Rome had sent an Italian request to the Minister of Foreign Affairs to establish a commercial airline to South America because the trip from Rome to Brazil is 13,767 kilometers long and required a technical stop mid-flight. De Castro met with General Giuseppe Valle – as undersecretary of state of the Ministry of Aeronautics (from 1933 to 1936) – authorized by Mussolini at the Italian Ministry of Aeronautics – a meeting with the Director of the Italian Civil Air Force, the General Aldo Pellegrini.

Among the first hypotheses presented by Italy was a proposal to establish an Italo-Portuguese Company with capital in both countries. The undersecretary of Aeronautics said through De Castro's words:

> Within a year Italy will possess the most powerful and best civil aviation aircraft in the world. These planes are under construction. Under these conditions and with these aircraft, Italy intends to establish in the coming year a commercial airline connecting Rome to Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro. This line could have two stops: one in Gibraltar and the other in Cabo Verde if the Portuguese government is in favor. Otherwise, the

Fig. 7
Francisco Keil do Amaral, Lisbon terminal airport, c. 1947 (source: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Col. Estúdio Horácio Novais / FCG Biblioteca de Arte e Arquivos).

line will go through Vila Cisneiros. The Italian government is not asking for, nor does it want, any kind of <u>monopoly</u>, because 'it has always been and will continue to be a defender of <u>freedom of the air</u>'. It only wishes to know if the Portuguese government is in favor of establishing <u>a base</u> in Cabo Verde[16].

These early contacts were followed by a break due to the conflict in Ethiopia (1935-1936) as the Ala Littoria had the aircraft used in East Africa.

In 1937, Italy sought confirmation from Portugal that it could use the Ilha do Sal as an air stopover, a request that was granted by Salazar despite some concerns.

In the same year in São Vicente (Cabo Verde), José Lopes da Silva – vice-consul of Brazil in São Vicente – communicated to the Cape Verdean population the words of Mussolini, with a clear propaganda intent. In his speech, beginning with the history of Italy, the city of Rome as *Urbe*, capital of the "ancient" world and "mother city" of all peoples, he said: "I have come to this point and to these conclusions to speak of Mussolini, the greatest of men of the present time and one of the greatest of all times-present, past and future"[17]. In this 'exaltation' of Italian history, Lopes da Silva traces the Italian history from the Middle Ages to the relation with Ancient Greece, its great artistic and cultural figures, justifying the arrival of Mussolini as the "savior of the homeland":

> It is then that he appears, more than a man, a superman to save Italy and perhaps Latin and Western civilization. He is an envoy, a savior whom God has raised up for Italy and for the Latin race! (...) And this *super-homem* is Benito Mussolini (...) who reorganizes the state, restores order, dignifies power, deifies patriotism, and founds the corporate state. He drains the centuries-old swamps (the areas of the Agropontino). But he does more. He spreads Instruction through Education, founding schools all over the country (...). I have been asked if he is greater than Hitler. I have no hesitation: the Duce is much greater than the Führer.[18]

Meanwhile, in Portugal, in agreement with Ala Littoria, had been sent some engineers to study the Cabo Verde archipelago and to assess which was the best terrain for the aerodrome: the best solution, cause bringing together the necessary conditions for a land and sea airport, they decided for the Ilha do Sal[19]. [Fig. 8]

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16    Source: Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, PT/ANTT/Arquivo Salazar/NE-4D/cx. 379, pt. 1 e pt. 2, f. 43. Letter from Augusto de Castro dated March 2, 1934. In a subsequent letter, dated March 31, 1934, it is reported that a training ship, belonging to the Aeronautica Militare Italiana will transport a technician to study the territory of Cabo Verde. (These words are underlined in the original letter; translation from Portuguese by the author).

17    José Lopes da Silva, "Mussolini," in *Jornal do Brasil*. (Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Officinas Graphicas, 1937), 5. (Translation from Portuguese by the author).

18    José Lopes da Silva, "Mussolini," in *Jornal do Brasil*. (Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Officinas Graphicas, 1937), 6. (Translation from Portuguese by the author).

19    Source: Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, PT/ANTT/Arquivo Salazar/PC-24 A/cx. 682, pt. 2. This report was sent to the President of the Council from the Secretariat of the National Aviation Council, by Lieutenant Colonel Carlos Esteves Beja who had studied the conditions necessary for the construction of an aerodrome, choosing from several islands: S. Tiago, S. Vicente, Brava, Fogo, S. Antão, S. Luzia, S. Nicolau, Boavista, Maio, and Ilha do

ILHA DO SAL



La piccola città aeronautica che la L.A.T.I. ha creata dal nulla nell'Isola del Sale

Aviorimesse

Alloggi e uffici
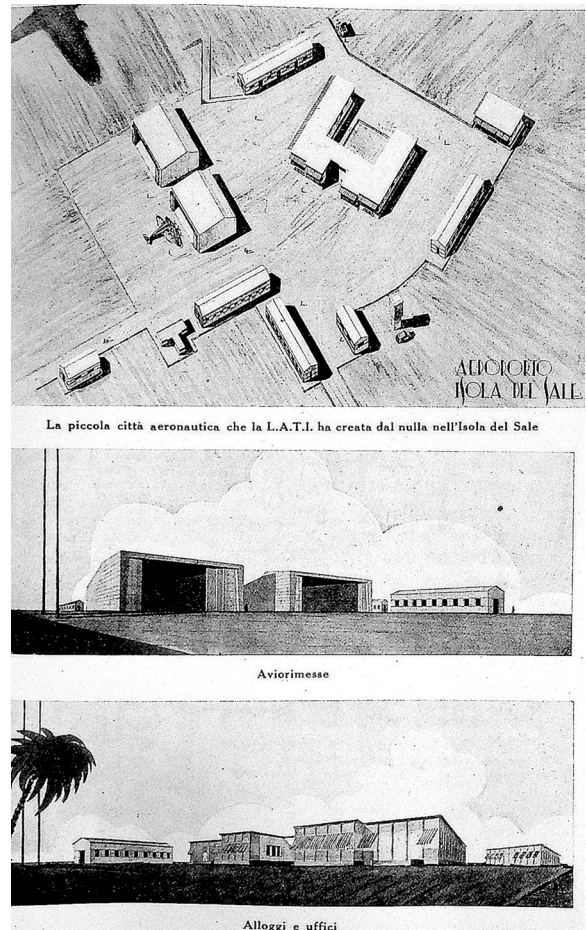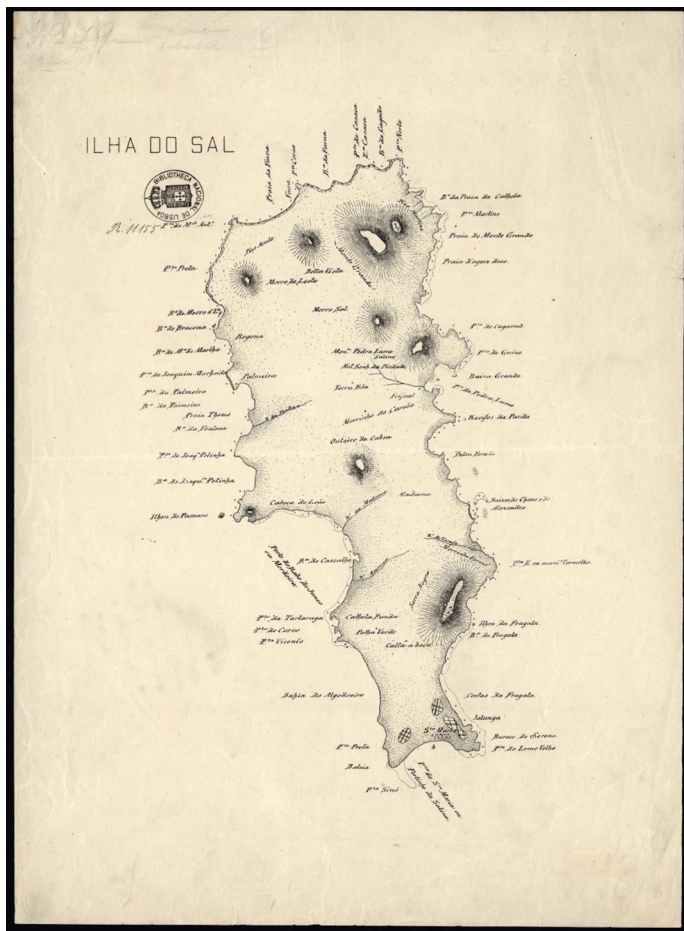
The group of specialists chose the location of Espargos, an area that was still "wild" and in which were built at the beginning: the airport, a flight assistance center, a weather and radio station, an aircraft hangar and a series of other buildings for the crew. It was from the construction of the airport – still visible today in the central part of the island – that the urban organization of the city of Espargos was structured, a center of urbanization that generated the spread of settlements on this island.

Between January 24 and 25, 1938, three Italian planes – called "Sorci Verdi"[20]– carried out the flight Italy-Brazil (Guidonia-Dakar-Rio de Janeiro)[21], having among the pilots Bruno Mussolini. This flight was gloriously celebrated by the Duce on the cover of *Corriere della Sera* on January 26, 1938, calling it "Power and Glory of the fascist Ala Littoria" and like a "wonderful venture that arouses the admiration of the entire world".[22]

Fig. 8
Map of Ilha do Sal before the airport of Espargos, 1892c. (source: Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa; also published in: José de Sena Cristiano, *Roteiro do Archipelago de Cabo Verde*. Lisboa: Typographia do Jornal das Colónias Portuguesas, 1892).

Fig. 9
Drawings of the planivolumetric, airplane hangars and offices of the "Città Aeronautica della LATI" (source: *In volo da Roma all'America Latina / Linee aeree transcontinentali italiane s.a.* - Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, Ferrara. Fondo Quilici)

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Sal. The study and report were carried out together with the Delegate of the National Aeronautical Council, in collaboration with delegates of the KLM Companies (Dutch colonel H. Steensma) and Ala Littoria (with lieutenant colonel Carlo Tonnini).

20    In the dialect of the Roma area, the word "sorci" means "rats"; the name "sorci verdi" came out because three green rats were painted on the fuselage of Italian airplanes. For this reason, the Italian expression "see green rats" is became an expression to tell another person that "bad things are about to happen".

21    It is important to remember that, at the time, the flight served only to transport postal equipment, excluding passengers, although in 1939 Bruno Mussolini stated in an interview in *Le Vie dell'Aria* magazine that it might become a passenger line in the future.

22    "Il volo Italia-Brasile compiuto", *Corriere della Sera* (January 26, 1938), Anno XVI, first page. (Translation from Italian by the author).

From the company's records is possible to document that the materials and the builders had been sent from Italy. The first five people had embarked on the steamboat Anfora, which left Genoa on July 16, 1939, and arrived on the Ilha Sal on August 7. Meanwhile, the steamship Tagliamento departed from Genoa on July 16 and arrived on September 7, and the ship Anna Martini departed on July 19 and arrived on September 7: the last two ships remained moored for some time in the Spanish port of Las Palmas, waiting further orders from Italy, due to Germany's entry into the War and the still uncertain Italian position.

Officially only in August 1939 – with a letter from the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Salazar's government approved the concession to Italy to use the Ilha do Sal, in exchange for the development of the Lisbon airport:

> It is ready to donation on a provisional basis and in anticipation of a future formal agreement, authorization for the establishment by Società Aerea Italiana Ala Littoria of an airline to South America with regular stops in Lisbon and Cabo Verde (...), but on condition that as soon as the Lisbon airport is completed, it will be the first point of arrival and the last point of departure in Europe (...). The Portuguese government requests that, in exchange for the authorization now granted, the Italian government authorize Portuguese commercial aircraft, on a possible route between Portugal and its colonies, to fly over and land in Italian territories in Africa[23].

In Lisbon, therefore, increased the need to complete the Portela Airport project. While waiting for the required authorizations from Portugal, the first Italians to arrive in Ilha do Sal began to build several small structures to store the materials and to have a shelter. They began some experimental flights between Rome and Ilha do Sal on October 13, 1939, when finally, the Portuguese government declared that it was possible to begin the works for the Cape Verdean airport. The Italians present on the Ilha do Sal, together with the population recruited for the works – workers also arrived from other nearby islands, in totaling about 300 people[24] – began the construction of the airport terminal. Many materials used arrived from Italy and others – like iron, wood, and concrete – from the island of São Vicente. [Fig. 9]

A radio-reception station pavilion, a meteorological and a radio-goniometer centers were built; as well as offices and workers' quarters, two metal-frame hangars (27 x 21 meters) and three pavilions (36 x 8 meters). [Fig. 10] Uninterrupted and with careful but very quick work, the employees, and passengers housing pavilion and a wooden "colonial style" passengers' station with a bar, restaurant, a hall, and thirty rooms.

23    Source: Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, PT/ANTT/AOS/CO/OP-1C; cx. 479, pt.1, 2-3. Letter of the 10 August 1939. (Translation from Portuguese by the author).

24    The workers came from all the islands of Cabo Verde. This connection to Italy is evidenced by the fact that when the Italian pilots had to return to Italy there was a big emigration of Cape Verdeans to Europe and to Italy. Cf. Pedro Goís, *Emigração cabo-verdiana para (e na) Europa e a sua inserção em mercados de trabalho locais: Lisboa, Milão, Roterdão*. (Lisbona: ed., ACIDI, ACIME 2006).

However, this "Italian urbanization" work does not appear in either the books or publications of the time, probably because it was mostly a more "technical" infrastructure, even though these works generated an early urban planning in the center of the island. An article published on November 18, 1939, entitled "Rome-Rio de Janeiro" explains the choice of site and the work done by Italian workers in Cabo Verde:

Colonel Biseo flying over there going to look around on the African coasts and in the Ocean recognized in a small island in the Cabo Verde archipelago (...) a suitable terrain. An island? A few square kilometers surmounted by a volcanic cone that has the rare prerogative of containing in its crater a kind of salt lake, which is precisely what gives the island its name, with its natural salt pans where a hundred Negroes work. There was a Portuguese camp there. They get to fix it up for the new purposes and place the necessary facilities. There was until recently hardly a single white person on Ilha do Sal, in the middle of the immense oceanic solitude. Now it is the Italian 'center' of the Atlantic. It was necessary to ensure not only the landing, but also the living and resting conditions for the Atlantic crews arriving there, alternating between outward and return crews. So housing for pilots, marconigraph station, engine services and repair hangars, spare parts storage, gasoline service. Bruno Mussolini wished that personnel destined to watch over the Atlantic could, if they wished, can live there with their families. So everything had to be provided, starting with the materials for the moles – there is no port and we had to build a port for the materials and fuel by having ships arrive from Italy – the storage facilities, the meals, and also the homemade furniture. The Ilha do Sal is a small, immobile, solitary stone ship, the center and key of the entire system of points that will permit for a regular transatlantic service[25].
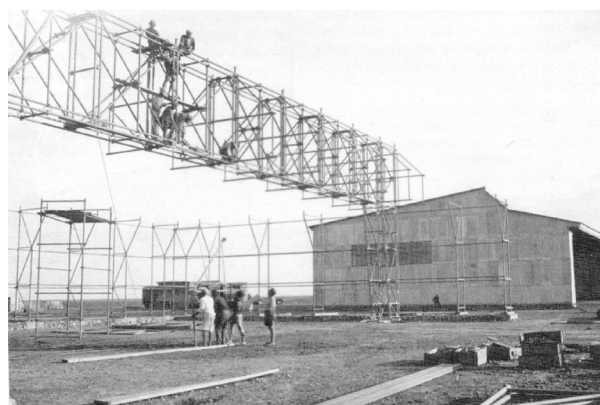


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The construction also included a series of necessary infrastructure, such as seven kilometers of roads around the camp, 6000 square meters of hangars, a water reservoir for the capacity of 400.000 liters, a power plant, sewage facilities with the excavation of 500 meters of sewer and eight septic tanks. They built the office and housing pavilions from lightweight materials, the customs, and planting of palm trees: in total, a 1,500,000-square-meter work of land[26].

The official opening of the airline in Ilha do Sal was on December 15, 1939, and the construction of the entire airport system took only one hundred and

25    "Roma-Rio de Janeiro. I piloti e gli apparecchi in servizio - Una lettera in America in poco più di trentasei ore - La "Centrale italiana dell'Atlantico", *Corriere della Sera* (November 18, 1939). (Translation from Italian by the author).

26    Gherardo Lazzeri, Adalberto Pellegrino. *Sal. A Ilha de Cabo Verde que entro una história da Aviação Comercial Italiana* (Firenze: Lo Gisma Editore 2002), 49.

Fig. 10
Photo of the construction of the hangar in Ilha do Sal (source: Lazzeri, G.; Pellegrino, A. *Sal. A Ilha de Cabo Verde que entrou na história da Aviação Comercial Italiana*. Firenze: Lo Gisma Editore, 2002, 40).

eighty days, concluding all work for LATI on April 11, 1940, with seven hundred inhabitants on the island[27]. **[Fig. 11]**

In the newspaper *Il Resto del Carlino* of February 4, 1940 in the article "La Città Areonautica all'Isola del Sale" **[Fig. 12]**, Piero Pedrazza explains how the urbanization of the island occurred through the Italian works:

> it is a temporary village, living its last days because on January 7 our compatriots will move to the new, rational one, created all by them with their own arms (…). The rest we can imagine it: everything necessarily had to be brought to the Island, starting with water; then furrows had to be traced on the land that correspond to the project of the new "aeronautical village" name that may seem too pretentious but is not at all. (…) … all solidly built with wise technical criteria, the prodigious fruit of Italian labor. In a few years the 'city' will appear unrecognizable, enriched by new buildings, and surrounded, we hope, by a thick curtain of plantations[28].

Others Italian magazines also talked about this project, such as *Le Vie dell'Aria* – a magazine that was sent to Portugal – as "L'organizzazione dei servizi aerei transcontinentali italiani - in un'intervista col Comandante Bruno Mussolini" **[Fig. 13]** or "I 'sorci verdi' all'isola del Sale" and "Roma-Rio de Janeiro e ritorno con il postale atlantico della L.A.T.I." and "L'organizzazione del servizio aereo transcontinentale italiano[29].

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27    "Instalações da LATI na Ilha do Sal, Cabo Verde" (source: Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, PT/TT/AOS/ D-J/012/0018/00041).

28    Piero Pedrazza, "La Città Areonautica all'Isola del Sale", *Il Resto del Carlino* (February 4, 1940). (Translation from Italian by the author).

29    *Le Vie dell'Aria,* no. 57 (December 16,1939): 1 (cover); *Le Vie dell'Aria*, no. 3 (January 20, 1940): 6; *Le Vie dell'Aria*, no. 5 (February 3, 1940): 6; *Le Vie dell'Aria*, no. 7 (February 17, 1940): 1 (cover).

Fig. 11
Italian LATI airport in Ilha do Sal (source: Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Agência Geral do Ultramar, Cabo Verde, cx. 22, no. 17494, ref. PT/TT/ AGU/002/017494).

There were more than 200 flights between Italy and Brazil, and the air base operated until December 1941, when – due to increasing difficulties caused by the war – the United States ordered the air connection to be closed. In 1942 all LATI equipment was looted by the Brazilian government.

Then the properties of LATI in 1942 were acquired by Portugal[30] and it is understood – by analyzing the inventory of acquisitions – that the work done by the Italians was an "initial urbanization" of the island even though the construction was of a "technical" and not a "planned city".

There was also another political motivation for the closure of the Italian base and its acquisition by Portugal, due to the concern arising from the presence of Italians on the island, reported earlier in 1939, at their first arrivals:

I have news that another 20,000 volumes have recently arrived, and more Italians and their families are expected. With this concession, the Italians will have the most suitable island in the archipelago as an air base and will be installed in larger numbers than the metropolitans and Cape Verdean civilians who live there, and in a few years they will 'italianize' the island, and it will not be surprising if they then make the usual claims[31].

In another letter, addressed to Salazar in 1941, the Portuguese Minister of Colonies expressed the urgency of adopting a solution by purchasing the island's Italian assets:

By way of information, it is reported that the ship Rapido which made transports for the Italians to the Ilha do Sal, has been placed on the Blacklist by the British authorities. The stay of the Italians on the island appears to be very delicate in two aspects: the first is the impossibility of exercising effective surveillance over their radiotelegraphic communications, made in code, which could allow abuses, contrary to our situation of neutrality, as well as the provision of navigation information in the Atlantic, obtained from aircraft, information on ships in our ports and also the provision of information on belligerent ships and aircraft seen from the island (...). The second is the problem, and it's possible, of a claim to future ownership of Ilha do Sal, or at least the land they used[32].

Meanwhile Keil do Amaral – who had designed the Lisbon airport – had also designed (an undated drawing) a Hotel for the Ilha do Sal airport, published in the brochure "Aeródromos" of the exhibition of *15 Anos de Obras Públicas*. [Fig. 14]



12

30    Source: Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, PT/ANTT/AOS/CO/OP - 1C cx. 479, pt. 1, 5; and also see: "Processo respeitante à indemnização pela cedência das instalações, da linee aerea transcotinentali italine - L.A.T.I. na ilha do Sal", Secretaria-Geral da Presidência do Conselho de Ministros, Gabinete do Presidente, cx. 188, proc. 1363/109, no. 3 (source: Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, PT/TT/SGPCM-GPC/1363/00003).

31    Source: Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, PT/ANTT/AOS/UL-10, cx. 765, pt. 15. Letter of 9 October 1939. (Translation from Portuguese by the author).

32    Source: Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, PT/ANTT/AOS/CO/OP - 1C cx. 479, pt. 2, 13-18. Letter of 16 October 1941. (Translation Portuguese Italian by the author).

Fig. 12
Article published, "La Città Aeronautica all'Isola del Sale" (source: *Il Resto del Carlino*, 4 Febraury 1940)
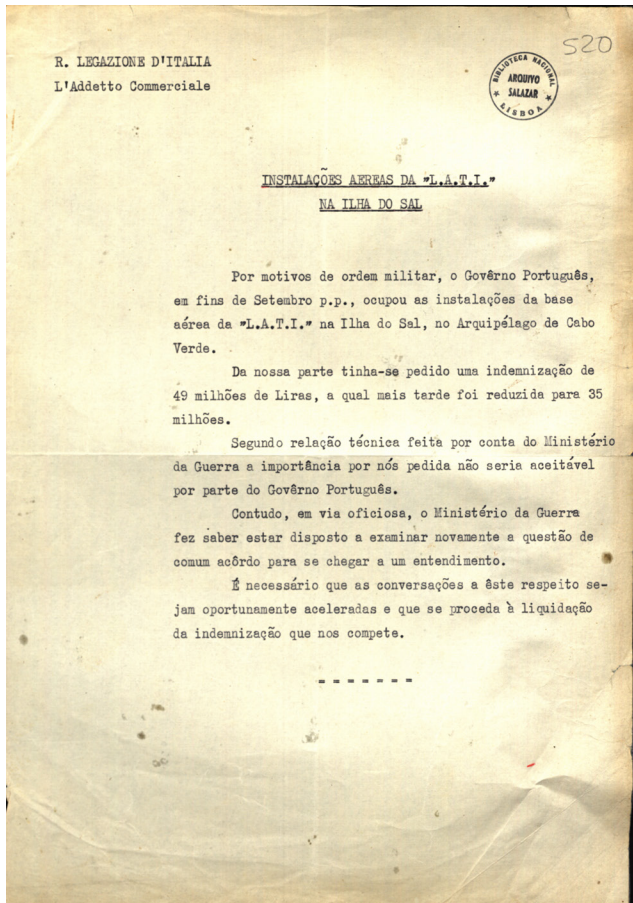
Fig. 13
Article published,
"L'organizzazione dei servizi
aerei transcontinentali italiali"
(sourse: *Le Vie dell'Aria*, 16
December 1939)

Fig. 14
Drawing for the airport Hotel in
Ilha do Sal, (sourse: brochure
"Aeródromos" of the exhibition
of *15 Anos de Obras Públicas
1932-1947*)

Fig. 15
Letter from the Portuguese
government to the Legazione
d'Italia about the occupation
of the "Instalações Aereas da
'L.A.T.I.' na Ilha do Sal", 1942c.
(source: Arquivo Nacional
da Torre do Tombo, Arquivo
Oliveira Salazar, NE-2F, cx.
434, pt. 41, ref. PT/TT/AOS/
D-J/012/0018/00041).

In 1947 the government of Rio de Janeiro had recommended the creation of a new airport on the Ilha do Sal, which was essential to regulate the operation of airline, and the Portuguese government ordered the urgent construction of the Sal airport by decree-law 36585 of November 12, 1947.

In 1948, Portugal permanently acquired all the Italian installations, holding the ownership of the air base, although it was too expensive to transport and bring all the equipment back to Italian territory. [Fig. 15]

After the II World War, it was the Italian company Alitalia that took over the coordination of connections to South America, using Dakar as an intermediate stop. Only from May 1949 the Italian flights to South America restarted to use this route with the base in Ilha do Sal, with the new airport opened to international traffic on May 15, 1949[33]. [Fig. 16]

This Italian fascist event was totally removed from Portuguese historiography, so much that it did not appear in 1947, in the official catalogue *Livro de Ouro* on the important Estado Novo exhibition *15 Anos das Obras Públicas (1932-1947)*.

This 'chapter' of Portuguese history, geographically outside the borders of Europe but directly linked to the central government, underlines the political and difficult diplomatic relations between Italian Fascism and the Portuguese Estado Novo. At the same time, it denotes the Salazar's desire to look its own originality – ideological, political, cultural, architectural – which is reflected in the architecture of public works and demonstrates the position of the Salazarist state and its regime.
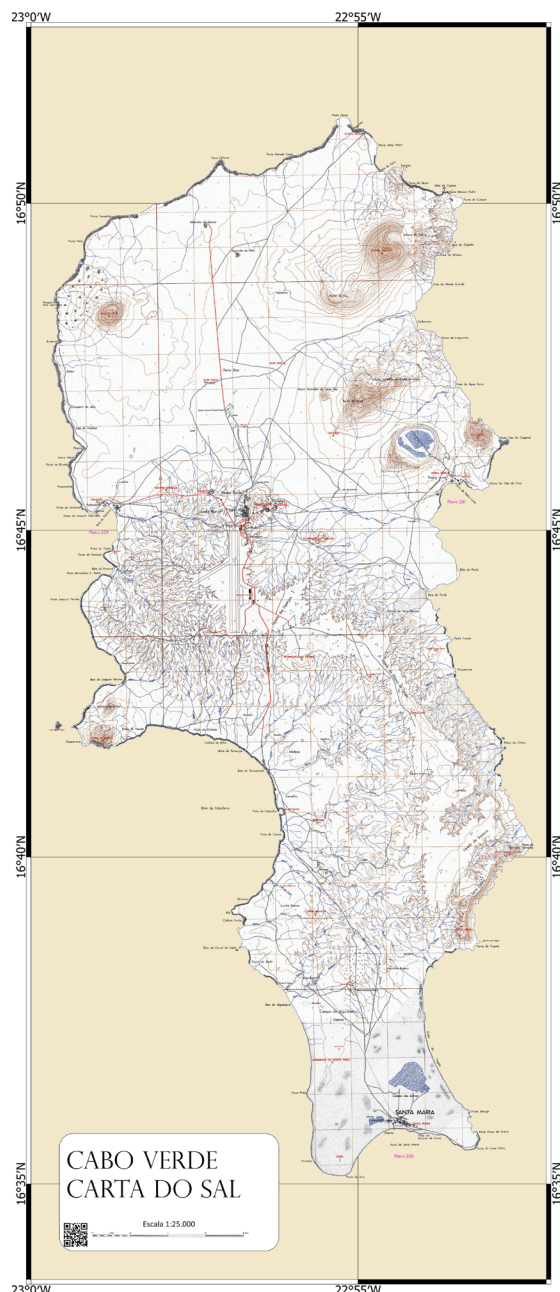


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33    The flight from Italy began in Roma-Ciampino, after an hour and a half arrived in Milano-Malpensa; then continued to Lisboa at Portela airport. From there it would take another seven-hour flight to arrive in the Ilha do Sal.

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Antonio Labalestra

# Sta Come Torre. The National Monument to the Italian Sailor and the Construction of the Ritual of Memory During the Fascist Era

*Fascist Architecture, Brindisi, Italian Sailor Monument, Propaganda, Architecture and Politics*

## /Abstract

The National Monument to the Italian Sailor in Brindisi is a majestic monument that stands on the Adriatic coast in memory of the Italian sailors who gave their lives to the service of the homeland. This monument is a tangible symbol of gratitude and recognition for the brave sailors who defended Italy and its waters. It is also a "necessary architecture" like all the architectural and monumental complexes designed and built by the fascist regime to receive and commemorate the remains of soldiers who died in war, with particular emphasis on those who fell in the First World War. Such monuments were meant to celebrate them with mass ceremonies to exalt heroism, sacrifice, death in battle, and the sacred nature of victory over the enemy through an elaborate symbolic and iconographic system and the use of spaces – architectural as well as natural and "historic" landscapes.

The decision to build a national monument in Brindisi in honor of the approximately 6,000 sailors who died during the 1915–18 war was prompted by the city's prominent role in the war, which had earned it the War Cross.

A national competition was announced for the monument, open to architects and sculptors, and 92 projects were submitted, later presented in a special exhibition held in Rome.

The winning project was the design of an enormous rudder monument with a chapel-shrine presented by architect Luigi Brunati and sculptor Amerigo Bartoli, for an estimated cost of 1,200,00 lire.

Construction took only one year, from October 28, 1932, to October 1933 and it was inaugurated on November 4, 1933, in the presence of King Vittorio Emanuele II.

Beyond the monument itself, the construction of the ritual of memory associated with it had a profound significance for the local community and the country as a whole.

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### "Why Brindisi Should Return to Its Former Glory"

All architectural works promoted by fascism and personally inaugurated by the Duce assume a particular significance transcending the artistic realm to take on political and strategic connotations to the extent that they serve Mussolini's intent to be effective tools for propaganda and mythology building around his personality.[1] **[Fig. 1]**

It is as if his presence had a miraculous ability to transform the event and, consequently, the architecture into a building block of the identity of the new fascist state. According to this political design, architecture built at the behest of the regime is meant to be part of this identity construction. Their lasting durability is entrusted with the fate of the future memory of fascism and the opportunity to "increasingly assert the regime, multiply its 'achievements,' and maximize the fascistization of Italians."[2]

As Paolo Nicoloso has thoroughly demonstrated,[3] "In Italy, during those years, there was a far-reaching political project, which leveraged architecture to manipulate the consciousness of individuals and control the identity code of the populace."[4] In this sense, "endurance also means constructing architectures that last for decades – an aspect clearly pursued – to leave behind signs of fascism for posterity. This architecture was preferably clad in marble."[5]

The inauguration practice took on a pivotal role in consensus-building and propaganda strategies for the political use of these projects. For the tenth anniversary of the March on Rome, Mussolini intensified this practice by going on a tour to all the regions of Italy: "In these pilgrimages, which took on the form of a ritual – the celebration of his arrival, the large gathering of crowds, the 'historic' speech, the promise of return – one feature is salient: its progression through visits marked by architectural objects."[6]

This was done in the belief that architectural commissions and constructions completed in the regime's ten years of rule would demonstrate its

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1   See: Philip Cannistaro, *La fabbrica del consenso. Fascismo e mass media* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1975); Renzo De Felice and Luigi Goglia, *Mussolini. Il Mito* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1983).

2   Renzo De Felice, ed., "L'organizzazione dello stato fascista. 1925-1929", in *Mussolini il fascista* (Torino: Einaudi, 1968), 362.

3   See: Paolo Nicoloso, *Gli architetti di Mussolini* (Milano: F. Angeli, 1999); Paolo Nicoloso, *Mussolini architetto. Propaganda e paesaggio urbano nell'Italia fascista* (Torino: G. Einaudi, 2008); Paolo Nicoloso, *Architetture per un'identità italiana. Progetti e opere per fare gli italiani fascisti* (Udine: Gaspari, 2012).

4   Nicoloso, *Mussolini architetto*, XVI.

5   Nicoloso, *Mussolini architetto*, 6.

6   Nicoloso, *Mussolini architetto*, 4.

Fig. 1
Mussolini on a boat in the port of Brindisi, 8 September 1934, Archivio Luce, A00056551.

industriousness and desire for the social and political integration of the masses, and, most importantly, prove it had kept the promise of modernizing the country, which had been a spark of the fascist revolution. In November 1932, at the start of his tour, going through the city of Brescia with Marcello Piacentini, the architect of Victory Square, Mussolini said specifically, standing next to the square's magnificent buildings, "Words are unnecessary; actions speak for themselves."[7]

In the regime's rhetoric, each architecture inaugurated and delivered to the people was a building block of the modern Italian fascist nation. Most importantly, it became a significant opportunity for communication and building mass consensus both for the political project of fascism and its leader who, as he delivers the architecture to the city, "going to the people," transfigures him into the sole creator of the new nation, represented as one "bustling construction site."

At the end of the summer of 1934, Mussolini's tour, which began on the anniversary of the March on Rome, reached Puglia. After intensive years of visits and inaugurations, by this point, the ceremony has become well-established, having already systematically marked the Duce's presence in all the regions of Italy, both major cities and small towns.[8]

At eight in the morning on September 6th, he arrived at the port of Bari on the Aurora motorship.[9]

Shortly thereafter, Mussolini, the Head of Government, stood on the city's waterfront on a stage set up for the occasion by the local architect Marino Lopopolo.[10]

The site chosen is the most defining location of the "great Bari" envisioned by Mussolini:[11] a city dramatically revitalized, commandingly facing the Eastern Mediterranean, becoming the emblem of the "new Puglia" landscape that fascism "has – in just over two decades – profoundly transformed. It has put forward Bari with all its energies and resources, the two-thousand-year-old strength of its grand historical and economic traditions, and the powerful cultural and economic infrastructure with which it has since been endowed and its indomitable will, which the fascist regime has extended to Italy, for its new peaceful mission of civilization in the world."[12]

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7    Edoardo Susmel and Duilio Susmel, *Benito Mussolini, Opera omnia* (Firenze: La Fenice, 1951-81), 156.

8    See: Victoria De Grazia, "Andare al popolo", in *Dizionario del Fascismo*, ed. Victoria De Grazia and Sergio Luzzato (Torino: G. Einaudi, 2002-2003).

9    "Il viaggio del duce in Puglia", *Il Popolo d'Italia*, September 8, 1934; See also: Silvio Petrucci, *In Puglia con Mussolini: cronache e note di un inviato speciale con il testo integrale dei discorsi editi e inediti pronunciati dal duce nelle giornate pugliesi del settembre XII* (Roma: Società Editrice Novissima, 1935).

10    Antonio Labalestra, "Spazi e riti per le pratiche del consumo nella Bari moderna. Le architetture per il commercio di Marino Lopopolo", *Beyond the gaze. Interpreting and understanding the city*, (September 2023): 435-436.

11    Fabio Mangone, "La costruzione della «grande Bari» negli anni del fascismo, tra ricerca d'identità e omologazione", in *L'architettura nelle città italiane del XX secolo. Dagli anni Venti agli anni Ottanta*, ed. Vittorio Franchetti Pardo (Milano: Jaca Book, 2003), 316-25.

12    See: Araldo Di Crollalanza, "Panorama della Puglia nuova", *Il Popolo d'Italia*, September 5, 1934.

The tour first visited the most important architecture built in the city – from the Victory Stadium[13] to the administrative buildings along the new Levante waterfront,[14] to the Levant Fair – and then continued to other major cities in the region.[15]

The next day he went to Lecce and then Taranto,[16] where he gave a speech at the foot of the new government building by Armando Brasini "which sought to emulate the magnificence" of ancient Roman architecture.[17] The following day, the presidential train, carrying the Duce, accompanied by Achille Starace, Araldo di Crollalanza, and Galeazzo Ciano, left Taranto to reach Brindisi. The ceremony continued in its solemnity with a brief review of the troops lined up from the Navy, Army, and Militia, greeting local authorities. He then boarded a car leading the procession, which was swiftly escorted to the government house, with cheering crowds on the sidelines, for his usual speech. After finishing it, the Duce crossed the crowded square, followed by more enthusiastic cheering, to board a motorboat to take him directly in front of the monument that Brindisi had built for its fallen."[18]

The small boat first crossed the area's entire military area; it went by the seaplane base, the marine colony, and the Fiume Grande reclamation area and then into the Levante inlet, before reaching the Swabian Castle that overlooks the historic center and ancient Roman port. After a brief stop, the procession set off again to visit the Balilla Naval Academy, where the Duce asked to see the building plans for the new headquarters of the Naval College commissioned by the Italian Youth of the Lictor. The outline of a new building, designed by the Roman architect Gaetano Minnucci, had already been traced in chalk not far away.[19] At this point, at the front of a line of workers waiting to start construction, Mussolini took up a pickaxe and dramatically delivered the first vigorous blows to dig the ditches to place the foundations of the new building. He then reboarded the motorboat:

> […] The boat skirted along the old fishing houses and then left the docks of Corso, densely packed with cheering crowds, and the docks at the Monument to the Sailor. Here too, there was a large crowd of fascist representatives and local people. The demonstration was impressive and led

13    Antonio Labalestra, "L'Arena della Vittoria: un «nuovo tempio della giovinezza e della forza» per la città di Bari", *Bollettino del Centro di Studi per la Storia dell'Architettura*, no. 4 (2020): 72-74.

14    Gian Paolo Consoli, "La formazione dei lungomare in Puglia durante il fascismo", in *La Puglia ha ancora qualcosa da dire. Alcune considerazioni sull'architettura ed il paesaggio*, ed. Gian Paolo Consoli and Antonio Labalestra (Massafra: Antonio Dellisanti Editore, 2017), 13-23; Antonio Labalestra, "Si redime la terra, si fondano le città. Il palazzo delle Opere Pubbliche per il lungomare di Bari: tra estetica del potere ed esigenze identitarie", *Bollettino del Centro di Studi per la Storia dell'Architettura*, no. 7 (2023): 35-48.

15    Ennio Corvaglia and Mauro Scionti, *Il piano introvabile. Architettura e urbanistica nella Puglia fascista* (Bari: Dedalo, 1985).

16    "Il Duce entusiasticamente accolto a Lecce ed a Taranto", *Il Popolo d'Italia*, September 8, 1934.

17    Antonio Labalestra, *Il Palazzo del Governo di Taranto: la politica, i progetti e il ruolo di Armando Brasini* (Roma: Quasar, 2018).

18    "Il viaggio del duce in Puglia trionfalmente concluso a Brindisi ed a Foggia".

19    Sandro Benedetti and Vittoria Zacheo, *Gaetano Minnucci. Progetti 1896-1980. Vita, concorsi, progetti, opere di un protagonista del razionalismo* (Roma: Gangemi Editore, 1984).

the Duce into the evocative shadows of the shrine, which, in the alcoves of the side arches, holds marbles engraved with the names of the fallen of the Navy from 1866 to the present day: from the long-ago Battle of Lissa to recent glory. The Duce paused in contemplation before each arch and the wooden statue depicting the "Stella Maris." The Head of Government then went up in a lift, used for the first time today, to the top of the rudder rising above the shrine. Here, on the terrace, where the vast port unfurls in a panoramic view, the silhouette of its three extensions resembling an enormous stag's head, the federal secretary presented the Duce with a silver reproduction of the harbor model.[20]

With this symbolic act, possession was taken of the last work personally overseen by Mussolini, and he solemnly and symbolically delivered it to the cheering crowd and to history. In the very place where Caesar had prevailed over Pompey's troops and which, after the unification of Italy, had become among the most important military and civilian ports of the nation, the ritual of commemorating the memory of the martyrs of the First World War became the ideal scenario and pretext to celebrate the fascist era.

### ...a new heritage to be placed alongside the ancient one"

The events leading to the construction of the Monument to the Italian Sailor extend many years before its inauguration. They are intertwined with the fate of the city itself and the role given it by fascism, culminating in 1927, when the new province was established in the abolished district of Brindisi, included until then within the administrative boundaries of the province of Lecce.[21]

The consequences of the city's elevation to the provincial capital did not lead to an instant transformation of the urban fabric. With few exceptions, old buildings and convents were adapted for the new public buildings needed for the new administrative role. It would take almost ten years for the demolition to get underway and the provisions of the "City Zoning and Thinning Plan," approved in 1934, to be implemented.[22]

This situation is described in the study by Carlo Aymonino and Sergio Lenci, according to which "the plan was slow to materialize due to the city's slow economic development. The initial public projects were completely exceptional, more closely linked to Brindisi's military function than to the modern transformation of its structures".[23]

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20    "Il viaggio del duce in Puglia trionfalmente concluso a Brindisi ed a Foggia".

21    The Province of Brindisi was established by Royal Decree-Law no. 1 on January 2, 1927, "Riordinamento delle circoscrizioni provinciali", published on the Gazzetta Ufficiale del Regno of January 11th. See: Giuseppe Teodoro Andriani, *Da Capoluogo di provincia a Capitale del Regno del Sud* (Brindisi: Grafica Aprile, 2000).

22    Alberto Alpago Novello, "La prima mostra dei Piani Regolatori", *Rassegna di Architettura*, no. 7-8 (year IX, 1937): 285-298.

23    Carlo Aymonino and Sergio Lenci, "Inchieste edilizie sulle città: Brindisi", *Casabella Continuità*, no. 222 (November-December 1958): 21-28.

Notable among these were the Naval College by Minnucci and the National Monument to the Italian Sailor, which according to the two authors, was "one of the least intrusive monuments, fitting in well with the greenery of the northern coast of the western inlet".[24]

In addition, starting with the reasons that the Head of Government gave to the representatives of Brindisi visiting the Viminale on January 15, 1927, many references have been made to the role the monument was intended to play in terms of the growth and modernization of the city and its port:

> I chose the Province of Brindisi, and I chose it for various reasons: because of the city's merit during the World War, for which I decided that the Monument to the Italian Sailor should be erected in Brindisi; because its port is known to all the world's sailors, considered the safest of all seas and oceans; because Brindisi is destined to the great mission for our expansion; and finally, because Brindisi, powerful at the time of the Roman Empire, must return to its ancient splendor. It is not without significance that the city is today reclaiming its rightful place in the history of Italy, which, according to the will of the Supreme Divine Providence, may have momentary eclipses but can never plunge into the darkness of night.[25]

The first major project dates to June 20, 1925, when Mussolini himself – in response to requests from the people and administrators of the city – agreed that the National Monument to the Italian Sailor should be erected in this port.[26]After the decision was made to erect a monument in honor of the fallen sailors of the First World War, at an earlier point, he had chosen Brindisi in Puglia over Trieste and La Spezia,[27] evincing its strategic importance in the Mediterranean chessboard and its decisive role in the outcome of the First World War:[28]

> To the glorious City of Brindisi, whose generous population, despite the repeated assaults from sea and sky, the numerous victims of enemy ferocity, and the unspeakable privations caused by the suspension of all traffic, never bent its spirit, I confer the War Merit Cross. I present for the admiration of Italians the city decorated in the long and bitter war, and because, with its proud character, it effectively contributed to the achievement of the Final Victory.[29]

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24    Aymonino and Lenci, "Inchieste edilizie sulle città: Brindisi", 24.

25    From the transcript of the meeting reported, among others, see: Vittorio Amedeo Caravaglios, *Il porto di Brindisi: illustrazione storica, geografica, tecnica, economica, corporativa, statistica e tariffaria* (Napoli: Guida portuale del Mediterraneo, 1942), 91.

26    See: Minutes of the Municipal Council of Brindisi dated November 23, 1923 "to vote to His Excellency the Minister of the Navy, Count Thaon de Revel, so that the national monument to the Italian sailor may be erected in Brindisi, the city that has unbowedly bent the enemy's pride during the long and harsh war"; the private letter from the Mayor of Brindisi sent to Achille Starace, requesting to submit this resolution to the Head of Government. Dated March 29, 1924. Both in the folder AS BR cat. 9, cl. 22, b. 3 fasc. 57; furthermore, see the articles: "L'erezione a Brindisi del Monumento al Marinaio d'Italia", *Giornale di Brindisi*, January 15, 1925; "Brindisi avrà il Monumento al Marinaio", *Indipendente - Settimanale di Brindisi*, June 24, 1925.

27    See: ACS, PCM, *Written note to H.E. the President of the Council of Ministers*, Rome, June 10, 1925.

28    To reconstruct the role of Brindisi during the First World War, comparing: Angelo Titi, *Alla eroica marina d'Italia* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1924); Saverio La Sorsa, *La Puglia e la guerra mondiale* (Bari-Roma: F. Casini, 1928); Caravaglios, *Il porto di Brindisi*.

29    From the motivation for the award of the War Cross, also reported in: Titi, *Alla eroica marina d'Italia*, 253.

A few days after Mussolini's approval, Vittorio Emanuele III also granted his high patronage to the honorary committee for the monument.[30]

The process leading to the building of the majestic work began with a resolution of the city council in November 1924 when the city assembly unanimously resolved to adopt the proposal, contributing the sum of 50,000 lire to the expenses.

The civic committee was formed at that point to work to raise the funds needed to build it, adopting diverse strategies: requesting donations, selling commemorative stamps, public initiatives, and concerts by the renowned tenor from Lecce, Tito Schipa.[31]

Despite the committee's efforts, the financial issue was only solved by the contribution of Achille Starace; the vice-secretary of the National Fascist Party, a long-time supporter of the project, formerly appointed extraordinary commissioner of the Italian Naval League. He took on the responsibility of supplementing the amount collected by the Civic Committee since 1925, with 1,200,000 lire.[32]

In 1930, Starace, one of the most active proponents of creating the new province of Brindisi, proposed that the architect Armando Brasini of the Academy of Architects be commissioned with the work. At that time, Brasini was completing the grand work of the Government House in Taranto[33] and the House of the Chief Magistrate in Foggia.[34]

Brasini's plan was fascinating;[35] his drawings seemed to evoke the legacy of an ancient civilization in conjuring up a magnificent waterfall flowing from an artificial mountain, created for the occasion, to pour into the waters of the port

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30    ACS, PCM, *Letter from the Undersecretary to the Presidency of the Council, Giunta, to the Minister of the Royal Household*, Rome, June 20, 1925.

31    See the folders for the sale of "stamps pro Monumento" ACS, PCM aa. 1931-33, 14.4, n. 4047/3 the folder dedicated to the press review of the pro-monument concert of Tito Schipa at the Teatro Verdi in Brindisi, AS BR, ASCB, cat. 9, cl. 22, b. 3 fasc. 57.

32    ACS, PCM, *Letter from Serafino Giannelli to Achille Starace*, Rome, June 29, 1928.

33    Labalestra, *Il palazzo del Governo di Taranto. La politica, i progetti e il ruolo di Armando Brasini*.

34    Mario Pisani, *Il Palazzo del Podestà di Armando Brasini a Foggia* (Melfi: Libria, 1997).

35    "Il monumento al Marinaio d'Italia. Presentazione e commento del progetto di monumento redatto dall'architetto Armando Brasini", *Indipendente*, no. 22 (1930): 1; Michele Biancale, "Il Monumento al Marinaio", May 27, 1930; "Il monumento al Marinaio d'Italia nel progetto di Armando Brasini", *La Tribuna*, May 23, 1930; "Il monumento al Marinaio d'Italia che Brasini erigerà a Brindisi", *Il Giornale d'Italia*, May 30, 1930; "Il monumento al Marinaio d'Italia del progetto di Armando Brasini", *Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno*, May 24, 1930; "Il monumento al Marinaio sull'Adriatico. Il grandioso progetto dell'arch. Barsini", *Popolo d'Italia*, May 24, 1930.

Fig. 2
A. Brasini, Monument to the Sailor of Italy in Brindisi, 1930, pencil and charcoal on glossy paper, Archivio Accademico San Luca, FAB23.01.

of Brindisi. [Fig. 2] The project, a version of which is at the Accademia di San Luca in Rome,[36] takes up the theme that Brasini had explored in 1918 when preparing the designs for the Monument to Victory in the First World War at Monte Pizzocco.[37] However, Brasini and his architecture no longer exerted the appeal that had made him, in the eyes of the Duce, "the architect of Imperial Italy."[38]

Brasini's plan, despite its interesting expressive symbolic effect, was not favorably received by the municipal administration and the promoting committee. It met with the same fate as the plan offered, without charge, by Saverio Dioguardi, an architect from Bari; both plans would have required too great an expenditure[39], not compatible with the financial capacity of the commissioning committee.

The importance of the theme and expectations for a work of such significance, nonetheless, required a remarkable design and a style befitting the celebration of the values of the Italian maritime tradition and its decisive role in the Great War. In the context of these needs, the decision took shape to make use of a competition.[40] The competition was published primarily in the Architettura magazine, edited by Marcello Piacentini, to give it wide publicity. The magazine published first the announcement, then the results of the competition, and, in 1934, an extensive article about the completed monument.[41] [Fig. 3]

The competition announcement, open to Italian architects and sculptors, gave clear instructions about how to present the proposal, emphasizing that criteria of sobriety, solemnity, and austerity should guide the submissions.[42]



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36    Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, Fondo Armando Brasini, Monument to the Italian Sailor in Brindisi, pencil and charcoal on glossy paper, dimensions 83 x 69,5 cm, signed lower right: A. Brasini / to the Italian sailor A. VIII, inventory FAB23.01. See also: ACS Fondo Armano Brasini, series 6, file 13.

37    Regarding this project, compare the documents: Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, Fondo Armando Brasini, Progetto per il Monumento alla Vittoria della I Guerra Mondiale a Monte Pizzocco, Vittorio Veneto, inventory FAB04.01 and FAB04.02.

38    From the handwritten dedication at the bottom of a photo of Benito Mussolini: "To Armando Brasini, Architect of Imperial Italy (...) Mussolini July 1923". ACS Roma, Archivi di Architetti e Ingegneri / Brasini Armando / Documentazione fotografica / Fotografie / 14.

39    For Dioguardi's project, an estimate of 10 million lire is considered, comparing: ACS, PCM, *Lettera di Serafino Giannelli ad Achille Starace*, Rome, June 29, 1928.

40    See: Maristella Casciato, "I concorsi pubblici per gli edifici pubblici", in *Storia dell'architettura italiana. Il primo Novecento*, ed. Giorgio Ciucci and Giorio Muratore (Milano: Electa, 2004), 208-233; Paolo Nicoloso, "I concorsi di architettura durante il fascismo", *Casabella*, no. 683 (November 2000): 4-7.

41    Comparing folders II and IX of 1932 and folder II of 1934; these latter ones are extremely useful for reconstructing the events related to the competition phases.

42    Published in full in the daily newspaper *Indipendente*, Brindisi, January 30, 1932.

Fig. 3
Cover of the magazine, *Architettura*, no. IX, (September 1932).
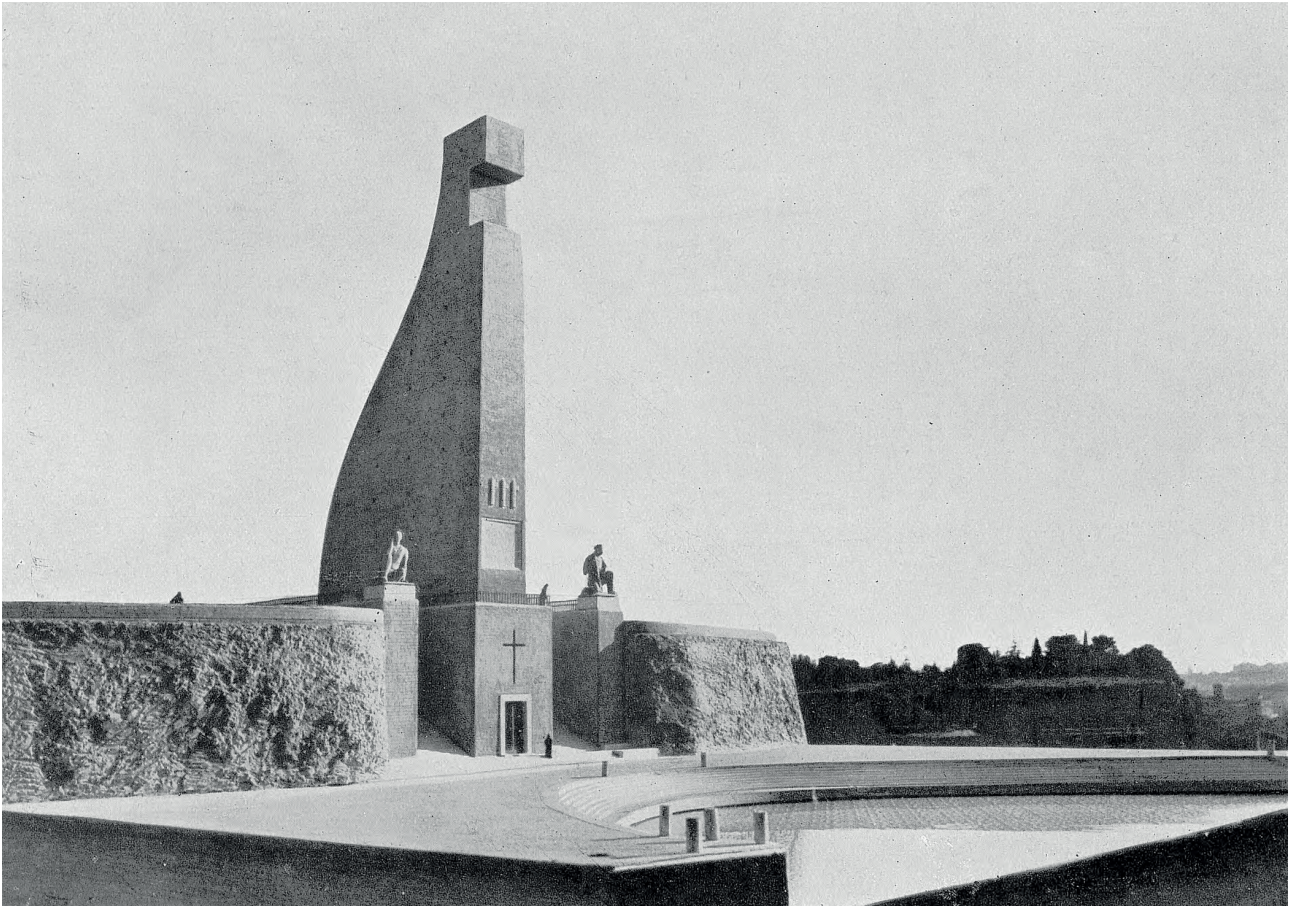
The second article of the announcement emphasized that the monument, as "a symbol of national gratitude and deference, should be primarily constituted of an imposing 'stele' formed by blocks of sea rock (natural smoke color) rising austerely for 30-40 meters," specifying that "a shrine should be carved into the base where plaques will be placed to eternalize the names that in epic deeds of peace and war over the centuries have linked their names to the glorious Italian Navy."[43]

The judging committee was chaired by the honorable Achille Starace, who had become the Secretary of the National Fascist Party. The committee included the sculptor Romano Romanelli, representing the Academy of Italy,[44] Admiral Giuseppe Cantù, representing the Ministry of the Navy; architect Enrico Del Debbio, representing the National Federation of Professionals and Architects; and Serafino Giannelli, the city magistrate of Brindisi.[45]

Out of the 92 different proposals submitted,[46] first prize was awarded to the project named for the motto "*sta come torre*" ["Stand as a tower"] by architect

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43    *Indipendente*, Brindisi, January 30, 1932.

44    See: Romano Romanelli, *Romanticismo velico. Ricordi di guerra, di mare, di caccia* (Firenze: Vallecchi, 1940).

45    Compare with the correspondence from Achille Starace to the Mayor of Brindisi, Serafino Giannelli, AS BR, ASCB, cat. 9, cl. 22, b. 5 fasc. 27.

46    A report on the submitted projects is provided by the newspaper *Indipendente*, Brindisi, January 30, 1932.

Fig. 4
Photograph of the sketch, project of the Monument of the Sailor of Italy, *Architettura*, no. II (September 1934): 65.

Luigi Brunati and sculptor Amerigo Bartoli.[47] It features an enormous rudder, with a reinforced concrete structure clad in limestone blocks from Puglia and standing over 52 meters tall. [Fig. 4]

The description of the project in *Architettura* magazine reports that:

> The monument was planned very close to the sea. An inlet in the shape of a parabola is carved into the quay itself, a small harbor on which the monument stands at its apex. The rocky promontory on which it is set is cut almost perpendicular to a horizontal section, which is a reverse parabola, wider than the other. The shrine is separated from the two narrow stairs and covered by five ribbed vaults whose sections are very elongated parabolas, placed directly on the ground. Each vault corresponds to two side recesses holding stone seats above which are plaques with inscriptions celebrating the deeds of our famous sailors. At the end of the shrine is a wooden statue of the Virgin Mary Stella, lit from above. The plateau around the monument was landscaped with pine and oleander trees in rows arranged radially like an imaginary wake left by the rudder.

Tying for second place – and rewarded with a prize of 5,000 lire – were the project with the motto "luce di gloria" ["light of glory"], by the architect Angelo di Castro and sculptor Enrico Martino, and "Oltremare," by architect Emanuele Mongiovì and sculptor Francesco Coccia.

The first project takes a decidedly futuristic approach, depicting "the Italian sailor standing on a pointed prow, surrounded by the light of the lighthouse at night," raised on the base of the shrine, on whose walls the deeds of the sailor, in peace and in war, are immortalized.[48]

Mongiovì and Coccia's project proposal was also inspired by the shape of a rudder and is crossed by a "vigorous" coffered arch; yet though it reflects "the characteristics of Lictorian style, both in form (the use of the arch element) and in its monumental dimensions," it is notably less dynamic than Brunati's design.[49]

All the projects were presented at the exhibition in the former Barberini granary on Via XX Settembre in Rome[50] Of these projects, editors of *Architettura* highlighted the one by Ruggero Michahelles with sculptor Ernesto Thayaht, presented by the group of architects Gino Cancellotti and Alfredo Scalpelli with sculptor Cesare Vecchi, the project by architect Gino Fiorini, a project by architects Aldo Mascanzoni and Oriolo Frezzotti with Francesco Barbieri, and one by the architect Rubens Magnani with Bruno Viola.

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47    Giuseppe Appella, *Amerigo Bartoli* (Roma: Leonardo Arte, 1990); Giuseppe Appella, *Amerigo Bartoli. Opere dal 1903 al 1971* (Roma: Edizioni della Cometa, 1995).

48    "Il concorso per il Monumento al Marinaio italiano in Brindisi", *Architettura*, no. X (September 1932): 463.

49    "Il concorso per il Monumento al Marinaio italiano in Brindisi", 460.

50    "I bozzetti per il Monumento Nazionale al Marinaio d'Italia. L'onorevole Starace visita l'importante Mostra", *Indipendente*, no. 31 (year X, 1932): 1.

After the commission's work was approved by the Duce, as was customary, preparations for the opening of the construction site began, with the contract awarded to the engineering firm of Armando Simoncini[51]. Under the direction of architect Brunati, it was started on the tenth anniversary of the "March on Rome": October 28, 1932.

The monument was built, adhering closely to the project, following the sinuous line of the helm rising from the level of the shrine and the steps that contain it, soaring commandingly skyward. Only minor changes were made during construction including replacing the two large statues of sailors, originally planned on the sides of the helm, with two cannons from Austro-Hungarian ships sunk by the Italians during the war.[52] A few years later, two anchors were added, which were also war loot, from the Tegetthoff and Viribus Unitis battleships.[53] They took their place on the sides of the monument in the upper square.
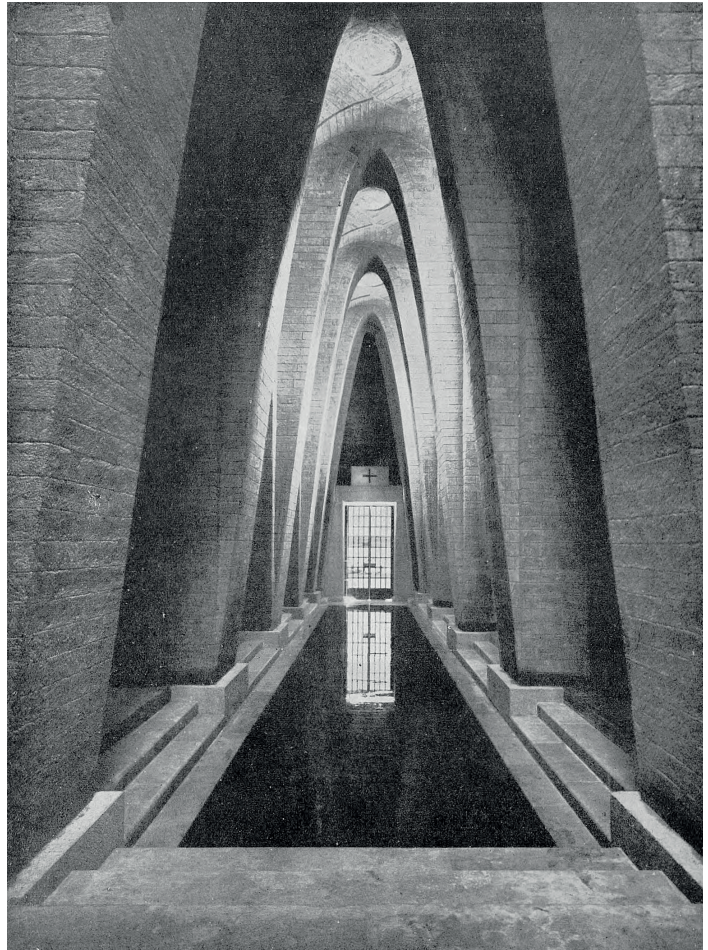
The most substantial modification involved the square's arrangement in front of the entrance to the shrine at sea level.[54] This area was initially bound by a system of arches not part of Brunati's original proposal. It was then resized based on the parabolic perimeter dock design, sloping down to the sea.[55] The original solution, inspired by the Ripetta river dock on the Tiber, intended to frame the shrine in the adjacent extension of the sea delineated by the new side retaining walls, was abandoned in favor of a simpler, less expensive linear quay.

The shrine inside the base is the element of the monument with the greatest evocative power. [Fig. 5] This space, 27 meters deep, is accessed from the lower square through an independent entrance to a space with a single nave, divided into five bays with cross vaults, designed to suggest a ship's inverted hull. [Figs. 6-7]



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51    The foundation of the company "Impresa Simoncini, costruzioni ferroviarie, edilizie, cemento armato" dates back to 1921. Born in Magione, Umbria, the company moved to Brindisi in the early thirties where, in addition to the construction of the monument structure, it contributed to the realization of an innovative sulfuric acid production plant, the first nucleus of the "Montecatini" chemical complex.

52    See page 2 of *Il giornale di Brindisi*, June 29, 1933.

53    The relics come from the naval action of Premuda. In this regard, compare: Franco Favre, *La Marina nella Grande Guerra* (Udine: Gaspari, 2008).

54    In this regard, refer to the documentation: AS BR, ASCB, cat. 9, cl. 22, b. 5, fasc. 97.

55    In this regard, refer to the documentation: AS BR, ASCB, cat. 10, cl. 9, b. 1, fasc. 9.

Fig. 5
View of the crypt, *Architettura*, *Architettura*, no. II (February1934): 71.

Fig. 6
Floor plan of the crypt,
*Architettura*, no. II
(February1934): 66.

Fig. 7
Section of the monument,
*Architettura*, *Architettura*, no. II
(February1934): 67.
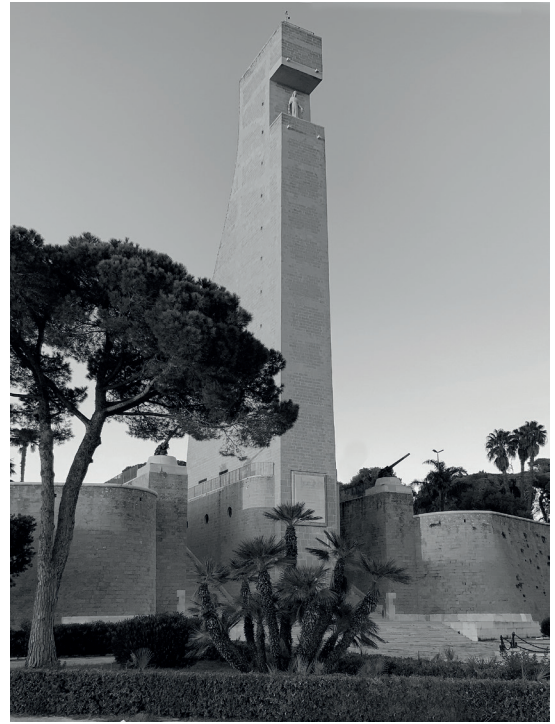
The bronze statue of the Madonna "Stella Maris" by the sculptor Amerigo Bartoli is at the end of the nave. Large slabs of black marble on the sides of the nave and the floor are engraved with the names of the 5,992 sailors of the Royal Military Navy and the Royal Merchant Navy who had fallen since the Unification of Italy through to the monument's inauguration.

"To enter the shrine, climb the steps from the lower square. If you prefer to reach the higher deck, where there is a bridge accessing the hollow of the rudder, go down another staircase. From there you can make your way to the viewpoints of the side rotundas. The small entrance into the rudder's interior also lets you reach the top of the monument using the stairs or an elevator. From here, there is a panoramic view of the city."[56] [Fig. 8-11]

### Conclusion

The Monument to the Italian Sailor was inaugurated on November 4, 1933, in the presence of King Vittorio Emanuele III and Duke Thaon de Revel, representing the Head of Government. The solemn ceremony required lengthy, meticulous preparation by the executive committee because of the presence of the king and the highest authorities of the state as well as the massive participation from all over Italy. This required ten special trains for former sailors and members of the Naval League.[57]

On the inauguration morning, as the special trains arrived, the participants

Fig. 8
View of the monument from the staircase towards the port. Photo by the author.

Fig. 9
View of the staircase from the square at the entrance to the crypt. Photo by the author.

56    ASB, *Brindisi 1927-1943. Da capoluogo a capitale. I progetti, le architetture* (Brindisi: Alfeo, 2000), 125-132.

57    "Oggi il sovrano inaugura a Brindisi il Monumento al Marinaio", *La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno*, November 4, 1933; see also the documents relating to its inauguration: AS BR, cat. 9, cl. 22, b. 3 fasc. 57.
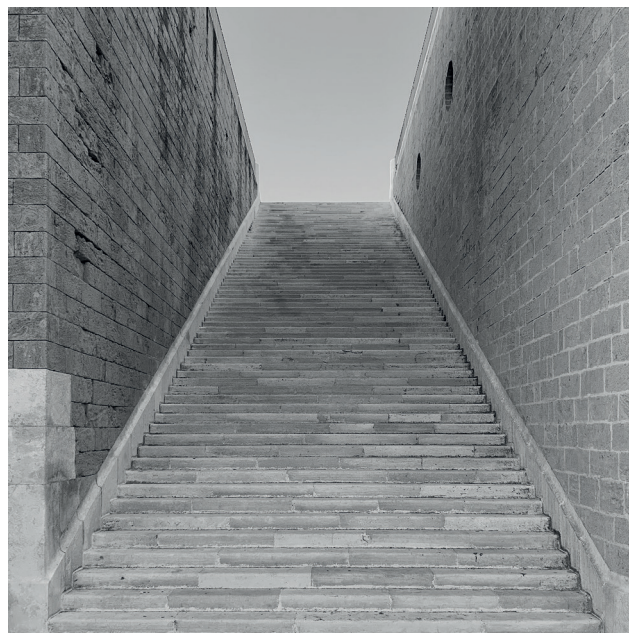
were organized and escorted to the port, where the Navy set up a floating bridge, over 250 meters long, to let the crowd reach their assigned positions. The local and provincial fascist organizations, the disabled veterans, and soldiers gathered at different assembly points before marching in procession upon the arrival of the king:

> The Monument to the Italian Sailor now stands, built at the behest of the Duce and through the steadfast efforts of the Naval League, in its austere solemnity at the gates of the Adriatic Sea. It is not only a perpetual and deserved tribute of honor and glory, and, first a foremost, a reminder and an act of faith.[58]

Yet, despite the large crowds at the inauguration, it paled in terms of attention compared to the celebration almost a year later during Benito Mussolini's visit. In the presence of the Head of Government, the architecture of the Monument to the Italian Sailor of Brindisi, costing 2,300,000 Italian lire, took on a greater meaning beyond simply memorializing the fallen of the Great War. His presence, his ritual acceptance and delivery to the people, was a moment of group awareness repeated from city to city, conveying to the crowd a sense of belonging, identity, and engagement with fascism and sending a message of consensus and strength, clear in the early reports from the time:

> the sailors of our merchant navy, who bravely fought in the Great War alongside the military navy, now form a solid mass, infused with the highest patriotic sentiments, and aware of their mission to propogate these sentiments in the world.[59]

Fig. 10
View of the base of the monument with access to the crypt. Photo by the author.

Fig. 11
View of the monument from the seaward quay. Photo by the author.

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58    These are the words Achille Starace used to describe the work.

59    These are the words Costanzo Ciano reported in the celebratory volume of the Ministry of the Navy: Ministero

The entire history of the monument in Brindisi, from its conception, the proposals by Brasini, and the competition results to its completion, is part of a broader narrative, reflecting the "theme of what role architecture should play in a fascist state."[60]

The events in Brindisi, both in their timeline and themes, correspond closely with the discussion by Pier Maria Bardi in his *Report on Architecture* from 1931.[61] This is particularly true concerning the role of support and representation that architecture is intended to fill in terms of fascism's achievements so as to "create a new heritage to place alongside the ancient one" to found "a new art, an art of our times, a fascist art."[62]

The monument in Brindisi unquestionably fits into this new heritage intended to become part of Italy's cultural tradition, alongside the glorious architectures of the past with which it has a joint responsibility for defying the passage of time and forming a new foundation of Italian historical memory. [63]

Port monuments appear to be a recurring theme in the political construction of consensus within totalitarian regimes, including beyond this specific case in Italy. They often appear as a reference point when national identity is closely tied to a nation's maritime history.

Pre-dating the monument in Brindisi, the German Bund Deutscher Marineverein commissioned a commemorative monument to honor the fallen of the First World War. This grand commemorative complex on the beach of the outer fjord of Kiel on the Baltic Sea features an expressionistic red brick tower that rises an impressive 85 meters, its design inspired by naval architecture.

The monument, designed by architect Gustav August Munzer and built between 1927 and 1936, was part of a strategy to raise public awareness of the values and traditions of the German navy, highlighting its efficiency and



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della Marina, *Al marinaio d'Italia* (Novara: De Agostini, 1933), 12.

60    Giorgio Ciucci, *Gli architetti e il fascismo. Architettura e città 1922*-1944 (Torino: G. Einaudi, 1989), 108. See the paragraph entitled "Compiti per l'architettura", 108-113.

61    Pietro Maria Bardi, *Rapporto sull'architettura (per Mussolini)* (Roma: Critica fascista, 1931).

62    From Benito Mussolini's speech in Perugia on October 5, 1926, delivered at the Academy of Fine Arts, later published in *Critica Fascista*, no. 2, 1926.

63    Emilio Gentile, *Fascismo di Pietra* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 2007).

Fig. 12
Laboe Naval Memorial.
Photograph taken by Kapitän
R. Rossow on the day of the
inauguration, May 30, 1936.

technological advancement as a guiding force of the National Socialist nation.[64]

This was made clear in the project's presentation motto which explicitly refers to the history and traditions of the German navy – Unsere Kriegs-Marine[65] ("Our Navy") – contributing to the significant prestige and international recognition the monument garnered even before its inauguration, which took place in May 1936 in the presence of Adolf Hitler himself. [Fig. 12]

In Portugal, under the regime of António de Oliveira Salazar, there was much glorification of the myth of the *descobridores*. This was initially a means of political legitimization and later a tool to influence the masses, in which there is a recognizable [66] "intention to maintain a certain ideological control over them."[67]

Among the most interesting of such examples is the site of the Fortress of Sagres in the Algarve, an architectural complex built in the 15th century, associated with the Age of Discoveries and the figure of Prince Henry the Navigator. The site received particular attention during the "Estado Novo" period, one of whose key ideologies was celebrating the Lusitanian history and the figure of Prince Henry. At one of the regime's largest propaganda events – the 1940 Centenary Celebrations – the celebration of his legend played a predominant role. The decision was made to build a monument to Prince Henry in the Fortress of Sagres as a "testimony of gratitude and a noble example of belief in the homeland."[68]

To these ends, several competitions were launched between the 1930s and 1950s, with no winners, aimed at promoting the idea that Portugal had once again become a great colonial nation.[69]



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64    For the events related to this monument see: Peter Stahnke and Myron Voyjtowitsch, *Munzer, Prof. Gustav August (1887-1973), Architekt und Schöpfer des Marine-Ehrenmals in Laboe* (Düsseldorf: Grupello Verlag, 2000).

65    Translation "our navy".

66    See: Antonio Costa Pinto, *The Blue Shirt. Portuguese Fascist and the new State* (Boulder: Columbia University Press, 2000); Daniele Serapiglia, "Goffredo Adinolfi, Ai confini del fascismo. Propaganda e consenso nel Portogallo salazarista (1932-1944)", *Storicamente*, no. 3 (December 2007); Mario Ivani, *Esportare il fascismo. Collaborazione di polizia e diplomazia culturale tra Italia fascista e Portogallo di Salazar (1928-1945)* (Milano: Clueb, 2008); Giulia Albanese, *Dittature mediterranee. Fascismo e colpo di stato in Italia, Spagna e Portogallo* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 2016).

67    Serapiglia, "Goffredo Adinolfi, Ai confini del fascismo. Propaganda e consenso nel Portogallo salazarista (1932-1944)", 20.

68    Joaquim Manso, "Carta ao sr. Presidente do Ministerio a proposito do monumento ao Infante. D. Henrique", *in ivi*, March 4, 1933.

69    For more on the role of architecture in Salazarist propaganda see: Jorge Ramos Do O', *Os anos de Ferro: O dispositivo cultural durante a "Política do Espírito" 1933-1949* (Lisboa: Editorial Estampa, 1999); Helena Mantos,

Fig. 13
Padrão dos Descobrimentos. Photograph taken by Casimiro dos Santos Vinagre during the exhibition "Mundo Português" in Lisbon, 1940.

These projects essentially failed, ending in the erection of the *Padràp dos Descobrimentos* by the sculptor Leopoldo de Almeida, based on a design by architect José Cottinelli Telmo.[70] [Fig. 13]

The influence of Italian architecture, especially the monument in Brindisi, is clear in both projects developed for the competition and the final version of the monument built in Belém. The influence is apparent in the symbolic value of the construction as well as in the naval metaphor, closely mirroring the scope of the monument in Puglia.[71]

The example of the Monument to the Italian Sailor is key to fully appreciating the use of architectural events within fascist propaganda dynamics. It also offers an interesting opportunity for international comparisons about the role that naval values played in nationalist propaganda during the interwar period.

As we have sought to demonstrate here, this aspect was key in several European national contexts, particularly concerning the role architecture can play in a totalitarian state based on the dialectic between the political content and architectural value of monumental works. Within the diverse contexts described – Italy, Germany, and Portugal – the opportunity to invest in works with high evocative power was considered, before all else, in terms of representing the idea of a "new" state through a "new style." They also reflect language rooted in strong cultural identities corresponding to a nationalist vision of radical socialism as it was being established in each of these national contexts.[72]

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*Salazar. A propaganda* (Lisboa: Temas e debates, 2010); Pedro Vieira de Almeida, *A arquitectura no Estado Novo. Uma leitura critica* (Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 2002).

70    José Ângelo Cottinelli Telmo, "O que costumam ser e o que podiam ser os monumentos comemorativos", *O Diabo*, no. 12 (16 September 1934); José Ângelo Cottinelli Telmo, "Renovação da fisionomia da cidade", in *Primeira Reunião Olisiponense*, ed. Câmara Municipal de Lisboa, vol. 2 (Lisboa: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa, 1948); Ministério das Obras Públicas, *Relatório da Actividade do Ministério nos anos de 1957 e 1958*, vol. 1 (Lisboa: Ministério das Obras Públicas, 1959); José Ângelo Cottinelli Telmo, *O Padrão dos Descobrimentos* (Lisboa: C.A.P.O.P.I., 1960); José Augusto Rodrigues França, *Os Anos 40 na Arte Portuguesa* (Lisboa: Livraria Bertrand, 1982).

71    For a detailed reconstruction of the events surrounding the competitions and the monument, see: Annarita Gori, "Tra Sagres e Lisbona: progetti museali e identità nazionale nell'Estado Novo portoghese", *Memoria e Ricerca. Rivista di Storia Contemporanea*, no. 54 (January-April 2017): 61-80.

72    Marcello Piacentini, "Il momento architettonico all'estero", *Architettura e Arti Decorative*, no. 1 (May-June 1921): 32-76.

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**Christian Toson**

# The Post-war Reconstruction of Nemi Ships Museum: Pushing the Boundaries between Museography and Memorialisation

*Nemi Ships Museum, Museum's reconstruction, Luigi Tursini, Guido Ucelli, Museography.*

## /Abstract

The Nemi Ships Museum is an early and unique example of museum architecture for large archaeological objects, built to display two great ancient Roman ships extracted from Lake Nemi near Rome between 1928 and 1932. The history of the Museum is a significant case study depicting development of fascist propaganda through heritage politics, archaeology, museography, and construction. During WWII, the Museum was damaged by a devastating fire that destroyed the ships. After the war ended, it was renovated, hosting a new exhibition, which opened in 1953. The new intervention had to deal with the huge cultural loss with a combined strategy of in-scale reconstruction of the ships and the original setting, by displaying the surviving finds, revisiting the huge fascist endeavour, and memorialising destruction. Nemi Ships Museum new setting can be contextualised within the general process of museum reconstruction in post-war Italy.

This paper uses documents and archival sources to reconstruct the key moments of the chronological and contextual development of the museum, contextualising them in the historical frames surrounding the story of Nemi Ships Museum and its post-war reconstruction. The claim is that this architecture represents both an early example of the renovation of museography in Italy following the 1934 Madrid Conference, and of a combined museal and memorial setting during Post-War Reconstruction.

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## 1944: a burning museum

On the 10th of June 1945 architect Furio Fasolo (1915-1987) was sent to assess the damage of Nemi's Museum of the Roman Ships[1]. In one of its direst moments in history, Italy was invaded by two armies: the Germans were slowly retreating north, while the Allies were advancing from the south. Most of Central Italy was turned into a battlefield, and Italian cities were heavily bombed by Anglo-American forces. The hilly countryside around Nemi was the last natural obstacle before Rome, and its lake was on the line of fire in the last days of May 1944. In the night between May 31 and June 1, while German troops were still occupying the northern shore, a fire broke in the museum, which hosted two of the largest roman ships ever discovered, about 70x30 m each. They had been extracted from the bottom of the lake between 1928 and 1934 and were among the most important archaeological findings of the century. Fasolo's report is daunting: the fire burned all wooden elements of the hulls, melted the covering lead sheets – only copper nails and other small elements were spared (Fig. 1). The building was heavily damaged as well, with the interior plaster and windows completely fragmented, and 3-meter artillery shell holes on the roof[2]. The commission investigating the fire held retreating German troops responsible, but recent findings indicate that the most probable cause were fragments of artillery shells shot by US counterbattery, aimed against German antiaircraft cannons located a few hundred meters from the museum[3]. The museum had been lavishly inaugurated by Mussolini in 1940: it lasted less than four years. With the end of the war, it was time to decide what to do with the ruins.

## Developing and Exhibition from the Excavation to the Museum

Before discussing the postwar reconstruction of the museum, it is necessary to briefly summarise its history[4].

The Nemi lake area was well settled by the Romans since the Archaic era. A special branch of Via Appia led to its northern shore, where there was an ancient sanctuary dedicated to the goddess Diana. The importance of the place is remarked by large imperial villas and noble residences found in the surroundings. The landscape of Nemi was deemed sacred since the Bronze Age, as demonstrated by archaeological evidence, and the cult of Diana was associated

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1    See Stefano Gizzi, "Tra università e istituzioni di tutela: Vittorio Ballio Morpurgo, Furio Fasolo e Bruno Maria Apollonjo Ghetti", in *La Facoltà di Architettura dell'Università di Roma "La Sapienza" dalle origini al Duemila. Discipline, docenti, studenti*, ed. Franchetti Pardo (Roma: Gangemi, 2001), 411-452.

2    Fasolo, *Notizie relative al grafico dimostrativo delle lesioni verificatesi alle coperture del Museo delle navi di Nemi*, 13 June 1944, Archivio della Soprintendenza Archeologica per il Lazio (SAL), Nemi XI, A. Dep 11/001, published in Gizzi, "Tra università…", 2001, 420.

3    A recent detailed inquiry on Nemi's fire was carried out by historians Altamura and Paolucci: Flavio Altamura and Stefano Paolucci, *L'incendio delle navi di Nemi. Indagine su un cold case della Seconda guerra mondiale* (Grottaferrata: Passamonti, 2023), 230-240.

4    Most of the basic historical information of this section comes from the following sources: Guido Ucelli, *Le navi di Nemi* (Roma: Poligrafia della Zecca di Stato, 1940); Giuseppina Ghini and Stefano Gizzi, *Il lago di Nemi e il suo Museo* (Roma: Soprintendenza Archeologica per il Lazio, 1996); Giacomo Calandra di Roccolino, "Architettura e propaganda. Il Museo delle Navi di Nemi, spunti per una ricerca", *La Rivista di Engramma*, no. 203 (2023): 23-33.
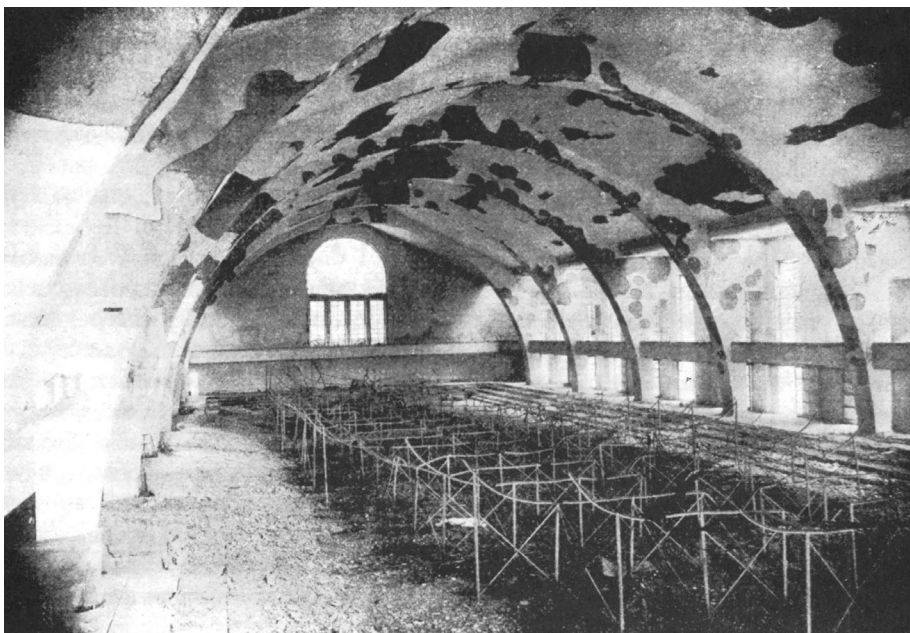
to the Sacred Forest that surrounded the temple. The existence of ancient ships inside the lake was well known since at least the XV century, with famous failed extraction attempts by Leon Battista Alberti (circa 1446) and later Francesco De Marchi (1535). No ancient source mentions the ships, hence these first explorers were the first to hypothesise that they might be a kind of floating palace, as were too large for the small lake. During the XVIII century, and especially the second half of the XIX century, thanks to the availability of underwater equipment, both ships were explored under the direction of Annesio Fusconi (1827) and Eliseo Borghi (1895), who first documented the finds, including bronze statues and mosaic panels. These campaigns, however, were focused on extracting valuable artefacts and damaged historical data: in 1896 the Ministry of Education ended the spoliation of the ships, and between 1895 and 1896 Vittorio Malfatti published the first modern scientific studies on this subject. Plans for further exploration and extraction of the ships were devised in the following years but were not put in action due to the operation's complexity and cost. The lake history gained international attention especially after the publication of the *Golden Bough* by anthropologist James Frazer, who, inspired by the sacrifice rituals of the *Rex nemorensis* associated to the sanctuary, developed his well-known comparative approach on magic and religion.

In 1923 the rise of fascism in Italy made conditions favourable again. Party propaganda being based on "romanity"[5] meant the financing of great archaeological projects, such as the Ara Pacis reconstruction or the Roman Forums excavations. Senator Corrado Ricci (1858-1934), interested in the ships since 1907, proposed then the extraction project from lake Nemi that was enthusiastically

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5   On the topic of fascist propaganda of "romanity" trough archaeology, see: Luciano Canfora, "Classicismo e fascismo", *Quaderni di Storia*, no. 3 (1976): 15-48; Joshua Arthurs, *Excavating Modernity. The Roman Past in Fascist Italy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012); Emilio Gentile, *Il fascismo di pietra* (Bari: Laterza, 2007); Daniele Manacorda, "Per un'indagine sull'archeologia italiana durante il ventennio fascista", *Archeologia Medievale*, no. 9, (1982): 443-470; Alessandra Muntoni, "Architetti e archeologi a Roma", in *Storia dell'architettura Italiana. Il primo Novecento*, edited by Giorgio Ciucci and Giorgio Muratore (Milano: Electa, 2004).

Fig. 1
Interior of the eastern hall of Nemi Ships Museum destroyed by the fire. Published in Ucellli, *Le Navi di Nemi,* 1950,  308.

endorsed by Mussolini in 1926. In terms of propaganda, the large Roman ships were to be the testimony of the greatness and technological development of the Italian Navy.

It was to become one of the greatest archaeological venues of Italian history. The process of extraction of the enormous ships from the bottom of the lake was in itself an operation displaying the regime's best engineering capabilities. Among various solutions, it was decided to empty the lake with large pumps. This choice was not only technical but was tied with the regime's transformations campaigns of portions of the Italian territory by draining insalubrious wetlands to expand agricultural land.

The enterprise was organised by the regime as an exemplar fascist collaboration between institutions and the private sector, involving Ministries, such as Education, Navy, and Airforce, which sponsored the project, public companies, such as the Electrical Company of Latium, providing resources, and private companies that carried out the works and provided machinery. Some of the best archaeology and engineering specialists were invited to participate and share their expertise – among them Guido Ucelli (1885-1964), engineer, brilliant CEO of Riva Calzoni and archaeology enthusiast. Riva Calzoni was at the time one of the largest heavy machinery companies in Italy and produced hydraulic turbines and pumps. Ucelli not only provided the pumps but played a crucial role in the success of the whole operation by coordinating technical works. His volume on the Nemi ships, published in two editions before and after the war[6], stands now as the most complete description of the ships, with a detailed history of the operation, and scholarly essays on the finds: the archaeological site, the objects, and the hulls were represented through measured drawings, which became the most important source for their reconstruction after the fire.

As soon as the ships started to emerge and the digging began, it became evident that the ships should be displayed near the shores, as it was impossible to move them much farther. The first projects focused more on sheltering the ships, and the musealisation function was of less importance – they were similar to archaeological coverings. An initial provisional structure of steel trusses and canvas was built to protect the first ship for two years while the second ship was still under excavation. At the same time, the site had a little exhibition room for smaller finds retrieved from the mud: nails, bronze heads, anchors, terracotta elements, gilded bronze tiles, mosaic fragments, coins, wooden doors, pumps, lead pipes. Some of these were unique objects that significantly contributed to the history of Roman naval engineering.

This provisional room reflected a traditional archaeological musealisation scheme where the finds – displayed and arranged according to typological/chronological classification in a separate building – were protected from the excavation site. The provisional museum was open for visitors (including

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6    Ucelli, *Le Navi di Nemi*.
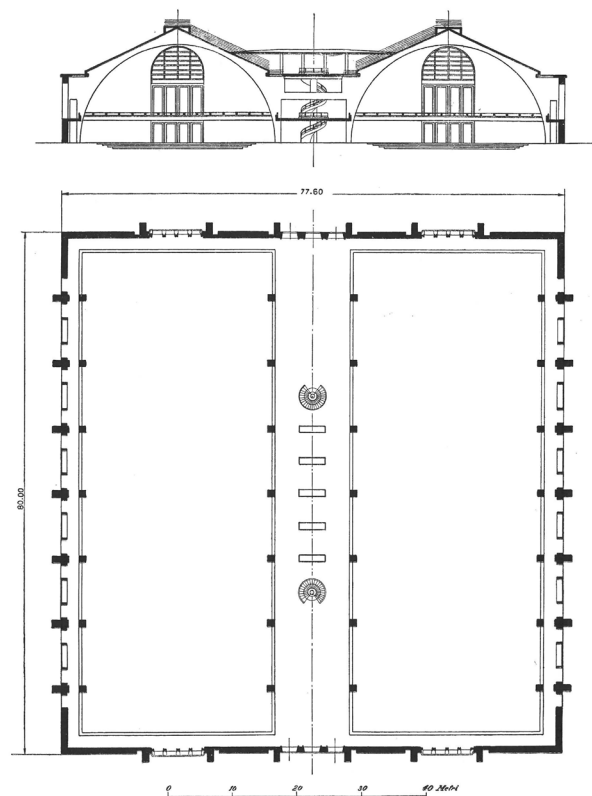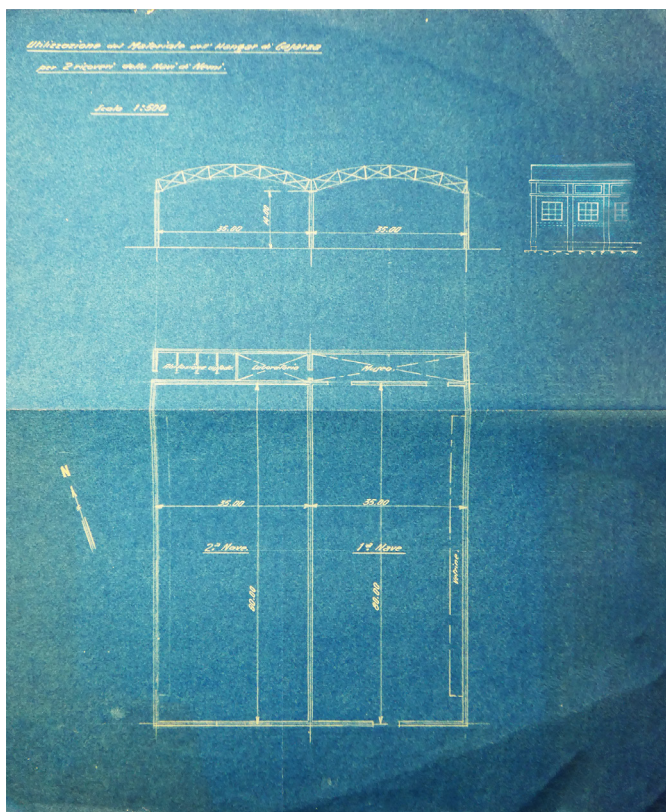
celebrities and high officials), and many were coming to see the work in progress – for them were laid the first visiting paths that encircled the ships. All these elements later became the basis for the final exhibition[7].

The first projects for the final recovery of the ships reflect their provisional setting: they are based on the reuse of zeppelin hangar coverings that had the necessary span and were readily available due to the decommissioning of airships from military aviation. Steel trusses on pillars would create two parallel halls for the ships, and behind, in a separate space, there would be the exhibition halls for the objects (Fig. 2). There are more than three variants of this layout, dating from 1929 to 1933, the last designed by Italo Gismondi (1987-1974)[8]. For reasons still unclear, none of these proposals was accepted, and in 1933 a previously discarded proposal by Vittorio Morpurgo (1890-1966) became the project of the museum still visible today (Fig. 3)[9].

This project was completely different both in construction and museography principles: the structure consisted in large span reinforced concrete arches connected by massive beams supporting a gable roof; from the point of view of spatial organisation, Morpurgo's project is much more fluid in the connection

Fig. 2
General plan of the Museum, draft by Ucelli's technical office, reusing hangar trusses (INASA, Fondo Navi di Nemi, C. 2, b. 3, doc 01).

Fig. 3
Approved plan of the Museum, designed by Vittorio Morpurgo (published in Ucelli, *Le Navi di Nemi*, 1950, 106).

7    For a more detailed description of the genesis of the Museum's project during the excavation of the ships, see my article: Christian Toson, "Dallo scavo all'architettura. Ingegneri, archeologi e architetti nella genesi del progetto del Museo delle Navi di Nemi", *Ricerche di Storia dell'Arte*, vol. 142 (2024): 59-67.

8    Ghini and Gizzi, *Il lago di Nemi e il suo Museo,* 30.

9    Istituzione Biblioteca Classense (IBC), Carte Corrado Ricci, Corrispondenza Navi di Nemi, b. 2, f. 223, f. 250.

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between different areas. Between the two halls there is a central gallery, functioning both as the main distribution axis, hosting the main entrance, staircases, and service rooms, and as an exhibition area for smaller objects. Furthermore, a mezzanine level allowed to walk around the ships, and to exhibit other artefacts. In this setting the visitor could enjoy a dynamic view of the archaeological finds, viewing the ships from below, and above, and could climb the helicoidal steps to the rooftop terraces for a panoramic view of the lake. Large windows on all four sides create connections both with the water and the nearby ancient sanctuary. Special architectural details reinforced the relationship between the building and the ships, such as the balustrade of the mezzanine, or the asbestos roof tiles, custom-made in the same shape as the gilded bronze ones found on the ships. Overall, Morpurgo's project deals with the complexity of the relationship between interior and exterior, between the exhibited object and ancient sacred landscape (Fig. 4).

This was probably one of the first modern museums in Italy conceived to display only one archaeological find, in one single articulated space. It may be possible that ideas coming from the Madrid Conference on Museography (1934), a turning point in the design of museums[10] were applied in the Nemi display, since

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10    Italian speakers at the conference were Ugo Ojetti, Roberto Paribeni, Amedeo Maiuri, see Mulazzani, Marco. "Il museo italiano: la trasformazione di spazi storici in spazi espositivi: attualità dell'esperienza museografica degli anni '50", in *Il Museo italiano*, ed. Antonella Huber (Milano: Lybra, 1997), 59; citing *Museographie, Architecture, et Amenagement des Musees d'Art*, Madrid 1935. See also Jean-Baptiste Jarmin, "La Conférence de Madrid (1934). Histoire d'une manifestation internationale à l'origine de la muséographie moderne", *Il Capitale Culturale. Studies on the Value of Cultural Heritage*, no. 15 (2017): 73-101.

Fig. 4
Pictures of the museum in 1940. View from below, from the gallery, and from above (SAL 3254 no. 4485-88).

one of the Italian representatives at the Conference, Roberto Paribeni (1876-1956), was deeply involved in the Nemi operation. Afterwards, new principles of museography became popular in Europe, focusing on the importance of visitor experience. Visual sequence, articulation of the movement, the importance of light, both natural and artificial – are some of the keywords of these new trends apparently followed in the Museum in Nemi. Moreover, in the same years, in Italy important museum renovation projects were carried out, such as the resetting of the Roman National Museum, which hosted some of the findings from Nemi. Other relevant events of that time were the great exhibitions, such as the "Mostra Augustea della Romanità", started in 1934 and opened in 1937, linked with most of the fascist archaeological ventures, and the "Prima Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare" in Naples, opened in 1940, where significant effort was put to celebrate the Italian Navy, in particular with the pavilion of the Repubbliche Marinare. Within the exhibition, the large reconstruction of Admiral Marco Querini's XVI century *galea* bears resemblance with the setting of the Nemi ships.[11] While the Museum was certainly built during a period of great experimentation in museography, the available documents do not allow to completely understand the design choices. Morpurgo's archive is currently inaccessible[12].

Building started in 1934, carried out by the Genio Civile under the direction of Antonio Buongiorno, who developed the concrete structures with his team. Once the roof was finished, the giant ships were spectacularly transferred from the bottom of the lake to their final position inside the halls on the shore some 200 meters away, using rails and hundreds of winches. In 1936 the front façade was closed, and interior works started. New, specially designed, metal supports replaced rough wooden cradles. Thin metal frames over the hulls supported the bronze bow and outlined the possible shape of the upper part of the vessels. The supports held also bronze head copies and details of the ships in their original position. Specially designed showcases in the central gallery hosted the heads, the balustrades, and other smaller objects. Larger objects, such as the anchors and marble columns, were kept at the lower level.

On the 25th of April 1940, after fourteen years of work, the museum was finally inaugurated by Mussolini with a lavish celebration. Six weeks later, Italy would enter World War II.

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11    See the pictures of the Prima Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare - padiglione delle Repubbliche Marinare by Federico Patellani, in SIRBeC, Sistema Informativo Regionale dei Beni Culturali Lombardia https://www.lombardiabeniculturali.it/fotografie/schede/IMM-3g010-0010444/ . See also Gabriella Prisco, "Allestimenti museali, mostre e aura dei materiali tra le due guerre nel pensiero di Amedeo Maiuri", *Il Capitale Culturale. Studies on the Value of Cultural Heritage*, no. 14 (2016): 531-574.

12    Vittorio Morpurgo's documents are held in the private archive of Piergiorgio Santoro, currently unaccessible. The last publication citing the archive is Stefano Gizzi, "Tra università e istituzioni di tutela: Vittorio Ballio Morpurgo, Furio Fasolo e Bruno Maria Apollonjo Ghetti", in *La Facoltà di Architettura dell'Università di Roma "La Sapienza" dalle origini al Duemila. Discipline, docenti, studenti*, ed. Franchetti Pardo (Roma: Gangemi, 2001), 411-452.

## The destruction and reconstruction of the Museum

From September 1943 to June 1944 the surroundings of Rome faced heavy destruction caused by the Allied advance. The Albani hills area, where Nemi lies, was repeatedly bombed[13]. Most of the damage was caused to the city of Frascati and the villages of Genzano, Albano Laziale, Velletri, Grottaferrata; cultural monuments were destroyed, and many residents displaced.

On the 24th of July 1943 German troops occupied the Museum. Fearing direct or indirect damages, Superintendent Salvatore Aurigemma (1885-1964) transferred the most valuable pieces, such as the bronzes, to Palazzo Massimo in Rome[14]. On the 10th of November 1943 the museum was officially listed by the Abteilung Kunstschutz, the Military office for the protection of monuments[15], so as to be protected by the German military. In February and April 1944, following the Anzio landings, the areas surrounding Nemi and Genzano area were bombed heavily. Hundreds of displaced villagers sought refuge in Museum, believing it would be spared from the attacks. People camped among the ships, lighting fires, cooking, hanging laundry, bringing chairs and beds, creating a serious threat to the conservation of the delicate archaeological material (Fig. 5). Aurigemma, with the collaboration of German military, evacuated the people the 3rd of April[16]. In the following months the museum wasn't accessible, guarded

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13    For a detailed account see Raimondo Del Nero, *L' 8 settembre 1943 a Frascati. Sessanta anni dopo* (Roma: Aracne, 2003).

14    The chronology of the war years of the Museum was reconstructed by Altamura and Paolucci in *L'incendio delle navi di Nemi. Indagine su un cold case della Seconda guerra mondiale,* 2023, chapter V, *il museo fra due fuochi,* 109-150.

15    On the activity of the Kunstschutz, see Klinkhammer, Lutz. "Arte in guerra: tutela e distruzione delle opere d'arte italiane durante l'occupazione tedesca: 1943-1945", in *Parola d'ordine Teodora,* ed. Giuseppe Masetti and Antonio Panaino (Ravenna: Longo Angelo, 2005).

16    Ucelli, *Le navi di Nemi*, 321.

Fig. 5
Genzano and Nemi residents sheltered among the Nemi ships (SAL scheda 2171 inv. no. 2815).

by local keepers and German soldiers, while fighting in the area intensified. Between 22:00 and 24:00 on May 31st, following American artillery strikes aimed at a nearby battery, the Museum burned down. The building was hit also on June 1st and June 2nd by the advancing army. Germans retreated from Nemi in the night of June 2nd, and only in the morning of June 3rd the keepers could assess the damage. Except for the concrete structures, everything had been destroyed by the high temperatures of the fire. American troops occupied the shores of the lake on June 4th.

The first alterations to the museum after the fire were made by American soldiers. Photographs taken by them[17] as well as envoys from the Italian Superintendence[18] show the building being used as a shelter for the troops[19] **(Fig. 6)**. The central section of the museum, with lower ceilings and two floors, was cleared from the debris, as were the perimetral walkways. The remains were shovelled in the centre of the halls, mixing archaeological and modern material together. On the free spots were placed army cots with mosquito nets and some camping equipment.  It is unclear how long the Allied troops camped in the building, but we know that on June 7th  news arrived to Aurigemma and on June 8th the first official visits by the MFAA (Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Sub commission: the so-called "Monuments Men" took place), followed by inspections carried by the Superintendence from 10th to 15th June; at this time architect Furio Fasolo wrote his report[20]. Nemi's Museum wasn't an exceptional case: in those months Italian heritage authorities in Latium were dealing with

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17    Imperial War Museum, NA 16168-73.

18    Historical Archive of Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma (SAL), fondo Salvatore Aurigemma, Nemi, scheda 3712, inv. 5244; scheda 2172, inv. 2816; scheda 2173 inv. 2817; scheda 2171 inv. 2815.

19    See also Altamura and Paolucci, *L'incendio delle navi di Nemi*, 184-190.

20    See footnote 2.

Fig.6
American camp in the burned museum (SAL scheda 2173 inv. 2817).

massive destruction of historical and archaeological sites[21]; Fasolo himself was busy with the repair of damages in Villa Adriana, Tivoli, and the Sanctuary of Palestrina[22].

Apparently, Nemi's Museum didn't receive any serious attention until 1948, when the same institutions that built it, i.e. the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Public Works, and the Ministry of Naval Defence, decided to start the reconstruction. A letter dated December 4, 1949, states that Luigi Tursini was in charge of the interior exhibition, especially regarding the construction of "models and simulacres" that reproduced with "maximum correspondence" the lost ships[23]. Tursini was a naval engineer and had been involved in the study of the Roman ships: hish calculations on their possible hydrostatic characteristics were published in Ucelli's volume[24]. He had a deep knowledge of the ships' geometries and was probably the best qualified person for their possible reconstruction, but he lacked museology experience. Current sources don't indicate the architect coordinating restoration works on the building, nor they provide construction drawings, except for a general plan[25].

21    For an overview on the degree of destruction of central Italian heritage in those years, see the reports by: Emilio Lavagnino, *Cinquanta monumenti italiani danneggiati dalla guerra*. Roma, 1947; Guglielmo De Angelis d'Ossat, "Danni di guerra e restauro dei monumenti", *Atti del V Convegno Nazionale di Storia dell'Architettura*. Perugia, 1948; and *La ricostruzione del patrimonio artistico italiano* (Roma: La Libreria dello Stato, 1950).

22    For a reconstruction of Fasolo's reconstruction of Villa Adriana and Palestrina, see Stefano Gizzi, "Tra università e istituzioni di tutela: Vittorio Ballio Morpurgo, Furio Fasolo e Bruno Maria Apollonjo Ghetti", in *La Facoltà di Architettura dell'Università di Roma "La Sapienza" dalle origini al Duemila. Discipline, docenti, studenti*, ed. Franchetti Pardo (Roma: Gangemi, 2001), 411-452; and Maria Bergamo, "Bombe sulle rovine: Villa Adriana 1943-1944", in *Strategie della memoria: architettura e paesaggi di guerra*, ed. Maria Bergamo and Andrea Iorio (Roma: Aracne, 2014), 54-63.

23    The letter is a photocopy kept in the Nemi Museum director's office. The position of the original is in the Archive of Soprintendenza (SAL). Title: *Ricostruzione del Museo Navale di Roma in Nemi*, from: Ministero della Difesa Marina, Direzione generale delle Costruzioni Navali e Meccaniche, signed by General Inspector dr. ing. Ignazio Alfano to: Ten. Col. GN. Luigi Tursini, and c.c. Ministero Pubblica Istruzione, Ministero dei Lavori Pubblici, Guido Ucelli, Maricost.

24    Ucelli, *Le Navi di Nemi*, 369-393.

25    Attachment to the letter mentioned in footnote 23.

Fig. 7
The westward hall after restoration, with the model ships on the right and the metal profile on the left. (Nemi Ships Museum archive).

Despite scarcity of official documents, there is a consistent photographic documentation that allows us to reconstruct the works in detail[26] (Fig. 7).

The main problem in the restoration was the absence of the two ships, a gap that couldn't be easily filled, given that the museum was purposely built to host them. The decision taken in 1949 was to completely restore one of the two pavilions and the central gallery, while the interior of the other pavilion would have had repaired only the roof, the windows, and exterior walls, leaving the interior as it was after the fire[27].

### Re-enacting the original exhibition

Construction site photos show how the westward hall was completely repaired: plasters, wall coverings, and floors were stripped out and replaced, the original mosaic surfaces of the stairs and some parts of the mezzanine substituted with simple coloured plaster; balustrades were remade. The floor was the most modified part: the original levels of the stepped floor were covered by a single flat surface, a few centimetres lower than the central section, seemingly with a polished concrete finish.



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The exhibition designed by Tursini occupied this space with two main areas: on the right, along the central section, two 1:5 models of the original hulls; on the left, a 1:1 reconstruction of half of the outline of one ship (Fig. 8). The remaining space was left for the main bronzes, while pictures, drawings, and smaller material, such as tiles and pipes, were placed along the perimetral wall.

The model ships were placed in a pit created in the floor, at the level of the Roman road that leads to Nemi's sanctuary, crossing the museum. In the original setting the road was exposed in a deep trench in the floor, but it wasn't accessible. Conversely, the new pit is accessible by a spacious staircase. The pit floor was clad with broken tiles (the so-called Palladian floor), resembling ancient road paving; the pit sides were painted plain black. The models were placed on tall stilts, so that they could stay at the ground floor level. This allowed the viewer to observe the models from the top, from the side and from below.

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26    Archived pictures of the Soprintendenza Archeologica del Lazio (SAL), scheda 3003, inv. 4005-4043.

27    From Ucelli, *Le Navi di Nemi*, 326, written before the end of the restoration: "Le riparazioni da eseguirsi dal Ministero dei Lavori Pubblici, Provveditorato Regionale alle Opere Pubbliche per il Lazio, comprenderanno la reintegrazione totale di uno dei due padiglioni e della galleria centrale, mentre nell'altro padiglione si ha in programma di eseguire solo le riparazioni protettive del tetto, degli intonaci esterni e degli infissi, lasciando l'interno come è stato ridotto dall'incendio."

Fig. 8
Installation of metal tubing tracing the line of a ship, designed by Tursini (Nemi Ships Museum archive).
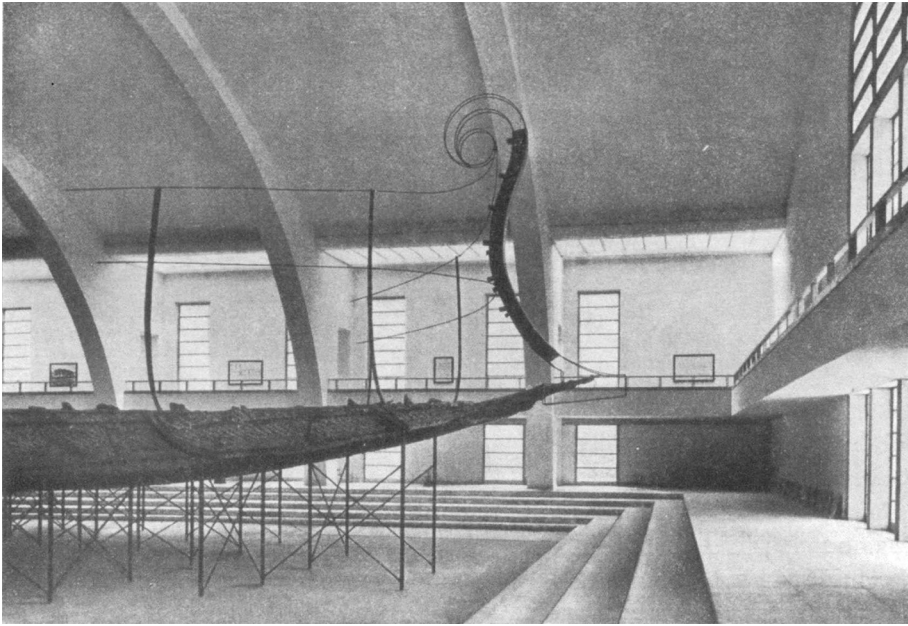
On the outer side, a tall construction in white metal tubes spans the entire length of the hall. It reproduces, in real-size, half of the outline of one of the Roman ships. One long pipe follows a curved shape corresponding to the bow, the hypothetical washboard line, and ends on the high stern. Other shorter pipes, placed perpendicularly, represent the outriggers. The pipes are held at the right position by thick round posts of the same colour.
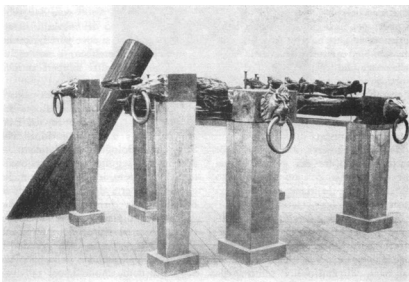
In the first setting, the original bronzes were placed in special window cases in the upper central gallery, and copies were mounted on the ships' outriggers to show their appearance in the correct location. They were retrieved from Rome for the new setting and placed on the ground floor without casing. The decorated balustrade stands right in front of the model hulls, while the heads are arranged in a composition of four crossed beam supports, analogous to the ones used in the provisional exhibition during the excavation **(Fig. 10)**.

In the lower central gallery, there are window cases for smaller objects, similar to the original ones, while in the middle, copies of the large anchors **(Fig. 11)**.

This setting deals with absence with a descriptive-didactic strategy. The lost ships are rendered with a triple description: 1) scaled copies, for a detailed image; 2) a 1:1 abstract line, to imagine the real scale; 3) technical drawings of the archaeological findings, giving a philological description; those are the

Fig. 9
Original metal rods on the hull designed by Morpurgo suggesting the shape of the ship (published in Ucelli, *Le Navi di Nemi*, 1950, 107).

Fig. 10
Settings of the bronze heads, from the first provisional museum (1930-35, left), to their place on the aft of the ship (1940-44, centre), to the 1953 exhibition (1953-1962, right) (SAL scheda 2564, inv. 3330, 4136).
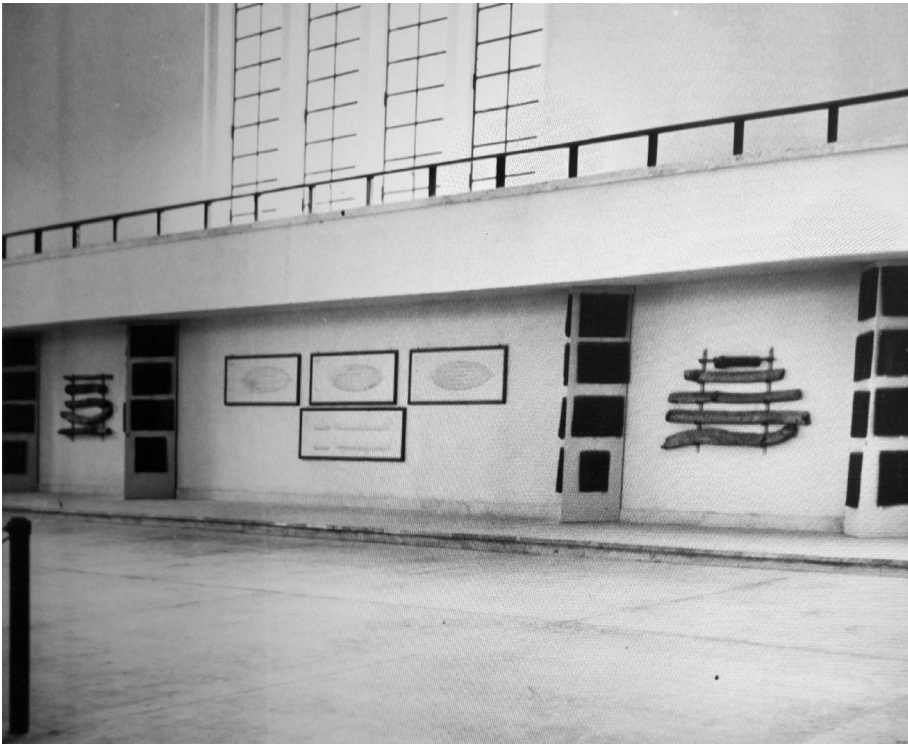
source of the other two representations. Perception of the original object is reconstructed by deconstruction, by the separation of the once all-encompassing experience in three smaller events that help grasp the lost ships' grandness.

The model hulls were built in the docks of Castellammare di Stabia, a few kilometres from Nemi, under the supervision of Tursini. Even scaled, they were considerably large, around 13 meters long: their transport and placement in the museum required large lorries. There are two newsreel footages[28] documenting the transfer. In a festive atmosphere, the lorries, escorted by the police, travel from Castellamare to Nemi. Their journey is a pretext to depict the reconstruction efforts in Italy: a village bearing evident traces of the bombings, farmers

Fig. 11

Display of the smaller artifacts. Morpurgo's window cases (1940-1944, left), 1953 exhibition, with the model ship in the background (1953-1962, centre) (SAL scheda 3003, inv. 4015, 4634).

Fig. 12

Display of the lead pipes, bronze tiles, and reconstruction drawings on the walls in the 1953 setting (SAL scheda 2566, inv. 4638).

28    Newsreels *Ricostruita la seconda nave di Nemi*, 01/05/1952, code I076705, ([https://patrimonio.archivioluce.com/luce-web/detail/IL5000020850/2/-10423.html](https://patrimonio.archivioluce.com/luce-web/detail/IL5000020850/2/-10423.html), last accessed November 2024) and *Trasporto di navi al museo di Nemi*, 08/05/1952, code ML002502, ([https://patrimonio.archivioluce.com/luce-web/detail/IL5000040025/2/trasporto-navi-al-museo-nemi.html](https://patrimonio.archivioluce.com/luce-web/detail/IL5000040025/2/trasporto-navi-al-museo-nemi.html), last accessed November 2024).
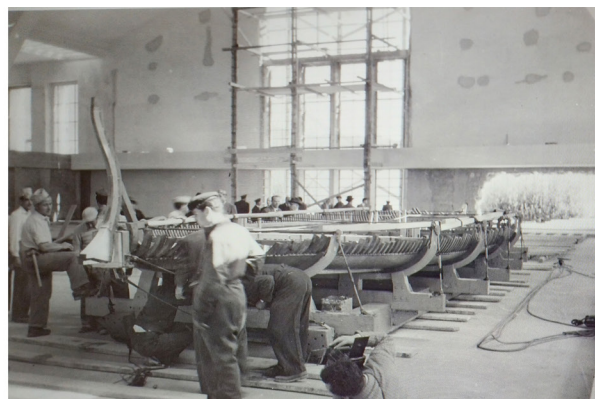
on the road, a destroyed bridge with a new one rebuilt on the side, the Nemi landscape from the distance, a close up on Roman capitals, and finally the Museum, still scarred by the war, covered with scaffoldings. The model is slowly pushed inside through a hole in the main façade. The parallel with the regime footages of the Roman ships transferred inside is evident[29], but the setting and the atmosphere are completely different **(Fig. 13)**. Mightiness and sublimity are scaled down, replaced with dynamicity and industriousness, and an underlying humble melancholy, well reflecting post-war Italy.

It may not be excessive to consider this event a particular form of re-enactment. Not only the process of transporting the ships inside the museum is done on similar premises, but the setting itself bears references to the old one. Even in the new setting, the ships can be visited from above and below, and it is possible to walk around them, albeit at different levels. The central gallery and the perimeter walls, unchanged, retain the same function. The 1:1 profile has analogous function to Morpurgo's metal rods suggesting the missing parts of the hulls. Even the bronzes, no longer on the mezzanine, are placed so as to reproduce some of the previous effects. The heads are also arranged in a square, as in the very first setting, and alluding to their arrangement on the ancient ships. The balustrade remains in front of the window, looking out on the lake.

The new setting is not overbearing or experimental, but rather plain and subdued, in deference to the original one. Everything seems to be arranged to allow a rational reconstruction of "how it was": behind the modest, didactic approach, probably also lies a memorial intention.

## A memorial?

The memorial function of the museum may be confirmed by the hall whose interiors were probably left in their ruined state on purpose[30], while roof and windows were repaired to provide weather protection. From the available sources it

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29    See, as an example the Luce newsreel *Sul lago di Nemi si assiste all'alaggio delle due navi di Caligola per il ricovero nel nuovo museo,* 01/04/1936, code B086106 ([https://patrimonio.archivioluce.com/luce-web/detail/IL5000022332/2/sul-lago-nemi-si-assiste-all-alaggio-due-navi-caligola-ricovero-nel-nuovo-museo.html](https://patrimonio.archivioluce.com/luce-web/detail/IL5000022332/2/sul-lago-nemi-si-assiste-all-alaggio-due-navi-caligola-ricovero-nel-nuovo-museo.html) last accessed November 2024).

30    See footnote 27.

Fig. 13

Transport of the first ship in the Museum (1935), and trasport of Tursini's 1:5 model reconstructions in the 1953 exhibition (1953-1962) (Nemi Ships Museum archive).

is not possible to state with certainty whether the ruined hall was an intentional memorial setting, or simply something to be completed in the future. While a document dated 1948 shows some partitions separating it from renewed part, which may suggest the second hypothesis[31], it seems quite peculiar for the windows to have been replaced without first removing the debris, as it happened with the other hall. In addition, from 1953 to 1963 the ruins were kept untouched in their position and not removed: this may suggest that, at least in time, they became accepted as part of the museum setting.

This is furtherly reinforced by the depiction of the Museum by director Elio Petri in the 1961 movie L'assassino[32]. In the scene starting at 27'41", the main characters of the film enter the Nemi Ships Museum. Starting from the eastern hall, they walk on the burned rubble, passing between the deformed metal stilts. Ceiling and walls are stained in black and white. The characters comment:

> "But why the Germans destroyed these beautiful Roman ships?"

> "Because they're German!"

After walking in the burned hall, they transition to the other side, where they walk through the exhibition already described. In front of the bronze tiles, they say:

> "Those bronze bands there were used to reinforce the sides of the ships, for protection."

> "They look like abstract paintings, don't they?"

Petri describes the reactions of middle-class Italians at the end of the Fifties

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31    Attachment to the letter cited in footnote 23.

32    *L'assassino*, directed by Elio Petri (Titanus, 1961), 27' 41"-30'00" https://youtu.be/oN8uXs_6jVE?feature=shared&t=1640 (last accessed November 2024).

Fig. 14
Figure 14 Still from the film *L'assassino* by Elio Petri in the ruins of the fire that destroyed the ships.

to the new setting: the visit starts with a moment of superficial remembering and continues with a similarly superficial interaction with the surviving objects. In both moments there is both visual and physical engagement. Even with the caveat that a film setting isn't necessarily accurate (in this case it certainly isn't, as some objects have been clearly moved), it is nonetheless possible to make some considerations.

First, it seems that the ruins are accessible, the debris evened out so that it is possible to walk on it. Secondly, there is no separation between the two areas: not only by visual connection, but physical passage is possible. These elements depicted in the movie add a strong memorial layer to the setting. In this case, the overall visit combines an emotional part, where physical evidence of destruction is displayed "as it is"; and a rational one, where various devices are used to recreate the lost objects. Both settings are on the same plane and communicate with each other.

The essential museography of the Museum is depicted in a complex montage by Petri, using many camera angles, static and moving frames. Starting from typical Neorealist themes, Petri's gaze leads the visual narration in new directions, away from the literal context, leading to surreal atmospheres. The director's peculiar poetics, which can't be discussed here, find fertile ground in the new museum setting. This scene represents a fundamental document both for the reconstruction of the setting itself and its reception.

### Aftermath

The museum was reopened on the 25th of November 1953, and remained in service until 1963, when it was closed again. On the 14th of December 1988, after heavy restoration works that altered both the 1940 and 1953 exhibitions, it was reopened. Windows at the ground level were closed, skylights on the roof covered with plastic shields, ground floor levels were changed once more, the pit filled with rubble, and original steel windows frames replaced with anodised aluminium ones. The Roman bronzes that had been kept in Palazzo Massimo in Rome never came back to Nemi and are now exhibited in a dedicated room at the National Roman Museum. Today, after a non-systematic series of minor modifications, Nemi's Museum displays a confused mix of objects coming from the ships, from previous exhibitions, and from unrelated nearby archaeological areas.

### A museum of Reconstruction. Discussion and Conclusion

The reconstruction of the Nemi Ships Museum is not an exception in the general process of museum reconstruction in Italy. Intensive Allied bombings of

Italian cities greatly damaged cultural heritage. Almost every city had a major museum to reconstruct: relevant among others are Palermo, Naples, Rome, Florence, Genova, Torino, Milano, Verona, Treviso[33]. In many cases, buildings were repaired to hide as quickly as possible the scars of war, removing its traces[34]. But often it was "too hard and painful as a destruction to allow a simple reconstruction as it was"[35]. Such was the trauma of destruction that it couldn't be healed with an impossible return to the past. Thus, museum reconstruction in the Fifties became the symbol of a possible redemption, the spiritual leap Italy needed[36]. Destruction created the conditions for the modernisation Italian museums longed for, it became the opportunity to catch up to modern technology museography. This spirit was particularly perceivable in Milan, arguably one of the most damaged cities in Italy. The Pinacoteca di Brera, Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Villa Reale, Castello Sforzesco were all heavily damaged[37]. Charismatic Superintendent Fernanda Wittgens (1903-1957) proposed what she called "modernised recovery"[38]: architects dealt with the problem of reconstructing the missing parts in different ways, often introducing modern elements within the historical material. Similar ideas circulated also in Naples, where Bruno Molajoli (1905-1985) completely reorganised the museum system, Torino, where the Galleria Civica di Arte Moderna was built by Carlo Bassi and Goffredo Boschetti in the voids created by a collapsed town block, and in several authorial reconstructions such as Palazzo Abatellis (Palermo), Castelvecchio (Verona) by Carlo Scarpa, Palazzo Bianco (Genova) by Franco Albini. In some cases, the destruction was used instrumentally, as the archaeological site of Palestrina restored by Furio Fasolo, where bombs had exposed the huge ancient sanctuary buried underneath the village. In all these cases, a simple return to the original state wasn't deemed acceptable.

Nemi's museum reconstruction of 1949-1953 is somehow in an intermediate position. On the one hand, the building was repaired as it was, all signs of war

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33    For an accurate and well documented reconstruction of Allied bombings in Italy, see Marco Gioannini and Giulio Massobrio, *L' Italia bombardata. Storia della guerra di distruzione aerea 1940-1945* (Milano: Mondadori, 2021); for more specific studies on the destruction and protection of the artworks, see the recent exhibition of the Gallerie del Quirinale, Gallo, Luigi, and Raffaella Morselli, ed., *Arte liberata. Capolavori salvati dalla guerra* (Milano: Electa, 2022). See also sources cited in footnote 15 and 21.

34    Such as with Uffizi in Firenze, or the anastylosis of Tempio Malatestiano, see, among vast literature: Lorenzo de Stefani and Carlotta Coccoli, *Guerra monumenti ricostruzione. Architetture e centri storici italiani nel secondo conflitto mondiale* (Venezia: Marsilio, 2011); and Giulia Ceriani Sebregondi, "La ricostruzione del Tempio. Il restauro post-bellico del Tempio Malatestiano di Rimini", *La Rivista di Engramma*, no. 61 (January 2008): 28-45.

35    Using the words of the superintendents reporting in those years. See Simona Rinaldi, "Strappi preventivi", in *Musei anni '50. Spazio, forma, funzione*, ed. Maria Cecilia Mazzi (Firenze: Edifir, 2009), 26.

36    As stated in: Marisa Dalai Emiliani, *Per una critica della museografia del Novecento in Italia* (Venezia: Marsilio, 2009), 78.

37    The Brera Pinacoteca had 30 out of 34 exhibition halls completely collapsed. See: Maria Cecilia Mazzi, *Musei anni '50. Spazio, forma, funzione* (Firenze: Edifir, 2009), 85.

38    On the topic a vast bibliography is available, for an overview, see: Antonella Huber, *Il museo italiano: la trasformazione di spazi storici in spazi espositivi: attualità dell'esperienza museografica degli anni '50* (Milano: Lybra, 1997), 88-91,135-143; Dalai Emiliani, *Per una critica della museografia del Novecento in Italia*, 91-110; Maria Cecilia Mazzi, *Musei anni '50. Spazio, forma, funzione,* 45-50, 110-113; Paolo Morello, "La 'museografia del dopoguerra'. Opere e modelli storiografici", in *Storia dell'architettura italiana. Il secondo Novecento*, ed. Francesco Dal Co (Milano: Electa, 1997), 406-410; Fabio Fabbrizzi, *Lezione italiana, Allestimento e museografia nelle opere e nei progetti dei maestri del dopoguerra* (Firenze: Edifir, 2021), 262-265.

cancelled from the exterior, with the overall architectural structure remaining untouched. On the other hand, the loss was too big to allow the reconstruction of the ancient ships and an impossible return to the original interior scheme. In this sense, Nemi is an exception: most of Italian museums suffered heavy damage to the buildings, but managed to save large parts of their collections by moving them to safe places. This allowed to reconsider the exhibition space with the objects themselves as basis, in a valorisation process involving mostly the design of interior space. As pointed out by scholar Marco Mulazzani, the long-standing tradition of the Italian Museum as an "internal museum" was amplified by the process of reconstruction. Architects could experiment with decontextualisation, display of stratification, scalarisation, thus producing some of the most innovative experiences of Italian museography. None of this happened in Nemi. The museum wasn't repurposed for new meanings, no new concepts were introduced. The overall display structure was simply scaled down to the size of the surviving remains. Morpurgo's building was very different from those common "museum conditions"[39] and was perhaps too modern to allow significant rethinking.

The redemption of Nemi Ships Museum, without the possibility to be achieved through innovation, came by re-enactment of the past, and, consequently, a process of memorialisation. This is particularly evident with the transport of the models inside the halls, and it is just as readable through the analogies with the previous display. The memory of the lost ships is fragmented in episodes that building a narrative within the exhibition.

The display of ruins is a very strong choice that has rarely, if ever, been adopted in an Italian museum, and creates a link with war memorials (Berlin, Hiroshima). The use of ruins for memorial purposes in Italy is a subject yet to be thoroughly explored, and it is difficult to find parallels.

It may be possible to explore similarities with the Monument of the Fosse Ardeatine, geographically close. It has a similar division in two moments: the first, the ruined caves, the site where the mass killing happened, is the physical proof; the second, an emotional elaboration of the trauma in the half-submerged graveyard. But this case is very different from Nemi: it belongs to the world of cemeteries and sanctuaries, dealing with the tragedy of loss of life, with a longer tradition than the memorialisation of the loss of cultural heritage.

Perhaps the closest post-war Italian experience may be the setting of the Villa Reale in Milano, and in particular the Picasso exposition in the hall of Caryatides in 1953; left intentionally as it was ruined by the war, designed by Gian Carlo Menichetti with the collaboration of Piero Portaluppi[40]. Picasso's large paintings

39    "Museum conditions" is a methodological term used by Huber, Mulazzani, Polano in *Il museo italiano: la trasformazione di spazi storici in spazi espositivi: attualità dell'esperienza museografica degli anni '50*, 13-27; for the study of Italian museums: "*Museum conditions* must be the informatory starting point; this is information on any previous orderings, on the history of the collections, the characteristics of the site, new technologies, materials and on the organizational aspects and workings of the institution and include elements of ideology, requirements of the commissioning body and of justification".

40    Fabbrizzi, *Lezione italiana,* 173.

were placed directly on the ground, in the grand hall surrounded by shredded sculptures on the walls. Physical testimony of the bombardment juxtaposed pictures' emotional elaboration, combining memorialisation and museography.

Moreover, in Villa Reale, as in Nemi, there is a process of interiorisation of the ruin, allowing it to be included within the framework of the "internal museum". Differently from memorials, the building as perceived from the outside is repaired and fully functional, reconnected. Destruction is not an extraneous object, exposed outside to create contrasts with everyday life, but is kept inside, domesticated, as an exhibition setting. It becomes a new stratification, a new "museum condition", freezing a moment in time.

The internalised ruins of Nemi freeze in time the fatal night of May 30, 1944, in an enduring transitory state. Internalising of physical space becomes interiorisation of a historical state, the ruin as an interior – a whole new category – pushes the boundaries between museography and memorial architecture.

The Nemi Ships Museum, in contrast with Milan's Picasso exhibition, doesn't need an author – the emotional effect of the burned ships is too strong, the spatiality of the museum too staggering. The reconstruction project is limited to a humble collection of the remaining pieces, and a didactic explanation of what it was.

Even assuming the display of the ruin wasn't completely intentional, its reception by a sensitive intellectual such as Elio Petri tells us the importance that it could have had within the history of museums during the Reconstruction of Italy. A history that didn't survive to this day.

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Francesca Capano

# Naples, City of War: 1940-1948.
# An Urban Catastrophe across
# Photography, Cinema, and Architecture

*War damage, Photographic Archives, Reconstruction, Roberto Rossellini, Federico Patellani.*

## /Abstract

As it is well-known, Naples was bombed by the Allies between 1940 and 1944 to liberate the city from Nazi occupation. As described by its 16th-century visitors, it was a distinctive and characteristic city whose peculiarities made it a symbol of scenic beauty yet contradictions. Indeed, it is no coincidence that the second episode of Paisà, by Roberto Rossellini (1946), was Napoli. The city is as much a protagonist as the two characters in the story; even though the episode is set in the years of the American occupation, it is portrayed by the director as a city still at war.

It was the age of Neorealism, and Rossellini, one of its protagonists, carefully chose the places where to set his story. Focusing on the exteriors, the port, Piazza Mercato, clearly bombed yet perfectly recognizable by the Carmine bell tower, an extraordinary landmark – an example of Neapolitan cultural contaminations – , and the tuff caves, first air-raid shelters and then homes for the displaced, the senzatutto (wholeless, lit. lacking everything), the name often used for those who lost everything and often their families in the bombings. Shortly before Rossellini, the city depicted in Federico Patellani's photos seemed unaware of the tragedy that would soon befall it despite being about to enter the war. Naples is an icon for both the photojournalist and the filmmaker, both before and after.

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## Introduction

As it is well-known, Naples was bombed by the Allies between 1940 and 1944 to liberate the city from Nazi occupation. As described by its 16th-century visitors, it was a distinctive and characteristic city whose peculiarities made it a symbol of scenic beauty yet contradictions. Indeed, it is no coincidence that the second episode of *Paisà,* by Roberto Rossellini (1946), was *Napoli*. The city is as much a protagonist as the two characters in the story; even though the episode is set in the years of the American occupation, it is portrayed by the director as a city still at war.



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It was the age of Neorealism, and Rossellini, one of its protagonists, carefully chose the places where to set his story. Focusing on the exteriors, the port, Piazza Mercato, clearly bombed yet perfectly recognizable by the Carmine bell tower, an extraordinary landmark – an example of Neapolitan cultural contaminations – , and the tuff caves, first air-raid shelters and then homes for the displaced, the *senzatutto* (wholeless, lit. *lacking everything*), the name often used for those who lost everything and often their families in the bombings. Shortly before Rossellini, the city depicted in Federico Patellani's photos seemed unaware of the tragedy that would soon befall it despite being about to enter the war. Naples is an icon for both the photojournalist and the filmmaker, both before and after.

## The Systematic Destruction of the City

Naples was liberated from the Nazis on October 1, 1943. Until the liberation of Rome (June 4-5, 1944), it was an outpost: a crossroads for those who wanted to

Fig. 1

Il gasometro di via Stella polare (oggi via via Arnaldo Lucci) dopo il bombardamento della notte tra l'8 e il 9 gennaio 1941 (lit. The gasometer in Via Stella Polare (today Via Arnaldo Lucci) after the bombing on the night between 8 and 9 January 1941), Archivio Storico Municipale di Napoli, nn. 6.002.

return home from exile, re-enter Italy, and document the war. The city had been the capital of a kingdom until 1861; it remained the largest city in southern Italy. Following the demagogic proclamation of the Fascist Empire (May 9, 1936), it was given the role of 'imperial port', recognizing it as a city of cultural exchange and contamination. This centrality condemned it as a military target and symbol of liberation from the Nazis. However, the liberation came at a significant cost.

As it is well known, Italy entered the war on June 10, 1940. Naples was bombed for the first time on November 1; the 1940 bombing was, all in all, focused and aimed exclusively at military targets. The Royal Air Force considered the port and the railroad hubs among the most crucial transportation infrastructure on the peninsula. The bombs were aimed at railroad and port equipment, ships, industrial plants, and fuel depots. Then, the bombings of '41 were already more substantial. The first ones occurred on the night of January 8-9 and focused on the eastern area, the main target being the gasometer on Via Stella Polare (today via Arnaldo Lucci) **[Fig. 1]**. However, via Roma (formerly via Toledo as today), the Bank of Naples, the Corsea neighborhood, and the Florentine Theater were also hit, legitimizing the promiscuity between military and civilian targets. In 1942, the offensive started to escalate. Throughout the year, air raids had been altogether limited; however, in December, attacks were concentrated, combining British and American bombardments. The Americans entered the war after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor (December 7, 1941); the American invasion of Europe began at the very end of 1942; the Neapolitan bombing raids of December 4 can be considered the outset. It was also the first daytime and indiscriminate air attack. Officially, the target was the cruisers moored in the port. Still, the population of Naples was caught by the sudden bombardment without the attack being signaled by air raid sirens. Other areas were affected, in addition to the port: piazza Municipio, via Medina, via Monteoliveto; in the historic center, an entire building in vico Santa Luciella imploded in the courtyard. The industrial area and the bourgeois district of Chiaia were also affected[1]. The RAF had already enacted *area bombing*, that is, the indiscriminate bombing of cities with night raids. This strategy was complemented by the American Air Force, which also resorted to the technique of daylight bombing.

Alongside the destruction of cities and territories, the Allied forces also performed reconnaissance on the territories through air surveys **[Fig. 2]**. This might seem a bipolar attitude; however, territorial surveys were instrumental in the reconnaissance of places and identifying strategic targets for destruction. Aerial photos are aseptic and less terrifying despite their "ability to perform depictions in an acceptable, harmless, and even fascinating way, killing without showing death, destruction without showing damage"[2].

The terrible year was 1943; after the Italian defeats in Africa and Russia,

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1    Aldo Stefanile, *I cento bombardamenti di Napoli. The Days of Am-lire* (Naples: Alberto Marotta, 1968), 55-60.

2    Caroline Brothers, "'Una guerra fotogenica'. Fotogiornalismo e guerra civile in Spagna", in *Immagini nemiche: la guerra civile spagnola e le sue rappresentazioni, 1936-1939*, (Bologna: Editrice Compositori, 1999), 100-111.

belaboring Italy concealed a strategy to engage Germans in our country to leave occupied territories in central Europe as undefended as possible. The Allied forces lucidly decided to raze several Italian cities, including Naples, hitting it without any distinction between military and civilian targets. In the summer, the most intensive bombing took place. With the fall of fascism on April 25, air raids were intensified to achieve Italy's surrender. On August 2, *The Evening News* reported: "Hotting up begins. Naples bombed"[3]. Many monumental buildings were severely damaged: piazza Dei Martiri and noble palaces such as Palazzo Partanna, Castel dell'Ovo, Grand Hotel Vesuvio, the Royal Palace[4] [Fig. 3], the San Carlo theater, Castel Nuovo, the Umberto I Gallery. As it is well known, Santa Chiara's complex suffered the most severe mutilation during the August 4 air raids [Fig. 4]. Neapolitans' emotional involvement was utter. The church burned for days; the rich Baroque apparatuses were lost forever; the loss of a symbolic monument for the city is considered a contributing cause to the spontaneous uprising of the Four Days[5] (September 28-October 1). Allied destruction had led to the September 8 truce. Still, Nazi reprisals had continued even more ferociously. The University, power plants, Palazzo dei Telefoni, and Mostra d'Oltremare – already partly damaged since 1941 – were pillaged, as well as factories, warehouses, and, once again, the port [Fig. 5]. The 'Quattro giornate' revolt (lit. Four Days) were fomented precisely by the population's exasperation; on October 1, when the Anglo-American troops entered, the city was in a deplorable state: almost half of it was in rubble, there was no water, no electricity, and no food. Until May '44, Nazi bombing continued in pure retaliation.

The city's catastrophe was not controlled by the meager defense strategy put in place since Italy's entry into the war. From August 1939, every civilian housing estate was to be equipped with an air raid shelter to protect the population, and

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3    *The Evening News*, August 2, 1943, 17.

4    La facciata meridionale e il giardino pensile (lit. The southern facade and the hanging garden of the Royal Palace), 1943, Archivio Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per il comune di Napoli, in *Palazzo Reale: danni di guerra e restauri. Una storia per immagini dal 1943 agli anni Cinquanta*, ed. Royal Palace of Naples (Naples Royal Palace exhibition, Androne delle carrozze, from Jan. 24, 2023, ongoing).

5    Benedetto Gravagnuolo, "Attualità della memoria", in *Il regno del cielo non è più venuto. Bombardamenti aerei su Napoli, 1940-1944*, eds. Sergio Villari, Valentina Russo, Emanuela Vassallo (Naples: Giannini Editore, 2005), 11-12.

Fig. 2
Avioripresa di ricognizione del quartiere San Giuseppe effettuata dalla RAF il 15 febbraio 1943 (lit. Reconnaissance air-photo of the San Giuseppe district carried out by the RAF on 15 February 1943), Istituto Campano per la Storia della Resistenza "Vera Lombardi", n. 28.24.

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many public places were adapted as shelters[6]. The shelters are documented by the plan of the Provincial Committee of the National Union of Aircraft Protection, *Ricoveri antiaerei e rifugi di fortuna* (lit. Aircraft Shelters and makeshift shelters)[7] [Fig. 6].

The preservation of the historical and artistic heritage was a priority of the fascist state, which enacted a preservation plan. Partly rhetorically, the Minister of National Education, Giuseppe Bottai, said in 1942, "La conservazione del patrimonio artistico non è soltanto la salvaguardia di un bene comune della civiltà del mondo, ma è un problema vitale per le nazioni interessate: le quali, combattendo, difendono appunto quella tradizione nazionale, quella propria e inconfondibile civiltà che si legittima non meno nella storia artistica che in quella politica di un popolo" (lit. The preservation of the artistic heritage is not only the safeguard of a common asset of the world's civilization but a vital problem for the involved nations: by fighting, they defend their national tradition, that own and unmistakable civilization. Still, this tradition is legitimized in the artistic history no less than in the political history of a population)[8]. From October 1939,

Fig. 3
La facciata meridionale e il giardino pensile di Palazzo Reale (lit. The southern facade and the hanging garden of the Royal Palace), 1943, Archivio Soprintendenza Archivio Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per il comune di Napoli

Fig. 4
Chiostro del complesso di Santa Chiara dopo il bombardamento del 4 agosto 1943 (lit. Cloister of the monastery of Santa Chiara after the bombing of 4 August 1943), Archivio dei Vigili del Fuoco, Archivio privato Clemente Esposito presso l'Archivio del Comando provinciale dei Vigili del Fuoco, n. 4.058.

6    Sergio Villari, "1940. I primi bombardamenti sulla città" in *Il regno del cielo non è più venuto*, 32-35.

7    Archivio di Stato di Napoli, *Plans and Drawings*, cart. XXXIV, no. 5.

8    Marino Lazzari, "La protezione delle opere d'arte durante la guerra", in *La protezione del patrimonio artistico nazionale dalle offese della guerra aerea*, ed. Direzione generale delle arti (Florence: Le Monnier, 1942), V-VII. See Francesco Fortino, Claudio Paolini, *Florence 1940-1943. La protezione del patrimonio artistico dalle offese della guerra aerea*, (Florence: Polistampa, 2011); Stefania Capraro, "Protezione delle opere d'arte dei musei civici di Torino tra la prima e la seconda guerra mondiale", *Palazzo Madama. Studi e notizie*, no. 4 (2020), 222-233.

superintendents were asked to update the photographic documentation of monuments under their protection. Bottai's words were eloquent and, unfortunately, prophetic: "Fra le misure da adottare per la difesa dei monumenti dai danni della guerra ritengo opportuno includere il completamento della documentazione fotografica dei monumenti presso gli archivi fotografici di ogni sovrintendenza.

Se è doveroso, infatti, prendere ogni possibile misura per evitare e attenuare i danni di guerra ai monumenti è altrettanto doveroso raccogliere tutti i dati che eventualmente potessero occorrere per il restauro dei monumenti colpiti o mutilati. Che poi il monumento fosse interamente distrutto, la fotografia che perpetuasse il ricordo di tutti i particolari del monumento scomparso, acquisterebbe un valore incalcolabile" (lit. Among the measures to be taken for the defense of monuments from the ravages of war, I consider it appropriate to include the completion of the photographic documentation of monuments in the photographic archives of each superintendency. Indeed, while it is incumbent to take every possible measure to avoid and mitigate war damage to monuments, it is equally incumbent to collect all data that might be needed to restore affected or mutilated monuments. Were the monument destroyed, a photograph perpetuating the memory of the vanished monument's details would acquire incalculable value).[9]

From '44, the city's slow recovery began, and synergies were established between the public administration and the military government of the Allied Forces (AM-GOT). Naples was supplied with water, food, and electricity; the main suburban communication roads were restored. In the meanwhile, poverty led to the black market, prostitution, widespread lawlessness, and even the radicalization of organized crime. Its historical and artistic heritage continued to be sacrificed to accommodate the Allies, who occupied valuable public buildings: the Royal Palace, the National Museum, the Floridiana, and Mostra d'Oltremare,

9    Ministry of National Education circular of October 29, 1939, in Valentina Russo, "1941. La distruzione del porto e dell'area orientale", in *Il regno del cielo non è più venuto*, 38-49: 44-45. See Letizia Galli, *Il restauro nell'opera di Gino Chierici (1877-1961)* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1989), 121-122.

Fig. 5
Piazza del Carmine il campanile e edifici adiacenti dopo il bombardamento diurno del 4 agosto 1943 (lit. Piazza del Carmine the bell tower and adjacent buildings after the daytime bombing of 4 August 1943), Archivio del Comando provinciale dei Vigili del Fuoco, n. 3.2262-3.

to name but a few.

The city was in a deplorable state: gutted neighborhoods, severely damaged monuments, and uninhabitable homes. The surviving Neapolitans, who had not left the city for the province, where the bombings would have notoriously only been sporadic, were exhausted, tried by fear and hunger[10]. Naples was once again called to be the paradigm for many other Italian cities and Italy itself. However, as its historical contradictions have shown, it was also the start-ing point for rebirth, a symbolic place: "Forse anche per questa condizione, di avamposto geografico e simbolico di elaborazione del lutto nazionale, Napoli è entrata prepotentemente nell'immaginario collettivo del dopoguerra italiano, con il suo bagaglio di sventura e distruzioni, alimentando generosamente il repertorio figurativo delle nascenti poetiche neorealiste" (lit. Perhaps also due to this condition, as a geographic and symbolic outpost of national mourning, Naples strongly entered the collective imagination of postwar Italy, with its her-itage of misfortune and destruction, generously feeding the figurative repertoire of the rising Neorealist poetic)[11]. The city appeared almost hidden by the rubble of public and private buildings. Its deplorable physical state was interpreted as a metaphor for the degradation of customs caused by rampant poverty that forced the poorest sections of the population to make do, resorting to whatever expedients they could. The urban fabric was torn as a result of the bombing. Many Neapolitans lost both their homes, which were already precarious and hygienically unsatisfactory and their families, essentially decimated. The pages of *Il Mattino* reported the iconic definition of *senzatutto*.

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10    Francesco Soverina, "L'autunno del fascismo a Napoli. Dalle leggi razziali alla dissoluzione del fronte interno", in *Meridione sud e nord del Mondo*, no. 2-3 (April-September 2014): 175-208: 203.

11    Sergio Villari, "On the Value of War Images", in *The Kingdom of Heaven Has No More Come*, 16-25: 16.

Fig. 6
Comitato provinciale di Protezione antiaerea - Napoli, *Ricoveri antiaerei e rifugi di fortuna*, Archivio di Stato di Napoli, *Piante e disegni*, cart. XXXIV, n. 5.

## The Bombed City between Propaganda and Documentation

The phenomenon of city bombing dates back to the 17th century when the use of artillery in sieges became more common; sometimes, it was documented visually, especially in the 18th century, by urban views. But it was with photography at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries that wartime destruction was systematically documented[12].

In Italy, World War I was highly publicized even before entering the war (May 24, 1915) through a copious production of picture postcards to convince neutralists that it would be a quick war[13]. They were almost always prints of drawings by well-known illustrators, often ironic; photography was used only rarely, while it was employed extensively later to document the terror of the trenches.

There are many photos of the Second Conflict; in particular, recounting this short *excursus* of the Neapolitan tragedy involved the consultation of several images preserved in various photographic archives. These include the Superintendency for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape for the City of Naples, the Naples Municipal Historical Archives, the Campanian Institute for the History of the Resistance "Vera Lombardi", and the Historical Archives of the Provincial Fire Brigade Command, whose iconographic holdings were displayed in the exhibition *Il regno del cielo non è più venuto. Bombardamenti aerei su Napoli, 1940-1944* at Sala della Loggia in Castel Nuovo, curated by Sergio Villari, Valentina Russo and Emanuela Vassallo[14]. The extensive photographic documentation was made by firefighters during rescue operations; at the time of the exhibition, it was essentially unpublished. These shots did not indulge in the fascist rhetoric of those years, exclusively aimed at documenting the state of deterioration of the building as it appeared to rescuers, without distinction of value among the subjects photographed: a monumental building of particular historical-artistic value was equally photographed as a building of little value [Fig. 7]. More photographs are preserved in private cultural institutions such as the Parisio Archives[15].



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12   Stella Casiello, "Ricordi e frammenti in città", in *Il regno del cielo non è più venuto*, 12-15.

13   Enrico Sturani, "Le cartoline della grande guerra. Quali?", in *La grande guerra. Società, propaganda, consenso*, eds. Dario Cimorelli, Anna Villari (Cinisello Balsamo: SilvanaEditoriale, 2015) 79-97.

14   Villari, *Il regno del cielo non è più venuto*. The exhibition, curated by Sergio Villari, Valentina Russo, and Emanuela Vassallo, was held in Naples, Castel Nuovo from December 16, 2003 to January 16, 2004.

15   The Archivio Giulio Parisio preserves not only the Giulio Parisio collection but also the Roberto Troncone collection (https://www.archiviofotograficoparisio.it/, last accessed October 2023). See Marco Iuliano, "Dagli archivi fotografici Parisio e Troncone: immagini per la Modern Heritage List", in *La Mostra d'Oltremare. Un patrimonio storico-architettonico del XX secolo a Napoli*, ed. Francesco Lucarelli (Naples: Electa Napoli, 2005), 26-43.

Fig. 7
Edificio di San Gregorio Armeno dopo il bombardamento pomeridiano del 1° marzo 1943 (lit. San Gregorio Armeno building after the afternoon bombing of 1 March 1943), Archivio del Comando provinciale dei Vigili del Fuoco, n. 1.152.

The photos take on even greater value when compared to the journalism of the same years; until 1944, the press was not objective in reporting catastrophic wartime events, as it was notoriously tightly controlled by censorship. Print media emphasized marginal news; the *War Bulletins* succinctly listed damage and casualties. Until 1943, attempts were made to describe the efficiency of the state's safeguarding policy against attacks. From May onwards, pretending was no longer possible; however, in an attempt to justify the heavy losses, the Allies were called "bandits"[16] or "air gangsters"[17].

In this case, the contribution of Istituto Luce was also marginal: as a consensus tool of the regime, it did not make newsreels on the bombings. Indeed, the documentation of the war has remained patchy on this issue until recently. Only in the last years of the twentieth century was the Combat film footage made by military cinematographers in the National Archives of Washington poured into the Italian institute's archive. Thus, Istituto Luce has filled a serious gap in the history of our country[18].

## Comparing Federico Patellani's and Roberto Rossellini's Narratives

The short visual narrative on the backdrop of the events of systematic destruction in Naples can be seen with the stories of photojournalist Federico Patellani and director Roberto Rossellini (1906 - 1977). Patellani was the first Italian photojournalist with a great artistic sensibility and several forays into Neorealist cinema[19]. Rossellini, notoriously one of the most famous Italian filmmakers, was the father of Neorealism, along with other well-known Italian filmmakers. This current had already appeared in literature and photography; however, due to censorship and the almost total interruption of film production due to the conflict, it did not have the development it later achieved at the war's end[20]. However, there are some notable experiences: *4 passi tra le nuvole* directed by Alessandro Blasetti in 1942, considered a precursor of Italian neorealism, with Luchino Visconti's *Ossessione* (1943) and Vittorio De Sica's *I bambini ci guardano* (1943).

Patellani's shots between 1937 and 1947 and the Neapolitan settings of Rossellini's *Paisà* – distributed by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in 1946 – showing the city and its material and moral rubble are essentially tangential.

Patellani (1911-1977) was born to a middle-class Milanese family in Monza; he studied law to please his lawyer father. However, his inclinations, which he later

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16    Editorial note, "I misfatti dei banditi dell'aria", *Rome*, May 7, 1943.

17    Editorial note "I gangsters dell'aria", *L'Illustrazione d'Italia*, May 30, 1943.

18    Roberto Olla, *Combat film* (Rome: RAI-ERI, 1997).

19    Francesca Capano, "Napoli 'città d'oltremare' nel racconto fotografico di Federico Patellani", *Eikonocity*, no. 2, December 2023, 59-75.

20    Emery Taramelli, *Viaggio nell'Italia del neorealismo. La fotografia tra letteratura e cinema*, (Turin: Società Editrice Internazionale, 1995); Enrica Viganò ed., *Neorealismo: la nuova immagine in Italia, 1932-1960* (Milano: Admira, 2006).

indulged, were toward photography, film, and painting. In 1935, when enlisted in the Italian army, he participated in the African campaign as an officer in the Engineer Corps, officially beginning his career as a reporter and putting aside the law degree he had obtained. However, Federico's father himself, a Milanese lawyer with an office in Monza, was responsible for Federico's passion. He had begun photographing alongside his amateur photographer father at a very young age. Enlisted in the army for the Ethiopian campaign[21], he embarked from Naples; in this first Neapolitan sojourn (1935), he immortalized the city before its destruction. In these early images by Patellani, the Neapolitan capital seems

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21    Giulia Della Torre, "Patellani, Federico", in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 81 (Rome: Treccani, 2014) (https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/federico-patellani_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/, last accessed September 2023).

Fig. 8
Federico Patellani, *Viaggio verso l'Africa. Napoli: scorcio del porto con il piroscafo ormeggiato* (lit. Journey to Africa. Naples: view of the port with the moored steamship), 1935, Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo, *Federico Patellani*, PR. 4/FT. 43.

Fig. 9
Federico Patellani, *Viaggio verso l'Africa. Napoli - Posillipo - casa addossata alla roccia* (lit. Journey to Africa. Naples - Posillipo - house leaning against the rock), 1935, Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo, *Federico Patellani*, PR. 6/FT. 5.

unaware of what was about to happen. Among the most photographed places are the port, monuments, and landscape[22] **[Fig. 8]** – among the most celebrated European landscapes in historical iconography, second only to those of Rome or Venice – . Beyond the places, the reporter, still an amateur, captures the most intimate features of a unique city. Among these, he shows its 'porosity'[23] **[Fig. 9]**, to use the term widely used today, quoting the description of Naples published by the philosopher Walter Benjamin with Asja Lacis, a Latvian theater director, in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* journal in 1925, one year after their stay in Capri and Naples: "Come la pietra, così anche l'architettura di Napoli è porosa. Costruzione e azione si permeano in un susseguirsi di cortili, portici e scaloni.

Tutto è fatto per custodire la scena in cui costellazioni sempre nuove, sino ad allora imprevedibili, possano accadere" (lit. Like stone, so too the architecture of Naples is porous. Construction and action permeate each other in a succession of courtyards, porches, and stairways. Everything is done to guard the scene where ever-new, hitherto unpredictable constellations can happen)24. From a recently rediscovered typescript; we know that the full version of the sentence continued with these words, "Quando a raggrupparsi in un locale sono i tedeschi, questi devono sempre separare e mettere in fila tavoli e sedie. Gli italiani, invece, si spargono ovunque, chiacchierano ai tavoli e reclamano sempre più spazio. Eppure, essi si comportano in modo molto più discreto che non i tedeschi nel loro buon cantuccio" (lit. When Germans group in a club, they must always separate and line up tables and chairs. On the other hand, Italians spread out everywhere, chatting at tables and claiming more and more space. Yet they behave much more discreetly than the Germans in their good little corner)25. Patellani's image of Naples between 1936 and 1940 shows a city built on and with tuff, unconsciously indulging Benjamin and Lacis's words – but we do not know if Patellani had read *Neapel* –.

Patellani was in Naples again between 1939 and 1940, after the painful experience of the war in Africa and the other dramatic experience of the campaign in

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22    Federico Patellani, *Viaggio verso l'Africa. Napoli: scorcio del porto con il piroscafo ormeggiato* (lit. Journey to Africa. Naples: view of the port with the moored steamship), 1935, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Cinisello Balsamo, *Federico Patellani*, PR. 4/FT. 43.

23    Federico Patellani, *Viaggio verso l'Africa. Napoli - Posillipo - casa addossata alla roccia* (lit. Journey to Africa. Naples - Posillipo - house leaning against the rock), 1935, Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo, *Federico Patellani*, PR. 6/FT. 5.

24    Walter Benjamin, Asja Lacis, "Neapel", *Frankfurter Zeitung* (August 19, 1925).

25    Walter Benjamin, Asja Lacis, *Napoli Porosa*, ed. Elenio Cicchini (Naples: Libreria Dante & Descartes, 2020), 16.

Fig. 10
Robert Capa, Il Vado del Carmine e piazza Mercato dopo i bombardamenti (lit. The Carmine gate and Piazza Mercato after the bombings), 1943, © Robert Capa © International Center of Photography/ Magnum Photos Italia).

Russia. Now a professional reporter for *Tempo*, he had experimented with the photo-text for the weekly magazine – shots with extensive captions – importing the American weekly magazine *Life*[26] model. Again by coincidence (?), Robert Capa reached Naples on October 1, 1943, in the aftermath of the 'Quattro giornate', following the Fifth Army, which had awaited the popular liberation of the city at the Chiunzi Pass. He dedicated touching photos to the city; those notes of the Nazi murder of the twenty teenagers at Jacopo Sannazaro High School shot by the Germans were published in *Life*[27]. Capa was, of course, struck by the people, the poverty and desperation; he, too, dwelt on the devastation of the port area and Piazza Mercato. The shot in the catalog at the Italian headquarters of Magnum Photos[28] is truly striking. It portrays *Vado del Carmine* (lit. Carmine's gate), through which the bomb-damaged buildings of Piazza Mercato can be seen [Fig. 10]. The gateway was built when the city walls were being decommissioned; it had a monumental function as it replaced the ancient *Porta della Conceria* (lit. Tannery Gate), which was demolished for the redevelopment of Piazza Mercato promoted by Carlos de Borbón in the mid-18th century and entrusted to Giovanni Bompiede. In the 1970s, following the construction of New Marina Street, the Baroque piers of the 18th-century gateway were moved to the flowerbed south of the new road axis. The urban environment portrayed by Capa preceded the post-war work. The door qualified by the alternation of mixtilinear rocks of different materials, marble, and piperno, was also noted by Giuseppe Ungaretti in 1932, who thus described it as "due pilastri […] pepe e sale […] piantati con durezza come cardini in un forziere" (lit. two … salt-and-pepper … pillars … planted hard as hinges in a chest)[29].

Between 1938 and 1940, Patellani documented the construction site of the Mostra d'Oltremare and then the grand opening event[30]. The Mostra was opened on May 9, 1940, the anniversary of the proclamation of the Empire, with a solemn ceremony, closed a little more than a month later, on June 10, for Italy's entry into the world conflict. In Patellani's shots dedicated to the city, nothing dramatic seems about to happen. The places are the same as in the 1935 passage: Neapolitans crowd streets, public places, restaurants, and bars[31] [Fig. 11, 12]. The same serene, rhetoric-free attitude can be perceived in the photos he dedicated to the Mostra d'Oltremare, which clash with the official,

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26    Giulia Della Torre, "Patellani, Federico".

27    *Life*, (1st and 8th November 1943), 32-33, 28-31; Robert Capa, *Leggermente fuori fuoco* (Rome: Contrasto, 2022); first edition: *Slightly out of Focus* (New York: H. Holt, copyr., 1947).

28    International Center of Photography, Magnum Photos ITALY.

29    Luciano Rebay, *Le origini della poesia di Giuseppe Ungaretti* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1962), 188.

30    Francesca Capano, "La Mostra delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare a Napoli: l'antefatto 1936-1939", in *History of Engineering / Storia dell'Ingegneria. Proceedings of the International Conference, atti del 5° Convegno nazionale AISI*, eds. Salvatore D'Agostino, Giulio Fabricatore (Naples: Cuzzolin, 2014), II, 1225-1237; Gemma Belli, "Un altro sguardo: Federico Patellani (1911-1977) e la Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare", in *Delli Aspetti de Paesi. Vecchi e nuovi Media per l'Immagine del Paesaggio: Rappresentazione, memoria, conservazione*, eds. Annunziata Berrino, Alfredo Buccaro (Naples: CIRICE, 2016), I, 593-602.

31    Federico Patellani, *Porto di Napoli. Folla passeggia lungo la banchina in occasione della partenza del piroscafo "Conte di Savoia"* (lit. Port of Naples. Crowd strolls along the quay upon the departure of the steamship "Conte di Savoia"), 1939-1940, and *Esposizione triennale Terre d'oltremare. Scorcio di uno degli accessi al polo fieristico*, 1940, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Cinisello Balsamo, *Federico Patellani*, PR. 309/FT. 38, PR. 335/FT. 34A.

quite propagandistic ones proposed by the magazines *Architettura*, *Costruzioni Casabella*, *Domus*, *Emporium*, *Le vie d'Italia*, *Napoli Rivista Municipale*, and *Illustrazione italiana*. Istituto Luce newsreels confirm this regime-pleasing image of the city[32].

During these years, another famous photographer and preeminently architect and publicist also passed through Naples. That was Giuseppe Pagano (1896-1945), who traveled to the islands and archaeological sites with his family[33]. According to the studies performed to date, he devoted very few photos to

Fig. 11
Federico Patellani, *Porto di Napoli. Folla passeggia lungo la banchina in occasione della partenza del piroscafo "Conte di Savoia"* (lit. Port of Naples. Crowd strolls along the quay on the occasion of the departure of the steamship "Conte di Savoia"), 1939-1940, Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo, *Federico Patellani*, PR. 309/FT. 38.

Fig. 12
Federico Patellani, *Esposizione triennale Terre d'oltremare. Scorcio di uno degli accessi al polo fieristico* (lit. Triennial exhibition Terre d'oltremare. View of one of the entrances to the exhibition), 1940, Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo, *Federico Patellani*, PR. 335/FT. 34A.

32    Capano, "Napoli 'città d'oltremare' nel racconto", 61.

33    Cesare de Seta, ed., *Giuseppe Pagano fotografo* (Electa: Milan, 1979); Gabriella Musto, "El archivio fotográfico de Giuseppe Pagano/The photographic archive of Giuseppe Pagano", in *Giuseppe Pagano. Vocabulario de imágenes / Images Alphabet, exposición*, ed. Daria de Seta (Valencia: Lampreave & Millán, 2008), 232-244.

Naples: a quite unusual monument, the cloister of Santa Maria di Monteoliveto[34], and the very famous Triumphal Arch of Alfonso de Aragón in Castel Nuovo[35] [Fig. 13], houses' condition[36] [Fig. 14] – houses containing houses – as Benjamin had shrewdly noted with Lacis and an emblematic image dedicated to the almost obsessive passions of Neapolitans: the game of lotto[37]. However, Pagano was notoriously more interested in other themes of the city and landscape, such as rural architecture, to which he had devoted the famous 1936 exhibition for the Milan Triennale, curated with Guarniero Daniel[38]. Pagano knew the Mostra well; he later wrote a wise article on the Arena flegrea (lit. Phlegraean theatre) by Giulio De Luca in the November 1940 issue of *Costruzioni Casabella*. Pagano was first a regime architect and later a protester of its policies; thus, he was deported to Mauthausen, where he died. He had several interests; therefore, his shots referring to 15th-century and 17th-century Neapolitan architecture and the additive transformation of an established fabric, as seen in the above shot, are even more significant.

In the early postwar years, Patellani was again in Naples, the ideal subject of

34    Giuseppe Pagano, Napoli: cortile a fianco delle poste nuove ex chiostro del convento di Monteoliveto (lit. Naples: courtyard next to the new post office, ex cloister of the Monteoliveto convent), undated but 1935-1940, and Napoli: cortile del palazzo a fianco le poste nuove ex chiostro del convento di Monteoliveto (lit. Naples: courtyard of the palace next to the new post office, ex cloister of the Monteoliveto convent), Archivio privato Giuseppe Pagano, Vol. 18, no. 45; vol. 18, no. 11, in Gabriella Musto, *Un architetto dietro l'obiettivo: l'archivio fotografico di Giuseppe Pagano*, PhD diss., Dipartimento di Storia dell'architettura e Restauro, Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, 2008, cycle XIX.

35    Giuseppe Pagano, Arco di trionfo di Alfonso de Aragón di Castel Nuovo (lit. Triumphal arch of Alfonso de Aragón of Castel Nuovo), undated but 1935-1940, Archivio privato Giuseppe Pagano, vol. 7, no. 15, in Gabriella Musto, *Un architetto dietro l'obiettivo*. I thank the architect Musto for reporting the images.

36    Giuseppe Pagano, Il prospetto posteriore di un palazzo napoletano (lit. The rear façade of a Neapolitan palace), undated but 1935-1940, Archivio privato Giuseppe Pagano, vol. 7, no. 13, in Gabriella Musto, *Un architetto dietro l'obiettivo*. I thank the architect Musto for reporting the images.

37    Giuseppe Pagano, Napoli: il lotto (lit. Naples: the lottery), undated but 1935-1940, Archivio privato Giuseppe Pagano, vol. 18, no. 33, in Gabriella Musto, *Un architetto dietro l'obiettivo*. I thank the architect Musto for reporting the images.

38    Giuseppe Pagano, Guarniero Daniel, *Architettura rurale italiana* (Milan: Ulrico Hoepli editore, 1936).

Fig. 13

Giuseppe Pagano, Arco di trionfo di Alfonso de Aragón di Castel Nuovo (lit. Triumphal arch of Alfonso de Aragón of Castel Nuovo), undated but 1935-1940, Archivio privato Giuseppe Pagano, vol. 7, no. 15 (I thank the architect Musto for reporting the images).

Fig. 13

Giuseppe Pagano, Il prospetto posteriore di un palazzo napoletano (lit. The rear façade of a Neapolitan palace), undated but 1935-1940, Archivio privato Giuseppe Pagano, vol. 7, no. 13 (I thank the architect Musto for reporting the images).

Fig. 15
Federico Patellani, *Matera. Sopralluoghi per il film "La Lupa". Veduta della città* (lit. Matera. Inspections for the film "The She-Wolf". View of the city), 1952, Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo, *Archivio Federico Patellani*, sup_10070_0002059.

Fig. 16
Federico Patellani, *Italia Dopoguerra. Napoli. Strada corre a fianco di una scarpata in tufo con edificio scavato all'interno* (lit. Post-war Italy. Naples. The road runs alongside a tuff escarpment with a building excavated inside), 1946, Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo, *Archivio Federico Patellani*, PR. 950/ FT. 28A.

Fig. 17
Federico Patellani, *Italia Dopoguerra. Napoli. Due donne in divisa militare parlano sedute sul davanzale di una finestra* (lit. Post-war Italy. Naples. Two women in military uniforms talk while sitting on a window sill), 1946, Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo, *Archivio Federico Patellani*, PR. 954/FT. 5A.
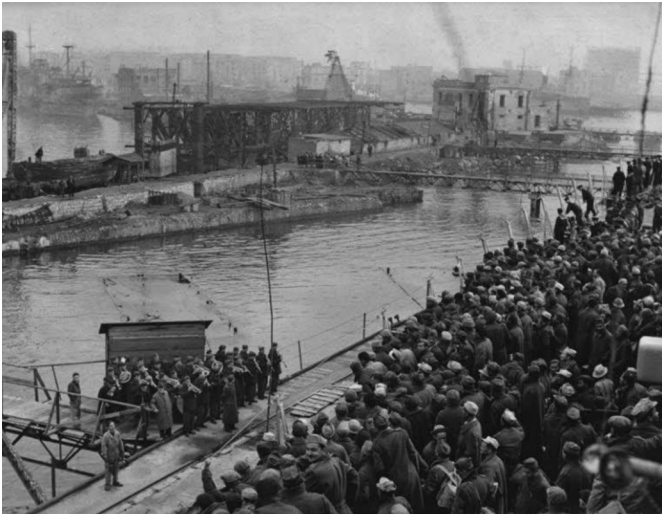
neorealist poetics. The relationship between the photojournalist and the cinema was very close. His Milanese beginnings had seen him with Carlo Ponti as producer, then assistant director alongside Alberto Lattuada from *The La lupa*[39]. Many of Patellani's photos are dedicated to the Sassi of Matera, ideally close to the Neapolitan 'porosity'[40] **[Fig. 15]**.

So when he was in Naples to document the republic's referendum for the republic – the city was notoriously royalist – he saw it not only as a symbol of rubble but also as an icon of recovery. The debris of fallen buildings is the backdrop for the city's rebirth, where people, though on their knees, try to survive and recover. Patellani also recounts about the *senzatutto*, who inhabit the tuff caves. Excavated to find the material to build the city, formerly used as shelters, they were then turned into promiscuous makeshift houses[41] **[Fig. 16]**. But life goes on, as shown by women wearing military clothing[42] **[Fig. 17]** or children playing in Piazza Plebiscito with the backdrop of the Royal Palace or the colonnade of the Church of San Francis di Paola, one of the monuments severely damaged and requisitioned by the Allies. Great impact is produced by the shots devoted to the port, from where people left for wars, but also to emigrate to America or to return from war after imprisonment. The port is almost in rubble but always a place to dream of journeys, reunions with broken families, or destinations for a better life[43] **[Fig. 18]**.

39    Alberto Lattuada, Federico Patellani, *Matera 1953* (Milan: Humboldt Books, 2017).

40    Federico Patellani, *Matera. Sopralluoghi per il film "La Lupa". Veduta della città* (lit. Matera. Inspections for the film "The She-Wolf". View of the city), 1952, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Cinisello Balsamo, *Archivio Federico Patellani*, sup_10070_0002059. Many photos of Matera by Patellani were published in 1952 for the reportage *Italia magica*, dedicated to occultism, a phenomenon widely practiced in the south.

41    Federico Patellani, *Italia Dopoguerra. Napoli. Strada corre a fianco di una scarpata in tufo con edificio scavato all'interno* (lit. Post-war Italy. Naples. The road runs alongside a tuff escarpment with a building excavated inside), 1946, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Cinisello Balsamo, *Federico Patellani Archives*, PR. 950/FT. 28A.

42    Federico Patellani, *Italia Dopoguerra. Napoli. Due donne in divisa militare parlano sedute sul davanzale di una finestra* (lit. Post-war Italy. Naples. Two women in military uniforms talk while sitting on a windowsill), 1946, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Cinisello Balsamo, *Federico Patellani Archives*, PR. 954/FT. 5A.

43    Federico Patellani, *Napoli. Sbarco in Italia di settecento ex prigionieri* (lit. Landing in Italy of seven hundred former prisoners), 1946, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Cinisello Balsamo, *Federico Patellani/ Stampe Modern*, STMOD_31_ST_CQ.

Fig. 18
Federico Patellani, *Napoli. Sbarco in Italia di settecento ex prigionieri* (lit. Landing in Italy of seven hundred former prisoners), 1946, Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo, *Federico Patellani/ Stampe Modern*, STMOD_31_ST_CQ.

Fig. 19
Screenshot from Napoli by Roberto Rossellini: Pascà takes Joe's hand and they cross the city.

In the same years, Rossellini shot an episode of *Paisà*[44] in Naples. The film chronicles the crossing of Italy by the 'liberating' allies. In the Neapolitan capital, Joe, an African-American soldier, meets Pasquale, an orphaned street urchin; *Naples* is the second episode's title[45]. Many of Rossellini's exteriors are identical to those in Patellani's photos. The ruined city is the setting for the encounters of the two protagonists: Pascà - the dialectal diminutive of Pasquale – takes Joe by the hand and directs him to reach the presumably makeshift theater, where they attend the puppet show **[Fig. 19]**. This is one more coincidence between the two artists: years later, in 1951, Patellani also photographed the Olimpia Theater, where the puppet show was held. The photojournalist documented the exterior of the run-down building and also the company putting on the show[46] **[Fig. 20]**.

The port is still one of the most filmed exteriors by Rossellini: while severely damaged, it is crossed by the protagonists. In addition to the unmistakable panorama, it is also possible to immediately recognize the precise location: the city's landmarks, such as the Immacolatella building, designed by Domenico Antonio Vaccaro in the mid-18th century, allow viewers to get their bearings; the silhouette of a steamship **[Fig. 21]**. One of the most famous scenes is the one with the protagonists sitting on the rubble: drunk Joe dreams of a better future upon returning home; the scene is set again near the port, in another iconic location, Piazza Mercato. Rossellini mercilessly notes the almost destruction of the urban environment, recognizable by the unmistakable Carmine bell tower **[Fig. 22]**. The jeep of the armed forces crosses the city, and this is an opportunity to document the state of degradation of Naples. Via Marina is almost destroyed, opposite the port boundary, while Corso Umberto with the University **[Fig. 23]**, represents the 'rehabilitated' city. After the late 19th-century plan conducted

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44    Fernaldo Di Giammatteo, *Roberto Rossellini* (Scandicci, La nuova Italia: 1990).

45    Giuliana Muscio, "Paisà/Paisan", in *The cinema of Italy*, ed. Giorgio Bertellini (London: Wallflower Press, 2004), 31-42.

46    Federico Patellani, *Italia del Sud. Napoli - Teatro Olimpia – ingresso* (lit. Southern Italy. Naples - Olimpia Theater - entrance), 1951, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Cinisello Balsamo, *Federico Patellani Archives*, sup_10090_0000741.

Fig. 20
: Federico Patellani, *Italia del Sud. Napoli - Teatro Olimpia – ingresso* (lit. Southern Italy. Naples - Olimpia Theater - entrance), 1951, Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, *Archivio Federico Patellani*, sup_10090_0000741.

Fig. 21
Screenshot from Napoli by Roberto Rossellini (1946): Pascà takes Joe's hand and they cross the port.

22 - 23



24

within the Naples City Rehabilitation for the lower districts, the districts of Porto, Mercato, Pendino, and Vicaria, where the cholera epidemic had developed in 1884, were gutted. The wide streets, indifferent to the medieval layout, were qualified by palaces with historicist curtain walls that gave Naples the image of a decent, 19th-century city.

The epilogue shows the city's true nature: a porous underbelly that welcomes Neapolitans. Joè joins Pasquale, who had stolen his shoes, at his house to take them back, but the house is a shelter. It is a tuff cave converted back into housing for those *senzatutto*; Pasquale symbolizes those who have nothing left and are forced to make do. Crowds of children gather around the American soldier, hoping to receive something, perhaps American chocolate **[Fig. 24]**. There is no difference between the tragic days of war and these postwar days; the cave/house could be an air raid shelter but also the makeshift home for those who had nothing left because of the bombing. The city is still a metaphor for poverty, a life of hardship, and rebirth, like for Patellani. In these scenes, Rossellini's Naples transcends the Ocean: "Napoli oriente favoloso, opera dei pupi, comme-dia, ventre materno nell'infanzia negata, filo spinato, sciuscià, neri 'venduti' come

Fig. 22
Screenshot from Napoli by Roberto Rossellini (1946): Pascà and Joe sitting on the ruins in Piazza Mercato, in the background the Carmine bell tower.

Fig. 23
Screenshot from Naples by Roberto Rossellini (1946): the jeep crosses corso Umberto.

Fig. 24
Screenshot from Naples by Roberto Rossellini (1946): the tuff quarry used as the home of Pasquale and other *senzatutto*.

schiavi" (lit. Naples fabulous orient, puppet opera, comedy, womb in denied childhood, barbed wire, shahs, blacks 'sold' as slaves)[47].

Unfortunately, the tragic events of World War II are dramatically relevant these days. The case of Naples should be a warning. The city was heavily bombed despite being far from the battle lines; this military strategy then opened new horizons toward the terror tactics perpetrated in later wars, which have seamlessly – but we have realized it only recently – spanned the second half of the twentieth century until sadly our days. In the many images documenting, more or less objectively, the disaster, the city's ruins rise as monuments, evidence of the civilization of culture, official and popular history, continued to these days despite the war.

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47   Giulia Fanara, "Paisà", in *Enciclopedia del Cinema*, (Rome: Treccani, 2004) (https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/paisa_Enciclopedia-del-Cinema)/, last accessed September 2023).

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**Pina Ciotoli, Rosalba Belibani**

# The Rewriting process in post-war cities

*Affective Sustainability; Rewriting Process; Memory of Places; War; Reconstruction;*

## /Abstract

The drama of reconstruction is, by its very nature, linked to numerous implications of the sphere of memory and the tangible and intangible aspects of perception and enjoyment of the city. Indeed, the loss of landmarks combined with the trauma suffered brings citizens to need reconstruction not only for physical, but also for emotional and psychological stability. Therefore, reconstruction, whether necessary following a war event or a natural disaster, requires reflection on the meanings of urban traces and signs, and to the role they play as identity, physical and affective references for people. Especially in the case of post-conflict reconstruction, the regeneration program must answer a long-standing question: how reconstruction and in what ways? Total reconstruction, on the one hand, tends to eliminate the trauma suffered by rebuilding the city "as it was where it was", on the other hand, selective regeneration involves the reconstruction of certain parts of a building or the selection of individual architectures, almost as if they were memory acupunctures.

Places generate different forms of feeling, emotion, and memory. When discussing urban reconstruction, therefore, it is also important to reflect on the kind of affection, emotion, and remembrance that a place is able to evoke, so that we can then reflect on the meanings that are more related to the sphere of memory. The theme of memory, moreover, is also central in those cases where reconstruction has failed: where  the injuries on buildings seem to have lost their deep meaning as mementos, that is, as urban monuments that, their silent presence, bear witness for future generations to the horror of war.

This paper aims to offer a reflection to the theme of reconstruction understood as the regeneration of intangible (as well as tangible) urban values, trying to outline some possible scenarios with respect to the recent destructions in the city of Irpin in Ukraine.

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This paper aims to offer a reflection to the theme of reconstruction understood as the regeneration of intangible (as well as tangible) urban values, trying to outline some possible scenarios with respect to the recent destructions in the city of Irpin in Ukraine.


**War and peace: destruction, reconstruction, memory and feelings[1]**

The reconstruction of cities destroyed in the aftermath of war compels reflection on sensitive issues related to multiple aspects of living together: the fury of conflict, in fact, changes the temporal and affective perception that citizens have towards their urban context and, even more, imposes an abrupt break in the process of modification that -especially in Europe and the Asian area- is inherent to the city. To borrow a famous quote from Lewis Mumford, «Cities are a product of time. They are the molds in which men′s lifetimes have cooled and congealed, giving lasting shape, by way of art, to moments that would otherwise vanish with the living and leave no means of renewal or wider participation

behind them»[2], it can be confirmed that destruction due to conflict profoundly alters the process and the cyclical nature of an urban organism. After all, «The concept of time is interrelated with other concepts such as: experience, motion, human actions and consciousness and also space. For this reason, attempts are made to integrate the element of time into the understanding of designers and architects, in respect of analyzing the social processes involved in the making of space and place».[3]

Within this perspective, therefore, the drama and the search for reassurance become the main driving forces capable of stimulating a prefiguration of the postwar city. It should be emphasized, however, that reconstruction -usually coinciding with the period of peace- is to be considered as problematic and painful as the destructive phase: if the latter leaves obvious traces even for those who did not experience the nemesis of erasure and annihilation, under the scars of reconstruction survivors still feel the memory of traumatizing events. War and Peace, as well as destruction and reconstruction, are sequential phases, united temporally in an almost inseparable way, and although they seem opposite in ontology and in their manifestation, they share an equal degree of difficulty. War and peace induce at the same time, in their temporal development, different emotions in those who experience them. These develop according to the full spectrum of the seven primary emotions[4] not only about the individual's personality but can articulate themselves in the richer range of secondary

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2  Mumford Lewis, *The Culture of Cities*, (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1938), 4.

3  Kaçar A. Duygu, *Time perception in relation to architectural space,* in *Proceedings of the 2nd Scottish Conference for Postgraduate Researchers of the Built and Natural Environment (PRoBE),* (Rotterdam: Glasgow Caledonian University, 2005), 34–44.

4  The seven primary emotions are anger, happiness, sadness, fear, disgust, contempt and surprise.

Fig. 1
Irpin in April 2022. Photo by Rasal Hague. @ Wikipedia.

emotions concerning events. The war/peace oxymoron is therefore similar in value, form, and content to the war/architecture[5] one, in that urban destruction does not only affect the city, but its material heritage -historical, architectural and environmental- and immaterial one, also built by the deposit of feelings in places. Destruction then is a process and, as we can understand from the Latin etymology -*destructio-onis*, from *dē-* (un-, de-) + *struō* (I build)- it indicates the action of destroying and the resulting effect, demolition, massacre, ruin, and wreckage. If the intent is to erase whole chunks of history, then it is indeed necessary to figure out what and how to salvage, despite of a position advocating the aesthetics of destruction, in the knowledge that places hold traces of memory of both the domestic life (now lost) and the violence suffered (from which, perhaps in the first instance, one wants to escape and not retain the memory).

In the background of the studies conducted from a historiographical perspective by Cohen and from the viewpoint of urban transformations by Bevan and Hersher, this paper aims to offer a reflection on the destruction/reconstruction/memory theme applied to the recent cases of Ukraine. [Fig. 1]


## Cities destroyed by war: the paradigm shift of the 21st century[6]

War, probably more than other events of a destructive nature, establishes a relationship between loss, memory and symbol as, moreover, the most recent historical events testify. Empathic understanding and collective involvement, for example, are among the perceptual capacities most stimulated in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict (2022-ongoing), as a result of which our society has undergone a real emotional upheaval. In this regard, it is worth noting how, since the end of the Cold War[7] -with the subsequent political and military crumbling of the USSR- the Western world has perceived any reference related to the conflict as remote. It is a perception that has been substantially altered with the wartime events of the Kosovo War -defined by Thomas Keenan as the first war of the Internet Age[8]- as there has been, for the first time, a *surplus* of images, of interviews with displaced people, of direct testimonies being channeled into the web. It is indeed an epochal change from the critical, and clearly political, selection that had been implemented up to that point with war photography[9].

The proximity with respect to the hot spots of the planet, already expanded thanks to the medium of television, had undergone a further change of scale: with Internet, every user has the power to inform himself or herself at any time about what is happening and, by increasing his/her awareness regarding the

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5    See Herscher Andrew, *Warchitectural Theory*, *Journal of Architectural Education*, no. 61 (2008): 35-43.

6    Cities destroyed by war: the paradigm shift of the 21st century is written by Rosalba Belibani

7    Barbara Biscotti, *Un tema terribilmente attuale*, in Giovanni M. Gambini, Giovanni Landi, *La Guerra in Ucraina* (Milan: RCS Mediagroup, 2023), 7.

8    Thomas Keenan, *Looking like Flames and Falling like Stars: Kosovo, the First Internet War*, *Social Identities*, no. 7 (2001): 539-550.

9    See. Annarita Curcio, *Le icone di Hiroshima. Fotografie, storia e memoria* (Rome: Postcart, 2011).

war bulletin, nurtures an empathy reassured by the remoteness for the populations in conflict. These constant visual streams, guaranteed by the latest technological instrumentation, clashed in a sense with the concrete distance of television users from such scenes; after all, "the only real involvement that the Western world perceived was that concerning, if anything, its own military personnel on missions or the economic consequences of those conflicts in the everyday made, for example, of gasoline price increases".[10]

Indeed, political propaganda and Western voyeurism[11] for wartime events far from one's daily experience are among the most recognizable characters in the narrative of the war from 1945 onward. Unlike the First World Conflict, the Second sought to emphasize the role that art, design, and more generally multimedia communication had with regard both to the population and the military[12]. For this reason, the use of the photographic image would become the tool par excellence through which to declare, to the entire world, a victory and at the same time to testify the defeat of the enemy[13]; within this perspective, the vision of entire pieces of cities plundered or completely damaged, as well as the destruction of individual monuments related to a particular historical period, acquire identity values and iconologies[14]. This is even more true when we consider how to date, in addition to the direct testimony of war photography, we can also count satellite images, videos filmed by drones, or frames shared directly online by civilians under attack. Compared to the numerous conflicts that occurred during the first decades of the 21st century, the one in Ukraine presents some interesting specificities from an urban point of view because, by wanting to act on political, social, and cultural rewriting, they emphasize the topicality of the reconstruction-regeneration-memory link.

Returning to the opening stages of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and trying to analyze, albeit schematically, what happened in the days immediately following February 24, 2022, we find how, after a tactical and military phase carried out by aerial bombardments, the Russian army positioned itself on Ukrainian territory, invading by land. Such a strategy[15] entails, as an immediate consequence from the urban point of view, the occupation of the land and the shifting of the conflict from battlefields and strategic places (such as infrastructure, production areas, military zones, etc) to the inhabited city. It is a logic already widely experienced during the last century and, in particular, with World War II[16], and currently

10    Barbara Biscotti, *Un tema terribilmente attuale*, 7.

11    Annarita Curcio, *Le icone di Hiroshima*, 46.

12    See Jean-Louis Cohen, *Architecture in Uniform: Designing and Building for the Second World War* (Paris-Montreal: Hazan-CCA, 2011).

13    Such as, for example, Joe Rosenthal's *Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima* and Yevgeny Khaldei's *Raising a Flag over the Reichstag*, two images that, in a sense, summarize the entire wartime course of World War II and express the instrumental use of photography in the service of wartime propaganda. See Annarita Curcio, *Le icone di Hiroshima.*

14    See Lisa Parola, *Giù i monumenti. Una questione aperta* (Turin: Einaudi, 2020).

15    According to Giovanni M. Gambini and Giovanni Landi, this is "a typically Twentieth-century scenario that leaves the entire West baffled", see Giovanni M. Gambini, Giovanni Landi, *La Guerra in Ucraina,* 59.

16    According to Andrea Lopreiato, the Russian Campaign (1941-43) markedly transformed the role of so-called "urban operations" making them, unfortunately, a custom of the last years of the World War II, whereas previously

reiterated in the Ukrainian cities of Irpin, Bucha, Mariupol', whose streets have been transformed into urban trenches.

The change in the location of war (understood as the area historically designated to contain the conflict) also implies a change in the perception of it by citizens: they in fact experience firsthand not only the negative effects (i.e., deprivations, such as lack of food, water, medical care, etc.) as much as the more direct implications, usually reserved for the military alone. [Fig. 2]

After all, as Alberto Ferlenga points out:

> However, it is not just the mechanisms and tools of destruction that found new life in post-war reconstruction: war profoundly changed the land and prepared it, indirectly, for new uses. The tragic events that took place in battlefields, where the smell of gas and death lingered, led to the decades-long abandonment of entire areas, from the plains of the Isonzo to the fields of the Somme and the gutted houses and churches of German and Italian cities. These acted as a reminder of how a previously unseen destructive power could also violate privacy, the shattered walls and roofs revealing the objects of domestic life. However, war also had a "constructive" aspect (…).[17]

they played a subordinate role to the sites of choice of warfare, namely battlefields and trenches. See Andrea Lopreiato, *Guerra nelle città. I combattimenti urbani nel dopoguerra* (Milan: Ugo Mursia editore, 2016).

17    Alberto Ferlenga, *War*, in *Recycled Theory Dizionario illustrato/Illustrated Dictionary* (Macerata: Quodlibet, 2016), 631.

Fig. 2

A transfer of civilians from Irpin to Kyiv due to Russian attacks. 8 March 2022. Photo by Mvs. gov.ua. @ Wikipedia.

The transformation of the city into a battlefield[18] determines a whole series of observations on the material and immaterial characteristics of public space, the annihilation of a community, the need to remember the violence and the fallen, and even the importance of the collective memory of the places that, more than others, have suffered the operations of war. In this sense, City and War relates to the theme of tangible and intangible Memory, triggering a process of study and knowledge that is important in tracing the various systems of relationships that, in an urban environment, naturally exist.

War therefore is understood as:

> as conflict of forms: territories, constructions and naval, aerial and land equipment were all designed – into shapes that combined criteria that were universally valid for anything mechanical (...) into particular concepts and interpretations that also resulted from firmly held aesthetic positions.[19]

The drama of reconstruction is, by its very nature, linked to numerous implications of the sphere of memory; the loss of landmarks combined with the trauma suffered, brings citizens to need reconstruction for not only physical, but also emotional and psychological stability. Therefore, reconstruction, whether necessary following a war event, requires reflection on the meanings of urban traces and signs, and to the role they play as identity, physical and affective references for people. Furthermore, in the post-conflict reconstructions, the regeneration program must answer a long-standing question: how reconstruction and in what ways?

Total reconstruction, on the one hand, tends to eliminate the trauma suffered by rebuilding the city "as it was where it was", on the other hand, selective regeneration involves the reconstruction of certain parts of a building or the selection of individual architectures, almost as if they were memory acupunctures.

The diversity of approaches, however, is united by a common basis:

> the regeneration interventions of parts of cities, in which the new integrates or replaces the pre-existing structures, do not take account of a series of practices related to a broad concept that may be defined as "affective sustainability" – that is, an affective heritage that can and must be maintained in the inhabitant's memory, to his or her comfort. This new aspect of sustainability is translated in terms of affective projections and impacts on the inhabitants, of recognition of the place, of affective result to be maintained or reconstructed. The new design, (...) overwrites the previous one and, in building a new one, reassigns new values to the places while not taking the role of memory into consideration.[20]

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18    See Jean-Louis Cohen, *Architecture in Uniform.*

19    Jean-Louis Cohen, *Architecture in Uniform.*

20    Rosalba Belibani, *Affective Sustainability in the Rewriting Process of Places*, in Stefano Catucci, Federico

The war and the resulting destruction brings before us a number of relevant issues, such as the different impact of war strategies and technologies on urban fabrics and the need to adapt the conflict to the city and the city to the conflict[21]. Indeed, it is worth noting that there are different examples of urban erasure: in the specific case of the war in Ukraine, a strategy of "reversible damage", aimed at psychologically bending the population by surgically acting on the infrastructure and symbols of power (found in the cities of Mariupol' and Irpin), is reported. Some fairly recent studies[22] (but all prior to the outbreak of war in Ukraine) categorized cases of total city destruction as a result of wartime intervention in the more generic realm of natural disaster; it is the writer's opinion that, on the contrary, it is necessary to highlight some specific features of post-war reconstruction from those of natural disasters, especially in terms of social and urban repercussions. The reconstructive phase (whether partial, complete or even failed) has different values in pre-decisional and post-building terms: in prefiguring where required a new urban model with advanced technologies; in reinterpreting its relationship with the memory of the city itself; in establishing the boundaries of nostalgia with respect to permanence and the lost; and finally in implementation it has a preponderant role in drawing future and plausible scenarios for the city in order to create new spatial relationships, and fallout emotional among the inhabitants.

## The Rewriting process in Ukraine. The case study of Irpin

Although the conflict is still ongoing, there are many initiatives (public or private in nature) proposed at the international level to activate, with the war still going on, a reconstruction plan for Ukraine. While politics seems to be concerned with the issue only to figure out the amounts that will actually have to be allocated to carry out such projects, it is interesting to dwell on the ways and timing as well as the demands of the population in this regard.

Re-Start Ukraine is one of several associations that, at the European level, is looking for collaborators and stakeholders to disseminate its program for the reconstruction of the country divided into nine strategic clusters: Observe (surveying, mapping and assessing both tangible and intangible damage left after the war), Reclaim (Developing effective temporary infrastructure for those who have been displaced), Clean (Removing, recycling and upcycling the debris), Predict (Analyzing the current and future trends of how Ukrainian cities and villages by the war may change), Remember (Working with material

De Matteis, eds., *The Affective City. Spaces, Atmospheres and Practices in Changing Urban Territories* (Siracusa: LetteraVentidue, 2021), 234.

21    See Jean-Louis Cohen, *Architecture in Uniform.*

22    See Kealy, Loughlin, de Marco, Luisa, Hadzimuhamedovic, Amra, Marchand, Trevor and Gregory, Alyssa Rose, eds., *ICOMOS-ICCROM Analysis of Case Studies in Recovery and Reconstruction*, *Case Studies*, ICCROM and ICOMOS, 2021, vol. 1 and vol. 2, https://www.icomos.org/en/what-we-do/621-english-categories/what-we-do/focus/reconstruction/91268-publication-of-icomos-iccrom-joint-project-analysis-of-case-studies-in-recovery-and-reconstruction (last accessed November 2024).

and immaterial pre- and post-war heritage), Plan (Rethinking the urban and rural planning of the destroyed settlements to make them more resilient and human-centered), Finance (Balancing the ambitions of the recovery with available financing and identifying new financing mechanisms), Participate (Involving locals and various other stakeholders to co-create this new vision, and ensure a human-centered approach within all the steps of the regeneration), Build (Building the new structures, restoring the old ones, protecting the heritage).[23] Some of these actions (Observe, Finance, Build) are common in cases of conflict and, come to think of it, were also basic to the reconstruction plans carried out in European cities following World War II[24].

In contrast, Reclaim, Clean and Preditct focus their attention on the urban and environmental quality that a post-conflict city should have. Indeed, in the aftermath of large-scale chemical pollution, it is necessary to take action with targeted and concrete short-range actions, as well as with time-dilated strategies by which to enable a restoration of the environmental balance. Therefore, the problem of polluting residues and abandoned debris is combined with the urgency of a project of conscious reuse and recycling of the elements, capable of giving birth to a new cycle for the city and the territory[25]. The Predict Cluster works in this direction, providing a whole series of questions and insights on the issue of reconstruction (these questions were deduced from the specific case of Chernihiv but are analogous to other Ukrainian realities as well): how is it possible to restore the ecosystem while ensuring an industrial-type production strategy capable of reactivating the economy as well? What initiatives need to be proposed to stop the current demographic crisis in Ukraine and enable residents to return to their cities?

The post-conflict phase establishes a series of priorities, related to the need to rebuild, that put people and the environment at the center. In fact, even before restoring the economy of places and the social fabric (still two vital and indispensable factors for the postwar phase), it is important to heal the environmental and urban wounds, which constitute the perpetual memento with respect to what happened. In particular, the environmental disaster that resulted from war time intervention calls for action by restoring wildlife and natural habitat, and consciously managing the debris and remnants. The destruction also concerns the environment, violated and mortified by the war. It is necessary to focus on the urgency of the environmental disaster caused by the war in order to act,

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23    All reported actions are published on the Re-Start Ukraine association website. See https://restartukraine.io/ (last accessed November 2024).

24    Here is a brief bibliographic selection concerning, specifically, postwar reconstruction in Italy: Bonifazio Patrizia, *Tra guerra e pace: società, cultura e architettura nel secondo dopoguerra* (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 1998); Lorenzo De Stefani, Crlotta Coccoli, *Guerra, monumenti, ricostruzione. Architetture e centri storici italiani nel secondo conflitto mondiale* (Venice: Marsilio, 2011); Marco Praticelli, *L'Italia sotto le bombe. Guerra aerea e vita civile 1940-1945* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 2009); Salvatore Settis, *Battaglie senza eroi. I beni culturali tra istituzioni e profitto* (Milan: Electa, 2005).

25    The issue of environmental reconstruction has also been addressed in the dramatic case of Hiroshima; it is no coincidence that after the March 2011 accident at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant, the attention of the Japanese and the international press has once again been focused on the urban and territorial reconstruction of Hiroshima and how it is possible to initiate a large-scale environmental regeneration process.

reactivating the production processes of the area, vital for the local economy, and restoring, where possible, the wildlife and naturalistic habitat.

In the early months of the conflict, Norman Foster was among the first architects called by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe to intervene in Ukraine, working on the reconstruction of Kharkiv, the country's second largest city. While Foster's masterplan is still being drafted, the international press has learned of a letter, known as the Kharkiv Manifesto, in which the British architect lays out some ethical and moral priorities, rather than setting out a more concrete plan of interventions to be implemented. The following is an excerpt from the Manifesto:

> I undertake to assemble the best minds with the best planning, architectural, design, and engineering skills in the world to bear on the rebirth of the city of Kharkiv. In the spirit of combining a planetary awareness with local action, I would seek to bring together the top Ukrainian talents with worldwide expertise and advice.

> The first step would be a city masterplan linked to the region, with the ambition to combine the most loved and revered heritage from the past with the most desirable and greenest elements of infrastructure and buildings - in other words, to deliver the city of the future now and to plan for its life decades ahead. (…).[26]

These few lines probably refer to Churchill's famous speech «We shape our buildings and afterwards our buildings shape us»[27] in October 1943, when the British Prime Minister emphasized the urgency of rebuilding immediately

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26    See https://normanfosterfoundation.org/?project=kharkiv-masterplan (last accessed November 2024).

27    See Winston Churchill, *Never give in! The best of Winston Churchill's speeches*, (London: Pimlico, 2003).

Fig. 3
Street view of the residential neighborhood near the Zemsnarad and Karyer Lakes. @ Google earth.
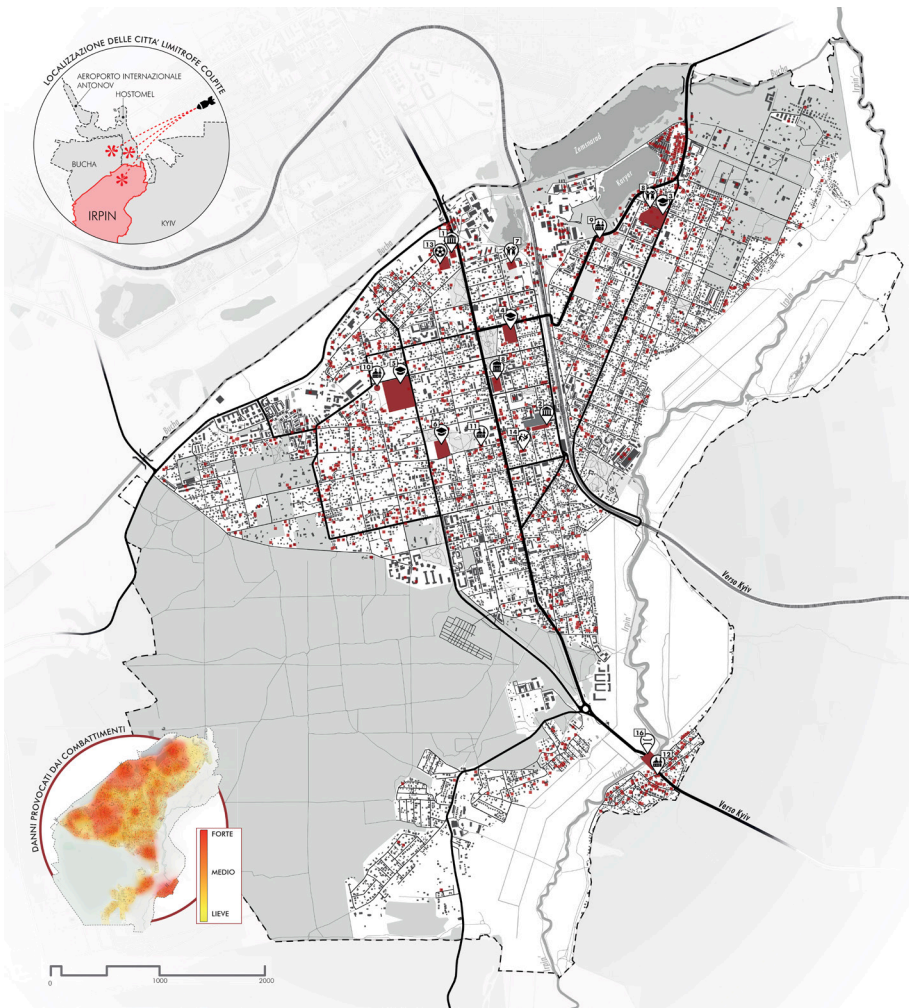
– before the end of the conflict – the Commons Chambers because it was a symbol of British democracy. Foster intends to act in the immediate term, mapping out possible rebirth scenarios for Kharkiv, which, not coincidentally, was named City of Future. Foster's Manifesto was the first step taken by the government administration toward a reconstructive vision that could extend from Kharkiv to the whole of Ukraine, conceiving a whole series of prototypical solutions that could be implemented in the heritage, in the industrial-productive system, in the housing, in the environment.

Irpin, a town located in the Kyiv oblast' and part of the Bucha district, is particularly respondent precisely to the need to restore the environment destroyed by wartime action. The large forests surrounding the city to the north (in the direction of Bucha) and to the south (in the direction of Kyiv) became, from the earliest stages of the conflict, the scene of war. Specifically, the northern area of Irpin -along the Bucha River to the Zemsnarad and Karyer Lakes-, is still today a militarized edge, surrounded by some residential neighborhoods (partially destroyed) and a now disused industrial district [Fig. 3]. It is precisely in the northern belt that a peripheral regeneration that deals with the city limit, rather than privileging a reconstruction of the inner areas, is conceivable. Reconstruction, by its nature complex and delicate, imposes choices: a ten-year planning in which the most historically relevant works are selected,

Fig. 4
Reconnaissance of the destroyed buildings in Irpin. Drawing by Alina Kruk, supervisors Rosalba Belibani, Pina Ciotoli.

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keeping the symbols of the war (reasoning is imposed on the meaning to be attributed to such architectures and how to rebuild them)[28] and working on the edges of the city, on the urban gates of which only rubble remains.

The rubble, in fact, is visible everywhere, in the initial surveying and street restoration operations it is placed along roads and becomes part of the everyday life of the survivors. As Silvia Dalzero argues:

> The rubble thus takes on all the characteristics of a Heideggerian spatium, of varying thickness, through which action and matter come into mutual contact giving shape to a renewed urban space. In this way another territorial conformation is being delineated, and the orography itself is transformed by tracing: rubble hills more or less high, more or less internal to the urban system, marshy areas transformed into solid land, coastlines gaining surface in water...[29]

There are many reasons why Ukrainian governance chose Irpin as the preferred site to experiment with a kind of reconstructive model that can be extended to the entire country. In fact, the geographical location, close to the northern outskirts of Kiev, has resulted since the first days of the conflict in a series of war interventions that have almost completely destroyed the center of the town [Fig. 4].  Also significant is the destruction of the Central House of Culture and the Irpin Bridge, structures made known to Westerners through the photos and video footage of war correspondents[30] [Fig. 5]. While it is true

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28    See monograph issue *Figli di Marte 2022 | Immagini in guerra*, "La rivista di Engramma", no. 190 (March 2022): 159-164.

29    Silvia Dalzero, "Rovine, detriti e macerie dei teatri di guerra", in *Dentro i confini della grande guerra. Memorie rimembranze. Tracce assenze* (Rovereto: ListLab, 2016), 42-47.

30    The Battle of Irpin was fought between February 27 and 28, 2022: although the urban area was recaptured by the Ukrainians, the green border surrounding Irpin to the north and south is still the scene of military incursions.

Fig. 5
The destroyed bridge over the Irpin River on the R-30 highway. 4 April 2022. Photo by Press Office of the President of Ukraine. @ Wikipedia.

that with the advent of new technologies, war destruction becomes surgical and mainly concerns sensitive objectives, it is pointed out that the inevitable destruction of buildings or entire parts of cities, inescapable consequences of conflicts, are often deliberate, intentional and consciously perpetuated, and it is precisely this aspect of premeditated violence that distinguishes the collective trauma of those who survive war from those who suffer natural disasters. In this regard, the insight that Robert Bevan brings forward by analyzing the relationship between wartime destruction, collective memory and urban heritage in the wars of recent decades is interesting:

> There has always been another war against architecture going on – the destruction of the cultural artefacts of an enemy people or nation as a means of dominating, terrorizing, dividing or eradicating it altogether. The aim here is not the rout of an opposing army – it is a tactic often conducted well away from any front line – but the pursuit of ethnic cleansing or genocide by other means, or the rewriting of history in the interests of a victor reinforcing his conquests. Here architecture takes on a totemic quality: a mosque, for example, is not simply a mosque; it represents to its enemies the presence of a community marked for erasure. A library or art gallery is a cache of historical memory, evidence that a given community's presence extends into the past and legitimizing it in the present and on into the future. In these circumstances structures and places with certain meanings are selected for oblivion with deliberate intent. This is not 'collateral damage'. This is the active and often systematic destruction of particular building types or architectural traditions that happens in conflicts where the erasure of the memories, history and identity attached to architecture and place – enforced forgetting – is the goal itself. These buildings are attacked not because they are in the path of a military objective: to their destroyers they are the objective.[31]

The new regeneration interventions of Irpin's architectural and environmental heritage are configured as paradigms of inescapable operations, which can become examples for the current need for mementos, which with their silent presence, hopefully bear witness for future generations to the horror of war. As in all manifestations of the real, so also physical reconstruction conceals in the eyes of most other meanings, bearers of lived histories and feelings, and remains unfortunately inescapable objects of study, depending on place, time and memory, in an ongoing investigation.

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31    Robert Bevan, *The Destruction of Memory. Architecture at War* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2006), 6.

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Maria Rita Pais

# Art as Document: Opening Historical Archive to Artistic Registers: Plan Barron 1938-2004

*Architecture Theory, Historiography, Military Heritage*

## /Abstract

Architecture research is traditionally addressed on perspectives aiming for object and author comprehension. We propose to change research point of view from creation to reception. Inspired by the revisitation of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's (1960) idea of experience of art, we propose to gather, understand and discuss architecture throughout art production reading, and more specifically to understand obsolete military architecture complexity through artistic visions. This idea also follows Hans Robert Jauss Aesthetics of Reception (1964), including what happens in the consciousness received and in its aesthetic fruition.

In the scope of the inhabitant spatial recognition, three researchers have been highlighted in recent years, with a perspective of relation with the work in architecture: Dana Arnold, (Arnold, 2014) presents methods of spatial investigation through biographies of the inhabitant, revealing personal meanings and strategies of relation with space; Jane Rendell with a work in understanding space through site-writing and site-specific as fictional forms of emotional relationship with the space; and Giuliana Bruno through the rescue of the "maps of the emotions" to make understandable some relations with space.

Can we really represent, understand or make history about dissonant architecture through art reading? What can art production bring to history reading that matters in research? We don't aspire to propose a new methodology, instead, we propose to present an ongoing curatorial experience to line up some methodological questions regarding the research on difficult heritage, that are not answered in traditional historical methodologies. More specifically, we propose to present and discuss how art can introduce more subjective but equally relevant layers of knowledge in the historical study of the object, especially when dealing with secret, codified or modified information and documentation, as it is the case of the Plan Barron of Defense of Lisbon and Setúbal Harbours.

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## 1. Introduction

Architecture research is traditionally addressed on perspectives aiming for object and author comprehension. In the case of hard-heritage, the one that materially and immaterially resists through time as it is the case of the architecture of war and the one in the form of bunker, in particular. Present paper avoids considering history as merely a reservoir of examples and attempts to analyze the phenomena 'historically', putting these examples in their context to gain better understanding of their deep meaning. The main objective of the research is to examine and (attempt to) understand architecture as a complex phenomenon: at the same time intellectual, physical, social and emotional. So, present paper proposes to change this research point of view from creation to reception, revealing the dialogue between creator and users, inhabitants and space appropriations by users or beholders. Inspired by the revisitation of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's (1960) idea of experience of art, we propose to gather, understand and discuss architecture throughout art production reading, and more specifically to understand the architecture of war complexity through artistic vision. This idea also follows Hans Robert Jauss *Aesthetics of Reception* (1964), including what happens in the consciousness received and in its aesthetic fruition.

Within the scope of this research, we don't aspire to propose a new methodology, instead, we want to collect examples, discuss cases and check the potential of art making, creative registers and art reading as a way to interpret space and, of course, the space of war and conflict.

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Fig. 1
Map of Plan Barron  @ Maria Rita Pais

## 1.1. Contextualizing

### 1.1.1. About Plan Barron

Abandoned on the coast as skeletons, bunkers are the last theatrical gesture in the history Western military architecture (Virilio, 1975). Technically obsolete, this military territory has fallen into extinction and is now generally forgotten. For this paper, we introduce Plan Barron of Defense of Lisbon and Setubal (PB) a set of land areas and military buildings planed in 1938 and implemented in three parcels:

1. Shooting Command, Oeiras

2. Northern Group, including:

>  1st Battery - Alcabideche, 3 pieces of 23.4 cm Vickers

>  2nd Battery - Parede, 3 15.2 cm Vickers pieces

>  3rd Battery - Lage, 3 pieces of Krupp CTR of 15 cm

>  4th Battery - Forte do Bom Sucesso, 2 x 2 56 mm Vickers pieces

3. Southern Group, including:

>  5th Battery - Raposeira, 3 pieces of Krupp CTR of 15 cm

>  6th Battery - Raposa, 3 23.4 cm Vickers pieces

>  7th Battery - Outão, 3 pieces of 15.2 cm Vickers

>  8th Battery - Albarquel, 3 pieces of Krupp CTR of 15 cm

Plan Barron was implemented in three phases:

Phase 1 - 1938, Plan Barron preliminary project made by General Barron in the English War Office.

Phase 2 - 1939, Plan "B" that is the result of the revision made by a technical group composed by English and Portuguese specialists.

Phase 3 - 1943, Plan B Implementation

This 3rd Phase was implemented in the Summer of 1943 and after the transfer of the Lajes Base in the Azores to the United Kingdom. In exchange, Portugal demanded, after several years of waiting for equipment, on the part of the Portuguese government, Plan B be implemented so that could ensure the country's security against the expected enemies of the so-called *Allies*.

The transfer of bases in Azores to England, in 1943, changes the course of Portuguese armament and to ensure the security of the new "allied" country, the *War Office* establishes a joint defense plan for the continent. This "English phase" revives a 1938 project, *Plan Barron* (PB) for the defence of Lisbon and Setúbal, designed by the WO with the Washington Naval Treaty in mind, which Portugal

had signed in 1922. The set draws a geography of surveillance and counter-bombing in the Tagus and Sado basins with eight fixed, secret, camouflaged and fortified batteries. The Plan Barron set constitutes what Gilbert Simondon calls a *techno-aesthetic* work, "entirely successful and beautiful" (Simondon, 1992, 255).

Lisbon is the only European capital that confronts the Atlantic, a plaza in the big ocean that has always needed particular defence. Each battery contains a set of large dimensioned bunkers to support long-range artillery pieces. Five are abandoned, one partially demolished and two have cultural use in other military areas. The variety of its forms is consistent with the diversity of the territories where they are located, from the natural park of Arrábida and Fonte da Telha to the densely populated Lisbon suburbs.

The secrecy to which he was subjected for a long time, delayed this study by about 20 years.

### 1.1.2. Theoretical Contextualizing

In the scope of the inhabitant spatial recognition, we highlight three research perspectives in recent years that unveil this particular point of view, more particular, more difficult to collect and, many times, more subjective: Dana Arnold, (Arnold, 2014) presents methods of spatial investigation through biographies of the inhabitant, revealing personal meanings and strategies of relation with space; Jane Rendell with a work in understanding space through site-writing and site-specific as fictional forms of emotional relationship with the space; and Giuliana Bruno through the rescue of the "maps of the emotions" to make understandable some relations with space.

We believe that these perspectives are particularly relevant given the emotional plan and the secrecy that the architecture of war bring to the discussion table. We also believe that since, historiography of a specific topic covers how historians have studied that topic by using particular sources, techniques, and theoretical approaches, we are saying that the history of the architecture of war can bring some new perspectives on historiography of architecture, and, in particular of the architecture of war.

Throughout history, the ideia that creative interpretations of space can bring new insights regarding the understanding of the history of civil architecture is more common. For example, we can better understand architecture through Albrecht Dürer's work, as Saint Jerome in His Study (1514) unveils the notion of comfort and interiorism; through Johannes Vermeer notion of interiors that explores the idea of intimacy; through Le Brun optical illusions, that increases the sensation of space, presenting a motto for the idea of building character (Boffrand, 1745). More recently, Richard Hamilton's, "pop" representation Just what is It that Makes Today's Home so Different, so Appealling? (1956) reflects on the ephemeral and the habitat symbolisms and Gordon Matta-

Clark's Splitting (1974) destabilize the image of suburban domesticity. Dwelling represents an impressive space sample scenario on space in a domestic scale. Can we really represent, understand or make history about other perspectives on historiography of architecture, as, for example, the architecture of war?

## 1.2. Hypothesis and Methodology

Our recent experience with the study of the specific case of Plan Barron of Defense of Lisbon and Setubal Harbours is opening our reading to an enormous panoply of possibilities, whether they originate from the type of artistic object, or from a broad set of emotional registers of the inhabiting subject. By bringing the space of war, present rehearsal opens the study to multiple readings, kinds of inhabitants:

1. The ones that make the project and inhabit the place before the military project. In this case, we find site photographs, drawings and inquirings.

2. The ones that build the military structures, many times in secret, many times without knowing all the information about the final object.

3. The ones that use the object as military, with its specificities, rules and technologies and contingencies of training or war.

4. The ones that the ones that use the construction as a demilitarized space bringing up the memories of aggression, of control or regulations. Post military use has broader possibilities, as the place can be preserved, in ruin or with another function.

So, in the research, our goal is to open the archive to these different archive origins and understand the emotional implications of these registers. We are, then creating several "micro-narratives" (Barbas, 2024) that can open up the historian narrative about the spaces of war.

## 1.3. Grouping the Factors into Clusters for Proposing the Conceptual Frameworks

The study for this paper comprises inductive research method in seven stages:

1. Empiric observations in the current panorama due to my two ongoing researches: "Art as Document" and "Plan Barron: A future for super-resistant structures".

2. Recognition of a research gap and the rise of the hypothesis by intuition: "- May we think about a wide way to look to the architecture of war, as it is embedded in secrecy and implies the idea of protection, control and aggression, three primary emotive reactions?

3. Analytical approach obtained by contributions by three authors regarding the idea of the relevance of the inhabitant: Dana Arnold, Jane Rendell and Giuliana Bruno. This will influence the next phase.

4. Grouping factors into clusters for proposing a conceptual theoretical framework to frame the hypothesis supposition made on the basis of limited evidence as a starting point for further investigation.

5. Results: conceptual framework composed by the clusters gathered in the previous phase. The concepts follow potential new positionings around the understanding of a possible new a shift of meaning regarding the art as a strong document source when studying the architecture of war.

The reading is supported by conducting a "critical literature review" (Taherdoost, 2023) around the main thematises in question here: "hard heritage" and "art as document". The literature review on this gap (Hettithanthri, Hansen & Munasinghe, 2022, 42) unveils x Clusters of conceptual framework:

This "critical literature review" as a qualitative method of research "group[s] the factors into clusters for proposing the conceptual frameworks" (Ullah, 2021) so that these x sustained concepts can be properly dissected, understood, compared and discussed, designing a new brief conceptual framework for this thematic. This last phase will be performed in another future study.

## 2. Conceptual Framework

With a group of European researchers we are working in what we call: *DISSONANT COLLECTION*. (1) Tito's Bunkers, in the 60's, underground anti-nuclear radiation shelter in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina; (2) During 2nd WW, Bunker Osiek, Gdańsk. A type L-1100 air-raid shelter, in Gdansk, Poland; and (3) Plan Barron of Defence of Lisbon and Setúbal, a counter Bombardment defence set along Lisbon coast. The reading is being done through a collection of creative readings to understand material heritage and emotional links to the architecture of war. These tow sides of the bunkers open some possibilities of re-propousing of this hard-heritage.

So, I decided to understand a little more about this *DISSONANT COLLECTION* regarding Lisbon Defence, and of Plan Barron, in particular, and started Grouping the Factors into Clusters for Proposing the Conceptual Frameworks regarding the possibility of art reading as a document in the history of architecture.

## 2.1. Architecture beyond Authorship

*Para uma casa sobreviver, tem de se transformar[1]*

According to José Gil, "for a house to survive, it has to transform itself". We propose to shift the focus of research from the author to the inhabitant and learn from him. We recognize the obvious relevance of the author of an architectural work, but we defend the relevance of the work during its existence

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1    José Gil in Henrique Pina, *Aires Mateus: Matéria em Avesso*, documentário RTP, 2018.

also. Therefore, we propose to study architecture, and more specifically the architecture of war, through the intervening parties from its creation to its use through the *Aesthetics of Reception* (Jauss, 1967) and the *Opera Aperta* (Eco, 1962). And, in this sense, we understand space as a result of the duality between authors conceptual ideas, together with the inhabitant understanding, embodiment and social behavior. Otherwise, as Gil says, maybe it can not last.

## 2.2. Space and Performativity

*perçu, conçu and vécu[2]*

In other hand, the sociologist and philosopher Henri Lefebvre is responsible for this approach that crosses this phenomenological basis with a critical analysis of a more political and social content. In his seminal book *La Production de l'Espace*, Lefebvre proposes an approach based on the triad of the "perceived" space of the "physical" world, the "conceived" space of the "mental" world and the "lived" space of the "social" world, what he defines respectively as "spatial practice", "space representations" and "representational spaces", seeking with this distinction to capture different analytical perspectives on spatial reality

Beyond Lefebvre's attempt to establish a "unitary theory" of space, the truth is that it can only be truly understood in the intersection between the ways in which space is appropriated by a given community, the conceptions of those who design and build it, and the symbolic systems that structure a given society, at

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2   Henri Lefebvre, *La prodution de l'espace* (Paris: Anthropos, 1976).

Fig. 2
. Bataria de Alcabideche. 1971.
s.a. @ Arquivo Histórico Militar

the limit, at the confluence of practices, models and representations materially manifested in the living space. In this sense, there is a certain performativity inherent in the "everyday space", a space framed by regimes, modalities, procedures and protocols, more or less unconscious, of an ideological and symbolic nature, which delimit and determine the horizon of experience, while enabling displacements and transformations in its borders or interstices. In fact, this idea that space is ideologically and culturally motivated by institutions and agents of society, but open to a potentially questioning and critical social appropriation by those who inhabit it and act in it, enables a historical and productive interpretation of works in the their contexts, which moves away from both naively subjectivizing and merely formalistic perspectives of approach. In this sense, there is a certain performativity intrinsic in the "space of war", a space framed by regimes, modalities, procedures and protocols, more or less unconscious, of an ideological and symbolic nature, which delimit and determine the horizon of experience.

## 2.3. Space and Representation

*Ceci n'est pas une pipe*[3]

As Magritte's Pipe, an image of a space/building/territory is not architecture. Architecture's relationship with its representations is not as linear as Magritte's affirmative sentence. As it is really called, "*The Treachery of Images*" evoques the critical relation between an image and a "form" itself.

Maybe because architecture is built usually to be inhabited, we presuppose that its physicality (materiality, form, color, arrangement), its sensoriality

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3   René Magritte in The Treachery of Images, oil on canvas, 1929.

Fig. 3
Bataria da Raposa. 1992. s.a.
@ Arquivo Geral do Exército

(smell, texture, visuality, sound or flavor) or its sensitive (intuition, subjectivity or emotion) experience, due to its embodiment, would give us a complete experience consciousness or perception. But is it architecture just the built materialized form? I argue not. Architecture is communication from an issuer to a receptor, and in this sense, architecture is a medium.

Representing is, for man, maybe one of the things that distinguish him most from other animals. Representing is in fact necessary to communicate intellectually with others through verbal, symbolic or artistic expression. Regarding the specificity of the architecture's discipline, it is well understood the amplitude between the artistic, social and humanistic knowledge that envolves thinking about space and territory and the nature of architectural *techne*, and the real need to build and materialize such complex and enormous realities.

Fig. 4
Vista de Lisboa, Frontispício da *Crónica de D. Afonso Henriques*, de Duarte Galvão, atribuída a António de Holanda, 1535-1545 @Casa-Museu Conde Castro Guimarães, Cascais

Fig. 5
Desenho de Lisboa. Século XVI. Alcáçova e parte da muralha medieval, s.a. @ https://jmdorropio.wixsite.com/site

## 2.4. (Art)Work and Truth

*World is the always non-objective (…)*[4]

According to Heidegger, the experience of art gives us a poetic intuition of "*Being*" ("*Sein*") that allow us to disclose the truth of things. But also Merleau-Ponty points this experience when looking at Cezanne's paintings in he's last work *L'Oeil et l'Esprit*, in 1960. Merleau-Ponty phenomenological approach begins by distinguishing art from science. Art relates to the lived and living world, including the body, the experience and the existence, while science takes the world as an object of knowledge "dissociated" from the existing subject, to identify laws beyond the phenomena. Science lacks the primacy of perception and the fact that we are first in the world with a body and that perceptual experience constitutes first knowledge. So, in this sense, and following Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, art interpretation is a form of resistance in a science based academic world. More recently, Michel Foucault (1994) and Hans-Georg Gadamer (1975) bring other approaches to understand subjectivity, both defending free thinking as an ethics to truth (Foucault, 1994) and as a unique understanding of truths, not accessible through a traditional science approach, but instead by an "experience of art" (Gadamer, 1975). As Jorge Otero-Pailos also remember, "(…) in the experience of art (…) sometimes also involve confronting another historical tradition, that of the artwork's original moment of production."[5]

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4    Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in *Poetry, language, thought*, edited by Martin Heidegger (New York: Harper Perennial, 1971). Original edition, *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*, 1950.

5    Jorge Otero-Pailos, *Architecture's Historical Turn. Phenomenology and the Rise of the Postmodern*. Minneapolis / London: University of Minneapolis Press, 2010.

Fig. 6
*Viagem ao Invisível* – Díptico fílmico, by Nuno Cera. 2016 @ Nuno Cera

## 2.5. Art as Representation

*architecture, as distinct from building, is an interpretive, critical act[6]*

According with the *English Oxford Dictionary*, representation is the "act of presenting somebody/something in a particular way; something that shows or describes something"[7]. The word has some more specific meanings, with more reasoning in the Latin origin of the word *repraesentationem* (nominative *repraesentatio*) means literally "to place before", something that is presented instead of another.

Among the various theories of art, which we will not discuss here, there is a very common idea about art, which the authors universally agree as art being an entity (artifact or performance) intentionally endowed by its author with a significant degree of aesthetic interest and usually distancing itself from everyday objects[8]. In this sense, an artwork always represent something, that goes from the intencional idea of the author, the different conceptions inside author's ideas to the real things, real concepts, real artifacts or real performances existent in human culture.

As Beatriz Colomina points, there is an interpretative act in architecture. Colomina introduced the idea that architecture, especially modern architecture activated by new technical instruments, could not be understood simply through works and manifestos, but should expand its field of analysis to the media in general:

> To think about modern architecture must be pass back and forth between the question of space and the question of representation. In deed, it will be necessary to think of architecture as a system of representation, or rather a series of overlapping systems of representation. This does not mean abandoning the traditional architectural object, the building. In the end, it means looking at it much more closely than before, but also in a different way. The building should be understood in the same terms as drawings, photographs, writing, films and advertisements; not only because these are the media in which more often we encounter it, but because the building is a mechanism of representation in its own right.[9]

In *Architecture and Ekphrasis*, Dana Arnold also brings this idea of art as representation with their own syntactical, linguistic and cultural qualities. She stresses that art expression is not about copying something, but about transmitting something. It's not about duplicating, it is about putting new

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6    Beatriz Colomina, "Architectureproduction", in Kester Rattenbury, *This is not Architecture. Media Construtions* (London, New York: Routledge, 1988), 207.

7    *Oxford Learners Dictionaries*, consulted in: https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/representation (last accessed November 2024).

8    According to the ideas developed in: Stephen Davies, *The Artful Species* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) and Stephen Davies, *Definitions of Art* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

9    *Beatriz Colomina. Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media (Cambridge-Massachusetts/London-England: The MIT Press, 1996), 13-14.*

thinking: "I argue that these images are, in fact, a form of writing, in the full sense of the word, as they are syntactical and linguistic qualities that convey both ideas and experience"[10] So, as an ekphrasis, an image has its particularities in order to describe a subject and the graphics, the sounds, the movements operate as language (words) to present an argument about art or architecture in this particular case.



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## 2.6. Art as Document

> Tout indice concret ou symbolique, conservé ou enregistré, aux fins de représenter, de reconstituer ou de prouver un phénomène ou physique ou intellectuel.[11]

According to the *Oxford Diccionary*, "an official paper, book or electronic file that gives information about something, or that can be used as evidence or proof of something"[12] Also, according to the same reference, the origin of the word is linked to the "late Middle English: from Old French, from Latin *documentum* 'lesson, proof' (in medieval Latin 'written instruction, official paper'), from *docere* 'teach'. So, broadening specking, we understand the role of documentation as a mean to archive or to work as evidences or even to remember us of something. "Fundamentally, every document is something that references something outside itself and is part of a broader system."[13] In this sense, a representation becomes a document once it is situated within a classificatory scheme or other broader system in relation to an object (architectural object) or an ideia (architectural theoretical proposition).

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10    Arnold, Dana, *Architecture and Ekphrasis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), 1.

11    Suzanne Briet, *O que é a documentação.* Translated by Maria de Nazareth Rocha Furtado (Paris: EDIT, 2016). Original edition Suzanne Briet, *Qu'est-ce que la documentation* (Paris: EDIT, 2015), 7.

12    https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/document_1 (last accessed November 2024).

13    Tim Gorichanaz, "Understanding art-making as documentation," *Art Documentation* 36, no. 2 (2017):191–203, 6.

Fig. 7
Soldado do Regimento de Caçadores 5. Castelo de S. Jorge. Joshua Benoliel, 1908 @ Arquivo Municipal de Lisboa

## 2.7. Building the history in an archive

In 7 September 1940, *The Blitz* started. The German bombing campaign against the United Kingdom took place between 1940 until 1941, during the Second World War. Beyond the physical changes, this traumatic event also shifted definitively the historiography studies as it threatening the existence of the country's architectural heritage. By November of that same year a meeting was held at the Royal Institute of British Architects, in London, to discuss what could be done to create a record of historic architecture that was now under threat of destruction from the bombing campaigns. The result was the establishment early in 1941 of the *National Buildings Record* (NBR), a distinct body with a small, dedicated staff.
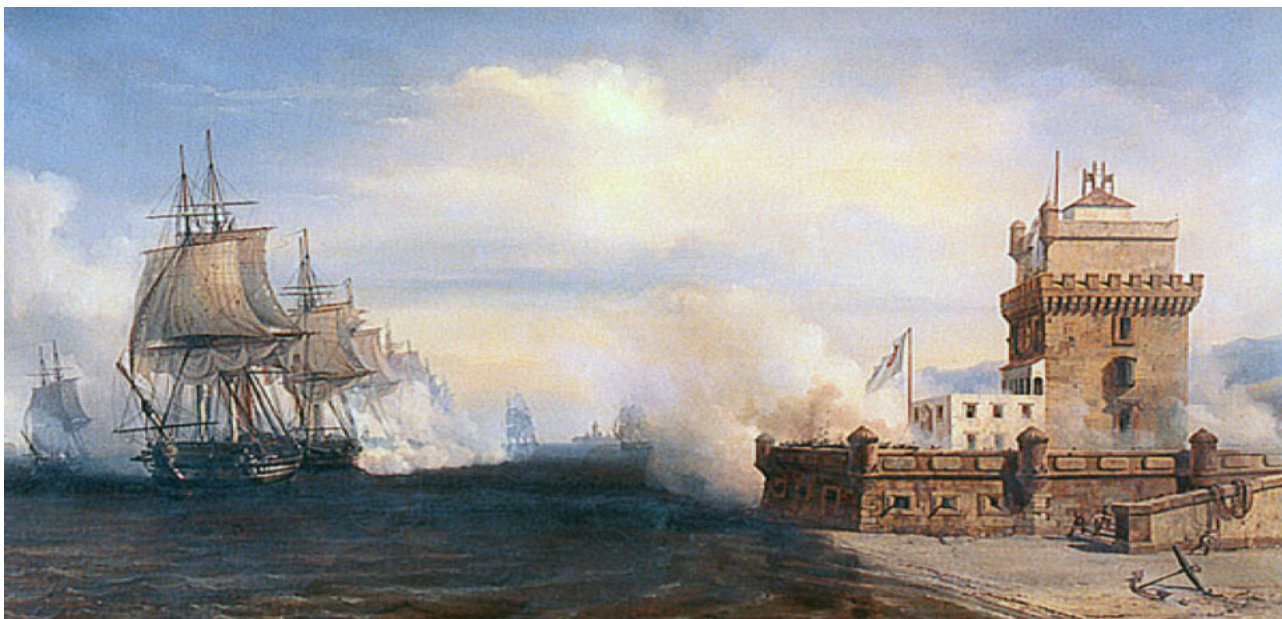


Its purpose was to collect and create photographic and drawn surveys of historic or significant buildings deemed to be under threat from bombing, so that, in the event of a building's destruction, a record of it would be preserved. Due to the immense scope of this work, in some instances it was only possible to record buildings after they had already been damaged by bombing. The importance of this work became even more apparent in 1942 as the *Luftwaffe* began their '*Baedeker*' raids (named after the popular German guidebooks) which specifically targeted areas and buildings of cultural value. The NBR considered architectural plans and measured drawings as the most important and valued form of record. However, a comprehensive measured survey scheme could not be implemented due to the cost in time and resources. The urgency of war-time conditions meant that photography was the most practical way to record threatened buildings. The origin of this practical decision, brought also many novelties in the field of historiography and philosophy of history in the post-Second World War, arising from the danger of losing so many buildings of historic value, but also due to the construction of such a new and extensive archive of architecture. That is the case of Sir John Summerson, Sir Howard

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Fig. 8
Batalha do Tejo, 1831, a.d. @
Service historique de la Marine,
Philippe Masson et Michèle
Battesti

Colvin or Rupert Gunnis, all showing an certain "sense of urgency to discover order and publish facts - empirical information about a past set of values and architecture that had nearly been lost"[14].

Dana Arnold brings the question, "what is the relation between the historian and the facts?"[15] Facts and events are in the past, so we only have the traces left in the present. Maybe it's what Foucault calls an archive,

> (...) the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events. But the archive is also that which determines that all these things said do not accumulate endlessly in an amorphous mass, nor are they inscribed in an unbroken linearity, nor do they disappear at the mercy of chance external accidents; but they are grouped together in distinct figures, composed together in accordance with multiple relations, maintained or blurred in accordance with specific regularities (...)[16].

According to Foucault, his archive of knowledge is activated by someone with its own reading and subjectivity. may be the subjectivity of the historian or the subjectivity of other authors of records or interpretations of the architectural work, in this case.

9 - 10

## 3. Opening Historical Archive to artistic registers

Though the hands of an historian, history lives in two different times, in the past and in the moment of the historical narrative creation. Naturally, this opens an attention to the question of subjectivity. In addition to these post-World War

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14    Daaìna Arnold, *Reading Architectural History* (London: Routledge, 2002), 9.

15    Arnold, *Reading Architectural History*, 4.

16    Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge, Rupert Swyer* (Trad.) (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972) (1969), 129.

Fig. 9 - 10

National Building Record, St Bride's Church, December 1940 and March 1941 @Historic England. Archive AA61/02660
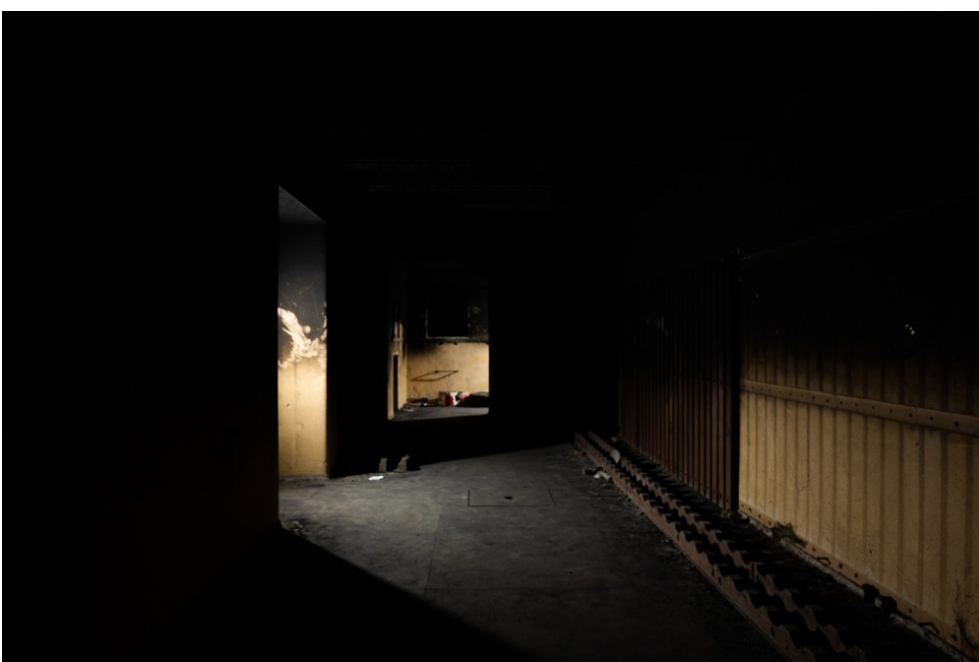
Fig. 11
s.a. Bataria do Bom Sucesso,
1946 @ Arquivo Geral do
Exército

Fig. 12
Nuno Cera. Bataria da
Raposeira. 2019
 @ Nuno Cera

Fig. 13
Miguel Marquês. Bataria do
Outão. 2023 @ Miguel Marquês

II evolutions, this event of the creation of an emergency archive brings to light a seminal issue in the field of architecture, that is its visuality, its materiality and its ability to produce experiences and performativities along its physical existence. So in this sense, we stress here the relevance of the visual archive, and the narration archive to bring these visuality, this physicality, this experience and performativity into the hands of those who study architecture, and of course the artistic registers of space and architecture.

Bunkers play a particular game, as Ian Klinke specifies, "increasingly recognised as constitutive of geopolitics itself, the violent mapping and writing of the earth" (Bennett, 2018, 117). We hear in the breaking news about the digging of new trenches in Ukrainian territory, so we can understand the functional power of these super-structures in the present day.

> Bunkers are, and have always been, offices or dormitories underground – the bunker reflects the society that made it (…). And like tombs, bunkers have always had, as part of their purpose, the protection and transmission of culture. They operate as a cultural ark – and what is preserved/valued for preservation speaks of what is privileged in the host society. The afterlife of bunkers now lies in the provision of secure archival storage. These places that once offered shelter for people or national treasures now live on (if at all) as data stores. (Bennett,2018, 168)

The idea of dissonance brings many orders and layers of understanding. Although the differences, the exercise of putting together such diverse material brough new common understandings that encapsulate their essence and impact, forming the thematic sections of this paper. Our research steers away from idyllic domestic architecture and ecological aspirations, delving into the architecture of conflict, where deception, power dynamics, and the imposition of force form the very essence of design. Ultimately, our collaborative endeavour serves as a testimony to the complexity of bunker architecture and its multifaceted impact on our understanding of history and heritage.

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Raffaele Amore

# Before Frauenkirke. Delayed Reconstruction Work of Historic German Buildings Destroyed during World War II

*Second World War, Come era dove era, Germany, Reconstruction, Conservation*

## /Abstract

Abstract

After World War II, Germany suffered from Allied occupation for several years. During this period, the diffi-cult operations of clearing the rubble and counting the damage to the buildings and infrastructural heritage of the cities began. At the same time, many architects started to investigate possible intervention strategies, giv-ing rise to an interesting debate in which the theme of the interpretation of the ruins played a central role.

After 1949, the socio-political conditions changed: with the birth of two states, the priority was the physical reconstruction of the two new countries. A massive work of reorganization and reconstruction took its moves. This resulted in very diversified operational choices in each city, both in terms of restoration of historic build-ings and urban and territorial planning. After the 1970s, once this phase was over, German scholars in both the East and the West started to draw up preliminary critical-descriptive studies on partial achievements. In these studies, those of Niels Gutschow and Werner Durth, Josef Nipper and Manfred Nutz, and Hartwig Beseler and Niels Gutschow are particularly signifi-cant.

In the early '90s of the twentieth century, before the reunification, the first reconstruction projects of the build-ings destroyed by the war were conceived as "where it was, how it was." Some examples are those of the Knochenhaueramtshaus in Hildesheim and the Alte Waage in Braunschweig.

This paper aims to illustrate and critically comment on the motivations that led to the reconstruction of these buildings, framing them in the wider debate that has developed in Germany after reunification fol-lowing the notorious cases of the reconstruction of the Frauenkirke in Dresden and the Berlin Castle, and the well-known exhibition curated in 2010 by Winfried Nerdinger at the Architekturmuseum of the TU München entitled Geschichte der Rekonstruktion – Konstruktion der Geschichte.

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## Premise

For too complex reasons to be examined here, the contribution of German culture to the discipline of restoration, both in terms of theoretical reflection and operation, has not been particularly widespread in postwar Europe. [1] That was at least until the reunification of the country when several interventions catalyzed international critics' interest. After outlining the general framework within which the reconstruction of German cities was dealt with, the present paper aims to present some considerations regarding some of the 'where they were and how they were' rebuilding work - carried out in the late 1970s and early 1980s - of monuments and urban environments destroyed during the war, which had been rebuilt in 'modern' forms only a few decades earlier.

## Reconstruction in Germany.

Much of German cities' historical and infrastructural building stock was destroyed during World War II. The operations to clear the rubble and count the damage were long and complex. Between 1945 and 1949, many architects and public officials in charge of conservation began to discuss possible intervention strategies. This gave rise to an interesting debate that addressed the subject of war ruins within the more general framework of a process of spiritual rebirth of German society. [2] This resulted in a fascinating discussion, with no particular follow-up, which is still scarcely known. [3]

Indeed, the division into two states with distinct political orientations, the process of 'normalization' of West-German society after the amnesty of 1951 and the Nuremberg Trial brought about new political and social conditions. Although with different motivations, in both the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, the priority became 'rebuilding.' Konrad Adenauer, Chancellor of West Germany from 1949 to 1963, had as his motto the phrase "Das Land wieder aufbauen und die Wunden heilen lassen" (Rebuilding the country and healing the wounds). For these reasons and without a unified strategy in both East and West, the processes and ways cities were rebuilt were very diverse. Similarly, there was a wide variety of attitudes, often conditioned by economic availability, even for restoring individual monuments. Total reconstructions were carried out, such as for the Charlottenburg Castle [4] in West Berlin, the

1   Giovanni Carbonara, Presentazione, in Donatella Fiorani, *Il restauro architettonico nei paesi di lingua tedesca. Fondamenti, dialettica, attualità* (Roma: Bonsignori, 2006), 7-10, 7.

2   Karl Jasppers, *La questione della colpa. Sulla responsabilità politica della Germania* (Milano: Raffaello Cortina editore, 1996); Susanne Vees-Gulani, *Trauma and Guilt. Literature of Wartime Bombing in Germany* (Berlin – New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003); Alexander Mitscherlich, Margarete Mitscherlich, *The Inability to Mourn: Principles of Collective Behavior* (New York: Grove Press, 1975).

3   Michael S. Falser, "Trauerarbeit an Ruinen – Kategorien des Wiederaufbaus nach 1945" in *Rekonstruktion in Deutschland. Positionen zu einem umstrittenen Thema*, ed. Michael Braum and Ursula. Baus, (Basel - Boston – Berlin: Birkhäuser, 2009) 60-97, 66.

4   Beseler Harting and Niels Gutschow, *Kriegsschicksale deutscher Architektur. Verluste, Schaden, Wiederaufbau* (Neumünster: Karl Wachholtz verlag, 1988) vol. I, 142-145.

Residenzen[5] and the Chinesescher Turm[6] in Munich, the Gemälde-Galerie[7] in Dresden, the Alte Börse in Leipzig, and for the Goethehauses[8] in Frankfurt. At the same time, the Aegidienkirche[9] in Hanover, the Gottfried Semper's Sankt Nikolai Kirche in Hamburg, and the Franziskaner Klosterkirche in West Berlin were kept in a state of ruin. There was no shortage of reconstruction interventions with more or less distinguishable additions of new parts, such as for the Staatsoper Unter den Linden[10] and the Paulskirche in Frankfurt am Main.[11] Yet, in interventions like for the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche[12], architect Egon Eiermann - after multiple

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5    Kurt Faltlhauser, *Die Münchner Residenz. Geschichte, Zerstörung, Wiederaufbau* (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2006); Tino Walz, *Untergang und Neubeginn: Die Rettung der Wittelsbacher Schatzkammer, der Wiederaufbau der Münchner Residenz und andere Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben* (München: Langen Müller, 2003).

6    Beseler, Gutschow, *Kriegsschicksale deutscher Architektur*, vol. II, 1405.

7    Hubert Gregor Ermisch, *Der Dresdener Zwinger* (Dresda: Sachsen, 1954).

8    Walter Dirks, "Mut zum Abschied. Zur Wiederherstellung des Frankfurter Goethehauses," in *Frankfurter Hefte*, no. 8 (August 1947): 819 – 828. See https://frankfurter-goethe-haus.de/von-der-zerstoerung-zum-wiederaufbau-des-frankfurter-goethe-hauses-1944-1951/die-zerstoerung-des-goethe-hauses/ [last accessed September 2023].

9    The city of Hannover was completely redesigned in the post-war period on the basis of urban planning criteria based on car mobility, according to the project of Rudolf Hillebrecht. See: Sid Auffarth, "Non ricostruire, ma costruire nuovamente. Hannover dopo la seconda guerra mondiale," *Storia urbana*, no. 129, (2010):155-170; Paul Zalewski, "Rudolf Hillebrecht und der autogerechte Wiederaufbau Hannovers nach 1945," in *Universität Hannover 1831 - 2006, Festschrift zum 175-jährigen Bestehen der Universität Hannover* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2006), vol. 1, 89-102; Paul Zalewski, "Zur „Konstruktion der Heimat" im funktionalistischen Aufbau Hannovers nach 1945," *Biuletyn Polskiej Misji Historycznej Bulletin der Polnischen Historischen Mission*, no.7 (2012): 293-337; Raffaele Amore, "The post-war 'reconstruction' of the city of Hanover and the restoration of the Aegidienkirche," in *Città e Guerra. Difese, distruzioni, permanenze delle memorie e dell'immagine urbana*, tomo II, *Tracce e Patrimoni*, ed. Raffaele Amore, Maria Ines Pascariello, Alessandra Veropalumbo (Napoli: Federico II University Press): 689-699.

10    Falser, *Trauerarbeit an Ruinen*, 67-68.

11    Falser, *Trauerarbeit an Ruinen*, 72-74; Michael S. Falser, "Hat Wiederaufbau denkmalwert? die Paulskirche im Reigen nachkriegszeitlicher Architektur Ikonen," in *Paulskirche eine Politische Architekturgeschichte, ed Maximilan Liesner,* Philipp Sturm, Peter Cachola Schmal, Philipp Kurz (Stuttgart: avedition, 2019), 104-121, 107-108.

12    The Kaiser Wilhelm Church, built in the late Romanesque style by Franz Schwechten, was opened in Sedantag in 1891 in memory of Kaiser Wilhelm I. Destroyed in 1943, it was redesigned by Egon Eiermann in the late 1950s (Egon Eiermann, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtnis Kirke* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1994). He came up with several solutions: the first did not provide for the preservation of part of the original church; Only after the protests of the inhabitants did the project move towards the construction of new buildings next to the consolidated ruins of the ancient church. This intervention, together with the one for the Cathedral Church of St Michael in Coventry, has become a true architectural icon, reported by critics as one of the most successful examples of integration

Fig. 1
Dresden. The ruins of the Fraunkirche: on the left in 1945, in the centre in 1992, on the right in 1992. (Wenzel Fritz edited, *Berichte vom Wiederaufbau der Frauenkirke zu Dresden Konstruktion des Steinbaus und Integration der Ruine*, Karlsruhe:Universitätverlag Karlsruhe, 2007, 86,74, 90).

second thoughts - chose to juxtapose the ruins of the 19th-century church with a new building with contemporary forms. Other peculiar and interesting interventions include those in Munich by Hans Döllgast for the Alte Pinakothek[13] and the Alter Südlicher Friedhof[14] and those by Josef Wiedeman for the Glyptothek and the Siegestor[15] or, again, those carried out in Cologne for the St. Alban[16] complex by Rudolf Schwarz[17] and Josef Bernard. Finally, there was no shortage of demolition without reconstruction, such as for the Stadtschlosses[18] in East Berlin and the many churches[19] in the cities of the German Democratic Republic[20] - for political-ideological reasons - or the Neues Pinakothek in Munich - for economic reasons.

between old and new, which has also found space in twentieth-century history manuals of architecture and restoration. See: Louse Campbell, "Reconstruction, Englishness and Coventry Cathedral", Storia urbana, no. 158 (2018): 87-110; Andrea Pane, "'Ruins for remembrance' the debate about the bombed London City churches and its echoes in Italy," *Storia urbana*, no. 158 (2018):111-147; Paola Martire, "A case Study in the City of London: St Alban's church in Woof Street," Storia urbana, no. 158 (2018): 149-163; Maria Pia Sette, *Il restauro in architettura, quadro storico* (Torino: UTET, 2001); Giovanni Carbonara, *Architettura d'oggi e restauro. Un confronto antico-nuovo* (Torino: UTET, 2011).

13    Technische Universität München und Bund Deutscher Architekten Dba, *Hans Döllgast 1891-1974* (München: Callwey, 1987); Winfried Nerdinger, "Hans Döllgast ricostruzione della Alte Pinakothek a Monaco," *Casabella*, no. 636 (March 1996): 46-54; Franz Peter, Franz Wimmer, V*on den Spuren: Interpretierender Wiederaufbau im Werk von Hans Döllgast* (Salzburg: Anton Pustet, 1998); Winfried Nerdinger, "Hans Döllgast. Cheerfully puritanical architecture," *Convention*, OASE, no. 49–50 (1998):108–119, 113 (https://www.oasejournal.nl/en/Issues/4950/HansDollgast, last accessed September 2024); Raffaele Amore, "Il nuovo per l'antico nell'opera di Hans Döllgast," in *Il Progetto di Architettura come intersezione di saperi. Per una nozione rinnovata di Patrimonio*, Atti dell'VIII Forum ProArch, Società Scientifica nazionale dei docenti di Progettazione Architettonica, ed. Alberto Calderoni, Bruna Di Palma, Antonio Nitti, Gaspare Oliva (Roma: ProArch, 2019): 212-219; Alberto Grimoldi, "Le vicende delle opere di Hans Döllgast a Monaco e i loro echi nella cultura tedesca," *Quaderni dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Architettura, Realtà dell'architettura fra materia e immagine. Per Giovanni Carbonara: studi e ricerche*, vol. 1, (2019): 175-182; Vitangelo Ardito, "La rovina e l'ornamento. Hans Döllgast e la ricostruzione dei monumenti in Germania nel secondo dopoguerra," *Opus*, no. 3 (2019): 49-68; Francesco Dal Co, "Un umanista sereno: Hans Döllgast 1891-1974," *Casabella*, no. 943, (March 2023): 60-61.

14    Winfried Nerdinger, "Hans Döllgast. Neue Raume aus Ruinen," *Casabella*, no. 943, (March 2023): 32-59, 62-101. Nerdinger, among other things, presents an interesting intervention by Dollgast for the South Cemetery in Munich. It should also be noted that the writer presented, a contribution entitled *L'Alter Südlicher Friedhof di Monaco di Baviera e Hans Döllgast* at the X AISU Congress, held in Turin from September 6 to 10, to be published.

15    Leila Signorelli, *Wiederaufbau: Josef Wiedeman e la conservazione viva dell'esistente* (Bologna: Bononia University press, 2019). See also Roberta Fonti, "Preventive conservation in Times of War. The case of Triumphal Arches," in *Città e Guerra. Difese, distruzioni, permanenze delle memorie e dell'immagine urbana*, tomo II, *Tracce e Patrimoni*, ed. Raffaele Amore, Maria Ines Pascariello, Alessandra Veropalumbo (Napoli: Federico II University Press): 1036-1046.

16    The block of St. Alban originally consisted of the old Pfarrkirke St. Alban and the Gürzenich, a town hall built around the middle of the fifteenth century. During the nineteenth century, the entire building, excluding the church, was used for the celebrations of the Cologne Carnival.

17    The project, different from the one proposed in the competition phase, involved the construction of a new building with public and commercial spaces and a ballroom that incorporates the ruins of the church (consolidated by means of reinforced concrete structures) and the Gürzenich building, of which only the facades have been preserved. It's interesting what one of the designers writes about it: "Wir haben erreicht, daß diese Kirche nicht wiederhergestellt wurde und fanden dabei die Zustimmung des Erzbischofs , […]. Was hätten wir wieder herstellen sollen? […] Wir ließen den Raum kahl und zerstört. Er mahnt an die unerforschbare Bosheit des menschlichen Herzens. So steht er neben dem Festhaus. Die Feste des Lebens werden vor den Hintergrund des Todes gestellt" (Rudolf Schwarz, *Kirchenbau. Welt vor der Schwelle* (Heidelberg: F.H. Kerle 1960), 93. In English: "With the archbishop's approval, we managed to prevent the reconstruction of this church […] What should we have restored? […] We left that space empty and in ruin. It is a memento to the human heart's unfathomable evilness. A ruin is placed next to a party house. Life is celebrated against a backdrop of death", German translation by the author. Rudolf Schwarz was responsible for urban planning for the city of Cologne between 1946 and 1952, see Wolfgang Pehnt, Hilde Strohl, *Rudolf Schwarz, 1897-1961* (Milano: Electa, 2000); Thomas Hasler, *Architektur als Ausdruck: Rudolf Schwarz* (Berlino Mann, 2000); Rudolf Stegers, "Rudolf Schwarz, the Hochstadt, and the reconstruction of Cologne," in *Modernism and the Spirit of the City*, ed Iain *Boyd* Whyte (London: Routledge, 2003); Adam Caruso and Helen Thomas, ed., *Rudolf Schwarz and the Monumental Order of Things* (Zurich: E T H Honggerberg, 2016).

18    Falser, *Trauerarbeit an Ruinen,* 89.

19    There is also an extensive bibliography for the reconstruction of Berlin Castle. Only articles that appeared in *Casabella* are mentioned here. In particular, those published in no. 796 of 2010 and no. 920 of 2021.

20    See: Claudia Zanlungo, *"Risorti dalle rovine". La tutela dei monumenti e il destino dell'architettura sacra nella Germania socialista* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 2018) and Henriette Von Preuschen, "Ideologia e conservazione dei beni culturali. Le chiese distrutte nella Repubblica Democratica tedesca," *Storia urbana* , no. 129 (2010):121-154.

German critics have only begun to produce systematic studies on the restoration modalities adopted in the postwar period - excluding the first surveys of destroyed or damaged buildings[21] - since the 1980s.[22]

One of the first contributions on the topic was by Niels Gutschow[23]. In 1985, he published a short essay on the urban reconstructions of four West German cities: Münster, Hannover, Darmstadt, and Freudenstadt. Two years later, Klaus von Beyme[24] presented the first comparative report concerning reconstruction policies in the two Germanies, pointing out the many points of convergence. Two significant volumes were published in 1988: Niels Gutschow and Werner Durth's catalog entitled Träume in Trümmern (Dreams in Ruins)[25], concerning the cities of West Germany. In 1993, this was followed by a further publication on the cities of the German Democratic Republic, edited by Josef Nipper and Manfred Nutz[26], and the two-volume publication edited by Hartwig Beseler and Niels Gutschow entitled Kriegsschicksale deutscher Architektur. Verlust - Schäden - Wiederaufbau. Eine Dokumentation für das Gebiet der Bundesrepublik Deutschland[27].

21    A first account of the war damage was published in the journal *Die Kunstpflege* in 1948 (Die Kunstpflege, no. 1 (1948): 87-146.), which was updated in 1958 (Heinrich Neu, "Die Verluste an Kulturgut in Deutschland durch den Zweiten Weltkrieg," in *Dokumente deutscher Kriegsschäden*, ed. Bundesminister für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte, vol. 1, (Bonn: 1958), 373-437 and, for the GDR in 1978, (*Schicksale deutscher Baudenkmale im zweiten Weltkrieg: Eine Dokumentation der Schäden und Totalverluste auf dem Gebiet der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*, ed Gotz Eckardt (München: Beck, 1978) vol. 1-2). Since the late 1980s, English-language volumes on reconstruction in Germany have also been published. These include: Jeffry M. Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War. The Reconstruction of German Cities After World War II* (New York, Oxford: New York-Oxford University Press, 1993); Wim Denslagen, *Architectural Restoration in Western Europe: Controversy and Continuity* (Amsterdam: Architectura & Natura Press, 1994); Rudy Koshar, *Germany's Transiest Past: Preservation and National Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, *Munich and the Memory. Architecture, Monuments and the Legacy of the Third Reich* (Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000); Nicola Lambourne, *War Damage in Western Europe. The Destruction of History Monuments During the Second World War* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001).

22    At the invitation of the ICOMOS National Committee of the German Democratic Republic, a meeting was held from 15 to 19 November 1982 on the theme *Reconstruction of Monuments Destroyed by War*, which ended with the drafting of the Declaration of Dresden on the 'Reconstruction of Monuments Destroyed by War' (1982), which helped to direct the research and give a strong impetus to the systematization of knowledge related to reconstruction policies in Germany post-World War II in a historical key. Below are points 7 and 8 of the Charter which in some way foreshadow the methods that the German authors will use to classify the interventions carried out. «7. In reconstructing monuments destroyed by war various techniques have been developed. A multiplicity of factors have to be taken into account in each individual case. These range from the conservation of a monument for its symbolic value to the restoration of a townscape condition which cannot be abandoned. In the restoration of monuments destroyed by war special care should be taken that the historic development up to the present time can be traced. This applies to the elements of monuments from different periods as well as other evidence of its fate. This might include modern elements which have been added in a responsible manner. The complete reconstruction of severely damaged monuments must be regarded as an exceptional circumstance which is justified only for special reasons resulting from the destruction of a monument of great significance by war. Such a reconstruction must be based on reliable documentation of its condition before destruction». https://www.icomos.org/en/charters-and-texts/179-articles-en-francais/ressources/charters-and-standards/184-the-declaration-of-dresden [Last accessed october 2023].

23    Niels Gutschow, "Stadträume des Wiederaufbaus −Objekte der Denkmalpflege?," *Deutsche Kunst und Denkmalpflege*, no.43 (1985): 9 -19. Niels Gutschow was head of the Münster Authority of Monument Protection and was a member of the German National Committee for Conservation between 1980 and 2000. https://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/people/all/person/persdetail/gutschow.html [Last accessed october 2023].

24    Klaus von Beyme, *Der Wiederaufbau. Architektur und Städtebaupolitik in beiden deutschen Staaten* (München-Zürich: Piper, 1987).

25    Werner Durth, Niels Gutschow, *Träume in Trümmern. Planungen zum Wiederaufbau zerstörter Städte im Westen Deutschlands 1940 – 1950*, vol. 1 Konzepte, vol. 2 Stade (Braunschweig:Vieweg & Sohn, 1988); Werner Durth, Niels Gutschow, *Träume in Trümmern. Stadtplanung 1940-1950* (München: dtv, 1993).

26    Josef Nipper, Manfred Nutz, eds., *Kriegszerstörung und Wiederaufbau deutscher Städte. Geographische Studien zu Schadensausmaß und Bevölkerungsschutz im Zweiten Weltkrieg, zu Wiederaufbauideen und Aufbaurealität*, heft 57 (Köln: Kölner geographische Arbeiten, 1993).

27    Hartwig Beseler, Niels Gutschow, *Kriegsschicksale deutscher Architektur. Verlust – Schäden – Wiederaufbau. Eine Dokumentation für das Gebiet der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, vol. I Nord, vol. II Süd (Neumünster: Karl Wachholtz Verlag 1988).

In the latter study, based on an extensive and detailed survey, Hartwig Beseler proposed an initial classification of the different types of interventions used in monument restoration. In addition to the few interventions of simple ruin conservation[28], he identified three forms: "naive Wiederherstellung"[29] (naive restoration), characterized by the restoration of the exterior appearance and the adaptation of the interior to modern standards, and "archäologische Rekonstruktion"[30] (archaeological reconstructions), out-and-out reconstructions that favored the oldest and most accomplished forms of the monument, freeing it from subsequent transformations; and, finally, interventions with a strong stamp of "Purismus"[31] (Purism) characterized by simplified reconstructions and contemporary additions. More recently, in 2009, taking up Beseler's studies, Michael S. Falser suggested a more nuanced classification into seven distinct types of intervention.[32] They are very interesting studies, testifying to the richness and variety of solutions adopted for the reconstruction of German cities; due to their critical and compositional significance, some of them deserve further insight.

## 'Delayed reconstructions' after the fall of the Berlin Wall

With reunification, many German cities, including Berlin, underwent massive urban redevelopment programs and major restorations of monuments damaged during World War II that had not yet been addressed for different circumstances. In particular, the second category has attracted the attention of national and international critics for various reasons. David Chipperfield's restoration works of the Neues Museum[33] in Berlin and Peter Zumtor's project of the Diocesan Museum in Cologne[34] - to name two

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28    Hartwig Beseler, *Baudenkmale – Zeugnisse architektonischer Überlieferung im Umbruch*, in Beseler, Gutschow, *Kriegsschicksale deutscher Architektur*, vol. I, p. XXXIII – XXXV.

29    Beseler, *Baudenkmale*, XXV.

30    Beseler, *Baudenkmale*, XXV.

31    Beseler, *Baudenkmale*, XXV.

32    Falser, *Trauerarbeit an Ruinen,* 67. Falser identifies seven distinct types of intervention: «1. Abriss der Ruine […]; 2. Die liegen gebliebene, innerstädtische Ruine […]; 3. Ruinenerhalt und kommentierender Gegenbau […]; 4. Die zeitgenössische Integration der sichtbar bleibenden Ruine […]; 5. Die zeitgenössische Aneignung der formalen Qualitäten der Ruine […]; 6. Teilrekonstruktion von erhaltener Original-substanz mit neuen Ergänzungen; 7. (Vermeintliche) Vollrekonstruktion nach Teiloder Totalverlust […]». In English: "1. Ruin demolition […]; 2. Conservation in a state of ruin […]; 3. Conservation of ruins with the addition of new construction […]; 4. Contemporary integration of ruins […]; 5. Contemporary reinterpretation of ruins […]; 6. Partial reconstruction with non-recognizable additions 3. Ruin conservation and commented counter-construction […]; 4. Contemporary integration of ruins […]; 7. (Alleged) complete reconstruction after a partial or total reconstruction […]".

33    The competition and the project for the restoration of the Neues Museum in Berlin has been the subject of numerous articles and critical essays, so much so that it is impossible to report them all. The following are the articles that appeared in Italy in *Casabella*: no. 657 (June1998), *Museumsinsel -Berlin* con articoli di N. Kieren, G. Grassi, D. Chipperfield, F. O. Gery e F. Venezia, dedicated to the competition, 34-61; no. 721(April 2004), *Progetto di restauro e completamento del Neues Museum* with essays by D. Chipperfield and N. Bernau, 41-42; no. 778 ( June 2009) *Neues Museum* with an essay by D. Chipperfield, 78); *Forum Museumsinsel*, no. 843 (November 2014): 33). For the competition, see: *Museumsinsel Berlin. Ettbewerb zum Neuen Museum* (Stuttgart, Berlin, Paris: avedition, 1994) and the essay of Rita Capezzuto, "Berlino ricostruisce l'isola die Musei", *Domus*, no. 831 (2000): 51.

34    The former Catholic parish church of St. Kolumba was one of the oldest and largest churches in Cologne. Destroyed as a result of the bombings, it was placed in ruins after the war, preserving the ground floor of the tower, the vestibule, large sections of the boundary wall of the complex, the base of some pillars and the crypt. In particular, a statue of the Madonna and Child from the fifteenth century placed on a pillar of the choir and miraculously preserved on site, became one of the symbols of the city's rebirth and gave its name to the project to arrange the ruins: *Madonna in Trümmern.* The architect Gottfried Böhm completed the arrangement of the complex by building an octagonal chapel on the grounds of the old church, in which the aforementioned statue of the Madonna was placed (S. Stefan Kraus, Anna Pawlik, Martin Struck, Lothar Schnepf, Kraus, A. Pawlik e M. Struck, ed., *Kolumba Kapelle* (Colonia: Kolumba, 2021)). Peter Zumthor's recent project has incorporated the foundations of the old church and the aforementioned Böhm Chapel into a new museum building. The intervention

of the best-known ones - have been the subject of almost unanimous critical acclaim for how the theme of additions and additions has been articulated in a contemporary key. Others, such as the reconstruction of the Fraukirche[35] in Dresden and Berlin Castle[36], have brought the theme of "where it was, as it was" reconstruction for buildings destroyed by war and natural disasters to the attention of the scientific community and international public opinion.

Damage to the historic built heritage resulting from armed conflicts and natural disasters challenges current models and methods of operation in the field of conservation by confronting restoration specialists and affected communities with exceptional and unconventional choices, including the possibility of resorting to the "where it was, as it was" reconstruction of destroyed monuments. In this sense, this issue is still of great interest and, unfortunately, extremely topical today. However, the uniqueness of the interventions mentioned above in Dresden and Berlin was that they were designed and implemented more than fifty years after their destruction. Usually, the decision to reconstruct a building destroyed by a sudden event "as it was" is made in the immediacy of the event - as happened after the war in most of Europe, including Italy, Germany and Poland, or as it happened almost simultaneously with the cases under review, after the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995) with the reconstruction of the Mostar Bridge - in response to psychological instances, to cope with the trauma caused by the destructive event. For this reason, the decision to reconstruct the two monuments mentioned above has raised several perplexities and a consequent interesting debate from the very beginning.

Without going into the merits of what was later achieved - see the specific bibliography on this topic –, it is useful to mention that the two monuments immediately after the war had been subjected to different types of intervention.

The ruins of the Frauenkirche in Dresden **[fig. 1 and 2]** were preserved in the center of the city and have taken on different roles and meanings over the years. During the 1950s, they became the "Mahnung an Schuld und Sühne unseres Volkes"[37]; later, the "Mahnmal gegen den Krieg"[38]. In the 1980s, they became a symbol of freedom of thought for the youth of the time: it was no coincidence that the demonstrations leading up to the collapse of the regime of the German Democratic Republic that took place in Dresden were held near the ruins of the church.

Conversely, after the war, the ruins of the Berlin Castle were razed for obvious

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– which presents undoubted elements of great quality – has been highly appreciated by critics (Chiara Bagliore, "Un museo per contemplare," *Casabella*, no. 760, 2007, 7-21), but in fact it has transformed one of the symbolic places of the post-war reconstruction of the city, erasing its memory and testament.

35    On the operating methods - which denote the complexity of the intervention and the significant effort in terms of applied research - with which the church was rebuilt, see: *Berichte vom Wiederaufbau der Frauenkirke zu Dresden Konstruktion des Steinbaus und Integration der Ruine,* ed. Fritz Wenzel (Karlsruhe:Universitätverlag Karlsruhe, 2007).

36    There is also an extensive bibliography for the reconstruction of Berlin Castle. Only articles that appeared in the magazine *Casabella* are mentioned here. In particular, those published in no. 796 (December 2010) and 920 (April 2021).

37    Stephan Hirzel, "Wiederaufbau der Dresdner Frauenkirche," *Zeitschrift für Kunst,* no.1 (1947), 48-50, 50; cited in Falser, *Trauerarbeit an Ruinen,* 81. In English: "Our people's monument of guilt and atonement."

38    Hans Hunger, "Der Aufbau des Zentrums der Stadt Dresden im Siebenjahresplan," *Deutsche Architektur* no. 8 (1959): 596; cited in Falser, *Trauerarbeit an Ruinen,* 81. In Englisch: "Memorial against war."

ideological reasons. The Palast der Republik was built in their place - an architectural icon of the new power.

Thus, although with different nuances, the church ruins and the new Palace had assumed a significant urban role in the two cities and acquired their historicity. Nevertheless, first, the Dresden church and then the Berlin Castle (after the demolition of the palace) were - with the local citizenry's support - rebuilt as they were before the conflict to erase two symbols of the Cold War period. They had become too cumbersome for two cities that, in different ways, wanted to look to the future without the burden of remembering the war and the undemocratic regime of the former GDR.

As predictable, the ensuing debate was polarized between those who argued the anachronism of such choices and those who, conversely, argued that reconstruction of destroyed buildings has always been an architectural practice. In particular, in the German cultural sphere, mention should be made of the work by the Architekturmuseum der TU München and the Institut für Denkmalpflege und Bauforschung der ETH Zürich, which organized a symposium in 2008 entitled Das Prinzip Rekonstruktion, held at theETH Zurich, and a subsequent exhibition at the Architekturmuseum der TU München, entitled Geschichte der Rekonstruktion - Konstruktion der Geschichte[39]. The latter's outcome was published in the homonymous volume edited by Winfried Nerdinger. [40]

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39    https://www.db-bauzeitung.de/empfehlungen/ausstellungen/geschichte-der-rekonstruktion-konstruktion-der-geschichte-muenchen/ (last accessed October 2023).

40    *Geschichte der Rekonstruktion - Konstruktion der Geschichte*, edited Winfried Nerdinger with Markus Eisen and Hilde Strobi (München, Berlin, London, New York: Ernest von Siemens Kunsstiftung, 2010). The book was received positively by German critics, although there was no shortage of dissenting voices, collected in the volume

Fig. 2
Dresda. FrauenKirche today.

It is a very interesting study, which proposes several essays and then a vast catalog divided into ten distinct sections, with historical examples of reconstructions of destroyed buildings. The study aims to demonstrate how - for different reasons - the practice of 'reconstruction' has characterized and still characterizes the history of architecture.

In his introductory essay, Nerdinger wrote: „Eine Kopie ist kein Betrug, ein Faksimile keine Fälschung, ein Abguss kein Verbrechen und eine Rekonstruktion keine Lüge"[41] […] „Wer einen verlorenen oder zerstörten Bau rekonstruiert, fälscht nicht […] denn es handelt sich immer um einen Neubau, der als solcher trotz historischer Formen zumindest für die Zeitgenossen bekannt und kenntlich ist und über entsprechende Quellen und Dokumente auch für spätere Generationen immer als Wiederholung identifizierbar bleibt"[42] […] „Rekonstruktion hat jedoch vielfach nichts mit >Denkmalpflege< zu tun, sondern ist ein von religiösen oder Memorialen Kategorien und I Interessen geleiteter Vorgang einer epochen- und Kultur spezifischen Erinnerungskultur." [43]

In other words, Nerdinger identifies 'the 'where it was, as it was' reconstruction of a destroyed building' as an 'architectural category,' removing it from the field of 'monument preservation. Then, he adds, „Wenn es vorrangig da rum geht, Erinnerung über Architektur zu bewahren, muss die bauliche Substanz nicht zwingend >original< sein."[44]

This is both an interesting and questionable cultural position. However, it negates one of the foundational principles of architectural restoration: that is, the impossibility of separating an artwork from its material.

Disassociating the values and meaning of architecture from its materiality and, therefore, imagining that we can reconstruct what has been destroyed to

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*Denkmalpflege statt Attrappenkult Gegen die Rekonstruktion von Baudenkmälern – eine Anthologie*, ed. Johannes Habich (Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag GmbH, 2011), with essays by Adrian von Buttlar, Gabi Dolff-Bonekämper, Mchael S. Falser, Achim Hubel & Georg Mörsch. See: Michael S. Falser, "Die Erfindung einer Tradition namens Rekonstruktion oder Die Polemik der Zwischenzeilen," 88-97. Then, regarding the controversy following Falser's aforementioned writing, see the article that appeared in the magazine *Bauewelt* titled  *Bauwelt-Fundamente: Denkmalpflege statt Attrappenkult* (https://www.bauwelt.de/themen/buecher/Bauwelt-Fundamente-Denkmalpflege-statt-Attrappenkult-Gegen-Rekonstruktion-Baudenkmaelern-Anthologie-2110208.html) (last accessed October 2023). On the same topic, see also: Michael S. Falser, "Zwischen Identität und Authentizität. Das Humboldt Forum und Rekonstruktion in Deutschland," in *der Architekt, Authentizität. Eigenschaft oder zuschreibung?*, no. 4 (2017): 29-33. It is also worth recalling Ascensión Hernández Martínez's 2007 volume (Ascensión Hernández Martínez, *La clonacion arquitectonica* (Madrid: Ediciones Siruela 2007)). Drawing deeply different conclusions from Nedinger, he discusses the theme of 'cloning' historical buildings destroyed by war and natural calamities. This study was published some years later in Italy with a preface by Maria Antonietta Crippa (Ascensión Hernández Martínez, *La clonazione architettonica,* Italian edition edited by Maria Antonietta Crippa ([Milano: Jaka book 2010)). It also proposes an interesting thesis about a possible connection between the crisis of modernity and, thus, some specific themes of post-modern architecture and the proliferation of reconstructions of historical buildings in the last two decades of the 20th century.

41    Winfried Nerdinger, "Zur Einführung. Konstruktion und Rekonstruktion historischer Kontinuität," in *Geschichte der Rekonstruktion - Konstruktion der Geschichte*, 10-15, 10. In English: "A copy is not a fraud, a fac-simile is not a fake; reconstruction is not a lie."

42    Nerdinger, "Zur Einführung. Konstruktion und Rekonstruktion historischer Kontinuität", 10-15, 10. In English: "Who reconstructs a lost or destroyed building does not falsify […] because a reconstructed building will always be a new building; despite its historical forms, it is recognizable by contemporary people and can always be identified as a copy by future generations through sources and documents."

43    Nerdinger, "Zur Einführung. Konstruktion und Rekonstruktion historischer Kontinuität", 11. In English: "The reconstruction of a destroyed building has nothing to do with the 'conservation of monuments'; it is a choice produced by religious interests and culture of memory (Erinnerungskultur)."

44    Nerdinger, "Zur Einführung. Konstruktion und Rekonstruktion historischer Kontinuität", 11. In English: "If the goal is the conservation of memory through architecture, architectural matter does not have to be 'original'."

preserve its memory could be a solution worthy of discussion, to be possibly applied only in exceptional and very limited cases. After all, even Roberto Pane had affirmed that the significance of Warsaw's old center for the Polish nation "non poteva essere sostituito e compensato da quello che l'architettura moderna sarebbe stata in grado di fornire"[45] at the Conference of Venice in 1964. He observed that, in particular cases, 'reconstruction' can represent an undesirable yet necessary choice.

Otherwise, there is the risk of creating meaningless architecture or, even worse, buildings that ideologically celebrate power. An ideological example of such a reconstruction practice is the 'Hauszmann National Program'[46] (2014) of the Hungarian authorities, which envisages the reconstruction of the Budavára complex in Budapest according to its original forms with obvious nationalistic goals as well as tourist exploitation.

It is a non-negligible effect of the so-called 'cancel culture', which has found fertile ground in the countries of the old communist bloc. There, demolishing statues and buildings erected after the war and rebuilding ancient monuments destroyed or demolished by pro-Russian[47] regimes has become a common practice without - it seems to me - helping those populations coming to terms with their own history. Instead, it fueled nationalism and ideological oppositions, which unfortunately dominate contemporary Eastern Europe's political scene.

## 'Delayed reconstructions' of the Alte Waage at Braunschweig and the Knochenhaueramtshaus in Hildesheim

Before the two important cases mentioned above in Dresden and Berlin, two historic cities in Lower Saxony, Braunschweig and Hildesheim, also produced two interesting 'where it was, as it was' reconstructions of buildings destroyed by World War II air raids.

Braunschweig is a town of early medieval origins, which grew during the 13th and 14th centuries as an important trading center and joined the Hanseatic League. Although part of the Duchy of Brunswick-Lüneburg, throughout the Middle Ages, it was ruled by wealthy local families and guilds of arts and crafts (Zunft - Gilde). The princes of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel did not regain control of the city until the end of the 17th century; soon after, the Collegium Carolinum - later Technical University of Braunschweig - was founded, and the city became an important cultural hub.

Since its construction in 1543, Braunschweig's Alte Waage[48] (old public weighbridge)

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45    Roberto Pane, ed., "Teoria della conservazione e del restauro dei monumenti", in *Roberto Pane. Attualità e dialettica del restauro, Antologia*, ed. Mauro Civita (Chieti: Solfanelli, 1987): 171-187, already published in Roberto Pane, *Attualità dell'ambiente antico* (Firenze: la Nuova Italia, 1967). In English: "could not be substituted and compensated by what modern architecture would have been able to provide"

46    https://nemzetihauszmannprogram.hu/ (last accessed November 2023).

47    Singular and tragic, in this regard, is the story of the Transfiguration Cathedral in Odessa, demolished in 1936, which was rebuilt by the Ukrainian authorities between 1999 and 2003 and which last July 2023 was damaged again during a Russian missile attack on Odessa.

48    Beseler, Gutschow, *Kriegsschicksale deutscher Architektur*, vol. II, 281; Justus Herrenberger, "Die Baustelle „Alte Waage"" in *Braunschweig* (Goltze, Göttingen 1993), see: https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:gbv:084-13103014592
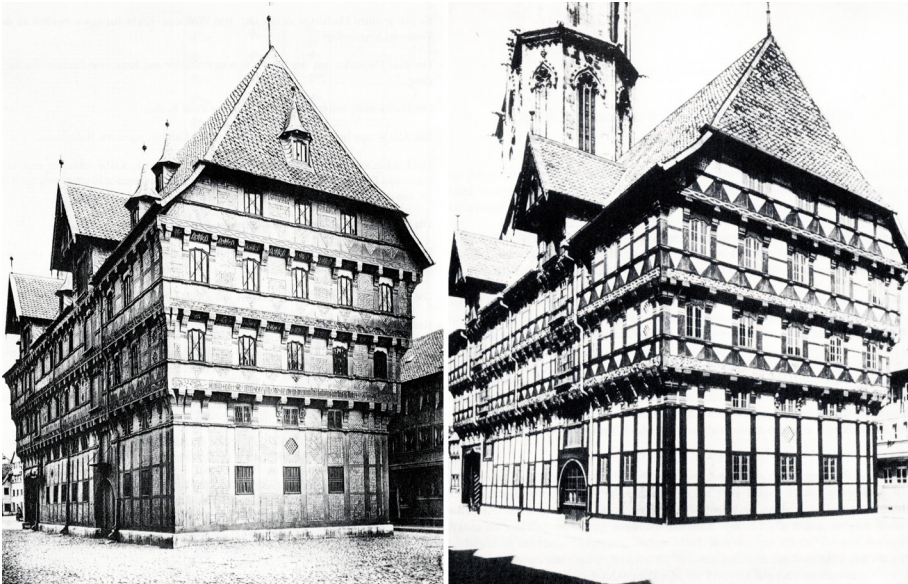
has been one of the city's most iconic public buildings. It was built near St. Andrew's Church, in the area at the southern end of the Wallmarkt - a long, narrow square used for the wool market near one of the city gates. At about twenty-one meters high, it was the tallest half-timbered building in the city. During the 17th century, the old building was abandoned with the construction of the new weighbridge. In 1854, it was restored by ducal architect Friedrich Maria Krahe, who made some significant changes to the facades [fig. 03].

By the end of the 19th century, the Braunschweig population grew considerably, and the living conditions around the Wallmarkt deteriorated. Thus, at the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century, reclamation and urban redevelopment works started in the area. They were then further fostered by the National Socialist Party's seizure of power. Herman Flesche, as a city official, was in charge of the project to redevelop the area west of the Wallmarkt. Works were completed in 1939. As part of these interventions, the Alte Waage building was restored, removing some of the changes made by Krahe, and designated as the Heimat der Hitlerjugend (Hitler Youth House).

The Alte Waage and all the buildings of the Wollmarkt were destroyed by the devastating Allied bombardment on October 15, 1944. In November 1946, the Braunschweig Chamber of Industry and Commerce announced a competition for their reconstruction, which architect Friedrich Wilhelm Kraemer won. He planned to construct new modern buildings, rejecting any reconstruction hypothesis, in open contrast to the population's will, which, on the contrary, wanted the square to be reconfigured according to its historical appearance. Kraemer's project represented a complete break with traditional architecture. Even less appreciated by the population, he envisioned a level car park instead of the Alte Waage.

Due to the lack of financial resources, unavailability of construction materials, and several administrative delays, work did not begin until 1953. The need to build houses

Fig. 3
Braunschweig. The Alte Waage in 1861, left. The Alte Waage in 1934-35, right, after restorations by F.M. Krahe. (Justus Herrenberger, "Das Stadtbaukunstwerk Alge Waage," in *Braunschweiger Werkstucke. Die Alte Waage in der Braunschweiger Neustadt*, Stadtarchiv Braunschweiger edited. Braunschweiger: Stadtarchiv Braunschweiger, 1993: 109-122, 120-121)

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(last accessed October 2023); *Karsten Kablitz*, "Die archäologischen Ausgrabugen auf dem Gelande der Alte Waage in der Braunschweiger Neustadt," in *Braunschweiger Werkstucke. Die Alte Waage in der Braunschweiger Neustadt*, ed. Stadtarchiv Braunschweiger (Braunschweiger: Stadtarchiv Braunschweiger, 1993), 9-50.

Fig. 4
Braunschweig. The Alte Waage. Construction details of the wooden structure. (Dröge Georg, Dröge Thomas, "Die Alte Waage. Wiederaufbau einer ingeniosen historischen Holzkonstruktion," in *Braunschweiger Werkstucke. Die Alte Waage in der Braunschweiger Neustadt,* Stadtarchiv Braunschweiger edited. Braunschweiger: Stadtarchiv Braunschweiger, 1993: 67-108, 75,77,93).

for the evacuees resulted in implementing the project proposed by architect Kraemer despite the population's opposition. The remains of the old buildings were demolished: only a few architectural elements that survived the fire were set as spolia on the facades of the new architecture, and the site area of the Alte Waage became a car park.

After overcoming the economic problems of the postwar period during the 1970s and 1980s, the issue of rebuilding the Alte Waage was repeatedly addressed by municipal authorities at the request of city committees[49]. These demands became increasingly pressing, so much so that in 1990, forty-five years after the end of the conflict, the City Council decreed its reconstruction.

The intervention followed meticulous comparative-historical research on the half-timbered houses of Lower Saxony and extensive analysis of existing graphic and

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49    Justus Herrenberger, "Das Stadtbaukunstwerk Alge Waage," in *Braunschweiger Werkstucke,* 109-122; Klaus j. Beckmann, "Städtebaulicher Realisierungswettebewerb Wollmarkt/Alte Waage," in *Braunschweiger Werkstucke,* 137-166; Wolfgang Wiechers, "Stadterneuerung und Städtebauforderung. Die Städtebauliche Sanierung des Bereiches Wollmarkt / Alte Waage als Baustein zur Erneuerung der Braunschwiger Innestadt," in *Braunschweiger Werkstucke,* 167-190; Andras Zunft, "Wollmarkt/Alte Waage. Städtebauliche Entwicklung und Diskussion nach 1945," in *Braunschweiger Werkstucke,* 191-220.

iconographic material. Some elements that survived the fire and had been preserved were put back in place within the new structure and rebuilt according to the original criteria and specific structural analyses [fig. 4][50]. The work was completed in 1994 [fig. 5].

The events surrounding the Marktplatz and Knochenhaueramtshaus in Hildesheim do not strongly differ from the ones just recounted. About thirty kilometers from the more important city of Hanover, Hildesheim was founded in the 9th century on the banks of the Innerste River, and its history was for centuries linked to that of the bishopric, founded by Ludwig the Pious (815). It obtained city rights in 1249, soon joined the Hanseatic League, and fell under the domain of the Dukes of Brunswick in 1523. Due to its location along several important land and river communication routes, it was a thriving commercial center.

At the beginning of the war, the city's historic center consisted of about 1,500 half-timbered houses built between the 16th and 18th centuries, decorated with polychrome painted reliefs. Among them, the most representative was the Knochenhaueramtshaus (Butchers' Guild House), built in 1529 opposite the town hall in the market square by the wealthy Butchers' Guild. [51] Gothic in its architectural setting, with its slender pitched

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50    Georg Dröge, Thomas Dröge, "Die Alte Waage. Wiederaufbau einer ingeniosen historischen Holzkonstruktion," in *Braunschweiger Werkstucke,*67-108; Justus Herrenberger, "*Der Wiederaufbau der Alten Waage 1990-1994*," in *Braunschweiger Werkstucke*, 123-135.

51    Heinz-Günter Borck, "Marktplatz und Stadtgeschichte am Beispiel der Stadt Hildesheim," in *Der Marktplatz zu Hildesheim: Dokumentation des Wiederauf baus* (Hildesheim: Bernward, 1989), 9-22; Walter Achilles, "Der

Fig. 5
Braunschweig. The Alte Waage today.

Fig. 6
Hildesheim. The Knochenhaueramtshaus at the beginning of the twentieth century.

roof, the Knochenhaueramtshaus had a facade richly decorated with Renaissance motifs embedded in the corbels that supported the cantilevered planes of the facade, whose top overhang of as much as 2.40 m above the base. After the suppression of the Butchers' guild by the Napoleonic regime (1809), the building was purchased by the city government in 1853. On August 1, 1884, a raging fire destroyed its top four floors, which were faithfully rebuilt within two years [fig. 6].

In 1945, the city of Hildesheim was repeatedly bombed. The incendiary devices used at the March 22, 1945 air raid destroyed much of the historic center and, in particular, the area around the market square, where the most representative buildings were located.

After the end of the war, most religious buildings were rebuilt in their original forms. Among them were St. Mary's Cathedral[52] and St. Michael's Church[53]. For economic reasons and the pressing need to provide housing for the homeless, residential buildings were constructed using contemporary techniques and forms. Regarding the Marketplatz area, only the Town Hall and the Tempelhaus were restored, the former in a simplified form. At first, between 1946 and 1949, a large part of the citizenry wanted the reconstruction of the Knochenhaueramtshaus. Lack of funds prompted this to be discarded; instead, it was decided to widen the square northward. Therefore, several modern buildings were constructed in place of the destroyed ones, while the area occupied by the Knochenhaueramtshaus and the adjacent Bäckeramtshaus was left vacant; it was not until 1960 that a hotel was built, designed by architect Dieter Oesterlen[54] and years of intense city controversy followed because this decision was made against the will of the majority of the population [fig. 7].

In 1970, the association Gesellschaft für den Wiederaufbau des Knochenhauer-Amtshauses e.V was founded to reconstruct the building of the Butchers' Guild House and, more generally, promote the creation of traditional-style architecture.

During the '70s, the issue of reconstructing the Knochenhaueramtshausus was repeatedly broached by municipal authorities, even going so far as to consider rebuilding it in different locations than the original one[55]. The situation changed in the early 1980s when Hildesheim's Sparkasse decided to demolish its headquarters, which had been built on the lots of three of the old half-timbered houses overlooking Marketplatz's south side after the war. Among the various design solutions devised, the city authorities approved the one involving the reconstruction (with floor plan modifications) of the three pre-war buildings. Therefore, nearly forty years after the end of the war, a complex urban program was initiated, including the reconstruction of all the old buildings facing

historische Markplatz – Gestalt und Bebauung," in *Der Marktplatz zu Hildesheim*, 23-58; Wolfgang Reimann, "Die städtebauliche Planung für den Marktplatz in Hildesheim", in *Der Marktplatz zu Hildesheim*, 59-80.

52 Hildesheim Cathedral was built in the ninth century. Damaged during the Second World War, it was rebuilt in simplified forms. Since 1985, together with the abbey church of St. Michael, it has been included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

53 The abbey church of St. Michael, built at the beginning of the year 1000, was rebuilt according to its original form after the Second World War, eliminating the later additions and rebuilding the west tower that had been demolished after 1650.

54 Anne Schmedding, Dieter Oesterlen (1911–1994). *Tradition und zeitgemäßer Raum. Forschungen zur Nachkriegsmoderne* (Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth Verlag, 2011).

55 Wilhelm Buerstedde, "Die kommunalpolitische Auseinandersetzung um den Wiederaufbau des Marktplatzes," in *Der Marktplatz zu Hildesheim*, 81-90.
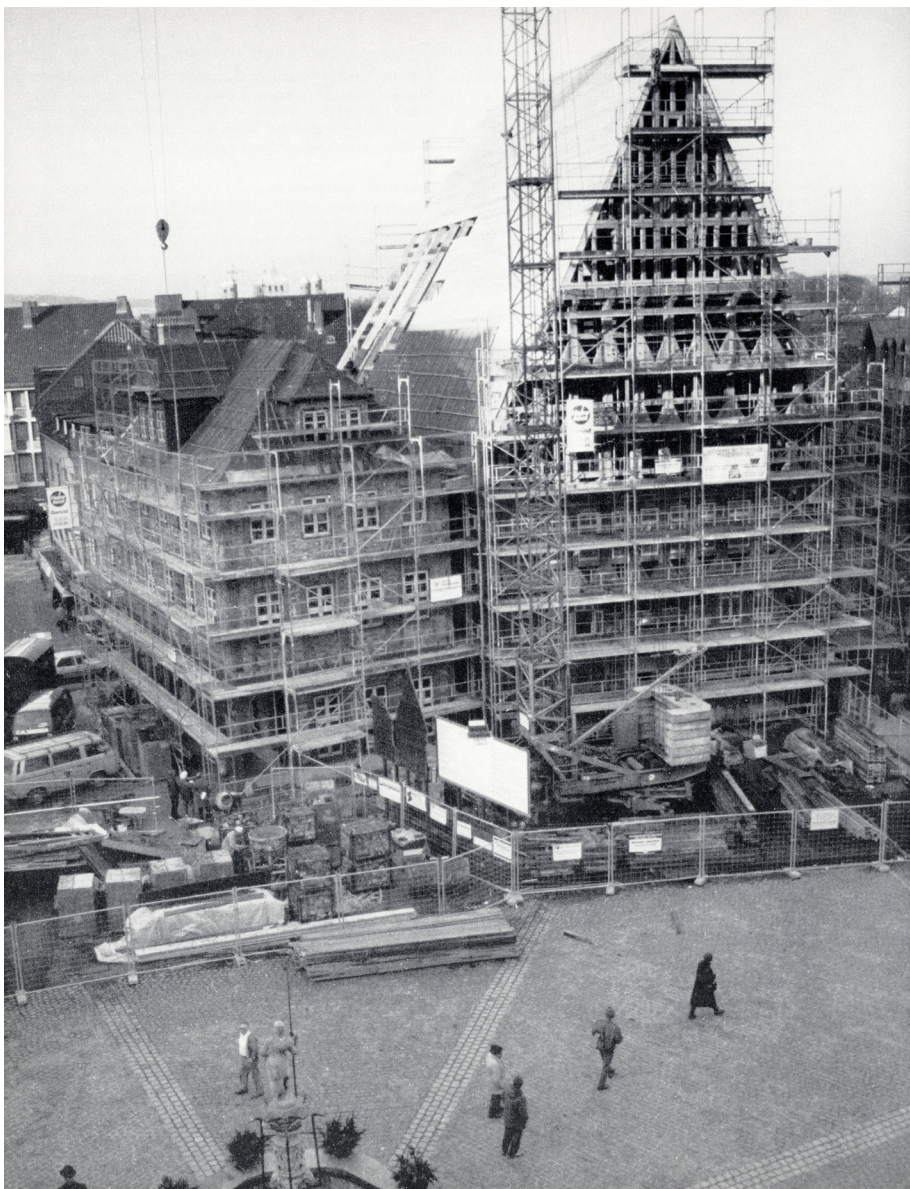
onto Marketplaz over the following decade. In particular, in 1986, the city authorities decreed to rebuild the Bäckeramtshaus and Knochenhaueramtshaus. The Rose Hotel, which had been in disuse for a few years, was demolished. The foundation structures and cellars of the Knochenhaueramtshaus were found below it. Thus, reconstruction works began and were completed in November 1989 [fig. 8-9-10], just days after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The complex task of reconstructing the entire urban environment of the square and its most representative historic buildings was carried out with the financial support of banks, patrons, and public and private foundations, but above all, thanks to the determination of the citizens of Hildesheim, who participated in various capacities in the reconstruction, donating money and making available the iconographic material in their possession[56]. A restaurant is now located on the ground floor of the Knochenhaueramtshaus, and on the upper floors is the city's civic museum (Stadtmuseum). Since the 1990s, the new

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56    Heinz Geyer, "Die Rekonstruktion des Knochenhauer-Amtshauses und des Bäckeramtshauses," in *Der Marktplatz zu Hildesheim*, 91-100; Dietrich Klose, "Arbeitsprozesse zum Wiederaufbau des Knochenhauer-Amtshauses und des Bäckeramtshauses," in *Der Marktplatz zu Hildesheim*, 101-132.

Fig. 7
Hildesheim. Hotel Rose by Dieter Oesterlen. Demolished (https://www.baunetz.de/meldungen/Meldungen-Dokumentation_von_Radio_Bremen_im_NDR_7261968.html).

KNOCHENHAUERAMTSHAUS
KONSTRUKTION
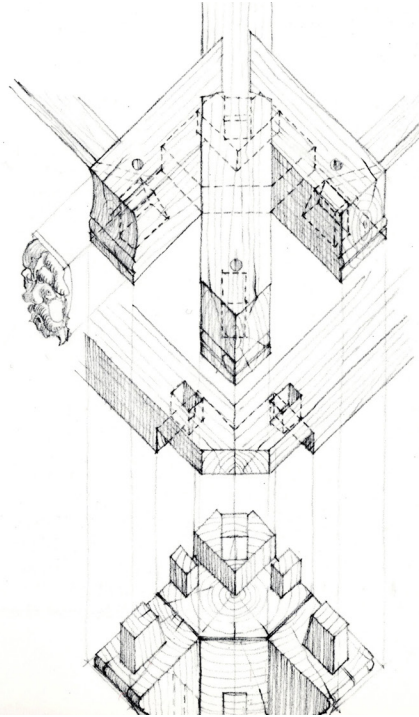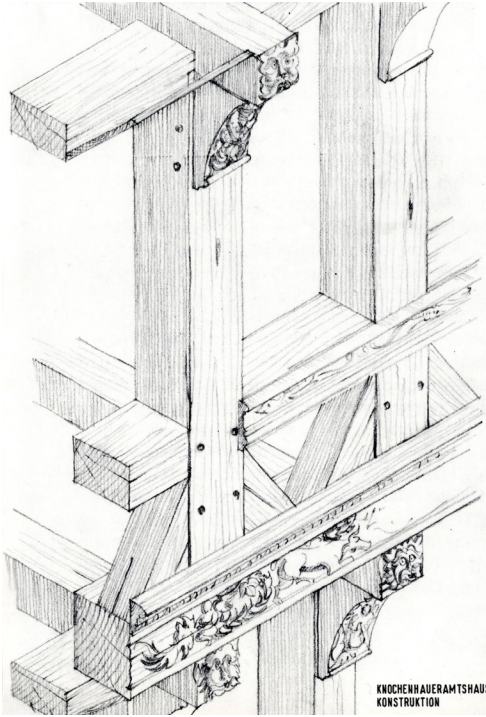
Marketplatz[57] has been the venue for all the most important events and happenings in the city, and even the memory of the buildings built after the war has been lost. In this regard, it is singular to point out that a photo calendar of 2024 dedicated to the city of Hildesheim is on sale (also online) with photos of buildings from the years built after the war: the month of June is dedicated to the Rose Hotel. [58]

## Conclusions

The theoretical issues and technical problems faced at the end of World War II in restoring German cities destroyed by bombs are as relevant as ever and can stimulate useful critical-methodological reflections.

Indeed, the effects produced by the destruction of the architectural heritage due to wartime events or natural disasters challenge the shared principles of contemporary conservation and restoration culture. Consequently, this prompts critical reflection about important theoretical issues, such as "where it was, as it was" reconstruction.

In the years just after the end of World War II, realizing the German people's responsibility for what had happened induced dismay and prompted many architects and preservationists to wonder what role ruins should play in cities' reconstruction plans. In the early 1950s, socio-political conditions changed: with the emergence of two states, the priority became physically rebuilding the two countries. A massive reorganization and rebuilding effort began. City by city, it took the form of very diverse operational choices, both in terms of restoration of historic buildings and urban and land use planning.

It was certainly an extraordinary experience, not devoid of mistakes and compromises, with different outcomes city by city due to manifold factors, and prolonged over time in some urban contexts, as proven by the cases examined.

While the events of the Frauenkirke and Berlin Schloss should also be framed and examined within the reunification process, the reconstructions of the Alte Waage in Braunschweig and the Knochenhaueramtshaus in Hildesheim highlight a problematic issue that was experienced by many small and medium-sized cities in Germany. In the major urban centers, most significant monuments were almost always rebuilt, sometimes integrally, or differentiating the rebuilt parts by removing the decorative apparatus, or occasionally juxtaposing ancient and new. Still, they were rebuilt. This has not always been the case in smaller urban settings, often for economic reasons. In Braunschweig and Hildesheim, the churches and the few stone buildings were reconstructed; however, much of the historic building fabric consisting of half-timbered houses was not rebuilt. The need to build housing for the homeless prompted local authorities to favor

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57    Dietrich Klose, "Die Rekonstruktion der Südseite des Marktplatzes," in *Der Marktplatz zu Hildesheim*,133-150; Ernst Sieverts, "Die Rekonstruktion der Nordseite des Markplatzes- Das Forte Hotel," in *Der Marktplatz zu Hildesheim*, 151-156; Michael Knobbe, "Hans Siegfried Laessing, Der Umbau der Gebäude Markt 2 und Markt 6,"in *Der Marktplatz zu Hildesheim*,157-159.

58 Hildesheim Damals Calvendo. https://www.calvendo.de/galerie/hildesheim-damals-/  (last accessed November 2023).

Fig. 8
Hildesheim. The Knochenhaueramtshaus during reconstruction (*Der Marktplatz zu Hildesheim: Dokumentation des Wiederauf baus,* Hildesheim: Bernward, 1989, 6).

Fig. 9
Hildesheim. The Knochenhaueramtshaus. Dettagli costruttivi (Dietrich Klose, *Arbeitsprozesse zum Wiederaufbau des Knochenhauer-Amtshauses und des Bäckeramtshauses*, in *Der Marktplatz zu Hildesheim: Dokumentation des Wiederauf baus,* Hildesheim: Bernward, 1989, 101-132, 105).

Fig. 10
Hildesheim. The Knochenhaueramtshaus today.
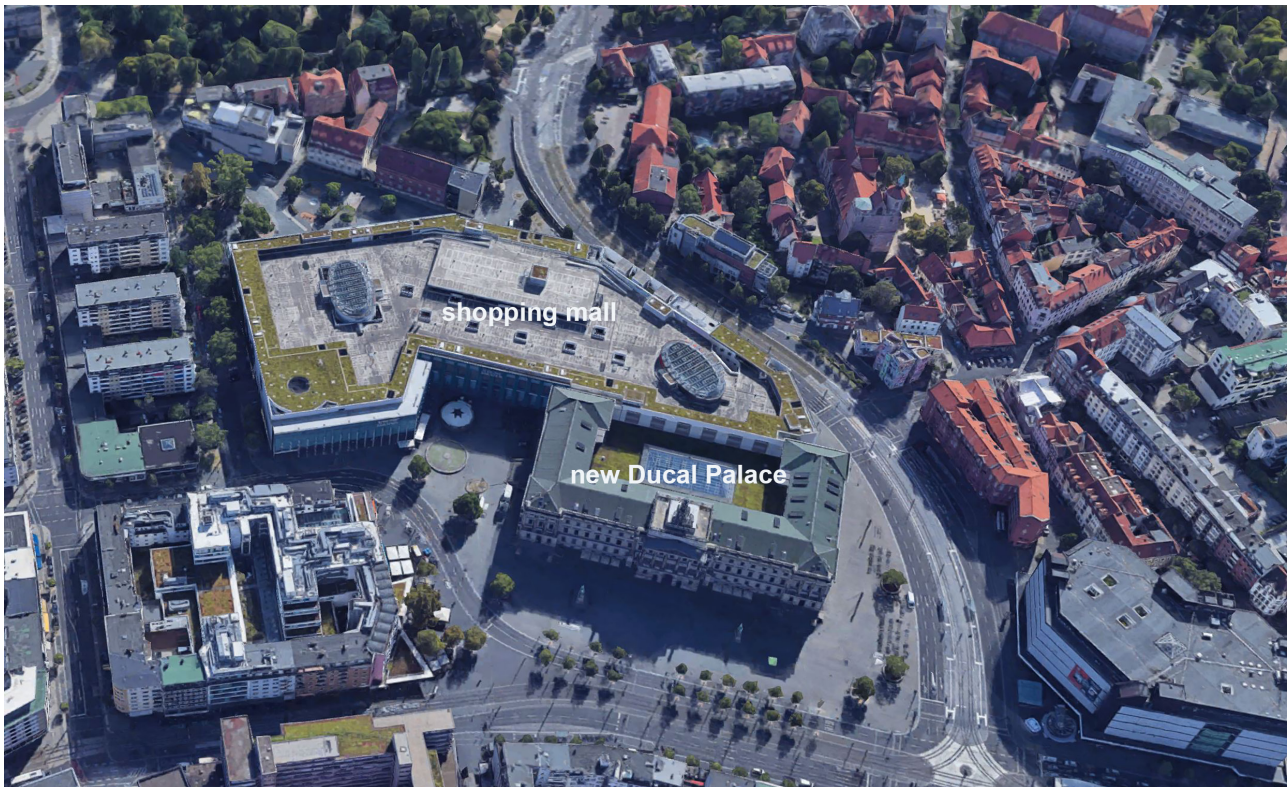
the construction of modern concrete buildings even in the historic urban fabric, often against the wishes of the citizens themselves, who would, conversely, have preferred to rebuild what had burned down just a few months earlier. The choices of earmarking the Alte Waage site for a car park in Braunschweig, altering the Marketplatz, and building a modern hotel in place of the Knochenhaueramtshaus in Hildesheim were dictated by contingencies that were never fully accepted by the citizenry and, therefore, always opposed. At the end of the last century, new economic conditions allowed the respective administrations to go back on decisions made after the war and rebuild what had long since ceased to exist as it was. Judging from how the population has received these decisions and the urban role that the reconstructed buildings have assumed, especially in Hildesheim[59], this was the 'right choice'. This leads to the conclusion that - as Nedinger noted - in particular circumstances, the 'memory' of a building is more important even than its materiality, and, therefore, one can legitimately imagine 'reconstructing' an ancient building destroyed by an extraordinary event. Yet, only in specific cases and under specific conditions, which hopefully will not be repeated, such as wars and natural disasters. It is a susceptible issue which can hardly be generalized. It will be necessary to evaluate the forces into play case by case an individuate solutions to fulfill the 'right to memory' of involved communities, after acknowledging the destructive event and the impossibility to rewrite history. Of course, it is easy to get carried away: in Braunschweig, in addition to the Alte Waage, the 18th-century Ducal

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59    The same could be said for the buildings on the east side of the town hall square (Römerberg) in Frankfurt, burned down as a result of the bombings of March 1944, were rebuilt in their pre-war consistency between 1981 and 1983, replacing two reinforced concrete buildings built at the end of the war. Beseler, Gutschow, *Kriegsschicksale deutscher Architektur*, vol. II, 811-813. *Dom-Römerberg-Bereich: Wettbewerb 1980*, ed Magistrat der Stadt Frankfurt am Main (Braunschweing, Wiesbaden: Friedr. Vieweg &Sohn, 1980); *Die Immer neue Altstadt. Bauen zwischen Dom und Romer seit 1900*, ed. Sturm Philipp Schmal Peter Cachola (Berlin: Jovis, 2018); Matthias Alexander, *Die Neue Altstadt*, vol. I *Die Entstehung*, vol. II, *Das Quartier* (Frankfurt: Societäts, 2018).

Fig. 11. Braunschweig. The new Ducal Palace. Da Googlemap2023.

Palace, which was also damaged and demolished after the war, was rebuilt in 2005 as part of a questionable project that also included the construction of a shopping mall that runs adjacent to the Palace and partly envelops it **[fig. 11]**.

In general, the various approaches that have characterized the variety of choices performed in Germany in the post-war period (illustrated in the mentioned essays by Beseler, Gutschow, and Falser, and still scarcely known in Italy) can represent a solicitation to individuate alternative solutions from the "where it was, how it was" restoration. This does not alter the awareness that the substitution of destroyed buildings with contemporary ones – with entirely different form, color, and spatiality – has managed to provide convincing responses, psychologically coherent with the involved populations' needs[60].

60    Analogous considerations could also be made for several post-earthquake reconstruction interventions performed in Italy, starting with the Irpinian earthquake.

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**Ana Paula Borghi de Avelar, Michel Toussaint Alves Pereira**

# THE MODERN CATHOLIC ARCHITECTURE OF POST-WAR GERMANY: Rudolf Schwarz, Dominikus Böhm and other German architects

*Modern German Churches, Germany, Rudolf Schwarz, Dominikus Böhm, Architecture and Liturgy*

## /Abstract

Germany was one of the countries that suffered the most from the devastation wrought by wars, particularly the Second World War, which caused extensive destruction within the country. Among the edifices designated for public use were the churches. These buildings needed to be rebuilt, as they had a specific objective in the post-war era: to provide social and pastoral assistance to communities that had suffered destruction. Consequently, a significant reconstruction movement emerged, primarily in the Rhineland region, spearheaded by renowned architects Rudolf Schwarz and Dominikus Böhm, who were instrumental in shaping German Catholic architecture. The careers of Schwarz and Böhm commenced during the interwar period, a time when the Liturgical Movement and the Modern Movement were already influencing German Catholic architecture. Their work on the first churches considered modern in Germany represents a significant contribution to this evolving field. They facilitated its advancement following the Second World War, exerting an influence on other architects. The objective of this article is to provide a concise overview of the evolution of German Catholic architecture, with a particular focus on developments in the period following the Second World War. To this end, a comprehensive review of the relevant literature has been conducted. This article introduces the development of German Catholic architecture, which underwent a significant period of growth and improvement in a relatively short period. The skills of architects were enhanced, and the architectural style was disseminated not only throughout the country but also to other parts of the world.

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## Introduction

Germany was one of the European countries that was most severely affected by the devastation of the Second World War[1]. The country was devastated[2], with a considerable number of public and private edifices reduced to rubble[3]. Among the affected structures were the churches, which would now serve as pivotal elements in the provision of social and pastoral services to communities in the aftermath of the war.

The process of reconstruction commenced in the west, specifically in the Rhineland region, where the construction of several new churches was initiated in response to the extensive damage and destruction caused by the war. Furthermore, the region was confronted with an influx of migrants during the war and the post-war period, as well as the movement of refugees from the devastated regions to the east and the mass migration between the old city centre and the expanding outskirts. [4]

It is evident that the cities were more severely affected than the countryside. Indeed, almost all urban centres of a certain size were subjected to at least 50% demolition, with Cologne experiencing 70% destruction and Würzburg reaching 75%. In Berlin, the previous city was almost entirely obliterated, and two new cities were born from its ruins, to the east and west.[5]

While the ruins of parish and collegiate churches in the inner cities were largely unused, hundreds of community centres were constructed in the new large settlements to provide pastoral and social care to these still faceless agglomerations.[6] For a period of time, spiritual leaders were permitted to attend the consecration of a church on a weekly basis. However, by the end of the 1960s, it became evident that the demand for such facilities had been met, as evidenced by the declining numbers of people attending church and the shrinking size of Sunday congregations.[7]

A bibliographical review will be employed to provide a concise overview of the evolution of German Catholic Architecture, commencing with the interwar

1   The Second World War caused more material destruction in Europe than the First. The damage seemed so severe that at the end of the war the impression was that a long period of time had been committed to the reconstruction of the affected countries, but instead, for various reasons, including the progress of modern technology, a period of economic expansion soon began which imposed major social transformations, faster and more profound in some countries than at any other time in their respective histories. (free translation) Leonardo Benevolo, *História da Arquitetura Moderna* (São Paulo: Editora Perspectiva, 2001), 647.

2   Günther Feuerstein, *New Directions in German Architecture* (London: Studio Vista, 1968), 11.

3   The reconstruction of Germany took place in very special circumstances, due to the huge amount of damage caused by the war, which was greater than in any other country: of the ten and a half million homes in West Germany, almost five million were damaged, of which 2,350,000 were completely destroyed. (free translation) Benevolo, *História da Arquitetura*, 684.

4   Edwin Heathcote, "Post-War Germany. A Church Meant for our own Time," in *Church Builders*, ed. Edwin Heathcote and Iona Spens (Chichester: A. D. Academy, 1997), 41.

5   Benevolo, *História da Arquitetura*, 684.

6   The exodus of people from the major centres was almost complete: Cologne, which had half a million inhabitants, was reduced to less than fifty thousand in 1945. In addition, it was estimated that ten million people moved from East Germany to West Germany, changing even the population distribution. (free translation) Benevolo, *História da Arquitetura*, 685.

7    Wolfgang Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock (Munich: Prestel, 2002), 155.

period and concluding with the post-Second World War era. During this latter period, two architects, Rudolf Schwarz and Dominikus Böhm, played a pivotal role in initiating a transformation in German Catholic Architecture.

## Modern Catholic Architecture in Germany

### *New Churches*

The new Catholic churches constructed at the beginning of the 20th century, in accordance with the principles espoused by the Liturgical Movement[8], placed the assembly around the high altar at the centre of the design. This simplicity was characterised by the absence of ornamentation, with no elements that might distract the faithful from the proceedings at the high altar. The presbytery was not particularly elevated, and the high altar was situated in the centre, allowing for Mass to be held in versus populum when necessary. The advent of new building technologies enabled architects to design churches that were no longer constrained to the basilica form. Consequently, architects would be able to experiment with a wide variety of floor plans, including circular, elliptical, square, and trapezoidal designs. This approach diverges from traditional models and aligns with the tenets of simplicity, as espoused by the theorists of the Liturgical Movement and the architects of the Modern Movement.[9]

The modernisation of architecture and the renewal of the liturgy were two distinct but interrelated phenomena. Their convergence led to a strengthening of the arguments put forth by both movements. The principles of the Liturgical Movement found a strong correspondence in those of the Modern Movement, namely functionalism, purification, authenticity, rationalism and clarity. From this point onwards, religious architecture underwent a rethink and renovation, not only in response to the Church's needs but also in accordance with the aspirations of architects and artists themselves, who sought to imbue sacred spaces and places of worship with the modern spirit. This is exemplified by the Brazilian case of Oscar Niemeyer's Pampulha Chapel (1943), where the initiative to construct a modern church originated with the government and was not shared with the Church authorities during the development of the project. This

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8    The Liturgical Movement was a process that took place in the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, which began in Europe with the aim of recovering the true values of the liturgical life of the Christian community. The process matured at the beginning of the 20th century with the publication by Pope Pius X in 1903 of the *Motu proprio Tra le sollecitudini* (Among the cares) on sacred music. In it, the Pope made a surprising revelation and expressed a concern: that the faithful should find the true Christian spirit in its first and indispensable source, in active participation in the sacred mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church. In other words, the true Christian spirit should consist of active participation in the sacred mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church. From then on, it would grow especially after the World Wars.

9    Rogério Henrique Frazão Lima, "*Arquitetura das Igrejas e o Culto Católico Contemporâneo: Preservação e Adaptabilidade*" (Master diss., Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 2011), 21.

resulted in the Church authorities rejecting the proposal for almost 15 years.[10]

The most significant impact of modern architecture on religious architecture occurred following the Second World War, with numerous reconstructions of churches destroyed by the attacks. Germany was one of the countries with the largest number of rebuilt churches. Rudolf Schwarz and Dominikus Böhm were two architects who made a significant contribution to this process.[11]

A number of guidelines were produced with the intention of providing direction to architects, artists, clergy and laity on the manner in which the new churches should be realised. In Germany, during the reconstruction phase, the liturgical commission of the bishops' conference in Fulda commissioned the writing of *Guidelines for the Design of the House of God in the Spirit of the Roman Liturgy*, which were compiled in 1949 under the management of church historian Theodor Klauser.[12] The aforementioned guidelines were subsequently translated into Portuguese and published by the architect João de Almeida in the magazine *Novellae Olivarum* in 1955,[13] with the following principles:

> "A Christian church is a consecrated building filled with a special divine Presence - even apart from the Eucharist - where the People of God gather. The People of God gather here:
>
> first and foremost, to celebrate the renewal of Christ's Sacrifice-Redeemer;
>
> secondly, to receive the fruits of Christ's Sacrifice-Redeemer in the holy sacraments;
>
> thirdly, to hear the Word of God;
>
> fourthly, to offer their homage to Christ, present in the Eucharistic Bread;
>
> fifthly, to indulge in extra-liturgical devotions."[14]

The aforementioned definitions were to be translated into rules that the architect was obliged to fulfil, taking into account the following requirements for the people of God in modern times: "the imperious desire for community life; the yearning for truth and authenticity; the desire to move from the superficial to what is central and essential; the ambition for clarity, luminosity and visibility; the vehement yearning for silence and peace, for warmth and security", which had to be transformed into concrete consequences. As for the exterior, the guidelines

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10    Marcus Marciano Gonçalvez da Silveira, *Templos modernos, templos ao chão* (Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2011), 42.

11    Hugo Schnell, *Der Kirchenbau des 20. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland* (München: Verlag Schell & Steiner, 1973), 40-51.

12    The *Guidelines for the Design of the House of God in the Spirit of the Roman Liturgy* were officially promulgated by the Bishops' Conference in Fulda. This document was drafted by Dr Theodor Klauser of the University of Bonn, at the request and with the collaboration of the Liturgical Commission chaired by the bishops of Mainz and Passau, as liturgical rapporteurs of the Fulda Bishops' Conference, and was based on the responses received from all the bishops of Germany to a questionnaire sent to them in advance. The final version was only finalised in 1953, after numerous meetings of the Liturgical Commission.

13    The *Guidelines for the design of the house of God in the spirit of the Roman liturgy*, in Portuguese were published in the magazine *Novellae Olivarum*, ano XIII, no. 121, January 1955); reprinted in year XVI, no. 162 (July 1959). The magazine *Ora et Labora*, year II, no. 2 (1955) also published them.

14    João de Almeida, "Directivas para o projeto da casa de Deus no espírito da liturgia romana," *Novellae Olivarum,* year XIII, no. 121 (January 1955): 1.

stated that it should be: "as dignified as it is persuasive, the Transcendence, the Supernaturality, the Divinity of what goes on inside; and yet harmoniously fit the House of God into the environment."[15]

### Dominikus Böhm[16] and Rudolf Schwarz: The precursors

The architects Dominikus Böhm (1880-1955) and Rudolf Schwarz (1897-1961)[17] collaborated in a harmonious manner on the construction of the "new era" sacred building. Böhm, who joined the Kölner Werkschulen in 1926,[18] completed one of his emblematic works in the early 1930s, the parish church of St. Engelbert (1930-1932),[19] with its centralised flower-shaped plan, which is considered to be the first modern church in Cologne. The church is situated in the Riehl district, located in the northern part of the city. It occupies a considerable area, approximately half a city block. The church is constructed on a plateau and has a concrete structure with a circular plan, the outer walls of which are divided into eight segments. The church's elevation comprises a ring of curved, parabolic walls, which are covered by barrel vaults. The exterior of the edifice is clad in brick. A rectangular annex was subsequently constructed to the main body of the church, with the intention of housing the presbytery. This annex is covered by a smaller parabolic vault and is illuminated by a large parabolic window on the side. The building, which exhibited a markedly different degree of plasticity for its era, earned it the sobriquet of "lemon squeezer". Adjacent to the church is an autonomous square bell tower that serves as the baptistry. The interior of the church is characterised by smooth plastered walls and a diffused light source provided by the eight upper circular stained-glass windows. The presbytery, in contrast, is illuminated by a side window that provides a bright, concentrated light source. Dominikus Böhm is regarded as an architect who was able to successfully combine an understanding of the mysticism of light

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15    Almeida. "Directivas para o projeto", 2-3.

16    Dominikus Böhm (1880-1955) was a German architect who was born in Jettingen and died in Cologne aged 74. With more than 50 churches built, he is considered one of the most important names in European religious architecture, at the forefront of designing sacred spaces. He stands out for his use of exposed concrete and for rehumanising the floor plan by designing interiors in which the worshipper takes centre stage. Works in Germany, Brazil, Poland, El Salvador, Netherlands and the United States. He completed a technical course in construction, and dedicated himself to teaching from an early age, as a drawing teacher at the school where he studied. His first church was built in 1919 in the town of Offenbach. In 1926, the architect moved to Cologne, where he consolidated his career, much of it dedicated to the construction of religious buildings. His work developed in a more remarkable way from 1920 until the end of Second World War. It was a period in which architects reinvented themselves, causing a paradigm shift in architecture. And this is very characteristic of Böhm's work, which made use of different materials and languages, reinterpreting tradition and letting go of sacred symbolism in architectural design.

17    Rudolf Schwarz (1897-1961) was a well-known German architect who realised several religious projects, including the Church of Corpus Christi, in Aachen. Schwarz was also director of the Aachen Arts and Crafts School from 1927 to 1934, and played a decisive role in the reconstruction of the city of Cologne after the Second World War, taking a leading role in the city's reconstruction authority between 1947 and 1952, contributing some of his own designs. He was also responsible for rebuilding the pilgrimage church of St Anna in Düren, near Aachen, which is probably his most famous work.

18    Kölner Werkschulen (Cologne Academy of Fine and Applied Arts) was a university in the city of Cologne that trained artists, architects and designers from 1926 to 1971.

19    The design for St Englebert's Church was the result of a competition limited to five architects, in which Böhm won. Several Church authorities opposed his proposal, as they thought the forms were closer to the Eastern spirit than the Western one. But the architect's brilliant defence showed that his architecture was deeply associated with the new liturgy, ensuring that it was built with a volumetry never seen before, and that its interior was surprising in both liturgical and artistic terms. João Alves da Cunha, "*O MRAR e os anos de ouro da Arquitectura Religiosa em Portugal no século XX*" (Ph.D. diss., Faculdade de Arquitetura da Universidade de Lisboa, 2014), 52.
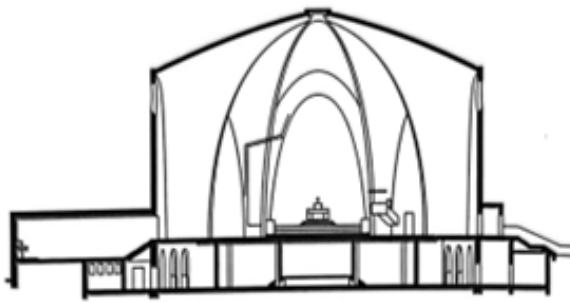
with his architectural expertise. He perceived light as a valuable construction material for the consecration of sacred space and as a material bestowed upon us by our Creator.[20]
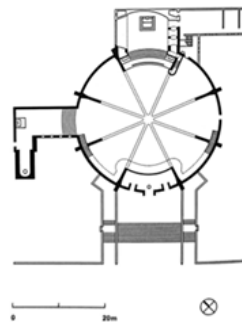
1a

1b

1c

1d

In his book *Church Builders*, Edwin Heathcote asserts that St. Engelbert is "one of the most influential buildings of its era," and that Böhm "created a perfectly circular church; the first modern Catholic church freed from the tyranny of the rectangular plan."[21] Similarly, Wolfgang Jean Stock, in his book *European Church Architecture 1900-1950*, states that "St. Engelbert assured him (Böhm) a place in the annals of modern church architecture." [22] In his book *Arquitectura Religiosa Moderna*, the Portuguese architect Luiz Cunha also lauded the circular design of the church created by Böhm, stating that it is "undoubtedly the most beautiful circular church that modern architecture has produced."[23]

In contrast to the approach taken by Schwarz in the Corpus Christi Church

20   Peter Keller, *St. Engelbert in Cologne-Riehl* (Cologne: Rheinische Kunststätten, 1991), 12.

21   Erwin Heathcote, "The Twentieth-Century Church" in Church Builders ed. Edwin Heathcote and Iona Spens (Chichester: A. D. Academy, 1997), 27.

22   Wolfgang Jean Stock, *European Church Architecture 1900-1950* (Munich: Prestel, 2006), 140.

23   Luiz Cunha, *Arquitectura religiosa moderna* (Porto: Imprensa, 1957), 34.

Fig. 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d
Parish Church of St. Engelbert: exterior and interior; section and plant. Source: Wolfgang Jean Stock – *European Church Architecture 1900-1950*, p. 136-141.

(1929-1930), the architect created a high, free space accompanied by a single low side aisle. This approach broke with the rhetorical charge inherited from the past, cancelling out spatial separations and seeking to bring the faithful closer to the celebration. Nevertheless, the congregation was still arranged in accordance with the traditional processional layout, with the pulpit elevated in reference to the traditional longitudinal nave. The construction of the edifice was completed with the utilisation of a reinforced concrete framework, while the interior walls were finished with a plaster coating and a coating of bricks.[24] Schwarz's architectural approach was informed by a profound comprehension of the functional aspects of the built environment. The essential relationship with the liturgical programme was expressed in the geometric simplicity and formal simplicity of the interiors. These qualities enabled the space to contain and symbolise the periodic communal celebration of the Eucharist and the permanent divine presence, without the presence of any images.[25] The interior was characterised by a dark base, surrounded by white walls, which corresponded to a theological concept that the floor represented human existence on earth, while the walls evoked the ascent to heaven.[26]

The structure, known as the "Factory", comprises a parallelepiped volume placed vertically (the body of the nave), perforated by openings that are also square and enclosed by slender frames with colourless glass placed on the outside of the surfaces. These are flanked asymmetrically by a smaller prism (side nave) with a dominant horizontal shape and a 40-metre-high square bell tower base. In his thesis on the MRAR, João Cunha said that "for the first time, a Catholic church adopted the parallelepiped expression associated with the industrial buildings erected by modern architecture in the previous decade."[27]

The interior of the church comprises a main nave measuring 21 metres in height and a side nave of a much lower height, which contains a confessional, the Via Crucis and an intimate chapel. A notable contrast is evident between the two naves, with the main nave being markedly illuminated by natural light, in contrast to the side nave, which is not.[28] In his thesis, Cunha described the "liturgical programme" as having been "interpreted and materialised by a theological thought of a truly modern spirit."[29] For Schwarz, the white wall behind the altar was not merely a spatial conclusion; it was a "membrane" permeable to movement beyond the demarcated space.

Even today, the imposing white structure stands out starkly against the surrounding landscape. As Wolfgang Jean Stock observed, "this building made history. Like no other it is seen to this day as the quintessential work of Modernism

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24    Flávia Martini Ramos, et al, *Templos Modernos: Estudos das Igrejas projetadas por Dominikus e Gottfried Böhm em SC* (Florianópolis: PET/ARQ/UFSC, 2013), 83.

25    Elisiário Miranda, *"Arquitectura e Liturgia em Portugal (1926-1974)"* (Provas de Aptidão Pedagógica e Capacidade Científica diss., Departamento Autónomo de Arquitectura da Universidade do Minho, 2005), 40.

26    Cunha, *"O MRAR e os anos de ouro"*, 67.

27    Cunha, *"O MRAR e os anos de ouro"*, 67.

28    Miranda, *"Arquitectura e Liturgia em Portugal"*, 40-41.

29    Cunha, *"O MRAR e os anos de ouro"*, 67.

in European ecclesiastic architecture."[30] For Luiz Cunha, "the value of the church in Aachen lies, therefore, not exactly in what it is, but above all in what it allows it to be, that is, in the perfect way in which it favours the transcendent mission that is asked of it."[31] Furthermore, Nuno Portas classified it as "one of the best examples of European purism in its almost colourless, perfectly parallelepiped volumetry, which results in a dramatic intensity then despised by the very canons of rationalism."[32]



2a

2b



2c

0          20m
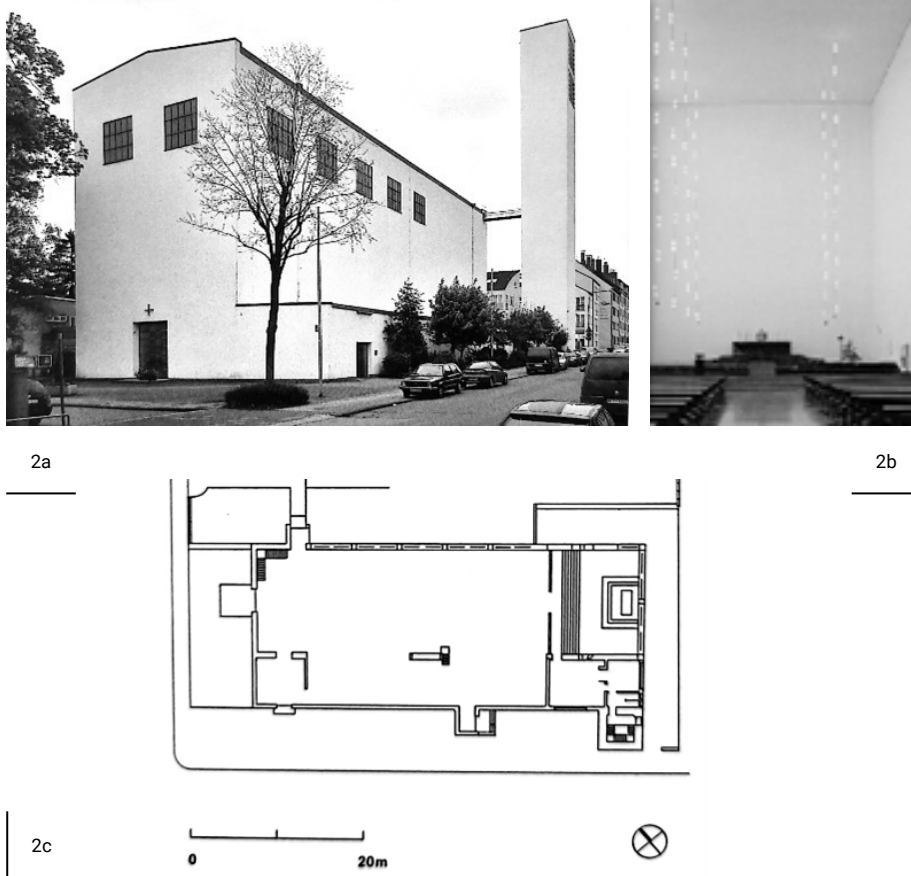
The construction of both buildings prompted considerable debate within the Catholic Church, and both architects subsequently departed from the principles of pure and strict geometry in their subsequent architectural designs. These edifices, however, survived the Second World War and serve as a testament to the prevailing architectural ideology at the time.[33]

Following the Second World War, Böhm and Schwarz continued their work. At the conclusion of the war, Böhm was 65 years of age and was widely regarded as the patriarch of Catholic church architecture in Germany. His post-war creations never attained the significance of his earlier works from the 1920s and

30    Stock, *European Church Architecture 1900-1950*, 124.

31    Cunha, *Arquitectura religiosa moderna*, 38.

32    Nuno Portas, "Sobre a situação da Arquitectura Religiosa no Mundo," *Arquitectura* no. 60, (October 1957): 22.

33    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 155.

Fig. 2a, 2b, 2c
Corpus Christi Church: exterior, interior and plant. Source: Wolfgang Jean Stock – *European Church Architecture 1900-1950*, p. 124-129.

1930s. Some of the buildings resembled traditional village churches, but the Church of Maria Königin (1952-1954) in Cologne, situated in proximity to the South Park, constituted a notable highlight.

The red brick edifice was augmented by a square bell tower base, which was added by his son Gottfried Böhm between 1959 and 1960. The baptistry, which is situated adjacent to the south wall of the church and is accessed via a transparent glass corridor near the choir, is a circular stained-glass structure. It contains a baptismal font, which was designed by Hanns Rheindorf.

The square church, designed to bring the parishioners closer to the altar, is an expression of the new liturgical requirements, with its steel structure and light four-sided roof, supported by four slender steel columns, exposed inside and painted in a bright scarlet colour, the only colour against the white walls and the only colour repetition of the bright fragments of stained glass.[34]

The presbytery with the high altar is next to the west wall, where there is a slight curvature in the apse. To the south, the wall is entirely of stained glass and opens onto the South Park, revealing a serenity hitherto unknown to Böhm.

The stained-glass wall running the length of the nave is the highlight of the project and is probably one of the most beautiful post-war German churches. The pattern is a stylised leaf design executed in shades of silver grey. No other colours were used, except for fourteen small litany symbols[35] that break up the background pattern at irregular intervals. These accent dots are fragments of antique glass that glow yellow, green and red.[36]

In addition to the coloured fragments, the wall is semi-transparent, allowing the outlines of the various large trees on the exterior to be discerned through the glass. The shadows cast by the trees on the glass create a silvery, shifting veil-like effect. On the north side of the church are the sacristy and other rooms, as well as a smaller chapel that is open to the interior of the church.[37]

In this project, Böhm employed a minimalist approach, maintaining the structure's simplicity while leaving the surfaces unadorned to accentuate the expansive stained-glass wall[38]. This was the genesis of an impressive architectural work of the post-war period in Germany, distinguished by its plasticity and profusion of detail. The final church designed by Dominikus Böhm was Church of Maria Königin.

In addition to his work in Europe, Dominikus Böhm collaborated with his son Gottfried on projects outside the continent. These included the construction

34    Albert Christ-Janer and Mary Mix Foley, "Church of Maria Königin," in *Modern Church Architecture: A Guide to the form and spirit of twentieth century religious buildings* (Florence: Literary Licensing, 1962), 58.

35    Litany is a form of prayer used especially in Catholic worship that consists of a series of prayers organised in short invocations that are alternately sung or said by a deacon, priest or cantors and to which the people respond in a fixed way, for example "pray for us", "we ask you, hear us". F. L. Cross, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 984.

36    Christ-Janer and Foley, "Church of Maria Königin," in *Modern Church Architecture,* 56.

37    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 157.

38    Christ-Janer and Foley, "Church of Maria Königin," in *Modern Church Architecture,* 55.

of two churches in Brazil: The Church of São Luís Gonzaga (1953-1962) in Brusque and the Church of São Paulo Apóstolo (1953-1963), now the Cathedral of Blumenau. The latter church exhibits similarities with the Church of Maria Königin project. For instance, the baptistry is constructed entirely of stained glass outside the walls of the church, in contrast to the Brazilian church where it is located in front of the main door, on the same axis as the high altar and under the same roof. Another point of similarity is the use of an entirely stained-glass wall, which in the Brazilian church is located on the main façade and on the side of the presbytery wall.
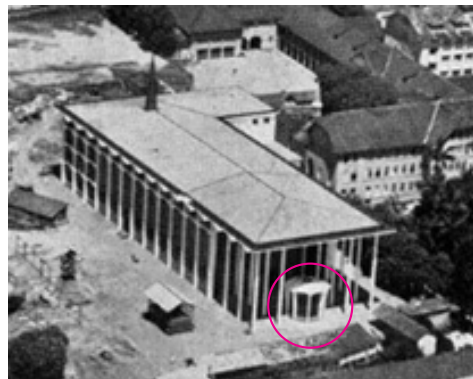
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3b
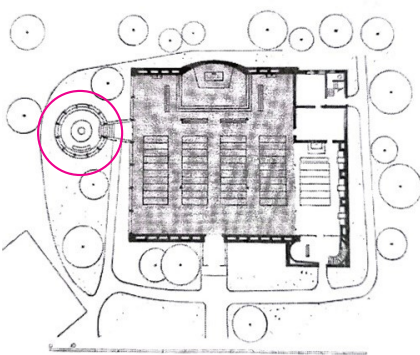
3c

3d

Following the completion of the Corpus Christi church in Aachen, Schwarz survived the Third Reich through the execution of smaller projects. However, he was also involved in the planning of large-scale regional developments in Lorraine. For Schwarz, the conclusion of the Second World War marked the advent of his most prolific and fruitful period as a church architect. The catalogue includes 24 new and rebuilt projects between 1945 and 1961, the year of his death. A further ten projects were completed posthumously under the direction of his wife, Maria Schwarz. It is notable that, with the exception of a few instances, his architectural designs offer expansive and refined spaces that do not cease at a specific point, but continue beyond the altar, providing an experience for the human gaze.

For Church of St. Michael (1952-1956) in Frankfurt, Schwarz devised a structure with an elliptical floor plan (51m x 17m), the nave of which is 16m high.

Fig. 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d Church of Maria Königin: the first image left; the baptistry outside. The first image right; interior and the second image left; plant. Source: G E Kidder Smith – *The new churches of Europe,* p. 114-115. The second image on the right is the Cathedral of Blumenau, in Brazil, where it is possible to see the baptistry outside. Source: *Acrópole Magazine* – Igreja Matriz de Blumenau, p. 179.

The nave is massively framed by the structure's concrete pillars and illuminated by a continuous window that encircles the entire building just below the roof. From the ground to the aforementioned window, the walls are a solid expanse of brickwork, with the exception of the atriums (antechambers) at the front and the chapels situated behind the presbytery.[39]

The architect's objective was to construct a robust and resilient edifice that would serve as a protective barrier against the challenges of the external environment. However, the expansive, exposed concrete structure and the substantial red brick walls gave way to a tranquil and aesthetically pleasing interior space, akin to a spiritual retreat, secure and tranquil. The walls are painted white with soft curves that contrast only with the pillars of the concrete structure that run from the floor to the roof, providing the only break in the internal surface. The pillars, which appear substantial on the exterior, appear delicate on the interior, where they have a slender edge that is flush with the wall. The walls are painted moss green, a colour that could be considered neutral. The floors are covered in dark grey slate, while the benches are constructed from wood in its natural state. The white walls and neutral tones are offset by the concrete roof, which is designed to resemble a large floating marquee and is painted sky blue with gold-coloured ribs.[40]

The interior is illuminated by a soft light from the high glass block during the day. In contrast, the artificial lighting is provided by simple white elongated globes which fall on thin golden rods from the high ceiling to the low point inside the nave. The interior is devoid of any additional embellishments, such as stained glass or colourful decorations. Instead, it is characterised by a minimalist aesthetic, with the walls, pillars and roof all painted white, and the latter featuring a blue hue. The result is consistent with the scriptures, which state that "peace that surpasses all understanding" (Philippians 4:7) can be attained.

The subsidiary elements (antechambers and chapels) project outward, creating an uninterrupted interior space surrounded by a continuous, gently curved wall. Concurrently, the geometrically coupled side chapels are integrated into this uninterrupted space, in contrast to the antechambers at the entrance, which have considerably lower ceilings and are separated from the interior, akin to distinct rooms.

Each of these chapels was designed for a specific purpose. The chapel on the right was occupied by the choir, while the chapel on the left contains the confessionals and stations of the Via Crucis. The chapel also serves as a secondary nave, providing a more intimate setting for weekday services when the church is not at full capacity. This configuration allows for direct communion between the officiating priest at the central altar and a smaller body of faithful in the smaller chapel. On Sundays and holy days, a larger congregation fills the

39    Albert Christ-Janer and Mary Mix Foley, "Church of St. Michael," in *Modern Church Architecture: A Guide to the form and spirit of twentieth century religious buildings* (Florence: Literary Licensing, 1962), 67.

40    Christ-Janer and Foley, "Church of St. Michael," in *Modern Church Architecture*, 67.

main nave, with overflow seating available in this chapel. The choir's location in the chapel to the right, with a view of the presbytery, also establishes an intimate relationship between this group and the altar. Furthermore, the choir was situated at the same level as the congregation, thereby becoming integrated into it. The altar is square in shape[41] and is positioned in such a way that the priest can stand on any of its four sides. This allows the priest to face the small daily congregation, the choir, or the main nave, depending on the occasion. The altar is situated behind a semicircular apse, which contains the seats for the priest and his assistants. These seats are constructed from grey slate, matching the floor.[42]

Although the nave of this church is long and narrow, reminiscent of traditional basilica plans, it still achieves a sense of unity between the priest and the congregation due to its extreme simplicity and its single curve that encloses the congregation and the altar in a single space. The absence of side aisles, columns, or other superfluous architectural elements serves to accentuate the
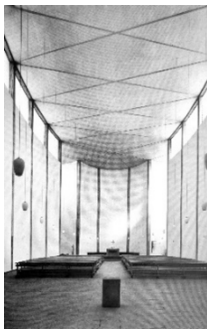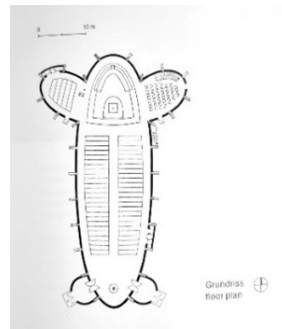
4a    4b    4c

infinite expanse of this elongated, elevated space.

On the same axis as the high altar is the baptismal font,[43] situated in close proximity to the entrance doors. The location of this font evokes the Parish Church of Santo Antonio in Moscavide (1955-1956), situated in the vicinity of Lisbon. The architectural design by A. de Freitas Leal and João Almeida places the baptismal font on the same axis as the high altar and adjacent to the main entrance.[44] It is possible that German religious architecture exerted some influence on Portuguese architecture. In this same church, the architects employed a squarer plan for the church, with three sides occupied by the assembly, situated in closer proximity to the altar. This type of plan is often observed in German architectural designs.

The bell tower, which is of considerable height and has a circular base, was

41    The placement of the altar as the centre of the four sides symbolised "the four corners of the earth" and was a sign of universal blessing. Christ-Janer and Foley, "Church of St. Michael," in *Modern Church Architecture*, 68.

42    Christ-Janer and Foley, "Church of St. Michael," in *Modern Church Architecture*, 67.

43    The position of the baptismal font is symbolic. In a straight line with the altar and between the two entrance doors, it represents entry into the Church, leading to the sacrament of communion and therefore the promise of salvation, as described in the Roman missal.

44    Nuno Portas, "Moscavide Igreja Paroquial de S. António", *Arquitectura* no. 60 (October 1957): 24-30.

Fig. 4a, 4b, 4c
Church of St. Michael
(1952-1956) – Frankfurt:
interior, exterior and plant.
Source: Wolfgang, Jean
Stock – *European Church
Architecture 1950-2000*, p.
40-41.

erected at a later date and was designed by Karl Wimmenauer. It has a marked impact on the surrounding landscape. At the time of its construction, the church was visible from all sides. However, its striking form is now largely hidden by trees and bushes. Schwarz's audacity in designing this edifice is acknowledged by himself. "Its entire form so strongly determined by its building method that one has to become acquainted with this in order to understand the building."[45]

In this project, the architect used what he called the "open ring". His main idea was to place the congregation around the three sides of the altar like a ring, with the fourth side of the ring being the curved apse, where the celebrants of the service are present. Symbolically, this model was intended to express that everyone was directed towards the altar with its "mediator" or "threshold", with the apse signifying the opening of heaven.[46] In Portugal, the Church of São João de Deus (1947-1953), designed by architect António Lino, despite having its characteristics orientated towards traditional architecture, has its nave divided into three, all of the same height and size, facing the high altar, with a similar objective to the one used by Schwarz.

After designing Church of St. Michael, Schwarz developed a repertoire of curved, elliptical and parabola geometries, as well as rectangular rooms, halls and basilicas, and cruciform or T-shaped plans.[47] Two examples are the St Ludgero Church (1959-1963) in Wuppertal-Vohwinkel and the St Boniface Church (1959-1964) in Wetzlar,[48] where Schwarz, who had little regard for Le Corbusier's Ronchamp Chapel, created almost floating spaces.[49] In Portugal, an architect who also explored a geometric repertoire was Luiz Cunha.

In the case of both Böhm and Schwarz, the wall surfaces of these creations are no longer kept in an abstract white. The wall surfaces were adapted to the textures and colours of the materials, the grain and tone of the stonework, brick or exposed concrete. These projects permitted extensive collaboration with visual artists. The purist box is no longer defined by a few exquisite details, such as a narrow crucifix, a circular baptismal font, or the ascetic liturgical device. The vitality that even the austerity of the war and the post-war period failed to diminish in the artists of the Rhine region experienced a renaissance in the work of Schwarz and, in particular, Böhm.[50]

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45    Rudolf Schwarz, "St. Michael Frankfurt am Main", in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock (Munich: Prestel, 2002), 39.

46    Christ-Janer and Foley, "Church of St. Michael," in *Modern Church Architecture*, 68.

47    Rudolf Schwarz was a prominent Roman Catholic architect who had studied theology and was closely involved in the liturgical reform movement. His churches were designed largely as contemplative spaces, in which the congregation would have a clear sense of presence before God. Tending towards minimalism of form, but with multivalent symbolism that contributed to the fullness of meaning; Schwarz devised a system of seven church plans, each of which had a wealth of symbolic association and he designed each of his churches with specific symbolic reference. Which was later published as a book. While Roman Catholic worship had long been held in the longitudinal "Wegkirche" (procession church), Schwarz favoured the "Ringkirche" (ring church) in which the congregation with the priest was gathered around the altar.

48    These churches were completed after Schwarz's death, under the command of his wife Maria.

49    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 157.

50    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 157.

Fig. 5a, 5b
St. Rochus - Düsseldorf: exterior and plant. Source: europeana.eu.scheider-esleben_paul.

In addition to his architectural legacy, Rudolf Schwarz exerted considerable influence through his writings, which employed a distinctive pictorial diction that was highly suggestive. The first edition of his book *Vom Bau der Kirche* (*The Church Incarnate* is the English version) was published in 1938, with a second edition following in 1947. Schwarz developed seven floor plans for churches based on a phenomenology of human behaviour. The author did not intend his catalogue of plans (ranging from the "sacred circle" to the "cathedral of all times") to be understood as a manual. Instead, it was to become a "germ of all things", a repository of images linking the inherent and constant qualities of humanity to different forms of worship.[51] For Schwarz, architecture that appeared to be art did not serve a functional purpose; rather, it was a category in itself. This conviction may help to elucidate his controversial clashes with the functionalism of his time. For Schwarz, this purpose-oriented thinking was inextricably linked to his greatest adversary, the Bauhaus of Walter Gropius, rather than that of Mies van der Rohe, with whom he was a close friend. However, Schwarz was equally passionate and fearless in his debates with the ecclesiastical authorities. He was drawn into the debate by the frequent references to the liturgy as a building manual. In Schwarz's view, a church building was not merely a "liturgical machine" or a functional building justified by liturgy. Rather, it was an artistically autonomous form that allowed for acts of worship.[52]

The critical examination of what Schwarz called "liturgical functionalism" was all the more important because the reform of the liturgy gave a decisive turn to new church building (including his own). Schwarz's close friend was Romano Guardini, a charismatic advocate of the new liturgy. The reformist monasteries in Belgium and northern France, which were already trying to renew the liturgy in the 19th century, were also geographically close to the Rhineland. The region could look to the Benedictine monastery of Maria Laach as a forerunner of liturgical reform, and to Johannes van Acken, parish priest in Gladbeck, as an eloquent spokesman.[53]

Long before the Second Vatican Council, which endorsed the aims of the liturgical movement and promoted the common celebration of the liturgy through the spatial proximity of the congregation and the altar, the architects who realised church projects in the Rhineland were committed to the visibility and contextual integration of liturgical places under one roof. Ecclesiastical commissions had already approved these steps before the Council. The Charter of Rights of the Diocese of Cologne, amended at a synod in 1954, emphasised the importance of a close relationship between priest and congregation and condemned any separation between congregation and altar.[54]

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51    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 157-159.

52    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 159.
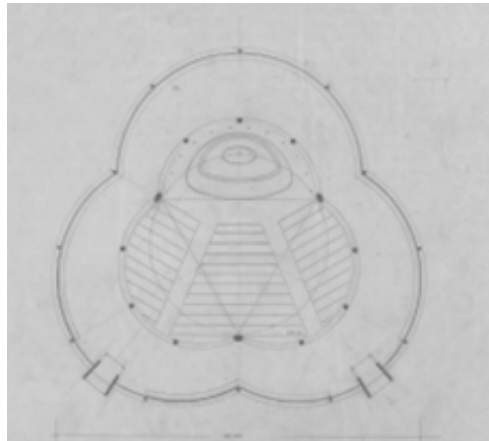
53    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 159.

54    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 159.

### *Other architects*

The liberal spirit of the Rhineland and post-war church architecture in general allowed for a variety of subscriptions. In the Archdiocese of Cologne, parishes had a wide right of participation, although the *Codex Iuris Canonici* stated that no church could be built without the permission of the diocesan bishop. The board of trustees ensured that decisions were based on sound knowledge and even organised several fact-finding trips.[55]

Several architects, working for both denominations (Protestant and Catholic), responded to the new load-bearing structures. Josef Lembrock (1918-1999), Dieter Oesterlen (1911-1994) and Fritz Schaller (1904-2002),[56] for example, used concrete folds, steel structures or grids to create dynamic, sometimes crystalline buildings and often column-free spaces. Others, such as Joachim Schürmann (1926-2022)[57] in the early 1960s, developed calm, disciplined and diaphanous spaces. Some, like Paul Schneider-Esleben (1915-2005), transformed churches into distinctive urban landmarks, as in the case of St Rochus (1953-1954) in Düsseldorf-Pempelfort. The church's clover-shaped floor plan recalls the 17th-century Baroque pilgrimage chapel by Georg Dienzenhofer (1643-1689) near Waldsassen, with continuous lining from wall to roof, suggesting the opening of a flower bud.[58]

5a - 5b

Almost without exception, the major architectural works of the period are diverse and varied in themselves. Gottfried Böhm went in many different directions within the space of a few years. Take St Albert's Church in Saarbrücken

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55    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 159-161.

56    Josef Lehmbrock was a German architect, urban planner, advertising critic and member of the Deuscher Werkund. Dieter Oesterlen was a German architect who studied at the Stuttgart School of conservative architectural philosophy, far removed from the ideals of the Bauhaus. Fritz Schaller was a German architect who designed several Catholic churches.

57    Joachim Schürmann was a German architect who realised several projects, including some churches. He was an award-winning architect throughout his career.

58    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 161.

(1951-1953), for example, where he followed caravanserai-inspired[59] configurations from the late 1950s, in which the building's tent-like reinforced concrete structure comes to the fore. Around and above the ring of the nave is a structure of fourteen pale concrete arches. They surround the lantern like a buttress, culminating in the pilgrimage church of the Cathedral of the Virgin Mary (1966-1972) in Negives.[60]
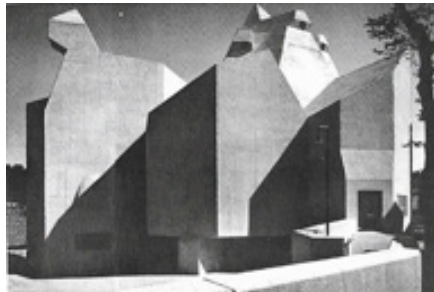
But the importance of regional character was repeatedly proclaimed. The Cardinal's Edict of 1912 emphatically recommended that architects look to "the glorious examples of the Rhine", but modernists such as Rudolf Schwarz also referred to the traditional models of the region. In any case, for many years architects were forced to collaborate with the past, as they had to work with a heritage in ruins. The fate of the Romanesque churches (almost all of which, from Bonn to Neuss, had been badly damaged in the war) was the subject of much discussion, especially during the lectures held in the winter of 1947 and 1948 in the auditorium of the University of Cologne. It was during this period that a *modus vivendi* was worked out between reconstruction and clear new construction. This *modus vivendi* didn't survive the next decade, however, because the changes that followed were also based on the principles of heritage conservation. The emphasis in the post-war years was on clean, simplified restoration, with exposed brickwork or large expanses of white plaster, reducing the historic building to an idealised state. To the next generation they seemed too frugal, ascetic and without historical value, and therefore unworthy of heritage protection.[61]

As a result, architects came to better understand the meaning of choir and apse, crypt and baptistry, pulpit and presbytery, not only in universities and lectures, but also through exposure to restoration work. Perhaps apse, cloverleaf choirs and massive walls have survived longer in the Rhineland than anywhere else because they were part of the everyday experience of architects. But the most significant influence of this experience was on the treatment of materials. In the Rhineland, architects treated stone as a relic, not only in reconstruction

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59    Caravanserai − a hotel with a large open central area, used in the past in Eastern countries by groups of people and animals travelling together. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 3rd ed. (Barcelona: Longman, 1995), 188.

60    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 161.

61    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 161-163.

Fig. 6
St. Albert Church (1953-1954). Source: Wolfgang Jean Stock − *European Church Architecture 1950-2000*, p. 161.

Fig. 7
Virgin Mary Cathedral − Neviges. Source: Wolfgang Jean Stock − *European Church Architecture 1950-2000*, p. 145.

projects but also in new buildings. "We wanted to integrate them into the masonry of the new building, so that the sacred stone could become the building material of a new work and the Old could be resurrected in the new," wrote Schwarz of the Santa Anna Church (1951-1956) in Düren, built entirely from salvaged rubble and considered Schwarz's most remarkable post-war church.[62]

Although the plan of this church is still elongated and rectangular, efforts have been made to distribute the congregation more evenly, including a second, more signalling nave at right angles to the main body of the church. The 'L' shape has its meeting point in the altar. In the inner angle of the "L", to form a rectangle of the overall plan, there is a large atrium marked by a lowered ceiling. In this plan, the presbytery occupies a central position between the two sections of the faithful, who have a direct view of the altar and an oblique view of each other through the open atrium, bringing everyone into intimate communion. Inside each nave, the space is uninterrupted. The presbytery itself is part of this uninterrupted space, placed on a stepped platform in the corner of the "L", directly between the two sides. Behind the altar, a "Tree of Life" pattern emerges from the stone, undulating across the aisle and illuminated by fruits like small circles (like Lethaby's "Jewel Bearing Tree" in Architecture, Mysticism and Myth, a reference to a tradition of burning mythical trees, for example Moses' burning bush and the candlestick of the Jewish menorah); one of the boldest and most truly impressive works of 20th century sacred architecture: expressionism without whimsy. The sacristy, choir and ambulatory were excluded from this area. Instead, the choir was placed at the back of the nave, facing the altar. This arrangement puts everyone in sight of each other, separated only by the difference in level of their respective places. In this way, Schwarz was able to express the main recommendations of the liturgical revival: close contact between the altar and the nave and an unobstructed view of the altar in an open plan.[63]

Hans Schilling, who also liked to use reclaimed materials, pointed out the more mundane aspect: these stones cost almost nothing. In addition to the fascination with the material itself, these encounters with damaged or destroyed historical materials have led to some strange syntheses. Like Gottfried Böhm in his Chapel of Our Lady in the Ruins (1947-1950), built on the ruins of the old

62    Rudolf Schwarz, *Kirchenbau: Welt von der Schwelle* (Heidelberg: F. H. Kerle Verlag, 1960), 223.

63    Christ-Janer and Foley, "Church of St. Anna," in *Modern Church Architecture*, 62
and Heathcote, "Post-war Germany," in Church Builders, ed. Edwin Heathcote and Iona Spens, 43.

Fig. 8
St. Anna Church (1951-1956) in Düren − Rudolf Schwarz. Source: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Anna_(Düren).

Fig. 9
St. Anna Church (1951-1956) in Düren − Rudolf Schwarz. Source: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Anna_(Düren).

medieval church,[64] or Karl Band, who used four preserved cross-vaulted slabs in the Church of St John the Baptist (1960-1962). These gestures were both humble and self-confident.[65]

The great Romanesque churches that had to be saved from collapse and brought back to life were not the only training grounds for post-war architects. In the province formerly known as *Germania Inferior*, a return to the Romanesque seemed a natural step. The Roman urban buildings of the first Christian centuries offered a marriage of both elements: Roman brick construction and the pious expression of late antique Christianity. Thus, the liturgical movement also drew on forms of worship from early Christianity. As the diocesan architect and professor Willy Weyres put it: "Almost every ecclesiastical reform [...] referred to and imitated the ancient Christian Basilica, albeit in a language appropriate to the period."[66] The Eternal City became a point of reference for many Rhine architects, such as Böhm, Schwarz and others. The techniques of brick masonry, for which Rome and the Rhineland archaeological sites were fertile training grounds, were all the more welcome because their application to new sacred buildings could be interpreted as a physical expression of the word in the living stones of the community, attributed to the Apostle Paul.[67]

The concept of original Christian religiosity may have reinforced the determination of numerous architects in the context of evolving demands, extending beyond the liturgical reform initiated by the Second Vatican Council. Their objective shifted from designing the *ecclesia triumfans*, whose stately symbols would emerge from the emerging urban landscapes, to that of a more modest church. This novel approach entailed not only the provision of spiritual services for the community but also the embodiment of an empathetic partner in all the worldly joys and challenges. The new church buildings no longer exposed their congregations to the great parables of the world, but offered them shelter in the midst of the modern diaspora. The memory of the initial Christian edifices erected during the Roman period, including S. Costanza and S. Giovanni in Fonte, both constructed in the 4th century, and S. Stefano Rotondo, which was built in the 5th century, influenced the emergence of a centralized plan that began to emerge in the 1950s, despite the cautions issued at the Cologne Synod of 1954. Following the Second Vatican Council, these trends were successfully established through the implementation of polygonal, circular, square, or irregular plans.[68]

Emil Steffann was an architect who espoused the values of humility and

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64    Our Lady in the Ruins Chapel is a parish church that was built on the ruins of the old medieval church that was destroyed by bombing in 1943. Gottfried Böhm designed an octagonal tent-like structure. The church was seen as a war memorial, called Madonna in der Trümmern or Madonna of the Ruins.

65    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 163.

66    Willy Weyres and Otto Bartning, "Geschichtliche Grundlagen," in *Kirchen, Handbuch für den Kirchenbau.* (Munich: Callwey, 1959), 35.

67    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 163.
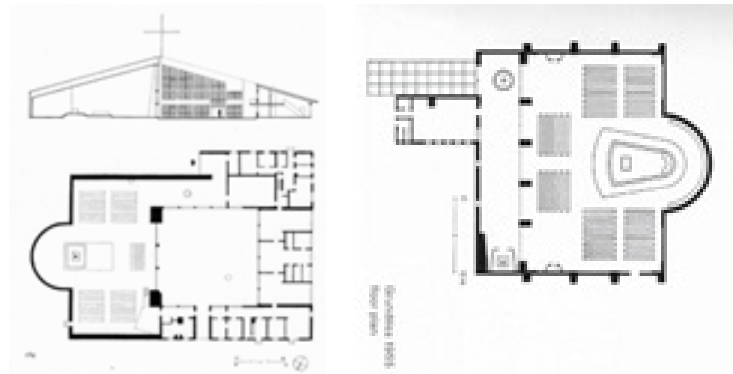
68    Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 163-165.

simplicity, which were becoming increasingly prevalent in the architectural profession at the time. He consistently rejected the prevailing trend towards the construction of flexible, multi-purpose buildings, which were perceived to be suitable for the various uses typical of the time. Steffann, originally from Lübeck, discovered his own architectural path in Assisi and Rome. Since the 1950s, Steffann's architectural practice was based in the Rhineland. His work offered shelter, embracing the individual, through the construction of solid buildings that preserved and perpetuated traditional values. These buildings often incorporated typological elements borrowed from antiquity, such as the porch and atrium.

In his churches, such as Maria in den Benden (1956-1958) in Düsseldorf, the secular and sacred spaces were arranged in a manner reminiscent of a Roman villa, with the atrium serving as the focal point. This architectural approach was prescribed by the German Liturgical Commission. The church of St Lawrence (1955) [69] in Munich also exhibits a stripped-down, elemental interior, with the same curved apse as the church in Düsseldorf.

For Steffann, contemporary places of meditation and prayer were analogous to modern catacombs. This approach was perpetuated in the edifices of his former colleague, Heinz Bienefeld, albeit with a more diverse colour palette and a more varied ornamental texture of the walls. The community centre in Cologne-Blumenberg, designed by Steffann and completed after his death, is an example of his work. In this, one of the rare new churches of the period, the principal elements of the practice of faith appeared to be arranged in a linear fashion, as if they were positioned on either side of a path.[70]

This exemplifies the manner in which Christian architects collaborated with liturgists in post-war Germany, with the bishops' providing encouragement and guidance. Consequently, architecture was flourishing in this area, capable of translating the liturgical and pastoral needs of the People of God.[71]

Fig.10
Plan of the Maria in den Benden Church. Source: G E Kidder Smith – *The new churches of Europe*, p. 184.

Fig. 11
Plan of the St. Lawrence Church. In both churches Steffann used the same plan with assembly around the altar on three sides and curved apse as the fourth side. Source: Wolfgang, Jean Stock – *European Church Architecture 1950-2000*, p. 45.

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69   The St Lawrence project is considered by scholars to be an architectural classic of the liturgical movement. Cunha, "*O MRAR e os anos de ouro*", 72.

70   Pehnt, "Under the Sign of Liturgical Reform," in *European Church Architecture 1950-2000,* ed. Wolfgang Jean Stock, 165.

71   João de Almeida, "Documentário eclesiástico sobre a construção de Igrejas," *Novellae Olivarum* ano XII, no. 120 (December 1954): 313.

## Conclusion

With this brief presentation of the development of modern Catholic architecture in post-war Germany in the Rhineland, we can see that, despite a country devastated by wars, especially the Second World War, architects such as Dominikus Böhm and Rudolf Schwarz, visionaries of an architecture appropriate to their time and dedicated to religious architecture, managed to combine the new guidelines established by the liturgical movement with modern architecture, achieving a significant "marriage" between the two, which gave rise to beautiful examples of modern churches.

In the interwar period, Dominikus Böhm and Rudolf Schwarz created emblematic works that were considered modern for the time. This is the case with Böhm's St Engelbert's (1930-1932), where he demonstrated a move towards a modern church, designed on the basis of some of the new norms of the liturgical movement. Built on a circular plateau, the church left behind the rectangular plans of basilicas, made possible by the new techniques of new architecture, without obstructing the sight and hearing of the high altar, as the congregation is distributed more evenly. Its white interior walls, without any ornamentation, do not distract the faithful.

The presbytery is still slightly separated from the assembly, but without any separating physical element, and it is higher than the advocates of the liturgical movement would like. The high altar in the centre is designed so that ceremonies can be held facing the congregation. And the natural lighting in the nave is serene, contrasting with the intense light received in the presbytery through the large side window. In this work Böhm presented the first steps towards the modern church, and in this project one of the focal points was natural light, one of the elements that Böhm knew how to work with.

Rudolf Schwarz's design for the Corpus Christi Church (1929-1930) remained more traditional. He developed a rectangular floor plan (in procession) and a pulpit in the centre of the nave. Despite this, we can find some modern guidelines, such as: simple white walls, without ornamentation; the nave and presbytery are well lit by upper windows, contrasting with the low side nave and without any natural lighting. In this project, the architect focused on two key aspects of modern architecture: functionality and rationality. These aspects were exemplified in the paradigmatic use of the shape of each part, as exemplified by the nave and tower. Despite its resemblance to industrial buildings, the design maintains a distinct identity. The raised presbytery, with no separating elements, has the high altar in the centre, allowing for ceremonies to be conducted facing the assembly.

Despite developing modern architecture, Schwarz retained some traditional elements, as previously mentioned. However, the architect's primary focus for this project was on understanding the function, with the objective of creating a simple yet effective design that would bring the assembly closer to the altar.

Following the Second World War, German architecture had reached a more "mature" stage, with a greater emphasis on elaborate designs within the context of the Liturgical Movement for modern churches. Böhm and Schwarz refined their approach and exerted a significant influence on other architects at the time. Gottfried Böhm, the son of Dominikus, was one of the architects of this new phase. He worked in his father's office and undertook a number of apprenticeship trips, thereby increasing his architectural repertoire.

In the post-Second World War period, we observe the emergence of more elaborate architectural designs by Böhm and Schwarz. Böhm was responsible for the design Church of Maria Königin (1952-1954), which is regarded as one of the most significant post-war buildings in Germany. The architect employed a square plan, in contrast to the circular plan utilised in St. Engelbert, with the objective of facilitating closer proximity of the assembly to the high altar, which is surrounded by three sides. The white walls contrast with the only stained-glass wall to the south (on the side of the nave), in contrast to the all-white walls of Böhm's first phase. The focal point of the work is the lighting through the stained glass.

The nave and presbytery are illuminated by the same focal point, the stained-glass wall, which serves to differentiate the two areas. The presbytery is less elevated than the nave, without the need to separate elements. The high altar is situated in the centre of the church, in a prominent position, and is ready for celebrations in the versus populum orientation. The interior is characterised by a neutral palette, which contrasts with the use of red on the internal pillars and the stained-glass wall.

The stained-glass wall contains a door that opens onto a transparent glass corridor, which in turn connects to the circular baptistery, also constructed entirely of stained glass, situated outside the church's internal walls. Böhm's concept can be traced back to a reinterpretation of the traditional external baptisteries, which he connected via a transparent corridor to the church. He subsequently employed this concept in a project in Brazil, however, the Brazilian baptistry was connected to the church beneath the same roof. The church, situated in close proximity to South Park and surrounded by verdant greenery, was conceived with the intention of harmoniously integrating with its surrounding environment through the incorporation of a stained-glass wall.

In the same period, Schwarz designed the Church of St. Michael (1952-1956), which features an elongated elliptical floor plan and other adjacent elliptical areas. The interior walls are white, devoid of ornamentation, with the exception of the ribs of the concrete structure, which were painted moss green. This hue is nearly neutral. The building is illuminated by a continuous upper window throughout. This lighting effect serves to enhance the visual impression of the sky-blue painted roof, which appears to float.

The presbytery, which is relatively low-ceilinged and devoid of any architectural divisions, features a high altar situated in the centre and bathed in light.

Despite the elongated nave, the presence of the adjoining chapels, choir and intimate chapel enables the celebrant to be situated closer to the assembly and to face the three sides of the assembly.

A commonality between this project and the aforementioned Portuguese church is the presence of the baptismal font in close proximity to the entrance doors, situated on the same axis as the main altar. This is in keeping with the understanding that baptism is the first sacrament, whereby the individual is initiated into the community and subsequently directed towards the altar. The location of the font facilitates the participation of the assembly during a baptism.

In addition to the aforementioned developments in German Catholic architecture, some churches were rebuilt in a new language, utilising materials that were incorporated into their replacements. This was exemplified by Rudolf Schwarz's St. Anna Church and Gottfried Böhm's Chapel Madonna of the Ruins, which employed stones from the rubble, combining old elements with new concepts in order to preserve a certain memory.

Gottfried Böhm collaborated with his father until the latter's demise, subsequently assuming control of the architectural practice and continuing to serve as a seminal figure in the field of modern German Catholic architecture. A considerable number of other German architects were influenced by the projects and ideas of Rudolf Schwarz and Dominikus Böhm.

When considered in its entirety (and including numerous other examples that are beyond the scope of this discussion), the German contribution to post-World War II church architecture was no less significant than that of the pre-war period. It represented the culmination of the experimentation and theorising of the previous generation and the fruition of the pioneering work of Böhm and Schwarz. Indeed, it can be argued that it represents the most significant contribution of a single nation in this field.

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**Daniel Maurício Santos de Jesus**

# ARCHITECTURE AS AN EXTENSION OF THE DOMAIN OF STRUGGLE
# An Idea of Europe revisited in view of three successive concepts: Technocracy, Thanatopolitics, and Thanatopraxia.

*Architecture as an Expression of Violence; Ideology; Class Struggle; Resistance*

## /Abstract

A few years after the original edition of Michel Houellebecq's book *Extension of the Domain of Struggle*, in the aftermath of the civil war and the subsequent balkanization of Yugoslavia, Lebbeus Woods subtitles a dystopian proposal for the "reconstruction" of the ruined city with the statement: "Architecture and war are not incompatible. Architecture is war. War is architecture."

The destruction and violence apparent in his *forensic interpretation* of Sarajevo (cf. Eyal Weizman; *Forensic Architecture Agency*), places Woods's competition proposal in the fight against an authority made explicit through materialized forms. By understanding the conception and production of the architectural device as an activity for transforming the habitable material support; and by recognizing how it thrives within the inescapable framework of the relations of production in the neoliberal capitalist system.

Instrumental for the confiscation and accumulation of private property – constructing, deconstructing or reconstructing – space production becomes an indispensable resource in perpetuating asymmetrical power relations that elementary political awareness distinguishes as socially and environmentally ruinous.

Hence, a hypothesis arises: the more conceptual autonomy is claimed for architectural project, the more defended is the circumscription of its practice in its own disciplinary fiefdom – under a technical and methodological determinant – the more it becomes vulnerable to plutocratic confiscation of financial, material, and technological resources in each era.

Discarding the presumed ideological neutrality in favor of a concrete mediation, using documentary and fictional films, and then some literary writings that inscribe architecture from the outside in, we begin to extract ideological, political, economic and social meaning from "a collision between the characters and the physical support that shelters them". All intertwined, as a renewed compound for summoning collective resistance.

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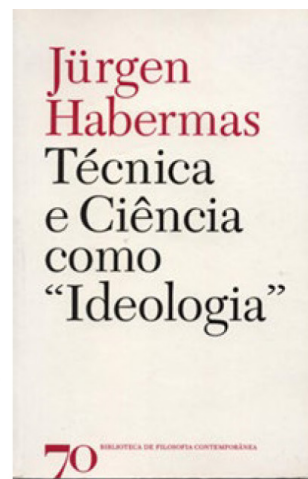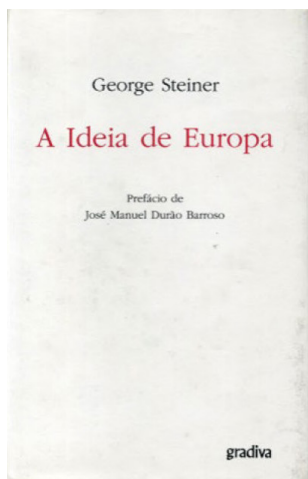
## Preliminaries

I've never read Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. Worse still, I've never read Liev Tolstoy. Dostoyevsky was my favorite of the 19th century Russians, and later I came across Gogol and Turgueniev: the latter was important because he coined the original meaning of the word nihilism, instrumental to survival in a world devoid of meaning (Le magazine littéraire, 2006). But before the hostilities begin, it's worth pointing out how difficult it is to read all the classics in a post-historical context (satire), with our attention held hostage by *here and now* headlines. However, "when we think about European history in the first half of the 20th century, we know that we can interpret it with the help of a dozen great modernist writers: Joyce, Kafka, T.S.Elliot, Beckett, Pound, Pessoa, Céline, Proust, Woolf, Mann, Musil, Ibsen, Pirandello, Genet, D.H.Lawrence, Hemingway... and Orwell (...), and Camus, all these writers who will have shaped the «Western canon» (Harold Bloom) and without whom there will be no way of understanding and explaining modernity.[1]"

Under this esteemed literary lineage, I reflected on an imaginary as synonymous with *a certain European paradigm*, indistinguishable from the very *emancipatory idea of modernity*. In fact, a European re-foundation took place in the 18th century in the light of the French and Industrial Revolutions: the first corresponding to the emergence of an assumed popular power to dismantle social stratification based on the ingredients of liberty, equality, and fraternity; the second was based on an agenda of technological and scientific growth that also defined it.

The institution of the secular modern university was established accordingly in the 18th century: under the umbrella of Reason and with the development of science as instrumental, inspired by the brothers Alexander and Wilhelm von

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1    "(...) quando pensamos na História da Europa na primeira metade do século XX, sabemos que podemos interpretá-la com a ajuda de uma dúzia de grandes escritores modernistas: Joyce, Kafka, T.S.Elliot, Beckett, Pound, Pessoa, Céline, Proust, Woolf, Mann, Musil, Ibsen, Pirandello, Genet, D.H.Lawrence, Hemingway... e Orwell (...), e Camus, todos esses escritores que terão modelado o 'Cânone Ocidental' (Harold Bloom) e sem os quais não haverá forma de compreender e explicar a modernidade." Clara Alves Ferreira, "A Morte da Cultura Literária", *Revista Expresso* (2013). Our translation.

Fig.1

*The Idea of Europe* (George Steiner, 2004, Portuguese edition); photograph by the author; *Technology and Science as "Ideology"* (Jurgën Habermas, 1968, Portuguese edition).

Humboldt, who understood emancipation and the constitution of the subject's character - *bildung - good in itself*.[2]

Despite previous meritorious affiliations, such as *liberty, equality,* and *fraternity*, the constituent factors of the conceptual triad, which germinated in the French Revolution and are believed to be the foundation of George Steiner's (2005) *Idea of Europe* [Fig.1], are in conflict with each other. Their borders and reciprocal influence require ongoing political negotiation, as these principles clash with the material practices of each unequal ideology and regime, which are based on a theory of borders and a theory of property (Piketty, 2020). As it happens, the possibility of conceptually organizing and reconfiguring these boundaries ends up colliding with the specialized technical forces of the capitalist economy, whose powers are growing at the same time and show up as *efforts of separation*.

Curiously, according to the founding mythology, we find Europa (in Greek: *Εὐρώπη*), daughter of Agenor, the king of Phenicia, sister of Cadmus, kidnapped by Zeus [Fig.2], who disguises himself as a bull so that his jealous wife, Hera, doesn't realize his purpose.[3] Is it a fair assessment to find that Europe's egalitarian and anti-clerical humanistic matrix still captive to mythological cupidity, based on the fact that a political system based on the predominance of technology prevails as a guideline for determining social and economic processes? Where present Zeus takes shape as a Technocracy, once again constraining candid Europe?

Regarding this state of affairs, Michel Houellebecq (1994) distinguishes an apparent and inescapable "technocratic domination" in a fiction which equates economic liberalism with an *Extension of the Domain of Struggle*, and whose extension stretches to all ages of life and all classes of society. And what kind of struggle is this, or, in other words, what domain is it referring to? No different from

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2    Bill Readings, *A Universidade em Ruínas.* (Joana Frazão, Trad.). Coimbra: Editora Angelus Novus, 2003. For recollection, that was before higher education became metrics-obsessed, featuring "commercialization, mental illness and self-harm, the rise of managerialism, students as consumers and evaluators, and the competitive individualism", all of which casting "a dark sheen of alienation over departments" (Peter Fleming, *How Universities Die* (London: Pluto Press, 2021).
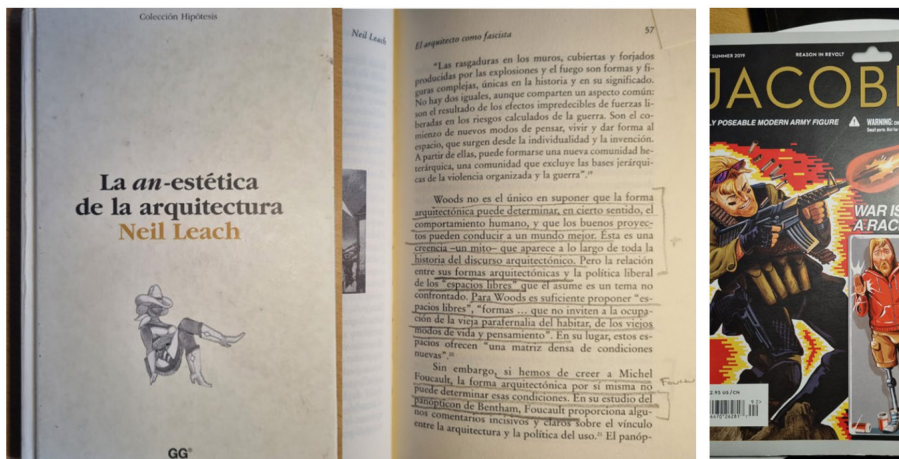
3    He took Europa to the island of Crete, which led Cadmus to look for her and, on the journey, to found the city of Thebes. Some things eventually come to good.

Fig.2
*The Rape of Europa* (Peter Paul Rubens, 1628-1629, Prado Museum; Madrid); *Charging Bull* (Arturo di Modica, 1989, bronze sculpture in Bowling Green, Manhattan's financial district).

what it has been, a historical, life-or-death fight for territory and its resources is ideologically unfolding, depending on the position of power held, in the age-old class struggle (Steven, 2023). Such a proposition is supported by a "Marxist who hasn't read Marx in his entirety", which is the interpretative predisposition that complements and clashes with the nihilism previously declared! But since Terry Eagleton (2011) asserts that Marx was right, I will adopt some of his critical tools [Fig.3]. In fairness, I've also looked at Lefebvre, Harvey, Marcuse, Habermas, among others, who don't seem to disagree on the essentials.

## The Struggle, properly written

A few years after the original edition of Michel Houellebecq's book, in the aftermath of the civil war and the subsequent balkanization of Yugoslavia, Lebbeus Woods (1993) accompanies a dystopian proposal for the "reconstruction" of the ruined city with the following statement: "Architecture

Fig.3

Le nihilism, la tentation du néant: cover photograph of *Magazine Littéraire* (Hors-Série, Octobre-Novembre 2006); cover photograph of *A Extensão do Domínio da Luta*, Michel Houellebecq (1994); cover photograph of Why Marx Was Right, Terry Eagleton (2011).

Fig.4

Cover and underlined text from chapter "El arquitecto como fascista", in *La an-estética de la arquitectura*, Neil Leach (2001); cover photograph from *Jacobin* (nº34, Summer 2019) entitled "War Is a Racket".
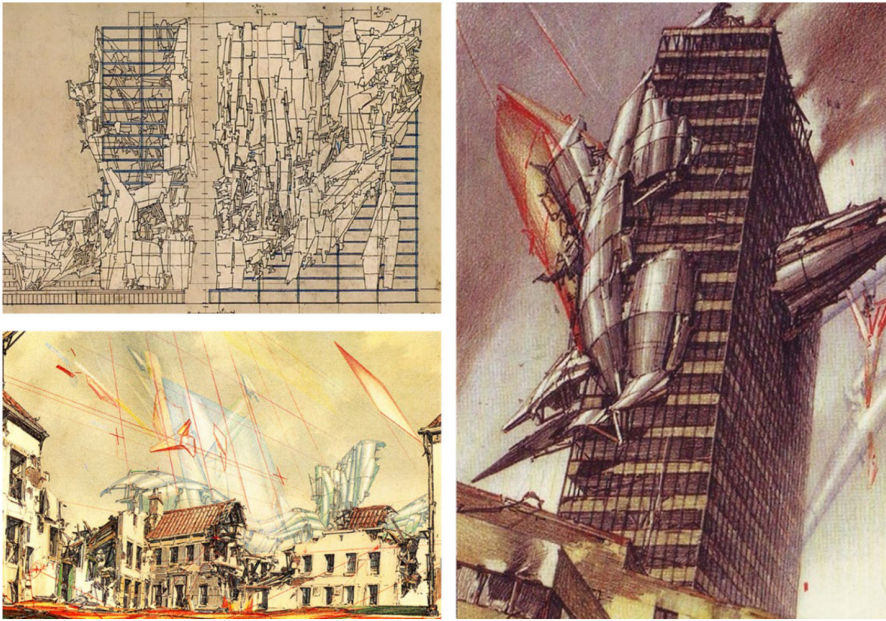
and war are not incompatible. Architecture is war. War is architecture. I am at war with my time, with history, with all authority that resides in fixed and frightened forms."

Neil Leach (1991) didn't give Woods' proposal enough scope cataloguing it in *The Anaesthetics of Architecture* as a mere exercise in the aestheticization of violence and including it in a chapter of his work that he subtitled **[Fig.4]** "the architect as fascist". This is, I wonder, a dry conclusion that is usually credited to typologies afflicted with *The Fountainhead*'s "indomitable will" (Vidor, 1949). In other words, the by-products of incensed visionaries capable of distinguishing clarity in dark times, which I don't think is the case... In view of the destruction and violence apparent in (his) *forensic interpretation*[4] of Sarajevo, Lebbeus Woods explains the competition proposal by placing it in the fight against the authority made explicit through materialized forms. **[Fig. 5]** In other words, understanding the conception and production of the architectural device as an activity that mediates the transformation of the habitable material support. And recognizing how it thrives within the inescapable framework of the relations of production in the neoliberal capitalist system.

Hostage to the material purpose of building, instrumental for the confiscation and accumulation of private property, deconstructing or reconstructing, space production becomes an indispensable resource in perpetuating asymmetrical power relations – of a kind that an elementary political awareness distinguishes as socially and environmentally ruinous.

Hence, a hypothesis arises from this alignment of propositions: the more conceptual autonomy is claimed for the architectural project, the more the circumscription of its practice in its own disciplinary fiefdom is defended – under

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4    The term forensic analysis refers to the work of Eyal Weizman's, founder of the *Forensic Architecture Agency*, which uses material transformations in architecture as material evidence for further judicial investigation and to bring actions in favor of human rights.

Fig.5
Compilation of drawings from Lebbeus Woods (retrieved online from his competition entry for the reconstruction of Sarajevo, 1993–1996).

a technical and methodological determinant – the more it becomes vulnerable to plutocratic confiscation of financial, material, and technological resources in each era. It is in these terms that we can deduce, by extension, that architecture is an extension of the domain of struggle.

Discarding the supposed ideological neutrality in favor of a concrete mediation, the narrative now points towards extreme forms of material struggle: not having followed the adventures of Napoleon's Russian campaign to the east through Tolstoy's writing, I learned early on as a child - through avid reading of Pierre Dupuis (1977) collection of comics focusing on the key events of the Second World War **[Fig.6]** - that "General Winter" does not condescend to reckless campaigns. Hitler's expansionist aspirations, in the footsteps of Napoleon, would also end up collapsing in the face of the impossible stretching of the supply lines. The steppe was infinite, and the advance would end up yielding to the severity of the winter: fuel and lubrication froze in the panzer pipes, delaying the triumphant mechanical progress of the Blitzkrieg until its definitive liquidation in the spring thaw mud.

A "technological refinement" of the First one, the Second World War would be the logical but expressive corollary for the use of the most advanced instruments in the service of the worst of purposes, the organization of technical thought as a killing industry: Rotterdam, London, Dresden, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki, appear at the head of a long list.

In *Empire of the Sun* (Spielberg, 1987), Jim Graham [Ballard], son of a wealthy English businessman based in Shanghai, is lost from his family in the turmoil generated by the exodus that precedes the Japanese invasion of China in 1937,

Fig.6
*As Grandes Batalhas* (Pierre Dupuis, drawings and text, 1977-1979): books from Portuguese ed. Livraria Bertrand. Original title: *La Seconde Guerre Mondiale* (France) Éditions Hachette, Abril de 1974.

in the prolegomena to what would become the Second World War [Fig.7]. Captive in a Japanese concentration camp where he survives until the end of the war, weakened by scarcity and successive ill-treatment, we see him euphorically celebrating the attack by American fighter-bombers on the concentration camp: "P-51! Cadillac of the sky!"– shouts Jim euphorically, indifferent to the bombs and destruction going off all around him.

Like Ballard in his childhood, but thirty years of peace later, I developed an unbridled curiosity for the aircraft that competed for dominance in the skies in the 1940s, in successive combat scenarios: the evolutions and declinations of the Hurricane, Spitfire, Messerschmitt, Focke-Wulf, Typhoon, Corsair, Mitsubishi (Zero), Sturmovic, and the P-51 Mustang, "celebrated as the Cadillac of the skies", the fastest single-engine propeller-driven fighter of the war.  But unlike Jim, without experiencing the traumas of loss or survival in captivity implied by the war.

Extraordinary is later discovering the protagonist of Spielberg's film inspired by the true story of a future science fiction writer, none other than James Graham Ballard, author of novels such as *Crash*, *The Atrocity Exhibition*, *Concrete Island*, or *High-Rise*, among many others.  The repeated ability to (de)construct a mythology of the future through literary and fictional means would lead to the adjective *Ballardian* becoming synonymous with a dystopian and apocalyptic modernity, where modern architecture and urbanism would find their share of the limelight—once again, distinguishable as an (extension of the) extension of the domain of struggle. As in some film examples from the 1960s, he uses the modern urban landscape as a spatial support to develop dark dramaturgies in the science fiction genre: such as Godard's (1965) *Alphaville* or Truffaut's (1968) *Fahrenheit 451*. J.G. Ballard also pays special attention to the materialization of architecture and urbanism as a disciplining device that conditions human experience [Fig.8].

The 1975 novel *High-Rise* (Ballard, 2012) stands out as a satirical missive of appreciation aimed to modern planners and architects, and their complicity in paving a social freeway towards Neoliberalism (Spencer, 2016). But it seems

Fig.7
*Movie poster of Empire of the Sun* (Steven Spielberg, 1987); collection of his own WWII aircraft models, photographed by the author.
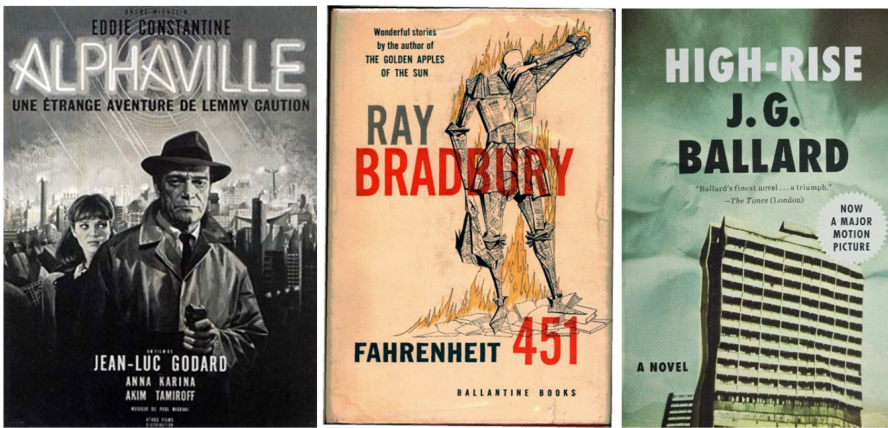
foremost to be addressed to Mr. Le Corbusier and his revered seminal ingenuity designing the *Unité d'Habitation* (Curtis, 1996), as one of the chapters is even entitled "Danger in the Streets of the Sky". The narrative explores a progressive aggravation of potential human conflict in the skyscraper, as residents realize that the modern device has little socially emancipatory value. Contrary to the political premise of the Modern Movement in architecture (Montaner, 2011), "the old social subdivisions, based on power, capital and self-interest, had reasserted themselves here as anywhere else." [5]

> All the evidence accumulated over several decades cast a critical light on the high-rise as a viable social structure, but cost-efectiveness in the area of public housing and high profitability in the private sector kept pushing these vertical townships into the sky against the real needs of their occupants.[6]

Henri Lefebvre (1991) or David Harvey (2010), as social scientists, couldn't have written it more clearly.

But let's relapse to WWII as a laboratory for the gestation and perfecting of *Technology and Science as 'Ideology'*, borrowing from Habermas's essay (1968): the competition between belligerents in the development of technical devices, in order to gain an advantage in the theater of operations, became self-sufficient in those years, overriding any ethical or philosophical consideration in terms of

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5    James Graham Ballard, *High-Rise* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2012), 66.

6    Ballard, *High-Rise*, 65, 66.

Fig.8
Movie poster of *Alphaville* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1965); 1st edition book cover of *Fahrenheit 451* (Ray Bradbury, 1953); book cover of *High-Rise* (J.G.Ballard, 1975, depicted edition: 2012)

Fig.9
Portuguese edition (DVD) of *Hiroshima, Mon Amour* (Alain Resnais, 1959) came with the extra disc of the documentary film *Nuit et Bruillard* (1955).

their serviceability. The dropping of the hydrogen and plutonium bombs on two inhabited cities epitomizes this assumption: the disregard of potential military objectives in favor of a terrorist demonstration of power against imagined opponents within the framework of international geopolitics. Thus, scientific and technological knowledge at the service of destruction is demonstrated in Hiroshima and reiterated in Nagasaki with radical indifference to the lives of civilians, present and future: The typology of atomic destruction includes, as a deferred effect over time, the release of radiation to corrode the organic matter that has been exposed to it.

To top off a previous documentary curiosity about the nuclear episode, a subsequent cinematic attraction would lead me to *Hiroshima, Mon Amour*, by Alain Resnais (1959), based on the eponymous novel by Margueritte Duras, to meet two other characters whose redemption from the war trauma is perceived to be compromised in the post-apocalyptic scenario: the material annihilation of architecture does nothing but reinforce the inevitability of their errancy. Coincidentally, during a time when access to cult films relied on their physical media (a so-called DVD), I discovered an extra in the edition of *Nuit et Brouillard*, a 1955 documentary by the same filmmaker Resnais, shot ten years after the end of World War II from the then-abandoned infrastructure of the Auschwitz extermination camp [Fig. 9].
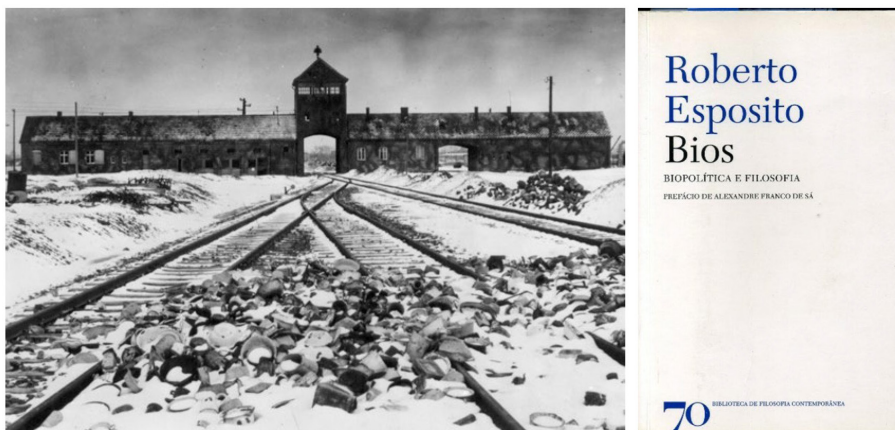


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Auschwitz, as we know, is the symbolic reminder of an industry of death that branches out into other subsidiaries, such as Dachau, Treblinka, Buchenwald, Bergen Belsen, etc., and as such, could not fail to be included in the list of technological atrocities perfected during WWII. Nevertheless, this ultimate agency deserves its own designation, distinguishable from mere technocracy since the organization of its precepts has the laconic aim of genocide. Indeed, the Holocaust represents a manifestation of Thanatopolitics, a political ideology that posits the defense and development of life solely through the progressive expansion of the circle of death [Fig. 10].

According to Esposito (2010), Michel Foucault was the first to offer a biopolitical interpretation of Nazism as a decline in governmentality. He chose the Holocaust project as the starting point, assuming that politics establishes

Fig.10

Railway entrance to Auschwitz concentration and extermination camp, run by Nazi Germany in Poland from 1940 to 1945. Foto (1945): Wikimedia Commons (German Federal Archive); Book cover of Portuguese edition of *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy* (Roberto Esposito, 2004).
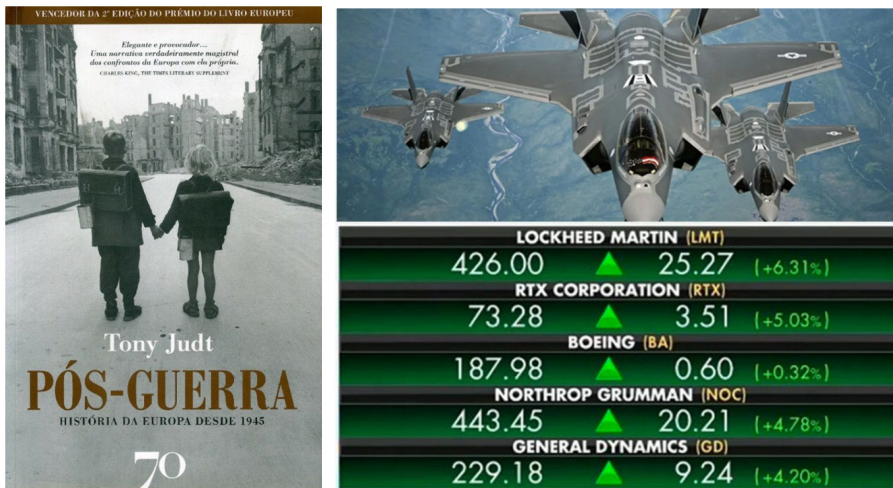
the division within the biological continuum between those who must survive and those who, on the other hand, face death (Foucault, 2010). In *Nuit et Bruillard*, panoramas of the abandoned field, already invaded by the surrounding vegetation, can be distinguished almost poetically as ruins. Once devoid and alienated from its former use value, the contrast with the awareness of its previous occupation is striking. And yet, a sequence unraveling the architecture supporting the genocide includes images of its projects: the devices built in the camp—dorms, watchtowers, crematoria—are depicted without any emotion (by Michel Bouquet):

> A concentration camp is built like a stadium, or a large hotel (…) There is no defined style, it's left to imagination: Alpine style, workshop style, Japanese style, no style. The architects calmly designed these portals to be crossed only once (…) Leaving the production aspects to his technicians, Himmler concentrated on annihilation. Plans were studied, models made, and the prisoners themselves took part in the work. From the outside, a crematorium might look like a postcard. Later, today, tourists take pictures.[7]

An exemplary manifestation of architecture as (extension of the) extension of the domain of struggle, the "Lager" (Field) reifies the association of a Technocracy with a Thanatopolitics, as a compound whose effect would come to be firmly repudiated in Europe and the so-called "West": "Never Again!" becoming a catch phrase to distinguish the unspeakable. However, a specific process of expiation - materialized in the staging of guilt and punishment promoted by the "allies" at Nuremberg, which can be reviewed, among others, in *The Memory of Justice* (Marcel Ophuls, 1976) - would not inhibit many Nazi leaders and facilitators

Fig.11
Portuguese cover of *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (Tony Judt, 2006); Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II fighter-jets, Cadillac of the skyes renewed; percentage increase in shares of companies in the American military industrial complex, immediately after the start of the so-called (by the Western media) "Israel-Hamas War". A coefficient that hasn't stopped rising since the beginning of the "unprovoked" (still, according to Western media) Russian Special Military Operation in Ukraine.

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7    Michel Bouquet narration from *Nuit et Brouillard*: "Un camp de concentration est construit comme un stade, ou un grand hôtel (…) Il n'y a pas de style défini, tout est laissé à l'imagination: Style alpin, style atelier, style japonais, pas de style. Les architectes ont calmement conçu ces portails pour qu'ils ne soient franchis qu'une seule fois (…) Laissant les aspects de production à ses techniciens, Himmler se concentre sur l'anéantissement. Des plans sont étudiés, des maquettes réalisées, les prisonniers eux-mêmes participent aux travaux. De l'extérieur, un crématorium peut ressembler à une carte postale. Plus tard, aujourd'hui, les touristes prennent des photos." Our translation.

from later integrating post-war rebuilt institutions of governance, on a national, but also on an international scale (Judt, 2007).

Fast forward to architecture teaching, present day: seeking guidance for an academic project, a student sensitized by recent humanitarian catastrophes – effect of wars that proliferate, "oddly enough", eighty years after the end of the Second World War – set out to create a "war-proof" housing shelter, a building that could resist destructive forces summoned from the opposite direction.

It may have been nihilistic decline, but I refused to support the attempt; and then explained the refusal based on two instrumental invariants to be considered in architectural practice, according to a question of purpose and a problem of scale.

If one can read this essay as a libel against technocratic proficiency, listing cases in which instrumental production disconnected from exegesis becomes an attack on human life (or any dignified condition of survival), how could its author consider a purpose that opposes it—the imagination of a defensive device—ethically reprehensible? Well, (apart from the fact that it's not really a novelty, recalling the Maginot Line, the Fortress of the Atlantic, the submersible base at La Rochelle, just to keep framing it in WWII), is the idea of producing a bomb-proof architecture any different from perfecting the armor of an assault car? That is, a "war-proof architecture" would be added to the arsenal of devices that promote war itself, as an additional typology of history of technical provisions that underline and feed on its inevitability.

A consideration about Scale should be also added to the subject of Purpose, given the asymmetry of power between the parties convened for such academic simulacrum: an idle Google search distinguishes an industry dedicated to "Defense" with sales of arms and military services of the 100 largest companies in the sector in the order of 592 billion dollars in 2021. More billion, less billion [Fig.11]. The unit cost of a cruise missile is around 2 million dollars and the successors to Jim Ballard's "Cadillac of the Skies" (F-35) can now cost up to 115 million dollars a unit, plus the petty change needed to keep them flying.

The military program based on the aircraft's development, construction and maintenance will have cost around 400 billion dollars. By comparison, one and a half billion dollars would have been "enough" to design the most expensive skyscraper built to date - the Burj-Khalifa in Dubai - in which case the imagination of skilled architects, engineers and a myriad of other technicians would not have looked at the cost to divert such an achievement from a Ballardian fate. In other words, a billion and a half dollars later, at an architectural scale, one can only hope for the best. But at "military industrial complex scale", however, one and a half billion presents itself as a ridiculous commitment (266 times less) compared to a 400 billion project in favor of deconstruction..., or as it is diplomatic to present the nature of these expenses, in favor of defense: if *war is a racket* (2019), it's a very good one.

Provisional corollary: the student in question disregarded an "asymmetry of

power as a possibility", as fictionally proposed by the writer Gonçalo M. Tavares (2010), in a book that depicts a researcher called Theodor Busbeck, publishing the investigation that has occupied him for many decades:

> (...) the first four volumes were made up of an impressive accumulation of figures and factual information about the victims of massacres throughout history (the definition of which appeared in the very first volume (...) 'I was not interested in the confrontation of two forces, however unequal they were, I was only interested in Strength when confronted with weakness; Busbeck defined Strength as 'matter with energy to endanger other matter' and weakness as 'matter with empty energy', in other words: 'without the possibility of endangering nearby matter'.

> (...) these two concepts were relative to neighboring matter: a strong matter was strong in relation to the matter located immediately next to it. A weak people, i.e. 'unable to endanger a particular 'invading army' should not be considered (...) 'a kind people' because the facts were not a question of goodness on one side - the victims - and evil on the other: the executioners or those who carried out the terror. It was simply a question of possibility and not of will or desire. A people that was weak in relation to another could quickly - in other words, historically speaking, in less than a century - become a strong people, either because it had become stronger in the meantime or simply because it had become closer to an even weaker people.[8]

The idea of a once weak people that becomes strong in less than a century; indifferent to its own history; which sees its advantageous position in the field of struggle as a sufficient condition to legitimize the use of violence against a weaker adversary; all set in a novel entitled (wait for it) ... *Jerusalém* [Fig.12]. A cumulative of implausible scenarios, I know, would never be tolerated in the light of righteously self-proclaimed European values.

Certainly, solid "war-proof" constructions aimed at redemption of the Past itself, the same kind of architecture by which the student seeks to legitimize his project, presenting itself to the rest of the world as a haven for conscience, are they really barbarism-proof? Cemented by endless and illustrious debates in cafés and literary gatherings, the secular and modern Europe of the sciences

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8    Gonçalo M. Tavares, *Jerusalém* (Alfragide: Editorial Caminho, 2010), 260. (...) os quatro primeiros volumes eram constituídos por uma impressionante acumulação de números e de informações factuais sobre as vítimas dos massacres ao longo da história (cuja definição surgia logo no primeiro volume (...) 'não me interessou o confronto de duas forças, por mais desiguais que fossem, interessou-me apenas a Força quando se confronta com a fraqueza; definindo Busbeck a Força como 'matéria com energia para pôr em perigo uma outra matéria' e a fraqueza como 'matéria com energia vazia', ou seja: 'sem possibilidade de colocar em perigo uma matéria próxima'.
(...) estes dois conceitos eram relativos à matéria vizinha: uma matéria forte era forte em relação à matéria situada imediatamente ao lado. Um povo fraco, isto é, 'sem possibilidades de colocar em situação de perigo um determinado 'exército invasor' não deveria ser considerado (...) 'um povo bondoso' pois os factos não se deviam a uma questão de bondade de um lado – as vítimas –e de maldade do outro: os carrascos ou os que executavam o terror. Tratava-se simplesmente de uma questão de possibilidade e não de vontade ou desejo. Um povo fraco relativamente a outro, poderia rapidamente – isto é, a nível histórico, em menos de um século – passar a: povo forte, por entretanto se ter fortalecido ou, simplesmente, por se ter aproximado de um povo ainda mais fraco. Our translation.
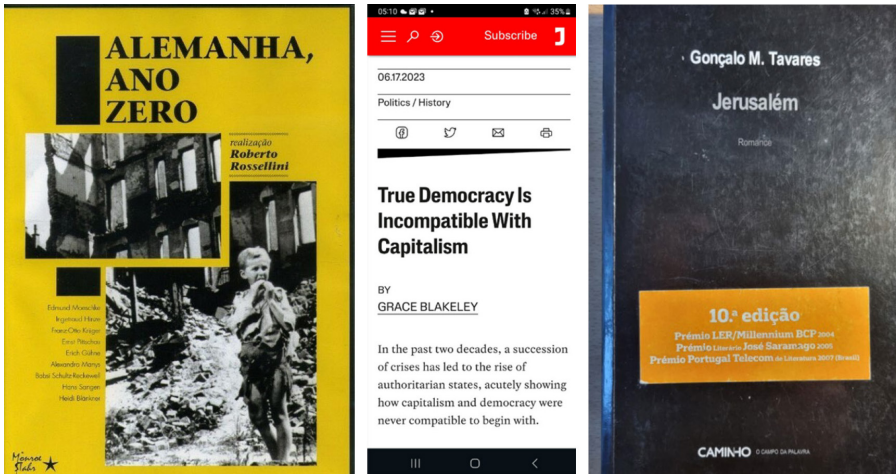
and arts, built on the esteemed heritage of classical culture (Steiner, 2005), some will agree that there is some subliminal purpose remaining in the monumental edifice of the "Western Civilization".

At its core, a sense of justice will always prevail, tempered by liberty, equality, and fraternity. After all, we turn on the televisions, and the world seems rational, with eyes and ears on behalf of selected incumbents, managers of human misery, who appeal for a balanced opinion on the latest geopolitical issues. If anything, akin to Rome's decline, we perceive the building as vulnerable to periodic attacks and demonization by predatory barbarism at its gates. For those of you gullible enough, let's leave it at that.

Nevertheless, on behalf of a lingering nihilist, please excuse me as I share one final allegory by filmmaker (and screenwriter, and artist, and...) Peter Greenaway (1989) *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife, & Her Lover*. Initially perceived by film critics as a libel against the initial period of implementation of neoliberal policies (under Reagan, overseas, and Thatcher, in "old" Europe), the dramaturgy contains successive subtleties, which translates into alternative possibilities of interpretation: the barbarians at the gate - the Thief (Mr. Spica, gangster, drug dealer, it doesn't really matter) - have now accumulated enough capital to buy luxury restaurants and spend time with exquisite artists (French Chef Richard Boarst, here present), thus gaining access to the refined strongholds of high culture. In other words, literally and figuratively, they can now "buy a place at the table" [Fig.13].

This is the general plot. At first glance, it seems like a typical example of how barbarism uses its weapons—merged from capital—to upset the peace of ancient privilege (Perelman, 2000), being rude, annoying, and gross. There is nothing new to see here, hardly distinguishable among the protagonists of *The Night Watch* in the painting by Rembrandt van Rijn (1642), from the baddies dressed to have a lustful dinner at the high-end restaurant [Fig.14].

The argument gets complicated when the thief's wife claims a carnal interaction with an assiduous diner as dissert, one whose solitary tasting of food was invariably accompanied by the abstracted reading of a book. In view of this

Fig.12

Cover of Portuguese disc edition of Germania Anno Zero (Roberto Rossellini, 1948); "True Democracy Is Incompatible With Capitalism", in *Jacobin online* (Grace Blakeley, 17.06.2023). Retrieved January 19, 2024, from https://jacobin.com/2023/06/democracy-retreat-capitalism-authoritarianism-crisis; Romance cover Jerusalém (Gonçalo M.Tavares, 2005).

particularity, one might even consider seeing the plot as a complex polyamorous relationship between culture and money, supported on the "Western canon" of writers referred to by Harold Bloom (Alves, 2013). After some close calls to spice up the reckless relationship, the lovers are eventually discovered by the spiteful husband.

Determined to serve his revenge cold, Mr. Spica plans the strategic moment to set out on a vengeful night tour to his unwitting rival's whereabouts, accompanied by his praetorian guard: in the house-library, he finds books piled up on the shelves that have provided a haven of passion for his Wife, among others that are scattered unruly on the floor, convenient for the thoughtless casualness of love. And since revenge, as well as benefiting from the low temperature, also demands a dose of poetic justice, the method chosen by the murderer would involve the inflicted ingestion of the pages torn from the repository of the victim's own library. An ending that is contextual but not bad. "But could it be also a Ballardian one?" I was afraid you wouldn't ask!

**Epilogue**

Spica's wife mourns her lover's tragic end, and, disgruntled, decides to undertake symmetrical revenge, with the help of the talented Chef Boarst. Naturally, once she's committed to tasting it, her *vendetta* variant will be served hot. Thus, after managing to overcome the gastronomic artist's resistance and repudiation, the corpse of the unfortunate lover-cultivated-reader begins by being cooked for gustatory purposes. Then, luring the husband or thief on the pretext of a meal, where she makes him believe that he will win back his favors—which is why he presents himself unaccompanied by the usual court of collaborators—she forces him, at gunpoint, to chew up the lover. More than a deferred threesome, it's a gasp of horror and cannibalism. Elias Canetti (2014)

Fig.13

*The Banquet of the Officers of the St George Civil Guard*, painting by Frans Hals (1616); restaurant scene from The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover, Peter Greenaway (1989).

Fig.14

*The Night Watch*, painting by Rembrandt van Rijn (1642); kitchen scene from *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover,* Peter Greenaway (1989).

explains in *Mass and Power* how tribal societies ate their enemies for a variety of reasons: they were nutritious, easy to taste, but most importantly, they served a magical and ritualistic purpose, summoning the stamina of the subjected enemy through the consumption of his flesh.

The terrifying image that closes our narrative ellipsis isn't far from other exercises in autophagy that we often engage in, devouring ourselves by eating the Other: the act of cannibalism representing the very capacity to devour what constitutes us, being sufficient or convenient the stimulus to do so.

Despite the books we can write and read, the films and documentaries we can shoot and watch, and the music we can compose and listen to, the primal nature of violence continues to lurk, unrepentant. Architecture, materially produced to organize and symbolize a humanitarian matrix, also falls short of this goal under capitalism – borrowing from Tafuri (1985). And that being the case, how can a translation of Europe through an Idea – updating Steiner's (2005) attempt, based on here rehearsed interpretation of some of its political, economic, and social determinants – be any different than a technique for preserving corpses, in order to slow down a biological process of decomposition? Europe as *Thanatopraxia* revamped as a final analogy – then. Whose institutions of power and control under capitalism periodically reaffirm an undemocratic pact (Blakeley, 2023) with Thanatos, the demon who personified death in Greek mythology? Hard to precise, at least as hard to deny that the production of architecture serves them as an invariable extension and support.

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**Alejandro Bocanegra**

# Agroindustry as an Object and Representation of Power in the 20th Century

*Agroindustry, Silos, Modern Architecture, Power, Resignification of Spaces*

## /Abstract

Agriculture, historically intertwined with symbolic significance through its connection to a higher dimension, has given rise to concepts such as subjugation and ownership or belonging to a place. The evolution of knowledge, manifested through technical mastery, has led to typological hybridizations in structures associated with agriculture. The intricate relationship between agriculture, architecture, and power becomes more pronounced with the industrial development of the 19th century, marked by field mechanization and industrialization.

In this context, agricultural architectures played a pivotal role as instruments of political and economic control in the 20th century. Their significance goes beyond the transformative power of production, extending to the portrayal of modernization and efficiency, strategically employed as political publicity.

Ultimately, the text reflects on the current obsolescence state and abandonment plaguing these buildings. This condition results not only from the challenges of maintenance but also from the negative connotations associated with them. These negative perceptions, linked to totalitarian regimes, cast these structures as problematic vestiges of the past, seen through the lens of oppression and power abuse.

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Architect graduated from the Valladolid University, with professional accreditation from the Colegio Arquitectos Extremadura (COADE) and the Ordem dos Arquitetos Portugueses (OASRS). Combines professional and research experience in Architecture, Design, Heritage, Urbanism, and Landscape. As an independent architect since 2018 (estudiobocanegra.com), notable projects include the "Strategic Plan and Intervention in Historical, Landscape, and Cultural Heritage" (PEI PHPC). This project (0394-LA2020) focused on the Cultural Routes and Development of the Alqueva Lake, financed by the INTERREG Spain-Portugal Program 2014-2020 of the European Union. Collaborated with various architectural studios on both sides of the border.

Founding member of several practical and research working groups and cultural initiatives for rural development and cross-border cooperation. Notably involved in the Silos Project on Industrial Heritage (proyectosilos.com).

His work has been presented at exhibitions and conferences, and disseminated through scientific and/or journalistic publications (I Jornadas de Patrimonio Industrial Agrario. Silos a debate, 2014, ADERCO, Leader Approach Funds).

Engaged in educational and teaching activities, participating in courses, conferences, and scientific research at different universities. Also actively involved in organizing activities directly related to the proposed research project's theme.

## The Power of the Earth

Since time immemorial, the quest for meaning in natural processes has been a recurring principle in the human mind. Agriculture has been historically regarded as a transcendental event that, through a symbolic connection to something higher, has sought to address fundamental questions about the existence of beings and their relationship with the surrounding environment.

Natural and climatic process, such as plant germination or crop cycles, were perceived as events more related to magical forces than to explainable phenomena. Humanity delegated the explanation of its individual and collective existence to the belief in a series of abstract and absolute precepts, thus laying the religious culture foundations.

The notion of a divinity linked to nature, whether dualistic or monistic[1], and its association with the earth, is seen as the basis on which food is obtained and on which the species relies, highlighting the supreme power of agriculture as a means of growth and prosperity. A simple observation of our surroundings suffices to understand that food is imperative for the exercise of our most basic functions, occupying the top position in the hierarchy of human needs[2]. **[Fig.01]**

Simultaneously, the obtaining food process serve a symbolic function, going beyond the mere satisfaction of a basic need and transforming into an instrument of social communication. These processes create bonds and connections that shape what we call the "culture of place."

From an anthropological perspective, agricultural activity, through the marks and furrows resulting from cultivation, contributes to defining the landscape. These furrows metaphorically delimit broader concepts such as identity and belonging to a space or territory.

History shows us how agriculture has been used both as a means and an end to exert power, whether at an individual or collective level. The provision of food through land cultivation ensures one's own existence, and this has been (and is) used as a tool of subjugation and the exercise of ownership—two concepts of broad significance that have been the cause of major wars and conflicts throughout human history.

## The Exercise of Power through Agricultural Symbols

The development and evolution of agriculture, facilitated by new tools, techniques, and materials, imply typological changes in the architectures associated with it, adapting the environment to meet social needs and demands.

Examining the writings of the Roman tradition, particularly the so-called Latin

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1    The concept of "monism" applied to nature refers to the philosophical belief that reality is one, and that there is no fundamental division between the material and the spiritual in the universe. Often, this belief implies the idea that everything in nature and the cosmos is part of a single substance or principle. This perspective is explored in works such as "Philosophy of Nature" by Paul Weiss, and "The Philosophy of Nature" by Jonathan Dancy and David E. Cooper.

2    The hierarchy of human needs, as proposed by A. H. Maslow in 1943 in his work "A Theory of Human Motivation," published in *Psychological Review* , no. 50 (1943): 370-396, outlines a theory of human motivation.

agronomists, we find evidence of the close relationship between agriculture, architecture, and the exercise of power. These texts provided rules and norms for land management and food production, directly influencing the organization and defense of territory.

Works such as Vitruvius'[3] "*De Architectura*," Marcus Porcius Cato's "De Agri Cultura" or "On Agriculture," Gaius Plinius Secundus's "*Naturalis Historia*," Columella's "*De re rustica*" or "*On Agriculture," and Palladius*' "*Opus agriculturae*" represent some of the most important studies of this era. These publications demonstrate the interest in agricultural practices, techniques, and associated buildings.

These comprehensive works convey extensive knowledge in engineering, hydraulics, architecture, veterinary science, and pave the way for encyclopedic knowledge dissemination. They remained practically valid until the mid-17th century when studies transitioned to those based on the Scientific Method and modern Empiricism.

The Renaissance reexamination of these authors brought a critical perspective on tradition and agricultural techniques. They became a source of inspiration and knowledge for territorial organization and architectural practice. Notable examples include Leon Battista Alberti's "*De re aedificatoria*," published around 1450, considered the most significant architectural treatise of humanistic culture. Also, the contributions of Leonardo Da Vinci spanned across various fields of knowledge.

Focusing on architecture once again, Andrea Palladio's work applied an anthropocentric vision to territorial control and landscape. This perspective is also reflected in the writings of Alvisse Cornaro. In both cases, the idea of "rusticitas"[4] (ruggedness and rural life) is separated from "santa agricultura" (sacred agriculture). The former refers to the roughness and rural nature of life and people in the countryside, while the latter signifies the necessary and agriculture venerable nature. This dualism inherently involves class separation and the ideological framing of agriculture.

The Royal Salines of Ledoux (1774-1779) represent a power structure established through state monopoly under the reign of King Louis XV, exclusively created for a productive process—an early industry: the transition from agriculture



1

3    Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, "The Ten Books on Architecture" with a prologue by D. Rodriguez, "Vitruvius and the Skin of Classicism" (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2009), 11-51.

4    Rusticitas: rurality, rusticity (country life and people). Although the term can mean something like a lack of sophistication, by adding the adjective "santa" (holy), the intention is to turn it into the opposite, thanks to the alienation of the concept from the passive subject, the peasantry.
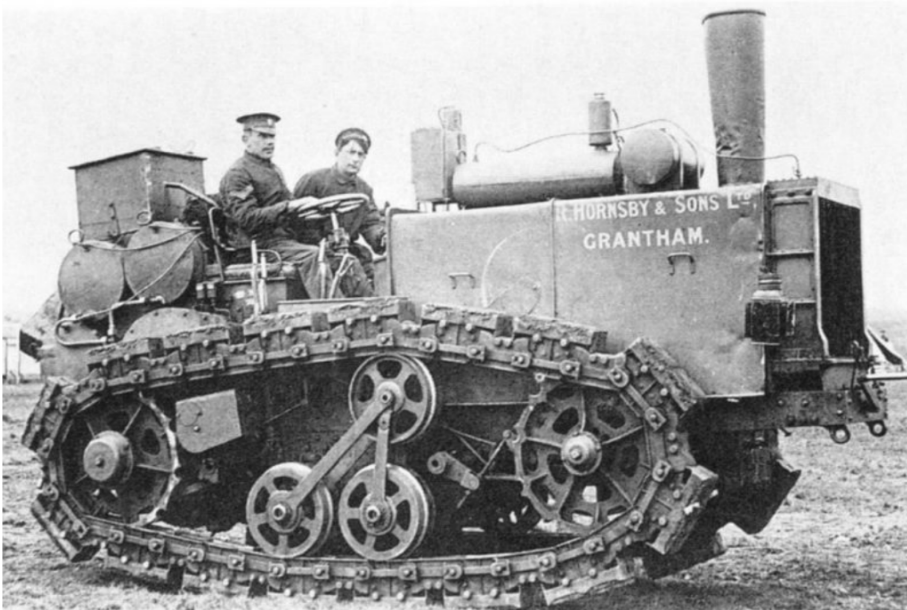
Fig. 1

The Power of Knowledge and Representation. The Baker's Tomb, also known as the Tomb of Eurysaces, is the burial site of a Roman citizen from the imperial period named Marcus Virgilius Eurysaces. He was a freedman who likely amassed wealth by supplying bread for the public ration around the mid-1st century BCE. The structure stands behind the Porta Maggiore in Rome.

to industry. This transformation brought forth new languages, methods of labor organization, and, most significantly, stringent social control. The system eventually led to the collapse of the Old Regime due to increased inequalities, population growth, and the agricultural system's incapacity to sustain it.

Throughout history, agricultural peasants have played a pivotal role as a representation of popular power. This dynamic became particularly apparent during the French Revolution through the transfer of territorial power, marking the beginning of the capitalist system in Europe. Property became a vital resource for wealth accumulation and the rise of the bourgeoisie.

This shift is crucial for understanding the evolution of power structures, persisting through the capitalist system to the present day. Although forms have changed, the underlying essence remains, perpetuating inequalities between those who cultivate and those who consume agricultural products.

Intensive agricultural use has led to nutrient depletion in the soil, causing cyclic soil collapse in Europe. In the 19th century, industrial powers, primarily England, sought ways to compensate by importing fertilizers from various parts of the world. This included the semi-slave labor of Chinese workers for guano extraction (accumulations of seabird excrement). Later, the intensive use of nitrates led to the "Saltpeter War" between Chile, supported by England, and the alliance of Bolivia and Peru between 1879 and 1884.

The development of the chemical industry for fertilizers generated flammable and contaminating products, leaving an unforeseen environmental footprint. With the use of chemicals, wars no longer impact only on a human scale but affect humanity as a whole.

In the 20th century, advancements in field mechanization through mechanical plowing and tractor use set the precedent for the construction of tanks and heavy machinery first employed in World War I. **[Fig.02]**

History illustrates the systematic use of symbols associated with the field, such as the sickle and hammer, sheaves of wheat, the yoke, etc., as ideological sup-

Fig. 2
The Power of Technique.
Hornsby Chain Tracked Tractor
(1907). Source: David Fletcher,
"The British Tanks 1915-19,"
Ramsbury 2001.

port and objects of power legitimation. Agriculture represents the power of the land, folk wisdom, and survival. Hence, the appropriation of these collective symbols aims to convey ideology through the idea of belonging: power legitimizing.

## Agroindustry as an Object of Power

The "power representation" concept refers to how power manifests in a specific context. It plays a significant role in the construction and maintenance of power structures in society and how these structures are perceived and legitimized. This representation can be explicit or implicit but often involves the use of symbols, images, rituals, or discourses that reflect and consolidate authority, hierarchy, systems, etc., and their influence on others.

In 1909, the Futurist Manifesto published in Le Fígaro by Marinetti supported the foundations of identity and nationalist thinking that was brewing in Europe, through the idea of progress, with clear references to movement, speed, and industrial machines.

It is interesting to note how the foundations of power in architecture have hardly differed since their inception. There is a common denominator in all of them regardless of their use: monumentalism fostered by the size of buildings, symmetry, order, and, above all, height.

The proposals of Antonio Sant' Elia (1888 – 1916), with clear references to Viennese Art Nouveau, influenced by Otto Wagner (1841-1918) and Joseph Maria Olbrich (1867-1908), or the proposal for the industrial city by Tony Garnier (1869-1948), highlight the interest in industry and mechanistic aesthetics in opposition to traditional artistic and cultural values.

Agroindustry as an "object of power" identifies in it the value of being used and controlled to exert influence, authority, or control over others. The intervention in agroindustry implies total control over the population's food supply. Similarly, the transportation control and logistics infrastructure associated with agroindustry, such as roads, railways, ports, and distributions centers, signifies national power to weave territorial networks, controlling production, distribution, and prices, as seen in the Spanish National Network of Silos and Granaries case.

The intervention in agriculture and its industrial transformation has a direct impact on the rural population. On the one hand, the community's reorganization and the agriculture collectivization, accompanied by controlled housing and infrastructure plans in dictatorship service, once the war is over. On the other hand, the rural migration to urban areas, again fostering inequalities and the loss of rights for farmers turned into a labor force.

Absolute control of agroindustry played a crucial role in the consolidation of power in totalitarian regimes. This strategy promoted a modern and society transformative vision by introducing innovative production measures such as mechanization, standardization, and mass production. An approach based on

efficiency, self-sufficiency, and productivity showed short-term successful results due to the complete state intervention in the economy and the market.

This interventionism became an effective long-term propaganda tool, exerting significant influence on public opinion and contributing to the perception of continued success, in line with the official ideology of the regime in power. In hindsight, the idealized image of success is what has fostered traditional power structures based on inequality, social control, and cultural population oppression.

A clear propagandistic manipulation example through agro-industrial symbols as objects of power is the strategy employed by the Nazis in World War II. In 1942, they managed to capture and bomb the grain silo in the southern part of the city of Stalingrad. This action was presented in a based manner, emphasizing the supposed German victory through the publication of photographs and highlighting the importance of control over agricultural resources and supplies. The Nazis even designed a military insignia commemorating the battle. However, despite all the symbolism and publicity, the success was partial, and the Nazis' defeat against Soviet resistance in Stalingrad marked their decline beginning. [Fig. 03]

## Perverse Functionalism

The history of art reflects a constant quest for beauty in nature; however, with functionalism, this approach is achieved through the reduction and simplification of form until reaching abstraction. This idea was reflected by the German art historian and theorist Wilhelm Worringer (1881-1965), a disciple of Alois Riegl (1858-1905). In his publication "Abstraction and Nature" (1908), he compared the representational power of grain silos with the symbolism of the pyra-

Fig. 3
The Power of Communication. A Panzer commander scans the horizon with the Stalingrad grain elevator in the background. 1942. Source: http://alcantara.forogratis. es/la-mayor-batalla-de-la-segunda-guerra-mundial-stalingrado-t1214.html

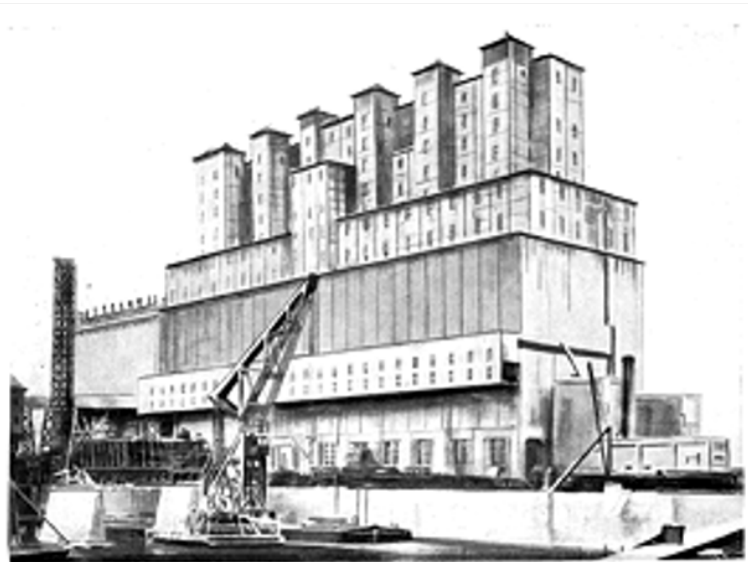mids of Egypt, due to their potency, scale, and robust form.

The Arts and Crafts movement in England, promoting craftsmanship and quality production since 1888 through various exhibitions, notably influenced the aesthetics and industrial production of the German Werkbund[5] (established in 1907). Both movements shared the pursuit of mass production and the democratization of art, laying the groundwork for the principles of the Bauhaus and the Modern Movement.

Several publications in the history of modern architecture emphasize the importance of agroindustrial elements. Walter Gropius, in the 1913 yearbook of the German Werkbund titled "Art in Industry and Commerce" ("Die Kunst in Industrie und Handel"), published an article titled "The Development of Modern Industrial Architecture" ("Die Entwicklung Moderner Industriebaukunst"). The seven pages of photographs of silos and grain factories published alongside the text brought about a radical change in European architecture. [Fig.04]



Silos et élévateurs à Mé... aux États-Unis.

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German architect Erich Mendelsohn included one of these images in one of his own articles and, in 1924, visited the grain silos in the United States, fulfilling his so-called "silos dreams."[6] In 1923, Le Corbusier published "Vers une Architecture" in the magazine L'Esprit Nouveau, where he advocated for a new functional architecture, praising silos as modern icons—an influential manifesto in 20th-century architecture.

Adolf Behne, in Die Moderne Zweckbau" (1923), included the silo as one of the landmarks in modern architecture. Moisei Ginzburg's "Style and Epoch" (1924) formulated a manifesto for a new architectural language, adapting architecture to the working class.

Ludwig Hilberseimer, in "The Architecture of the Big City" (1927), showcased factories and silos as paradigmatic elements of a new era. The agriculture mechanization and the industrialized food processing brought about typolog-

Fig. 4
Symbolic and Iconographic Power. Photograph. Grain elevators and factories in Buffalo. Original photographs by Walter Gropius. Published in "Vers Une Architecture" (1914). Source: http://arquitecturazonacero.blogspot.com/2012/10/la-atlantida-de-hormigon-reyner-banham.html

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5    The Deutscher Werkbund was an association of architects, designers, and artists founded in 1907 in Munich by Hermann Muthesius, a precursor to the Bauhaus.

6    Erich Mendelsohn, *Erich Mendelsohn: Letters of an Architect*, ed. Oskar Beyer (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1967), 69.

ical hybridizations in agricultural architecture. Grain silos emerged as modern icons, blending functionality and industrialization through grain mechanization and elevation. Food factories improved hygiene and enabled more efficient and serialized food processing. Warehouses and distribution centers fused logistics with infrastructure. Dairy and meat facilities combined industrial processing with temperature controls and sanitation. Industrial stables and farms were designed to accommodate livestock on a large scale to enhance productivity.

While these architectural adaptations reflected the need for productive efficiency and the transformation of rural architecture as a tool for agricultural modernization, the excessive application of these functional principles directly in architecture, especially in collective housing programs or urban planning, would have long-term negative consequences.

The mechanized elements incorporation, mass production, and the new material development revolutionized the conception and modern architecture development and design practices in the 20th century. Although early modern functional construction initially aimed practically to provide shelter and housing in a democratic and accessible manner, industrialized architecture soon acquired other connotations, precisely due to its reductionist conception: it could once again become a strategy or power object, promoting social segregation, control, exclusion, loss of cultural identity, or alienation—exercises in perverse functionalism.

A significant example of what I term perverse functionalism is the Atlantropa project, proposed in 1928 by the German architect Herman Sörgel. The idea was to dam the Strait of Gibraltar and lower the level of the Mediterranean Sea, exposing a significant portion of the seabed to gain land for agricultural development and large-scale energy generation.

The project aimed to unite Europe and Africa, promoting international cooperation to boost German industry. However, the consequences would have been disastrous, including the flooding of coastal areas, water salinization, loss of biodiversity, and climate disruption, causing a devastating environmental impact. [Fig.05]

## Final Reflections

Our exploration witnessed beginning the agriculture evolution —subsequently transformed into agroindustry—and its significance both as an object and a representation of power up to the 20th century.

Some of these connections persist nowadays and unfortunately become apparent in times of war, as exemplified by Russia's blockade on the cereal exports of Ukraine or the bombardment of several grain silos.

It is not difficult, therefore, to conceive that structures of power designed and constructed under the totalitarian regimes of the 20th century are often identified with oppression, a lack of freedoms, or abuses of power. Agroindustry is frequently viewed in many cases with such negative connotations. When aban-

doned or rendered obsolete due to shifts in the economy, trade, or technological and energy advancements, their presence in the landscape may evoke a sense of desolation and decadence, construed as remnants of the past and associated with the excesses of absolute power and authoritarianism.
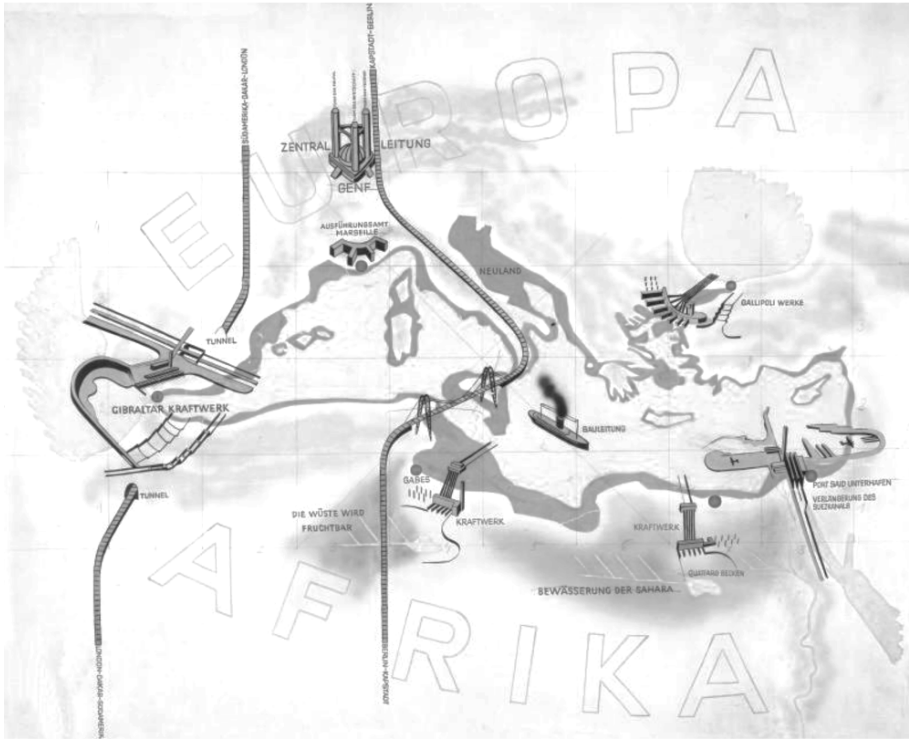
Nevertheless, instances of a "kind of architectural peace or conciliation" emerge through the critical reuse of these structures. Through a deliberate will and effort to reinterpret and repurpose these agro-industrial spaces from a new perspective, with novel uses, there arises an opportunity for reflection and learning from past mistakes. Additionally, this process seeks to champion culture, democratic values, environmentalism, and human rights.

In this manner, these structures, which once bore the weight of negative historical legacies, undergo a transformation into symbols of introspection, coexistence, and positive societal evolution. Efforts in their architectural rehabilitation contribute not only to the physical restoration of these spaces but also to the creation of a legacy that invites critical reflection and dialogue on the intersection of power, architecture, and society.

Fig. 5

Values for an Atlantropa. A new state based on the "utopia" of new lands, connectivity, and inexhaustible energy sourceas. Figure 3. The Power of Communication. A Panzer commander scans the horizon with the Stalingrad grain elevator in the background. 1942. Source: http://alcantara. forogratis.es/la-mayor-batalla-de-la-segunda-guerra-mundial-stalingrado-t1214.html

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**Arturo Gallozzi, Michela Cigola, Marcello Zordan, Laura Lucarelli**

# WW2 Memorials and Remembrance: German Military Cemetery in Cassino

*VDK, Robert Tischler, Gerd Offenberg, Susie Müller-Diefenbach, German Soldiers' Cemetery*

## /Abstract

*"... May the teaching imparted by the fallen soldiers*
*be a guide to life and peace*
*for the present and future of humanity ...",*

*Walter Trepte,*
*president of the Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge,*
*in his speech at the memorial ceremony,*
*for the 'nauguration of the*
*Germanic Military Cemetery of Cassino-Caira,*
*May 4, 1965.*

The WW2 produced more than 250 thousand victims in central and southern Italy, and particuralry in Cassino territory, very close to the German defensive Gustav line. Aim of this article is the documentation and valorization of these special architectural heritage that are silent witnesses to what the war has destroyed but mostly what peace has been able to rebuild. Today in Cassino area there are five military cemeteries in which rest soldiers of thirteen different nationalities who participated in Montecassino battle: Polish cemetery; Commonwealth cemetery; German cemetery; French cemetery and Italian cemetery. All the memorials were designed by some of the best architects and sculptors of the time and have monumental characteristics. We focus on German military cemetery in Caira (Cassino) designed by German architects Robert Tischler and Gerd Offenberg, both chief architect of the German War Graves Commission "Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge" - VDK.[1]

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1   All images marked with "VDK Archive" are freely available by the "Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge", all other images and photographs are by authors.

One of the most brutal events of WWII was in central Italy, close to German defensive Gustav line. It was the battle of Montecassino, which takes its name from the Benedictine abbey near which it was fought.

On 8th of September 1943 Italy ceased hostilities against the Allies signing the Armistice. In their retreat to the north, the Germans fell back on the so-called "Gustav Line", which cut Italy in two and which passed near the city of Cassino. This situation stalled until the Allies broke Gustav Line and entered Rome freeing it on 4th of June 1944.

Those that are remembered as the battle of Cassino and Montecassino began on 10 September 1943 with an aerial bombardment of the city by the Anglo-American Allied air forces and culminated the following year in the two violent battles of 15 February 1944, with the destruction of Montecassino Abbey, and 15 March 1944 with the destruction of the city of Cassino. The Montecassino battle produced more than 250 thousand victims[1].

Immediately after the battles, even before the war had ended, the bodies of soldiers killed in action were buried in provisional graves close to the combat areas. Such temporary cemeteries were organised by nationality.

After the end of the war -and in some cases years later- the governments of the nations that took part in Montecassino battle decided that the soldiers who died on the Gustav line should be buried in the places where they had fought and fell and to build some memorials.

The memorials were designed by some of the best architects and sculptors of the time; they were able to significantly shape the sites, creating monumental scenarios of artistic, symbolic and scenic interest, despite being singularly heterogeneous in terms of style and typology. All the cemetery has monumental characteristics bestowed a definitive structure on the territory, in perpetual memory of the fallen.

Today in Cassino area there are five military cemeteries in which rest soldiers of thirteen different nationalities who participated in Montecassino battle. They are: Polish Cemetery in Montecassino with 1052 graves; Commonwealth cemetery in Cassino with 4271 graves; German cemetery in the village of Caira near Cassino with approximately 20080 graves; French cemetery in Venafro with 4345 graves and Italian Cemetery in Mignano Montelungo with 974 graves [Fig. 1].

The war cemeteries in the Cassino area are a topic of great interest, but still underestimated and little studied despite their historical and symbolic importance. They, together with the city of Cassino and the Abbey of Montecassino are important and touching symbols of the Second World War. This contribution focuses on the complex history of the design and construction of war cemeteries in the Cassino area, with a specific focus on the German monumental cemetery.

Focus of our research is the recovery and dissemination of historical docu-

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1    Even today are not precisely determined the number of soldiers of various nationalities fallen in the battles for Cassino.
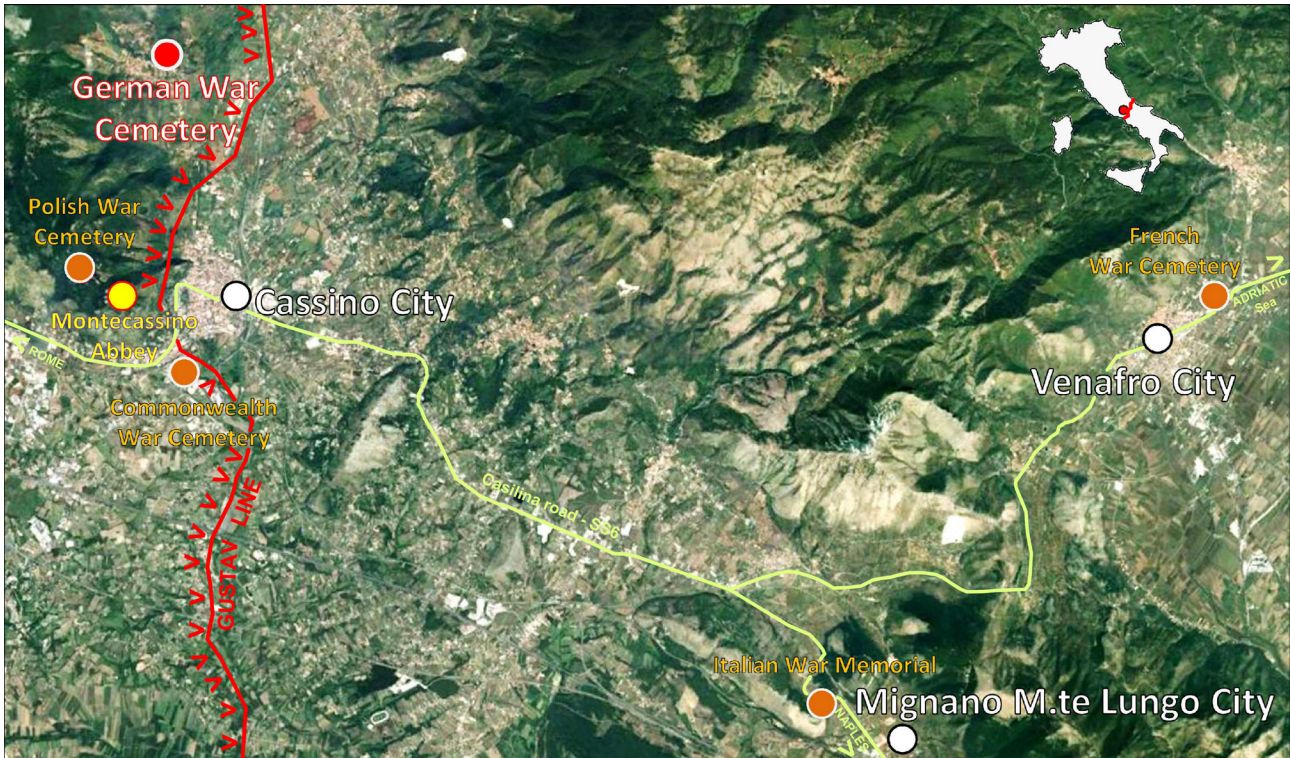
ments, particularly the original project drawings of the Second World War cemeteries in Italy. These documents, currently preserved in some archives or by the associations of the countries responsible for the maintenance of military cemeteries, offer precious information on design methods and representative methods chosen by different designers of various nationalities and with different training.

The research also aims to conduct a comparative analysis of the various monuments from an architectural and design point of view, to identify recurring typological patterns and understand how these elements influence the symbolic perception of visitors. Another aim of our research is to explore the symbolic dimension of war cemeteries to highlight how these places were designed and built to reflect and transmit values of peace and collective memory.

## The Polish, British and French war cemeteries

The Polish cemetery is close to the Abbey of Montecassino. On 18th of May 1944 Polish soldiers climbed up to the almost destroyed abbey and defeated the last defending German troops. This was the last action in the battle for Cassino and Montecassino.

Polish cemetery is located on a wide trapezoidal area whose required the levelling of cratered land devastated by bombs. For its construction General Anders[2] who commanded the II Polish Army Corps established a committee for

Fig. 1
Position of German Cemetery in Caira (Colle Marino) in the Liri Valley. The location is related to the other war cemeteries in the area and to the Gustav Line.

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2    Władysław Anders, (Błonie, Poland 1892-London 1970) played a fundamental role in the battle of Montecassino.

coordinating the necessary technical, legal and financial resources[3]. Architect Wacław Hryniewicz[4] (a Polish Army lieutenant) designed the cemetery and by architect Jerzy Skolimowski[5] (Olympic Rowing silver medal at Games of the X Olympiad in 1932 Los Angeles). Polish cemetery was built between 1944 and 1946 with the contribution of Polish soldiers of the II Army Corps and with the help of Italian workers.

The Polish architect and sculptor Michał Paszyna[6] created the sculptures. The two hussar eagles on pedestals at the entrance gate are by Italian sculptor Duilio Cambellotti[7]. The entrance has a long pedestrian approach path which leads to a semi-circular travertine paved area that precedes the burial plots. The rows of graves are arranged in six rectangular plots divided by a central sequence of steps, at the top of which are located an altar and ramps leading to an external green space with a monumental cross marked out with trees. The latter frames the large stone eagle, the symbol of Poland. The burial area is dominated by the colour white which recalls the stone paving, the retaining walls and the gravel paths between the individual tombstones. The green space at the upper section of the cemetery creates a strong chromatic contrast, accentuated by the sloping lie of the land. Polish cemetery was consecrated on 1 September 1945 with a multi-faith ceremony attended by representatives of Polish Government and Allied Armies Command.

The most important military cemetery of the British Commonwealth in Italy is in Cassino. The site for the cemetery was chosen as early as January 1944 but due to the continuation of the battle it was only possible to use it after the retreat of German forces. It was inaugurated in 1956 in the presence of the Commander of all Allied forces in Italy, the British General Harold Alexander[8] and all the ambassadors of the Commonwealth.

In the central part of the cemetery, on the sides of a large ornamental pool, is located the *Cassino Memorial* that commemorates soldiers who fell in action throughout Italy and whose graves are not known. The architect and urban

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3    Once completed, the cemetery was initially entrusted to the monks of Montecassino. The cash contribution, which should have covered the ordinary maintenance costs of the structure for a long time, soon became insufficient. So, the management of the cemetery was taken over by Commissariato Generale per le Onoranze ai Caduti in guerra italiano (General Commissariat for Honors for the Fallen in Italian Wars).

4    Wacław Jerzy Hryniewicz, (S. Petersburg 1909-London 1987). Was an architect, graduate of the Warsaw University of Technology. He participated - with awards - in numerous architecture competitions and at the 1937 International Exhibition of Art and Technology in Paris. He participated in the battle of Monte Cassino. The design of the Polish War Cemetery in Monte Cassino was developed together with the architect Jerzy Skolimowski.

5    Jerzy Walerian Skolimowski, (Łuków 1907-London 1985). Was an architect, graduate of the Warsaw University of Technology. He was awarded, in 1939, by the Association of Polish Architects for the design of the Polish pavilion. Decorated with the "Virtuti Militari" cross, he had an extensive career as a military and as a designer. After the war, having settled as a refugee in London, he will work as an architect under the name of George Skolly (aka George Deen). He was a lecturer at the Polish University in exile in London and a member of the Society of British Industrial Art.

6    Michal Paszyna, (Warsaw 1903- Castello di Rotaio-Camaiore 1970). He was an architect and sculptor, he created the decorative elements of the Polish war cemetery in Bologna, built in 1946 on a project by Eng. arch. Zygmunt Majerski. He was a professor at the Silesian Polytechnic in Poland.

7    Duilio Cambellotti, (Rome 1876-Rome 1960). He was a sculptor and master of applied arts; he was intensely involved in the aesthetic-social problems of his time. As a sculptor, in the first post-war period, he also created some monuments to the Fallen in Terracina and Fiuggi.

8    Harold Alexander, (London 1891–Slough 1969). He was commander of the allied forces in Italy, he was one of the protagonists of the battle of Cassino. Together with General Eisenhower and the Italian Marshal Pietro Badoglio, he concluded the armistice of 8 September 1943.

planner Louis de Soissons[9] designed the memorial. In the 1920s he was credited as the designer of England's *Welwyn Garden City.* This city enacts Ebenezer Howard's theories about ideal cities on a human scale. He studied in Paris at École des Beaux Arts. After Second World War, the fame of the landscape architect, in addition to his experience in the garden city, earned him the prestigious commission of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, on behalf of which he will design forty-six military cemeteries in Italy and Greece.

The British cemetery is conceived as a private garden, placed higher than the level of the road from which it is not possible to see the inside of the cemetery itself. A fence creates a feeling of private space and symbolically focuses the vision on Montecassino. Close to the entrance there is a rectangular pavilion, which acts as a filter and element of communication between the external and internal space.

The tombs are organized in a rectangular layout and arranged according to an orthogonal grid in the center of which there is an ornamental basin aligned with the entrance temple. The pedestrian paths are only in the entrance areas and around the pond, leaving the visitor free to roam freely in the green of the large lawn where the tombstones are placed.

According to an agreement signed with Italy, the care of the cemetery it is delegated to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission – CWGC[10]. It was instituted by Royal Decree on 21 May 1917. It deals with the maintenance of the graves of 1.7 million men of the Commonwealth armed forces who fell in the WW1 and WW2.

The French cemetery was built between September 1945 and December 1946 by the *Génie Militaire Francais* on an area of about 70,000 square metres. Near the entrance there is a chapel which contains the history of the French army battles; the French architect André Chatelin[11] designs this "Chapelle". The cemetery is organised in three parts according to the religion of the buried soldiers. The graves are white on a grass surface, and everyone carries the fallen's name, rank and date of death. The first part contains the graves of French soldiers and is in front of the entrance near the Chapel, crosses mark all graves. The second part of the cemetery is spread around a minaret and contains the tombs of Moroccan and Tunisian troops in French contingent. These graves are marked with round stones facing Mecca as customary in Muslim religion. The third part, at the bottom of the cemetery, is dedicated to soldiers belonging

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9    Louis de Soissons, (Montreal 1890-London 1962). He was a landscape architect and designed garden cities. His training took place between London and Paris, where he attended the École des Beaux Arts. after World War II he designed forty-six military cemeteries with significant environmental characteristics between Italy and Greece on behalf of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

10    Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) was established by Royal Decree on May 21, 1917. It deals with the maintenance of the graves of 1.7 million Commonwealth soldiers who fell during the two world wars. The CWGC also deals with the construction and care of memorial stones for the fallen, whose burial place is unknown. The Commission is also interested in safeguarding documents relating to cemeteries and memorials in various countries. The cost of running the cemeteries is shared between member governments in proportion to the number of their graves.

11    André Chatelin, (Paris 1915-Boulogne-Billancourt 2007). In 1943 he won the first prize of the Grand Prix de Rome for the Architecture section. In 1947 the French Ministry of Defence commissioned him the project of military cemetery of Monteriggioni (Siena) which will not be built.
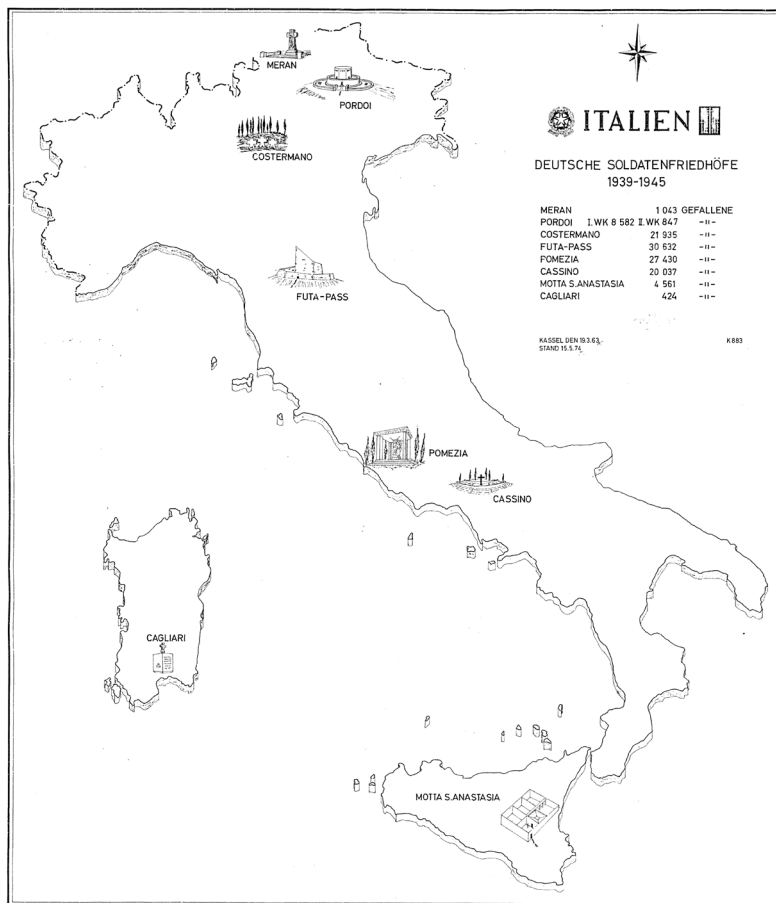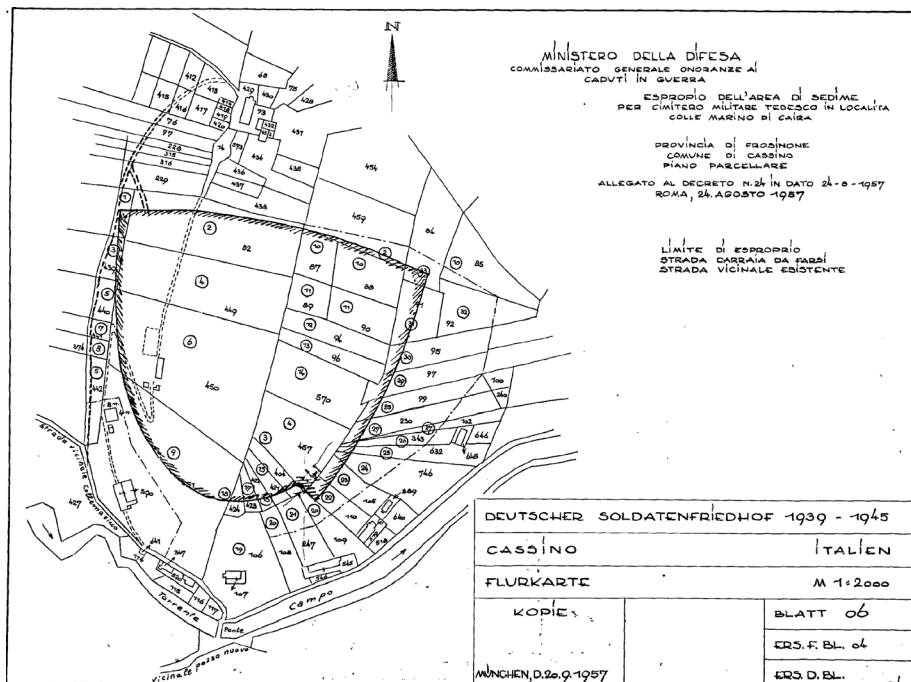
Fig. 2

Location of other German military cemeteries in Italy, with reference to the number of fallen buried. (VDK Archive).

Fig. 3

Detailed plan of expropriations for the construction of the German cemetery by the Italian Ministry of Defence, Commissioner General Honors to the Fallen in War — CGOC. Original in scale 1:2000. (VDK Archive).

to other faiths, those of the Jewish religion and those coming from the African animist areas of the French colonies.

## Italian Military Memorial in Mignano Montelungo

In December 1943, on the border between Latium and Campania regions, in the municipality of Mignano Montelungo, a violent battle was fought to breach the Gustav line. In the mid-1950s, the Italian military cemetery was built in this area by architect V. Kusmisky[12]. We know little about this designer; some clues say he was born in Ecaterinoslav (Russia) in 1908 and graduated from the University of Rome.

The cemetery develops along vertical lines with rows of tombs arranged in six orders, centrally divided by a sequence of steps culminating in a portico with two side wings. The facade of the portico bears the Latin epigraph "*Mortui ut patria vivat*" (dead so that the Homeland may live). In the center of the memorial there is a black marble altar, above which a white marble statue of a dying soldier was erected. It is by Italian sculptor Pietro Canonica[13].

The graves of the 190 dead in Montelungo are placed on both sides of a portico. On six terraces there are the graves of 784 soldiers who died in the war of liberation from fascism in various conflict zones. The cemetery has an access stairway aligned with a statue of the Madonna placed at the bottom of it.

## The Caira German cemetery

The German cemetery is located near the village of Caira, close to Cassino. It is one of the largest German war cemeteries in Italy [Fig. 2]. The guidelines for the creation of the German cemetery were developed by the German War Graves Commission "Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge" - VDK. The VDK is a private organization dedicated to the identification and maintenance of the graves of Germans who fell abroad. The VDK was founded in 1919 after the end of the First World War, since the early 1930s it has built many German war cemeteries[14]. The German military cemetery of Cassino is one of the fourteen projects that the VDK has conducted in Italy.

Construction of the German cemetery began in 1959 under the direction

12    Vladimiro Kusmisky, (Ekaterinoslav, 1908). Some clues can be found in an October 1942 issue of the Regia Gazzetta which lists the name of those who passed the exam for the profession of architect. Among the names we read: Kusmisky Vladimiro, by Alexander, born in Ekaterinoslav (Russia) on November 25, 1908, graduated from the University of Rome. His name is also found in a 1960 document from the Committee for the Education of Russian Youth in Exile. This Committee, headed by Thomas Whittemore, aided and supported many young Russian exiles in various European countries. Then Kusmisky, assisted by the Committee as a refugee, studied architecture in Italy.

13    Pietro Canonica, (Moncalieri 1869-Rome 1959). He attended the Albertina Academy in Turin and participated in numerous national and international exhibitions. He worked at the main courts of Europe, making busts aristocrats. After the First World War and after the Second World War, his sculptures concerned monumental and celebratory compositions.

14    In 1954 the Federal Government entrusted the Volksbund with the search and care of the fallen in war abroad.

Fig. X

of Robert Tischler[15] who was a landscape architect [Fig. 14]. From 1926 to 1959 Tischler held the position of chief architect of the VDK and designed many German war cemeteries. Caira German cemetery was completed in 1964 by Gerd Offenberg[16] who succeeded Robert Tischler as chief architect of the VDK.

VDK preferred simple formal solutions that established a relationship with the surrounding landscape, creating a shady place for the fallen to rest. This specific typological model, in close connection with the landscape, is attributable to an innovative approach by Gerd Offenberg. He departs from Tischler's original plan giving the same symbolic importance to landscape and buildings, integrating them with an articulated network of paths.

The cemetery develops concentrically around a hill, covering almost half of it [Figg. 4-5]. The tombs are arranged to form ascending terraces divided into 34 blocks [Fig. 12]. They, following the shape of the hill, converge towards its summit where there is a large bronze cross [Fig. 13]. The general composition is based on a small variety of materials and shapes that give the whole cemetery an essential image. This design purpose can also be found in the tombs marked by simple marble tombstones that emerge isolated from the green of the lawn, devoid of any funerary decoration. [Fig. 11]. Starting from the main road a short pedestrian path arrives at the Pavilion which is the formal entrance to the memorial [Fig. 6] and the filter with the outside [Fig. 10]. At the entrance to the path there is a bronze sculpture by Suse Müller-Diefenbach[17] who was director of sculpture courses at Weimar Academy. The sculpture represents the figures of "*Affliction and Consolation*" (Trauer und Trost) recalling two parents who have lost their son.

The cube-shaped entrance building is a work that surprises with its shapes and volumes, they are the result of a careful design that makes use of stone slabs of regular shape, minimalist, to which the sculpture placed in the center of the ceremonial hall acts as a counterpoint. The space has a strong symbolic appeal, immersing the visitor in a contemplative atmosphere [Figg. 9-10]. Here light is protagonist, it is designed to create optical illusions and suggestive play of shadows and to emphasize the space.

The complex, which is accessed via a flight of steps, is geometric in an alternation of solids and voids, lights and shadows that fit inside the structure and give volume to the solids [Fig. 10]. You enter in silence, on tiptoe, each sound has an acoustic return that recalls the monuments of classicism. The surfaces are regular to emphasize that German minimalism that gives the work an "bunker" effect. However, the effect is broken by the large opening that opens

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15    Robert Tischler, (Frontenhausen 1885-Munich 1959). He was a landscape architect.

16    Gerhard Offenberg, (Erwitte 1897-Mainz 1987). In 1942 he headed the Faculty of Architecture and Fine Arts in Weimar, between 1948-1960 he headed the unit for urban and regional planning of the Ministry of Finance and the reconstruction of Rhineland-Palatinate.

17    Suse Müller-Diefenbach, (Stuttgart 1911-Tübingen 1997). She studied sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Stuttgart. She was director of the sculpture course at the Weimar Academy. From 1945 to 1951 she was a lecturer in life drawing and modelling at the Technical University of Stuttgart, Department of Architecture.
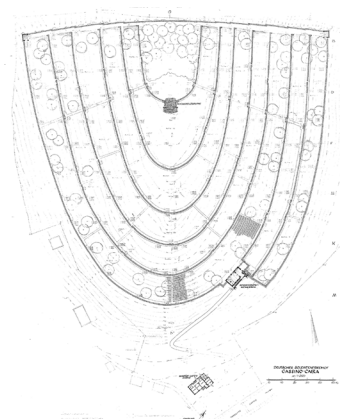
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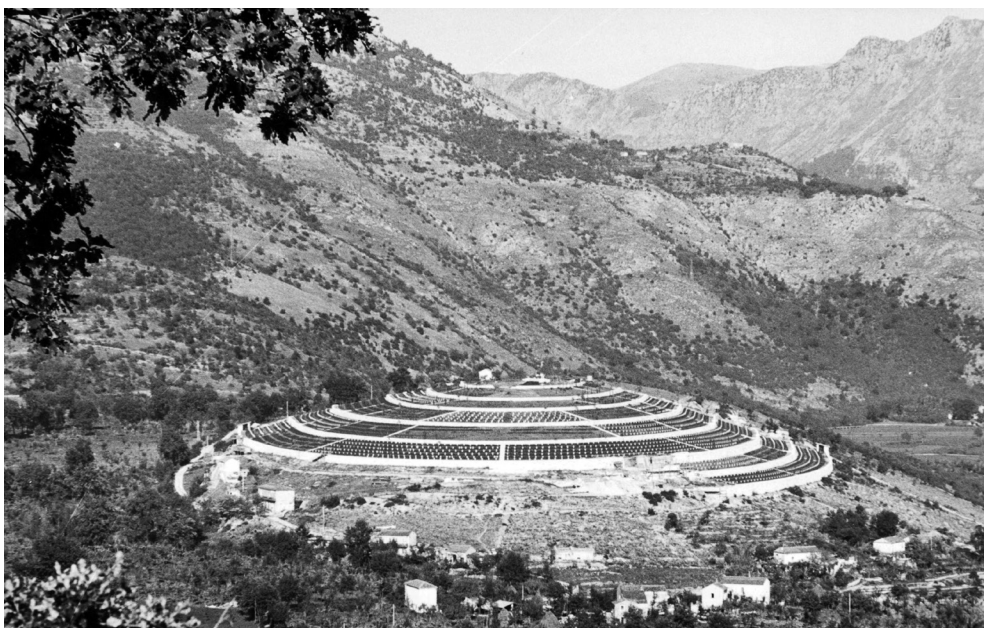
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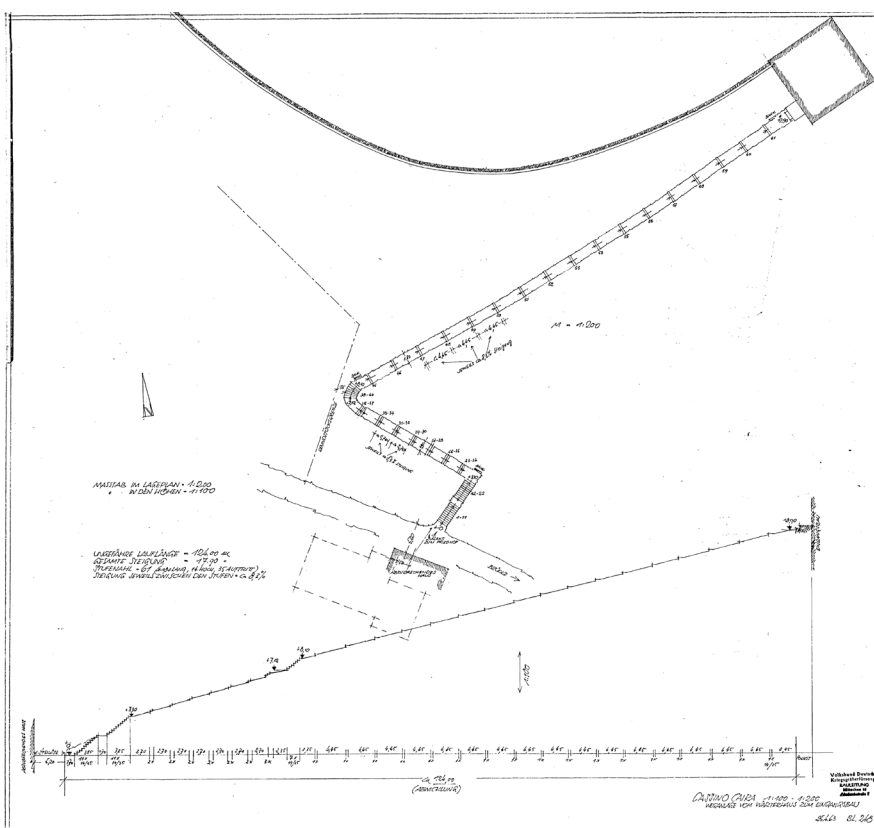
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Fig. 4

General plan of the cemetery, with a quoted plan of the new arrangement. Below reception building and caretaker's home. At the end of the access path, there is the entrance building to the cemetery area. Original in scale 1:250. On the right plastic of project of the entire cemetery. (VDK Archive).

Fig. 5

Panoramic view of the German military cemetery, in 1965 (VDK Archive).

Fig. 6

Floor plan and detail section of the access ramp to the cemetery (from reception to entrance). The ramp is 124.00 meters long and has a vertical drop of 18.90 meters. Original in scale 1: 100 (floor plan) and 1:100 elevation). (VDK Archive).
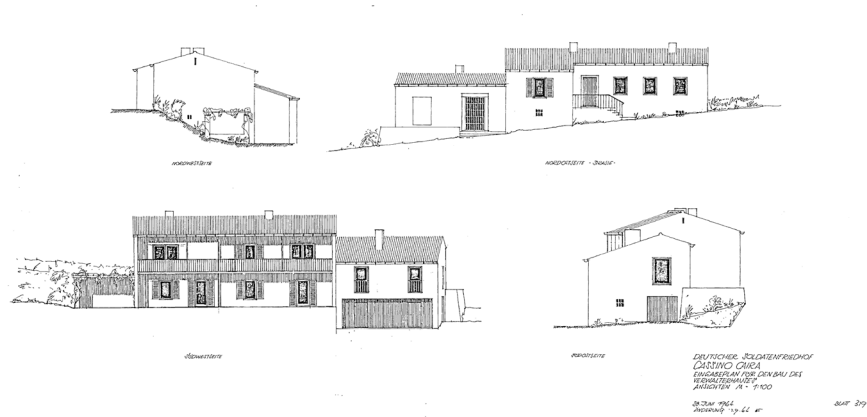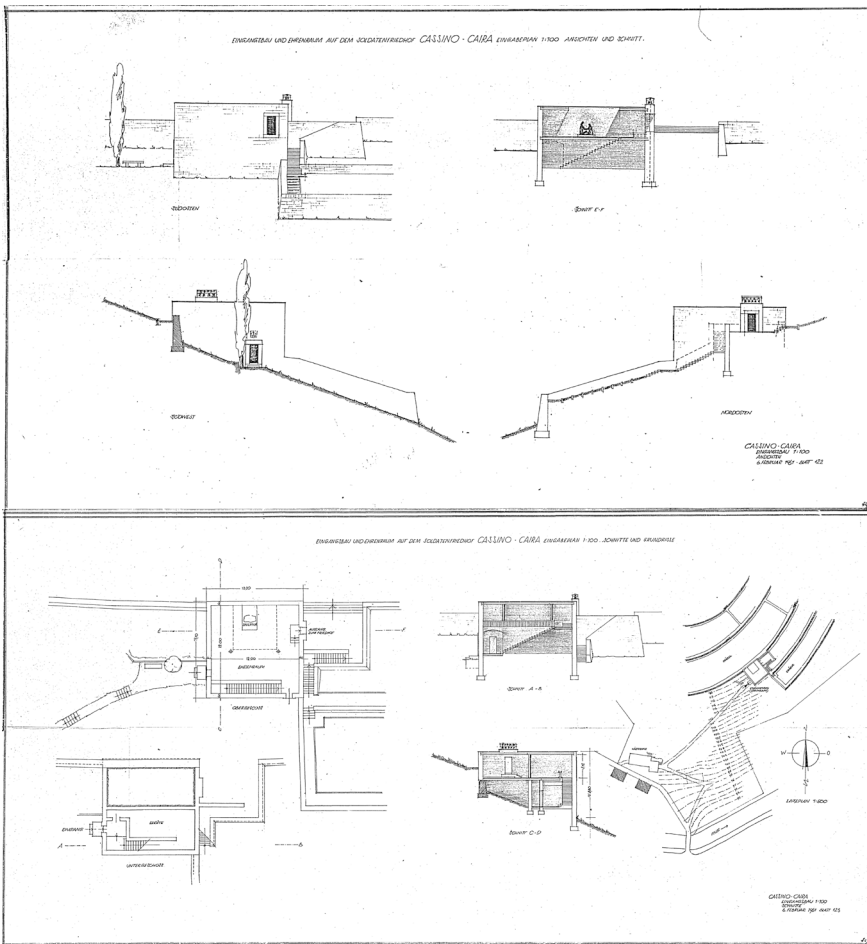
Fig. 7
Reception building and caretaker's home. On the right the entrance building. (VDK Archive).

Fig. 8
Project drawings: elevations of reception and caretaker's home. Original in scale 1: 100. (VDK Archive).

Fig. 9
Project drawings: elevations and sections of entrance building and ceremonial hall. Original in scale 1: 100. (VDK Archive).

towards the sky, letting in a bright cone of light. The passage through these pure forms, which capture and reflect the light, calls the visitor to an act of transition, with a strong visual and emotional impact. On the one hand the memory of what happened, on the other the glare that leads to what will be, remaining suspended on an incorporeal concept of life and death [Fig. 10].

In one of his reports, the designer himself describes the construction of the building and the choice of sculpture recalling two parents who have lost their son. "… *I inserted a simple travertine cube into this landscape … in this cube, between the simple walls, a linear staircase leads to the hall of honor. Here, under the open sky, there is a sculpture 'Affliction and Comfort'. The argument arose from conversations with my wife, having lost our son. … This bronze sculpture is the only work of art in a simple but precious space made of travertine. …*" [Fig. 10].

## German Cemetery: Project Drawings

The construction of the German Cemetery of Caira was certainly preceded by an extended period of analysis and study, both formal and architectural, of the territory and the chosen area. The design respects precise guidelines of the VDK. These follow a repeated typological model of close connection with the nearby landscape. Some recurring architectural elements characterize the general layout of the cemetery: the entrance, the ascent path, the monument of honor, the large summit cross. They determine a pleasant relationship between visitors and the surrounding environment. The secretary of the VDK, Christel Eulen, in a speech identifies the choices for the location of military cemeteries: "… *we like to lead our dead towards the light and lay them on the heights of a hill for their last rest …*".

The project for the German military cemetery of Caira highlights, more than others, the stylistic and aesthetic evolution followed by the VDK and by its designers Tischler and Gerd Offenberg. The model and the previous tradition of the "Totenburg" (Fortresses of the dead) characteristic of the period 1933-1939, are no longer followed. The design is therefore aimed at greater transparency and the characterization of a larger open space.

The project graphics attached to the design documentation of the cemetery are accurate, even if essential. In this contribution, some general drawings are shown in the figures, (Detailed plan of chosen area; elevations and sections of entrance buildings; floor plan of the access ramp and details of the large commemorative cross and soldiers' tombstones) [Figg. 3, 6, 8, 9,11, 13].

## Conclusions

The war cemeteries built in Cassino area are silent witnesses to the tragedy of war and the regenerative power of peace. The city of Cassino and the Abbey of Montecassino were destroyed during the Second World War. They and the
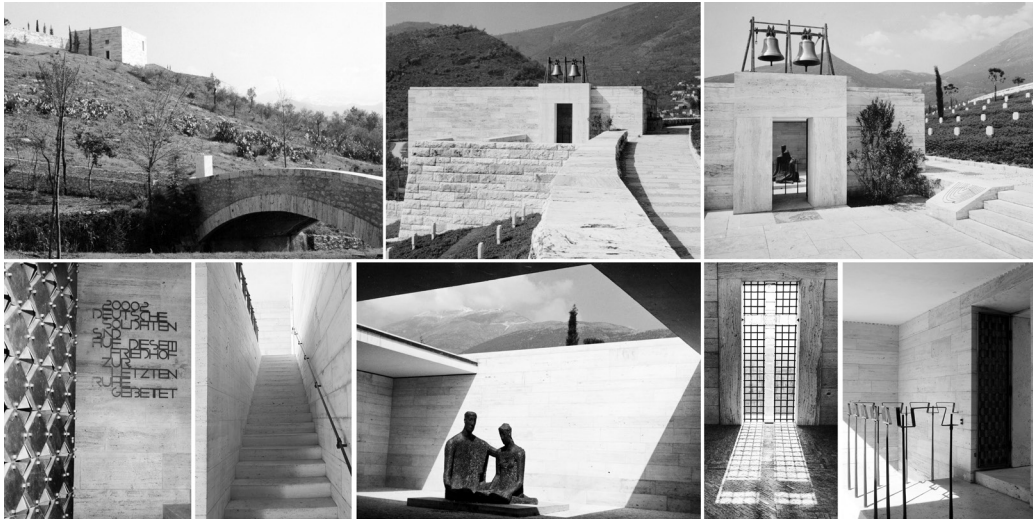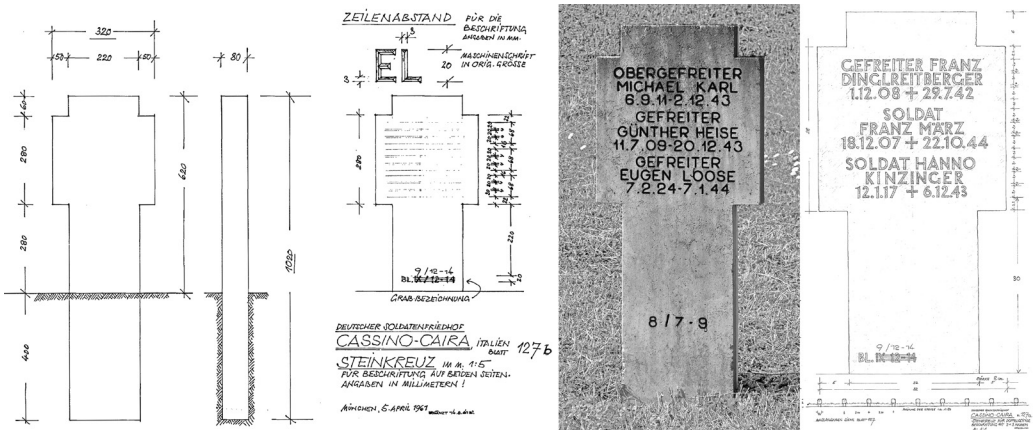
cemeteries represent not only the memory of the victims, but also society's ability to rebuild and be reborn from the ashes of destruction; they are fundamental for understanding the historical and moral legacy of the conflict and the values of peace.

The war cemeteries in the Cassino area are a topic of great interest, but still underestimated and little studied. Each of them deserves further study due to the importance of the designers involved, their integration with the surrounding landscape, the profound symbolism they express, the innovative architectural solutions and the use of materials. This study aims to be a starting point for a deeper comprehension and valorisation of these monuments, which helps to understand their symbolic and planning value. In this contribution, we examined the German military cemetery, highlighting the main design choices, some of which anticipate the minimal art of the second half of the twentieth century, recognizable in the "Ceremonial Hall" with the sculpture "Affliction and Consolation " (Trauer und Trost). The precise historical reconstruction clarifies the real developments of the construction methods of an architecture that presents some references to rationalism, with a singular and well-defined typology. This trend, combined with a strong scenographic component, characterizes a model that is also found in other military cemeteries, although with significant variations.

This contribution, focused on the horrors of war, intends to promote the collective memory of past conflicts as a warning and a call for peace: "…*those who doubt Europe … should visit the Military Cemeteries …*". Jean-Claude Juncker (President of the European Commission from 2014 to 2019).

Fig. 10
Entrance building of the military cemetery and ceremonial hall. Top: panoramic view and view of exit portal from cemetery side. Down: entrance door, internal staircase, ceremonial hall with the sculpture "Affliction and Comfort" by the sculptress Suse Müller-Diefenbach, artistic stained glass window and exit towards the cemetery. (VDK Archive).

Fig. 11
Detailed drawings of buried soldiers' funeral crosses. (VDK Archive).

Fig. 12
View of a sepulchral circle and stairway from one circle to another. (VDK Archive).

Fig. 13
Project drawings of the top of military cemetery with the large commemorative cross. Photographic views and detailed construction drawing of the large metal cross. (VDK Archive).

Fig. 14
Architect Robert Tischler, designer of the Caira cemetery (in the center).

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**Pablo Arza Garaloces**

# Ideological Perspectives on Spanish Architecture in International Journals (1950-1986)

*Spain, Image, Ideology, Architecture, Journals*

## /Abstract

At the end of the 1930s', Spain suffered a civil war. Its consequence is the establishment of a new political order: General Franco's dictatorship, that would kept its power for almost forty years.

Along this period, the image of the country for the foreigners was complex and changing. From the initial mistrust from international powers, the image of Spain went through a larger acceptance following its entry in the United Nations and its re-adjustment as occasional ally of Western countries against communism. However, the main feature of the government—the lack of public rights—marked the foreign view of Spain along these years.

In parallel, this image of the country had repercussion for the way architecture—a phenomenon relatively alien to the political realm— has been analysed and comprehended. This influence can be noticed on the way international journals approached the work of Spanish architects. On their pages we can find a view conditioned, in varying degrees, by ideology.

It is not until the death of the dictator, in 1975, and the coming of democracy, that a change in the architectural and political panorama took place. The production of Spanish architects got rid of ideological connotations, that along Franco's period had diverse manifestations— from the linkage with the regime to its consideration as a means of combating it.

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Since 2016, he is a member of the European Architectural History Network.

## Introduction[1]

In the Autumn of 1953, the Building Centre in London hosted an exhibition on recent architecture in Madrid. In the show there were works of Miguel Fisac, Luis Gutiérrez Soto, Carlos de Miguel and Luis Laorga, among others. The exhibited works provoked diverse opinions that were published in some English journals:

*The Architect and Building News* presented a brief report in which the editor referred the Spanish architecture in these terms: 'I find the buildings disappointing (…) [they] have the harsh monumentality associated with the Works of Hitler and Mussolini'[2].
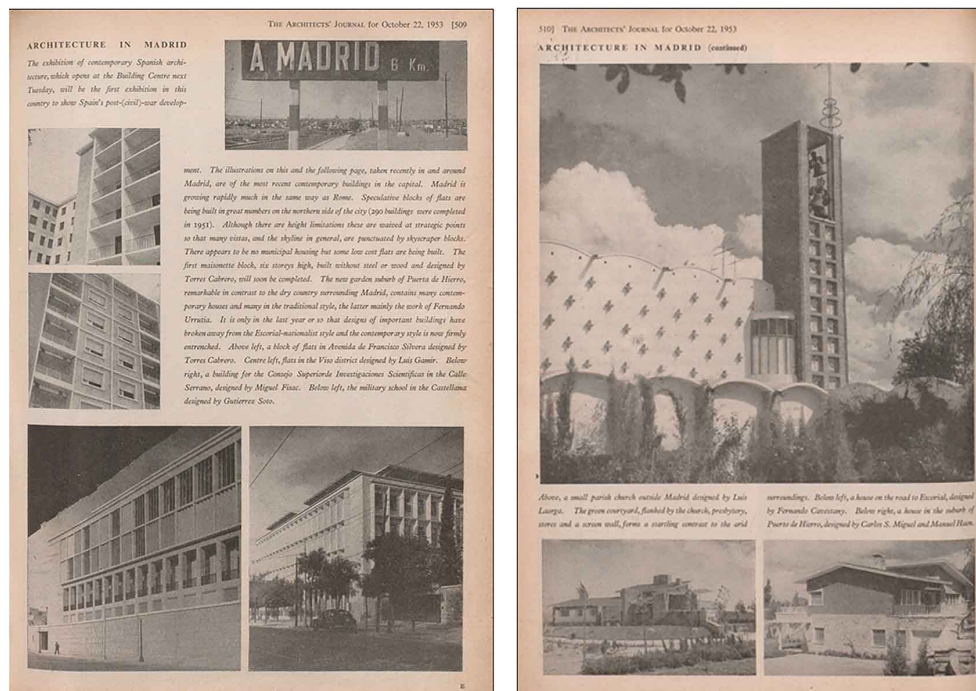
*The Architects' Journal*, on its two-pages article illustrated with some photographs, assessed the show and pointed that 'it is only in the last year or so that designs of important buildings have broken away from the Escorial-nationalist style and the contemporary style is now firmly entrenched'[3] [Fig. 1].

It can be noticed that these commentaries offer different perceptions of the work exhibited in London, however, it is not my intention to evaluate which one is more accurate. What I want to focus on is that the particular political situation of Spain in these years—a regime without liberties—was present, in a way or another, for the assessment of both journals.

On the one hand, *The Architect and Building News* perceived in Spain a monumentalism similar to the one promoted by German and Italian regimes.

2   "Events and Comments. Contemporary Spanish Architecture," *The Architect and Building News* Nov. (1953): 555.

3   "Architecture in Madrid," *The Architects' Journal*, no. 3060 (1953): 509.

Fig. 1
Article from *The Architect's Journal* about the exhibition on Madrid architecture held at the Building Centre in London, 1953 (Figure from the Author).

This architecture was also present in authoritarian governments such as Stalinism. However, this appreciation was not present in the report. Thus, it seems that the journal was judging the exhibited work based on ideological criteria, identifying the country with right-wing dictatorships and applying these characteristics to the designs. On the other hand, *The Architects' Journal*, with the term 'Escorial-nationalist style', made reference to a supposed architectural style, official for the regime, inspired by the Escorial monastery.

These events put into consideration how the view of Spain from abroad, in that specific moment, had repercussions for the way a phenomenon such as architecture—to some degree outside of the political realm—has been analyzed and understood.

Therefore, with this text, it is my intention to show this relationship. The period that I will cover dates from 1950—once the immediate postwar period is passed—to 1986—year in which the young Spanish democracy enters the European Union; Franco died in 1975. However, it is also important to point out that, in the field of history Spanish architecture, this period is one of development and consolidation of the modern architecture in the country.

## Spain seeing from abroad (1936-1986)

For a better comprehension of the repercussion of the foreign understanding of Spain between 1950 and 1986, firstly it is necessary to know what the elements that defined this understanding were. For reasons of extension, I will not develop here an in-depth study of the topic—which itself is very complex and has an abundant bibliography. Thus, I will only trace the general panorama, highlighting the main events that contributed to the construction of a specific view of the country.

Many times, the view of a nation is built on stereotypes or inevitable simplifications. Although not completely truthful, these views strongly influence the way the beholder perceives the different features of the country. On the top of it, many varied factors contribute to the construction of the image, however not all of the same importance. In the case of Spain, it is a fact that 'the political issue has conditioned and charged the foreign projection of the country'[4], along this period.

Besides, the image of any period is influenced by the perceptions of the previous period. In this case, this means that the foreign understanding of the early years of Franco's regime is marked by the position taken during the Spanish Civil War. For the historian Javier Tusell, the Civil War got Spain closer to the World. 'Never before there was such an attention towards Spain in all the countries'[5]. The warfare put the whole world in one fighting group or the other.

4   Hipolito de la Torre Gómez, "La España de Franco desde el exterior: el inacabado camino hacia Occidente (1955-1975)," *Espacio Tiempo y Forma*, no. 25 (2013): 235.

5   Javier Noya, *La imagen de España en el exterior* (Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano, 2002), 61.

Once the war was ended, a new political order was settled: General Franco's dictatorship. The regime held the power for almost forty years. During this period, the image of the dictator is one of strength that 'inescapably was projected over the whole country'[6]. From the beginning of the war, everyone had an opinion about the insurgent army and, as it is logical, judged the whole nation from that perception.

Along Franco's regime, the image of the country was complex and changing. During the early years of the dictatorship, once the II World War was ended and fascism defeated, the survival of an authoritarian regime such as Franco's arose a feeling of mistrust from the democratic powers. As a consequence, between 1946 and 1950, Spain was under a tight isolation, fruit of economic and political sanctions from the UN.

With the dissolution of the sanctions in 1950, it seemed Spain was starting a favorable period for the external context. Within this new international realm—rarefied by the menace of communism and the inception of the Cold War—,'in a brief period, Spain changed from being under suspicion of pro-nazi from the democratic powers to be sympathetic for the Americans and its re-adjustment as 'allied country', although in a secondary position'[7]. General Franco became an anti-communist leader and, for some aspects, casual ally of the Western powers.

It is in this context in which, in 1953, Spain signed two important agreements: the Concordat with the Holy See and the Pact of Madrid with the USA. Two years later, Spain entered the UN. This new situation made the foreign view more favorable.

This way, at the end of the 1950s' decade, everything seems 'to contribute to clear the way for the re-encounter between Spain and its neighboring Western-Europe countries'[8]. In a World in state of change, Spain also showed its transformation. The country developed a process of social and economic modernization, international opening and an increasing presence in foreign affairs. However, the political ideology of the government did not evolve.

Within this panorama, in 1962 Spain applied for its entry in the European Economic Community. However, the shadow of a regime without liberties prevented the entry in the European organization. This burden supposed an obstacle impossible to avoid for as long as the dictatorship remained. Nevertheless—and despite the negative of the EEC—, Spain continued showing a progressive opening towards the exterior.

In the last years of the Regime, some political events contributed to disturb the foreign understanding of Spain, producing a rejection of the dictatorship.

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6    Rafael Nuñez Florencio, "La percepción exterior de España durante el franquismo," *Historia Contemporánea*, no. 30 (2005): 26.

7    Nuñez Florencio, "La percepción," 40.

8    Raimundo Bassols Jacas, "España y Europa durante el franquismo," *Historia Contemporánea*, no. 30 (2005): 219.
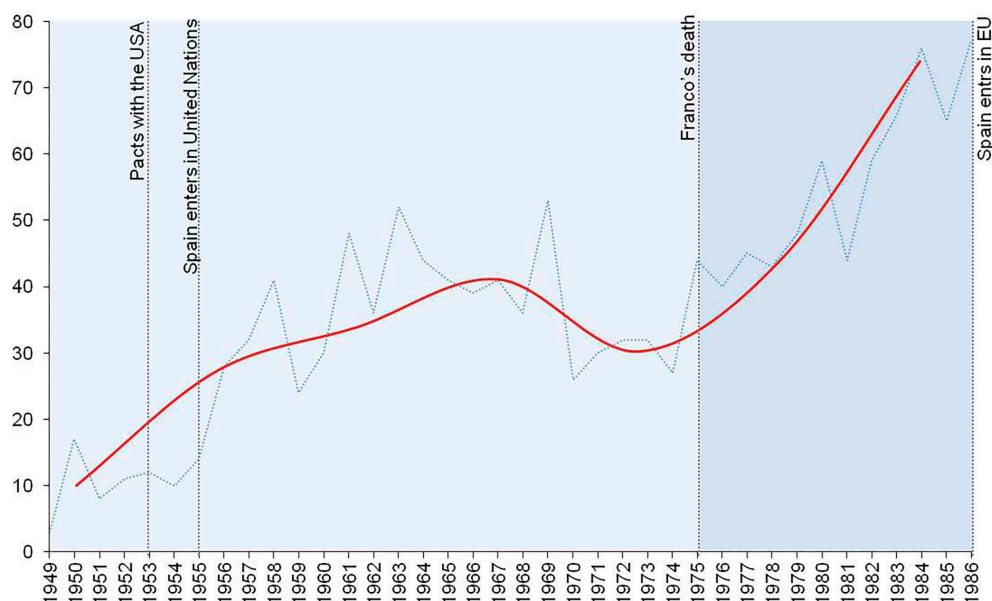
The reason for this spurning was the legal processes that took place in the country. Between 1970 and 1975 several members of the terrorist group ETA were sentenced to death. Some of these sentences were executed. These events 'provoked a wave of repudiation in the rest of the world against Spain and Franco'[9], with various demonstrations in front of Spanish embassies along Europe.

In 1975, with the death of General Franco, Spain moved over a long period in which the main feature of the political system—its lack of public rights—, disappeared. Despite the fears and an initial uncertainty, the foreign countries behold a pacific transition towards parliamentary democracy[10]. The process of international normalization culminated in 1986 with the entry of the country in the European Union.

**The presence of Spanish architecture in international journals**

As it was pointed out in the introduction, the complex image of Spain, produced by the political status of the country, seemed to be influential for the way the work of Spanish architects was approached in international publications' discourse. As we will see, along their pages, we can observe an understanding of Spanish architecture conditioned, in varying degrees, by the ideological position regarding Franco's regime.

If we look at the dissemination of Spanish architecture along the period we can observe how, along these years and in a parallel way to the improvement of the image of the country abroad, there was an increasing interest on the

Fig. 2
Graphical representation of the diffusion of Spanish architecture in international journals between 1949 and 1986. The blue line indicates the number of articles each year featuring Spanish architecture in international journals. In red, the trend curve is shown (Figure from the Author).

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9    Bassols Jacas, "España," 231.

10    This process towards democracy eased the breaking of stereotypes inherited from past decades. The stereotypes produced the thinking of the end of the dictatorship, as it happened in the Civil War of 1936 with the end of the Republic, as "a time in which violence and passions would dictate the change" (Noya, *La imagen*, 63).

architectural production of the country that, with the advent of democracy, grew considerably [Fig. 2].

The 1950s' was not only a decade of economic and political opening towards the world; it was also the first time that the post-war Spanish architecture was rediscovered and valued in an international realm. Not without certain surprise, different foreign journals started to unearth some remarkable Spanish architects and to dedicate, in a progressive way, a larger number of pages of their works.

Certainly, in a large degree this was due to the good work of the Spanish professionals. However, it is worth considering the improvements in foreign affairs after a period of isolation, and how they contributed to the phenomenon. The opening of the relationships stimulated the introduction of new ideas and this promoted again a further openness. In this sense, in 1972, the journal *Architectural Design* reminded how 'the slight liberalization introduced after the American-Spanish military and economic pact in 1953 allowed the frontier to be opened and new ideas to fertilize'[11].

In the context of the 1950s', 1957 and 1958 were important years for the international projection of Spanish architecture. In these years, the pages of different publications made reference to two important works: the canteens for Seat by César Ortiz-Echagüe, Rafael de la Joya and Manuel Barbero Rebolledo; and the Spanish pavilion for the Expo in Brussels by José Antonio Corrales and Ramón Vázquez Molezún. With the former, in 1957, Ortiz Echagüe, de la Joya and Rebolledo won the prestigious Reynolds Memorial award of the The American Institute of Architects[12]. With the pavilion in Brussels, Spain reached a notorious international prestige in 1958—the first expo after the Second World War. As J.M. Richards, editor of *Architectural Review*, many 'were introduced to modern Spanish architecture by the Spanish pavilion at the Brussels International Exhibition of 1958'[13]. Both works became the most published in the decade, as well as in the period between 1950 and 1986.

In the decade of 1960s', the Spanish architecture continued improving its presence in foreign periodicals. This way, in 1962, *Werk* journal commissioned César Ortiz Echagüe[14] to develop the first monograph on recent Spanish architecture [Fig. 3]. The special issue came out in June of that year. In the introduction of the issue, the editor Lucius Burckhardt posed the interesting reflection of the situation of the country in which he argues for that publication:

Should we dedicate the editorial to the young generation of Spanish architects? Wouldn't it be misinterpreted in Switzerland—and in Spain? (...) Whoever thinks about a real change in the authoritarian instances is misguided. However,

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11    Ángeles Sanjuanista, "Spanish students unrest," *Architectural Design*, no. 2 (1972): 123.

12    Regarding the canteens *Architectural Review*, no. 754 (1958): 345, noted: "a welcome sign of continuing progressive thought in Spain".

13    James Maude Richards, "The Spain of Carlos Flores," *Architectural Review*, no. 781 (1962): 187.

14    César Ortiz Echagüe's success with the design of the canteens for Seat allowed him to established different contacts in Germany and Switzerland. From those contacts he received the commission of the monographic issue.
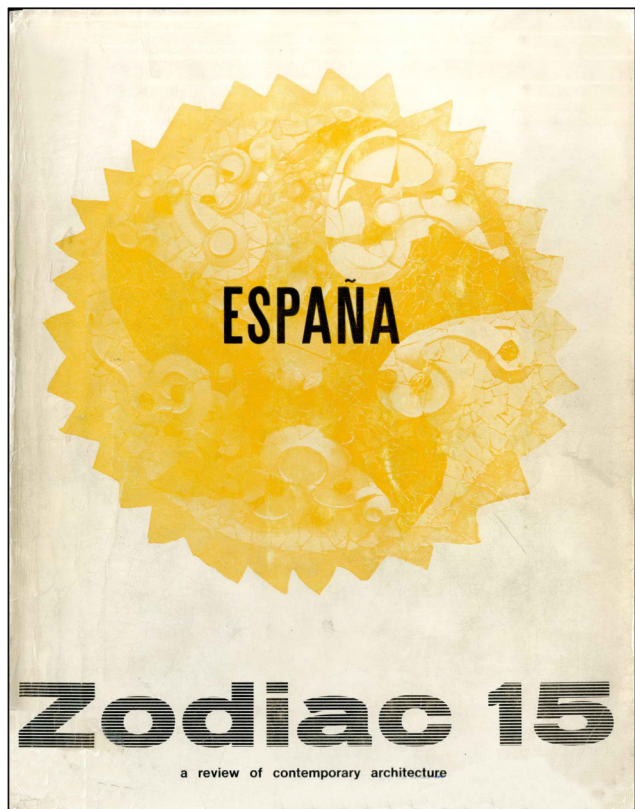
there is also a misguidance of whoever, due to this reason, boycotts the cultural holders that have remained in the country15.

From these brief lines, two clear ideas can be extracted: First, Burckhardt's knowledge of the political situation is patent. When talking about the misguidance of the ones thinking in a 'real change' within the regime, it seems that, implicitly, he is closing the doors to any hope in those believing that the improvement of the foreign affairs and modernisation of the country in those years were to bring a change in the liberties. Second, despite that situation, he considered that there was no reason for blaming the whole country, neither its architecture, acknowledging the virtues of it—in this case, the young architects' production.

Three years later, in 1965, the Italian journal *Zodiac* published an extensive monograph dedicated to Spanish architecture [Fig. 3]. The edition was in charge of the Italian architect Vittorio Gregotti. In the editorial, Gregotti also mentioned the situation of the country, arguing that anything happening there, including architecture, seemed to be constructed as a subversion against the regime: 'when we curated this issue, about a year ago, we set a prime objective, further to our opposition to the regime, of trying to trespass the traditional figure, based on the struggle of regime-resistance with which the world understands life in Spain'16. What Gregotti did not narrate were the problems raised on trying to publish the prepared material. In those years, the Italian architect was editor of *Edilizia Moderna*, however, for political reasons that journal did not accept an

Fig. 3
Front page of the monographic numbers dedicated to Spanish Architecture from the journals *Werk* (n 6, 1962) and *Zodiac* (n 15, 1965) (Figure from the Author).

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15    Lucius Burckhardt, "Spanische Architektur," *Werk*, no. 6 (1962):185.

16    Vittorio Gregotti, "Premisa," *Zodiac*, no. 15 (1965): 3.
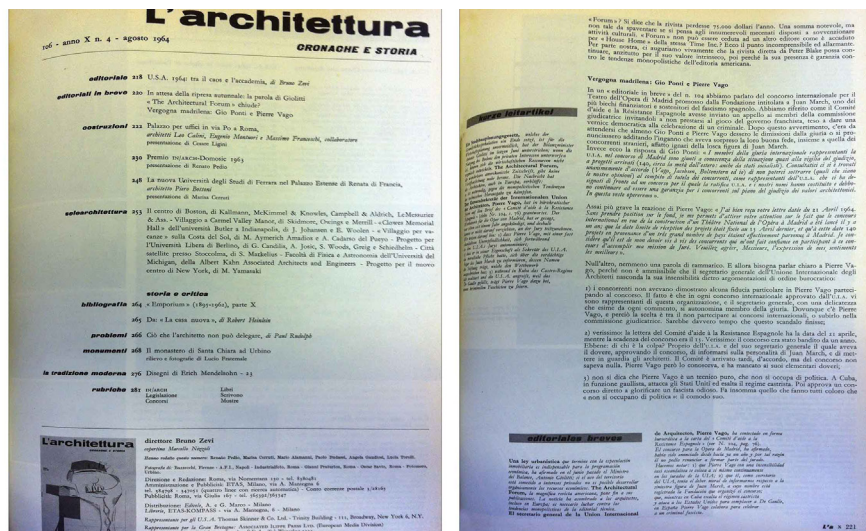
issue on Spanish architecture. Facing that situation, Gregotti turned to *Zodiac*.

As we can see, for both Gregotti and Burckhardt the ideological question conditioned their approach to the Spanish architectural reality. In both cases, the political situation of the country is present; however, it seems to step back against the value of the architecture the young Spaniards were developing. At the end, both editors considered that talking about Spanish architecture was not a means of promoting the regime but a way of critique.

Along the pages of other foreign periodicals we can notice how the disagreement with Franco's dictatorship was a primary question when engaging with Spanish architecture. A clear example was the Italian publication *L'Architettura Cronache e Storia*. The journal was founded in 1955 by the architect and critic Bruno Zevi —who, since then until 2000, became its editor. Zevi, besides being one of the theoretical sources of the post-war Italian rationalism, was prominent for his opposition and struggle against fascism—in which he participated in the forties.

In 1958, in a chronicle published in the journal on the Expo in Brussels, Zevi clearly stated his position regarding the Spanish situation. When talking about the Spanish pavilion, the editor wondered, with some irony, the next questions: 'maybe the country is not fascist anymore? Or Franco is tired and allows an unusual freedom for the artist as Mussolini did in some periods of his dictatorship?'[17] As can be noticed, this commentary shows how the journal believed that Franco controlled the architectural production of the country, when, in fact, the interest of the dictator for the discipline was very little[18].

Later on, in an editorial for the issue of June 1964[19], Bruno Zevi gathered the polemic around the competition for an Opera House in Madrid. The Spanish

17    Renato Pedio, "La crisi del linguaggio moderno dell'Esposizione Universale di Bruxelles 1958," *L'architettura Cronache e Storia*, no. 36 (1958): 388.

18    Pedro Feduchi, in an article about the Pavilion in Brussels (*Pabellón de Bruselas '58. Corrales y Molezún*, (Madrid: Ministerio de Vivienda, 2004), 103-121) shows the little intervention of the government in that work.

19    *L'Architettura Cronache e Storia* presented a similar structure in all its issues. A first part, under the title of 'editoriale' and 'editoriali in breve', developed in four pages different topical questions for architecture. In these editorials, the author was, in most of them, the editor of the journal: Bruno Zevi.

Fig.4
Index and editorial from the journal *L'Architettura Cronache e Storia* (n 106, 1964). The editorial, titled, 'Shame in Madrid: Gio Ponti and Pierre Vago' refers to the controversy that emerged around the contest of the Opera of Madrid (Figure from the Author).

Ministry of Information and Tourism called for this competition, of international character, under the sponsorship of Juan March Foundation. The competition had a great reception among architects. Among the members of the jury were Gio Ponti and Pierre Vago. Up to this point nothing seemed strange. However, the polemic came whit the sponsorship of the Foundation. The institution received the name from its founder, Juan March, to whom Zevi described as 'one of the founder members and promoters of Falange, one of the most wicked figures of Spanish fascism'[20]. Zevi also suggested how 'Franco's regime wanted to glorify, through an international initiative, one of its infamous protagonists'[21].

In the editorial he continued explaining how, after knowing this fact, various Italian intellectuals—among them Zevi himself—sent a telegram to all the embassies informing about the event, and requesting the architects not to present projects[22]. He also pointed out that the 'Comité d'aide a la Résistance Espagnole', presided by Jean Cassou, had sent a release to the members of the jury, asking for their resignation[23]. Two months later, in the August issue of the journal, Zevi showed—in the 'editoriale in brevi' titled 'Shame in Madrid: Gio Ponti and Pierre Vago'[24] —his indignation with the negative of Pierre Vago[25] and Gio Ponti to the resignation [Fig. 4].

Despite the polemic, the proposals for the competition were published in different international journals as *Bauwelt*, *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, *Architectural Design* or *Builder* among others. Some, as it is the case of *Architectural Design*, in 1965, took advantage to show their hostility towards the dictatorship: 'The competition last year for the Madrid Opera House offered architects a challenge that was not only architectural but, equally, ideological -many preferred to have no part in the aggrandizement of the present Spanish regime'[26]. From these words it can be inferred how, for some, every success of the country—also in the realm of architecture—was a triumph for the regime. Two years later, in July 1966, in a new editorial entitled 'Barcelona architects are fighting for freedom in Spain', Zevi published again in his journal a piece of news related to the political situation of the country. In this occasion, he informed about the detention and release of architects Antonio de Moragas, Oriol Bohigas, Luis Domenech and Josep Maria Martorell, noticing how 'once again, Franco's regime has shown oppressive and tyrannical'[27].

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20    Certainly, March's economical support for the coup is clear, however, the politician and businessman also was characterised by his sponsorship of culture and science through his foundation, created in 1955.

21    Bruno Zevi, "Editoriali in Brevi. Más italianos nerviosos," *L'architettura Cronache e Storia*, no. 104 (1964): 77.

22    The text, apart from informing about the fact, is also the response to the accusation made by the newspaper ABC of attempted sabotage of the competition. The Spanish journal *Arquitectura* also mentioned the news and published a letter of response.

23    Bruno Zevi was among the signatories.

24    Bruno Zevi, "Editoriali in Brevi. Vergogna madrileña: Gio Ponti e Pierre Vago," *L'architettura Cronache e Storia*, no. 106 (1964): 221.

25    In these years, he was General Secretary of the UIA.

26    "Madrid Opera House," *Architectural Design*, no. 6 (1965): 312.

27    Bruno Zevi, "Editoriali in Brevi. Gli architetti di Barcellona lottano per la libertà della Spagna," *L'architettura Cronache e Storia*, no. 129 (1966): 144. The reason for the detentions belongs to the context of the revolts carried

On the other hand, it is also patent the journal's support to the Catalan architects that are characterised as 'the best architects in Barcelona, internationally recognised'. With them, Zevi shared a 'common desire of setting Spain free from the oppression'[28]. This affinity was patent on the way Spanish architecture was approached. In the analysis of its pages there were more than forty articles about architectural production in Spain in our historical period. From them, three quarters are dedicated to Catalan architecture from which almost one forth is the work of Catalan architect Oriol Bohigas.

It is important to point out that this fact is not an isolated phenomenon but a possible feature of all the period: between 1950 and 1986, when talking about Spanish architecture, Barcelona had more presence in international journals—more than Madrid or any peripheral region[29].

Certainly, from the many factors that influenced this question, it seems logical to think about how one of these factors has been the view of Catalan architecture as a form of dissent from Franco.

In this sense, it is also important to bear in mind the effort made by some architects from within the country for promoting the Spanish architecture abroad. Among them, the role that Bohigas developed. His promotion in periodicals has been constant, evidencing the effort for promoting Spanish presence, and specially Catalan, in the international panorama. He has regularly collaborated in journals such as *Moebel interior Design*, *Lotus* or *Casabella*. Besides it, he also has collaborated in many monographs that, from the seventies, several periodicals—such as *Aujourd'hui Art et Architecture*, *Arquitectura* (Lisbon), *Werk*, *Der Architekt*, *Abitare* or *Zodiac*— has dedicated to the Spanish production.

From 1975, with Franco's death and the establishment of democracy, there was a new interest in Spanish architecture and its presence in international journals increased in a considerable way: there were many monographs[30] and articles along these years on the Spanish production. As it is logical, along their pages, the new situation of Spain did not pass unnoticed and the architectural reality was seen with optimism. In this new scenario, the production of Spanish architects was set free from the ideological burden that, as we have seen, had diverse manifestations—from the alignment with the regime to its consideration as a mean to combat it—that lost their meaning in the new times.

*Bauen und Wohnen* magazine dedicated its January 1978 issue to the architecture in Barcelona[31]. In that volume, it is pointed how the country 'had been liberated from fascist rule, peacefully, by a judicious government, at a

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out by students in Spain in the 1960's'. In this case, there was a meeting of around 500 students and 35 intellectuals aiming to create a union, something illegal at the time.

28    Zevi, "Editoriali in Brevi," 144.

29    This data is inferred from the analysis of almost 180 international journals.

30    More than a half of the monographs dedicated to Spanish architecture between 1950 and 1986 were published in the period of 1975-1986.

31    It was the second monograph about Spanish architecture that was published since the death of the dictator in 1975. The first one was edited by A+U dedicated to the work of José Antonio Coderch, in December 1977.

crucial moment, combining two epochs, the past still having life in it and the future beginning to emerge'[32]. From its part, the Italian journal *Controspazio* edited a monograph in 1979 on contemporary Spanish architecture. In that issue, the journal reminded the special issue published by *Zodiac* in 1965 and the obstacles Gregotti found for its publication. This way, they put into evidence how the political and architectural panoramas, after fifteen years, changed radically. Leaving Franco's regime behind, Spanish architecture, freed from ideological clichés, was analysed with deeper detail. 'Spain had left the myth behind'[33].

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32    Ulrich Schäfer, "Architektur im Gespräch –Bericht aus Barcelona," *Bauen und Wohnen*, no. 33 (1978): 9.

33    Claudio D'Amato, "Presentazione," *Controspazio*, no. 4 (1979): 2.

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Clara Germana Gonçalves, Rogério Paulo Vieira de Almeida

# Conquering Freedom and Identity.
# Encounters and Convergences
# in Architecture and Music in the Postwar

## /Abstract

Architecture and music's paths in the aftermaths of WWII have been the subject of detailed studies and are well-known in their respective fields. However, beyond the underlying individual expressions, there has been little work on their parallel paths where common themes, experiences, procedures, shared goals, and achievements are analyzed.

In the aftermath of WWII, the idea of progress has faded away, and technology and science are no longer seen as synonymous with progress. Existentialism and the emergence of Social Sciences will be paramount in the new times.

If in the period between the Wars architecture and music saw an overall longing for universality and order, after 1945 nontraditional approaches, in general, the will for change, and the ideas of freedom and identity associated with those of local, community, individuality, participation, etc., will dominate architecture and music's new approaches, manifesting in different ways.

The text proposes (i) to retrace some key junctures in architectural and musical discourses (both practical and theoretical) emerging in the postwar period, (ii) to explain its relevance in cultural terms and (iii) to evaluate some of its later consequences. By exposing some parallels between architecture and music disciplines, the present analysis aims to contribute to a better understanding of its contexts and its disciplinary interrelationships.

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## Introduction

The interwar period was marked in most artistic disciplines by the *retour à l'or-dre* (return to order) – an expression said to derive from Jean Cocteau's (1889-1963) *Le rappel a l'ordre* (1926) to characterize the artistic situation in the interwar period, in opposition to the period of "euphoria" preceding World War I –, however, "throughout the 1950s," as a general attitude, as stated by Marien and Fleming, "artists and writers attempted to merge art and life."[1] Even if the period immediately after the World War IIr may be considered still orthodox, the 1960s and 1970s will be a reaction to this period that immediately follows the war.

This is the period of the spirit of rebellion, of pushing boundaries and challenging established norms. New approaches in Human and Social Sciences, namely from Existentialism, were paramount, after the rise of macro-deterministic visions and ordering systems, in the first half of the twentieth century, following the path of exact and natural sciences.

In architecture and music, two events are of particular significance. The destruction of the Pruitt-Igoe housing complex [Fig. 1] – "celebrated upon its opening [in 1956]"[2] –, in front of its former inhabitants, in 1972 (finalized in 1974), and the destruction, in front of the audience, of a concert piano during Philip Corner's *Piano activities* (1962) performance [Fig. 2] (with the noises extracted from this action being part of the composition).

By materializing the destruction of work, of the "thing" itself, it meant that the rejection is no longer a theoretical proposal, but of its corporeal material existence. People's way of living didn't fit within architectural aspirations and the audiences did not adhere to avant-garde music trends (such as Serialism). Thus, the reception of the work and the symbolic destruction of the work played, in both cases, a special role.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the consequences of cultural and anthropological relativism began to be accepted by culture in general and architecture in particular. Western culture began to accept diversity and pluralism, no longer considering itself superior to others, or the center of the world.[3] On the other hand, it was during the 1960s that the great wave of diffusion of modern architecture took place. Before this, it had been the "intellectual property" of a few countries in central Europe, of the United States, and of the Soviet Union. In this context, three main issues were to be solved: 1. " prototypes being transformed into clichéd imitations"; 2. "the relevance of forms in the new context"; and 3. (a consequence of the second) "if new ideas from abroad were accepted, which old or

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1   Mary Warner Marien and William Fleming, *Arts and Ideas* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 2005), 610. The authors follow, specifying: "Abstract Expressionism insisted on making their intuitive experience the center of art. Writers such Ginsberg based their poetry on their impressions and experiences."

2   Kate Nesbitt, ed., *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory, 1965-1995* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), 22.

3    Josep Maria Montaner, *Después del Movimiento Moderno: Arquitectura de la segunda mitad del siglo XX* (Barcelona: Gustavo Gili, 1999), 127.

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indigenous ones should be thrown out?"[4] The answer to these questions led to new reflections on this modern architecture. Josep Maria Montaner titles Part I of his book on the second half of twentieth-century architecture – "1945-65: Continuidad o crisis" (Continuity or crisis).[5] As William J. R. Curtis states: "[T]he post-war period in Europe was itself marked by pockets of resistance against sterile aspects of internationalism."[6]

The mid-1960s was a "contentious period in theory characterized by a prodigious publication of books and articles on the professional crisis" in contrast to architectural practice that was reduced to canonical works of Modern Movement's repetitions, technological utopias, and expressionist fantasies.[7]

In *Modern Music and After* (2010), Paul Griffiths describes his book as "not a history of music since 1945," but as "an account of a musical movement that gained huge momentum after 1945 … a movement of radical renewal."[8] In his words, "1945 represents a shift in music. The destruction, havoc, grief, and misery felt across the world … demanded not just reconstruction but an alternative paradigm." And the true instigators of change were the young composers: "peo-

Fig. 1
George McCue, Pruitt-Igoe Demolition, 1976.
Source: George McCue Photograph Collection (S0718). S0718_7064. The State Historical Society of Missouri, Photograph Collection.

Fig. 2
Philip Corner's *Piano Activities*, performed by Philip Corner, George Maciunas, Emmett Williams, Benjamin Patterson, Dick Higgins, and Alison Knowles during Fluxus Internationale Festpiele, Neuester Musik, Hörsaal des Städtischen Museums, Wiesbaden, Germany, September 1, 1962. Unknown photographer for Deutsche Presse Agentur. Gelatin silver print, image and sheet: 8 1/4 x 6 5/16' (20.9 x 16 cm). The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection Gift. Acc. no.: 2124.2008
Source: Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence.

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4   William J.R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900* (London: Phaidon, 1987), 331.

5   Montaner, *Después del Movimiento Moderno*.

6   Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 334.

7   Nesbitt, *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture*, 12.

8   Paul Griffiths, *Modern Music and After* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), xvii.

ple just coming to adulthood in a shattered world."[9] An idea followed by Donal J. Grout and Claude V. Palisca, according to whom the music of the 1950s and 1960s was more radically innovative than that of the 1920s.[10]

This paper sets out to reveal and understand the individual paths of architecture and music, their convergences, similarities, and common goals. The aim is to understand these two paths as shared paths, emerging in the context of the same *zeitgeist*, reinforcing the understanding of the role of each of the disciplines. Its ultimate goal is to contribute to a better understanding of architecture and music's contexts and its role in consolidating a specific paradigm. In this case, postwar architecture.

Two main ideas dominate the whole: freedom and identity. Within these, are outlined the themes considered to be, on the one hand, paramount in both disciplines and, on the other hand, a background for a deep relationship between architecture and music. Within freedom: infinity, indeterminacy, daily life, and distant traditions; within identity: vernacular, and individual. The paper is organized into sections following the sequence of those themes. Each section reflects the main theme and elaborates on both architecture and music, therefore contributing to a better understanding of the proximity of both fields. Furthermore, and along with this thematic organization, each theme makes use of authors and works considered as paradigmatic examples, given the limits of the text. Nonetheless, they are mainly instrumental in being related to each other and even concomitants. Some examples could illustrate more than one section, which is symptomatic of how these themes form part of the same paradigm that shapes the postwar period.

## Freedom

In the years after 1945, freedom was a central issue. Already in 1935-1937, Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) pointed out that despite "[t]he scientific rigor …, the convincingness …, and their enduringly compelling successes,"[11] there was a crisis in sciences, in general, and of human sciences in particular. By trying to match the "[s]cientific, objective truth" human sciences were occurring in "a positivistic restriction," and, thus, excluding the "questions which man …, finds the most burning: questions of the meaning or meaninglessness of the whole of this human existence."[12] At the center of Husserl's reflections was the question of freedom: "man as a free, self-determining being in his behaviour toward … himself and his surrounding world."[13] More than a philosophical reflection,

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9    Griffiths, *Modern Music and After*, 1.

10    Donald J. Grout and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1988), 808.

11    Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 4.

12    Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, 5-6.

13    Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, 6.

freedom became a key issue reverberating largely in the years following World War II, eventually ending up being at the center of both theoretical and practical debates in architecture and music, from 1945 onwards.

From a political and ideological point of view, the outcome of World War II was the victory of freedom over dictatorial regimes – a kind of triumph of good over evil. These were also times when different disciplines and artistic practices were taking distance from some dominant themes from the first half of the twentieth century. This distance can be broadly characterized as a three-fold trend. First, the increasing importance of personal expression instead of the group and, or collective positions. Second, the abandonment, or a more slacked use of the systems (such as serialism in music or the more orthodox functionalist architecture) that were prominent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Finally, the free use and acceptance of forms, expressions, and thinking, outside of the Western intellectual tradition.

These intertwined trends would result in a crucible condition, providing conditions for multiple explorations, where expressions, thoughts, and practices, find new ways with this impetus of freedom as a recurrent basis for thought and action. Architectural and music practices were long since under corsets by the notions of order and system; it is no coincidence that treatises in architecture and music were not only more abundant but had a more significant use than in other arts. With all their will for personal expression, and for exploring new paths, those liberties were taken within the framework of an established system. In Vasari's legendary words "a freedom which … was nevertheless ordained by the rules"[14], as a kind of permanent come-and-go from analogy (the rule) to its contradiction (liberty).

The exercise of freedom will take the form of multiple and open choices, both in architecture and music. This exercise manifests itself from the point of view of the author (in the work's form, in the type of composition, in the choice of materials, in his/her inspiration, etc.), from the point of view of the recipients (the intervention of the residents, in the case of architecture, or the public, in the case of music) or even from the point of view of the interpreter (in the case of music).

It's interesting, and possibly paradoxical, that while on the one hand, the interpreter is given a great deal of freedom, on the other hand, he is consigned to a role without functions (as in the case of electroacoustic music).

### *Infinity*

Being closely linked to the notion of freedom, the idea of infinity is both a cause and a consequence.

The avant-garde from the early twentieth century, the technological revolution

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14    Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 278.

throughout the nineteenth century, and the overall licentiousness and free-spirited atmosphere that aroused from the late eighteenth century onwards, were brought to a kind of climax in the post-World War II. Long-distance journeys now possible without time constraints, the possibilities of exploring astronomic space, the new democratic world, and the new technological achievements, all played a catalyzing role by bringing a sensation of infinite possibilities both in theory and practice. The general idea of expansion in space emerges in music and architecture. The concrete surfaces, by their very shape (and definition) are infinite, the megastructures suggest a discreet and continuous vision of the new place and they propose. Musicians now move around the stage and within the audience, among the spectators; with the implementation of loudspeakers and other devices that allow the multiplication of sound sources in the space, music acquires a corporeal space that didn't exist before; this new music tends to diffuse itself in the space as much as possible; in addition, music that can now be emitted by loudspeakers acquires a non-corporeal aspect – no one sees it being performed –, which emphasizes the previous facts.

In architecture, the idea of incorporating infinity was already present in some of Frank Lloyd Wright's (1867-1959) works immediately after 1900[15], thus defining what would soon become known as the Prairie style, in which the walls and horizontal slabs protruded from the buildings as if trying to escape the normal boxed interior space, integrating the interior (finite) space with the exterior (infinite). In fact, conquering, through this encounter, the infinite space. This conquest or relation with the infinity was to remain an invariant in Wright's architecture. The vertical upward extension of the stone wall counterpointed by the dramatic expansion of the horizontal white slabs suspended over the water stream in Kaufmann House (so-called Fallingwater, Bear Run, Pennsylvania, 1936), the flat roofs with long overhanging cantilevers of the Usonian houses (1930-59) and the Guggenheim Museum (New York, 1956–9) with its spiral opening to the sky, are just a few examples of this long-standing relation of Wright's design buildings with the infinity.

Built to celebrate postwar technological progress, the Philips Pavilion, for Expo 58 (Brussels), is a building whose exceptional and unusual form expresses this willingness to emulate infinity. Instead of a parallelepipedal shape, we enter an interior surface-designed space composed of hyperbolic paraboloids. [Fig. 3] Moreover, the building clearly expresses earlier collaborations between Le Corbusier (1987-1965) and Xenakis (1922-2001) (Unité d'Habitation in Marseille, 1947-53; Chandigarh, 1951-9; Monastery of Sainte-Marie de la Tourette, 1953-61), and Xenakis' earlier research on architecture and music interrelations. Indeed, although the building was commissioned to Le Corbusier, the authorship seems to be mainly Xenakis'.[16]

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15    Examples may be Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio (Oak Park, Illinois, 1889-1909), Ward Willits House (Highland Park, Illinois,1901), Darwin Martin House (Buffalo, New York, 1903-5), Robie House, (Chicago, Illinois, 1908), Meyer May House (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1908-9), or Isabel Roberts House (River Forest, Illinois, 1908).

16    Xenakis eventually left Le Corbusier's studio due to this dispute. See Marc Treib, *Space Calculated in Seconds:*

Moreover, Xenakis' later work, namely his series of "polytopes" (1967-85) follows this tendency. The very definition of "polytope" – from Greek *polus*, many, and *topos*, place,[17] or in Ostwald's words "spatial compositions of light and sound"[18] – is an image and accomplishment of this desire to fill the space and supposedly to infinity. Furthermore, colors are projected through external devices while the electroacoustic part is played. This very well explains the will to expand the music throughout the space. Indeed, these objects are neither architecture nor music. It is symptomatic that, in Iannis Xenakis's Official Website[19], Xenakis's work is divided into architecture, music, writings, and polytopes.

Since infinity is an essentially mathematical concept, everything converges on geometry; a geometry that fills space; to infinity. Indeed, as Alessandra Capanna states, "a compositional process in which it is difficult to say if the mathematical structure precedes or proceeds from the architectural image."[20]

By his side, Le Corbusier took this opportunity to build an object that synthesizes the arts: an "electronic poem" (the definition chosen by Le Corbusier for this building-event). A film made out of Le Corbusier's images was projected inside, accompanied by Edgar Varèse's (1883-1965) eight-minute piece, also

*The Philips Pavilion, Le Corbusier, Edgard Varèse* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 88-89.

17    Iannis Xenakis, *Musique de l'architecture: Textes, réalisations et projets architecturaux choisis, présentés et commentés par Sharon Kanach* (Marseille: Parenthèses, 2006), 287.

18    Philipp Oswalt, "Iannis Xenakis' Polytopes," (http://www.oswalt.de/en/text/txt/xenakis.html) last accessed December 20, 2023.

19    "Iannis Xenakis official," https://www.iannis-xenakis.org/ (last accessed December 20, 2023).

20    Alessandra Capanna, "Iannis Xenakis: Architect of Light and Sound," *Nexus Network Journal* 3, no. 1 (2001): 20, https://doi.org/10.1007/s00004-000-0003-4.

Fig. 3

Philips Pavilion, Expo 1958, Brussels, July 1958. Photo by Wouter Hagens.

entitled *Poème électronique* (*Electronic Poem*). Instead of a traditional building as proposed by Philips, the *Poème électronique* – a work of art integrating color, sound, light, and rhythm –, for Le Corbusier a "truly synthetic artwork", put him and his collaborators at the forefront of advanced visual media.[21]

The work of Paolo Portoghesi (1931-2023) emerges as a clear example of the idea of infinity. An architect from the Italian postwar generation, he found inspiration in seventeenth-century baroque architecture for some of his works. In Papanice House (Rome, 1966–8), as well as in Baldi House (Roma, 1959), the plans show a composition in which the spaces could continue, extend, and unfold indefinitely. And in Bevilacqua House (Fontania, Gaeta, 1964-73), although the curved walls give the interior space a strong sense of enclosure, with its concave surfaces, each wall does not join the next one, rather leaving a vertical void that points to the infinity, vertically and horizontally, while the roof has a cupola inspired shape with a spiraled summit that refers to the Borromini's Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza's (Rome, 1643).

Another case where infinity is clearly defined, although in the void form, is Farnsworth House (Plano, IL, 1951) by Mies van der Rohe (1886-1969), in which a clear, void, and undesigned, axis pierces the house guided by the stairs bellow.

In what concerns music, François Bayle's (b.1932) is paradigmatic. One of Bayle's first works is entitled *Espaces inhabitables* (*Unhabitable Spaces*) (1967). A later one, the cycle entitled *Érosphère* (1978-9) while alluding to the same spatiality, is one of the first musical works that uses computer real-time transformations. From 1974 on, he worked on his idea of *acousmonium* (seldom referred to as "*orchestre de haut-parleurs* (loudspeaker orchestra)"), a device designed to play live electroacoustic music that consists of a set of loudspeakers, each with its color, arranged on stage. This set-up is often complemented by lighting or video.[22]

### Indeterminacy

In 1958, John Cage gave two lectures entitled "Indeterminacy", one in Darmstadt and one in Brussels. Both had a performance format, combining words, music, and short stories. The word "indeterminacy," while new as a conscious and operative concept in music, was not a new idea in artistic practice. And even if the indeterminacy notion refers mainly to specific procedures in music, the idea was also explored in other arts such as the mobile sculptures of Alexandre Calder (1898-1976) in which objects were hung while moving randomly with the airflow.[23]

In a sense, indeterminacy as a kind of uncertainty was a common notion not

21    Treib, *Space Calculated in Seconds,* xiv.

22    Gaël Tissot, "La musique acousmatique de François Bayle: Entre ombre et lumière, une musique de transparence," *Musurgia* 14, no. 3/4 (2007): 57, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40591495.

23    See as examples, Calder's mobiles *Romulus and Remus*, 1928, and *Ghost*, 1964.

only to arts but also to science. Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, articulated in 1927, and the stochastic processes in mathematics had already broken the assumption of an always fixed result, or form, from a defined set of causes. By introducing the ideas of uncertainty and probability, they preceded the later idea of indeterminacy as formulated and put into practice in music by Cage.

Some analog procedures would also be developed in architecture such as structures left open to further determinations by future users and/or inhabitants. By way of illustrating the discussion on the idea of structure, Herman Hertzberger refers to the spontaneous occupation over centuries, with different uses to the original ones, of pre-existing structures, such as the Bastille Viaduct in Paris, Diocletian's Palace in Split, and the Amphitheatre Square in Lucca.[24] This set of examples emerges as an illustration of what could be considered indeterminacy in architecture: precisely this discussion on the idea of structure induces the idea of indeterminacy in architecture.

Although Hertzberger refers to the spontaneous occupation of preexisting buildings in these examples, his architecture is a priori thought to be "occupied". For him, the architect's job is to provide users a structure, a support that can be filled in by them. In *Lessons for Students in Architecture* (1991), Hertzberger thus defines structure:

> "Broadly speaking, 'structure' stands for the collective, general, (more) objective, and permits interpretation in terms of what is expected and demanded of it in a specific situation. One could also speak of structure in connection with a building or an urban plan: a large form which, changing little or not at all, is suitable and adequate for accommodating different situations because it offers fresh opportunities time and again for new uses."[25]

Hertzberger also compares the structure to a tree that loses its leaves every year: while the tree remains the same, the leaves are renewed every spring.[26]

His ideas are put into practice in, for example, De Drie Hoven Residence for the Elderly in Amsterdam (1964-74) – a fixed structure that allows for different occupations of the space and different formal variations. The initial form can adapt to multiple functions and take on numerous appearances, while the structure remains fundamentally the same maintaining visual and organizational coherence.[27] The possibilities are thought of a priori by the architect as part of the project. It is not about the public's participation in the project, or in the final work, as is the case with Lucien Kroll's work (cf. below).

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24   Herman Hertzberger, *Lessons for Students in Architecture* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2001), 98-103.

25   Hertzberger, *Lessons for Students in Architecture*, 94.

26   Hertzberger, *Lessons for Students in Architecture*, 132.

27   Hertzberger, *Lessons for Students in Architecture*, 131-32.

In Steven Holl's (b. 1947) later "hinged space", as shown in Parallax[28], object-walls move around fixed axes, like a mobile. Space changes when the user interacts with objects. The possibilities are random, and unlimited in their combinations. These "participating … rotating-walls"[29] resemble Calder's mobiles.[30]

Paradoxically, indeterminacy arises in the same period in which, in fully electronic works, the composer controls the entire piece, and the performer is dismissed. According to *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music*, indeterminacy in music, close to aleatory, means that a decision by the performer replaces a decision of the composer.[31] Indeed, indeterminacy is a term introduced by John Cage, replacing aleatory,[32] a more restricted term, covering all situations: from improvisation, within a previously established framework, to cases in which the composer only gives a minimum of indications to the performer or exercises himself the choices at the minimum.[33] Along with previous Cage's works, such as *Imaginary Landscape No. 4* (1951), *Music of Changes* (1951), and the silent *4'33"* (1952), other musicians such as Henry Cowell (1897-1965), Morton Feldman (1926-1987) and Christian Wolff (b. 1934) had already used indeterminate structures in their compositions. Stockhausen and Xenakis wrote pieces, in the 1950s, in which time length is left to the performer's discretion.

One of the most significant works from John Cage is *4'33"* (1952), a work "for any number of players, any sounds or combinations of sounds produced by any means, with or without other activities."[34] A fact of major importance is that the score has empty pages.

*Fontana Mix* (1958), one of Cage's emblematic works, is a composition indeterminate of its performance. Furthermore, it is, as Griffiths explains, a "kit composition."[35] The score consists of ten sheets of paper and twelve transparencies. The sheets of paper contain drawings of 6 differentiated (as to thickness and texture) curved lines. Ten transparencies have randomly distributed points. Another transparency has a grid, measuring 2 x 10 inches, and one last contains a straight line. By superimposing these transparencies, the player creates a structure from which a performance score can be played: one transparency with dots is placed over one of the sheets with curved lines, and over this one

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28    Steven Holl, *Parallax* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000), 226-251.

29    Holl, *Parallax*, 226-233.

30    For the specific relation between architecture and music in Holl's teaching activity, see https://www.stevenholl.com/architectonics-of-music/ (last accessed December 20, 2023).

31    Michael Kennedy, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 357.

32    See Grout and Claude Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 873. In the original English version, "aleatory" is used. A more recent version of the book uses the term "chance" instead of "aleatory": "chance music". Cf. J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010), 942. It is interesting to note that in the Portuguese translation of the former edition of the book – Donald J. Grout, Claude V. Palisca, *História da música ocidental* (Lisbon: Gradiva, 1994), 749 – "*aleatório*" (aleatory) is the word used, which is explicit concerning the Latin term *alea* (dice, in English). Indeed, "chance" has a wider range of acceptance than "aleatory".

33    Grout and Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 873.

34    Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 943.

35    Griffiths, *Modern Music and After*, 154.

places the grid. A point enclosed in the grid connects with a point outside, using straight-line transparency. Horizontal and vertical measurements of intersections of the straight line with the grid and the curved line create a time-bracket along with actions to be made. *Fontana Mix* may be performed with parts written for Cage's *Concert for Piano and Orchestra*, *Aria*, *Solo for Voice 2*, and/or *Song Books*.

In "Lecture on Nothing" (1959), John Cage considers structure "a discipline which, accepted, in return accepts whatever,"[36] very much in line with the idea of structure as proposed by Hertzberger.

Christian Wolff's work is also a paradigmatic case of indeterminacy in music. Performers are offered numerous choices in his music, based on two main ideas: music exists only in performance, and "the freedom and dignity of the performers" is paramount.[37]

Another approach to indeterminacy is that of electroacoustic music. In this type of music, sounds are manipulated acoustically, generating music in which there is no stable temporal reference system. In this respect it is interesting to refer that, in some cases, in the music of non-Western oral traditions, this issue also seems to be present. This is the case with certain Eskimo or Pygmy songs, for example. In these songs the drumming is not isochronous – the duration of a given event when repeated is not constant – when two recordings of the same song are superimposed, the same beats are not superimposed.[38]

### *Daily life*

The incorporation of daily life in its diverse and multiple dimensions is another aspect that dominates postwar architecture and music, with the use of new, non-conventional/non-traditional materials being paramount in both architecture and music therefore, expressing a sense of freedom while exercising it and moving away from tradition. From now on, low-price materials, industrial materials, ordinary materials, as well as every sound or (former) noise – even silence – were to be considered as legitimate as those consecrated by tradition as materials. Antecedents of this were already in place in Gaudi's (1852-1926) use of broken glassed tiles, Le Corbusier's grass in roof gardens, exposed iron structures such as Pierre Charreau's (1883-1950), Maison de Verre (with Bernard Bijvoet, (1889-1979), Paris, 1928-32), not to mention Picasso's (1881-1973) and Bracque's (1882-1963) use of *papier collé* as early as the first decade of the twentieth century or Duchamp's (1887-1968) "ready-mades". In music,

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36    Cage, John. "Lecture on Nothing," in *Silence: Lectures and Writings* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), 111. The full quotation is: "Structure is simple be–cause [sic] it can be thought out, figured out, measured. It is a discipline which, accepted, in return accepts whatever, even those rare moments of ecstasy, which, as sugar loaves train horses, train us to make what we make."

37    Norman Lebrecht, *The Companion to 20th Century Music* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1996), 385.

38    Jean-Jacques Nattiez, "Tonal/ atonal", in *Enciclopedia Einaudi* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional - Casa da Moeda, 1984), 305.

electronic sounds and recorded noises were used already in the 1930s as is the case of the Futurists. But the period after World War II's overall atmosphere would provide momentum and openness to include new materials. As stated by Pierre Boulez (1925-2016), new materials were the key element for post-war innovations, new ideas were always following the invention of new materials.[39]

Notwithstanding their great success, radicalities from the first half of the twentieth century were seen as eccentricities, avant-garde, and exceptions. Democratic ideals, the faith in progress, and the belief in a "Brave New World" formed the crucible for the appearance and the extensive use of non-conventional materials after 1945. With the new mindset emerging, radicality became a new normality. In this respect, technological inventions as well as everyday, non-conventional materials came to prominence. This acquires even more relevance if one considers that artistic practice had long since been in a world apart from normal, daily life, even if with some exceptions such as the everyday life scenes in seventeenth-century Dutch painting and the case of the sublime – with the terrible and ugly being considered as a theme. The monolithic triple relation – unique objects had to be created for individuals with uncommon power, capable of summoning exceptional artists to produce works of unrepeatable beauty – started to show clear fractures all over the nineteenth century.

The fact that the nineteenth century was in a sense marked by the "apotheosis of art"[40] and by the consecration of the "system of systematic grouping together the five major arts, which underlies all modern aesthetics and is so familiar to us all,"[41] already carried the seeds of its disintegration. The minor, subsidiary, or applied arts, usually linked to the everyday practical needs of life, were soon to claim their autonomy and invade the realm of the major arts. And if Realism, par excellence, portraits of daily life, Picasso's and Braque's go further by including these subjects in their material form as well. Their use of the *papier collé* or Duchamp's "ready-made" or "found objects" were signs of the latter. Moreover, practices like photography, film, jewelry, fashion, and design find their way in the first half of the twentieth century to a growing acknowledgment as part of the arts field.

These antecedents were enhanced by the dramas of the World War II (partially already announced with Modernism in the 1910s). Dreams of art as a redeeming revelation and of the spiritual elevation of man were ended, or at least interrupted, by the human brutalities of the war. It is in this context of a certain loss of the art's aura that the fact that daily life was brought to the center of artistic practice became an instrumental one and acquired an all-new importance. After World War II, the quintessential place of daily life is the street, or the urban public space. Art and architecture had long since been the realm to produce stan-

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39    *Arena Series*, season 8, episode 12, "Boulez Now," directed by Barrie Gavin, aired February 8, 1983, on BBC.

40    Larry Shiner, *La invención del arte* (Barcelona: Espasa Libros, 2004), 175.

41    Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought and The Arts: Collected Essays* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 165, 225.

dalone objects. However, the public contemporary imagery became increasingly populated with street images, a fact only stressed by the appearance of television. Exceptional and significant moments were no longer associated with the private spheres of palaces and families but with the street. Riots, protests, demonstrations, strikes as well as festivals, celebrations, sports events, and other mass moments increasingly become points of encounter between "triviality and splendour – seriousness and play – reality and dreams"[42]. In his *Critique de la vie quotidienne I: Introduction* (1947) Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991) was about to launch what would become an action "programme", in the intellectual circles as well as in artistic and political movements, as it would be lately confirmed by his influence in the May 68[43]. The "programme" could be summed up in the book's premonitory question: "how can the 'masses' – whether masses of moments or masses of human beings – 'participate' in a total vision?"[44]

Ten years after Lefebvre's book, in 1957 (at Cosio d'Arroscia, Italy), Situationist International was founded. Loosely inspired by the avant-garde movements, libertarian Marxist and left-inspired politics and Lefebvre's ideas, one of its main fields of action was everyday life. Their revolutionary program proclaimed that art should be a driving force for social change, calling for spontaneous action and adopting playfulness to articulate alternative ways of living and working.

Concerning architecture, Situationist International stated that it should emerge from the street and its inherent multiplicity of forms, its movements, validities, and contradictions, with the variety of environments acting as a central determining force, and the street as the space of liberation. In direct contrast to former modern architects, the Situationist International wanted to embrace the fluidity of modern life, not the imaginary fluidity of "free movement" but the fluidity in which all the chaotic upheavals of reality emerge – the body as it sweeps against and is dented by its context. The Situationist International structured architecture on such concepts as noise, and dissonance, inherent in the "natural" conditions of urban life. More than a sequence of cause-effect actions, several works show a diffuse nevertheless related set of works. Gordon Cullen's (1914-1994) *The Concise Townscape* (1961) called for an understanding of the urban space beyond the individual qualities of buildings:

> "One building standing alone is experienced as a work of architecture, but bring a dozen buildings together and an art other than architecture is made possible … the space created between the buildings is seen as having a life of its own."[45]

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42    Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, 251.

43    For an outline of Lefebvre relations and influences, see Michel Trebitsch, "Preface," in Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, ix-xxviii; Lukasz Stanek, *Henri Lefebvre on Space Architecture, Urban Research, and the Production of Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011); Lukasz Stanek, "Introduction. A Manuscript Found in Saragossa: Toward an Architecture," in Henri Lefebvre, *Towards an Architecture of Enjoyment* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), xi-lxi.

44    Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, 250.

45    Gordon Cullen, *The Concise Townscape* (London: Architectural Press, 1961), 7.

For Denys Lasdun (1914-2001), as Montaner points out, more than the buildings themselves, the most important thing is the space between them. This is the true urban and collective space par excellence. In Lasdun's buildings, staggered and cut out, the plane of the façade gives way to the environment, the urban space, the open platforms, and the city being created. Examples of some of the buildings are the Royal College of Physicians (London, 1960) and the Royal National Theatre (London, 1967-1973). The same attitude – which gives the building itself and the public space that surrounds it the same importance – is also revealed by Alison and Peter Smithson (1928-1993 and 1923-2003) in the headquarters of *The Economist* (London, 1963-67), thoughts very much in line with Jane Jacobs's (1916-2006) book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) and Henri Lefebvre's *Le Droit à la ville* (1968) (*The Right to the City*).[46]

One further example that fits in with this spirit is the study cited by Toby Morris as a reaction to the uniformity of architecture imposed by the International Style: Douglas Haskell (1899-1979), in "Jazz in Architecture: It Makes More Fun and Better Sense" (*Architectural Forum*, no. 3 (Sep1960)) suggested that architecture should be inspired by jazz and reject the regular rhythms of structure and fenestration in favor of syncopated rhythms and dissonant proportions.[47] It should be noted that this call to jazz is also related to the affirmation of an emerging American culture (jazz presents itself as something genuinely American or, at least, non-European). This also means a sense of identity.

Relation with daily life was expressed also in the use of non-conventional materials. A clear example is the usage of *béton brut* (raw concrete) after 1945 as a non-conventional material.[48] Until then, it remained a hidden non-visible material apart from a few exceptions such as Church of Notre-Dame at Le Raincy (near Paris, 1923) by Auguste Perret (1874-1954), or military fortifications. It is in this context that the turning from the structural, hidden concrete, to the visual, visible concrete can be seen as the appearance of a non-conventional material in architecture. Le Corbusier's extensive use of visible concrete in the exterior of his buildings became a trademark of his architecture from 1945 onwards. The Unité d'Habitation (Marseille, 1947), Villa Shodhan (Ahmedabad, India, 1951-6), Convent of Sainte Marie de La Tourette (Éveux, France, 1953-60), Chandigarh buildings (1951-1962), National Museum of Western Art (Tokyo, 1954-9), Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1960–63), and his last building Gymnasium (Baghdad, 1956-65, built 1978-80), all show the same extensive and almost exclusive use of *béton brut* as the only visible material in the exterior walls. This use of concrete as a raw, visible material became part of a more general trend to use other raw construction materials such as

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46    Montaner, *Después del Movimiento Moderno*, 37, 77-78, 82.

47    Toby E. Morris, "Musical Analogies in Architecture," *Structurist*, no. 35-36 (1995-1996): 68.

48    A natural association must be established with Art Brut (raw art) as proposed by Jean Dubuffet (1901-1985) in which qualities like vitality, childlike, and inclusion of materials such as gravel, ashes, sand, etc, are the main features.

exposed in what became known as "New Brutalism"[49] characterized by the clear exhibition of the inherent qualities of materials "as found" (Reyner Banham, *The Architectural Review*, 1955) leading to the creation of an image where the coherence of the building was sustained by a visual entity where exterior volumes were defined and emphasized by materials. While this unconventional use of materials had developments in the works of mainstream architects such as Alison and Peter Smithson, Denys Lasdun, James Stirling (1926-1992), James Gowan (1923-2015), and Paul Rudolph (1918-1997), it will echo also in other geographies such as Eastern European and Far East countries.

A different attitude is the use of non-conventional materials, in the strict sense, for their precarity, by Frank O. Gehry. His incorporation of non-building materials – corrugated metal sheets, chain-link fences, unfinished ceiling beams, and plywood –, all exposed and as final finishing of surfaces, had the first architectural formulation, in his own house in Santa Monica (1977-9), where he wrapped an existing 1920s colonial style house with corrugated metal sheets and chain-link fences. His subsequent works remained highly experimental while exploring the sculptural expressiveness of non-conventional materials, even if not as cheap anymore such as the titanium cladding of the Guggenheim Museum (Bilbao, 1998).

During the 1940s, several musicians explored ways of incorporating daily sounds into music. Those were not entirely new attempts, as previously stated. However, it was Pierre Schaffer (1910-1995) who all over the 1940s explored, developed, and defined what he will designate, in 1952, as *musique concrète* (concrete music).[50] He considered the entire world of sound as potential material for music.[51] With his musique concrète,[52] Pierre Schaffer fought for the same inclusion of daily life noises in his music.[53] Simply put, musique concrète proposed a radical change in musical composition. The basic materials were common everyday sounds recorded on magnetic tapes with a microphone. These were later transformed by using electronic and magnetic devices and finally mixed and assembled on a tape or recording. Music notes were replaced by daily sounds, instruments were replaced by microphones and tape recorders, and interpreter musicians were now sound technicians. In terms of composition, a whole new system with no relation to previous ones was born. Dodecaphonic and serial music parted ways with traditional systems but kept using traditional notation, musical notes, and traditional techniques, such as counterpoint and harmony, even if proposing whole new systems. Musique concrète, on

49    Reyner Banham, "The New Brutalism," *The Architectural Review*, (December 1955); Reyner Banham, *The New Brutalism* (London: Architectural Press, 1966).

50    See Pierre Schaeffer, *A la recherche d'une musique concrète* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1952). Schaeffer used the designation "*musique concrète*" "because the computer worked with concrete sounds themselves rather than with music notation." Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 947.

51    Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 947.

52    We follow the English terminology as in Burkholder, Grout and Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 947, A12.

53    A parallel between International Situationist and musique concrète is proposed by Brandon LaBelle in "Architecture of Noise," in *Site of Sound: Of Architecture and the Ear*, ed. Brandon LaBelle and Steve Roden (Los Angeles: Errant Bodies Press, 2002), 47-55.

the other hand, had no relation whatsoever with the existing elements of music. No music notes, no new systems to ordering them, no instruments, and no virtuosity to show. Notions taken for granted till then – melody, harmony, rhythm, and tempo – suddenly disappeared. Just existing sounds and new ways to manipulate them.

After a few years of experimentation with sounds, in Studio d'Essai de la Radiodiffusion Nationale (renamed Club d'Essai de la Radiodiffusion-Television Française in 1946),[54] the year 1948 saw the first Pierre Schaffer's work of musique concrète *Cinq études de bruits* (Five studies of noises), and by the early 1950s musique concrète became a well-known trend, at least in the avant-garde musical circles. Notable composers like Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992), Edgar Varèse, and Arthur Honegger (1992-1955), as well as emerging key names from the postwar generation such as Luc Ferrari (1929-2005), Iannis Xenakis, Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, were attracted to these studios where they explored the possibilities of the new genre and its technologies.

Another of these pioneers of musique concrète, Pierre Henry (1927-2017), started, in 1946, working in the Club d'Essai studio. Of those first years of experimenting and collaborating with Pierre Schaeffer, a major work of musique concrète, *Symphonie pour un homme seul* (*Symphony for One Man Alone*), was composed by the two men in collaboration. The work was a main influence outside of musical circles, as in the case of Maurice Béjart (1927-2007) namely with the eponymous ballet in 1955, a sign of what Pierre Schaeffer would later call creation "across disciplines"[55], and the first of a long series of collaborations between Béjart and Henry.

Schaeffer and Henry's initial tour de force to establish the new genre was underpinned by the theoretical work mainly from Schaeffer. If *À la recherche d'une musique concrète* (*In Search of a Concrete Music*), published in 1952, was, along with other short texts, mainly an account of the discoveries and experiments from the 1940s, the *Traité des objets musicaux* (*Treatise on Musical Objects: An Essay across Disciplines*), published in 1966, presents concrete music as an established genre, with a defined vocabulary, and its specific musical forms and types.

The term musique concrète slowly dissolved into the more general notion of electroacoustic, however, the specific use of daily sounds in music became a well-defined and precise influence in the late 1960s and 1970s, not only in eru-

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54    See Carlos Palombini, "Machine Songs V: Pierre Schaeffer: From Research into Noises to Experimental Music," *Computer Music Journal* 17, no. 3 (1993): 14, https://doi.org/10.2307/3680939. The Studio d'Essai de la Radiodiffusion Nationale was founded in 1942 by Jacques Copeau (1879-1949) and his pupils along with Pierre Schaeffer. (It became a center of the Resistance movement in French radio, being responsible, in August 1944, for the first broadcasts in liberated Paris.) It was renamed in 1946 to Club d'Essai de la Radiodiffusion-Television Française, where in 1948, Schaeffer started research into noises in what would become publicly known as *musique concrète* in 1949. In 1951, along with Pierre Henry, and sound engineer Jacques Poullin, the Groupe de Recherches de Musique Concrète, Club d'Essai de la Radiodiffusion-Television Française was born, denoting official recognition.

55    Pierre Schaeffer, *Treatise on Musical Objects: An Essay Across Disciplines*, trans. Christine North and John Dack (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017).

dite music but in popular music as well. It was the case of many obscure, experimental, underground, alternative, and indie music scenes[56], but daily sounds also started to appear in the core of mainstream music, the radio pop song. Frying eggs, ticking clocks, cash registers, barking dogs, sheep bleats, truck doors, trains, metallic clashes, roosters crowing, creaking doors, voices in the street, bombs, and crashing planes, become common and sometimes iconic defining sounds of hit songs.[57]

A key and radical moment concerning the use of a non-conventional material is John Cage's use of silence. His acceptance of silence as the exclusive musical material is an absolutely revolutionary attitude and one of the most revolutionary ever. He states: "Thanks to the silence, noise has definitely entered my music"[58] and "[t]he more you discover that the noises of the outside world are musical, the more music there is."[59] His *4'33"*'s score has empty pages, showing that the outside noise is now part of the music.[60]

In a parallel point of view and referring to painting, the very same idea can be found in the work of Helena Almeida (1934-2018), *S/título* (Untitled) (1969, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon), in which the (blue) frame, supporting a (orange) canvas shifted to the side in its frame, allowing you to see the wall behind.

### Distant traditions

After World War II, exoticism, and distant traditions (non-Western traditions) became a common feature in architecture and music, thus expressing a sense of freedom and a tie-cutting with the past. Once more, there were already earlier signs of this attitude. Indeed, the search and use of non-Western traditions came to the foreground of arts from the nineteenth century onwards; even if classical art with its elements and codes remained a constant presence during the nineteenth century, the desacralization of classicism was an ongoing process, giving way to other historical references and slowly dissolving into a general eclecticism. It is in this context that the "discovery" of exotic art elements from faraway places became instrumental in the artistic renovation of the early twentieth century, even if episodically (Orientalism, Japanism, Chinoiserie, etc).

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56    As examples of this, see the records of Cabaret Voltaire, Throbbing Gristle, Test Department, Psychic TV, Einstürzende Neubauten, and early Pink Floyd.

57    See, as examples, The Beatles ("Good Morning", "Back in the USSR", "Revolution 9", "A Day in a Life"), Pink Floyd ("Alain's Psychedelic Breakfast", "Time", "Money", "Sheep", "Dogs", "In the Flesh"), Kraftwerk ("Autobahn", "Trans Europe Express"), Joy Division ("Insight"), Peter Gabriel ("Intruder", "Biko") and The Smiths ("Last Night I Dreamed").

58    John Cage, *Pour les oiseaux: entretiens avec Daniel Charles* (Paris: Belfond, 1976), 112, quoted in Jean-Jacques Nattiez, "Som/ ruído," in *Enciclopedia Einaudi* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional - Casa da Moeda, 1984), 213 (our translation).

59    John Cage, *Pour les oiseaux*, 222 (our translation).

60    It is surely symptomatic that Cage wrote a piece for solo prepared piano entitled *Music for Marcel Duchamp* (1947). (The work was originally written for the Duchamp portion of Hans Richter's film, *Dreams That Money Can Buy*.)
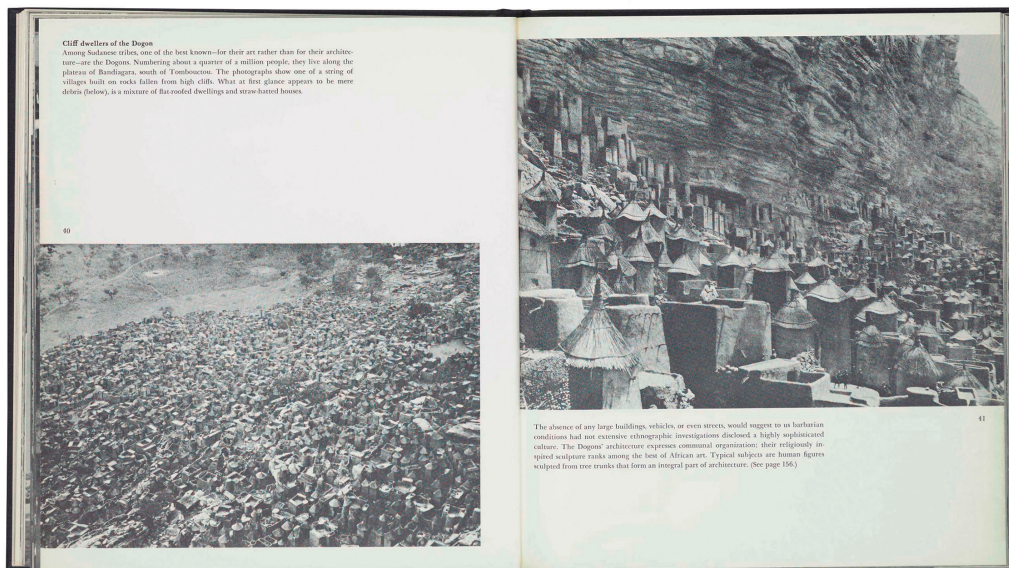
Before World War II, Frank Lloyd Wright's early buildings showed various vernacular influences such as Midwestern, the Shingle style, or Mayan revival as a way to broaden his horizons; the Japanese influence was a constant from his early years throughout his whole career, first through his Japanese prints collection then by direct knowledge of Japanese architecture. Apart from Frank Lloyd Wright, Bruno Taut (1880-1938) and Richard Neutra (1892-1970) were among the architects who before World War II explored the influence of Japanese architecture – one of the most faraway influences in Western architecture –, in which they found similar principles to those of modern architecture.

Another reason for this incorporation of distant traditions was expressed by Aldo Van Eyck (1918-1999). His study of Dogon mud communities in the pre-Sahara [Fig. 4] as well as linguistic anthropology was a consequence of his quest for "timeless qualities." According to Curtis, Van Eyck's approach to vernacular form was mystical: "he saw them as expressions of coherent spiritual mythologies which he felt were sorely missing from most industrial building. His analysis focused on the cosmic meaning of symbolic elements … and on the hierarchies of spaces."[61]

Music was perhaps the artistic field where encompassing distant traditions had a larger outreach and wide range. A comprehensive account would go far beyond this text's scope and limits, but some key moments and protagonists are worth pointing out. The USA-based artistic experimental forum Fluxus while more concerned with the inclusion of everyday into art – with a parallel approach concerning its European counterpart Situationist International –, had in its events' participants well-established names such as John Cage, and emerging ones. Among these are La Monte Young (b. 1935) and Terry Reily (b. 1935). Both were heavily influenced by music from India, Japan, and the Indonesian Gamelan and were involved in defining what would become known as

Fig. 4
Cliff dwellers of the Dogon communities, in Bernard Rudofsky, *Architecture Without Architects: An Introduction to Non-Pedigreed Architecture* (New York, NY: The Museum of Modern Art, 1964), ill. 40-41.

Source: www.moma.org/ calendar/exhibitions/3459.

61    Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 291.

minimal music, by using repetitive melodic patterns and drone notes, largely inspired by non-Western distant traditions. Another key figure in the minimal music scene is Steve Reich (b.1936) who stated, in 1970:

> "Non-Western music in general and African, Indonesian and Indian music in particular will serve as new structural models for Western musicians. Not as new models of sound. (That is the old exoticism trip.) Those of us who love the sounds will hopefully just go and learn how to play these musics."[62]

In *Telemusik* (1966) Stockhausen (1928-2007) also includes recordings of indigenous music from Spain, Vietnam, Bali, the southern Sahara, Japan, and Hungary. The piece was composed in Tokyo, with him adding that he aimed to create "not 'my' music but a music of the whole earth, all lands, and races."[63]

Besides the erudite tradition, and in the context of the growing importance of popular culture after the 1950s, the rise of popular music had its roots in the Western song tradition but soon began to explore distant traditions by mainstream musicians such as The Beatles (*The White Album*, 1968), Jimi Hendrix (*Foxy Lady*, 1967), John McLaughlin and Mahavishnu Orchestra (*The Inner Mounting Flame*, 1971), Miles Davis (*Filles de Kilimanjaro*, 1968), and Led Zeppelin (*Kashmir*, 1974). This widening of possibilities paved the way for what was coined in the 1980s as World Music, with the WOMAD (World of Music, Arts and Dance) festival becoming one of its most well-known public events since 1982.

## Identity

In a text published initially in 1954, Siegfried Giedion states that,

> "first and foremost, [the architect] must make a careful—one might almost say a reverent—study of the way of life (the climate of living) of the place and the people for whom he is going to build. This new regionalism has as its motivating force a respect for individuality and a desire to satisfy the emotional and material needs of each area."[64]

Significantly, this appeal to regionalism and individuality comes precisely from Giedion, one of the International Style's heralds, and one of the organizers and founders, in 1928, of CIAM (International Congresses of Modern Architecture). It was not a turnback to the universal architectural conception, but a claim to the "regional [and local] contributions" and that the architecture and cities:

> "must … recover those values that have been lost to our period: the human scale, the rights of the individual, the most primitive security of

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62    Steve Reich, "Some Optimistic Predictions (1970) About the Future of Music," 1970, quoted in Paul Griffiths, *Modern Music* (Rev. ed. London: Thames and Hudson, 1996), 130.

63    Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Texte* (Cologne: DuMont, 1971), 75, quoted in Griffiths, *Modern Music and After*, 176.

64    Siegfried Giedion, *Architecture, You and Me: The Diary of a Development* (Harvard University Press, 1958), 145.

movement, within the city. How can one overcome the isolation of the individual …? How can one stimulate a closer relationship between the individual and the community?"[65]

Giedion's claims were in line with time's trends. If it is true that the desire and aspiration for the universal marked contemporaneity, it is also true that it was

also the time of nationalisms. In its modern sense[66], nationalisms are intertwined processes, with one of its prominent features being the difference, the individuality, and the construction of identity signs of distinction.

It was only natural that the years following World War II were characterized by rising tensions between universal and local values. Universality was directly connected with the West spreading its values and achievements through all continents. This implied a colonial relation between Western and other territories, an idea challenged by a new international reality, by the fall of the empires, by the colonies' independencies, and by the consensual understanding that all peoples were equal. Also, the Eurocentric universality had been unable to avoid two major world conflicts, each with millions of deaths, which originated precisely in the birth of universality, Europe. The individual freedom, as well as the collective one, led to new choices with countries having to define identities and national symbols. In Europe, architecture faced a new quite specific challenge: reconstruction of destroyed cities. The simple fact of deciding between the reconstruction of old historical areas destroyed, or rebuilding them with modern models, led to reflections, and discussions, ultimately on the relations, similarities, and oppositions, between universal, regional, traditional, vernacular, folk, and local values.

It is therefore important to consider identity as a multi-folded notion, "on which the novel appeal of political nationalism could build"[67], to preserve historical Western cultures, as well as to enable the rise and claim of now equal nations all over the world. As pointed out in the next two sections, vernacular expressions and the role of the individual were to play a fundamental role.

### *Vernacular*

Explorations of the vernacular never ceased to be present in the contemporary era. Vernacular was instrumental to what Eric Hobsbawm (1917-2012) named the "nationalism program"[68] that spread in Europe during the nineteenth century. The "new nations" needed a sense of sharing a common past, and vernacular had a key role in this construction. By the end of the nineteenth century, most

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65    Giedion, *Architecture, You and Me*, 159.

66    Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 14-45.

67    Hobsbawm. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780*, 45.

68    Hobsbawm. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780*.

European nations engaged in a quest to define the specifics of a national style, namely in architecture. If, on the one hand, monumental-historical styles of the past (Classicism, Romanesque, Gothic, etc.) were essential to the nation-state's power affirmation, on the other hand, the vernacular-folk features had a key role since they could provide a widespread sense of sharing between the population. The rising of the vernacular was, in a sense, seen as a return to a programmatic use of forms, structures, and sounds, in contrast with the universal value of forms and sounds proclaimed by both classicism and modernity.

Along with the ideological uses of the different nationalist traditions, vernacular has had another relevant purpose in modern times. Vernacular was frequently invoked as having a kind of timeless qualities, above the contingency of the historical styles and places. More than a monolithic trend, the vernacular was, and is, a converging place encompassing different dimensions: primitivism (the ancient timeless past), organized national folklore (the timeless oral tradition), or informal Indigenous cultural forms. On the one hand, it was an ideal companion to the avant-garde and modern program of cutting ties with the past and tearing apart historical styles, and, on the other hand, it was used by conservative figures as a counterpoint to modernist and avant-garde trends. The latter can be seen in the appearance of surveys and studies on vernacular architecture and folk music in most of the European countries, the former in the interest and use of vernacular sources of avant-garde figures such as Le Corbusier or Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971). Before 1945, the interest in vernacular architecture acquired a discreet visibility in several European countries, paving the way to exerting a more decisive influence after 1945. Surveys, inquiries, and studies became frequent from the 1930s onwards in Italy, Spain, France, England, and Portugal,[69] among others. Soon after, the strict interest in vernacular turned throughout the 1950s and 1960s to a more operative approach with several attempts to blend modern architecture with local and vernacular traditions. There were lessons to be learned about incorporating the environment, climate, traditions, available techniques, materials, etc., in contrast to the International Style faith in technology and progress, having men (and not the individual) as a monolithic category.[70]

Curtis rehashes the already afore-mentioned statement of Giedion on "New Regionalism," synthesizing that "[t]he idea was [now] to cross-breed principles of indigenous building with the language of modern design," with peasant vernaculars becoming a fashion for its capacity to evoke a pre-industrial world in which things, men and nature lived as one unit.[71]

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69    Giuseppe Pagano, and Daniel Guarniero, *Architettura rurale italiana* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1936); Associação dos Arquitectos Portugueses. *Arquitectura popular em Portugal* [Popular architecture in Portugal] (3rd ed. Lisbon: Associação dos Arquitectos Portugueses, 1988).

70    "On the whole, the necessities of life are the same for the majority of people." Walter Gropius, "Principles of Bauhaus Production," in *Programs and Manifestos on 20th-Century Architecture*, ed. Ulrich Conrads (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971), 96.

71    Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 296.

These turns would soon be at the very center of debates in modern architecture. In the 1959 CIAM congress in Otterlo, Aldo van Eyck stated: "The time has come to gather the old into the new; to rediscover the archaic qualities of human nature, I mean the timeless ones."[72] It was these "timeless qualities" that led Van Eyck (besides studying Dogon mud communities in the pre-Sahara as said (see above)), to a mystical approach to vernacular form as he saw them, in Curtis's words, as "expressions of coherent spiritual mythologies which he felt were sorely missing from a most industrial building.[73]

In other geographies, and maybe precisely for their former marginality, vernacular architecture was paramount in the new approaches of modern inheritance. Examples of this new attitude are found in México in, for example, Luis Barragán's (1902-1988) work, O'Gorman's (1905-1982), and Carlos Lazo's (1914-1955) UNAM Central Library with its indigenous art-based mural-facade; in Brazil in, for example, Oscar Niemeyer's (1907-2012) vast work; in Uruguay in, Eladio Dieste's (1917-2000) work, where local and traditional materials and techniques are applied in new forms.

Within twenty years, two new concepts would come into play. More than texts, Bernard Rudofsky's (1905-1988) *Architecture Without Architects*,[74] and Kenneth Frampton's (b.1930) "Critical Regionalism"[75] would prove their effectiveness in consolidating the relevance of the vernacular and local values in the face of the more universal trends of modern architecture.

Rudofsky's *Architecture Without Architects: An Introduction to Non-pedigreed Architecture*, published in 1964 after the exhibition of the same name at MoMA (November 1964 to February 1965), is one of the most important works on vernacular architecture. [Fig. 5] Both the title and the subtitle are strong and radical statements, a radicality that continues in the opening lines: "Vernacular architecture does not go through fashion cycles. It is nearly immutable, indeed, unimprovable, since it serves its purpose to perfection. As a rule, the origin of indigenous building forms and construction methods is lost in the distant past." And "Architectural history, as written and taught in the Western world, has never been concerned with more than a few select cultures." The unfamiliar world of non-pedigreed architecture "is so little known that we don't even have a name for it. For want of a generic label, we shall call it vernacular, anonymous, spontaneous, indigenous, rural."[76]

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72    Aldo van Eyck quoted in Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 290.

73    Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 291.

74    Bernard Rudofsky, *Architecture Without Architects: A Short Introduction to Non-Pedigreed Architecture* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1964).

75    The expression "critical regionalism" first appeared in the early 1980s in essays by Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre. Kenneth Frampton followed this approach systematizing it in his first essay on the subject: Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (New York: New Press, 1983). "It is helpful to appropriate the term Critical Regionalism as coined by Alex Tzonis and Liliane Lefaivre," Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism," 20.

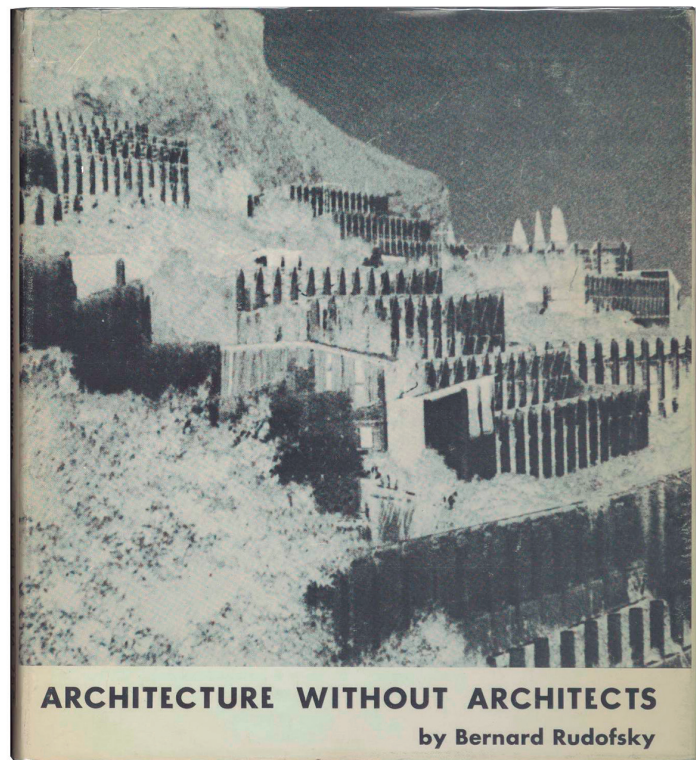76    Bernard Rudofsky, *Architecture Without Architects*

The book features examples so diverse as Isfahan vaults in Iran, arcades and granary structures from Portugal and Spain, movable huts in Vietnam, and bamboo structures in Polynesia, and it was a kind of celebration of anonymous vernacular architecture from different geographical locations in a time and a place where architecture was seen as a reflect of the superstar-architect.

Kenneth Frampton's "Critical Regionalism" was an attempt to re-visit and interpret some mainstream Western architecture along with peripherical works, by encompassing them under a common concept. For Frampton, this tendency emerged an "anti-centrist consensus – an aspiration at least to some form of cultural, economic and social independence."[77]

Both concepts of local culture and national culture were paradoxical. On the one hand, rooted culture and universal civilization are antithetic; however, on the other, every civilization is a product of cross-fertilization with other cultures. Frampton highlights that these ideas emerged when global modernization continued to undermine all forms of traditional, agrarian-based, autochthonous culture. Concerning critical theory, one should regard regional culture not as immutable, something merely understood as given, but as something that should be self-consciously cultivated.

In music, vernacular references' usage emerged after World War II. First with a growing interest in the music exterior to the erudite Western tradition: popular music is understood as music outside the Western intellectual tradition. Fieldwork recordings started in the nineteenth century as soon as the first wax cylinders, gaining momentum as new recording devices became available during the first half of the twentieth century. More than a theoretical understanding, these were a means to preserve memories of disappearing traditions and to use them as an effective raw material instead of a transformed one through the lens of the Western tradition. It was an approach combining the study of music and people, and of perspectives from disciplines such as folklore, cultural anthropology, comparative musicology, music theory, and history.[78]

The development of magnetic tape recorders in the early 1930s became an open field of opportunities for ethnomusicologists in their fieldwork. Namely,

Fig. 5

Front cover of Bernard Rudofsky, *Architecture Without Architects: An Introduction to Non-Pedigreed Architecture* (New York, NY: The Museum of Modern Art, 1964).

Source: www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/3459.

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77    Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), 314.

78    See Jonathan McCollum and David Hebert, eds., *Theory and Method in Historical Ethnomusicology* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014); Carole Pegg et al., "Ethnomusicology," in *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001).

Alan Lomax (1915-2022)[79] started systematic recordings first in the USA with folk musicians [Fig. 6] for "American Patchwork" (recordings since 1948), and later from other continents turning "his intelligent attentions to music from many other parts of the world, securing for them a dignity and status they had not previously been accorded."[80]

This new availability of sounds became instrumental for several generations of musicians. As above stated, in *Telemusik* (1966), Stockhausen included recordings of Indigenous music from diverse geographies. The crossings between vernacular sources and classical music were soon to expand to the popular music domain. Mainstream names like The Beatles, Pink Floyd, and Led Zeppelin, were later followed by other more obscure such as Sonic Youth, 23 Skidoo, Test Department, and Raincoats.

### *Individual*

A challenge faced by artistic practices was the growing participation and intervention of the public. In the nineteenth century, the very notion of "public" underwent significant changes. The growth of the cities' population, the end of the ancient regime, and the subsequent decline of the aristocracy as art's main propellant led to greater access by the people to art. The French salons that

Fig. 6
Alan Lomax, Stavin' Chain [Wilson Jones] and Wayne Perry performing, Lafayette, LA, USA, 1934-50.

Source: Alan Lomax collection of photographs. Library of Congress photo via https://www.loc.gov/item/2007660072/.

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79    From 1936 to 1966 he recorded thousands of tradition-bearers in the United States, the Caribbean, and Europe.

80    Brian Eno, "Liner Notes," Alan Lomax, *Alan Lomax Collection Sampler*, Rounder Records, 1997.

became prominent were an arrival point of a process that had slowly started still in the seventeenth century. Still, art remained an exclusive practice of the artist, with its meanings accepted as being determined by the artist and his work. Even with the innovations and subversions from the early twentieth century, art remained within its realm; it's significant in this context Duchamp's assumption that only after his choice and decision can a common object – a bicycle wheel, a bottle rack, or a urinal – became art. In the same line, Le Corbusier's proclamation "Architecture or Revolution" was a statement of architecture as a civilizational pinnacle and the only art with demiurgic capacity to avoid what he called a class-based revolution, a kind of order from the top.

The end of World War II marked – at least in Western public opinion for a few decades – the end, or the suspension, of the belief in the major ordering political systems as a way to accomplish major social achievements. At the same time, democracy seemed a final achievement, a civilizational standing point from where future progress could be made. This spirit of time was but a short-circuit to the appearance of the public – and of people – as a possible intervener in accomplishing artworks. The works of Hannah Arendt (1906-1975), Jurgen Habermas (b. 1929), and Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991)[81], also provided theoretical support for the growing importance of the public domain and the common people's participation. It will be a matter of time until the architects and musicians find a way to incorporate in their works the possibility of public intervention. Instead of "Architecture or Revolution" it was like "Participation or Annihilation."

As said above, for Hertzberger the structure is prepared to support later and various uses. In the case of Lucien Kroll (1927-2022), the idea was furthered and extended. There is no sense of a pre-defined structure that supports different uses while maintaining an abstract, impersonal sense: unlike Hertzberger's structure, what is unfinished in the building is not a layer, but a part; and this part is completed by the actual person who will be using the building. It depends on his/her will, his/her habits, and his/her taste. In his Medical School of the Catholic University of Louvain (1970-76), Lucien Kroll included the students in the design process, thus applying the idea of participatory architecture, with future users finishing the building. Ralph Erskine (1914-2005), in Byker Wall housing (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1969-82), followed a similar approach with the architectural design developed with the residents and future users. In these cases – Kroll and Erskine –, the change does not depend on what is initially proposed by the architect. Unlike Hertzberg's practice, the choice is made by the building's end-user. The concept of participatory architecture involves meeting with future residents to understand their expectations, with architects opening offices on-site to develop communication and trust between the existing residents.

Of relevance is the case of BEST showroom stores, built in the 1970s in the

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81    See Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (1958; repr., Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998); Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (1962; repr., Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1989); Henri Lefèbvre. *Critique of Everyday Life* (London: Verso, 1991).

USA, designed by the SITE (Sculpture in the Environment) architectural office between 1972 and 1984. In these years about a dozen showrooms stores for the BEST chain were built. In these, the brand image was precisely the individual distinctiveness of each store. Each of them was recognizable as a BEST store, and each one was a unique artistic building, with the facades exhibiting whole surfaces of bricks peeling or cascading as if they were falling apart. If indeterminacy was explored in these designs, a strong sense of the individual was also at stake.

In *Piano Activities*: (Pr.: International Festival of the Newest Music at Wiesbaden Festum Fluxorum, 1962) a piano is destroyed in front of the audience. As said, if before what was meant to be destroyed was the music that emanated from the piano, now, what is destroyed is the piano itself – the corporeal agent of that music. This attitude may be understood as a symbolic death of the Western musical tradition – at least, as a significant and personified part of its significance, "personified" in the piano. Furthermore, this same audience is invited to take part in this destruction. It is also noteworthy how some people in the audience exhibit a combination of laughter and smiles while looking at and hearing the piano being destroyed. Later, in *Sounds out from Silent Spaces* (1972-79), Philip Corner (n.1933) also invites the public – the listeners – to take part in the performance, in what can be understood as a similar and parallel process with that of inhabitants' participating in the architectural design process. If the idea of concrete (as proposed by Schaeffer's "*concrète*") is present in the act of creation, here the idea of the concrete permeates the act of destruction.

The idea of participation is also present in the works of artists such as Rirkrit Tiravanija (b.1961) who creates installations to be used by the public.

The individual's intervention in music is an intertwined feature. Indeterminacy as stated above implies in many cases the intervention of the individual performer, which, of course, is different from one performance to another. In a sense, it is the human intervention opposite to the infinity that usually relied on impersonal electronic devices for performances. Apart from erudite music, jazz was a domain where individuals manifested. The improvisation sequences were a "first large-scale revolt within the frame of popular music, against art as mass production,"[82] and a sign of the "revolt of the individual."[83]

A fundamental aspect of identity is man's identification with nature and how he exists within the world. After centuries of discovery, knowledge, and domination, humans needed to understand themselves and their relationship with nature. The world was to be understood no more as an abstract concatenation of systems, numbers, and coordinates, but as a concrete domain, where senses and sensorial values were at the forefront. In this sense, Messiaen's interpretation of birds' chants, Pink Floyd's performances in Pompeii (1971) and Venice

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82   Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Jazz Scene* (London: Faber & Faber, 1993), 67.

83   Hobsbawm, *The Jazz Scene*, 68.

(1989), and the return, in architecture, to regional values and a sense of place are part of the same trend.

By incorporating the characteristics of the vernacular, freedom is used to show the individual. In other words, identity becomes predominant. The work is freed from its universal character. It also frees itself, sometimes, from its erudite and systematic character. This more universal and abstract paradigm, linked to the erudite tradition, gives way to another, more specific and concrete paradigm, related to popular and local traditions. Paradoxically, however, vernacular is kept at distance, since in most cases it's seen through scholarly readings.

## Some Interdisciplinary Remarks

One of the most relevant features of the postwar period is the crossings and interchanges between disciplines, arts, and theories. Collaboration between different arts was not a novelty, being explored in the above-mentioned cases of Corbusier with Varèse and Xenakis and of Pierre Henry with Maurice Béjart. However, what the overall climate of freedom and individuality in postwar years brought was a freedom where each person could adopt procedures, ideas, and theories from quite different fields. When, in 1966, Roland Barthes declared that

"objectivity, good taste and clarity … do not belong to our time,"[84] he was claiming the individual freedom and the autonomy of the critic to consider his work with the same kind of freedom as in the literary creation. By doing that he was claiming to literary studies the same sense of infinity explored in arts: "There have been Marx, Freud, Nietzsche. Elsewhere, Lucien Febvre and Merleau-Ponty have also claimed the right to rewrite endlessly the history of history and the history of philosophy"[85]; "endlessly" or infinitely.

The discipline that perhaps had the larger echo in different fields was linguistics and its later consequence, structuralism. After its early developments with Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman Jakobson, linguistics and structuralism gained momentum after 1945, becoming prominent in theoretical thinking in many fields, including architecture[86] and music[87]. If in the beginning, structuralism became a stronghold disciplinary open to analysis across different fields, it also opened the way for the endless variations and to the end of what Paolo Portoghesi called "the unfeasibility of the grand, centralized systems with which one once attempted to explain everything,"[88] ultimately leading to "a time of

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84    Roland Barthes, *Criticism and Truth* (London: Continuum, 2007), 13.

85    Barthes, *Criticism and Truth*, 15.

86    Concerning the ascension of theory in architecture, see Nesbitt, *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture*, 12.

87     Jean-Jacques Nattiez, "Linguistics: A New Approach for Musical Analysis?," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 4, no. 1 (June 1973): 51-68.

88    Paolo Portoghesi, *After Modern Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1982), 106.

ephemeral beliefs, in which images are reduced to 'semblances,' copies without originals – a time when culture is no longer a double for reality."[89]

The overall atmosphere in the postwar years was characterized by a sense of freedom, a quest for identity, and the urgencies and needs of Europe's rebuilding. If this led to a strong sense of experimentation, it would also become the last strong breath of what can be called a manifestation of the systems and the intellectual tradition. The radical experiments were, in many cases, an extent of the avant-garde movements from the early twentieth century and were maintaining strong ties with those. But soon after, new actors "no longer had this tradition within them and changed an ideal into a positively false factor."[90] If from the 1960s onwards, several trends tended to highlight the elitist and intellectual radicalities, freedom and identity were, on the other hand, introducing some new and corrosive seeds. One of the most relevant is relativistic thinking, a convergent point that became evident in the late 1960s and was preceded by a series of works and events. In architecture, Robert Venturi's book *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966) "opened a Pandora's box,"[91] later followed by *Learning from Las Vegas* (1973), both advocating the right to subjectivity, or even to arbitrariness, and to common pop culture to influence architecture. By the same years, Sontag publishes his famous essay *Against Interpretation* where she claimed that "in place of a hermeneutics we need an erotics of art"[92] after stating that "in a culture whose already classical dilemma is the hypertrophy of the intellect at the expense of energy and sensual capability, interpretation is the revenge of the intellect upon art," and that "the most celebrated and influential modern doctrines, those of Marx and Freud, actually amount to elaborate systems of hermeneutics, aggressive and impious theories of interpretation."[93]. The quick ascension of youth culture to the foreground through the radio and TV media provided a planetarian dimension to pop cultural phenomena such as the Beatles, the anthropological studies[94] stating that every culture could only be understood through its institutional forms, its system of ideas, and the personality of individual human beings. These were just a few of those first seeds that a few years later would lead to the punk explosion and the post-modern ways of thinking and acting. From the 1970s onwards, tonal music, after decades in the background, resurfaced, figurative painting re-acquired its status, and, in architecture, ornament, historical, and figurative features re-appeared as mainstream and were no longer ostracized.

All in all, the postwar years were characterized as a back-to-revolution: artistic practices, radical experiments, use of new technologies, social and political ide-

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89    Portoghesi, *After Modern Architecture*, 107.

90    Theodor Adorno, quoted in Portoghesi, *After Modern Architecture*, 110.

91    Kate Nesbitt, *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture*, 12.

92    Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*, (New York: Picador, 1966), 10.

93    Sontag, *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*, 4-5.

94    Marien and Fleming, *Arts and Ideas*, 610.

als, ecological concerns, cultural changes, and new publics, all were both causes and effects of that back-to-revolution after 1945. If the years before World War I were those of the avant-garde revolutions, the period between World War I and World War II was characterized as a return to order, and to the re-appearance of systems and classical features.[95] It is in this sense that the return to revolutionary trends is of relevance in the postwar period.

Freedom and identity were two driving forces in postwar architecture and music. More than separate entities, they were like different poles acting at a social and cultural level. As already mentioned, "artists and writers attempted to merge art and life,"[96], an attempt that could only be undertaken through the assumption of freedom and identity. Merging life with art implied that life should merge with art's freedom and art with life's individuality.

95    Of relevance is the case of artists strongly engaged in avantgardes from the 1900s and 1910s, such as Stravinsky, Braque and Picasso's neoclassical trends, after 1920.

96    Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

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Claudio Sgarbi, Talia Trainin

# Skeletal Cities, or the "Destructive Character" of the Art of Building

*Catastrophe, "the Destructive Character," Art of Building, Structure, Rückenfigurs*

## /Abstract

Our point of departure is a phrase that evokes the horrors of devastation while creating a spiral of sublime complicity in our contemplation—a "looking from behind" (Rückenfigurs) at the catastrophe of the others and at the pristine void of the buildings they once occupied. The voiceless others are the losers. A voyeuristic allure for ruins echoes in the void of the winners' words. Does a city, rendered a ruinous skeletal structure, amount to radical loss, or rather to its exposed ontological predicament—or both? What kind of meaning does the haunted void unravel by the very structure which was supposed to hold that content in place? Why should architecture, furthermore, have anything to do with these notions of war or conflict, catastrophe and violence? In order to fathom the reasons and principles which are necessary to master the art of building —the "meaning" of "architecture"— it seems misleading to privilege the eros (jouissance) which guides the art of building without exposing the polemos (war) inherent in such need/demand/desire to build. The "catastrophe" is inscribed in the very art of building that lacks its purported meaning. Agamben's "means without end." We propose to design the domain whereby indulging into this questioning is possible. A reciprocal commitment to create the conditions for a suspension of judgement – the conditions whereby the humane dialogue takes place. We invite architects to partake in it and "take [them] to the threshold of the building [they] shall not build" (*Eupalinos, or the Architect*).

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Third came the people of the bronze age, with fiercer natures, readier to indulge in savage warfare, but not yet vicious. The harsh iron age was last. Immediately every kind of wickedness erupted into this age of baser natures: truth, shame and honour vanished; in their place were fraud, deceit, and trickery, violence and pernicious desires. They set sails to the wind, though as yet the seamen had poor knowledge of their use, and the ships' keels that once were trees standing amongst high mountains, now leaped through uncharted waves. The land that was once common to all, as the light of the sun is, and the air, was marked out, to its furthest boundaries, by wary surveyors. Not only did they demand the crops and the food the rich soil owed them, but they entered the bowels of the earth, and excavating brought up the wealth it had concealed in shade, wealth that incites men to crime.

—Ovid, The Metamorphoses, Book I

## A catastrophe of nature or art

*"Thus, the relief and design of structures appears more clearly when content, which is the living energy of meaning, is neutralized. Somewhat like the architecture of an uninhabited or deserted city, reduced to its skeleton by some catastrophe of nature or art. A city no longer inhabited, not simply left behind, but haunted by meaning and culture."*[1]

### *A "Catastrophe of Nature"?*

Derrida points to the remains of cities devastated by natural or artificial events which expose, in their aftermath, their "relief and design of structures": earthquakes, tsunamis, plagues *or* wars and destructions—we may surmise. Such dramatic events are all generalized as "some catastrophe of nature or of art." Derrida's "catastrophe of nature" does not rid us of responsibility, since Anthropocene's nefarious, ubiquitous effect upon nature is unleashing its devastating power time and again. Natural events are no longer so, permutating into artificial catastrophes. During the pandemic (which could burst out again, unexpectedly), it was strange, indeed, to inhabit a world whereby the skies were closing on us, where immured quarantined medieval cities made a travesty of globalization, when a plague was exported in lieu of cheap merchandise. T.S. Eliot's *Waste Land* (1922) presages the predicament of modern cities, whereby bristling, vital capitals of the world turned ghostlike. Every sign of human affection, community and communion, had become potentially deadly.

In this dystopian reality—this uncanny reversal—the erotic drive and the death drive exchanged places; the familiar and intimate became the most threatening.

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1    Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 163 (See note 24).

A "heap of broken images"—by war, by plague—by human-made catastrophe. An ironic reshuffling takes place in all realms of human existence and perception.

Our very existence may be seen through such grim lenses: "the desperate and horrible thought has come that perhaps the whole of human life is but a bad joke, a violent and ill-fated abortion of the primal mother, a savage and dismal catastrophe of nature."[2]

### A "Catastrophe of Art"?

Does the structure or the inanimate skeleton of the design becomes more visible when cities have lost their life due to an artful disaster? The inanimate skeleton is visualized as being haunted by meaning because of an artistic calamity. The "catastrophe of art" can be both implied in art (the catastrophe as its own end – the end of art) and caused by art. The elementary superstition to be debunked is the conviction that art promotes goodness. Art is a means whose ultimate end remains unknown. War is also an art. The catastrophes occasioned by this art are well-known.

"Art is not the cure but the disease"[3]— in the sense that it is a *pharmakon* that implies its own poisoning effects (hubris being the most devastating cause-qua-outcome). The art of building is no exception. Do you design buildings to celebrate creation or do you celebrate creation to design buildings? The radical conflict (the inner war) is already fully disclosed by this questioning. The art of building has gained the status of a highly self-celebrative addiction. This is how this art points at its dead end: in the accomplishment of its self-glorifying graveyard (by the sea?).[4]

We have opted to refer to the consequences of war on cities in an imaginative reading of Derrida's excerpt. We have translated war into the *casus belli* of archi-



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2  Herman Hesse, *Steppenwolf*, trans. Basil Creighton (London: Penguin, 1927 [first edition]; rep. 1999), 46. See also Umberto Curi, *Meglio non essere nati* (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 2008).

3  "L'arte non è la cura, è la malattia", Ninni Donato; https://www.facefestival.org/ninni-donato_23/ (last accessed 11 June 2024).

4  Architects educated in Venice (IUAV) were told (supposedly the dictum originated by Bruno Zevi) that Manfredo Tafuri had proclaimed the "death of architecture" and Aldo Rossi had built "the architecture of death." "The Graveyard by the Sea" is the title of the 1920 poem by Paul Valéry.

Fig. 1 "The Resurgence of the Skeletal City," Talia Trainin, Watercolour & China ink

tecture—a profession whereby Mammons and demiurges (such is Socrates' view of architects by the ending of Paul Valery's *Eupalinos*) strip naked the cities of their *senso unico*—cities as loci of shelter, work, *communitas*, culture and conviviality. Ours is an anti-manifesto against the war waged between reasoning before acting, in praise of thinking about architecture on the threshold of building vis-à-vis the senseless execution per se of building without end.[5]

We have, then, deconstructed the call for a paper on war and peace in the literal sense—war in terms of conflict between peoples, indoctrination, blind ideologies, inculcated fear, hatred and racism, invasions, mass murder—but have kept the motivation behind wars as *Lebensraum*, as the spirit of violence, the fatuous idolatry/ideology embodied in the very building of soul-less cities by cynical architects who collapse the city as the last vestige of humanity. The Carl-Schmittian "ethics of the land," of conquest, parcellation and appropriation is shared by both in literal and figurative senses. And we have internalized the conflict as one taking place within the very discipline of architecture, bent on building structures meant to collapse, which must destroy for building to take place.

The art of unrestrained building at-all-costs amounts to a declaration of war. Ours is a (peace-seeking) anti-manifesto aimed at exposing the war waged between reasoning as praxis, between thinking about architecture on the threshold of building vis-à-vis its ruthless proliferation. The collapse described by Derrida was chosen as precedent and as token of the destructiveness of the war implied and entailed in indiscriminate building.[6]

"If you want to change society don't build anything."[7] "To build more […] is a folly."[8] "Just because we can doesn't mean we should."[9] The first and foremost commitment is a restrain (*modus tollens*): try to withhold from building and to fully engage in reconsidering; to inhabit that which has already been overbuilt – and this is a colossal undertaking (which includes the sweeping of the floor after such a mess) that will demand millennia of intense professional dedication and human labor. The skeletal remains of the destructive power of the art-full war

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5    Claudio Sgarbi, "Building without End: The Travails of Archè and Téchne" in *The Contested Territory of Architectural Theory*, ed. Elie G. Haddad (New York: Routledge, 2023), 87-101.

6    Claudio Sgarbi and Talia Trainin: "The Collapse as a Precedent" – *ASAU*, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. Agora II Symposium: (Un)Common Precedents. September 23, 2023. Forthcoming: *(Un)common Precedents in Architectural Design,* eds. Federica Goffi, Isabel Potworowski, Kristin Washco (London: Routledge: 2025).

7    This is the motto of the front cover of the magazine *Icon*:  https://www.iconeye.com/back-issues/architecture-without-buildings (last accessed 13 December 2023). We propose to read Douglas Darden's poem on *Condemned Buildings* as a call to condemn the guiltiness of building.

8    This is also the opinion of the architect Carlo Ratti: "To build more and to build upon virgin land is a folly." "*Le nostre città non devono crescere e per quanto riguarda il consumo di suolo io sono convinto che nel nostro paese, sarebbe fondamentale portarlo a 0. Questo non vuol dire che non ci sia lavoro per architetti, progettisti e impresari. Ci sarà da mettere a posto molti errori del passato. Ma io direi: arrivare a consumo-di-suolo=0. In queste condizioni costruire di più e costruire su terreno vergine è una follia.*"  https://www.radio24.ilsole24ore.com/programmi/economia-piccole-cose?refresh_ce=1 (Interview by Anna Migliorati, 3:19, accessed December 16, 2023).

9    See the debate about another " object or cake", "supreme banality", "horrible archi-babble": the comments about the twisting office towers, designed by Büro Ole Scheeren for Shenzhen in  https://www.dezeen.com/2023/12/07/buro-ole-scheeren-tencent-helix-shenzhen/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Dezeen%20Debate%20843&utm_content=Dezeen%20Debate%20843+CID_f1165b8ca424c811f43c6eb453c5d131&utm_source=Dezeen%20Mail&utm_term=Read%20more (last accessed November 2024).

of building are salient in the global landscape of ghost-towns, empty villages, abandoned buildings in "one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage."[10] Cities ravaged by the art-full war of fighting against nightmares of our unconscious to expose again their skeleton and entrails—their actual senseless pitiful bare structures.

## The Theatre of the Dead

While visiting a famous anatomical theatre, a question was raised: why are contemporary architects so fascinated by anatomical theatres? And this was the answer: because any design must start with the simulacra of a dead building – a corpse, a cadaver. From their very inception, buildings are designed by architects as empty simulations (on paper or digital screens). Human presence is reduced to that of scale figurines. Indeed, even the ideal picture of a newly completed building is void of the lively people that are supposed to wait to occupy that essential absence of life – before a good shot is taken by a master photographer. Such simulations regain the same pristine emptiness after natural or artificial catastrophes.  The catastrophes make the buildings regain the purity of means of their own design –pure means devoid of the contamination by the chaos, the muddiness of everyday life. The structure of the pure means is exposed bare by the catastrophe – hence the aesthetic fascination for the catastrophe. The design of buildings sets off, then, as the anatomy of a corpse.[11]

## Reshuffling words: Jacques-Aldo-Peter

Not perchance was Derrida's phrase brought to the attention of architectural debate by a star-architect (Peter Eisenmann) reasoning upon the work of another star-architect (Aldo Rossi)[12] – both of them fascinated by the "cemeterial" purity of their "means for means sake" (*l'art pour l'art*) that is also known as "the autonomy of architecture." Autonomy from what, from whom?

The insistence of Peter on the skeletal *jouissance* of the design is evident in his introduction;[13] and he must have been triggered by Aldo's famous cynical observation which was found "very poetic" by the students:

> "*Anyone who remembers European cities after the bombings of the last war retains an image of disemboweled houses where, amid the rubble, fragments of familiar places remained standing, with their colors of faded*

10    Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History" in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn, edited and with an introduction by Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 249.

11    This was a smart observation made by a student while visiting a famous anatomical theatre. My question was: why are contemporary architects so fascinated by anatomical theatres? And she answered:  because you must start any design with the simulacrum of a dead building.

12    Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City* (Introduction by Peter Eisenman, translated by Diane Ghirardo and Johan Ockman, revised for the American Edition by Aldo Rossi and Peter Eisenman), Cambridge-MA: The MIT Press, 1982.

13    See the Introduction by Peter Eisenmann in Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*, 5.

*wallpaper, laundry hanging suspended in the air, barking dogs-the untidy intimacy of places. And always we could see the house of our childhood, strangely aged, present in the flux of the city. Images, engravings, and photographs of these disemboweled cities, record this vision. Destruction and demolition, expropriation and rapid changes in use and as a result of speculation and obsolescence, are the most recognizable signs of urban dynamics. But beyond all else, the images suggest the interrupted destiny of the individual, of his often sad and difficult participation in the destiny of the collective. This vision in its entirety seems to be reflected with a quality of permanence in urban monuments. Monuments, signs of the collective will as expressed through the principles of architecture, offer themselves as primary elements, fixed points in the urban dynamic. The laws of reality and their modifications thus constitute the structure of human creation. It is the purpose of this study to organize and order these principal problems of urban science.*"[14]

The "catastrophe of nature or art" is reversed in the privileged-dire condition for observing that which otherwise remains hidden: "the recognizable sign of urban dynamics" and the "urban science" of their void. But that which otherwise remains hidden is not merely the purity of "the permanence," but also its "dirty thought," the inner conflict inherent in the art of building: to design a building you must first start with the simulacrum of a dead building and to build it you must destroy resources by taking hold of something which does not belong to the perpetrator of the act of possession.[15] The allure for ruins is embedded in the ontology of the art of building as a return to the anatomical virtual theatre it springs from. Cynically enough, the return to its inception is indifferent to its cause —natural or artificial.  It must just be a catastrophe. The theory of the value of ruins: Das Ruinenwerttheorie."[16]

When destruction (by nature or art) takes place, then the uncanny (*Unheimliche*) logic of building design is revealed. And here Aldo can take his laconic stance whereby Peter joins in. Once a city is reduced to its skeletal remains, and life is rendered but a haunting ghost, then one can see how the "underground"[17] logic of building design works. A building must become definitively and ideally

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14    Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*, 22.

15    There is always a spoiled subtraction that is inevitably created somewhere-else in order to satisfy our desire to build: each construction has its own quarry. Considering how much we have to spoil, destroy and subtract in order to build, this would be already a "sufficient reason" to apologize.  Building implies an act of violence for which we should always make amends. "Separation and marking make a claim over something that was once an integral part of nature. Many people believe that they must make amends to nature or the gods for what they have taken away. They sometime do so through sacrifice and ritual or by making the settlement itself a model of the ordered world, of the cosmos: they explain its order and its workings through orientation and the primary geometry and location of the settlement features." Joseph Rykwert and Tony Atkin, "Building and Knowing," in *Structure and Meaning in Human Settlements*, eds. Joseph Rykwert and Tony Atkin (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 9. Or, more precisely: "isn't architecture simply the positive version of the violent response to some central anxiety provoked by building? And isn't this anxiety based on the suspicion that building is taking place on top of something that was unlawfully seized?" Kunze, Donald. "The Topography of Fear: Architecture's Fourth Walls and Inside Frames." In Kenzari, Bechir. *Architecture and Violence*. (New York: ACTAR Publishers, 2011), 177.

16    Albert Speer and Adolf Hitler allure for ruins are well documented. See  https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruin_value (last accessed December 10, 2023)

17    *Notes from the Underground* is a novel by Fyodor Dostoevsky in a confessional form, first published in 1864.

an empty tomb: no matter how long it will have to wait. Is this really the case? Would, then, destruction be so functional to our building endeavor – to understand something which otherwise remains hidden? If this is the case, then, we must assume that we design and overbuild to promote the lack of meaning itself – the lack of "sense":[18] the uncanny return of the dead.

## Intertextualities and queries

We propose to relate to these three texts (Derrida's / Eisenmann's / Rossi's) as a network of intertextualities, a term which underscores that these are "tissues of quotations," rather than original, authoritative sources. [19] We propose, likewise, to relate to the present article as a series of challenging, poignant questions—rather than authoritative axioms— questions that must be asked in order to de-automatize blind praxis and call for its critical rethinking.

Could devastating wars have been avoided had world leaders and their herd stopped to reflect and reconsider? Might "catastrophes by art" be circumvented if city planners, politicians, investors, architects and clients stopped to ponder before the threshold of building? We have been enmeshed by the very persuasive rhetoric of these thinkers and architects and can no longer escape through the holes of the net. We shall see how Gordon Matta Clark will pierce such holes in the very fabric not only of words, but of buildings.

## The eradicated and mutilated language that belongs to the other

Intertextuality "vindicates the view that there is nothing outside the text — which means that all meanings reside in the interpretation and re-interpretation of texts and that no text exists outside its interpretation." We suspect that the intertextual relationships of these texts hover in the very void of sense they evoke. A slip of tongue.[20]

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18    "Derrida also consistently plays on the derivation of *sens* (meaning or sense; *Sinn* in German) which includes both a supposedly intelligible, rational sense (a signified meaning) and a vehicle dependent on the senses for its expression (the signifier). Further, in French *sens* also means direction; to lose meaning is to lose direction, to be lost, to feel that one is in a labyrinth. I have inflected the translation of *sens* to conform to its play of meanings wherever possible." Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978). Translated with an Introduction and Additional Notes by Alan Bass, Translator's Introduction, p. xvii.

19    "A term popularized by Julia Kristeva in her analysis of Bakhtin's concepts Dialogism and Carnival, intertextuality is a concept that informs structuralist poststructuralist deliberations in its contention that individual texts are inescapably related to other texts in a matrix of irreducible plural and provisional meanings. The term is used to signify the multiple ways in which any one literary text is made up of other texts, by means of its implicit or explicit allusions, citations, its repetitions and transformations of the formal and substantive features of earner texts, or simply its unavoidable participation in the common stock of linguistic and literary conventions and procedures that are "always already" in place. Nasrullah Mambrol, "Julia Kristeva: Intertextuality" (March 22, 2016) in *Literary Theory and Criticism* https://literariness.org/2016/03/22/julia-kristeva-intertextuality/#:~:text=A%20 term%20popularised%20by%20Julia,of%20irreducible%20plural%20and%20provisional (last accessed December 12, 2023).

20    "If this constant sliding and hiding of meaning were true of conscious life, then we would of course never be able to speak coherently at all. If the whole of language were present to me when I spoke, then I would not be able to articulate anything at all. The ego, or consciousness, can therefore only work by repressing this turbulent activity, provisionally nailing down words on to meanings. Every now and then a word from the unconscious which I do not want insinuates itself into my discourse, and this is the famous Freudian slip of the tongue or parapraxis. But for Lacan all our discourse is in a sense a slip of the tongue: if the process of language is as slippery and ambiguous as he suggests, we can never mean precisely what we say and never say precisely what we mean. Meaning is

"When the end comes, there are no images of memory that pierce me. Only words. Words that are now eradicated, mutilated, words that belong to others."[21] The words that belong to others are the eradicated and mutilated words that haunt. Not the sense of these words — as Derrida desires — but the eradicated and mutilated words as such. What are they haunting for? The emptiness of their own sense. They are words and nothing more: pure means, empty signifiers – and their appearance (is this a manifestation of the violence of the "pure means" that Benjamin mentions in his "Critique of Violence"?) is unbounded and unchained: haunting.

We think that we might substitute such eradicated and mutilated words with the "structure of the language" whose sense remains unattainable, but whose bombastic construction by means of destruction is for sure radically wrong and unjust. Like the super-ego overbuilding its unconscious (Es), as expressed in the video *Megalomania*:[22] the complete void, the profound lack of a narcissistic society building the excess of its own failure to pathetically worship the misery of its own ruins.

## Structuralism and Crime

Derrida's intention is to point out at the destructive power of structuralism – a certain kind of structuralism. We propose to read the "original" text, whereby this quote is contextualized, in order to grasp his radical critique of structuralism:

> There is therefore nothing paradoxical in the fact that structuralist consciousness is a catastrophic consciousness, destroyed and destructive, destructuring at the same time, as is all consciousness or at least the decadent moment, a period specific to any movement of consciousness. We perceive the structure in the instance of the threat, at the moment when the imminence of the danger focuses our eyes on the keystone of an institution, on the stone where its possibility and its fragility are summed up.[23]

always in some sense an approximation, a near-miss, a part-failure, mixing non-sense and non-communication into sense and dialogue." Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Blackwell, second edition, 1996).

21    From the closing lines of *The Immortal* by Borges, in *The Aleph and Other Stories* (Spanish: "The Aleph") 1948, translated and with an introduction by Andrew Hurley (rep. 2004).

22    *Megalomania* is a 2011 movie by Jonathan Gales of architectural animation studio Factory Fifteen: "Megalomania is a short film that perceives the city in total construction; inspired by the incomplete states of world icons such as The Shard and Burj Khalifa. The built environment of the city is explored as a labyrinth of architecture that is either unfinished, incomplete or broken. Megalomania is a response to the state of many developing cities, exaggerating the appearance of progress into the sublime." https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2102375/plotsummary/?ref_=tt_ov_pl (last accessed December 20, 2023). See also https://www.dezeen.com/2012/03/07/megalomania-by-jonathan-gales/ (last accessed November 22, 2023).

23    "Ainsi, le relief et *le dessin des structures* apparaissent mieux quand le contenu, qui est l'énergie vivante du *sens*, est neutralisé. Un peu comme l'architecture d'une ville inhabitée ou soufflée, réduite à son squelette par quelque catastrophe de la nature ou de l'art. Ville non plus habitée ni simplement délaissée mais *hantée* plutôt par le *sens* et la culture. Cette hantise qui l'empêche ici de rede- venir nature est peut-être en général le mode de présence ou d'absence de la chose même au langage pur. Langage pur que voudrait abriter la littérature pure, objet de la critique littéraire pure. Il n'y a donc rien de paradoxal à ce que *la conscience structuraliste soit conscience catastrophique*, détruite à la fois et destructrice, *déstructurante,* comme l'est toute conscience ou au moins le moment décadent, période propre à tout mouvement de la conscience. On perçoit la structure dans l'instance

But this observation – that addresses the nature of the idea of structure that was under deep scrutiny in France in those years[24] – is not something that interests/concerns the star-architects:

> Human aggression is most dangerous when it is attached to the two great "absolutarian" psychological constellations: the grandiose self and the archaic omnipotent object. In contradistinction to Freud, Kohut posits that the most gruesome human destructiveness is encountered, not in the form of wild, regressive, and primitive behavior, but in the form of orderly and organized activities in which the perpetrators' destructiveness is alloyed with absolute conviction about their greatness and with their devotion to archaic omnipotent figures.[25]

The isolated sentence quoted at the very beginning echoes its own dramatic void. A city, rendered a ruinous skeletal structure, amounts to a radical dramatic loss. This dramatic loss is the ontological predicament of the demiurgic megalomania that so many star-architects overbuild. The obsessive allure for building; the catastrophic overbuilding that takes place now is a masked allure for the ruins of an imminent and immanent artificial catastrophe: not only a declaration of war but a complacent spectatorship at the catastrophe that Derrida poignantly exposes.

## The Haunted Void

What kind of meaning does the haunted void unravel by the very structure that was supposed to hold that content in place? The war is already lost; the space haunted. The ghost towns and buildings that pop up all over the place now parallel the dramatic spoiling of the catastrophe by the nature of our art – of building (Anthropocene's meta-dark-object-of-desire)[26] and point out at their careful and meticulous planning: we have become the heralds of our own collapse. *Rückenfigurs* into this void of sense. Reiterated *Rückenfigurs* looking at the complicity of other *Rückenfigurs* certifying the immense potency of this impotence toward the hubris of building voids of sense: building-for-the-sake-of-building. To make the means become the end is the scope (the self-justified per-version) of "technique": the awareness of this folly[27]  is what the architect

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de la *menace,* au moment où l'imminence du péril concentre nos regards sur la clef de voûte d'une institution, sur la pierre où se résument sa possibilité et sa fragilité. On peut alors menacer *méthodique- ment* la structure pour mieux la percevoir, non seulement en ses nervures mais en ce lieu secret où elle n'est ni érection ni ruine mais labilité» (italics, ours). Jacques Derrida, *L'écriture et la difference* (Paris: Èdition du Seuil, 1967), 13. Originally published as "Force et signification" in *Critique*, June-July 1963: 193-94.

24    The "structure" that Jacques Lacan tries to evoke in his teaching has nothing to do with the dead, skeletal structure, haunted by the void of sense that Derrida presents.

25    Heinz Kohut, "Thoughts on Narcissism and Narcissistic Rage" in *The Psychonalytic Study of the Child*, eds. Anna Freud, Marianne Kris and Albert J. Solnit, 27 (1) 1972, 360-400, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heinz_Kohut (last accessed December 3, 2023).

26    Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects. Philosophy and Ecology After the End of the World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

27    The extreme *folly* is the belief that "things become something else." While the things we build with our technique (the art of building) only make appear what they were meant for - in our case: manifestations of their

(archè-tekne) would be consciously asked to master—not its complicit justification as a demiurgic guardian of its grandiose graveyard.

## Is Building the "Tomb of Architecture"?[28]

Could architecture instead be the art of avoiding building? To avoid is to make the void manifest– to evoke that void of meaning that anticipates the endeavor of the coopted designers of buildings. Could it be that architecture (the noun "archi-tecture") is the purely evocative power of pondering upon the arcane logic of the art of building; that is, pondering upon its ancestral void of sense? The humane void of sense of the art of building.  A void[29] at its core. And the void justifies as little as possible the art of building, its ostentation. Architecture is the art of the latency that is evoked by gaining the renunciation to build – to suspend the need, demand and desire to build. To live as well and as respectably as possible without being compelled to build at any cost. To evoke the free necessity[30] to avoid building. The free necessity to renounce. This does not mean at all to promote minimalist asceticism. The ideal of dignity and wellbeing of the poetics of renunciation deserves to be openly confronted with the opulence of consumerism. There is a substantial difference between the art of building per se and the reasoning upon its principles. Reasoning upon the principles of the art of building yields the meaning of archi-tecture. The art of building starts where reasoning (the meditation upon its principles) ends.

own lack of meaning. We cannot therefore complain if war and catastrophe do nothing but make clear a destiny that has already been sealed. Emanuele Severino, *Testimoniando il destino* (Milano: Adelphi, 2019). "*Nel proprio inconscio l'occidente, ed è la follia, pensa che le cose siano niente, e le vive come ninte; e proprio perchè le vive come niente può proporsi di crearle e di distruggerle. Tutti i progetti di dominio presuppongono questo.*" "In its own unconscious the West is madness [*follia*] because it thinks that things are nothing, and experiences them as nothing; and precisely because it experiences them as nothing man can propose to create or destroy them. All the projects of dominance presuppose this." (C. S.; my translation). https://emanueleseverino.com/2021/07/05/la-follia-dellesistere-intervista-a-emanuele-severino-a-cura-di-vera-slepoj-riza-psicosomatica-n-74-aprile-1987-2/ (last accessed December 6, 2023).

28    "Buildings have become the tombs of architecture." An idea expressed by Aaron Betsky in occasion of the 11th Biennale of Architecture: to point the way toward "an architecture liberated from buildings." https://www.wmagazine.com/story/aaron-betsky (last accessed December 13, 2023).

29    *A Void* is the masterful tile of the English translation (by Gilbert Adair, The Harvill Press, 1995) of Jorge Perec's *La disparition*. The Oulipian novel is based on "the permanent, reiterated and premeditated absence" of a letter from the whole written story. In the French original version (1969) the *desaparecida* letter is the "e." The absence of the letter is an artificial constrain, a permanently reiterated privation that transforms a self-inflicted prohibition into a perverse desire to tell the whole story without that letter.  This, in turn, ends up creating unexpected meanings together with a profound sense of lack. A simple decision "to omit" (why omitting?) questions the imperative and the obligation to omit. What do we choose to omit? To this follows the ontological question: did someone choose for us to omit something that now we omit without knowing it? Was there ever an ancestral prohibition? The English title "a-void" points out at this duplicity: both an avoidance (to avoid) and a lack (a void) that nevertheless allows the story to unfold and allows us getting used to it without even noticing it: that fundamental disappearance will go unnoticed.   "Far from a mere collection of nutty pirouettes, Perec's writing often confronts the most disturbing historical realities. The loss of both his parents at an age when he barely knew them—his father killed by a German bullet, his mother sent off to Auschwitz, both dead before Perec was nine—seems to have become more laceratingly painful the older he got. The missing "E" throughout "La disparition" is phonetically indistinguishable from the pronoun "*eux*"—"them" ("they" are missing)—and the title is taken from the *acte de disparition*, the official document that Perec received from the Ministry of War Veterans telling him that his mother was last seen alive in February of 1943." https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/the-absolute-originality-of-georges-perec (accessed May 11, 2023).  The prohibition, "*le flick dans la tête*", the preclusion, the foreclusion, la manqué, the default, the inhibition, the substitution or the Ersatz are different ways of thinking the lack and its void.

30    Concerning Baruch Spinoza's notion of "free necessity" see his Letter 62-P02: https://www.faculty.umb.edu/gary_zabel/Courses/Spinoza/Texts/Spinoza/let6258.htm#:~:text=I%20say%20that%20a%20thing,decision%2C%20but%20in%20free%20necessity. (last accessed June 12, 2024).

The building industry is responsible for the greatest amount of devastating spoiling which takes place in the planet. [31] The building industry (AEC – Architecture Engineering Construction) is a declaration of war – a silent, deceitful, sneaky and violent conflict that takes place under the eyes of such star-architects who conceal their complicity through highly self-indulgent persuasive discourses and self-celebrative practices. No wonder if the same catastrophe they start with, then returns in the anatomical theatres of the schools that demand always new victims (the so-called "precedents").[32] The list of the demiurgic architects is vertiginous: enough to flip through the pages of the histories of architecture and its most devoted magazines.



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This is the misleading leitmotif we have been educated with: "you shall design buildings to be built at any cost because this is the only accepted outcome of architecture" – and this fulfils the allure for the catastrophe and its ruins.  Who has set up this sequence of need, demand and desire? We propose to learn to trace and reveal the catastrophes of art implied in "architecture wonders" such as the well-known star-architects' masterpieces: contemporary popular examples of the "unprecedented and environmentally calamitous phenomenon of the mass-consumption of architectural opulence";[33] that is certainly not something "new" as the demiurgic delirium of the architect in Valéry's *Eupalinos* demonstrates.

A concealed war has already taken place – it's a *déjà vu* –and we are the surviving witnesses of many other, human and nonhuman, victims. The practice is literally preposterous – the after being anticipated by the before. We are complicit impotent *Rückenfigurs*. The wars fought with bombs and other sophisticated weapons are the showing off of the mass-intellectual destruction which confirms our spectatorship: impotent in the face of the fatal attraction for this devastating potency.

War – *polemos* – is not just a metaphor.

31    Glen Hill, "The Aesthetics of Architectural Consumption" in *Aesthetics of Sustainable Architecture*, ed. by Sang Lee (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2011), 26-40.

32    The architectural discourse is retroactive in the path of desire where the subjectivity meets cultural expectations. In the "elementary cell" of the "graph of desire" that Lacan illustrates the subject meets at a key point (*le point de capiton*) the expectations that are imposed upon him by cultural and ideological mandates. Jacques Lacan, *Scritti,* vol II (Torino: Einaudi 1974), 807. In our case, such mandates are the obligations to design buildings to be constructed, whereby architecture should/could be understood as the condition of reflecting thoroughly upon this need-demand-desire.

33    Glen Hill, "The Aesthetics of Architectural Consumption" in *Aesthetics of Sustainable Architecture*, ed. by Sang Lee (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2011), 27-8.

Fig. 2
"The Demiurge Architect or The Guardian of the Graveyard," Claudio Sgarbi, mixed media.

## Biblical and modern conflicts: Babel and its byproducts

> And if the Temple is to be cast down, [if the temple shall ruin],
>
> We must first build the Temple.[34]

No surprise if—in case the catastrophe becomes violently evident—those buildings will be able to fully expose the haunted structures they were designed for.

How could the Greeks dare give the name of *symbol* [35] precisely to a broken token of reciprocal reunion? How could their tongues and voices dare venture into this crux? The crack *is* the symbol. A wound that will never be healed is the eternal tear, the icon that "some-thing" must be broken apart to be rejoined. Bringing things together entails their breaking apart. Like blind men brandishing the sword of religion, igniting deep conflicts and seizing strong bonds at the apex of its immanent non-sense, right in the place whereby both bonds and conflicts are so strong, alas, so strong, as to make the contradiction the essence of their faith.

*Symbolon* is the wholeness, the all-roundness ("*a tuttotondo*") of the mythical, of the human, all too human body, that has been forever broken apart and is forever trying to bond the wound that will never be healed. Conversely, *diabolo*[36] is the objectification of the body which has lost the sympathy for the other and its otherness. It is the domain of the entities that simulate a completeness and an autonomy and do not look for those bonds that are their essence: the essence of being always separated and broken apart from those bonds. The lack of the sense of belonging to a wholeness that has been irreversibly broken is diabolic.

The punishment for building the tower of Babel (*bilbul*; confusion in Hebrew)[37] is the tower itself—an oxymoron—*diabolon* and *symbolon*. The punishment of the quest for the *symbolon* is *allegory*.[38] Thus, the tower is doomed to remain forever the non-finito of imagination encrusted in our imagination—the longing

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34    Thomas S. Eliot. *Choruses from "The Rock,"* 1925. Published online by Cambridge University Press: 10 March 2010 ed. Jewel Spears Brooker
https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/abs/t-s-eliot-rock-1934/EC5D33C6A8D98AC84748355EB17DD4DA
The text between square parentheses is our addition.

35    (sun-ballo) Symbol: from the Latin: *symbŏlus* e *symbŏlum*, gr. **σύμβολον** «combination», «sign of recognition», «juxtaposition», derivative of **συμβάλλω** «to join together, to bond, to make the pieces coincide» (composition of **σύν** «together» e **βάλλω** «to throw».

36    "διάβολος, *diabolos*, *devil*, means slanderer, detractor. It relates **δια-βάλλω**, *dia-ballo*, throwing, rift, alienate, accuse, slander, denigrate, cheat … **διά**, *dia-*, is exactly a preposition or adverb meaning separately, in part, through; it is, the opposite of συν , *sin-*, *with*." So, etymologically "*symbol*" is the opposite of "*devil*": if the "*symbols*" join together, the "*devils*" separate.   http://www.antiquitatem.com (last accessed January 20, 2022).

37    Irving Wohlfarth points out that "in his final jottings . . . Benjamin resurrects the Messianic hope for a world in which 'the confusion deriving from Babel is allayed,' and the original, prelapsarian language has been restored—one which is 'understood by all men like the language of birds by Sunday children.'" ("On Some Jewish Motifs in Benjamin" in *The Problems of Modernity: Adorno and Benjamin* ed. Andrew Benjamin (London: Routledge, 1991), 157-215.

38    *Qua* figurative language; allegory—*allos* + *agora,* are mutually exclusive. Consider the etymology of *allegory*: "*allos*=other; another, different; beyond / *agoreuein*= speak openly, speak in the assembly, from *agora* ("assembly")
https:// www./etymonlyne.com/word/allegory (last accessed January 5, 2023).

to return to the memory of the lost childhood of man ("eastward"). Memory itself, of a lost prelapsarian unity, is already a crack that wedges a before and an after. The either/or which denies the both/and.

The tower as elegiac disbandment, other than itself, the rift of self from self, of self from other, of language from itself, rather than "the thing-in-itself," which mankind, that can never "step barefoot into reality"[39] is ever banned from. Like Borges' city of the immortals, the tower is abandoned; not destroyed—a memorabilia (ephemerae) for memory to enact its everlasting Moebian wedge—the sense of an ending-no-beginning.  Was the mythical warmonger Nimrod the hubristic architect of Shinar's tower of war, of the *fascio*,[40] who dared defy God and men, the erection that ended up in disbandment, uncommunication and splintering? But nothing is lost. How many modern offsprings and metamorphoses? Petrograd, Dubai, Seoul, London, Shanghai…  Demiurges, playing God by gracefully gathering splintered humanity together again, via the travesty of progress, by way of a thousand slaves of all races and a plethora of languages who will build these towers whose head will raise to the heavens. Meagre payment for the meagre sacrifice by flocks of workers, some of whom drink themselves to oblivion after working tirelessly for such noble cause. The rift of Babel has ostensibly been healed, as they all together build the golden calf of capitalism. And these are only paradigms of the *High Rise* (J. G. Ballard) vertical catastrophes – never mind the low profile, horizontal or subterranean ones.

We must confess our interest in those historic architectural precedents we were educated to appreciate – no criticism *ad hominem* is intended; nevertheless, we cannot anymore accept the logic that "beauty" can be a "deterrent against violence."[41] Unless we drastically change our concept of beauty and stop attributing it to paradigmatic hubristic (arrogant, prideful, haughty, patronizing, opinionated, self-conceited) spectacles of opulent consumption. So, the question should be formulated in this way: which kind of beauty can be a deterrent against violence? The beauty of the void—to avoid building without end; and, since the end is not something that humans can grasp, the beauty to a-void the need, demand, desire to build.

Isn't the architectural opulence of our overbuilding a justification for the violence that mater-builders practice on the resources of this planet?  It is not by

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39    from Wallace Stevens' "Large Red Man Reading": "There were those that returned to hear him read from the poem of life, / Of the pans above the stove, the pots on the table, the tulips among them./ They were those that would have wept to step barefoot into reality" (ll. 3-6). *Wallace Stevens: Collected Poetry & Prose*, ed. Joan Richardson and Frank Kermode (New York: Library of America, 1997).

40   The etymology of *fascism*: "under Benito Mussolini (1883-1945); from Italian fascio 'group, association,' literally 'bundle,' from Latin *fasces*. Fasci, "groups of men organized for political purposes" had been a feature of Sicily since c. 1895, and the 20c. totalitarian sense probably came directly from this but was influenced by the historical Roman fasces, which became the party symbol. https://www.etymonline.com/word/fascist (last accessed Dec 21, 2023).

41   "Inoltre la bellezza è qualità si fatta da contribuire in modo cospicuo alla comodità e perfino alla durata dell'edificio. Giacché nessuno potrà negare di sentirsi più a suo agio abitando tra pareti ornate che tra pareti spoglie; né l'arte umana può trovare mezzo più sicuro per proteggere i suoi prodotti dalle offese dell'uomo stesso, anzi *la bellezza fa sì che l'ira distruggitrice del nemico si acquieti e l'opera d'arte venga rispettata*. Oserei dire insomma che nessuna qualità, meglio del decoro e della gradevolezza formale, è in grado di preservare illeso un edificio dall'umano malvolere" Leon Battista Alberti, *De re aedificatoria*, Libro VI, cap. ii, 234.

chance that their designers openly announce it as the redemptive antidote for the failures of the Tower of Babel without considering the disastrous consumption of resources that this arrogance effects and the threatening void of sense of its structure that simply waits the catastrophe to accomplish its inception: a means for means' sake – haunted by the same meaning that was excluded in its inception. The private and public life that is supposed to attribute to it its meaning is only a temporary muddiness that mars the purity of its structure. So many iconic buildings advertised in history books and popular architectural magazines, are violent "means without end"[42] not to be so proud or arrogant about. Who is meant to make amends[43] for the hubris they dauntedly brandish?

### To Inhabit the Haunting Voids of this Catastrophe

A catastrophic amount of voids has already been overbuilt and will demand a dutiful commitment to be inhabited. An increase of the world population by the billions and a sublime crowd of volunteers will not suffice to sweep the floor after such a mess and to try and face all this haunting void of sense. We return to Derrida's "haunted by sense." The most famous hero of a tentative reaction against this global war of consumption is the abovementioned Matta-Clark. His splitting, subtractions and emptying by destruction of condemned buildings amount to a war on war. One of his craters seems to have inspired sequence in the movie *The Pianist*, whereby a piano player keeps heroically playing notwithstanding the horrors he is witnessing. Matta-Clark's craters are not the evil made by the enemy but the exhibited performance of the scientific eye that inspects the void of sense of building itself– the void of sense of the alternation between the construction and destruction of buildings that have already been condemned since their inception. [44] Matta-Clark exposes the extraordinary importance entailed in that difference – he hollows the dead structure of the bare structure by means of destruction.

### A Destructive Character

Is Matta-Clark, then, the destructive character evoked by Walter Benjamin? Or does he rather poke peepholes into the net of "the architecture of an uninhabited or deserted city, reduced to its skeleton by some catastrophe of […] art"? To return to Walter Benjamin, from our detour through Derrida, and Matta-Clark, "The destructive character envisions nothing. He has few needs, least of all to know what will take the place of the destroyed. At first, for a moment at least,

42    Walter Benjamin, *Toward the Critique of Violence*, ed. Peter Fenves and Julia NG (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2021) and Giorgio Agamben, *Means Without End: Notes on Politics*, trans. Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

43    Claudio Sgarbi, 2017 "Apology of the Void," *Scroope: The Cambridge Architecture Journal*, no. 26: 60-67.

44    The Buddhist ide*a of "Samsāra" – as* popularly exhibited in the movie *Little Buddha* (1993) in the sequence known as "architect," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhpruCbb4lQ (last accessed December 13, 2023) seems to suggest this idea of an eternal return of pathological narcissism.

the empty space, the place where the object stood, the victim lived. Someone will turn up who needs it without occupying it."[45]

The character entailed in the obsessive compulsion to build at all costs, in an "orgy of development" that dooms the marginalized to an abyss of humiliating scarcity and the resources to a regime of values is both constructive (another totalizing-excluding structure) or destructive (another spoiling). Time and again, the poor and helpless who inhabit the humblest of abodes are uprooted and displaced from the traditional homes they had inhabited for generations, cast out to the streets or little less—when there is a top-down need to clear out entire zones in order to make room for the erection of ghostly Olympic villages (Brazil, China, Sochi),[46] railroads or (uninhabited) high-rises on plots whose value has dramatically increased, and which will bring fortunes to the winners. Such is the ruthless and thoughtless *Lebensraum* of war and of the art of building.

### Rückenfigurs: Jacques Derrida, Peter Eisenman, Aldo Rossi and Jorge Luis Borges (with the lurking ghost of Simonides of Cheos)

We propose to look into all these characters we have summoned—ourselves included—through the condition they-we humanly share: the condition of being *Rückenfigurs*, figures from behind looking at the panorama they evoke. Imagine this sequence: Jacques Derrida looking at the ruins of a bombed and abandoned Syrian city; Peter Eisenman looking at the remains of his abandoned "City of Culture"; Aldo Rossi looking at an apartment building devastated by a hurricane or a bombing; and finally, behind all of them, the regressive reiterated "figure from behind" of Simonides of Cheos (the inventor of the memory by places of catastrophes)[47] looking at the disaster of his banquet hall and at all of those figures looking from behind – as a *mise-en-abyme* of René Magritte's famous painting "Not to be reproduced" (*La reproduction interdicte, 1937*).

Destruction and spectatorship are their common ground. A sequence of differences and a common end: the catastrophe of witnessing at the catastrophe

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45    Benjamin, *Toward the Critique of Violence*, 1931.

46    See, for example, https://www.washingtonpost.com/magazine/2020/07/06/inside-troubling-legacy-displacing-poor-communities-olympic-games-one-villages-resistance-brazil/ ; https://www.noboston2024.org/housing-displacement ; https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/jun/30/a-massive-betrayal-how-londons-olympic-legacy-was-sold-out ; https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0956247813501139. In China, for instance, "More than 2 million people have been moved from their homes over the past 20 years, many of them forcibly, to clear space for the Olympic Games, a human rights group reported yesterday." https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/jun/06/sport.china
 (All websites accessed December 11, 2023).

47    "Imagery seems to have first attracted learned attention when its powerful mnemonic properties were discovered by the Greek poet and *sophos* (wise man) Simonides (c.556-c.468 B.C.E.). According to a legend passed on by Cicero (106-43 B.C.E.), the discovery occurred at a banquet in Thessaly which Simonides attended in order to present a lyric poem written in praise of the host. Simonides was called outside shortly after his performance, and during his absence the roof of the banqueting hall suddenly collapsed, crushing the other diners, and mangling many of their corpses beyond recognition. Simonides, however, found he was able to identify the bodies (important for proper burial) by consulting his visual memory image of the people sitting around the banqueting table, which enabled him to identify the corpses according to where they were found.[...] Supposedly, this was the origin of the mnemonic technique known as the *method of loci*.
    *Ancient Imagery Mnemonics.* (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy) https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/mental-imagery/ancient-imagery-mnemonics.html (last accessed June 20, 2022).

of the other to bury the remains of the dead.

In order to move from difference to differing and then to deference we propose to confront these "figures from behind" with a photograph taken by Ferdinando Scianna in 1984: Jorges Louis Borges "looking" at the ruins of the Temple C in Selinunte. This is an extraordinary image that only a photographer with a profound knowledge of Borges' oeuvre could have planned and shot. The man Borges, now blind, is a *Rückenfigure* facing the ruins (with a sea of blue behind his shoulders), the anastylosis of the ruins of the Selinunte Doric Temple C.

## Stand Still for a Moment

In the face of this profound lack, in the clear vision of the lack of the end, how can architects promote their art of building, how can architects build means for means' sake, instead of meditating at the threshold of the building they shall not, they may avoid to build?

Behind the rear-figure (and, as we must infer, the rear window, the window the man Borges paints with his own imagination) there is another rear-figure: the photographer looking through the small window (viewfinder) of his camera. Such an overlapping of gazes – both possible and impossible – is precisely again that catastrophe of nature (the ravagings of time inflicted upon the temple) and art (destruction, spoiling, preservation and reconstruction of the ruins)— all captured by the art of photography—of "secur[ing] the shadow, ere the substance fades."[48]

Did Borges spontaneously indulge into that blind gaze into the void? Did the photographer just capture it? Or was the setting intentional? It doesn't matter. We may imagine what he must have asked to the man Borges who must have well understood this strange request by the photographer: — "I would like to take a picture of your head from behind.

Maestro, would you please stand still for a moment and turn your gaze in that direction where you could see the anastylosis of the Doric Temple C?

Do you mind turning in that direction?"

— "Shall I comb these long, unkempt gray hairs of mine?"

—No. They are just perfect, as messy as they need be."

 Both men smile.

— "Perfect. Just a moment."

—"Do you want me to keep smiling, though no one can see?"

—"Yes please. Good; like this.

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48    "'Secure the shadow, ere the substance fades' was one of the earliest advertising slogans used by photographers, as carte de visite (CDV) photographs became all the rage. The phrase urged one and all to capture the image (Secure the shadow) before beloved family members were dead and gone (the substance fades)." https://www.ephemerasociety.org/secure-the-shadow-ere-the-substance-fades/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CSecure%20the%20shadow%2C%20ere%20the%20substance%20fades%E2%80%9D%20was%20one,gone%20(the%20substance%20fades). (last accessed December 21, 2023).

*The photographer and we ourselves are destined to re-enact this interdicted reproduction of our own gaze MISE-EN-ABYME into the abyss – where our face is lost.*

*"Dear photographer what are you doing to me, of me?"*

Behind the rear-figure (and, as we must infer, the *rear window*, the window the man Borges paints) there is another rear-figure with his picture's frame: that of the photographer. Can we imagine what he must have asked to the man Borges? Borges must have well understood this strange request by Scianna the photographer: I would like to take a picture of your head from behind...... **Maestro, would you please stand still for a moment and turn your gaze in that direction where you could see the anastylosis of the Doric Temple C**? Do you mind turning in that direction? Shall I comb this long, unkempt gray hairs of mine? No!!! They are just perfect, as messy as they need to be. Both men smile. Perfect. Just a moment. **Do you want me to smile?** Yes please. Good like this. Now I can see. Do you know what I see? You may guess what I didn't see. **But you can't know what I didn't see. You have caught me. You have stolen me. It amuses me to become the character of an image I will never see. Will I?** It is not by chance that one of the most renowned stories by Raymond Carver is titled "The Cathedral" that is about "digging" into the eyes of blindness. Self 'inflicted blindness like the one by Oedipus?
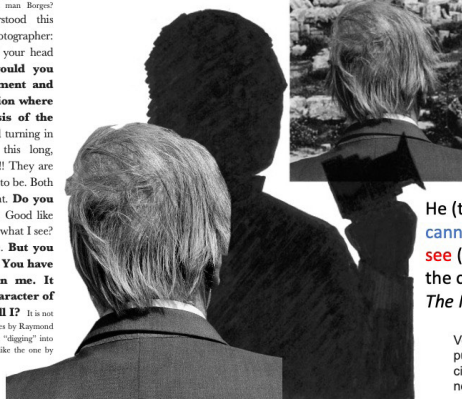
HOW DOES THE FRONT FIGURE LOOK LIKE?

recto.....verso ?
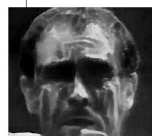
*Being without answer determines the death of the face*
Emmanuel Levinas

He (the photographer) sees (frames) Borges who cannot help but not see **who** can only help but not see (he can/cannot anymore see himself gazing at) the cyclicity of lives and deaths..... (he describes in *The Immortal*)

Vede (inquadra) Borges che non può che non vedere che non può che non vedere (che non si può più vedere guardare) il ciclicità delle vite e delle morti ....(samsara) che racconta nell'immortale.

Now I can see."

—"Do you know what I see? My profile hides something to you. You may guess what I didn't see. But you cannot know what I did not see. You have caught me. You have stolen me. It amuses me to become the character of an image I shall never see."[49]

It is not by chance that one of the most renowned stories by Raymond Carver, titled "The Cathedral," (it could have been titled "The Temple") is about "digging" into the eyes of the physical blindness of the other to find the metaphorical blindness that pervades our illusory unpaired gazes. Self-inflicted blindness like Oedipus'? *Blindness*, by Jose Saramago is the title chosen to advertise a famous Italian publisher with an image of the devastation that the building of the metropolis implies.[50] This is precisely what blindness is about: the opulence of the consumption of the overbuilding we wrongly call "architecture" has impaired our ability to see its internal dramatic conflict, has drugged/ exploited/ doped/ crack-headed the subject; it has radically subjugated the subject to the neurotic allure for the very catastrophe as a celebration of its own potency: the potency of destruction, the *polemos* of eros.

## Why?

Why should architecture have anything to do with these allusions to war, conflict, catastrophe and violence? Can we reformulate this question now, after considering these figures-from-behind?

There is another figure-from-behind that leaves us ourselves alone as figures from behind: this is the figure of Walter Benjamin's "destructive character" blur-

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49    Ferdinando Scianna, *Jorge Louis Borges fotografato da Ferdinando Scianna* (Milano: Franco Sciardelli, 1999); see also https://www.doppiozero.com/jorge-luis-borges-palermo-1984 (last accessed 11 June 2024)

50    The campaign is titled "Leggere insegna a leggere": https://www.lafeltrinelli.it/leggere-insegna-leggere (last accessed December 14, 2024).

Fig. 3
"Borges' Rückenfigur." Photomontage by Claudio Sgarbi; Ferdinando Scianna, photographer: Jorges Louis Borges "looking" at the ruins of the Temple C in Selinunte in 1984.

ring and disappearing before the monument to his own suicide built in front of the ocean he would never cross. This monument it arrogantly too beautiful.[51] Was there a "need" to build it? This is a lively fundamental question that demands the most profound practice of architecture—to live the question itself. To "live the question now."[52]

## Forget the Fathers

Our gaze is turned towards the dead structure or the structure of death. *Morto ammazzato.* As we are blind watching at the dead (by art), we ourselves are rendered figures-from-behind (who is behind us? Why are you following me?) witnessing the destruction of these wars fought with weapons and scapegoats and violence and blood and miasmas (now a totally futile sacrifice and a futile demand for victims —the same archaic sacrifice that takes place since the beginning of time[53] now again with the sacrifice of "obsolete" human beings,[54] a futile boasting of futility as in the case of those archaic symbolic "gifts" of pure expenditure: the hecatomb (literally: the killing of scapegoats by the hundreds).

Will this be enough? repeatedly asks José Saramago, evoking a rebellious Christ figure-from-behind – taking our own part, being our own hero – rebellious, asking his madman father who insists demanding victim after victim, martyrdom after martyrdom in his own "name of the Father" towards the inebriating purely meaningless "vertigo of the list." How much is enough in the name of the Father? An apocryphal mother (nature) exclaimed: *You would still be my son - were you not the son of your father.*[55]

We directly address this question —how much is enough — to the complicit star-architects who keep overbuilding this folly, who keep building *forsennatamente* the immanent death of their skeletal cities haunted by all the ghosts that haunt them:

> forget your fathers:
> their tombs dunk into ashes,
> black birds, the wind,
> bury their hearts.[56]

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51    https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/walter-benjamin-memorial (last accessed December 14, 2023)

52    Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*, Letter n. 4, July 16, 1903 https://www.tumblr.com/dabacahin/159546902842/rainer-maria-rilke-live-the-questions-now (last accessed June 14, 2024).

53    Girard, René. *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*. Translated by Stephen Bann & Michael Metteer. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987.

54    Günther Anders, *L'uomo è antiquato. Vol. 1 Considerazioni sull'anima nell'epoca della seconda rivoluzione industriale* (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 2007).

55    "Non fossi stato figlio di Dio, t'avrei ancora per figlio mio." Fabrizio de Andrè, *La buona novella*, 1970, "Tre Madri."

56    Closing lines from Salvatore Quasimodo's "Man of My Times." The poem by Salvatore Quasimodo, *Uomo del mio tempo* – first published in 1946, is the last in the collection *Giorno dopo giorno*, in *Tutte le poesie*, Mondadori, Oscar Grandi Classici, 1994. "To break the chain of violence, we must break with the past, break away from the mentality of our fathers because: their tombs sink into the ruins of their own destruction while vultures and the wind cover their hearts." https://paralleltexts.blog/2017/04/24/man-of-my-time-by-salvatore-quasimodo/ (last accessed December 20, 2023).

**We**

Probably we can see only the truth of the back of the gaze of the other: the direct reciprocal gaze is always cheating, reversed as if reflected in a mirror. If I meet you and I want to shake your right hand I will have to cut through your reverse because your right is on my left. Our meeting is a chiasm. We write, paint, design and try to find out the architecture of this chiasm. Given the recurrence of the horrors we keep witnessing and the *jouissance* of the life we try to live, we aver that the best stance to adopt is to banish any sort of pride, arrogance and hubris and design as precisely and humbly as possible the human limits and its finitude. The nothingness to be proud of is a poetic impulse of renunciation. We share a motto borrowed from *Eupalinos* as a reciprocal invitation: "take me to the threshold of the building you shall not build."

Because the best of any possible building is the building which does not need to be built, the best design is simply *evoked* by what we do and is inevitably spoiled by what gets done. Humane latency – way too humane. The end, the aim, the finality, the telos – that must be kept clearly as a practical scope – is not that which we end up doing but what we evoke. Quite often this ends up being just our friendship, or a symposium on architecture: war and peace (or art and war) and the conviviality[57] it implies. We propose to design practically the domain whereby the indulging in this questioning is possible. A reciprocal commitment to create the conditions for a suspension of judgement – the condition whereby the humane dialogue takes place. We invite our star-architects we have just crucified to step down and partake in a dialogue, and "take [them] to the threshold of the building [they] shall not build."

57    Ivan Illich, *Tools of Conviviality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973).

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Leonor Ferrão

# The Cistern of the Portuguese Fortress of Mazagan (1541-1769)

*Architecture and War, History of Architecture, Portoguese Cistern, Mazagão (El Jadida, Morocco), Heritage*

## /Abstract

Portugal, a small European kingdom with a small population and few resources, was able to maintain several positions on the northwest coast of Africa over a span of 354 years: Ceuta was the first Portuguese city in the Maghreb (1415), and Mazagan the last to be abandoned (1769). It began as a small protectorate of the Portuguese crown (1486). After the conquest of Azemmour (1513), King Manuel I (1469/1485-1521) deemed it vital to guarantee Portugal's supremacy over the Spanish crown and protect the *Carreira da Índia* from pirates and corsairs who sailed the north and west coast of Africa. But there were other motives. Those aims dictated the transformation of a small lookout post into a bastioned fortress capable of withstanding modern ballistic attacks. Despite the many difficulties, King Manuel's successor endowed the city with the conditions that would allow it to survive in a very hostile territory and far from help: in addition to the construction of the modern defensive structure, the cistern, built between 1541 and 1547, was essential for life inside the city during very prolonged sieges. Mazagan — El Jadida nowadays — has been a UNESCO heritage site since 2004. Mazagan is still beautiful, but ruined and socially depressed. It had the best architects and engineers at the service of the Portuguese crown during the reigns of King Manuel and King João III. There is therefore no shortage of arguments to justify the urgency of a safeguarding project, which is of interest to both Morocco and Portugal, in order to celebrate peace and life, concealing a past of wars and lost lives.

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## Introduction

Portugal, a small European kingdom with a small population and few resources, was able to maintain several positions on the northwest coast of Africa over a span of 354 years. Ceuta was the first Portuguese city in the Maghreb (1415), and Mazagan the last to be abandoned (1769). **[Fig.1]**

The African campaign was driven by multiple motives, which were revised over time.[1] The strongholds in North Africa were the "school where the Portuguese nobility went to learn and . . . practise acts of valour,"[2] an opportunity to give free rein to the "ferocious pleasure of destroying, pillaging, burning and taking prisoners"[3] and to rise socially,[4] besides being an exile destination, as was the case of a state secretary for overseas territories, Diogo de Mendonça Côrte-Real (1694 or 1703−71).[5]

## Mazagan I and II: from Protectorate to Coastal Fortress

Mazagan began as a small protectorate of the Portuguese crown (1486). After the conquest of Azemmour (1513), King Manuel I deemed it vital to transform the protectorate into a coastal fortress (1514). The Arruda brothers, Francisco (fl. 1506−47) and Diogo (fl. 1510−31), were the architects chosen to carry out the plan and supervise the work, which attests to the importance the monarch attributed to Mazagan.[6] The new project had a square plan with four cylindrical towers in the corners, following a composite design in vogue for the fortifications of southern European monarchies in the late Middle Ages.

## Mazagan III: the First Modern City in Africa

King Manuel's successor, John III, was forced to review the Portuguese crown's ambitions in North Africa after losing Santa Cruz do Cabo Guê (the current Agadir) in 1541. In that year of 1541 Francisco de Holanda (1517-84) returned from his study trip to Italy; in an autograph manuscript he claimed authorship of

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1    For a description and discussion of the purposes as well as the successes and failures of the Portuguese campaign in North Africa during the Discoveries period, see Augusto Ferreira do Amaral, *Mazagão: a epopeia portuguesa em Marrocos* (Lisbon: Tribuna, 2007), 27−9, 37.

2    "He a escola, aonde a nobreza de Portugal hia aprender, e juntamente exercitar as acçoens de seu valor." *Noticia da grande batalha, que houve na Praça de Mazagão no dia 6 de Fevereiro do presente anno de 1757* (Lisbon, 1757), 1.

3    Joseph Goulven, *Safi: aux vieux temps des portugais* (Lisbon: [s.n.]), 75.

4    Amaral, *Mazagão: a epopeia portuguesa em Marrocos*, 30−31.

5    Mário Francisco Simões Júnior, "A Secretaria de Estado do Ultramar e Diogo de Mendonça Corte Real" (Master's dissertation, Faculty of Philosophy, Letters and Human Sciences, University of São Paulo, 2017), 177.

6    Francisco de Arruda had designed and built with his brother Diogo the Tower of Belém (begun in 1513). Mário Tavares Chicó, "A Arquitectura em Portugal na época de D. Manuel e nos princípios do reinado de D. João III: o gótico final português, o estilo manuelino e a introdução da arte do renascimento," in *História da Arte em Portugal*, eds. Aarão de Lacerda, Mário Tavares Chicó and Reinaldo dos Santos (Porto: Portucalense, 1942-53), 2:301; A. Nogueira Gonçalves, "A Torre Baluarte de Belém," *Revista Ocidente* no.67 (1964): 161−176; Rafael Moreira, "Torre de Belém," in *O Livro de Lisboa*, coord. Irisalva Moita (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte), 175−180.

Fig. 1
Nicolas Sanson (1600-67)
*Estats et royaumes de Fez et Maroc Dahra et Segelmesse tirés de Sanuto de Marmol etc.*
Engraving (Paris: chez Mariette, 1655)
Dim. 40 x 53 cm
© BnFr
Source: https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8595420g#

a plan for the fortification of Mazagan.[7] But King John III opted for Benedetto da Ravenna (ca. 1485–1556), an Italian engineer in the service of his brother-in-law Emperor Charles V. To that end, he sent João de Castilho (1490–ca. 1551) to the court of Charles V to arrange for the Italian to come to Portugal. Francisco de Holanda's eventual contribution to the project executed by Benedetto cannot be ruled out: both were familiar with the Fortezza da Basso in Florence, a pentagonal bastioned structure designed by Pier Francesco da Viterbo (1470-1535) and Antonio da Sangallo the Younger (1484–1546) and built in the 1530s, the most likely reference for the quadrangular bastioned structure of Mazagan.

Between May and July of 1541, Diogo de Torralva (ca. 1500–66) was at the site to study the best way to set up the new defensive construction. In July, Benedetto da Ravenna, Diogo Torralva and Miguel Arruda (fl. 1533–63) confirmed the plan's feasibility at the site. At the end of July, João de Castilho and João Ribeiro arrived to supervise the work with a team of 1,500 workers recruited in Évora and from ongoing construction at the Convent of Christ in Tomar.[8]

Despite the technical difficulties of carrying out the work, along with the shortage of skilled workers willing to enter combat if necessary, detailed in the letter from João de Castilho to King John III on 15 December 1541, the exterior curtain wall, partly built over a rocky offshore outcrop, was finished by the end of 1542, ensuring more tranquil progress of the interior and exterior work, notably the digging of moats to protect the land-facing curtain walls.[9] **[Fig. 2]**

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7   Francisco de Holanda, *Da ciência do desenho* (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1985), 32–33.

8   Rafael Moreira, *A construção de Mazagão. Cartas inéditas 1541-1542* (Lisbon: IPPA, 2001), 43.

9   The moats were navigable. They were about 4 m deep; their width varied between 14 (in front of the St Sebastian Bastion) and 37 m (in front of the northern and southern curtain walls). João Barros Matos, "El Jadida [Mazagan] (Marocco)," in *Africa, Red Sea, Persian Golf: Portuguese Heritage around the world*, edited by José Mattoso (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 2012), 94.

Fig. X

In coordination with the King, the work was overseen by Luís de Loureiro (ca.1440–1553), a military man with a great deal of experience fighting in African territory who served as governor of Mazagan between 1541 and 1548.[10]

Besides the workers (though not as many nor as skilled as João de Castilho had requested), from the home kingdom came materials, tools and prefabricated items (nails, bricks, woodwork and stone ready to be put in place), thereby maximising the speed of execution and dispensing with any need for local raw materials or labour.[11] Everything came from Portugal by sea and was unloaded from large vessels anchored offshore to other smaller ones able to enter the precinct through the Sea Gate and along a channel to the Manueline citadel that was navigable at high tide. [12] The Rua da Carreira corresponds to that route, which was used during construction of the curtain walls and bastions. When no longer necessary it was filled in. The Sea Gate was walled off (at an unknown date) before the great siege of 1562.[13] [Figs. 3, 4]

During the construction campaign that began in 1541, the Manueline citadel was not demolished, rather it lost defensive functions and gained others, housing nearly all the infrastructure required for the city's life — hospital and Misericórdia (charity institution), prison, gunpowder magazine, warehouses and granaries. [Fig. 5] The governor's palace and the main church were built to the west, next to the citadel precinct.

Under the old parade ground situated inside the citadel a large semi-subterranean cistern was built. [Figs. 6, 7] João de Castilho was responsible for its design and construction, at least until November 1542, when he returned to Portugal by order of King John III.[14]

The cistern comprises a vast chamber with thirteen pillars with Tuscan imposts and twelve Tuscan columns that support thirty-six stone-ribbed vaults lined with solid brick. [Figs. 8, 9] The oldest known description was written by a witness of the 1562 siege:

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10   This historical detail is corroborated by the correspondence between various signatories and the King. Moreira, *A construção de Mazagão*, 85–163.a

11   This practice dates back to the founding of the city and fortress of São Jorge da Mina, described by Rui de Pina (1440–1522) in the chronicle of King John II. Helder Carita, *Lisboa manuelina e a formação de modelos urbanísticos da época moderna (1495–1521)* (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1999), 47–48.

12   The Sea Gate is a round arch measuring 7 x 4.5 m, with the thickness of the rampart (5 m). João Matos, "Del mar contra la tierra: Mazagán, Ceuta y Diu, primeras fortificaciones abaluartadas en la expansion portuguesa: estúdio arquitectonico" (PhD diss., University of Seville, 2012), 2:124.

13   Matos, "Del mar contra la tierra," 2:127.

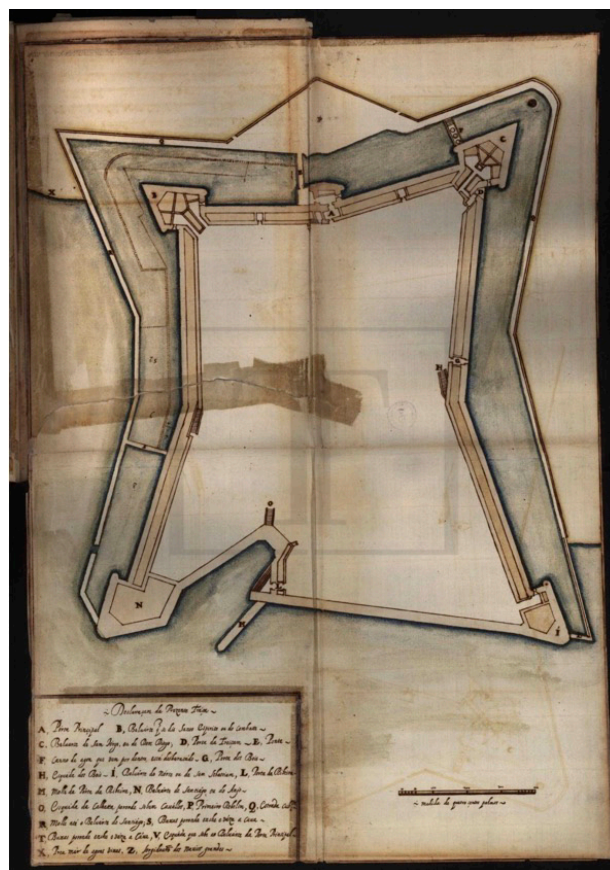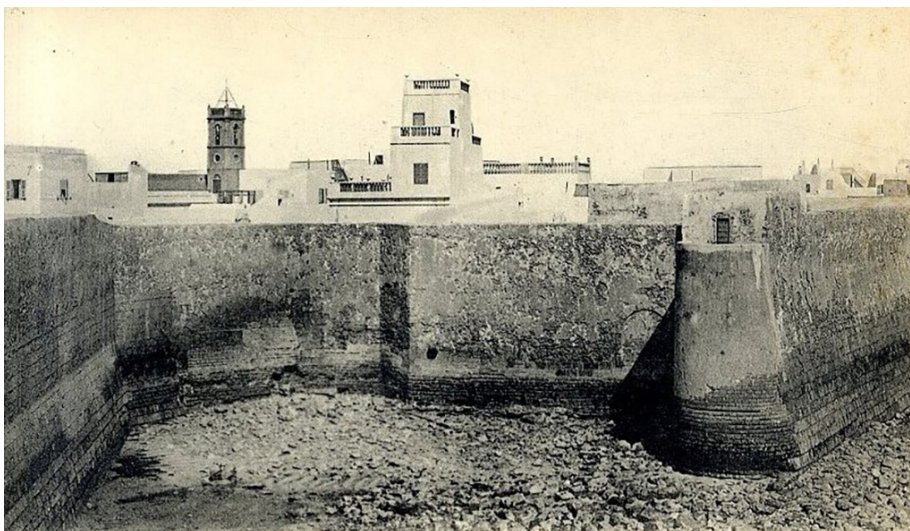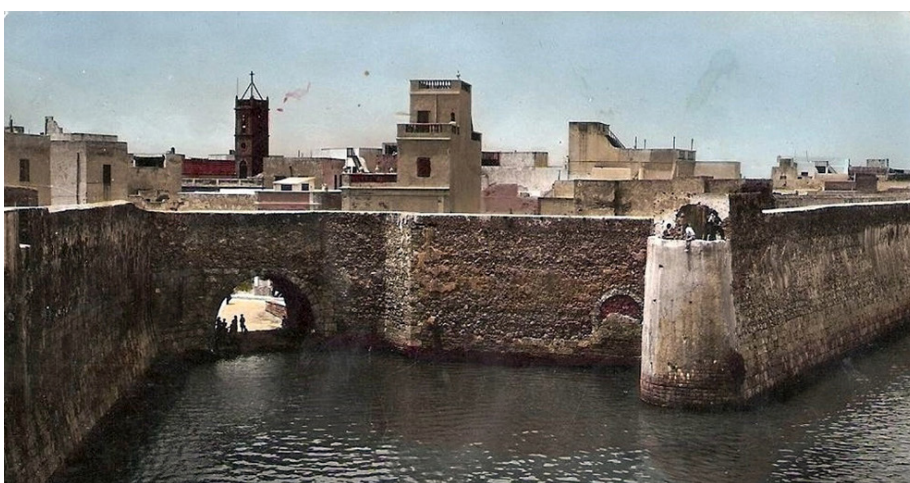14   Moreira, *A construção de Mazagão*, 64 and 146.

Fig. 2
Henrique Correia da Silva
(1560-1644)
Plan of Mazagan
1611

Source: Farinha, *Plantas de Mazagão e Larache no início do século XVIII*, 4-5

   The fortress has inside it a very large cistern with a very strong vaulted ceiling supported by thick columns and has a length of one-hundred and seventy palms and width of one-hundred and fifty-five, in square form, and it has a very high tower in each corner, whereby it is between four towers . . . and during the siege it had five-and-a-half palms of water, with each palm amounting to a thousand tonnes, and at the end of the siege, which lasted more than two months, with more than three-thousand people in the town, it had dropped by one palm of water, which was a cause of great wonder, because the water had always been doled out very liberally.[15]

   When converted, the dimensions given by Gavy de Mendonça indicate a chamber measuring 38.59 x 35.185 m, or 1,357.59 sq. m.

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15   "Tem a fortaleza dentro em si húa cisterna muy grande, & de muy forte abobeda, fundada sobre grossas columnas, & tem de comprimento cento & setenta palmos, & de largo cento & cincoenta & cinco, em forma quadrada, & tem húa torre muy alta em cada canto, de maneira, que fica antre quatro torres, por onde correm hús muros bayxos em contorno de toda a cisterna, como que foy aquelle edeficio de algum alcayde, ou xeque rico, & no tempo do cerco tinha cinco palmos & meo dagua, que monta a mil toneladas o palmo, & acabado o cerco que durou passante de dous meses, avendo na Villa passante de três mil pessoas, saltou hum palmo de agoa, o que se teve por grande maravilha, porque se deu sempre a agoa liberalissimamente." Agostinho de Gavy de Mendonça, Historia do famoso cerco, que o xarife pos a fortaleza de Mazagam deffendido pello valeroso capitam mor della Alvaro de Carvalho, governãdo neste reyno a Serenissima Raynha Dona Catherina, no anno de 1562 (Lisbon, 1602), 8v–9.

Figs. 3 and 4

Mazagan
Sea Gate (walled off and open) and to the right the Ribeira Gate (views of the landing cove)

Source: https://historiasdeportugalemarrocos.com/2016/06/01/o-terramoto-de-1755-em-mazagao/#more-6543

Given the date of Gavy de Mendonça's report and its closeness to when the work was completed (1547), it is unlikely that it had any other use, contrary to what was asserted by Joseph Goulven.[16] Meyrelles do Souto was the first to disagree with Goulven,[17] whose description presents different dimensions than those indicated by Gavy de Mendonça:

> It is a chamber 33.65 m long and 34.75 m wide, with walls 3.50 m thick: 25 Gothic stone pillars arranged in 5 rows of five support a series of vaults rising 5 metres above the ground. From the capitals of those pillars 2.50 metres above the floor 8 ribs rise and intersect at the centre of each vault, creating a very pleasant effect. The vaults are filled with ordinary masonry. Twelve of the pillars have round shafts, the other 13 have square shafts.

> Light enters the chamber through a circular opening with a diameter of 3.55 m made in the vault … The floor is paved with red brick … The cistern is accessed through a 2-metre-high gate that opens onto the upper landing of a broad 11-step staircase, 2.45 m above the ground.[18]

In a letter to King John III dated 16 February 1549, the governor of Mazagan, Captain Tristão de Ataíde (1548–51), suggested to the monarch that the (recently-built) cistern be converted into a church. The proposal is incomprehensible, given the complex politico-military situation on the ground, though it does confirm the potential of this vast chamber, which seems more like a hall church. But the irregular (in both number and placement) distribution of pillars and columns was actually due its practical water storage function. Those irregularities alone would be sufficient to discredit the hypothesis of it having been an armoury.

The Mazagan cistern was fed by underground conduits that brought water from wells outside the bastioned precinct (it is not known how many and where they were located) and also by an opening about 3.5 m in diameter made in the flat roof to collect rainwater, protected by a low stone wall now on the cistern's



5

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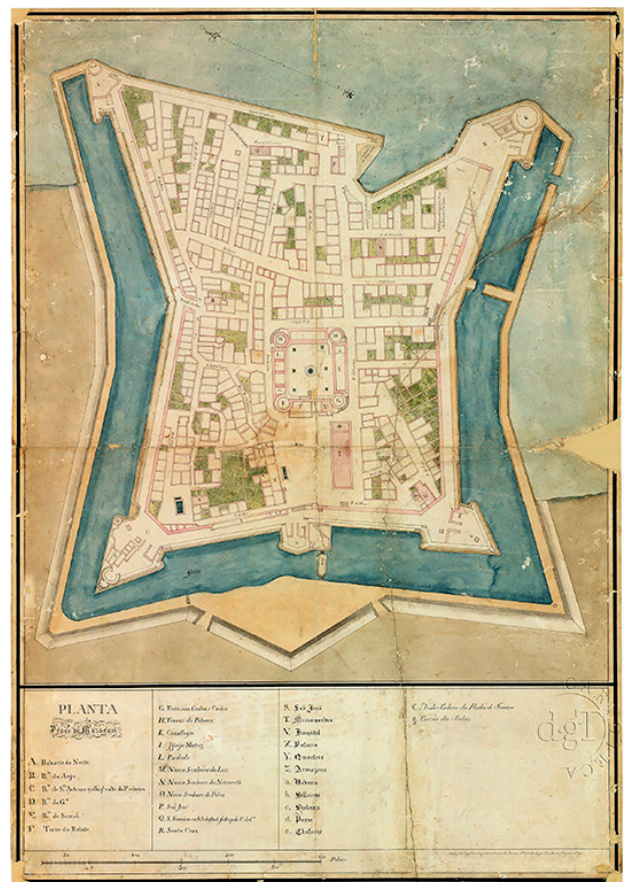
16 Goulven, *La place de Mazagan*, 226.

17 A. Meyrelles do Souto, "Quem fez a linda cisterna de Mazagão?," *Revista Ocidente* no.75 (1968): 217–21.

18 "C'est une salle de 33m.65 de longueur sur 34m.75 de largeur, aux murs épais de 3m.50: 25 piliers gothiques, en pierre taille disposés par 5 rangées de cinq, soutiennent une série de voûtes qui s'élancent à 5 mètres du sol. Du chapiteau de ces piliers partent à 2m.50 du parquet, 8 nervures qui s'entrecroisent au centre de chaque voûte et sont du plus heureux effet. Le remplissage des voûtes est en maçonnerie ordinaire. Douze des piliers sont à fût rond, les 13 autres sont à fût carré. La salle est éclairée par une ouverture circulaire de 3m.55 de diamètre dans la voute. Surplombant un bassin en pierre dont nous ignorons l'usage auquel était destiné. Le pavage du sol est de briques rouges, longues, entrecroisées et brillantes comme la brique d'Azemour. On accédait à la cisterne par une porte haute de 2 mètres qui débouche au palier supérieur d'un large escalier de 11 marches, à 2m.45 au-dessus du sol." Goulven, *La place de Mazagan sous la domination portugaise* (1502-1769), 227-28.
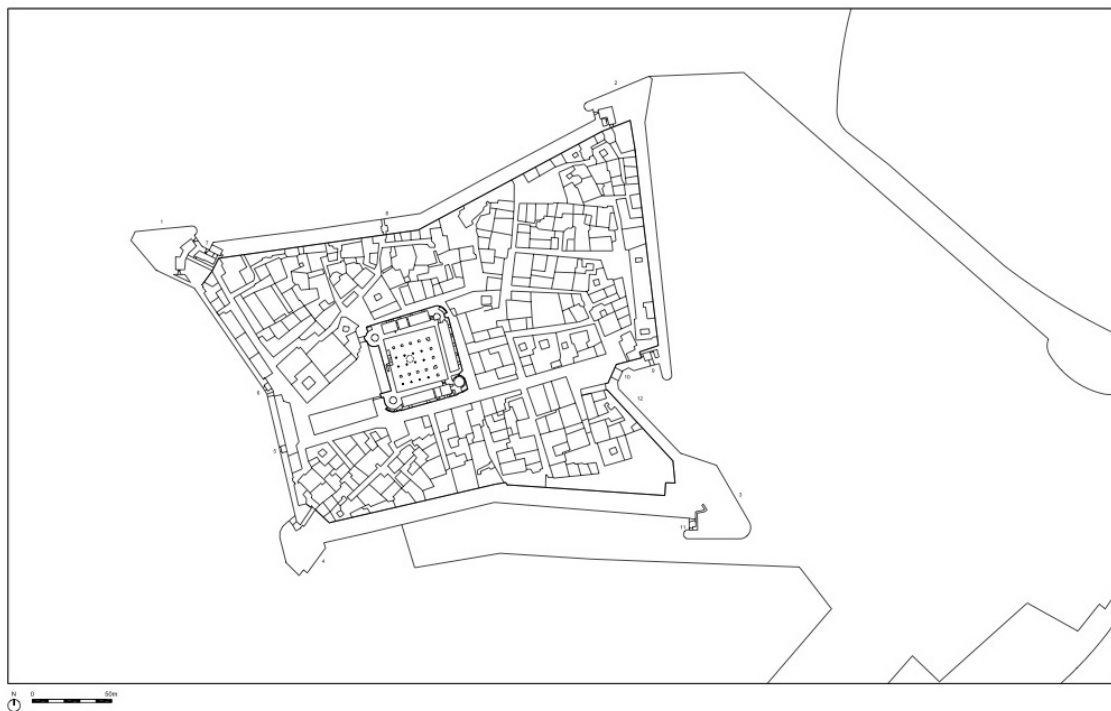
Fig. 5
Simão dos Santos
Plan of Mazagan
1730-60
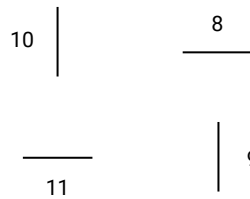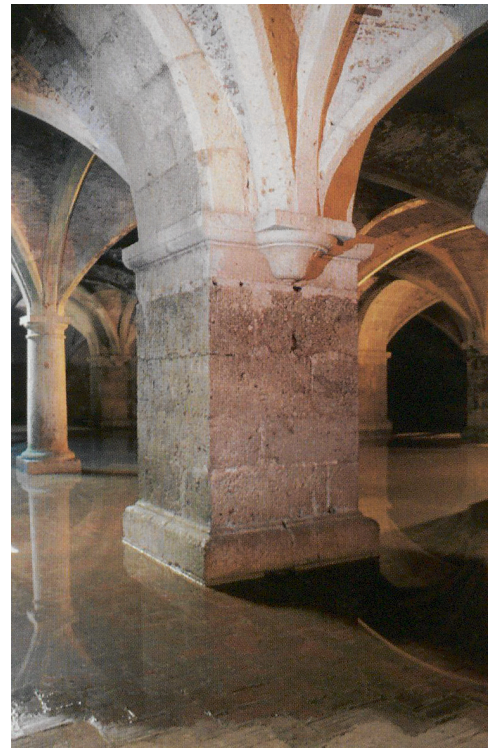© Instituto Português de Cartografia e Cadastro
Source: https://historiasdeportugalemarrocos.com/2014/03/05/mazagao

Fig. 6

Mazagan
Plan at the level of the upper
gun positions

Source: Matos, "Del mar contra
la tierra," 2:166

Fig. 7

Mazagan
Plan at the level of the
casemates

Source: Matos, "Del mar contra
la tierra," 2:167

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11





inside floor. **[Figs. 10, 11]** To prevent the structure from collapsing when over-filled, there was an overflow system situated between the Stork Tower and the Alarm Tower. However, all this is still unconfirmed: there is no rigorous survey nor have there been archaeological campaigns to verify the description of the system that brought water to its storage site.[19]

Castilho returned to Portugal in late 1542 by royal order, though the work continued under the supervision of another engineer until 1547 — the date is indicated in a cartouche in the keystone of one of the vaults.[20] **[Fig. 12]**

Between 1542 and 1550, the Portuguese fortresses at Safi, Azemmour, Asilah and Ksar es-Seghir were abandoned. Tangier and Ceuta were transferred to the

Fig. 8
Cistern of Mazagan
Source: Moreira, *A construção
de Mazagão*, 202

Fig. 9
Cistern of Mazagan
Source: Moreira, *A construção
de Mazagão*, 203

Figs. 10 and 11
Cistern of Mazagan
Source: João Matos n.d.

19    Information from the panel placed by the Ministry of Culture and Communication of the Kingdom of Morocco next the cistern's entrance, on Rua da Carreira.

20    Moreira, *A construção de Mazagão* (Lisbon: IPPAR, 2001), 188.
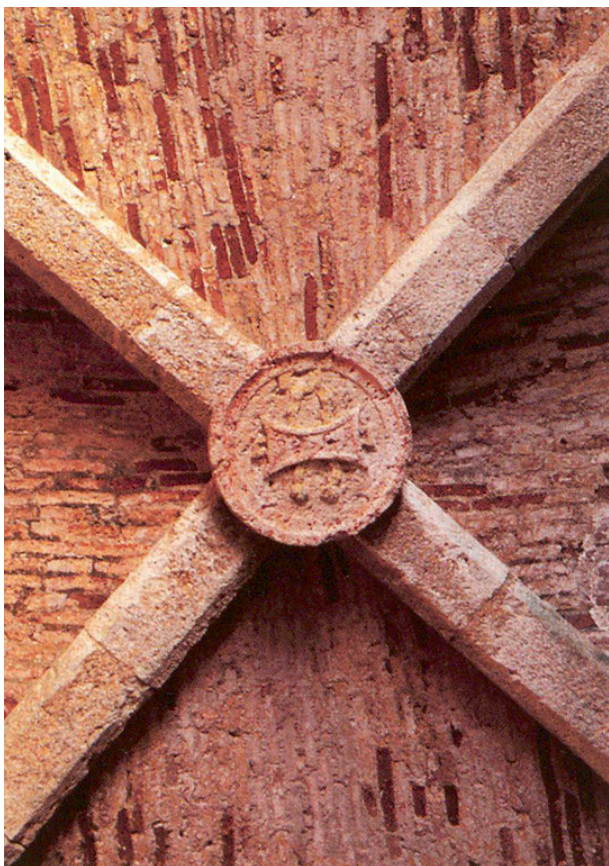
English and Spanish crowns, respectively in 1661 and 1668, but the stronghold of Mazagan survived, impregnable, though a prisoner of itself and, with no royal order allowing the population and garrison to evacuate, continually dependent on supplies brought from Portugal by sea.[21]

Distance and the unpredictability of outside assistance meant there were many periods of scarcity and even hunger. The only abundant resource was water from the huge cistern and fish the tides brought into the moats, which the soldiers caught by dangling fishing poles from the ramparts above.[22] [Fig. 13]

## The Beginning of the End

Mazagan was the first modern city built in Africa, the first built from the ground up that did not appropriate from pre-existing settlements. It complied with some of the principles that were practiced in many others founded by the Portuguese: as usual, there is a main north-south street, the Rua Direita, though it is not very straight, as often occurs.[23] What is unexpected, however, is that Mazagan's Rua Direita was not the thoroughfare that structured the urban fabric. That function was fulfilled by the Rua da Carreira, running east-west and joining the Governor's

Fig. 12
Cistern of Mazagan
Keystone of one of the vaults with dated cartouche (1547)
Source: Moreira, *A construção de Mazagão*, 188

Fig. 13
Mazagan
Curtain wall between the Angel Bastion and the Holy Spirit Bastion
Source: Author 2023

21   The vegetable gardens outside the gates were continually raided and destroyed; those inside the city blocks were insufficient to feed the city's garrison and residents. Amaral, *Mazagão: a epopeia portuguesa em Marrocos*, 27.

22   Mendonça, *Historia do famoso cerco*, 6v–7.

23   Ana Elisabete Martinho Amado, "A rua direita nas cidades portuguesas: leitura tipo-morfológica do elemento urbano" (Master's dissertation. School of Architecture, University of Lisbon, 2012).

Bastion Gate, used as the main landward access, to the walled-off Sea Gate and the smaller Ribeira Gate opening onto the stepped boat landing closer to the breakwater (as indicated in the legend of the 1611 plan [Fig. 2]).[24] The Rua Direita is roughly perpendicular to the Rua da Carreira and is the second street after the citadel on the way to the Sea Gate. [Fig. 14]

In 1562 the city suffered a violent attack and siege, but resisted. Gavy de Mendonça left an impressive description of that episode, including details about the fortification, its firepower and the cistern.[25] And it withstood many other sieges and battles that followed. But one final siege by troops of the Sultan of Morocco, Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdallah, brought the Portuguese presence in Mazagan and the Maghreb to an end: [Figs. 15, 16] on 11 March 1769 King Joseph I issued an order to destroy and abandon the city.[26] The most ruined section was the land-facing curtain wall (next to the Governor's Palace and respective bastion). The St Anthony and Holy Spirit bastions were also largely destroyed. The population fled through the Ribeira Gate, the only one open to the sea.

From 15 September 1769 on, the first wave of Mazagan inhabitants were shipped to Brazil to found Mazagão in Amazonia (23 January 1770).[27]

Mazagan in Africa was abandoned between 1769 and 1821 and during that period was called Al-Mahdouma, the Ruined. After 1821 it was resettled under the designation of El Jadida, the New. The cistern was discovered by chance and opened to the public in May 1918; it was classified as a national monument by dahirs [royal decrees] dated 3 November 1919 and 15 April 1924.[28]

On 30 June 2004 it was classified by UNESCO as a World Heritage site.[29] Although the cultural and heritage value of the city of Mazagan was now recognised, this did not have the necessary consequences: the urban fabric, defence



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24    António Dias Farinha, *Plantas de Mazagão e Larache no início do século XVII* (Lisbon: Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 1987), 5.

25    See notes 15 and 22 above.

26    The ships arrived in Lisbon between the 21st and 24th of March, 1769. By order of the king, most of the recently-arrived families were lodged in storage spaces of the Jerónimos Monastery and the nobles were authorised to find accommodation in the homes of relatives. Goulven, *La place de Mazagan*, 132.

27    Renata Malcher Araújo, *As Cidades da Amazónia no século XVIII: Belém, Macapá e Mazagão* (Porto: FAUP, 1998), 266, 286–87.

28    Information from the panel at the cistern's entrance placed by the Ministry of Culture of the Kingdom of Morocco.

29    Sacavém Fort Architectural Heritage Information System, "Fortaleza de Mazagão," accessed on 11 March 2024, http://www.monumentos.gov.pt/Site/APP_PagesUser/SIPA.aspx?id=24406 (last accessed November 2024).

Fig. 14
Mazagan
Landing cove at low tide and
Ribeira Gate
Source: Author 2023
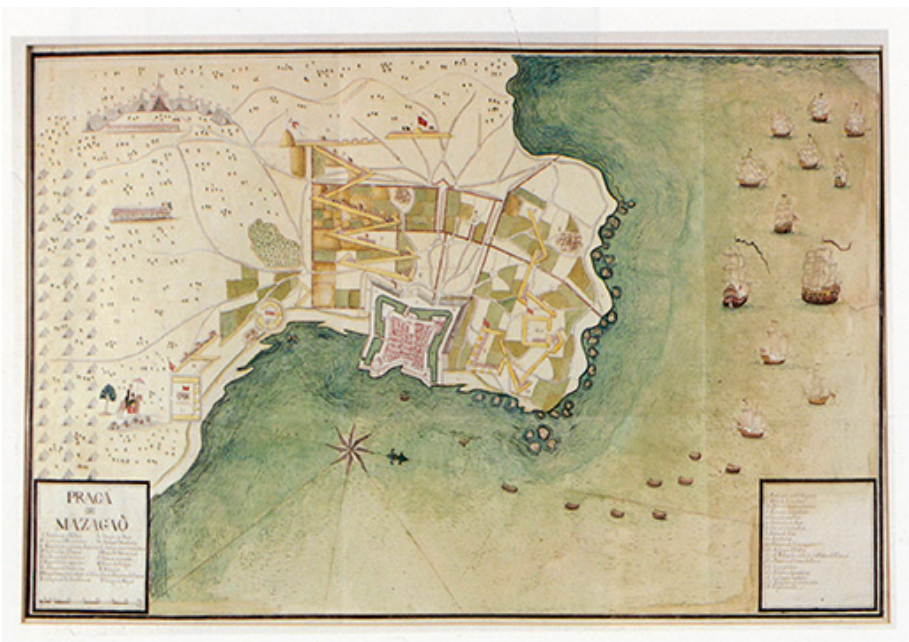
system and cistern still await archaeological campaigns and restoration and rehabilitation work.

Mazagan had the best architects and engineers in the service of the Portuguese Crown during the reigns of Kings Manuel I and John III. It survived the gradual abandonment of all Portuguese positions in Morocco until 11 March 1769. It has not yet been disfigured by mass tourism and consequent gentrification. There are hence sufficient arguments to justify the urgency of a rehabilitation project in the interests of both Morocco and Portugal, to celebrate the site's peace and beauty while reconciling its past history of wars and lost lives.

Translated by **John Bradford Cherry**

Fig. 15
Mazagan
1769 siege with deployment of troops of Sultan Sidi Mohammed ben Abdallah
Late 18th century (?)
© Casa da Ínsua
Source: Moreira, Moreira, A construção de Mazagão, 186

Fig. 16
Mazagan
1769 siege with deployment of troops of Sultan Sidi Mohammed ben Abdallah
Late 18th century (?)
© Casa da Ínsua
Source: https://historiasdeportugalemarrocos.com/

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**Paolo Bortot**

# Eigth Forts. Traces of the Modern in Austro-Hungarian Permanent Fortified Works among the Mountainous South-West Borders of The Empire. 1833-1913

*Military architecture, Mountain fort, Modern fort, Armored fort, Brutalism*

## /Abstract

The nineteenth century was a century characterized by numerous wars and geopolitical changes that in fact resulted, by their being politically and geographically unfinished, in the Great War. It characterized the second decade of the twentieth century.

The military action, understood, recalling Carl von Clausewitz, as a continuation of politics by other means, led European states to bloody actions of offense and defense predominantly in the plains spaces. This is absolutely evident.

In the same period, new considerations of strategy and tactics lead to the consideration of mountainous territory as a place that offers strong positions, in which, as classical history reminds us, a handful of men can stop many: the case of Thermopylae a very famous example.

This essay therefore is devoted to eight forts built in the mountainous environment within the Austro-Hungarian Empire with the sole exception of Fort Airolo. These are eight forts that, according to the author, represent milestones in defense in the mountains. These forts, at the same time and in some way, are the works that best represent the attempt to address, according to the logic of their time, the resolution of the problem of modern fortification for the defense of the Empire.

The design and practical efforts of the officers of the Austro-Hungarian Genie Corps would eventually lead, in the early 1900s, to the construction of forts made entirely of concrete. Fort Garda was the first. In them we find experimentation with theoretical principles and thoroughly modern construction techniques and materials, making them de facto forerunners of the avant-gardes of modern architecture and in particular of functionalism and brutalism.

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"They say that in war, thought is of great importance. That's true, but only for the general, as long as it's about strategy which has nothing to do with philosophy. Indeed, such a glorious feat it is carried out by parasites, exploiters, thieves, hitmen, farmers. idiots, losers, all the dregs of society,..." [1]

ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM, *Praise of Folly*, 1511

## Introduction

In the second half of 1800 after the progresses in steel manufacturing techniques, European metallurgic industry started producing increasingly heavier weapons, which were more and more precise and destructive in their effects.

The first practical consequence was the restructuring of the *tracé* and of the profile of the permanent fortification by eliminating the bulwarks. New forms of building single forts were adopted and studied with the use of building materials such as cement concrete, and within the fortifications brand new heavy armored elements were introduced.

A second theoretical consequence was the development of a fortifying theory, which had the purpose to detect some "strong spots" - "Feste Stellungen" distinguishing between plains and mountains.

When choosing the strong spots, it was difficult to find the best position where to build the single defensive fort, which was aimed at being harmonized with the physical conformation of the terrain.

Forts were built either as isolated buildings, or in pairs, or in small groups, and from a morphological point of view they express, in the layout and construction technique, the state of the art of the various periods in which they were built.

The studies carried out in Austria-Hungary, military ally of the Kingdom of Italy since 1874, regarding the best geometric shape to give to modern fortification, lead to the development of various projects, even with completely new and original ideas [2] **[Fig.1]**, which were also partly adopted. In the second half of the 19th century, in addition to the tracé and the most proper position to choose, a new problem came out, that is to say the installation, within the permanent

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1    *"Dicono che in guerra il pensiero abbia una grande importanza. É vero, ma solamente per il generale, in quanto si tratta di strategia che non ha nulla a che fare con la filosofia. Oltre a questo una impresa così gloriosa é realizzata con l'opera di parassiti, profittatori, ladroni, contadini, idioti, falliti, tutta la feccia della societá, ..."* Erasmo da Rotterdam, Elogio della follia. 1511 (Torino: Einaudi, 1966): 53-54.

2    See moreover the original proposal for an earthen fort by the Austrian officer Viktor Tilschkert who proposed forts with heavy armoured towers totally made of steel - "Panzerthürme"- placed at the top of the trapezoidal layout of the plan. Viktor Tilschkert, *Neue Formen der Panzer Fortification* (Wien: L.W.Seidel e Sohn, K.u.K. Hof-Buchändler, 1902).
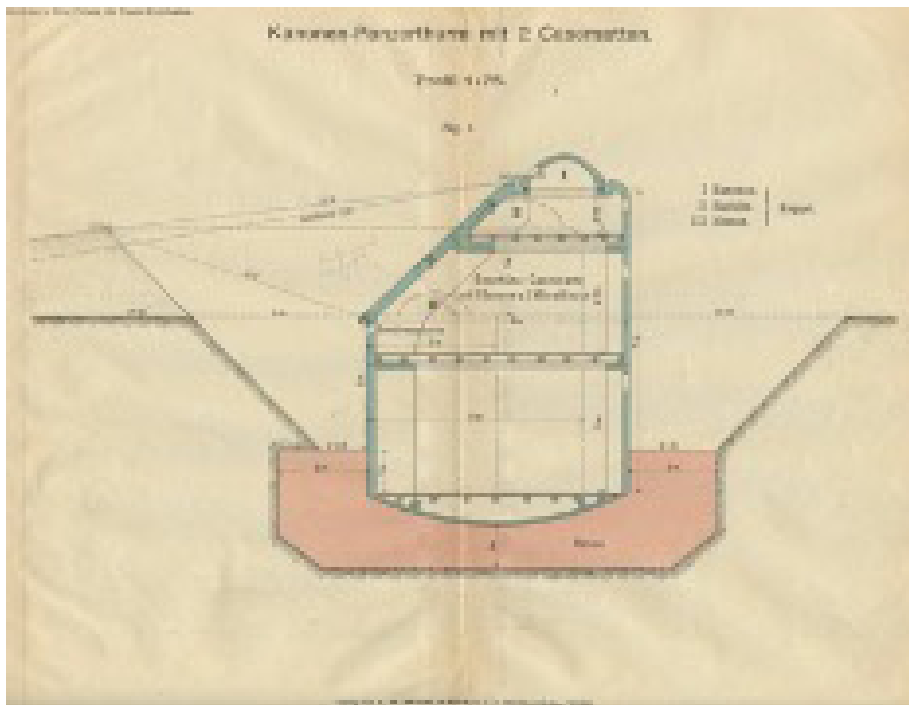
fortification, of new armoured elements which production actually started in the first years of the 1860s.

The resistance of some heavy armoured casemate was tested also in some shooting ranges and in the end, by way of the empirical method, it was possible to determine the fittest shape to employ in the buildings. The result was the introduction of fixed armoured plates for frontal reinforcement with minimal cannon-embrasure - minimalscharten - , as well as of dome-style elements. In this way a result, "revolving heavy armoured casematte" started being studied and (of course) produced, or, it is better said, this type of casematte is, under a morphological perspective, revolving heavy armoured dome - "drehbare Panzer Kuppel ", which may be more lowered or less lowered, with a diameter that may be variable according to several Schools of Fortification.

This article briefly addresses the evolution of the modern fort on the south-west border of Austro-Hungarian Empire by analyzing some paradigmatic cases , according to the autor.

As a result of geopolitical changes following territorial losses, in rapid succession, of Lombardia (1859) and Veneto (1866) , the Austrian-Hungarian military *Genie* is forced to reinforce the new borders. Hence, a series of forts has been constructed, along the mountainous border of the South-Tyrolean salient. These first constructions would later be joined by others with new constructional and morphological characteristics, dictated by the need to modernize and adapt their endurance to the increased firepower..

The identified location for the construction of these forts were chosen to accentuate the function of a blockage - *Sperre* - in order to directly and physically to block the access ways to the region.

In this regard, De Paula observes: *"The barriers were mostly set up at narrow*

Fig. 1
Revolving heavy armoured dome for kannons - Kanonen Panzerthurm.
Source: Tilschkert 1902

*points (valley barrages -Talsperren) or at dominant points (Mountain Pass barrages - Paßsperren), which had to block the road to be secured directly."* [3] Furthermore, regarding their morphology, he notes: "Mainly bar-shaped constructions were built with the main facade on the enemy side." [4] In fact, the constructions built on the South Tyrolean territory at the beginning of the second half of the 19th century, presented in some cases a bar-shaped core with semicylindrical morphological elements (Forts Gomagoi, S.Nicoló), but also L-shaped plans inscribed in a square that have the edges of the vertical masonry rounded on the enemy side (Forts Strino, Larino). There are also cardioid-shape plan (Fort Nago). The South-Tyrolean permanent fortifications which were initially constructed in the traditional way, would gradually go on to present their own and innovative features both in terms of armament, but especially in terms of morphology.

They reflect the debate concerning the adoption of heavy armament and of heavy armor in the permanent defense works of the time, we recall here Fort Airolo of the St. Gotthard Pass barrage in the Swiss Confederation, surely the most modern heavy armored work - Panzerwerk - of the mountains in the second half of the 19th century.  The Austrian school, through slow and continuous reflection accompanied by field experimentation, applied to the specific geographic context of mountains, respecting the requirements of economy and effectiveness typical of the Austrian military *Genie* school produced, along the border with the Kingdom of Italy, a numerous series of permanent defense works. They represent the proposed solution to the fortification problem in the various periods of construction. This process, which came to maturity in the early twentieth century, would eventually lead to the invention and use of novel and in some cases absolutely modern and original construction solutions.

This was made possible by the advances in steelmaking of the imperial heavy industry, particularly the Skoda company, which in the years immediately preceding the conflict reached a very high level of quality in the production of heavy weapons and armored elements.

## Elements of periodization

We recall here briefly the various periods of construction as proposed by the author[5]:

1. First period (1833-1840). Construction of Nauders and Franzenfeste fortified works. They represent the two extremes of the small and large permanent

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3    *"Die Sperren waren meist an Engstellen (Talsperren) oder an beherschenden Punkten (Paßsperren, welche den zu sichernden Verksweg unmittelbar zu sperren hatten, angelegt."* Kurt Mörz De Paula, *Der Österreichisch-Ungarische Befestigungbau 1820-1914* (Wien, Buchhandlung Stöhr, 1995): 73.

4    *"Die meist riegelförmiger Werke wurden in der Riegel mit Front zur Feindseite errichtet."* De Paula, Der Österreichisch-Ungarische Befestigungbau 1820-1914, 73.

5    Paolo Bortot, "Technical evolution and modernity of the Austrian South-Tyrolean imperial Forts on the italian borders", in *HERITAGE 2016*, eds. R. Amoeda, S. Lira, C. Pinheiro (Barcelona: Green Lines Institute, 2016): 1201-1211.

mountain fortification. Of the two, the lesser known is Fort Nauders also known as Fort Finstermünz, named after the homonymous pass.

2. Second period (1860-1862). Construction of forts with French case-mate construction technique following the example of Napoleonic lunettes in Palmanova. His type had the task of barring roads, which is why they took the name "Strassensperren."

3. Third period (1880-83). Mixed-elements fort construction. Built with vertical external and internal walls of stone and lime surmounted by brick vaults. Open casemates in the internal part, covered with an earth layer of 2 or 3 meters. This particular construction method was carefully studied for the territory surrounding Trient and was thus named "Trentiner Stil", or "Trient style."

4. Fourth period (1884-1900). The Austrian officer Julius Vogl invented a new type of barrage bombproof mountain fort that can be found only in the South-Tyrol region. This fort is characterized by aligned and inclined front casemates, normally 4, internally with cast iron shields to protect cannons. From the point of view of their shape, South-Tyrolean forts are unique all over Europe.

5. Fifth period (1904-1915). This is the period of modern heavy-armored Forts. The first work of this type was Fort Garda, completed in 1907. Here a new construction technique was experimented with the only use of concrete. It was built in a unique bolck of concrete with internal and perimetral walls with a thickness of 1.5 meters. The thickness of the covering was between 2.5 and 3.0 meters and it rested on a plane of 30cm double T beams. It was equipped with 4 heavy-armored rotating domes - *drehbare panzer Kuppeln* - and a revolving heavy-armored observatory - *drehbare gepanzerter Beobachtunssgstand* - for the commander.

As far as construction materials and morphology are concerned, Fort Garda represented the first example of South-Tyrolean modern mountain heavy-ar-mored fort.

Let us now look at some paradigmatic cases of fortified monumental heritage in *Süd-Tirol*: they are representative of the entire Austrian mountain fortification.

**Fort Nauders**

After the Napoleonic Wars and the Congress of Vienna, following the incur-sions of the French army into the Tyrolean valleys, it was recognized that the fortresses placed in the Po Valley were no longer enough to block enemy armies. Following long years of extensive field observations by Austrian officer Franz



2

Fig. 2
Fort Nauders.
Sud-East wiew.
Photo by the Author

von Scholl and Archduke John of Habsburg [6] in 1832, it was decided to build two works whose function was to block access to the Inn Valley.

The first work, the small Fort Nauders [Fig.2] (*Nord-Tirol-Oesterreich*), at the Finstermünz pass (1186m asl) just after the Reschen pass (1507 asl) blocked the ancient Roman Claudia-Augusta road, wich was of great strategic and commercial importance. The second work, the mighty fortress of Franzenfeste, was built on the right margin of the Eisack River north of the city Brixen. It had the dual function of barring the route leading to the Brenner Pass (1370m asl), but also to control the passage into the Pustertal valley that led to the Drava Valley.[7]

Fort Nauders is practically unknown: it was also called Fort Finstermünz taking the name of the small pass (1186m asl) where it was built between the years 1834 and 1840.

This building had the function of blocking the road from South Tyrol to North Tyrol and was located, north of the village of Nauders, on the road from Reschen Pass into the Inn Valley. It constitutes a unique case, mainly for three orders of reasons.

First: the choice of construction site. The building is perfectly positioned in a fold of the terrain adhering to the steep rock face of the mountain. For this reason, it is completely out of sight and appears to those traveling north - the most likely direction of enemy arrival - only at a close distance of 70-80m after a bend in the road descending to the Inn Valley.

The small Stille stream laps at the base of the main facade of Fort, flowing into the artificial ditch and passing under the Caponier. [Fig.3]

3

This Caponier, shaped like a projecting bulwark with a polygonal plan, houses two overlapping pairs of artillery casemates. A few meters to the north there is also a deep ravine where the Stille stream forms a waterfall to reach the Inn valley below. The site exhibits the characteristics, according to military theory, of the "strong position"-"*Feste Stellung*": here nature and art shake hands.

The protection from view due to the morphology of the mountain, the presence of the natural obstacle on the north side, and also the small frontal stream that laps against the facade by flowing at the bottom of the dich, make it difficult to attack by live force and practically impossible to destroy with artillery.

The arrangement of the armament for close defense and the coverage by direct artillery fire of the possible main lines of attack - actually two namely south and north following the road - making it an impregnable building.

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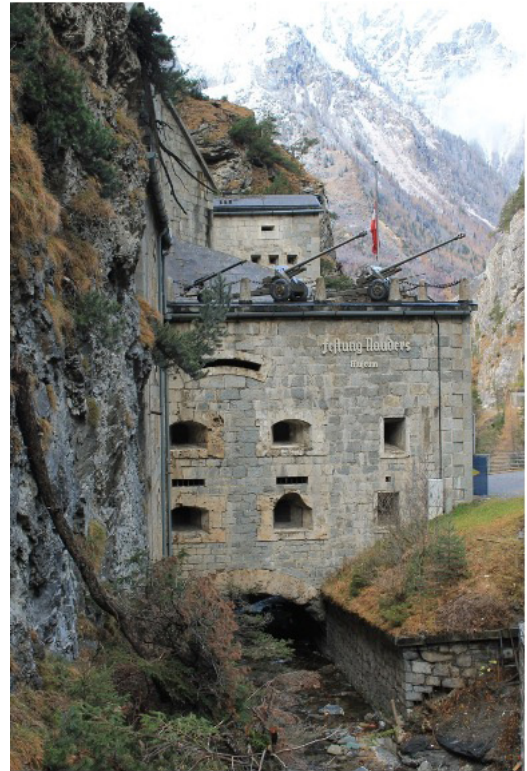
6    See the biographical notes on Franz von Scholl in Lino Vittorio Bozzetto, *Verona. La cinta magistrale asburgica* (Verona: Cassa Risparmio Verona Vicenza Belluno e Ancona, 1993): 162.

7    Dario Massimo, *La Fortezza* (Bressanone: Weger, 2010): 45.

Fig. 3

Fort Nauders. South side of the caponier-bulwark with pairs of overlapping cannon-embrasures.

Photo by the Author

Second: the refined artifice in the composition of the plan. The fort is formed by a symmetrical main body, consisting of the caponnier-bastion with plan of salient ended in a shape of a swallowtail. The fronts of the caponier-bastion in which the pairs of superimposed cannon-embrasures open, form a right angle with the two symmetrical side fronts of equal height: three superimposed levels of vertical embrasures open in the latter. In the final swallowtail element, six rifle-embrasures - three on each side - open to cover the dead angle.

This special conformation of the caponiera-bastion allowed a dual function of artillery defense through the open cannon-embrasures in the facades: the flanking action of the fort's elevations work with the vertical embrasures and at the same time direct firing against the advancing enemy on the road. To the side of the caponier, facing north, is the entrance to the fort, connected to the road by a small bridge over the front artificial dictch. The facade of the fort ends north-ward with a sloping front recessed by 30 degrees from the section adjacent to the caponier-bulwark. This final section of the work has a greater height: in it are four levels of vertical rifle-embrasures with direct action on the road rising from the Inn Valley.

All facade sections **[Fig.4]** are characterized by the arc-shaped ventilation elements placed above each pair of vertical embrasures: these allow internal ventilation and the removal of smoke from small arms during combat.

On the axis of the caponier-bulwark **[Fig.5]** there is the rearmost and tallest body of the building - placed above the roof of the main structure - that adheres posteriorly to the rock and has on its sides two small facades with rifle-embra-sures providing action on the roof. It is characterized by the large pointed arch that would seem to recall the debate around the contemporary Gothic revival. In

Fig. 4
Fort Nauders. Detail of the north facade to the side of the entrance. Minimal ornamental elements.
Photo by the Author

Fig. 5
Fort Nauders. Front of caponier-bulwark.
Photo by the Author

fact, here the Gothic arch protects the recessed facade that houses the rifle-embrasures for frontal defense. At the same time, the arch functions as a strong structural element that supports the two-pitch gabled roof, which has an accentuated slope in order to promote snow sliding in the winter months.[8]

Laterally, this upper body, presents two asymmetrical facades, with two small gables on the south side and one on the north side, at which there are a different number of rifle-embrasure with the function of protecting the single-pitch roofing of the two lower south and north sections of the fort flanking the caponier-bulwark.

The volumetric composition of Fort Nauders ends at the highest point, at the center of the two-pitch roof of the volume characterized by the Gothic arch, with a small cylindrical tower with a conical roof: along the curvilinear walls of the cylinder open the rifle-embrasures that allowed a circular action with an "umbrella" protection.

The building is constructed of rough-hewn stones on site and lime. The facades are made of stones placed in irregular courses, almost with characteristics of rustic work. There are minimal concessions to ornamentation: string-course bands highlight the interior levels, regular stone blocks at the corners, and simple rectangular cornices surround the arched ventilation holes and rifle-embrasures.

Third. The significance of this work is underscored by the military historical sources that, upon careful analysis, can be observed in the construction. Certainly the placement of the casemates for the artillery in overlapping pairs recalls the same solution used for the Bulwark of the Magdalene built in Verona [Fig.6] in the Renaissance period according to the instructions of Francesco Maria della Rovere with the technical contribution of Michele Sanmicheli. Franz von Scholl was perfectly familiar with Verona's Renaissance walls. Recalling Bozzetto, "Scholl drew up the preliminary studies and the overall plan to turn Verona into a 'maneuver and storage stronghold' for the imperial army. In addition, by 1832 Scholl had defined plans for the Alpine barrages at Franzenfeste near Brixen and Nauders near the Reschen Pass. The works at Verona and Franzenfeste were started in the same year, 1833, those at Nauders in 1834."[9]

Scholl would therefore arrive at the strengthening of the Bastion as part of the project to transform the fortress of Verona while essentially maintaining its Renaissance layout. In fact, Francesco Maria della Rovere Duke of Urbino commander of the Venetian army argued that the cannon-embrasures should be in the flanks of the bastions, "li quali nuoceno più e sono più guardati."[10]

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8    The building is in fact built at 1290m asl, at those altitude the snowpack could reach 3-4 meters.

9    "Scholl elaborò gli studi preliminari ed il progetto d'insieme per trasformare Verona in una 'piazzaforte di manovra e di deposito' per l'armata imperiale. Inoltre nel 1832 Scholl aveva definito i progetti per gli sbarramenti alpini di Franzenfeste presso Brixen e di Nauders, vicino al passo di Resia. I lavori di Verona e di Franzenfeste vennero avviati nello stesso anno, nel 1833, quelli di Nauders nel 1834." Bozzetto, Verona. La cinta magistrale asburgica, 162.

10    Francesco Maria della Rovere, Discorsi militari. in Ennio Concina, La macchina territoriale (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1983): 89.

Exactly the solution that is employed in Nauders build-
ing. In this mountain fort we also find military design princi-
ples already implemented by French officers in Italy during
the Napoleonic campaigns: in fact, the umbrella defense of
the fort's roofs directly recalls the same concept expressed
and implemented by the French in the fortress of Rocca
d'Anfo consisting on the cylindrical element[11] overhang-
ing the summit lunette. The casemate facade of the Anfo
summit lunette itself has arched elements [12], in this case of
the lowered type protect the set-back masonry in which the
rifle-embrasures open, in analogy to the back wall protected
by the large Gothic arch.

The plan of the salient caponier-bulwark of Fort Nauders
can also be considered an adaptation of the layout, on a
smaller scale, of the second and third fortification modes of
Carnot's System. This was characterized, at a much larger
dimensional scale, by bulwarks for tanagled defense. Finally,
another element recalling of French works is found in the
masonry of the small barracks [Fig.7] built in front of the

Nauders fort on the opposite side of the road. The design of de facade, with
arched elements at the ground floor and the stringcourse frame of the first floor
in fact take up stylistic elements from the barracks [13] of the gorge lunette of
Rocca d'Anfo. Here at the Finstermünz pass, the decorative elements typical of
urban culture introduced on the facades of the small barracks contrast with the
spartan, rustic and essential construction of the fort.

Fort Nauders (or Finstermünz) is effectively the first modern Austrian impe-
rial mountain fort. This structure embodies the functional needs dictated by
defense, resulting from field reconnaissance and the application of fortification
theory to a practical case. It conforms to the reality of the situation, according
to the principles dear to Karl von Clausewitz, here applied to the art of defensive
construction, in the act of fortification carried out in a context of peace and
without haste.

This work is attributable, in terms of the layout of the plan, structure and
conception, to Franz von Scholl. It stands in the field of functionalism, outside
the didactic and academic schemes of the time. It can be considered among
the innovative works from the point of view of modern fortification theory but, at
the same time, well grounded in the tradition of building practice.

11    The fortress of Rocca d'Anfo was designed by François-Joseph-Didier Liédot and approved by Chasseloup
the designer of the Palmanova lunettes. See the design drawing of the cylindrical structure in the text by Philippe
Prost, *La Fortezza incompiuta* (Milano: Electa, 1989), 56.

12    See the design drawing of the facade of the upper part of the lunette in the text by Philippe, *La Fortezza
incompiuta*, 64.

13    See the design drawing of the facade of the upper part of the lunette in the text by Prost, *La Fortezza
incompiuta*, 61.

Fig. 6
Bulwark of Maddalene. Verona.
Photo by the Author

Fig. 7
Fort Nauders. Facade of the
barracks adjacent to the fort.
Photo by the Author

The building, with its large Gothic pointed arch that characterizes the main facade, the serial elements of the rifle-embrasure, the presence of single-pitch, double-pitch, and cone-shaped roofs, with the invention of the caponier-bulwark housing the artillery casemates in overlapping pairs, certainly recalls on the one hand the contemporary revaluation of the Gothic while expressing a certain tendency toward eclecticism.

## The Forts of San Nicolò, San Rocco and Gorazda

The Austrian Empire lost Lombardy in 1859. The new frontier thus comes to lie on the borders of South Tyrol. Urgent barrages in the western valleys and the northern edge of Lake Garda were necessary. These are forts [14] built immediately beside the road - "Strassensperren" - made all at the same time, as we mentioned, between 1860 and 1862, as the new border was completely undefended. These works, because of the technique with which they was built, are also called "French-style forts."

A pair of forts was built north of Lake Garda: Fort S.Nicoló and Fort Nago. Fort S. Nicoló, by shape and structure is the one that can make us understand, perhaps most directly, the French derivation. In fact, morphology and construction technique directly echo those of the polygonal lunettes built by the French "Genie" in an external radial position to modernize the Venetian Fortress of Palmanova. These were works designed by General Chasseloup, built between 1806 and 1809, and well known to Austrian "Genie" officers. These lunettes consisted of a salient-shaped embankment lined with stone along the outer perimeter of the scarp. Inside the lunettes, on the axis, is a rectangular-mixtilinear casemate ending in a semi-cylinder shape [Fig.8] on the enemy side: here on the upper floor there are cannons-embrasures.

The exterior walls were built of cut stone blocks laid in regular courses. The work has internally lowered vaults on the ground floor and a round-vaulted roof on the first floor that ends externally with a roof made of brick.

The plan of the Napoleonic casemate of Palmanova, with its semi-cylinder terminating shape, thus presents, on a smaller scale, exactly the pattern of the plan of the Austrian fort built at the entrance to Riva 26 years later.

Fort S.Nicoló, [Fig.9] built between 1860 and 1861, had a dual function. Direct barrage of the 'road access to the town - Strassensperre - blocking those coming from Torbole along the route at the edge of the lake at the base of Mount Brione.

_____

14    Fort Gomagoi is built at the beginning of the Trafoi Valley that ends in altitude with Passo dello Stelvio. In the Vermigliana Valley ending west with Passo del Tonale Fort Strino. In the upper Chiese Valley, forts Larino, Revleger, and Danzolino close access to the Tione basin.

Fig. 8
French lunette Fort of Palmanova. Flank and semi-cylindrical element on the enemy side with cannon-embrasures.
Photo by the Author

Fig. 9
Fort San Nicoló. Semi-cylindrical element of the north facade.
Photo by the Author

Control of the stretch of water in front of Riva harbor and the flat stretch between Mt. Brione and the town in an anti-disembark function.

The building, with a mixtilinear plan, consists of a paralelepiped with a main body about 43 meters long and 12.5 meters wide ending northward with a semi-cylinder. Morphologically, as we have seen, it echoes, on a larger scale, the French type of Palmanova.

The facades are made of regular blocks of limestone in horizontal courses. In them open vertical rifle-embrasures in groups of three, surmounted at the top by elegant lunettes for the exit of smoke produced by small arms during the combat. A pair of cannon-embrasures, surmounted by lunettes, opens in the middle of the long façade oriented toward the city. The half-cylinder-shaped north side houses a cannon-embrasure at on the first floor and a series of equidistant single vertical rifle-embrasures. All of the rifle-embrasures are simply open in the walls without relief moldings on the outline.

In contrast, the lunettes for smoke escape and cannon-embrasures are highlighted by elegant relief cornices with stone ashlars. The exterior walls are 1.3 meters thick all around, including the interior walls. The short wall, facing the lake, is 3.5 meters thick. On the ground floor, the fort has casemates for cannons, 2 ammunition depots, troop rooms, kitchen and food storage rooms in the semicircular space. On the upper level are the soldiers' dormitories with rifle-embrasures for rifles for short-distance combat. The roof is made of wooden structure with tile covering. The armament consisted of 3 Mod.61 15-cm smooth-barrel cannons in casemates: two towards the lake, and one, in the semi-cylinder part, towards the flat terrain on the north.



10

The works of this period thus look towards the past. These are academic exercises that have some defensive effect against possible troop attacks, but certainly not against modern artillery.

To find something truly innovative, at least from the building morphology point of view, we will have to reach the 1880s.

In the mid-1800s, new explosive artillery shells are produced.Experienced in major European firing ranges, torpedo grenades cause a real crisis in fortification. Forts with thick embankments covering service rooms and casemates, such as Fort Pannone,[15] suddenly become obsolete and dangerous.

The layer of earth placed over the casemates, warehouses and living quarters, increased the projectile destructive action. The weight of the earth above the penetracted projectile, increases the force of the explosion to be directed
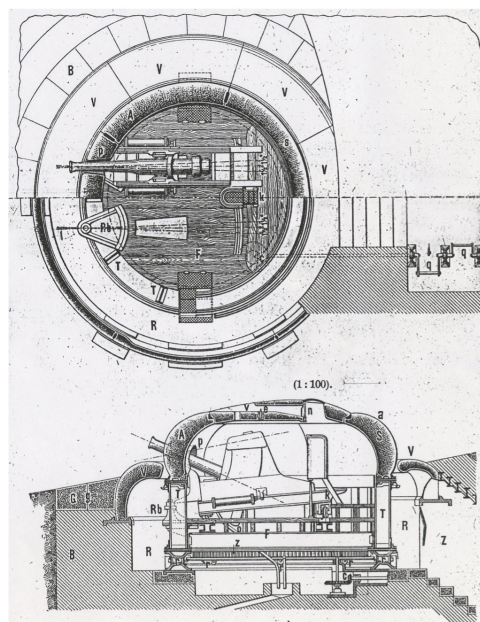
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15    See Paolo Bortot, *Progetto e memoria: il forte scomparso di Pannone nell'ambito della fortezza di Riva del Garda., in Donato Riccadonna, I Forti austroungarici nell'Alto Garda: che farne? Atti del Convegno.* Forte superiore di Nago 27 febbraio-2 marzo 2002 (Riva: Museo Civico Riva del Garda, 2003): 39-43.

downward, causing masonry vaults to collapse. A first attempt to redress the balance in favor of defense was made by experimenting with an ultra-modern large armored dome of German manufacture .

On a hill to the south of the city of Trento, at a dominant point on the left side of the Adige Valley, at an elevation of 445m above sea level, was thus built between 1881 and 1883, Fort San Rocco as a barrage to any attempt to take the city from the south.

This 'work features the most modern technological-military defense element of the time: a revolving armored dome [Fig.10] by the German firm Gruson-Werke. The result is a fort with design layout where old and new stand side by side.

A lower part, oriented towards the Adige valley, consists of a salient of polygonal shape in isosceles trapeze [Fig.11] that houses above open-air barbette emplacements for 4 M61 cannons of 15 cm caliber. Along the perimeter of the embankment was a ditch that followed the trapezoidal layout. This part of the work was of an outdated type in that it echoed the form of the open earthen fort - Tunkler type - of the early entrenched camps. Here the artillerymen were directly exposed to shrapnel and the 'destructive effect of explosive projectiles.

The major base of the trapeze (North) measures about 150 meters, the minor base (South) about 60 meters and the oblique sides about 80 meters. Because of the rising ground, the ditch was interrupted at the throat side of the block that houses the armored dome. This was built of concrete and lined with stone. The near defense in the original project was carried out by means of caponiers

Fig. 11 Fort San Rocco. Plan of the fort. 1881

Source: Fondo K.u.k Geniedirektion Trient. Archivio di Stato Trento.
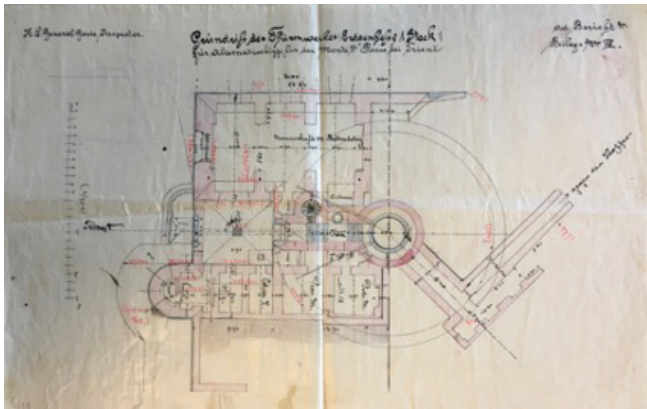
placed at the bottom of the ditch.[16] Two caponiers were located at the apexes of the short salient side, and a third caponier was placed at the end of the oblique, flanking section of the building with the dome.

The upper part [Fig.12], housing the dome, is differently structured. This consisted of a stone masonry work cut in regular courses. It presentes a rectangular, two-level plan containing a series of functional rooms. A caponier, orthogonal to the outer facade and terminating in a semi-cylinder, is placed at the side of the entrance door.

The entire upper work is rotated 45 degrees to the north side - the largest - of the trapezoid-shaped polygonal layout. In this way it aligned with the oblique side of the trapeze. The heavy rotating armored dome - weight 120 tons - manufactured in Germany by Gruson Werke Buckau-Mackleburg, was installed on the roof. The circular shaft of the tower, in plan, was positioned tangent to the walls of the rooms on the salient side.

The dome was constructed of hardened cast iron and is made of 5 sectors with a longitudinal section of varying thickness and a very distinctive shape. In fact, externally the dome appeared to have a toroidal morphology ending at the top with a very low cap. The thickness was greater at the front where there was more possibility of receiving a direct hit; it then gradually decreased to the top. A small circular hatch opened on the top for smoke to escape. The accompanying extract drawing from Brunner's text makes everything clear.

The dome rested on a ring-shaped front armor, also made of hardened cast iron, set into the roofing concrete. It was armed with a pair of 12cm "Minimalschartenkanone"- minimal cannon embrasure - with a barrel length of 3.2 meters. The cannons had a range of 8.0 km with both explosive and shrapnel projectiles. The diameter of the dome at the base was 4.00 meters.

Along the gorge side - the base of the isóscele trapeze - a casemate was build with garrison quarters - Wohnkasamatte - . In this work, the living part, is separated from the fighting elements of the fort. This is an extremely modern

Fig. 12
Fort San Rocco. Ground floor plan of the upper part in stone masonry.
Source: Fondo K.u.k Geniedirektion Trient. Archivio di Stato Trento.

Fig.13
Turmfort Gorazda. Gruson revolving armored dome made of hardened cast iron.
Photo by the Autor

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16    See project drawing *K.K. General Genie Inspektor, Monte S.Rocco bei Trient. Wien am 23 Juni 1881, 1/500"*, Fondo Genio A-U, Archivio di Stato Trento.

solution that appears here for the first time, anticipating project solutions that would appear in the first decade of the 20th century.

The garrison, *"...in the case of war with Italy consisted of 3 officers and 120 petty officers and soldiers, in the case of war against Russia the garrison would consist of 1 officer and 60 soldiers."*[17]

Ultimately, Fort San Rocco, although armed with a the most modern revolving armored dome, has some incongruences due to the inclusion and use of such advanced technology within a static and conservative cultural context. The lower part of the work with the artillery emplacements in open-air barbette, the wall structure on which the dome is installed, with its stone-clad exterior walls ending in horizontally laid stone slab covers, the small inner courtyard, appear anachronistic.

Another work, that was instead projected around the Gruson armored dome **[Fig.13]**, in an attempt to integrate new technological elements more closely into the layout, was built in a mountainous environment on the Adriatic coast of Montenegro. Here again, as we shall see, the "classical" Austrian tradition that looked to the past appears with full force.

Between the years 1884 and 1886 the Turmfort Gorazda was built on the Montenegrin coast of the Adriatic Sea south of the ancient Venetian fortress-city of Kotor. The name of the fort emphasizes the presence of the modern armored tower. The "Tower Fort" - "Turmfort"- ensured the secure domination of the Budua-Cattaro road.

The fort is situated in a dominant position on the Gorazda mountain relief, from which it takes its name, at an elevation of 452 m above sea level, opposite Mount Lovcén. The elevated position offered an incomparable view of the Lustizza peninsula and the two branches of the Kotor "fjord" to the north, of the flat or shallowly sloping Gerbal territory stretching southward, encompassed between the hills by the Adriatic Sea to the west and the rocky slopes of Mount Lovcén to the east. The revolving armored dome allowed 360-degree action, thus also controlling possible enemy action from the Adriatic Sea.

The Gruson armored dome, the same as that of Fort S.Rocco, was armed with a pair of 12-cm cannons, in this case is the center of the plan composition and at the apex of the elevation volumes. The layout of the fortification is in



14

Fig.14

Turmfort Gorazda. View of the front ditch in the curvilinear tract at the apex of the salient. Note the two caponieres with oriented rifles-embrasures for close defense. The scarp and counter scarp walls lined with regular stone courses ending in a cover of horizontal stone slabs. On the left is the fort's sloping rampart in which opening the minimum cannon-embrasures with half-armored shield openings.

Photo by the Autor

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17   *"...in caso di guerra con l'Italia era formata da 3 ufficiali e 120 sottoufficiali e soldati, nel caso di guerra contro la Russia la guarnigione sarebbe stata composta da 1 ufficiale e 60 soldati."* Stefano Pinotti, Festung Trient. Le Fortificazioni di Trento e il relativo periodo storico (Schio: Gino Rossato Editore, 2011): 155.

the form of a salient. The 'angle, between the two blocks of casemates, hinged around the curvilinear element formed by the dome, is of 105 degrees.

Same armored casemates with metal half-cap with minimal-embrasure are located at the front, below the rampart, allowing to beat the circular sector of land between the fort and the steep slopes of Mount Lovcén, in direction to the east. The apex of the salient layout is rounded. [Fig.14]

This element characterizes the shape of the ditch, which is about 7 meters wide and between 5 and 7 meters deep. At the bottom of the ditch are 4 stone-clad caponiers with vertical rifle-embrasures - with the usual rectangle plan ending in a semi-cylinder - for close defense in case of *"viva forza"* attacks.

In the gorge side, on the central axis, there is a section of cylindrical masonry placed in the center of the two wings living casemates [Fig.15] of the building forming a 105-degree angle between them. In the center of the curvilinear section is the portal of the fort. The two symmetrical casemates of the fort have, on the gorge side, holes for internal lighting with contours of level stone ashlars.

The interior floors are highlighted on the facade by a simple rectangular stringcourse band. On the top of the vertical masonry, throughout the work, is a stone cover.

The memory of the fortification tradition, in addition to the symmetry of the layout, is the low ravelin placed to protect the gorge side, which, along the entire perimeter, is bordered by stone walls. In the center of the ravelin is a recessed, sinuous open-air pathway, protected from view and direct fire, which allowed the entrance to the fort to be reached.

The work is organized on three levels. The lowest level has a corridor that follows the layout of the V-shaped salient fort with a rounded apex: from it there is access to the four caponieres for the close defense of the ditch. [18] The two heads of this corridor are open onto the side sections of the ditch to favor the ventilation of the interior.

The middle level (the main one) houses housing quarters for troop and officers , ammunition stores, 2 casemates in each side with traditional cannon-embrasures for cannons with traitor -*"traditor"* - function, and 5 minimum



15

Fig. 15.
Turmfort Gorazda. View of the right ditch (north side). In the left foreground, the pair of traitor cannon-embrasures at the end of the casemate block for the garrison. On the left of the photo, at the end of the gorge ditch, the curved masonry into which the entrance portal opens.
Photo by the Author

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18 In fact, the two caponiers beating the two sections of the sides' ditch, although they have a symmetrical plan, have direct action only on the short sections of the ditch: in fact they are semi-caponiers. The two caponiers located on either side of the arc of the circle at the apex of the salient, have action on the two sides. Their function was to beat the straight frontal sections of the ditch and the circular arc section

cannon-embrasures casemates with frontal armored semi-cap shield [Fig.15] positioned internally. These latter housed the cannons - Minimalschartenkanone - 12cm M80 on pivoting support designed from Krupp. Barrel weight of cannons was 1700 kilograms, length 3.2 meters: pivoting support weight was 1120 kilograms. The useful range of 8 kilometer.

At the top level of the building was the revolving armored dome with the characteristic toroidal shape. From a technical point of view, this dome, represented the most advanced product of German steelmaking technology of the time. The process of casting hardened cast iron allowed the creation of domed shapes, which became the new morphological element here.

The Gruson rotating armored dome of toroidal shape, terminating in a lenticular dome, was protected externally at the base by a crown forepart formed of hardened cast iron elements cemented into the concrete cover. The dome also rested on an internal steel ring structure standing at the top of circular shaft made of stone and concrete block masonry. The latter housed the servants assigned to the rotational movement of the dome. Between the dome and the forepart was a gap that effectively let water go through, that is inpratically in mountainous environment. The rotation movement was manual, by means of cranks placed below the level of the pieces, which sent the movement to gears.



16

The total weight of all constituent elements of the dome, without cannons, is 120,000 kilograms. The management of such complexity required a certain number of men: 1 commander, 1 petty-officer and 4 artillerymen in charge of the pieces, 2 men in charge of the ammunition service, 4 men in charge of the winch (for lifting the shells, expolosive charges, and for rotating the dome). The total number of servants was thus 12 men. The Gruson armored dome, with manual movement could make a full rotation in 1 minute. The cannons could have a firing rate between 1 and 2 rounds per minute: it depended on the skill of servants.

Fort Gorazda armed with the modern twin rotating armored dome, thus represents at that time the most technologically advanced point in the planning of permanent fortification works in Austria-Hungary in the mid-1880s. Here, too, however, as in Fort San Rocco, some incongruities can be observed.

In plan, the fort presents a symmetrical layout of "classical" form. Close defense was implemented by means of caponiers in the ditch with vertically oriented rifle-embrasures of traditional form. The masonry structure of the work, inside and outside, with its square stone walls, externally ending "sharp-edged," with covers of stone slabs laid horizontally, appear anachronistic.

Fig. 16
Turmfort Gorazda. Casemate with an armoured semi-cap shield with minimum cannon-embrasure for cannon with on pivoting support.
Photo by the Author

Near and far defense were here concentrated. The thick earth rampart covering the fixed casemates could prove damaging in the event of bombardment with large caliber explosive shells.

The type of armored dome installed was very expensive, and its great weight made it difficult to transport - even fractionally - and to install. The solution adopted in the 'mountainous environment, will be to build permanent works, as we shall see, with a morphological repetitive scheme of the cannon sector. Thus, fixed casemates were built side by side - in varying numbers - with internal metal semi-cap shields and minimal opening cannon-embrasures, such as those at Fort Gorazda. Externally, the cannon-embrasures opened on an inclined plane: an idea of naval derivation. [19]



These types of forts, designed expressly for the mountain environment of Süd-Tirol and Carinthia, built of concrete or clad, depending on de case, also in granite, stone or porphyry, are called "Type Vogl" [20] after the Austrian officer who defined their role and form. They were also armed with a number of small-diameter armored dome mortars with a lowered lenticular cross-section. Nothing compared with the exceptional heaviness of the Gruson domes. The Vogl-type mountain forts are in fact still tied to forms that look toward the past. To encounter a more consistent use of concrete and, in fact, the modern Austrian armored dome type, we must go to the first decade of the twentieth century.

## A first turning poin: Fort Airolo

The 1880s were of particular importance in the concept of permanent mountain fortifications. There is the particular case of Switzerland, which, as a small country situated between aggressive giants, had at that time the problem of modernising permanent fortifications. In fact, there was no school or officers with specific theoretical or practical training in the country. Precisely at the time of the construction of Fort Gorazda, between 27 March and 30 September 1885, several commissions working on fortifications were active in Switzerland, one of which presented "… *to the federal government, the project for a first nucleus of fortifications grouped around the Gotthard massif. Having taken the political decision to build fortifications, those responsible were faced with a number of*

Fig.17
Fort Airolo. View of the left side section of the ditch and the gorge front. Note the plastic forms of the cover and the caponieres for close defense. It's possible to see the rotating armoured dome on the top of the roof. At the middle of the rampart you can see the armored minimum cannon-embrasures.

Photo by the Author

19    See Paolo Bortot, *Morphology and Technology of the Austro-Ungarian Empire mountain forts on the Italian and German South-Tyrol in the 19th century: a path to modernity*, ed. Maria Rita Pais, Plan Barron. *A future for super-resistent structures* (Lisbon, 2024): 53-54.

20    The characteristics of Vogl-type forts are well described in Kurt Mörz De Paula, *Der Österreichisch-Ungarische Befestigungbau 1820-1914* (Wien: Buchhandlung Stöhr, 1995): 90-91.

*practical difficulties, the first of which was* "... the absence of Swiss specialists in contemporary fortifications." [21]

This fact resulted in emissaries being sent to all European countries with the task of studying *"the latest improvements in the Art of Fortification throughout Europe."* [22] The result was the construction of a first major work, Fort Airolo[**Fig.17**]. Three pre-projects were requested from three different planners, *"... from Captain Mougin, Major Schumman, and an opinion from Lieutenant Field-Marshal von Salis, a Swiss officer in the service of the Austro-Hungarian Empire."* [23]

In this competition, three of Europe's most important schools of fortification were thus compared: the French, the German and the Austrian.The latter was held in high esteem by the Swiss, imposing itself over the most modern that was then available on the fortification Market. Fort Airolo was built between the years 1887-1890, following the observations of von Salis-Soglio, [24] presenting at the same time, morphological and construction technique solutions derived from the European debate, but also, at the same time, solutions from the Austrian fortification school. This work testifies, at the same time, that modern construction solutions and materials from the European debate were known in Austria-Hungary.  The result was the construction of a fort in the form of an enormous tortoise shell made of concrete covered in granite that housed the casemates with an inner shield and minimal cannon-embrasures, ammunition depots, technical rooms, and garrison quarters. At the top of the roof was a rotating armoured steel dome of the Schumann type with two 12cm cannons. In the sloping rampart front were the minimum cannon-embrasures for five 8.4cm cannons in casemates. At various points on the roof were four revolving retractable armoured turrets for 5.3cm rapid-fire cannon, and three revolving armoured observatories.

The set of solutions adopted completely realised the idea of a modern industrial fort. This work presents an irregular trapeze shape that adapts to the

21    *"... au gouvernement fédéral le projet d'un premier noyau de fortifications groupées autour du massif du Saint-Gothard. La décision politique de contruire des fortifications prise, les responsables furent confrontés à une série de difficultés pratiques. ...", - la prima delle quali era n.d.A. - "l' absence de spécialistes suisses en matière de fortification contemporaine."* Maurice Lovisa, "L'Exemple Suisse", in *Actes du colloque Séré de Rivières. Épinal 14-15-16 Septembre 1995* (Paris: Association Vauban, 1999): 249.

22    *"... les dernieres perfectionement dans le domaine de l'art de fortifier dans l'Europe entière."* In Lovisa, Actes du colloque Séré de Rivières, 251.

23    *"... au capitaine Mougin, au major Schumman et l'avis du lieutenant feld-maréchal von Salis, officier suisse au service de l'empire austro-hongrois."* Lovisa, *Actes du colloque Séré de Rivières,* 249-251.

24    Says Lovisa in this regard: *" ...les esquisses de von Salis furent en effet retenues."* Lovisa, *Actes du colloque Séré de Rivières,* 251.

18

Fig. 18
Fort Airolo. Detail of the sloping front section of the trapezoidal ditch. In the foreground, it's possible to see the semi-caponier and the caponier in the background.
Photo by the Author

morphology of the terrain. The defence of the front section of the ditch was entrusted to a caponier [Fig.18] protruding from the scarp wall located at the left corner between the minor (sloping) base and the oblique side of the trapeze. In front of the caponier is a semi-circular counter-scarp gallery with a rifle-embrasures The second inclined section of the trapeze, on the right side, was defended by a semi-ca-ponier. Finally, a caponier - with a classical rectangular plan ending in a semi-cylinder - placed to the side of the entrance on the ravine side, with rifle-embrasures along the entire perimeter, implemented the flanking work of the residential casemate, and the path, embedded in the ground, for access to the fort.

Fort Airolo, is in fact the most modern armoured mountain fort in existence at the time. Although built in Switzerland, it can be considered a product of the Austrian 'Genie' school. There are in fact also typical traditional elements, already used, as we have already seen, in the fort for revolv-

ing armored tower, Turmfort Gorazda. The same to caponier in the ditch, with masonry of the arched scarp, the use of the semi-caponier, the introduction " in nuce " of the ditch flanking system with the construction of a semi-circular gallery with rifle-embrasures at the caponier, the use of masonry casemates with semi-caponier frontal shield with minimal gunnery (typically Austrian), the cladding of the articulated roof in very regular squared blocks of granite, the living quarters for the garrison on the gorge front and the defensive caponier on the side of the entrance.

The new is instead constituted by the abandonment of the symmetrical plan, by the introduction from the "tortoise shell" morphology of the fort, wich effectively build the idea of modern fort theorized by French Mougin. The new is also constituted from the roofing made with rounded joints between the various surfaces,but more importantly, from the installation of the twin-barrel rotating armored dome in steel [Fig.19] - no longer in cast iron - of lenticular shape. Finally, the ultra-modern technical equipment is completed with the inclusion, in the volumic mass of the fort, of the rotating retractable armored turrets for rapid-fire cannons and the rotating armored observers, also retractable. In summary, the fort is armed with the most advanced fortification armaments available in the European market at the time.

Fig. 19
Fort Airolo. Detail of the roof. Note: the aerators for air exchange, the revolving dome-observatory for the direction of fire, the modern twin revolving armoured dome.
Photo by the Author

Fig.20
Fort Mitterberg. View from the friendly side towards the mountain.
Photo by Author

## The imperial Mountain Forts: Fort Mitterberg, Fort Garda, Fort Verle

As we mentioned earlier, the solution adopted among the mountains of the imperial territory between Tyrol and Carinthia was the "Vogl type." The forts built, although different in shape and size, were characterized by a typical morphological element, the presence of cannons placed in side-by-side casemates with a front armored cap shield placed internally, which presented on the outside a characteristic sloping plane protecting the battery. According to the author, of all of them, the most representative case, also because it still exists today and is embedded in a Dolomite territory of incomparable beauty is Fort Mitterberg. [Fig.20]

This was built between 1884 and 1889 at 1585m above sea level. Its function, combined with the purpose of Fort Heideck, was that of impeding the access to Sexten Valley from Fischlein Valley and from Monte Croce Comelico pass.

Fort Mitterberg, which still exists, has an irregular 5-sided plan, of which two sides form a 160-degree angle, salient toward the enemy [Fig.21]. In practice it consists of two functional blocks, which are then joined by two narrow corpses to form a single building with a small inner court.

21 - 22

One of the sides of the salient consists of the building body from the rectangular-plan armored battery with long side parallel to the mountain level lines. The external inclined plane of fair thickness is covered with granite blocks. Internally, there are 3 casemates with frontal armor formed by metal semi-cap shield with minimal cannon-embrasure. [Fig.22] There is then a second morphologically more articulated body, which housed on the cover a battery of 3 howitzers in 3 small revolving armored domes for indirect firing.

A small revolving armored observatory is placed on a conical structure built for purely functional reasons of bullet resistance. This was also originally covered with galvanized sheet metal. The building thus presents, from the enemy side, an articulated morphological structure.

Internally, the spaces are organized on three levels. A ground floor with warehouses, a second floor with rooms for the garrison and officers, and a third floor with fighting rooms.

Fig.21

View of the battle front with the two sides of the salient. A close-up of the linear battery block with the 3 minimum cannon-embrasures at the base of the inclined plane invented by Vogl for mountain forts. In second floor the articulated masses with the cone-shaped element at the top of which is installed the revolving armoured observatory.

Photo by the Author

Fig.22

Forte Mitterberg. Interior view of the armoured casemate with a semi-calotte with a minimal cannon- embrasure for a cannon Mod.80-12cm on pivoting support.

Photo by the Author

Externally, Fort Mitterberg looks like a very traditional building with facades clad in rustic "*opus incertum*" stone. The east elevation, in which the entrance door opens, has six large windows that give light to the garrison's living quarters. The north elevation, facing the mountain, features two levels of embrasures for close defense and ends in the east corner with a small tower that, at the top, houses an armored casemate for Belgian-made Montigny machine gun.

Two more machine gun casemates were located in the southeast (1 machine gun) and southwest (2 machine guns) corners of the works at the ditch level. Globally, the fort's armament consisted of 3 Mod.80 15cm howitzers in revolving armored domes, 3 12cm Mod.80 cannons with Mod.85 pivot-carriage, and 4 Montigny machine guns. The number of men in the plan garrison was 180 men of witch 3 officers, 17 petty officers and 82 artillerymen.

Fort Mittelberg, which outwardly looks like a classic fence, almost convent-like, presents the articulated volumetry of the fighting front determined by pure functional needs. It also presents the covering of the roof in galvanized sheet metal - one of the first cases at the European level. The plastic volume of the built work, integrated with the technical elements of heavy and light armament, the inclination of the combat front determined by the calculation of projectile penetration, and the complete absence of ornamental elements, make this building one of the most interesting examples of mountain military architecture of the second half of the 19th century. In addition, being installed in the casemate block of the cannons, the armored inner semi-cap shields with minimal cannon-embrasures, being still present the armored casemate of the Montigny machine gun in the turret and being still installed the armored observatory dome made of hardened cast iron, make this fort a unique case in the entire Süd-Tirol.


**Fort Garda. The first expression of Brutalism.**

The case that constitutes a turning point on the territory of the empire , is the construction of Fort Garda in fact the first truly modern armored fort built in Süd-Tirol. The construction technique adopted in some European countries was already part of the design and construction practice of the modern fort: building constructed entirely in concrete, basically a single inside excavated monolith, with integration of howitzers in revolving armored domes, cannons and machine guns protected by armored shields. Experiences made by the Austrians in the Kummersdorf polygon led to the discovery that concrete was stronger than granite. The shock of bullets exploded in it caused surface chipping but remained confined to the point of impact. Fort Garda was built for the purpose of experimentation in the use of concrete and steel.

The *Garda Werk* was constructed [25] between 1st September of 1904 and May 26th 1907 in the lower part of Monte Brione in the Riva Fortress. "*The*

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25   *Rapportsplan über das Werk Garda*, Jahr 1907, KAW.
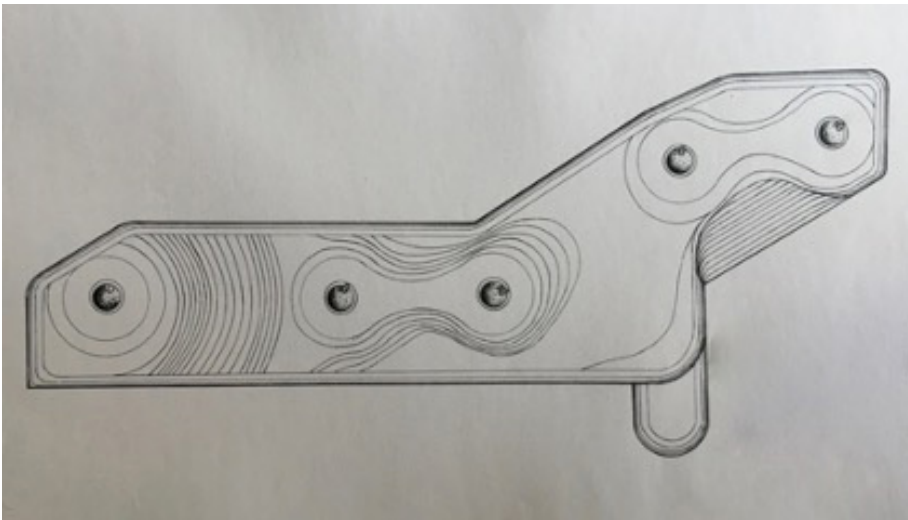
*new building is characterized by a more rigorous application of the theory of the mountain forts and new techniques of construction.*

*It was built 153.50m above sea level on the southern side of Monte Brione on the edge of the vertical cliff that descends until the lake. The roof was built emulating the natural enviornment of the existing terrain, rendering it invisible from the enemy side. The roof had a thickness between 2.5 and 3.0 meters and lay on a continuos structure of steel IPE beams with a height of 35cm." [26]*

The fort consists of a large building a formed by two sections, one larger, about 46 meters in length, and one smaller, about 24 meters. They are leaning against the mountain forming a 30-degree angle between them. Altogether they are about 70 meters long.

*"The roof has an articulated and sinuous morphology. Its form, in correspondence of the howitzer battery, is made of two low pair of artificial small concrete hills with rounded volumes, at different levels, on wich the armored rotating domes were installed.* [Fig.23]

*At the end of the longest segment of the fort, that rose to the mountain following its profile towards north, was located the observatory of the commander, a small armored rotating dome. From here one can view the entire surrounding landscape.*

*Already during the project, the volumetry of the roof was designed with the level curves inherent to the topography. This highlights the concept of reconstruction nature." [27]*

The main body of the building houses various technical rooms and garrison quarters with windows opening onto the narrow gorge ditch. [Fig.24], The rotated small body houses a combat gallery with oriented embrasures for small arms,

26     See Paolo Bortot, *Morphology and Technology of the Austro-Ungarian Empire mountain forts on the Italian and German South-Tyrol in the 19th century: a path to modernity. Pais, Plan Barron. A future for super-resistent structures*, 63.

27     Pais, *A future for super-resistent structures*, 63.

Fig. 23
Forte Garda. The roof. Drawing
by Architect PhD Paolo Bortot

on the mezzanine floor, and two casemates for 8 cm M05 rapid-fire cannons[28] with traitor function on the upper floor. In this section, located to the south, a machine gun was added after the completion of the work.

On the ground floor, there were garrison rooms and stores for large-calibre ammunitions. To the right of the entrance was the machine engine room with a petrol generator for the production of electricity for the interior lighting - with petrol storage - and the operation of the optical telegraph, telephone and search-lights.

The staircase connecting the various floors is located in the west corner of the main building at the compositional pivot point of the plan.

On the first floor of the fort, there was the optical telegraph, rooms for the garrison with relatively large windows and, in the shorter part of the building, the traitor cannons.

At the final part of the main facade - a quarter of a cilinder - and at the end of the short facade, we find the oriented rifle-embrasures towards the direction of fire determined geometrically by the shape (in front by the slope and in plan by the orientation) of each opening - embrasure - for the rifles used in close defence.

The second floor, from a planimetric point of view, is not very different from the first, but it radically changes the visual relationship with the outside space: here we find only form-orientated rifle-embrasures, in the elevation and plan, obtained with 'concentric' mouldings. It's a space specifically for combat. In the building's angular quarter-circle, there is an electric spotlight - Scheinwerfer - for the illumination of the space close to the outside during night-time combat.

From a morphological point of view, the fort's roof is extremely interesting. In the project, it was shaped as an "artificial nature" that follows the contours of

28    *Rapportsplan über das Wek Garda, Jahr 1907*, KAW.

Fig. 24
Fort Garda. Wiew of gorge side.
Photo by the Author

the terrain. [Fig.25], The plastic form of the building's exterior volumes allows the rotating armoured domes - positioned in pairs - to be harmoniously integrated with the concrete architectural structure. From the enemy side, the lake side, the building is completely invisible, with only the rotating armoured domes and the commander's rotating armoured observatory visible. On the friendly side - north and north-west - the roof is connected to the façades with simple curved lines, at some points in triple curvature.

The morphology of the roof, but also the entire building, can be well defined in the words of Bruno Zevi about the work of Eric Mendelshon: his expressionism, *"exalts the material and dramatically moves it to create a univocal formal message."* [29] What's more, *"…the interior form was excavated and the exterior sculpted to create a poetic image of organic compactness."* [30] The entire roof, which recalls the formal contour of fort Airolo, was covered by galvanized metal sheets, which once again places it, with the use of this new material, among the first cases of the application of this roofing technique in Europe.

The fort is extremly modern, but the concept of the nearby defence is from the 1800s. The construction shows a fundamental contradiction, it's a hybrid. That's why it's so important. It allows us to understand in depth the process of development of the form, between tradition and innovation. During the construction of the fort, the Austrian Armoury perfected the machine gun. In the same year that the building was inaugurated (1907), the Schwarzlose machine-gun Mod.07 8mm was launched. In the months before the outbreak of war, as the author's survey and observations show, this technological 'lack' was corrected.

The caponiere to the right of the entrance was enlarged with the addition of another volume containing two embrasures for two machine guns, one on each side of the ditch.

Next to the armoured casemates of the rapid-fire cannons, on the first floor, a embrasure was drilled for a third machine gun. [Fig.26] The heavy armament was installed on the roof that was full coverd with metal sheet finished

Fig. 25
Fort Garda. Main part from the gorge side. The contours of the roof follow the terrain.
Photo by the Author

Fig. 26
Fort Garda. Front of the shortest side. The fort is built on a rocky base. The texture of the surface of the  facade left rough after casting is evident, showing the patterns and joints impressed by the wooden boards. The morphology of the façade is determined by the interior spaces. The lower part houses the  defensive tunnel for light weapons with oriented embrasures. On the upper level one can see the two  holes that housed the cannon armoured plates with minimal embrasures for the "traitor" cannons.  At the end of the facade one can see the MG Mod.07 machine-gun embrasure added later.
Photo by the Author

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29    *"…esalta la materia e drammaticamente la muove per creare una scattante immagine in un univoco messaggio formale."* In Bruno Zevi, Storia dell'Architettura moderna (Torino: Einaudi, 1950): 154

30    *"…la forma interna veniva scavata e quella esterna scolpita per realizzare un'immagine poetica di organica compattezza."* Zevi, Storia dell'Architettura moderna, 156.

with zinc. This was composed by 4-10cm Mod.1899 modern howitzers, with 43 degrees elevation and 10 degrees depression, in rotating armoured dome. The fire was directed by a small rotating armored dome of the commander located in the higher point of the construction. After the building of the fort, 3 8-mm machine guns Schwarzlose Type Mod.1907 were installed for the short range defense. The existing caponiere was extended for 2 machine guns. A third machine gun was installed at the end of the west façade. The garrison was made up of 114 men: 6 officiers, 15 petty-officeirs and 93 soldiers.

The size of the construction, made of a large monolithic and articulated mass of concrete, is imposing. The entire construction is the result of a set of avant-garde construction techniques integrated with the most modern products of the Austro-Hungarian Empire's military heavy industry, with the effect of constructing a building among the most modern in Europe at the time, and at the same time partially reducing the backwardness of the construction technique of the Empire's permanent fortified works.





27 - 28

By the way, it should be noted here which Austro-Hungarian military Genie did indeed build an exclusively functional building. Let's remember that the first to design and build this type of fort, all in concrete, was the Belgian Brialmont, which built in Belgium the first armoured forts in Europe in the 1880s.

At the time of its construction, Fort Garda looked like an austere building without any decorative element. The compact design came from the adaptation to the ground. The big natural cliff constituted pratically an insuperable obstacle. The planned weaponry on the gorge side, rifles and machine guns, turning the work paratically unconquerable. The facades surfaces showed the characteristic texture of the beton brut with the natural veins of the wood.

The modern shape of the sinuous roof, connected with the façades by a quarter of the circle, was stemmed by plastic properties of concrete, by structural calculation and insatlled technology. Then, the fort appeared as a powerful war machine that integrated the most advanced elements of the technologies and techniques of passive and active defense of the time. This coud be considered, by its architectural and morphology elements, the precursor of European expressionist architecture and of the brutalism.
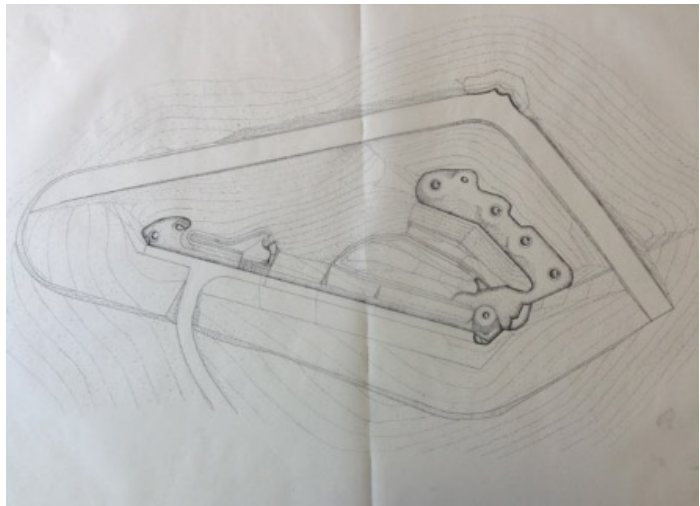
Fig. 27
Fort Verle. General plan .
Designed by Architect PhD
Paolo Bortot

Fig. 28
Fort Verle. View of gorge side.
Photo by the Author

**Fort Verle. The stateof the art of the austrian aromoured mountain fort.**

Fort Verle represents a concentration of values rarely found in the history of architecture. It was built immediately after the Great War, finally applying the most up-to-date theoretical and construction principles of the armoured mountain fort in practice. It was the one that resisted the overpowering Italian artillery and troops most strongly, in fact making itself the protagonist of one of the bloodiest battles in a single attack.

The Fort Verle[31] **[Fig.27]** was built at 1506m a.s.l., between 22 October 1908 and 30 April 1913, on the back of the meadows of the Vezzena pass near Malga Verle. It was a modern armoured fort. According to the author, it is the most important example, both of the mountain armoured fort type and for its historical value, being the theatre of well-documented cruel events for the Austrian officer Fritz Weber, but also for Luis Trenker, which graduated in architecture in Graz after the war. Let's remember here that historical value, as defined by Alois Riegel, deriving from the ability to recognise an architectural object that is in front of us.

The Fort Verle consisted of five main elements connected to each other: (1) the main casemate - Wohnkasamatte - **[Fig.28]**, consisting of two overlapping floors with a long rectangular plan; (2) the complex of armoured casemates and one coffre - placed at the eastern side of the fort - with the function of flanking the Luserna fort and for close combat; (3) the fixed armoured casemates installed for close combat on the opposite, western side; (4) the howitzer battery block; (5) the work for flanking the ditch situated in the counterscarp at the top of the salient.

The habitational casemate had a very long rectangular plan. The spaces for the troops were placed at three different levels to follow the contours of the terrain. The fort practically had an east-west orientation. On the east side, in the direction of the Vezzena meadows, the flanking armament, which in this case was particularly abundant, was placed in the first floor; two 8 cm Mod.05 rapid-fire cannons were placed in two casemates with armoured shields. Their action was in an easterly direction towards the road from the Asiago plateau. In the same position, at the south angle of the short side, was a one- floor coffre. On the first floor, immediately to the side of the rapid-fire cannons, in the rounded corner of the building, it was housed 4 machine guns in pairs behind armoured shields. In the opposite side (west), at the end of a long corridor, a close combat position was reached, characterised by two fixed armoured casemate, armed with four 8mm M07 MG machine guns. **[Fig.29]**, The habitational casemate - Wohnkasamatte - had a long corridor on the side close to the rock, opening onto the bedrooms and technical rooms. On the ground floor, starting from the west side, there was a real bathroom, two large garrison rooms, the

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31 *K.u.k. Geniedirektion in Trient. Rapports Plan des Werk Verle. Übersichtsplan 1:400 Lit. A Trient, im Feber 1913 Planer und Erbauer Haupt. Lehmayer.* KAW.

accumulator room, the machine room, the workshop, the kitchen, the medical officers' room, the infirmary room and the entrance to the guard post. After the guard post we find combat spaces placed in the gorge coffer [Fig.30], and further inside we find the supply depot and two storerooms, one for the genie material and one for the artillery material. On the upper floor we found the same bathroom, large rooms for the garrison and rooms for the officers. Next to the staircase was the telephone room. A staircase led up to the block of fighting casemates armed with the forementioned 8 cm cannons and machine guns in pairs housed in the gorge coffer. On top of the armoured roof, the commander's rotating armoured observation dome was in a dominant position.

On the first floor was the entrance to the howitzer battery. This was made up of a monolithic block set into the rock, forming an angle of around 30 degrees with the main work of the fort. The same block then had a second rotation angle of 30 degrees.

The battery therefore consisted of three aligned armoured domes and a fourth armoured dome slightly further back from the others. Here, in a more forward position as the theory predicted, a second fixed armoured casemate with machine-guns was also installed with defensive and observation function. A strong flanking installation was present on the counter-scarp of the ditch. This was powerfully armed with two pairs of 6cm Mod.10 rapid-fire cannons behind an armoured shield for the use of signal guns.

At the start of the war, the fort had two officers, three petty officers and a medical officer. *"There are more than two hundred artillerymen and a hundred sappers from Genie... people from Upper Austria, Salzburg and Tyrol. ...These important positions have been assigned to very loyal troops."*[32] The cost of the fort was 1.834.585 crowns, of which 33.708 was for the land, 1.735.421 for the construction, 17.742 for the furniture and 43.813 for the administration.

The building looks like the result of calculation, the application of concrete and the installation of chromium-hardened steel armour. To understand life in an Austrian fort at the beginning of the 20th century, we strongly recommend to read the text by Fritz Weber cited in the note. Here we find a detailed description of the fighting which brought the men close to exhaustion. Weber recalls the situation in the fighting, in which *"the concrete vibrates like bronze ...a man, at best the upper part of a human body, ...is on the ground.... Two, three men come*

Fig. 29
Forte Verle. Wiew of the gorge side of the fort. On the roof to the right is the rotating armoured commander's dome for the direction of fire. To the left of the photo the outlines of the howitzer battery domes emerge from the ground.
Source: KAW - Bortot (2005), p.156

Fig. 30
Fort Verle. View of the gorge coffre. On the first floor - in the centre of the photo - one sees the armoured shield with two embrasures for 8mm Mod.07 machine guns. On the ground floor - on the left of the photo - one can see the gorge coffre placed to protect the entrance.
Source: KAW - Bortot, (2005),p.157

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32  *"Si tratta in gran parte di elementi giovani, sui quali si piú contare: gente dell'Austria superiore, del Salisburghese, e del Tirolo. ... Si sono volute affidare queste importanti posizioni a truppe fedelissime."* Fritz Weber, Tappe della disfatta (Milano: Mursia, 1965): 8.

*towards us, staggering, their faces black with smoke, their eyes wide open."*[33] On the outside, another spectator who witnessed the battle, the Austrian writer Robert Musil, notes : *"War. At the top of the mountain. Behind the sentry barrage you walk like a tourist. Heavy artillery firing at the distance. At intervals of 20, 30 seconds and more, it reminds you of the boys which at a great distance are throwing stones at each other. ... Grenades explode in the back of Vezzena's collar. Bad black smoke from a house which has been burning for minutes. Too bad for Lavarone's poorly decorated landscape."*[34]

The observations of the Viennese Robert Musil, a young officer at the front of the Italian Süd-Tirol, remind us of the war situation in which the young men of yesterday found themselves. Another Viennese, Friz Weber, recalls how the limits of human suffering were reached: *"Every explosion has the effect of a powerful fist to the head. The ears whistle, the veins in the forehead harden, blood comes out of the ears. ... Six hours spent in the observatory serve to atone for all the sins which a man can make in the course of his life."*[35]

The extreme harshness of the fighting and the tragic efficiency of Fort Verle as a war machine are testified to by the plaque on the side of the Passo Vezzena road in memory of the assault of valiant force attempted by the Italian troops on one of the most heavily defended points of the Italian-Austrian front. The following is written on it: *"On the night of 25 - 8 - 1915, the infantrymen of the 115 Treviso, attempting with pertinacious impetus the road to Trento on this hill, devoted their lives and blood to the redeeming victory. Fallen: 43 officers, 1048 infantrymen."*

The fort was in fact heavily armed. The heavy armament consisted of 4 Skoda Mod.09 10cm howitzers in a revolving armoured dome, 2 Mod.05 8cm rapid fire cannons behind a fixed armoured shield, 4 Mod.10 6cm rapid fire cannons behind a fixed armoured shield, 1 machine gun in a revolving armoured dome - the commander's - and 14 machine guns in fixed armoured metal casemates or behind an armoured shield. The planned garrison consisted of 1 officer and 30 men of the Landesschutzen, 4 officers and 167 men of the fortress artillery, 3 sappers, 3 telephonists, 1 doctor and 1 nurse. On the date of entry into the war, the effective garrison of Fort Verle consisted of two officers, 3 petty-officers and 1 medical officer.

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33  *"Il cemento armato vibra come bronzo. ... Un uomo o piú precisamente la parte superiore di un corpo umano, ...giace a terra...Due, tre uomini ci vengono incontro, barcollando, la faccia nera di fumo, gli occhi sbarrati."* Weber, *Tappe della disfatta*,14.

34  *"Guerra. Sulla vetta di una montagna. Dietro lo sbarramento di sentinelle si va come un turista. Duello lontano di artiglieria pesante. A intervalli di 20, 30 secondi e piú, rammenta ragazzi che a grandi distanze si buttano sassi addosso. ... Granate scoppiano nella gola dietro Vezzena; brutto fumo nero come di una casa in fiamme incombe per minuti interi. Pena per il povero inghirlandato paesaggio di Lavarone."* Robert Musil , *Diari. 1899-1941* (Torino: Einaudi, 1980): 465.

35  *"Ogni scoppio ha su di noi l'effetto di un poderoso pugno alla testa. Le orecchie fischiano, le vene si inturgidiscono, il sangue esce dalle orecchie. ... Sei ore passate nell'osservatorio servono a espiare tutti i peccati che un uomo normale puó commettere durante tutta la sua vita."* Weber, *Tappe della disfatta*, 33.

## Conclusions: Brutalism ad a necessity

This article, which deals with Austrian fortifications in Süd-Tirol, deals with eight forts which, according to the author, represent milestones in the construction of fortifications, particularly mountain fortifications, taking up some of the questions presented at the Lisbon Congress on 7 November 2023.

The objective is to show a path through which, in an empirical-practical way, people are drawn to the construction of fortifications that are placed high in the history of modern architecture. The theme, but also the territory descrived, proved to be extremely complex. This was due to the events in the region, which is situated at a truly strategic point, that has not a despicable historical density.

The forts described here therefore show us the long road of modernisation taken by Austrian officers, which culminated in the construction of efficient and modern armoured mountain forts that were invincible during the fighting of the Great War.

In particulary, the historical period between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, when modern armoured forts were built, was characterised by great technical development. We find inventions such as the electric light bulb, the radio, the telephone, the cinema, the internal combustion engine, the automobile, the dreadnought battleship and the aeroplane. In the industrial field, the first assembly lines led to a significant increase in production. At the same time, industrial processes ensured ever more perfect productions of the same objects in large series.

In the artistic field we find the birth of the isms: cubism, futurism, expressionism, among others. Cities were rapidly increasing in size and population. Life became chaotic and in continuous movement. Wrote Robert Musil - of whom, during the war, we will find testimonies of the fighting at the Austrian Fort Verle -: "*Air trains, overland trains, underland trains, pneumatic mail, automobile chairs, ...very fast lifts pump masses of men vertically from one traffic level to another...*"[36]

In the Austrian panzerwerke of the early 20th century, we find the use of the telephone, the telegraph, the optical telegraph, the internal combustion engine, the machine gun, howitzers in revolving domes, fixed armoured metal casemates, armoured metal shields, in a context of perfect integration of heavy weapons technology, steel technology and concrete construction technology.

The complete absence of decorative elements and the total integration of form, function and elements of technology place these buildings squarely in the dimension of modernity. Forte Garda was the first among them.

The tragic events of the Great War closed that parenthesis of apparent calm and serenity of the Belle Époque.

The time and world described by Stefan Zweig: "*was an orderly world, with*

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36    "*Treni aerei, treni sulla terra, treni sotto terra, posta pneumatica, catene di automobili, ... , ascensori velocissimi pompano in senso verticale masse di uomini dall'uno all'altro piano di traffico...*" Musil, *Diari. 1899-1941*, 465.

*clear stratifications and comfortable passages, it was a world without haste. Not only was haste considered inelegant, but it was a superfluous reality, because in that staid bourgeois world, with its innumerable cautions and precautions, things never happened suddenly...*" [37] The Austro-Hungarian Empire, after hundreds of years, the place where everything happened without haste, ended.

The military buildings presented are certainly anticipators of modern architecture and, at the same time, bring up some typical urban planning issues such as the direct observations made to recognise the site - strong position - to be fortified: it is a question of analysing the territory on a large scale and the relationships between the various buildings which were linked by a communications network. The final point of this fortification activity, the construction of the fortifications entirely in concrete, beginning with Forte Garda, is strongly emphasised.

From an architectural point of view, the plastic forms extend organically into the terrain. The roof is plastically connected to the vertical elements with rounded elements. The same goes for the casemates: all edges are avoided as they are easily damaged by the projectiles and allow them to slide without damage.

The shape of the forts from the last period, particularly the Verle fort, is remember some of the sketches by Erich Mendelsohn, one of the founding fathers of Expressionist architecture. In his Einsteinturm he built exactly the plastic forms linked by curved elements which can be found in some Austrian forts, especially in the Garda and Verle forts. Even Rudol Steiner, in the first version of the Goetheanum, designed the element above the entrance, which appears frontally as a German helmet, but laterally is a practically exact quotation of the shape of a fixed armoured casemate which can be found in the Verle fort or also in the observatory at the top of Vezzena. In the second version of the Goetheanum, concrete appears as the leitmotif of the construction: it was the practical response to the fire in the first almost-finished building.

The modern Austrian armoured forts in Süd-Tirol have a concrete structure that is coherent with the function of the building, eliminating every temptation for ornament. The form is generated, as we have seen, to respond to the technical problem of installing the armoured steel and defence elements, which can make some constructions of the Modern Movement palid.

The aspirations of Futurist paper architecture are fully realised here in concrete and steel, using raw, bare material, without predetermined solutions, thus fully realising the aspirations of Antonio Sant' Elia expressed in his manifesto of Futurist architecture of 11 July 1914. Even Boccioni, in his manifesto for futurist architecture, wanted a radical renewal of architecture through a return to necessity. The Austrian armoured forts, with their elemental and pure materials, designed without decoration, represent exactly that, brutalism as necessity.

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37    "*era un mondo ordinato, con chiare stratificazioni e comodi passaggi, era una realtá supérflua, giacche in quel saldo mondo borghese, con le sue innumerevoli cautele e previdenze, non accadeva mai nulla all'improvviso...*" Stefan Zweig, *Il mondo di ieri. Ricordo di un europeo.* (Mondadori: Milano, 1947): 39.

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**Marco Mulazzani**

# The Cult of Fallen Soldiers.
# German Cemeteries and Memorials
# of the First World War in Italy, 1935-1943

*First World War Memorials, Italy, Germany, Architecture, Landscape Design*

## /Abstract

A little more than ten years after the end of the First World War, the scenario of devastation of the battlefields of the Western Front appears almost unrecognizable, regenerated by nature and the work of men. But thousands of cemeteries hold the bodies of fallen soldiers, unconcealable scars of the wounds of the first "war of materials" of the contemporary age.

In Germany the construction of military cemeteries outside national borders is the work of an organization, the Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge ("German People's Association for the Care of War Burials"), founded in 1919 in Berlin. German cemeteries are designed with "natural material", to create "a strip of native soil in a foreign land". They are simple and austere, to express the seriousness of the word "front". Individual graves are grouped together to "form a whole" and a symbolic role is assigned to the collective burial area (Sammelgrab, later Kameradengrab), always in close relation to the "space of honor" (Ehrenraum). The memory of the individual fallen is annulled in "sanctuaries built not for the consolation of families, but for the loyalty and elevation of the Nation". This condition of the "anonymous soldier", a hero "without personality or individuality [...] son of the earth whose destiny is to fertilize Mother Earth", is finally stoned in the "castles of the dead" (Totenburgen): in them the "community of the nameless" rests in a single burial ground, in "immortal landscapes" consecrated by battles.

In this perspective, we can consider the constructive program launched by the VDK at the end of 1935 in Italy, on the Isonzo, Tagliamento, Piave and Dolomite passes. The cemetery of Feltre (1936-37), the Ehrenmales of Quero and Tolmin (1936-37), the Totenburgen of Pordoi and Pinzano (both started in 1938 in a pan-Germanic perspective, the first completed in 1959, the second remained unfinished), are conceived as sentinels of an "eternal guard", consisting of a ring of similar monuments placed in a crown around the German Reich.

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Among his publications: *Guida ai padiglioni della Biennale di Venezia dal 1887* (Electa 1988, 2014, 2022); *Guida all'architettura italiana del Novecento* (Electa 1991, 2004, with S. Polano); *Le macchine volanti di Corradino D'Ascanio* (Electa 1999, with A. Bassi); *Luigi Moretti. Opere e scritti* (Electa 2000; Princeton Architectural Press 2002, with F. Bucci); *Giuseppe Vaccaro* (Electa 2002); *Massimo e Gabriella Carmassi* (Electa 2004); *Francesco Mansutti e Gino Miozzo. Architetture per la gioventù* (MART-Skira 2005); *Case del balilla. Architettura e fascismo* (Electa 2008, with R. Capomolla e R. Vittorini); *Ipostudio. La concretezza della modernità* (Electa 2008); *Architettura e paesaggio costruito. Palerm & Tabares de Nava* (Electa 2010); Werner Tscholl. Architetture / Architekturen (Electa 2013); *L'Ospedale degli Innocenti di Firenze. La fabbrica brunelleschiana, gli Innocenti dal Quattrocento al Novecento, il nuovo museo* (Electa 2016); *La foresta che cammina. Le sepolture dei soldati tedeschi 1920 1970* (Electa 2020); *Moretti, el Barroco, Caravaggio* (Mudito & Co. 2021); *Abtei Marienberg / Abbazia Montemaria. Monte Maria, la storia. Werner Tscholl, la rivitalizzazione* (Electa 2021); *Arte e architettura. Il Laboratorio Morseletto dal 1920* (Electa 2023, with E. Pegorin).

On the first day of meetings of the German-Italian Committee for War Graves and Memorials (Deutsch-Italienischer Ausschuss für die Amtliche Kriegsgräberfürsorge), which met in Vienna between 10 and 15 February 1943, General Augusto Grassi put on the agenda "a delicate question of great moral importance for Italians". Following the agreements established in 1936 between the two countries – General Grassi argues – the Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge had asked and obtained to arrange "dignified burials" for about 3,200 German soldiers who fell in Italy; however, and "inexplicably", the VDK has built "five magnificent monuments", at least three of which are in places that "remind us Italians of painful military events". In fact: "Tolmin represents the monument to the German-Austrian victory of November 1917; Pinzano that of the breakthrough of the Tagliamento line; Quero that of the possible German-Austrian occupation of the bank of the Piave". Only Feltre and Pordoi do not seem to imply "hostile meanings towards Italy", even if the latter "is more than a monument, it is a real fortress"[1].

In addition to those discussed in Vienna, the Totenburgen Deutscher Helden, the "castles of the dead" dedicated to the "German heroes" erected in the second half of the 1930s in various places in Eastern Europe, are not a few or without "hostile significance". Among the main ones: in Silesia in Annaberg (today Gora Swietej Anny, Poland) and in Waldenburg (today Walbrzych, Poland), in Romania in Petrisoru, in Yugoslavia in Semendria (today Smeredevo, Serbia), Gradsko am Vardar and Bitolj (today Bitola, Macedonia). Real fortresses that, together with the Ehrenmale, the "memorials" built in numerous military cemeteries in France and Belgium, constitute an "ewige Wache", an "eternal guard" that surrounds the new German Reich[2].
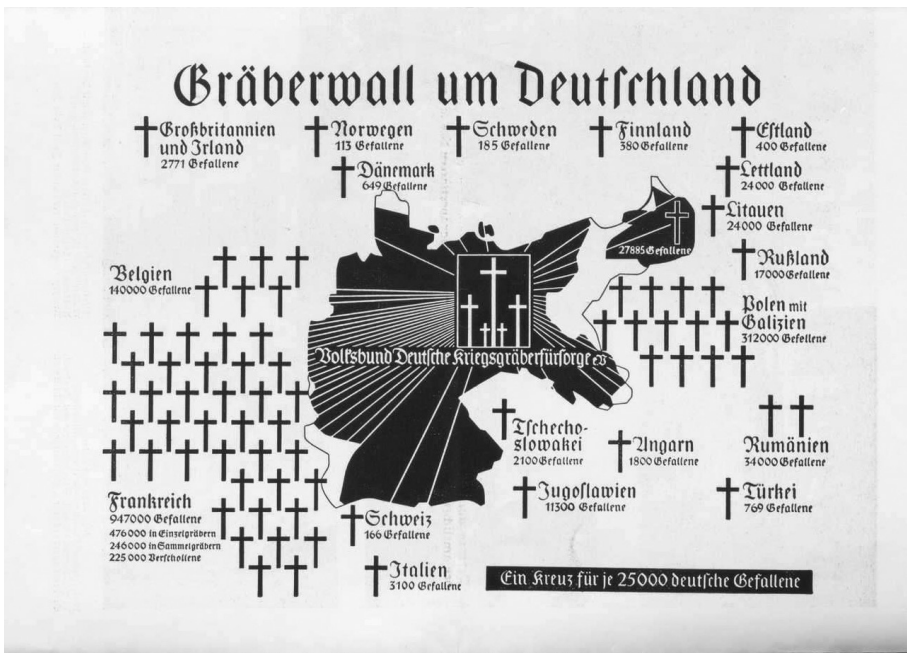
The Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge, the German People's Association for the Care of War Burials, founded in Berlin on 16 December 1919[3], commissioned and at the same time was the creator of these and numerous other works devoted to the "cult of fallen German soldiers". At the end of the Great War, the military losses suffered by Germany amounted to about two million soldiers[4]: two hundred thousand were buried on national territory, one million in France and Belgium, over half a million on the Baltic, Russian and Polish fronts,

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1   General Grassi lays out possible "remedial solutions" suggested by the head of the Italian government. The Pinzano memorial – almost completed but not yet in use – could be donated to Italy to "honor its sons", who fell to defend that front in 1917; or become a burial place for German and Italian soldiers who perished fighting "shoulder to shoulder, with a spirit of sacrifice" in the ongoing war. The report of proceedings, *Österreichische Kriegsgräber in Italien*, in Politisches Archiv des Auswärtiges Amts (PAAA), copy in Volksbund Archiv, Kassel (VA), R. 1-297. This essay constitutes an in-depth analysis of the text "'La guardia eterna'. Cimiteri e memoriali del Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge in Italia, 1936-1943", in Maria Grazia D'Amelio, ed., *Per non dimenticare. Sacrari del Novecento*, Rome 2019, 61-75 (proceedings of the International Conference held in 2016 at the Accademia di San Luca in Rome).

2   W.C. Gomoll, "Die ewige Wache. Der ring deutscher Ehrenmale rings um das Reich. IV. Italien", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no. 11 (1940): 154-158.

3   Bernd Ulrich, Christian Fuhrmeister, Manfred Hettling, Wolfgang Kruse, *Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge. Entwicklungslinien und Probleme*, Berlin-Brandenburg 2019, 55. The volume is a fundamental reference for the history of the VDK, from its foundation to the present day.

4   Heeres-Sanitätsinspektion im Reichskriegsministeriums, *Sanitätsbericht über das deutsche Heer, (deutsches Feld- und Besatzungsheer), im Weltkriege 1914-1918*, Berlin 1934, vol. 3, 12-14. According to other sources, the number is overestimated: the British War Office indicates, for example, German losses in 1922 at 1,808,545 men.

**Gräberwall um Deutschland**

†Großbritannien und Irland 2771 Gefallene
†Norwegen 113 Gefallene
†Schweden 185 Gefallene
†Finnland 380 Gefallene
†Estland 400 Gefallene
†Dänemark 649 Gefallene
†Lettland 24000 Gefallene
†Litauen 24000 Gefallene
27885 Gefallene
†Rußland 17000 Gefallene
†Belgien 140000 Gefallene
†Polen mit Galizien 312000 Gefellene
Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge e.V.
†Tschecho-slowakei 2100 Gefallene
†Ungarn 1800 Gefallene
†Rumänien 34000 Gefallene
†Jugoslawien 11300 Gefallene
†Türkei 769 Gefallene
†Frankreich 947000 Gefallene 476000 in Einzelgräbern 246000 in Sammelgräbern 225000 Verschollene
†Schweiz 166 Gefallene
†Italien 3100 Gefallene
Ein Kreuz für je 25000 deutsche Gefallene

several tens of thousands in the other theaters of war – Italy, the Balkans, Greece, Turkey, the Middle East, Africa, Japan – and in the colonies[5]. The Treaty of Versailles (June 28, 1919) prevented Germany – even if it had had the means – from directly dealing with military burials outside its borders, attributing this task to each Nation in whose territory the fallen were buried[6]. The limited possibilities of action of the government motivate the birth of associations of private citizens for the "care of war graves". In the case of the VDK, the initiative was due to a group of officials of the Military Administration, among whom Siegfried Emmo Eulen, who inspired and led the Volksbund until 1945, stands out[7]. Its vision was ambitious: to create an organization capable of operating on a large scale, in cooperation with government structures but independent of them and with strong popular support. The "memorandum" prior to the founding congress (November 26, 1919) calls on the German people to mobilize to help the State face up to a "huge task." In addition to the army of the sick and maimed, prisoners, refugees, and displaced persons, the unemployed without means of support, there is an "army of the dead numbering millions of people"; and the tombs, "abandoned in a foreign land" and at risk of destruction. "Even the dead have a right," reads the concluding lines of the document: it is a duty "to take care of the

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5    In 1929 the VDK lists 13,000 German military cemeteries in 38 countries. In 1932 the Zentralnachweiseamt für Kriegsverluste und Kriegergräber (Central Office for the Documentation of the Missing and War Burials) under the Ministry of the Interior, established on 1 October 1919, estimated a total number of 34,000 soldiers' cemeteries: Simon Rietz, *Deutsche Soldatenfriedhöfe des Ersten Weltkrieges und der Weimarer Republik. Ein Beitrag zur Professionsgeschichte der Landschaftsarchitektur* (PhD diss., Leibniz Universität Hannover, 2015), 24. http://edok01.tib.unihannover.de/edoks/e01dh15/841205302.pdf (last accessed November 2024).

6    Part VI of the Treaty – "Prisoners of War and Burials" – commits Governments (Article 225) to "respect and maintain the burials of soldiers and sailors buried in their respective territories" and "to recognize any Commission appointed by one or other of the Allied and Associated Governments, to identify, register, maintain or construct suitable monuments on such burials and to facilitate the performance of this Commission in the performance of its duties"; Article 226 undertakes to provide each other with the complete list of deaths and information useful for identification; the indications, number and location of the graves of the unidentified dead.

7    Siegfried Emmo Eulen (1890-1945) was Kriegsgräberverwaltung Offizier (official in charge of war graves) in Poland, Galicia, and Palestine during the First World War. He was president of the Volksbund from 1933 and from 1939 he took part in the Second World War, at the end of which he died from a wound.

Fig. 1

The graves of German soldiers outside the national borders in a graphic representation of the VDK, 1930.

burials that, everywhere, bear witness to heroic sacrifices"[8]. **[Fig. 1]**

The VDK is supported by public figures[9] and its governing bodies include members of the Liberal and Social Democratic parties. Soon, however, the nationalist inspiration impressed by the founders became the dominant feature of the organization: the VDK would claim a sort of moral primacy to its work, based on the inseparable link between the task of honoring the "sacrifice of the heroes" of the war and the redemption of the Nation.

The widespread German rejection of the infamous "treaty of guilt"[10] at Versailles includes provisions regulating the burials of soldiers. There is no shortage of propaganda topics for the VDK: the state of neglect of German cemeteries abroad; frustration at the failure to reach an agreement in 1921 between Germany, Belgium and France on the sharing of the costs of building and maintaining cemeteries[11]; finally, the decision of the Belgian and French governments to proceed, from 1922, to a drastic reduction in the number of German military cemeteries in their respective territories, with the consequent obliteration of ar-

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8    The document is published in Rietz, *Deutsche Soldatenfriedhöfe*, 600.

9    Among the 92 subscribers of the *Aufruf!*, the "appeal" of the first months of 1920, include Konrad Adenauer, Erwin Barth, Peter Behrens, German Bestelmeyer Richard Dehmel, Bishop Otto Dibelius, Martin Elsaesser, Archbishop Michael von Faulhaber, Gerhard Hauptmann, General Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg, Hermann Hosaeus, Wilhelm Kreis, Max Liebermann, Franz von Mendelssohn, Max Pechstein, Bruno Paul, Hans Poelzig, Walther Rathenau, the evangelical pastor Fritz Siems,  Fritz Schumacher, Vice-Admiral Adolf von Trotha, Rabbi Samson Weiße. The sheet is reproduced in Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge e.V., ed., *Dienst am Menschen. Dienst am Frieden*, Kassel, 2001, 19.

10    Article 231 of Part VIII, "Reparations", provides "... the responsibility of Germany and her allies, for having been the cause, for all losses and damages suffered by the Allies and the Associated Governments in consequence of the war imposed on them by the aggression of Germany and her allies."

11    The problem is the disproportion in the number of soldiers killed and buried in different countries. While Britain is making agreements with France and Belgium to cover the costs of building its own military cemeteries, Germany is invoking Articles 225 and 226 of the Treaty because it is unable to meet the costs of building or repatriating the bodies. Aimed at affirming the principle of "reciprocity" is the law on the preservation of war graves in Germany voted by the German parliament on December 29, 1922.

Fig. 2
The German military cemetery "La Maison Blanche" in Neuville Saint-Vaast, France, 1929.1930.
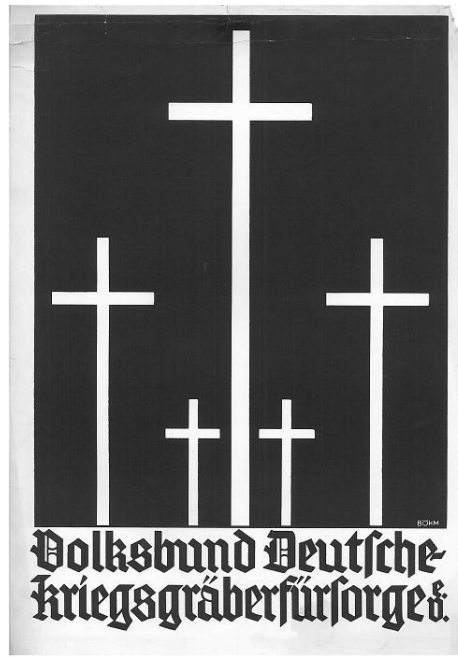
tefacts considered "of historical and artistic value" and, above all, the definitive impossibility of assigning an identity to several thousand soldiers. The outrage is joined by criticism of the new cemeteries, some of which appear as real "cities of the dead", with tens of thousands of crosses in a barren landscape: "naked and soulless" places, alien to German ways of honoring the fallen[12]. **[Fig. 2]**

After being recognized in 1921 as the government's sole interlocutor in the care of war graves[13], in 1922 the VDK obtained the involvement of the German parliament in the celebration of the Volkstrauertag, the "day of popular mourning" dedicated to soldiers who died in war[14]. Since 1921 a monthly bulletin has been published, the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge. Mitteilungen und Berichte vom Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge*: the first issue features a photograph of a cemetery on the Eastern Front, the "Vier-Grenadier-Grab" in Grabowiec (Poland) – an image transformed in 1926 by the artist Ernst Böhm into the pictogram with the five distinctive crosses of the VDK insignia[15]. **[Fig. 3, 4]** The bulletin is a fundamental tool for the growth of the association and its rooting in every social stratum of the population. The results are eloquent: from 1920 to 1930 the individual members of the Volksbund grew from 9,849 to 138,044 and the "local groups" from 177 to 1,439, while the circulation of the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* increased from the initial 7,000 to over 51,000 copies. The VDK also counts 5,197 guilds and 13,266 German cities and municipalities among its members; finally, it benefited from the donations of 376 Paten (godfathers) who between 1926 and

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12    In 1922-24 the number of German cemeteries in France was reduced from about 3,900 to 210; among the structures resulting from this merger are Neuville-Saint-Vaast ("La Maison Blanche") and Saint-Laurent-Blangy, with 40,000 and 22,000 burials respectively; Rietz, *Deutsche Soldatenfriedhöfe*, 442.

13    The decree of the Ministry of the Interior (October 1921) regulating the cooperation between ZAK and VDK is published in the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.11 (1921)82-83.

14    The Volkstrauertag, "day of national mourning", was transformed in 1934 by the Nazi regime into Heldengedenktag, "day of remembrance of heroes".

15    The mound with five crosses contains the bodies of four grenadiers and an officer (the highest cross) killed in action.

Fig. 3

Cover of the first issue of the Kriegsgräberfürsorge bulletin with the image of the Vier-Grenadier-Grab in Grabowiec (Poland) set up in autumn 1918.

Fig. 4

Pictogram by Ernst Böhm for the insignia of the Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge.

1930 supported works in military cemeteries with over a million Reichsmarks. In the six-year period 1925-1930 the expenses allocated to the arrangement of cemeteries rose from 57% to 85% of the total resources of the association, growing in absolute terms from 24,000 to 570,000 Reichsmarks[16].

The construction activity of the VDK intensified from 1926, the year of the agreements that allowed Germany to deal directly with its war cemeteries in Belgium and France. In June 1926, Siegfried Emmo Eulen created a VDK Construction Office (Baubüro) in Munich and entrusted its technical responsibility to Robert Tischler, Gartenarchitekt in the Bavarian city since 1920[17]. The VDK's programme for the development of military cemeteries in France was announced in the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* of August 1926 and documented in the following years with the publication of numerous projects in the regions of the former Western Front, from Pas-de-Calais to Rhône-Alpes. In May 1930, out of about 200 planned cemeteries in France, 80 were listed as "designed down to detail", 62 under construction, 12 completed. In Belgium, where the Amtlicher Deutscher Gräberdienst operates[18], the VDK built only two cemeteries in these years: in Roeselare-De Ruyter (1928-30) and in Langemark (1929-32) – a work, the latter, of great symbolic importance and decisive in clarifying the meaning attributed by the Volksbund at the end of the twenties to the "cult of fallen soldiers".

The projects drawn up by Baubüro directed by Tischler necessarily take as a reference the ministerial "guidelines" for military cemeteries drawn up during the war[19]. However, they are interpreted and "refined" by accentuating the role of certain elements – in particular, the area of collective burial (Sammelgrab) – and by introducing new ones, the most important of which is the "space of honour" (Ehrenraum). The cemetery enclosure is protected by dense hedges and rows of trees and sturdy walls. Beyond the narrow entrance – which allows the passage of one person at a time – there is sometimes a "tree-lined vestibule". The main path, paved but not wide, leads to the Sammelgrab, clearly distinguished from the individual tombs, arranged in compact and regular rows, and marked by wooden crosses (destined to be replaced by stone crosses). The collective burial tomb is defined by a low curb and always connected to the Ehrenraum, often surrounded by trees, and marked by a stele, an altar or a cross.

16    *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.10 (1929): 6, 1931. The numbers were destined to grow in the following decade: individual members were 151,110 in 1934, 295,000 in 1936, 537,000 in 1940, 993,572 in 1943.

17    The biography of Robert Tischler (1885-1959) is meagre due to the loss, after his death, of his personal and professional archive. It is known his apprenticeship at the Munich Botanical Garden and his attendance in 1903-04 at the Staatliche Lehranstalt für Obst- und Gartenbau (Proskau, Silesia); his work as a garden designer is documented until 1931. From 1926 to 1959 he oversaw Baubüro, then Bauleitung, of the VDK. To his "design direction" is ascribed most of the military cemeteries and memorials built by the VDK in this period; Fritz Debus, "Robert Tischler zum Gedenken", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no. 5 (1959): 67; Hans Soltau, "Zum 100. Geburtstag von Robert Tischler", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.4 (1985): 20-21. A first critical reading is by Meinhold Lurz, "'… ein Stück Heimat in Fremder Erde'. Die Heldenhaine und Totenburgen des Volksbunds Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge", *Arch plus: Zeitschrift für Architektur und Städtebau*, no.71 (1983): 66-70. A biographical reconstruction is by Christian Fuhrmeister, "Robert Tischler, Chefarchitekt 1926-1959. Ein Desiderat", *RIHA Journal*, 0159, 27 June 2017 (http://www.riha-journal.org/articles/2017/0150-0176-special-issue-war-graves/0159-fuhrmeister, last accessed November 2024).

18    Established on 1 April 1923, the Amtlicher Deutscher Gräberdienst (Official German Burial Service) reports to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has responsibility for military cemeteries abroad.

19    Monica Kuberek, "Die Kriegsgräberstätten des Volksbundes Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge", in *Unglücklich das Land, das Helden nötig hat: Leiden und Sterben in den Kriegsdenkmäler des Ersten und Zweiten Weltkrieges*, ed. Michel Hütt, Hans-Joachim Kunst, Florian Matzner, Ingeborg Pabst (Marburg 1990), 75-90.

The essential order of the composition corresponds to the craftsmanship of the materials – the rough stone, the wrought iron of the gates, the oak wood of the crosses – and a judicious use of vegetation. In the first cemeteries, traditional German plants, such as oaks and lime trees, are preferred (but not exclusively), along with hedges of wild roses, sycamore, or beech for the fences. Collective burials are covered with periwinkle or lavender cloaks and individual graves with heather, while unpaved paths are sown with clover[20]. [Fig. 5, 6, 7, 8] Hans Rose identifies the VDK cemeteries as "typical solutions that have their basis in the personal vision of Robert Tischler". The collective burials, in subdued interaction with the entrance, "form the heart and focal point of the plant", while the individual tombs "are not circumscribed" or in evidence, because only in its entirety can the surface of the ground be "artistically organized"[21]. Franz Hallbaum wrote even more explicitly a few years later that "if the word 'front' has any meaning in the design of war cemeteries", its character, simplicity and seriousness must resonate in the landscape and in the tombs, united to form "a totality"[22].
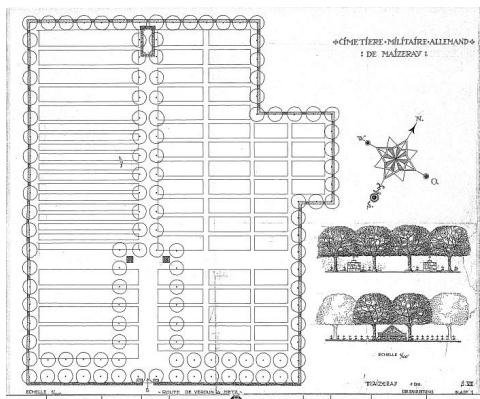
5 - 6

From the early 1930s onwards, the character of the German Soldatenfriedhöfe was fervently claimed in VDK publications. The military cemeteries of other nations are criticized for their excessive monumentality, judged "bombastic" in form, "pretentious" for the ostentation of the materials, "superficial" and "pathetic"[23] for the attempt to soften with the variety of colors of flowers the grave solemnity of the places that should honor the sacrifice of the fallen for the Fatherland. On the contrary, German cemeteries – in terms of the organization of space and the choice of "simple and austere" vegetation, the attention to the craftsmanship of the details, the shape and color of the crosses – emanate, in Hallbaum's words, "a deeper calm and seriousness than those of England and France." And, in their tendency to "typify", "a repeated solution will never be found,

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20    Detailed descriptions accompany the images of drawings, models, and creations of the Soldatenfriedhöfe in the magazine.

21    Hans Rose, "Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge", *Die Gartenkunst*, no. 5 (1930): 83-86; Rose points out that the architect does not satisfy a personal taste but interprets the theme in ways appropriate to a general feeling. A pupil of Heinrich Wölfflin, Rose was Professor of Art History at the University of Munich from 1921 to 1931.

22    Franz Hallbaum, "Die deutsche Kriegsgräberstätte, ihr Wesen und ihre Form", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no. 10 (1932): 146-148. Hallbaum was a pupil of Hans Rose at the University of Munich; from 1930 to 1932 he was director of the DGfG and of the journal *Die Gartenkunst*; he was head of communications for the VDK from 1933 and editor of the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* until his death in 1939.
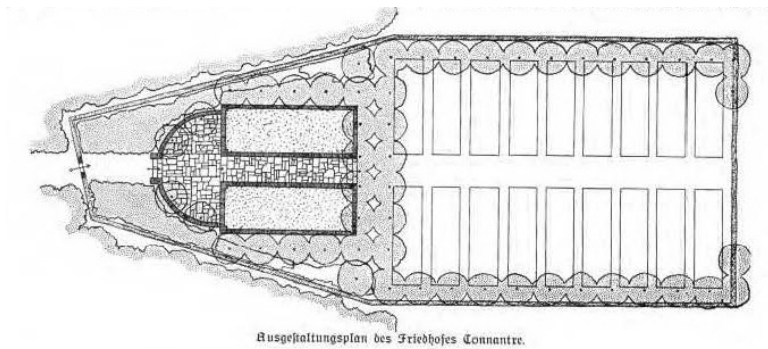
23    Reinhold Lingner, "Kriegerfriedhöfe", *Die Gartenkunst*, no.10 (1930): 173-175.

Fig. 5
Project for the arrangement of the military cemetery of Maízeray (Maizières-lès-Metz), France, 1928.

Fig. 6
Bellau military cemetery, France, 1930.

Ausgestaltungsplan des Friedhofes Connantre.

never will one cemetery resemble another, in terms of location, size, character of the landscape"[24], since "we Germans, unlike other peoples, design our cemeteries mainly with natural material". The aim is to create a natural atmosphere in the places where the soldiers are commemorated, because "in the shadows and rustling of the treetops, the German seeks peace when he is in communion with his dead, with whom an eternal dialogue must be maintained"[25]. [Fig. 9, 10] From all these formulations, it is clear what the founding paradigm of these places is; and illuminating, to identify their origin, is a page by Elias Canetti in *Masse und Macht*.

"The mass symbol of the Germans was *the army*. But the army was more than an army: it was *the walking forest*. Nowhere in the world has the sense of the forest remained as alive as in Germany. The rigidity and parallelism of the upright trees, their density and number, fill the German heart with deep and secret joy. The German looks for the forest in which his ancestors lived and still likes to feel at one with the trees"[26].

"Ein Stück Heimat in fremder Erde" – a strip of native soil in a foreign land – is the commentary that accompanies the images of cemeteries in the *Kriegs-gräberfürsorge* that evoke the Heldenhaine, the woods of the ancient Germanic heroes now dedicated to soldiers, "contemporary heroes". Nature is incorporated into German military cemeteries, which become "landscapes of memory of the Fatherland" – or rather, of "memory of war". In them, the importance assigned to the "places of honor" – the Sammelgrab, "heart and focal point", and the Ehrenraum – to the detriment of individual burials is a consequence of the immanent meaning attributed by the VDK to its mission: "to build sanctuaries not for the consolation of families, but for loyalty and for the elevation of the Nation"[27]. Consistent with this vision will be, on the one hand, the symbolic "groups of crosses" (Kreuzgruppen), placed in the camp without a direct relationship

24    Franz Hallbaum, "Gestaltung deutscher Kriegsgräberstätten. Aus der Arbeit des Volksbundes Deutscher Kriegsgräberfürsorge e.V. ", *Die Baugilde*, no. 3 (1934): 75-88.

25    [Max] Arendt, "Bauten des Volksbundes in ihrer geschichtlichen und kulturellen Bedeutung", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.2 (1935): 19-24 (text of a lecture of 7 December 1934 at 1. Führertag of the VDK in Kiel).

26    Elias Canetti, *Masse und Macht*, Hamburg 1960 (*Massa e potere*, Milan: Biblioteca Adelphi 1981, 206).

27    Hans Gstettner, "Kampf um ewiges Werk. Eine Weiterführung unseres aufsatzes. Was bald vergessen sein wird", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.1 (1940): 9-15. The decision to privilege the collective significance of the Soldatenfriedhöfe was ratified by the VDK as early as 1930; Rietz, *Deutsche Soldatenfriedhöfe*, 454-459.

Fig. 7, 8
The military cemetery of Connantre, France, 1928. The project for the arrangement and views of the Ehrenraum and the Sammelgräber in 1930.

with the burials but as "units of the army, called on parade, to the eternal call"[28]; on the other hand, the use of architecture, to give an even more precise character to the "sanctuaries" built by the Volksbund.

The architecture appears on the cover of the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* in December 1928, in a "cemetery of honor" in the district of Olita (Alytus) in Lithuania: a sort of mastaba built with boulders that seems to evoke the enduring resistance of soldiers who died fighting[29]. [Fig. 11] A few years later, in March 1931, a "chapel" erected in 1930 in the cemetery of Lissey near Verdun in France was published: a cylindrical stone volume, furrowed by vertical slits below the crowning frieze and equipped with a massive trilithic portal. [Fig. 12] The small memorial (Gedenkhalle) is inserted, according to Rose, in the wake of a tradition that originates with the tomb of Theodoric in Ravenna: "the noblest testimony among the burials of Germanic heroes", even if in Lissey "it is not a tomb of kings but a tomb of the people"[30]. A bas-relief superimposed on the portal shows the stylized figure of an angel with the insignia of the VDK; on the interior walls, oak planks are engraved with the names of the soldiers – in Rose's words, a "typographical masterpiece whose craftsmanship takes us back to the oldest examples of woodcuts". The Lithuanian "fort" and the "chapel" in Lissey announce the ways in which the "care of war graves" will evolve in the work of the VDK. In the former theatres of battle in the east and south countries – in the absence of restrictive regulations by the local authorities[31] – and in Germany, the "fortresses of the dead" (Totenburgen) will be built. In the military cemeteries in France – already "defended" by sturdy walls, "not forty centimeters, as in the fence of a domestic garden, but one meter thick, rooted in the ground and created for eternity"[32] – architectures of small dimensions but no less eloquent will be built. At Romagne-sous-Montfaucon (1932-33), Rancourt (1932-33), Maissemy (1933-35), Liny-devant-Dun (1933-37), Haubourdin (1934-37) and other places, the VDK will build memorials adorned with sculptures, mosaics, blacksmith and cabinet-making works, dedicatory inscriptions, transforming soldiers' cemeteries

9 - 10

28    Hans Gstettner, "Ehrenmale des Volkes. Die Entwicklung der Grabzeichenfrage in der Arbeit des Volksbundes", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no. 6/7 (1940): 76-88. The article shows models of two cemeteries in France, in Consenvoye and Origny-Sainte-Benoite, set up with groups of five and seven stone crosses, the central one larger and slightly advanced than the others.

29    The construction is not listed as a Bauleitung construction nor further documented in the bulletin and may have been a war station integrated into the cemetery.

30    Hans Rose, "Zum Volkstrauertag – 1. März 1931", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no. 3 (1931): 40-41. In Rose's historiographical simplification, the election of the Ravenna mausoleum as a "Germanic testimony" is also the consequence of an instrumental interpretation of the meaning of the decorative band crowning it with the Gothic "pincer" motif.

31    The complete "design freedom" is also emphasized by Franz Hallbaum, "Die Totenburg Deutscher Helden in Bitolj, Jugoslawien", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.1 (1936): 4-13. On the other hand, the agreements with France and Belgium provide, among other constraints, for a limit of 3 meters in height for constructions in German military cemeteries, and the approval of projects by the competent authorities.
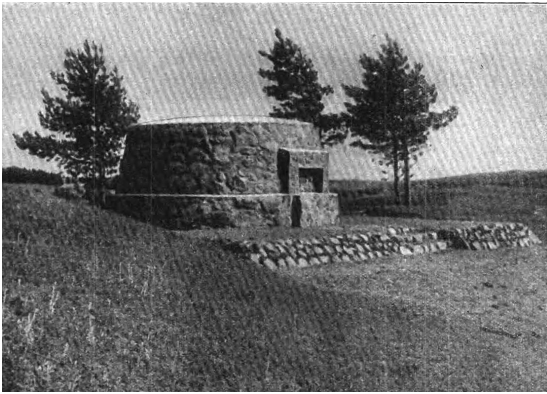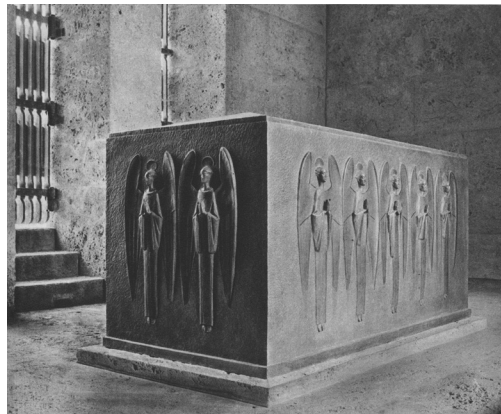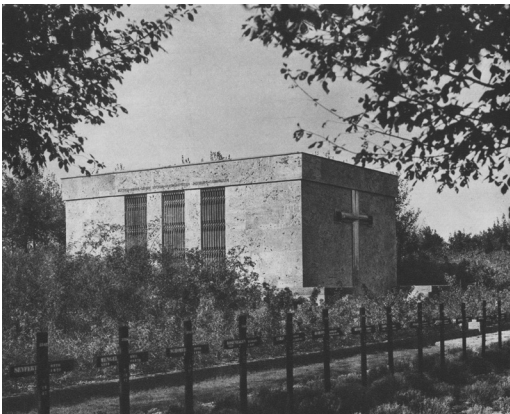
32    Arendt, "Bauten des Volksbundes…", 20.

Fig. 9
The military cemetery of Roeselare-De Ruyter, Belgium, 1928-30. View circa 1934.

Fig. 10
"Deutsche heimat in fremder Erde", the German military cemetery in Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, France, 1932-33. The field with the crosses in 1938.

11 - 12




13 - 14

into complete symbols of "Germanic culture"[33]. [Fig. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18]

In the work of Tischler's "construction office", the expression "Heimat in fremder Erde" takes on a new meaning. According to Hallbaum, the Munich Bauleitung restores the tradition of the old builders' guilds (Bauhütten): a partnership of architects, artists and master craftsmen who collaborate, collectively and anonymously, "in the service of the honor of heroes"[34], aspiring to the realization of a "total work of art" (Gesamtkunstwerk), an expression of the "people's community" (Volksgemeinschaft) – an explicit will in the claim of the Volksbund as a "German People's Federation" (Bund des Deutschen Volkes).

A paradigmatic demonstration of the service rendered "to the honour of heroes" is the "Soldatenfriedhof Langemarck" in Flanders, commissioned in 1929 from the VDK by the German Students' Union and inaugurated on July 10, 1932[35]. The cemetery area (210x90 meters) is surrounded on three sides by rows of willows and divided into two parts: the burial ground, planted with oak trees, and the "space of honor" (Ehrenraum), with a moat on the outer sides. The entrance is guarded by a massive construction of reddish-orange sandstone from the Weser, the narrow passage framed by a megalithic portal. Inside, to the left of the vestibule, is the "consecrated space" (Weiheraum), covered with oak planks

Fig. 11
Ehrenfriedhof in Olita, Lithuania, 1928.

Fig. 12
Chapel in the military cemetery in Lissey, France, 1930.

Fig. 13, 14
Ehrenhalle in Maissemy military cemetery, France, 1933-35. Exterior with the stainless-steel cross and bronze sarcophagus on the inside.

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33    The Handwerks Kultur in the work of the VDK, in explicit antithesis to the modernism of the Neue Sachlichkeit, is a recurring theme in the writings of Hallbaum and Gstettner in *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*.

34    Dr. H. [Hallbaum], "Die Bauhütte des Volkbundes. Eine Kameradschaft deutscher Künstler und Handwerksmeister im Dienste der Heldenehrung", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no. 1 (1938): 4-12.

35    *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.8 (1932), is entirely devoted to Langemark; among the many later writings, Franz Hallbaum, "Langemarck. Der Patenfriedhof der Deutschen Studentenschaft, seine Gestaltung und Bedeutung", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.5 (1933): 69-72.
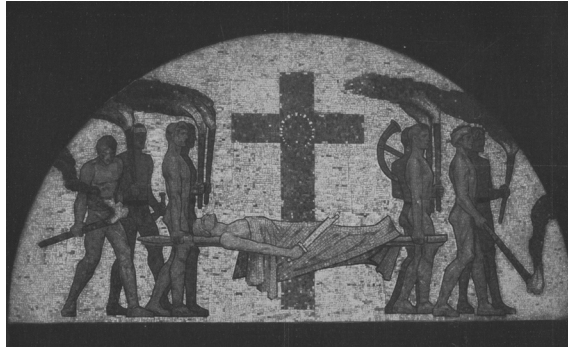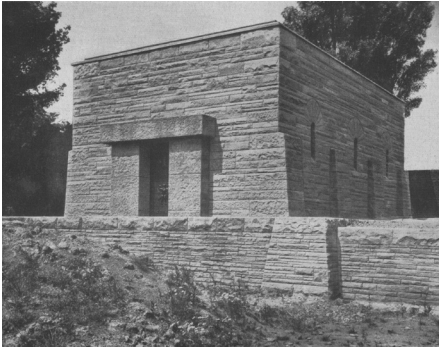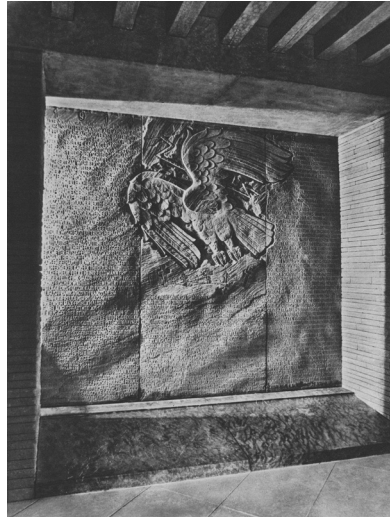
bearing the names of 6,307 soldiers engraved with fire and gilded. Beyond the vestibule, on the wall of the "court of honor," a wreath of oak leaves is surmounted by a plaque with the words: "Germany must live, even if we should die!"[36]. From here, a paved path between beech hedges leads to the Ehrenraum, where three concrete casemates – suitably "restored" vestiges of war – are enclosed in a sequence of altars dedicated to regiments and student associations, defining a path at the end of which you enter the burial ground. A sophisticated narrative structure links together the different places of the cemetery. [Fig. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25] The entrance is a "fortified gate" (Torbau); the Weiheraum is "consecrated" by the exposition of the soldiers' names, united in a totality whose meaning is made explicit by the epigraph in the walled courtyard. In the "space of honour", the outer moat evokes the opening of the Nieuwpoort dam, the cause of the halt of the German advance at the end of October 1914; the barrier formed by the casemates and altars "materializes" the resistance of the defensive front on the battlefield, sown with poppies "as red as the blood of soldiers"[37]. Finally, the oak forest (Eichenhain), in which crosses are almost superfluous since this place can legitimately be considered as a single collective burial ground. "Langemarck" fully stages the transfiguration of the death of the individual soldier, in himself an "insignificant victim"[38] whose memory is con-

Fig. 15, 16
Ehremal in Haubourdin Cemetery, France, 1934-37. Exterior view and mosaic in the interior.

Fig. 17, 18
Ehrenmal in Liny-devant-Dun military cemetery, France, 1933-36. View of the court of honour and the Weiheraum with the dedicatory slate tables.

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36    "Deutschland muß leben, und wenn wir sterben müssen!" is the recurring line of the poem *Soldatenabschied* (1914) by Heinrich Lersch.

37    Ulrich, Fuhrmeister, Hettling, Kruse, *Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, 164-165.

38    "Der einzelne nichts und das Volk alles ist" [the individual is nothing and the people are everything]; Hans
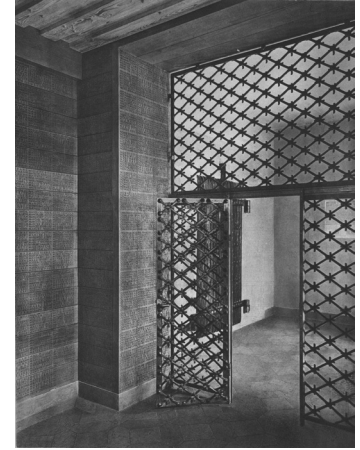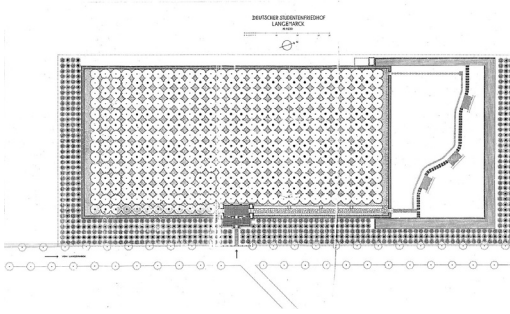
sidered destined to fade, in the "foundational" sacrifice of the new spirit that animates the nation and which, therefore, is destined to perennial memory. It is no coincidence that such a "political truth", which claims to indissolubly link Germany's past, present and future, is uttered in "Langermarck", given the pristine and constant manipulation of the aimless massacre of several thousand German soldiers that took place here in the first months of the war[39].

Ernst Jünger has dedicated reflections to "Langemarck" and to the figure of the "anonymous soldier" (unbekannt) that it is appropriate to recall here. In *Der Arbeiter* (1932) Jünger writes that "the hero of this affair [the World War], the anonymous soldier, appears as the exponent of virtues active in the highest degree [...]. Its virtue lies in its substitutability and in the fact that behind every fallen soldier the changing of the guard is already ready, in reserve"[40]. This, precisely, is the "virtue" celebrated at "Langemarck": "an event less significant in military history than in the history of the spirit," where "the bearers of the idea [...] they are knocked down to the ground by matter, the mother of things [the machine gun]. But this contact with the ground is what [...] enriches them with new energies. What dies," Jünger concludes, "what detaches from the branch and falls is the individual," whose "visible path" the unknown soldier concludes[41]. As a child of the earth returning to it, the unknown soldier is "the one who fertilizes": an "elemental energy" that frees death from its individual motivations. Even more than the fallen remembered by their names on the tombstones of war cemeteries, the unknown soldier thus becomes, to use an expression of Canetti, a "figure of growth": for this reason, in the cemeteries built by Tischler for the VDK "the

Gstettner, *Deutsche Soldatenmale. Erbaut vom Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge e.V. Berlin*, Berlin [1940], 14.

39    In the months of the First Battle of Ypres (October 19 – November 22, 1914), the German High Command ordered on November 10 the attack on Langemark (actually at Dixmuide and Bixchote) on the reserve corps of the Fourth Army – new and poorly trained, consisting mainly of young volunteers. The "myth of Langemarck" – and of the students singing the national anthem during the assault on enemy positions – begins on November 11, 1914. Langemarck is remembered by Hitler in *Mein Kampf* as his "baptism of fire"; in June 1940 he visited the cemetery (an image on the cover of *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.8 (1940)). On Langemark: George L. Mosse, *Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars*, Oxford 1990 (*Le guerre mondiali. Dalla tragedia al mito dei caduti*, Rome-Bari 1990, in particular chapter V. *Il culto del soldato caduto*); Karl Unruh, *Langemarck. Legende und Wirklichkeit* (Koblenz 1986); Gerd Krumeich, *Langemarck*, in *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte. III*, ed. Etienne François and Hagen Schulze (München: 2001), 292-309.

40    Ernst Jünger, *Der Arbeiter. Herrschaft und Gestalt* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1932). (*L'operaio. Dominio e forma* (Milan: Longanesi, 1984), 137).
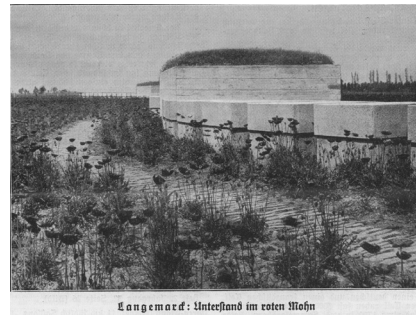
41    Jünger, *Der Arbeiter*, 99-100.

Fig. 19
Deutscher Kriegerfriedhof Langemarck, Belgium, 1929-32. Plan with the heading "Studentenfriedhof".

Fig. 20, 21
The Torbau and the Weiheraum covered in oak planks engraved with the names of the soldiers.

Langemarck: Unterstand im roten Mohn

meaning and shape of the individual graves had to be increasingly absorbed by the ideal center of force [of the Kameradengrab], losing their intrinsic meaning [...], to the point of removing [with the groups of symbolic crosses] all distinction from the unknown dead in the collective tombs, approaching the community of the nameless"[42].

On December 1, 1933, on the 15th Congress of the VDK, an exhibition summarizing the last four years of the association's activity was inaugurated in Berlin. [Fig. 26, 27] In addition to Langemark, models and drawings of new constructions for the cemeteries of Maissemy and Liny-devant-Dun in France, Feltre San Paolo and Quero in Italy, Smederevo (Semendria) in Yugoslavia are on display, among others; but above all, the plans for a memorial in Nazareth in Palestine and for the Totenburg – a term coined and used for the first time on this occasion – in Bitolj in Yugoslavia[43].

Nazareth and Bitolj, presented in June 1932 in the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*[44], have in common the total absence of signs of individual burial. The first is a parallelepiped pierced by seven "courts of honor" (Ehrenhöfe), one of which is a "consecrated space" with a tower next to it. The second, referred to as a "to-

tally new" type, has the appearance of a compact fortress, consisting of an Ehrenhof flanked by two buttress-towers connecting with the sturdy wall that surrounds the circular space intended for collective burial. Both projects will undergo changes in execution – particularly Bitolj, where the courtyard is transformed into a "hall of honor" (Ehrenhalle), with a granite altar in the center of the space and an eagle depicted in the ceiling mosaic. Built between 1933 and 1934[45], the Totenburg Deutscher Helden in Bitolj was published in the



February 1935 issue of *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* with images of a megalithic tomb in the Ahlhorn Forest near Oldenburg, the Mausoleum of Theodoric in Ravenna,

42    Gstettner, "Ehrenmale des Volkes...", 83.

43    Dr. H. [Hallbaum], "Verlauf der 15. Bundestagung des Volkbundes Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge und Bericht über di Schau von Modellen, Bildern und Werkstücken deutscher Kriegsgräberstätten im ehmaligen Herrenhause in Berlin, 1. bis 23. Dezember 1933", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.1 (1934): 4-11.

44    "Neue Baupläne des Volkbundes", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.6 (1932): 82-88.

45    The *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* reports news and pictures of Bitolj in February, May, June, and November 1933. In January 1934 a detail of the mosaic with the eagle – the head turned to the right due to a mistake in the *cliché* – was on the cover of the bulletin illustrating the Berlin exhibition; in April the *Ringburg* in execution was published; in October, in a photograph from below, the construction appears to have been completed. The January 1936 issue is dedicated to Bitolj, with an essay by Eulen and an introduction by Hallbaum; The inauguration took place on 25 October and was reported in the December issue.

Fig. 22, 23, 24

The court of honor and the Ehrenraum with the pre-existing casemates on the site included in the sequence of are dedicated to the regiments.

Fig. 25

The oak forest with the burials of soldiers.
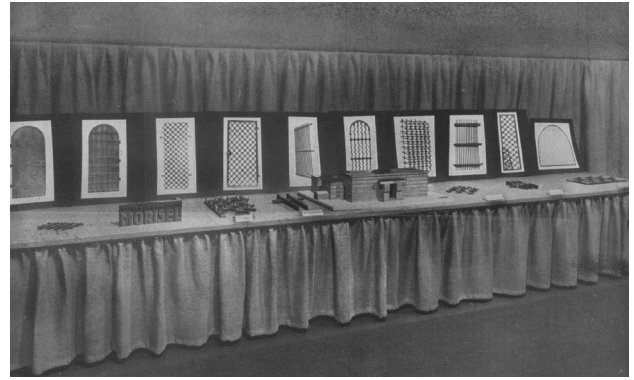
and the Frederick fortress of Castel del Monte in Apulia. These testimonies "of the great German past" are invoked as a "term of comparison" "with the work that the Volksbund is called upon to carry out"[46]; in particular, Castel del Monte or Lagopesole in Basilicata are to be considered not as formal references but for their value as a "settlement archetype", expressions of dominium exercised over the territory[47].

Bitolj gives imperishable memory and form to a war event – the resistance of German soldiers to enemy attacks during the offensive conducted by Entente troops in Macedonia in the autumn of 1916. The hill chosen for the construction dominates the "immortal landscape"[48] and the city. The "sanctuary" intended to house the remains of about 3,000 soldiers (exhumed from various cemeteries) is located there like a fortress made of granite blocks, equipped with a keep, buttresses and an enclosure protected by walls 6 meters high on the outside and over 2 meters thick. An impervious road leads to the north side of the keep, in which there is a narrow portal that can be crossed by one person at a time. Passing through the entrance, the bare room with the granite altar and the mosaic in the ceiling looks like a cozy space that prepares the passage to the Kameradengrab, a sort of *hortus conclusus* planted with juniper shrubs, protected by a wall two and a half meters high that allows only a view of the profile of the mountains and the sky. **[Fig. 28, 29, 30, 31]** In terms of its location in the landscape, form, and mass of the building, Bitolj proposes a new concept: no longer just "ein stück Heimat" but a German exclave[49] "in a foreign land". The fortress in Macedonia is also referred to by the local population as "Hitlers Werk", Eulen and Tischler report to the Führer guiding him on his visit to the VDK exhibition in Dresden in June 1934; a phrase specified by Hallbaum in 1936 with the term "Hitlerburg", meaning that "past and present are connected [because] the dead of the World War have entered the new State"[50]. In this sense,

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46    Arendt, "Bauten des Volksbundes…", 19.

47    Christian Fuhrmeister, "Die 'unsterbliche Landschaft', der Raum des Reiches und die Toten der Nation. Die Totenburgen Bitoli (1936) und Quero (1939) als strategische Memorialarchitektur", *Kritische Berichte. Zeitschrift für Kunst- und Kulturwissenschaften*, no.2 (2001): 56-70.

48    *Die unstbliche Landschaft. Die Fronten des Weltkrieges*, Leipzig, 1935, edited by Erik Otto Volkmann, is the reference given by Hallbaum in *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no. 1 (1936), for the events of the Macedonian campaign.

49    Fuhrmeister, "Die 'unsterbliche Landschaft'…", 65.

50    Dr. Johannes von der Osten-Sacken, "Der Führer in der Ausstellung des Volkbundes", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.7 (1934): 98-100; Hallbaum, "Die Totenburg deutscher Helden in Bitolj…", 9.

Fig. 26, 27
VDK exhibition in the former Herrenhaus, Berlin, December 1933. Models and drawings for Feltre, Nazareth, Quero, Langemark; models of inscriptions and motifs in wrought iron, photographs of doors and gates.

the Totenburgen establish a precise "correspondence" with the colossal triumphal arch, imagined by Hitler since 1925[51], with the names of all the soldiers who perished in the war carved in granite: as in that distorted vision, "substance" of the Totenburgen are the fallen for Germany, celebrated as "victors in death". Symbols – unmistakable and enduring – are therefore the foundation of the Totenburg "type". The architectural references, as numerous as they are changeable, are considered by Tischler with great freedom, by selecting some essential features – the principles of settlement and the ways of occupying space, the elementary and potentially massive volume – from which to develop his projects. For Bitolj, the Napoleonic Fort d'Enet in La Rochelle has been indicated as possible references, but also the circular enclosure of the royal tombs in the palace of Mycenae[52]; in Gradsko (1934-37), the memorial seems to be based on an archaeological reconstruction of Egyptian temples, but typologically it can be traced back to Bitolj, due to the compact body of the entrance building and the burial enclosure, here rectangular in shape[53]. The same morphological organization, with variations in the dimensions and articulation of volumes, shapes, materials, and solutions that "set" the buildings, is found in the "German and Romanesque" Totenburg[54] in Petrisoru in Romania (1935-43). The meaning of the VDK's Totenburgen does not derive from history – an important source, but from which they draw instrumentally – but from Tischler's ability to translate im-

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51    Albert Speer, *Erinnerungen*, Berlin 1969 (*Memorie del Terzo Reich*, Milan 1971, 1995, 90); Elias Canetti, *Hitler, nach Speer*, München 1972 (*Hitler secondo Speer*, in Id., *Potere e sopravvivenza*, (Milan: Biblioteca Adelphi, 1974), 96.

52    Respectively Fuhrmeister, "Die 'unsterbliche Landschaft'…", 61, and Moreno Baccichet, *Il sacrario sul Tagliamento e i Totenburg germanici nel paesaggio italiano (1936-1943)* (Monfalcone: Edicom, 2019), 38.

53    In Gradsko, the monumental high relief placed as the "guard" of the Kameradengrab depicts two soldiers supporting and leading a wounded comrade: Wilhelm Conrad Gomoll, "Die ewige Wache. Der Ring deutscher Ehrenmale rings um das Reich. V. Balkan und Orient", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.12 (1940): 170-181.

54    In Petrisoru there are sculptures of horses on the main front and lions guarding the Kameradengrab; a "Germanic" Weiheraum with bronze altars and a "Romanesque" Gedenkhalle with frescoes.

Fig. 28, 29, 30, 31
Bitolj's Totenburg in Macedonia, 1932-35. Views in the landscape, the Ehrenraum and the Kameradengrab in 1938.

ages and concepts "analogically" into architectural forms and spatial sequences. The "character" sought for them is the result of an executive process that is deliberately "anti-modern" as well as carefully controlled: from the choice of materials – mainly stone, almost always but not exclusively of local origin – to the construction techniques, anachronistically primeval[55]. Finally, their "quality" is entirely entrusted to the decorative apparatus created by the "guild" of artists and master craftsmen of the Bauleitung of Munich, which "completes" the construction by seeking an agreement between symbols and signs in every detail, up to the choice of plant species to be planted.

What has been written so far provides adequate tools for understanding the nature of the "five magnificent monuments" built by the VDK in Italy between 1936 and 1943 – of whose plans, moreover, the Commissariato was constantly informed. Nor could General Ugo Cei, Grassi's predecessor, who in the second half of the 1930s was a promoter of the construction of the main Italian memorials and who was present at the inaugural ceremonies of May 1939 in Quero and Tolmino, have escaped the significance of the "monuments" built by the VDK, which he himself appreciated for their "great artistic value" during the eighteenth congress of the organization in Wrocław[56].

But let's go back to the beginning of this affair. Despite the small number of German soldiers who died on the Italian front during the First World War, the VDK is very committed to taking a census of the places where their remains are located. The first information reports were published in the magazine *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* in June 1921 and continued until the early 1930s[57]. About 213 cemeteries are scattered in the territories of the Isonzo, Tagliamento, Piave and Dolomites: their reorganization, announced in the bulletin of November 1935, is the consequence of an agreement between the governments of Italy and Germany and does not include, at this stage, the Austro-Hungarian cemeteries in Trentino and South Tyrol[58].

Communicated in advance of the official meetings that began in Rome in January 1936 and ended on June 2, with the signing of the agreement between Italy and Germany, the VDK's constructive programme in Italy is the result of long preparation. The reform projects of two existing military cemeteries, Feltre San Paolo and Quero, were presented in the Berlin exhibition of December 1933: while the first was to be carried out without substantial changes, the second

55    "Ochsenblut, Quark, Kälberhaaren" (ox blood, cream cheese, and calf's hair) are natural components of a mortar based on lime and sand with quartz or marble flakes used as a binder in VDK constructions; Hans Gstettner, "Die Handwerkskultur im Werk des Volksbundes", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.5 (1940): 58-67.

56    *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.6/7 (1938): 89. On that occasion (just two months after the annexation of Austria) General Cei urged a solution for the former Austro-Hungarian cemeteries, still in large numbers (847) on Italian territory. Germany's competence over them was formally established at the first meeting of the German-Italian Committee in Rome in 1940; the agreement was finalized in technical details on 10 June 1942 (ACGOC).

57    A detailed survey of the burial sites is in Baccichet, *Il sacrario sul Tagliamento*, 16-19.

58    These cemeteries were cared for by the Österreichisches Schwarzes Kreuz until 1938, but mainly by local committees. From 1941-42 onwards, the ADG carried out reforms affected the Austro-Hungarian cemeteries of Bondo, Levico, Ora, Trento, and Vigo di Fassa in Trentino (mentioned as "under renovation" during the Vienna meeting); of Merano and Bressanone in South Tyrol: Marco Mulazzani, "Cimiteri militari delle due Guerre Mondiali in Alto Adige", *Turris Babel,* "Cimiteri. Friedhöfe", no.95 (May 2014): 20-37.

was completely rethought, with a new location on Col Maor. This decision can probably be traced back to the summer of 1934: a VDK report communicates that the meetings between the German delegation and the Italian authorities ended with an agreement on the possibility of building "monuments to German heroes" in all places of historical importance of the war and that the first site inspection was carried out under the supervision of Tischler[59]. In the first half of 1935, the VDK made attempts to buy the land on Col Maor directly from the owners[60]. From the surviving documentation[61] it is possible to reconstruct the design development of German memorials in Italy. The plans of Feltre and Tolmino bear the dates May 1934 and May 1935, the executive drawings of Quero June and July 1936[62], the first version of the "monument" of Pordoi" is dated January 1937. Finally, apparently later, the Pinzano memorial: first documented project in April 1939; final design and partial executive tables March, November, and December 1941, with additions made in January 1942. However, it is the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* that fully returns the work of the Volksbund in Italy. In April 1936, some photographs of the Dolomites and the Tagliamento strait accompanied an article dedicated to the "battlefields and war cemeteries in Upper Italy", and the news that the Volksbund was preparing to build three memorials: on the Piave, the Tagliamento and Isonzo. In June, two perspective sketches by Tolmin and Quero accompany a text by Hallbaum concluded by an epitaph, referring to Quero, which evokes the stubborn steadfastness – "like the mountain" – of the resistance put up by the German soldiers against the besiegers[63]. In November 1936 an image of the wooden model on Col Maor was published and almost a year later, in October 1937, Hallbaum presented the works under construction at that time – Tolmino, Quero, Feltre – accompanied by views of the Isonzo, the Piave, the Tagliamento near Pinzano and Passo Pordoi, where two other new memorials were "raised"[64]. The bulletin of November 1937 is entirely dedicated to the cemetery of Feltre. Buildings in Italy are still documented in 1938, in the January (Tolmino), March, May and December (Quero) issues. The 1939 edition of the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* is largely devoted to the memori-

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59    *Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge. Arbeitsbericht 1933/34* (1934): 6-7.

60    The initiative, followed by the German consul in Trieste, was blocked by the Italian government in July 1935 due to the lack of an official protocol between the two countries. The agreement of June 1936 stipulates that the Italian government will acquire the land by expropriation and hand it over in perpetual use to the German government in return for reimbursement of expenses. On several occasions, to speed up the process, the VDK makes the proposal both to supplement the price of the land and to advance part of the amounts to the sellers (documentation in ACGOC): Gabriele Toneguzzi, "Il Totenburg di Quero: Dunkle, wie mit Blut getränkt. Scuro, come inzuppato di sangue", in D'Amelio, *Per non dimenticare*, 76-89.

61    The VDK archive does not contain original drawings of the plans for memorials in Italy, which were lost along with much of the related documentation in 1945, except for several photographs. Drawings and documents (not complete) are kept at the Commissariato Generale per le Onoranze ai Caduti (ACGOC) in Rome and the municipality of Quero Vas (BL).

62    Some executive drawings of the Tolmin memorial with the same date, are preserved in the Pokrajinski arhiv (Provincial Archives) in Nova Gorica (SL), confirming the simultaneous development of the two projects.

63    "Trotzig und fest, wie der Berg, / Hielten wir stand den Bedrängern; / Treu umarmt uns der Grund, / Den wir einst lebend betreut" (Obstinate and steadfast as the mountain, / we have resisted the besiegers / the land faithfully embraces us / that we once cared for when we were alive): [Franz] Hallbaum, "Kahle Gräberfelder mahnen…", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.6 (1936): 85-86. The construction site in Quero did not actually begin until the end of August 1936.

64    Hallbaum, "Wir bauen…", writes that Feltre was completed at the beginning of the year and Quero will be completed in the autumn; about Pinzano, that the work has not yet begun, but the plans are ready.

als that have been completed and are in progress: Tolmin (January, May, June, July, the entire September, November issue); Quero (March, May, June, July, the entire issue of August, October, November); Feltre (June and July); and finally Pinzano, with an image of the Tagliamento in June and a photomontage of the scale model on the November cover. The "information campaign" continued in 1940: in January Pordoi, presented with a "natural model"[65] in the landscape – the construction site was already underway – and Quero on the back cover; in February, new photographs of the works in Pordoi and Pinzano with the caption: "also in the year 1939 the Volksbund built the walls of the monuments of honor". In March, photographs of Tolmin and Quero – the latter, flanked by an image of the castle of Lagopesole because, like the latter, it is destined to "stand the test of time". In May, Tolmin is on the back cover, and, in June/July, the Italian works illustrate (among others) a text by Hans Gstettner on the significance of the VDK's achievements. In November 1940, in addition to the cover with a view of Pinzano in the distance[66], images of Feltre, Tolmino and Quero accompany Gomoll's fourth text dedicated to memorials in Italy. On this occasion, other "castles of the dead" are announced: on the Monte Croce Carnico Pass, on the Karst and on the plateau of the Seven Municipalities[67]. In the following years, the presence of Italian works in the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* was constant, up to the cover of the last issue of November/December 1944, dedicated to Feltre. Evidently, the significance attributed by the Volksbund to the German memorials in Italy is not commensurate with the number of soldiers to be given a "dignified burial".

The war cemetery of Feltre San Paolo is one of the provisional burial places built in the last months of 1917. The decision to make it permanent is probably due to its location, far from the town and among the fields, with a view of the mountains in the distance. The burial ground, raised above the road, is bordered on four sides by a wall made of boulders of Valdobbiadene "biancone", irregularly rendered. The entrance to the cemetery is through a sort of chapel consisting

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65    Regarding the photomontages published in the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, the creation of life-size silhouettes in Italy has documentary evidence from other sources only for Pinzano.

66    It is perhaps a retouching of the photograph, given the backwardness of the work on the memorial.

67    Gomoll, "Die ewige Wache…". Of the three new monuments, designed for thousands of soldiers of the former Austro-Hungarian army, there is no known documentation. However, the need to build two memorials, on the Asiago Altopiano and on the Karst, for an "enormous number of Austrian corpses" is mentioned in a memorandum from the VDK to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated April 26, 1939 (PAAA, copy in VA, R. 1-111).
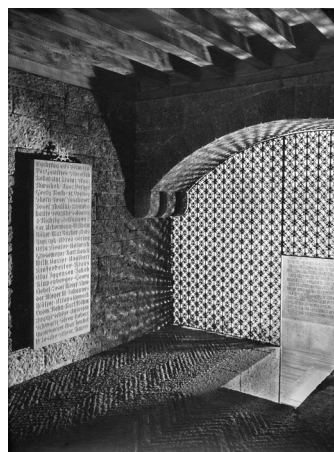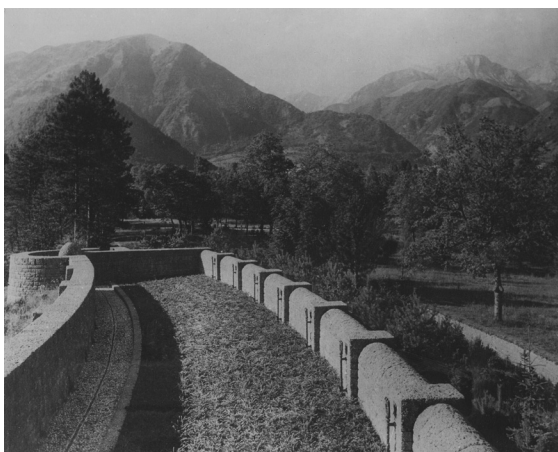
Fig. 32
The German military cemetery in Feltre San Paolo, 1933-36.

Fig. 33, 34
The hall of honour with the fresco "Ich hatt'einen Kameraden" and the burial ground.
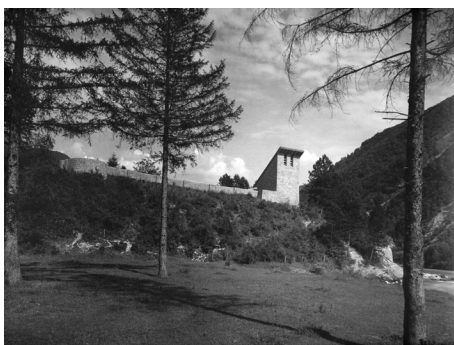
of a vestibule and a hall of honor, with a fresco depicting the theme of war ca-maraderie[68]; outside, sheltered by a loggia, a niche in the wall houses the names of the soldiers written in "sgraffito". The crosses in the field are made of dark por-phyry, with almost rough surfaces. An extensive planting of Sedum spectabile (removed in the early 1940s) introduced, at the time of flowering, a chromatic note in accordance with the color of the crosses. [Fig. 32, 33, 34] The simplest of the VDK's burial places in Italy, however, declares its "soldierly" character. First, in the crowning of the perimeter fence with sloping slabs of reddish stone – like that of the Roeselere-De Ruyter cemetery in Flanders[69] – which makes the sturdy wall even more eloquently "defensive". Then, in the arrangement of the crosses in the meadow – in a smaller number than the burials – and in the lack, on them, of any indication of names. Finally, in the not-so-disguised hooked cross repeated in the frieze that runs along the inner walls of the "chapel".

The transformation of soldiers' cemeteries begun in Langemark and "perfected" in Bitolj finds complete expression in Tolmin and Quero: "castles of the dead of German heroes" that garrison places of battle and in which the individuality of fallen soldiers is definitively obliterated in the Kameradengrab, the collective burial ground without crosses or tombstones.

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68   A soldier holds his mortally wounded comrade in his arms; the inscription "Ich hatt'einen kameraden" (I had a comrade) recalls the incipit of the text by Johann Ludwig Uhland (1809) set to music in 1825 by Friedrich Silcher and adopted by the armies of Germany and Austria. The fresco (Paul Rössler) was replaced in 1970 with a cross (Hans Profanter); the window-stained glass with the acronym ILR (Infanterie-Leib-Regiment) and a stylized soldier's head, also by Rössler, were replaced after 1945 with other subjects by the same author; the *sgraffito* in the niche is by Karl Riepl. All the characters of the inscriptions are in Fraktur.

69   The explicit reference to the wall of the De Ruyter cemetery – "fortified" in 1935 – in *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.11 (1937).

Fig. 35
The German Memorial in Tolmin, 1935-38. View from the banks of the Soča.

Fig. 36, 37
The entrance and the path alongside the Kameradengrab.

Fig. 38
The vestibule and the gate separating it from the hall of honor.

In Tolmin, the memorial is located at the top of an escarpment on the north bank of the Isonzo. Built in square blocks of Nagelfluh (puddinga)[70] with the sack wall technique, it is composed of a perimeter enclosure visually "strengthened" by a rhythmic sequence of overhangs and a parallelepiped tower cut at 45 degrees from the roof pitch. The outer bastion is surrounded by a moat to the east and north. After stepping on a stone slab placed like a bridge, the enclosure is accessed through a passage closed by a "karabinerschlösser" – a gate made with Mauser rifle barrels and bolts – and along the "washer" traced around a massive pylon ending in an ogive. [Fig. 35, 36, 37, 38] A walkway paved with river pebbles runs to the side of the Kameradengrab, the burial ground planted with honeysuckle shrubs, flanking a two-meter-high wall – an evocation of the existing trench on the site – to the raised terrace, overlooking the Isonzo. On the opposite side is the entrance door to the memorial, which allows the passage of one person at a time to the vestibule, illuminated by two splayed windows and set up with oak wood planks engraved with the names of the identified fallen. A wrought-iron gate separates the vestibule from the Weiheraum, the "consecrated space" of the crypt which




39 - 40

is accessed by descending six steps. On the walls, the soldiers' names are repeated in dark marble mosaic on a gilded background; in the center of the floor, a red sandstone plaque bears along the perimeter an inscription celebrating the eternity of the "glorious deeds of the dead" – a concept reiterated in the inscription of the bronze bell suspended in the cavity of the tower, dedicated to the young heroes of Germany[71]. Tolmin is undoubtedly a small fortress (Festung) whose shape is defined in relation to the characteristics of the place, the topography, the views, and the material used in the construction. At the same time, however, the memorial is attributed the meaning of a "pillar in the current of the river, connected to the bank by history"[72]: a metaphor that underlines both the symbolic relationship sought by the VDK in its works with the places that contain a memory of the war, and the desire to root them in the present time of

70    The river conglomerate comes, according to the sources in the Volksbund Archiv, from the Val Venosta (or the Alto Tagliamento). An accurate technical description of the work can be found in Luca Pellegrini, "I sacrari germanici della grande guerra. Il Toten burg di Tolmino", *Rassegna Tecnica del Friuli Venezia Giulia*, no.1 (2014): 27-32.

71    The engraved oak planks and mosaic are by Karl Riepl, the wrought irons by Michael Erl. The verses on the tombstone – "Besitz stirbt, Sippen sterben / Du selbst stirbst wie sie / Eines nur ist, das ewig bleibt / Der Toten Tatenruhm" (Possessions die, clans die / You yourself die like them / Only one thing remains eternal / The glory of the dead) – are quotations (modified) from the *Poetic Edda*. The inscription on the bell reads: "Künde du Glockenklang / Ewigen Heldensang / Jungdeutschlands Dank!" (Announce the ringing of the bell / The eternal song of heroes / Young Germany thank you!). The characters of the inscriptions are in Fraktur except for those on the tombstone, in Antiqua.

72    Hans Gstettner, "Der Pfeiler im Strom", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.9 (1939): 134-141.

Fig. 39
The German Totenburg on the Col Maor, Quero, 1935-38. View from the north-east, with the Grappa massif in the background.

Fig. 40
The observation redoubt of the First World War, later incorporated into the construction of the memorial.
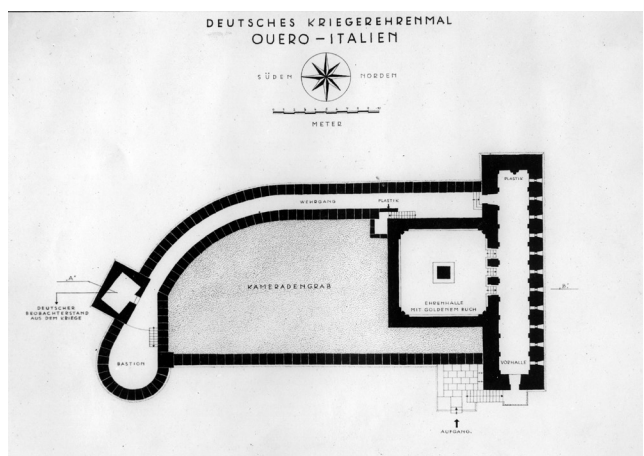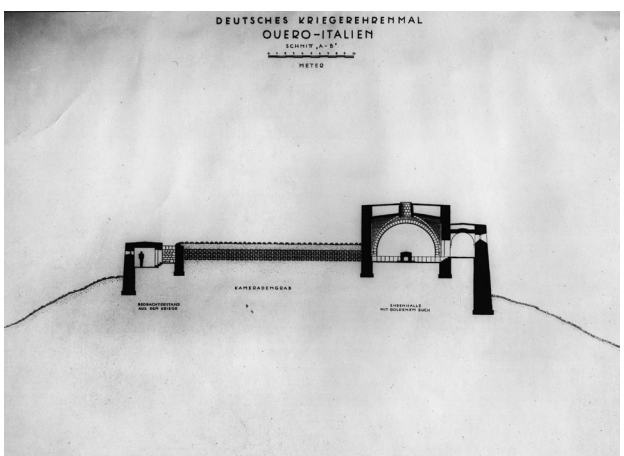
DEUTSCHES KRIEGEREHRENMAL
QUERO-ITALIEN
SCHNITT A-B
METER



DEUTSCHES KRIEGEREHRENMAL
QUERO-ITALIEN

Germany and to make them, thanks to the "values" that order them, an expression of "Heimat in fremder Erde", in the new meaning of "exclave" demonstrated by Bitolj.

Of these "values", the Quero memorial is an incomparable summa for the Volksbund, starting with the choice of its location on the Col Maor, where an artillery observation post has remained since the war years that looks the Piave to the south and, on the right, the Monte Tomba, the scene of battle from 14 to 17 November 1917. It is therefore understandable that Tischler decided to shelve the first project – too similar to the one currently being executed in Feltre – to create a work that aspires to become paradigmatic of the new "architectural thinking" of the VDK. [Fig. 39, 40]

Fig. 41, 42
Views from the west and north of the memorial.

Fig. 43
View from the northeast of the entrance front to the memorial.

Fig. 44, 45
Deutsches Kriegerehrenmal Quero Italien. Section and floor plan.

"Solemn, severe, powerful", are the adjectives that recur in the descriptions of the porphyry structure "dark, as if soaked in blood"[73] erected on the hill; "mysterious and enigmatic", composed of three volumes included in an "inviolable" masonry made of blocks weighing over 60 quintals[74]. The building is approached from the west – once you have crossed the courtyard of the caretaker's house[75] – by climbing the hill along a path that leads to its eastern front, where the access staircase is located. [Fig. 41, 42, 43, 44, 45] A very small door leads into the long and narrow vestibule, dimly lit by eleven splayed loopholes (originally screened by alabaster slabs) cut out in the north side wall, and guarded by a "cyclopean warrior", armed with sword and shield, in high relief on the back wall[76]. Through three arches equipped with gates with elaborate workmanship, you descend into the crypt, cross-vaulted and lit zenith by an oculus. In the centre of the "consecrated space", on a low predella, an altar in black Swedish granite houses the bronze tablets of the "golden book" in which the names of the identified fallen are engraved. [46, 47] On three walls of the room, a marble mosaic work depicts twelve soldiers with helmets in hands and eyes turned to the ground[77]; on the fourth, the Nazi coat of arms above the central arch is flanked by two cartouches quoting a verse from Heinrich Lersch's *Die Toten Soldaten*: "the blood of the soldier the blood of the comrade is never alone / always near the soldiers there must be comrades"; immediately above the plinth, an inscription that extols the camaraderie of war in similar tones ends with the words "We confidently await eternity"[78]. At the end of the vestibule a second door leads into the open air, into a small space where a narrow staircase – little more than a protrusion of the masonry – climbs up to the podium overlooking the burial ground, planted with heather shrubs. At the top of the retaining wall, the high relief of a winged figure – "half boy, half sphinx, imperturbable genius of supernatural clarity"[79] – holds out the shield with the insignia of the VDK. The "genius" marks the beginning of a path "in the trenches" – curved and just one and a half meters wide – that obliterates the view outwards up to the south-east bastion, where a raised platform allows the gaze to sweep all around. Immediately before the platform, a

73    Hans Gstettner, "Wir harren getrost der Ewigkeit…", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no. 8 (1939): 116-126.

74    Ibid. The first view "from afar" is the perspective from the left bank of the Piave, interesting for the dramatization of the landscape, as well as for the differences with the project carried out (in particular, the theory of corbels at the top of the perimeter wall, perhaps derived from a detail of the castle of Lagopesole): Toneguzzi, "Il Totenburg di Quero…".

75    Even the caretaker's house, designed by the Munich construction management, is "Heimat" in every aspect, down to the furnishings and the pergola in the garden, which can be reminiscent of "a farm in the Bavarian Oberland": Gstettner, "Wir harren getrost…", 126.

76    After World War II the sculpture was removed; in its place is a cross made in 1959-60. The cross on the outside installed in 1979 is by Manfred Bergmeister.

77    Created in place of a fresco initially planned like the one in Feltre, the mosaic work (inspired by a war photograph) is executed on cartoons by Lois Gruber by Werkstätten Van Treeck. The altar was made by the sculptor Kroher; all other sculptures are by Ernst Geiger, railings by Michael Erl.

78    The inscription reads: "Wir liegen zusammen in Reih und Glied / wir standen zusammen im Leben / drum gleiches Kreuz und gleicher Schmuck ward uns aufs gegeben / Nun ruhen wir aus vom heissen Streit und harren getrost der Ewigkeit" (We lie together in neat rows / Together we have been alive / That is why we have been assigned the same cross and the same decoration / Now we rest from the heated struggle and confidently await eternity).

79    Hans Gstettner, "Das ist Quero, Tolmein und Feltre…", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.6 (1939): 82-89.
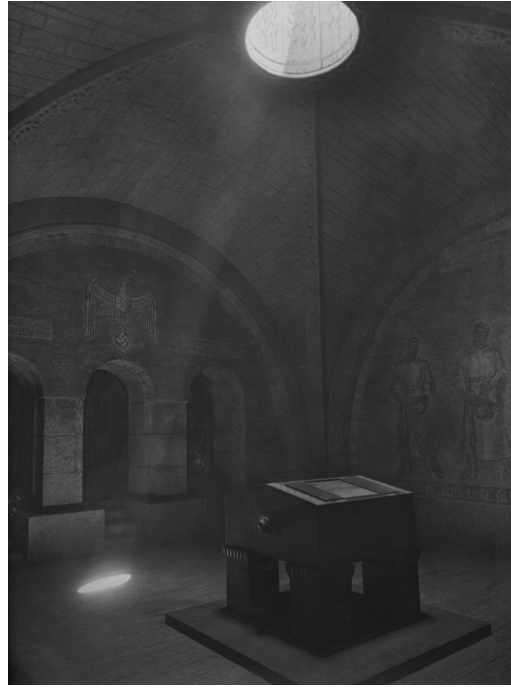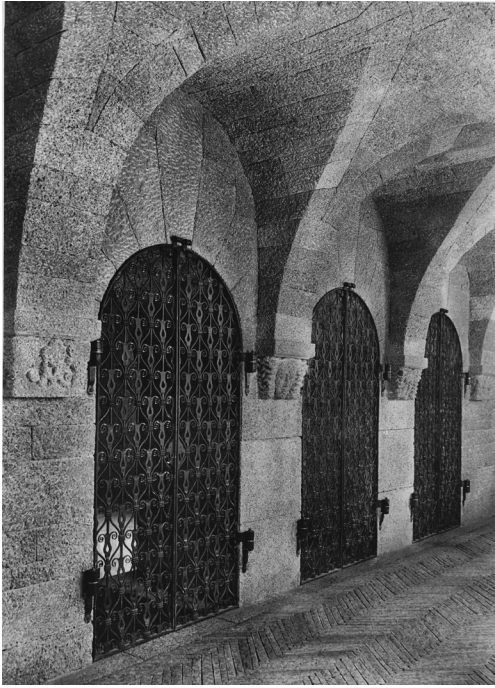
"karabinerschlösser" marks the entrance to the former artillery emplacement: a remnant of war – like the bunkers of Langemark – incorporated into the building like a relic, testifying once again to the ritually foundational relationship established in the Volksbund memorials with every "strip of land sanctified by the blood sacrifice of soldiers"[80]. **[Fig. 48, 49]**

Among the architectures created by the VDK, Quero is undoubtedly the most sophisticated. Its constructive form fully corresponds to a spatial organization obtained by composing "places" – entrance, vestibule, "consecrated space", trench or "patrol" path, observation platform on the bastion, ordered with liturgical precision around the bunker – a sort of martyrium – and the "burial ground of the comrades", "ideal center of strength" here "raised to the sky"[81]. As always in the works of the Volksbund, the relationship between the Kameradengrab and the Weiheraum – the place of the "supra-individual" union of the soldiers and the space "consecrated" by their names – is fundamental, here set at the same height to symbolize the union of the celestial vault of the former with the physical vault of the latter, transfigured in the ascension of the ribs up to the summit oculus[82]. In the crypt of Quero it is perhaps possible to recognize some influence of the reform carried out in 1931 by Heinrich Tessenow in the Neue Wache in Berlin[83]; however, it fails to express the sacredness of that essential space, simply configured "in a workmanlike manner"[84]. On the contrary,

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80    Gstettner, *Soldatenmale*, 15.

81    Max Arendt, "Die materielle und geistige Rüstzeug des Baukunstlers", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no. 9/10 (1943): 50-56.

82    The ribs and oculus are decorated with signs "in which the light of the eternal stars mingles with the fires of hatred and song"; "Gstettner, Wir harren getrost…", 120.

83    Kuberek, "Die Kriegsgräberstätten…", 84.

84    Siegfried Kracauer, "Zur Einweihung des Berliner Ehrenmals", *Frankfurter Zeitung*, no.2 (June 1931) (*Casabella*, no. 714 (2003): 59).

Fig. 46
The vestibule and the entrance to the hall of honor.

Fig. 47
The hall of honour with the altar made of black Swedish granite and the mosaics on the walls.

the multiple signs summoned to the crypt – the mosaics and writings, the "altar of blood" (Blutaltar) and the swastika in the eagle's talons, much more than an "obligatory" effigy – impose themselves as symbols that "sacralize" a deceptive and negative value: the experience of "eternal" war, offered to the "community of the people" as the "supreme expression of the German Nation"[85]. Precisely by virtue of these "tattoos", the "monument" is precluded from access to true spiritual completeness; nor is it allowed, as a witness to this "Germanic spirit", to "survive time"[86].

Until the end of the 1930s, the construction of the VDK in Italy was held in high esteem in Germany, as evidenced by the "6 days on the Berlin-Rome axis"[87], the journey made in May 1939 by a wide range of representatives of the Reich, the NSDAP and the Wehrmacht led by Siegfried Emmo Eulen, to inaugurate the memorials in Quero, Feltre and Tolmino. After crossing the Brenner Pass and passing through the "divine garden" (im Garten Göttes) between Bolzano and Trento, the delegation moved from Trento to Quero and Feltre on 25 May; the next day it moves between Treviso, Nervesa della Battaglia and Pinzano, finally arriving in Udine in the afternoon; it continues the 27 May to Tolmin and Gorizia. The official itinerary is also reported in the newspaper *Il Popolo del Friuli*: there one can read of a stop in Pinzano to visit the Col Pion, "where the ossuary monument dedicated to the fallen Germans will be erected", and that here "the delegation paused to admire the view and listen to the illustration of the project made by the builder"[88].

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85    Walter Benjamin, "Theorien des deutschen Faschismus. Zu der Sammelschrift 'Krieg und Krieger', hg. von Ernst Jünger", *Die Gesellschaft*, 7, 1930 (*Teorie del fascismo tedesco. A proposito dell'antologia "Krieg un Krieger"*, a cura di Ernst Jünger, in *Critiche e recensioni. Tra avanguardie e letteratura di costume* (Turin: Einaudi, 1979), 153).

86    *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.3 (1940): 46-47, where the images of Quero and the castle of Lagopesole seen in the distance are compared (text by Klaus von Lutzau).

87    *6 Tage auf der Achse Berlin-Rom. Mit dem VDK unterwegs – Deutsche Totenburgen an der Alpenfront* is the brochure of the travel report written by Erich Brandt, published by the VDK in 1939; the inaugurations are documented in the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no. 7 (1939) and in German newspapers.
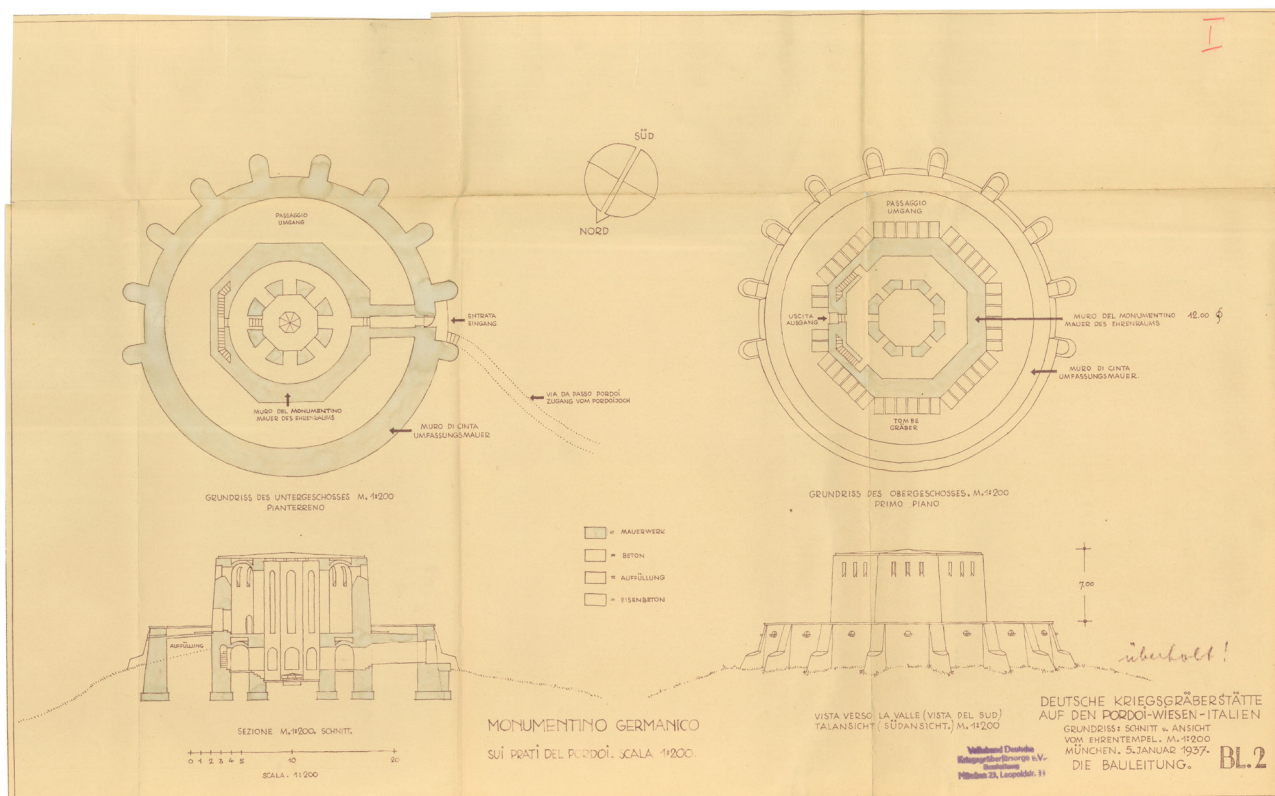
88    "I combattenti tedeschi celebrati a Udine", *Il Popolo del Friuli*, May 27, 1939, 4; short blurbs also on 24, 25 and

Fig. 48
The trench route to the redoubt and the bastion on the Piave; on the left, the sculpture of the "Winged Genius" with the insignia of the VDK at the entrance to the common burial ground.

Fig. 49
The Kameradengrab.

The construction of the memorials in Pinzano and Passo Pordoi entered the VDK's plans immediately after the June 1936 agreements between Italy and Germany, as evidenced both by the date on the plate of the "Germanic monument" of Pordoi (5 January 1937) and by Hallbaum's article in the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* of October 1937 – "Wir bauen in Italien" – in which the plans for Pinzano are said to have been "completed". In the same month of October, the *Berliner Lokalanzeiger* reported that the Italian Commissariato was preparing to build an ossuary in Pinzano for many hundreds of German soldiers. In a letter addressed to the Foreign Office, the Volksbund denies this rumour, declaring that the monument will be built under its own care and specifying the extent of the land – about 3 hectares and not the improbable 30,000 indicated by the press. On May 24, 1938, two months after the annexation of Austria, an article in the *Jenaische Zeitung* announced the expansion of the VDK's commitment in Italy, resulting from taking over the graves of the former Austro-Hungarian army: the planned constructions in Pinzano and Passo Pordoi were mentioned, but also the need for new memorials. On December 10, 1938, a letter from the VDK informed that 1,000 identified bodies and 25,000 unknown bodies could be buried in each of the two shrines[89]. Germany's competence over the burials of the former Austro-Hungarian army was established only at the first meeting of the Italian-German Committee in November 1940: the VDK's response to the requests made in May 1938 by General Cei at the congress of the organiza-

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26 May. The "builder" was the Vittorio Marchioro company of Vicenza, which in these years built the main Italian shrines designed by Giovanni Greppi and Giannino Castiglioni.

89    Documentation and letters from Tischler and Eulen to the Auswärtiges Amt in PAAA, copy in VA, R. 1-4; R. 1-5; R. 1-111.

Fig. 50

Deutsche Kriegsgräberstätte auf den Pordoi-Wiesen Italien. Plans, section and south-facing downstream of the first project, 5 January 1937.
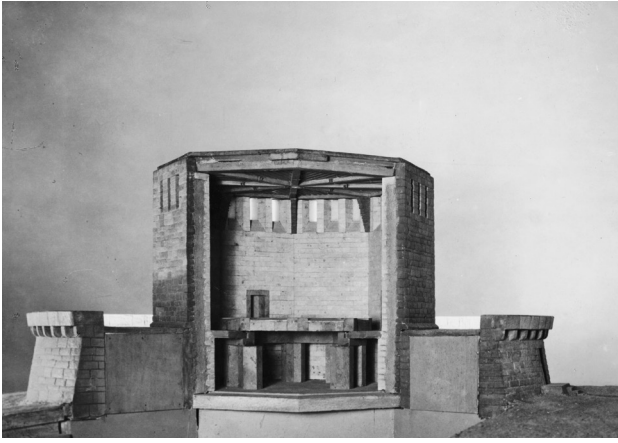
tion in Breslau was therefore very timely.

In addition to having the appearance of a "real fortress" built with large blocks of porphyry, the "monument" of Pordoi has a strategic control of the Dolomites front of 1915-17 – an intentionality confirmed "a posteriori" by a schematic map showing the views from the memorial towards the "former combat areas". **[Fig. 50]** The project of January 1937 shows an octagonal construction (about 15x15 meters the apothem) "defended" by a circular wall (30 meters in diameter) that presents, towards the valley, ten buttresses shaped like a scarp. From the entrance, cut into the wall between two spurs, a narrow gallery leads to the ambulatory, which leads down to the center of the "space of honor", a room about 4x4x12 meters high. From a gallery superimposed on the ambulatory, which can be reached via pincer stairs carved into the thickness of the wall (160 centimeters), you enter the burial ground located outside, within the walls. In a subsequent proposal, undated but probably from 1938, the location and the general character of the project are confirmed – except, on the outside, for the disappearance of the buttresses and the redefinition of the crowning of the boundary wall, with the addition, as in Quero, of a series of corbels. On the other hand, the internal organization underwent significant changes: in particular, the "space of honor" surrounded by the ambulatory was no longer walkable, due to the provision of a new underground level intended as an ossuary. **[Fig. 51, 52]** Started in the spring of 1939, the construction site on the Pordoi Pass proceeded slowly, with a practicability of just over two and a half months a year[90]. In 1943 the remains of almost 9,000 "unknown" soldiers, mostly from the former Austro-Hungarian army, were buried in the crypt[91]; then construction stopped. When work resumed in 1956, there were two further changes to the project, anticipated (with some differences) in a model that was probably from before the war. Inside the memorial, both the lower ambulatory and the gallery above have been removed, replaced by a simple gallery from which you can ac-

90    *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no. 1 (1940; no. 2 (1940), with some images of the construction site.

91    This operation was carried out despite growing complaints to the VDK over the continuation of the practice of collective burials. In February 1944, the delegate of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the care of war graves in Italy criticized the "excessive monumentality" of Pordoi's memorial; at the same date, the German ambassador to the Social Republic of Salò declared the Volksbund's failure to comply with the principle of safeguarding the recognizability of individual burials in Italian works "untenable"; Ulrich, Fuhrmeister, Hettling, Kruse, *Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, 258.

Fig. 51

Model of the third project of the memorial on the Pordoi Pass.

Fig. 52

The construction site interrupted at the level of the crypt, circa 1943.
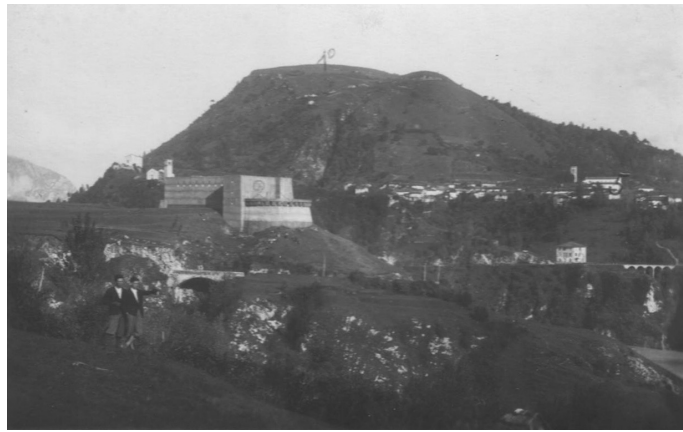
cess the external burial ground, included in the first city wall. The layout of the room is completed with the creation of an octagonal sarcophagus surmounted by a "cup of fire" (Feuerschale), four sculptural groups each consisting of two soldiers and a stylized eagle in the ceiling mosaic[92]. Outside, a second walled ring, barely emerging from the profile of the ground, houses the burials of soldiers who fell in the Second World War. Overall, the image of the "fortress" on the pass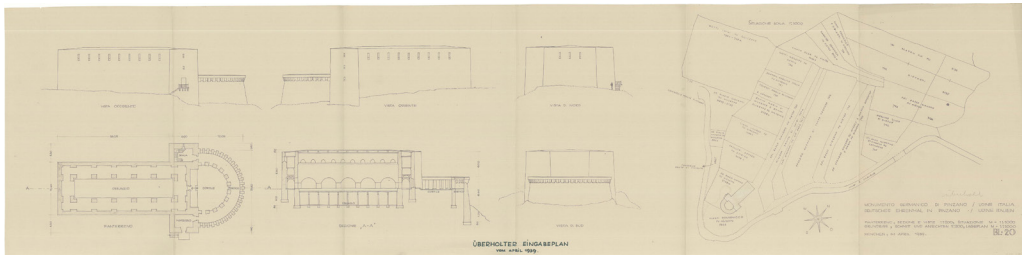 does not change – a "continuity" certainly justified by a construction site already set, but which finds other parallels in Tischler's projects after the Second World War.

More controversial is the story of the Pinzano memorial, which between 1939 and 1941 underwent changes during construction in the shape of the main building and especially in the design of the outdoor spaces. The project dated April 1939, verified with a life-size model, prefigures a slightly tapered parallelepiped (about 32x12 meters at the base, 7 meters high) flanked by two towers at the south end and concluded with a semicircular porticoed bastion (10 meters radius) from which – as reported by *Il Popolo del Friuli* on May 27, 1939 – "between the corbels, you will see the valley". The entrance to the memorial, in the west tower, leads to the portico and the courtyard and from here, on a low podium, into the "consecrated space" (Weiheraum); a staircase in the east tower allows the ascent to the upper gallery. The Weiheraum – closed on all four sides by an ambulatory and the gallery above – measures 5x20 meters in base and, as at Passo Pordoi, is not practicable because the flooring, lowered, coincides with the roof of the ossuary planned in the basement. "Inside the imposing work", informs the Udine newspaper, "a large memorial hall will house about 30,000 bodies on the sides". The image published in the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* of November

Fig. 53
Photomontage of the preliminary project of the memorial of Pinzano sul Tagliamento with photo editing of the context. Kriegsgräberfürsorge, 11, 1939.

Fig. 54
View from the west of the real-life model of the second project of the memorial in Pianzano, 1939.

Fig. 55
Germanic monument in Pinzano, Udine, Italy / Deutsche Ehrenmal in Pinzano, Udine, Italy. Plan, plan, section and fronts of the first project, April 1939.

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92    All works are by Munich artists: the sculptures by Albert Allmann; the sarcophagus with the cup of fire from Eisenwerth (Fritz Schmoll); the mosaic in the ceiling by Franz Grau; the bronze workmanship of Otto Gattinger.
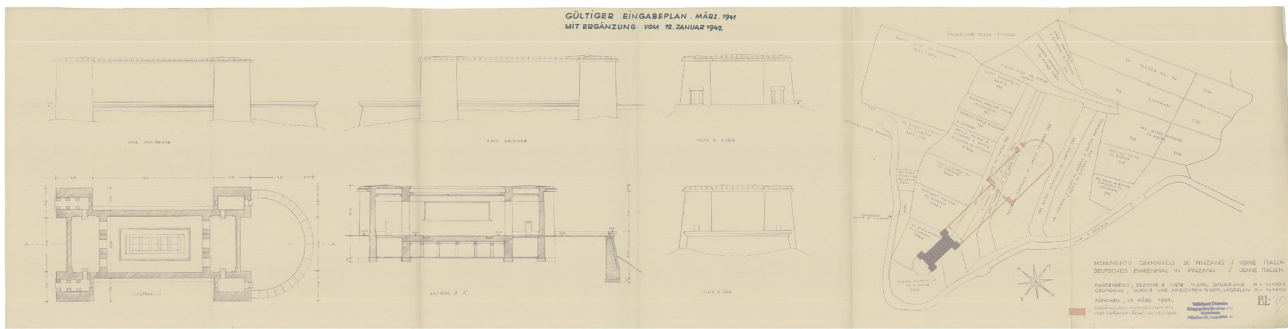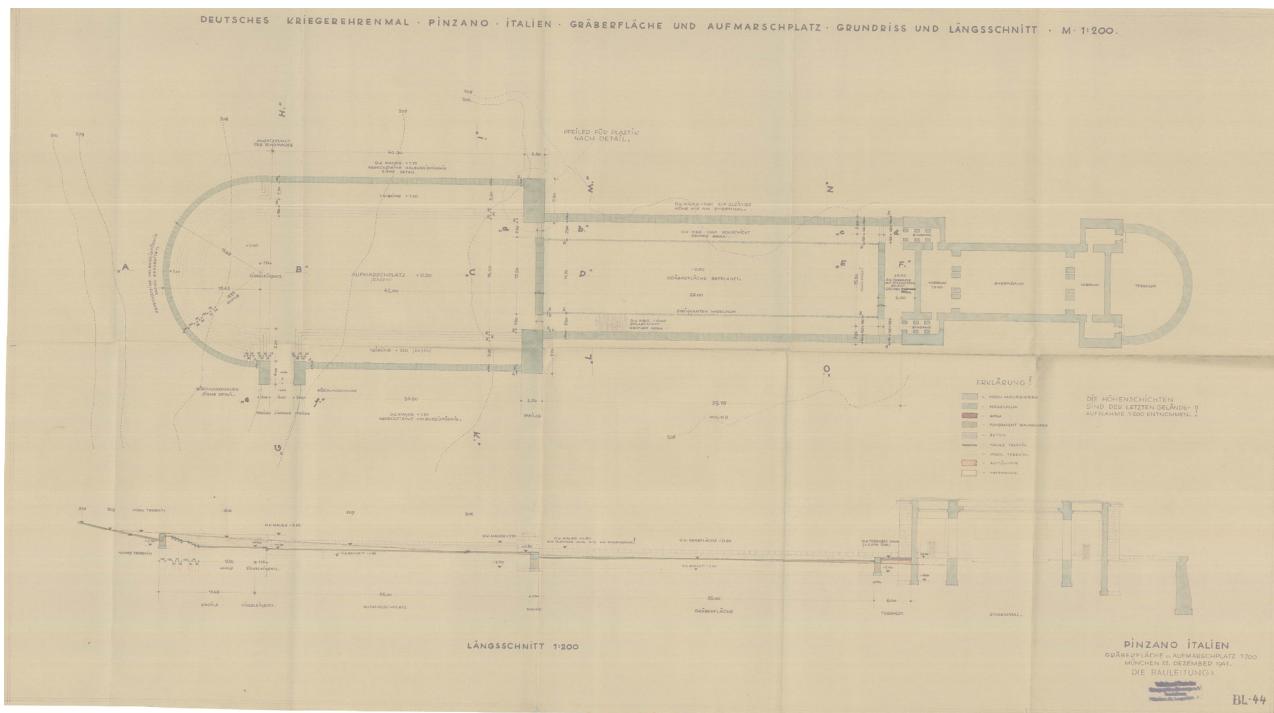
1939, indicated as a "natural" model "made to test the effect in the landscape", does not correspond to the one erected on the hill. [Fig. 53, 54, 55] The south towers are lower than the eaves line of the main volume and the latter, closed to the north by a curved wall, is surrounded by a sequence of buttresses. Likely, the photomontage of the scale model, inserted in a conspicuously altered context to highlight the profile of the building[93], represents the project mentioned by Hallbaum in October 1937, modified in April 1939 because of the changed circumstances – among others, the need to bury a greater number of bodies in the memorial. The construction site begins on the south side, with the walls of the bastion and the towers – as documented by the images published in February 1940 in the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* – but the project will be further modified. A drawing from March 1941 records the addition of two more towers on the north side and the disappearance of both the portico and the rampart corbels. The building is raised up to 10 meters and reproportioned in length – 36 meters, including the towers – while the "consecrated space" is "uncovered". [Fig. 56, 57] Drawings from November and December 1941 show the final configuration of the project and the details of the outdoor spaces on the north side of the memorial. Here there is a common burial ground (12x55 meters, 140 centimeters deep)[94] and an arena (35x60 meters) surrounded by grassy steps bordered in stone. The entrance to the complex is from the north-west side of the arena: a 4-meter gap between stone plinths of 2x4 meters in base and just under 3 meters in height. After crossing the arena, the path continues along the sides of the burial ground along two walkways, almost 3 meters wide, up to the podium in front of the north front of the fortress, designed by the two new towers. The massive trilithic structures inserted in the hollow body of the towers leave gaps of just over a meter – a constraint accentuated by the ascending pavement – to be crossed to reach the vestibule, a sort of archaic pronaos facing the court of honor; on the opposite side, a second vestibule allows you to reach, through the south towers, the bastion overlooking the Tagliamento. In the centre of the courtyard, a rectangular predella slightly sunk into the floor and surrounded by a

93    Baccichet, *Il sacrario sul Tagliamento*, 98-99. In the photomontage, the hill of Ragogna with the castle and the church of San Pietro, which from the point of view assumed constitute the backdrop of the memorial on the other side of the river, are completely erased. The publication in November 1939 of an outdated project is probably due to the greater communicative effectiveness of the image.

94    The burial ground of Pinzano is planned for 6,000 sarcophagi – the same number of "known bodies" that, together with 50,000 "unknown" bodies, the VDK indicates as burial both in Pinzano and in Pordoi in a report to the AA of 26.2.1943 (PAAA; copy in VA, R. 1-296).

Fig. 56

Germanic monument in Pinzano, Udine, Italy / Deutsche Ehrenmal in Pinzano, Udine, Italy. Plan, plan, section and fronts of the final project, March 1941, modified on 12.1.1942 with the addition of the arena and the common burial ground.

dentilled cornice identifies the underground level of the ossuary (4 meters at the internal height). In the construction of the memorial and in the external works, blocks of Carnian ceple are used; slabs of silver beola cover the external paths and pink granite slabs the internal floors; in yellow sandstone are both the twin monolithic pillars of the vestibules and, in large blocks, the cladding of the walls of the court of honor[95]. Here, as in the vestibules, the stone apparatus leaves large free surfaces, probably intended to house the works of the "Bauhütte" of Munich[96].

Of all the German memorials, the one on the Tagliamento was to be in the words of Hans Gstettner "the closest to an ancient temple"[97]. However, as demonstrated by the size of the building and the solutions of some spaces – for example, the usual constriction of the entrances – this aspiration does not produce substantial changes in the typical character of the Totenburgen: if anything, the attempt seems to be to modify the "celebratory rituality". To understand the significance of this transformation, it may perhaps be useful to think of the images of the inaugurations of May 1939 in Quero, Feltre and Tolmino: a disjointed crowding of individuals, made even more difficult in Quero by the sloping terrain,

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95    An accurate description and quantification of the materials can be found in Luca Pellegrini, "Il Sacrario germanico di Pinzano", *Rassegna Tecnica del Friuli Venezia Giulia*, no.1 (2012): 12-17.

96    In the VA there is no information about the planned works, but the sculptor Eisenwerth (Fritz Schmoll) had been commissioned to create lion figures – perhaps inspired by the "Marathon lions" – at the entrance to the arena and in the passage between it and the Kameradengrab: Barbara Küppers, *Fritz Schmoll*, 348.

97    Hans Gstettner, "Schriftgestaltung im Dienst der Heldenhrung", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no. 7/8 (1942): 50-58. In this text, which is dedicated to the form of writing in the cemeteries and memorials of the VDK, Gstettner conjures up the image of a temple in connection with the planned use of Roman lapidary characters instead of Gothic runes. However, both in Quero and on the tombstone in the crypt of Tolmin the Antiqua is used. This typeface has enjoyed a renewed fortune in Germany since 1941, after Hitler's ban on the use of Fraktur in official publications. The *Kriegsgräberfürsorge* discontinued Fraktur (except for the magazine header) from the first issue of January/February 1942.

Fig. 57

Deutsches Kriegerehrenmal Pinzano Italien. Plan and longitudinal section of the final project, 22.12.1941.

not the compact and orderly mass required by the Nazi celebrations[98]. This "necessity" probably accounts for the addition of the "introductory" space of the arena. It is not, however, a Thingplatz, a form of choral theatre and a "cultic" term banned in Germany since October 1935[99], but a parade field (Aufmarschplatz) with Greco-Roman references, like the much larger one set up by Tischler in 1938 at the Waldenburg memorial in Upper Silesia: both simulacra of "mass vessels".

In Pinzano we find further confirmation of Tischler's extraneousness – or uncultured disinterest – in the problems of the "national style" and the ideals of a tradition such as that of the "Prussian style"[100], at the center of the attention of architects endowed with a very different culture than his own. The trilithic structures in the entrance towers, whether they are "actualized" megalithic tombs or fragments of Luxor's funerary temples, together with the pseudo-Egyptian style of the court of honor and vestibules and the semicircular south bastion – which remains, despite its simplification, an eloquent piece of the original "fortress" project – testify to the "barbaric" randomness with which Tischler considers architectural models. In this regard, for the detail of the twin pillars of the vestibules, placed side by side to leave a slit of a few centimeters, Tischler can have an example that is as close as it is appropriate, although probably unloved: the portico on the courtyard of honor (or the head) of the *Soldatenhalle* designed in 1938 by Wilhelm Kreis in the north-south axis of Albert Speer's plan for Berlin. However, even if this were the reference, it would not be enough to "save" Tischler from the accusation addressed to him by Kreis of preferring forms inspired by an "unstructured cubism" for the constructions of the Volksbund. On the contrary, the comparison between the heterogeneous "temple" of Pinzano and the "colossal" monuments designed by Kreis between 1941 and 1943 to mark the boundaries of the Reich's expansion – on the Atlantic and the North Sea, in the East, in the Balkans and in Africa – confirms the diminishing significance, in the last years of the Nazi regime, of the VDK's work. Nine years after appreciating the position of Totenburg Bitolj because it "dominates the entire region"[101], Kreis granted the Volksbund in 1943 the sole merit of having created, through the foundation and development of "craft enterprises", "creations that are exemplary in terms of artistic foundation and beauty"[102]. It is now the projects of the "general councillor" Kreis that embody "in landscapes of warlike resolve the sense of a great historical turning point"[103], as "symbols of the faith

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98    The inaugurations are documented in the *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no. 7 (1935) and in a short film preserved in the VA.

99    Stommer, *Die inszenierte*, 122, 288-289. After the prohibition of the use of the term, the Thingstätte were renamed Feierstätte (places of celebration).

100    Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, *Der preussiche Stil*, München 1916, Breslau 1931. *Stile prussiano*, in Francesco Dal Co, *Architettura Germania 1880-1920* (Roma: Laterza, 1982), 114-120.

101    Wilhelm Kreis, "Kunst und Handwerk. Schöpferisch vereint in der Gestaltung deutscher Kriegsgräberstätten", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.7 (1934): 106-108. Right from the title, however, the text focuses on the "creative union" of "artistic and craft culture" of the VDK.

102    Wilhelm Kreis, "Kriegermale des Ruhmes und der Ehre im Altertum und in unserer Zeit", *Bauwelt*, no.11/12 (1943), in Anna Teut, *Architektur im Dritten Reich 1933-45* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1967), 222-226.

103    Gerdy Troost, *Das Bauen im neuen Reich. Zweiter Band* (Bayreuth: Gauverlag Bayreuth, 1943), 7.

and unity of the German people, true divine constructions, memory of an eternal and omnipotent creative power"[104]. In their presence, what can be appreciated in Tischler's work is the measure of the spaces and – even in Pinzano – the ability to arrange the external arrangements. It is perhaps no coincidence that the penultimate issue of the Kriegsgräberfürsorge of September-October 1944 is devoted to the theme of the "shape of gardens" in the "places of honour" created by the Volksbund[105].

In 1943 the work on Pinzano was almost completed and in April – after the meeting of the Italian-German Committee in Vienna[106] – the VDK declared it capable of accommodating up to 100,000 "unknown Austrian soldiers" (unbekannte Österreichischen Soldaten), asking the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the necessary funding to start the burial operations. To this end, it should be noted, all construction work has been suspended to concentrate efforts on completing the crypt[107]. However, the evolution of the events of the war – and the relative lack of economic resources to allocate to these items of expenditure – makes this proposal impracticable. **[Fig. 58]** Definitively abandoned at the

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104    Friedrich Tamms, "Die Kriegerherenmäler von Wilhelm Kreis", *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich (Ausgabe B)*, März 1943. In 1943 Kreis received the Adlerschild des Deutschen Reiches – the highest honour awarded, already in the Weimar Republic, for academic or artistic merits – and became president of the Reichskammer der bildenden Künste (the Reich Chamber of Fine Arts).

105    Wilhelm Conrad Gomoll, "Unsere Ehrenstätte und ihre gärtnerische Gestaltung", *Kriegsgräberfürsorge*, no.9/10 (1944): 38-43.

106    The "remedial solutions" requested by Italy in Vienna in 1943 are the subject of an exchange of letters between the Auswärtiges Amt, the Reichsminister des Innern and the Oberkommando der Wermacht. On the part of the latter (and of the VDK) it is noted that the plans for Pinzano and Pordoi had been known for some time to the Italian Commissariato and approved by General Grassi at a meeting on 19 January 1942 (PAAA, copy in VA, R. 1-297).

107    In the letter sent to the AA on 5.4.1943, the VDK refers to the similar situation in Pordoi, with the construction of the memorial suspended and the crypt ready to receive the bodies of the "unknowns" (PAAA, copy in VA, R. 1-296).

Fig. 58
The Pinzano memorial just completed, 1943.
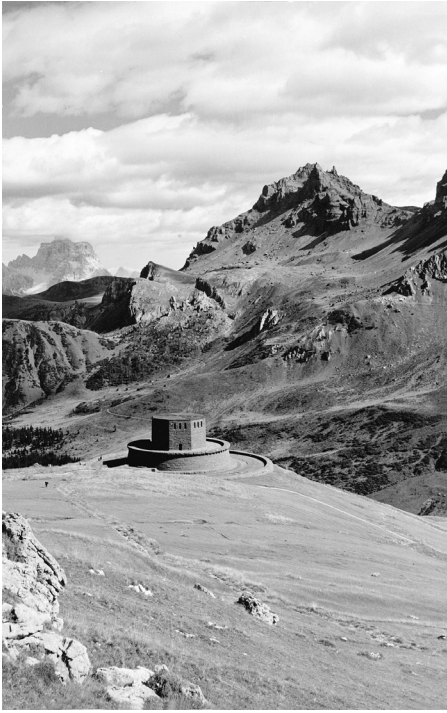
**59**

end of 1943, the "fortress" became in 1944 a German military post to guard the bridge over the Tagliamento. At the beginning of September, the building was hit by a bomb dropped by a Royal Air Force plane, which caused the destruction of the towers and part of the northern vestibule. After the war, the fate of Pinzano remained in uncertainty for almost ten years, followed by a long period of oblivion because of the restriction imposed in 1954 by the Italian Ministry of Defense, which forbade access to the Col Pion complex "for military reasons"[108]. None of the proposals put forward up to that time for the recovery of the memorial were successful: not even the one deliberated in July 1945 by the National Liberation Committee of the province of Udine to erect a monument to the memory of the partisans on the "stone base built by the Germans on the Pinzano bridge"; nor the hypothesis advocated by General Grassi, which re-emerged in 1946 and remained in vogue until the beginning of 1950, to complete the memorial and use it for the burials of Italian soldiers; nor, finally, the VDK's attempt, in 1957, to recover the "beautiful material" installed in Pinzano for use in other constructions planned in Italy[109]. The latter hypothesis was prompted by Robert Tischler, who was again intensely involved in the design of cemeteries dedicated to German soldiers who fell in the Second World War[110]. **[Fig. 59]**

108    An exhaustive description of the events that took place in Pinzano after 1943 is in Baccichet, *Il sacrario sul Tagliamento*, 123 ff.

109    Documentation in ACGOC and VA, A. 100-879.

110    Marco Mulazzani, *La foresta che cammina. Le sepolture dei soldati tedeschi 1920 1970* (Milan: Electa, 2020).

Fig. 59
View of the memorial at Passo Pordoi after its completion in 1959.

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**Giovanni Leoni**

# Remembering (with) the Body.
# Form and Experience in Post-war Memorial Architecture Dedicated to Political and Racial Deportation

*Postwar Architecture, Anonymous Paradigm, Body and Architecture, Memorial Architecture, Sites of Memory*

## /Abstract

The text explores the evolution of memorial architecture post-World War II, focusing on its role in commemorating victims of political and racial deportation. It argues that architecture must transcend traditional formalism, becoming a reflection of collective experiences and processes shaped by historical traumas. Central to this discussion is the notion of "bare life," as defined by Giorgio Agamben, highlighting the loss of individuality and humanity in concentration camps, where victims were stripped of identity and agency.

Memorial architecture faces unique challenges, as it must confront the unspeakability of the victims' experiences while also serving as a moral obligation to remember those silenced. The author emphasizes the need for architecture to facilitate a personal, embodied engagement with memory, transforming the act of visiting into an active reflection on the past. This shift from static monuments to dynamic memorials allows visitors to connect physically and emotionally with the history, bridging the gap between the past and present.

Ultimately, the text advocates for an architecture that honours anonymity and collective suffering, seeking to reconstruct a sense of place and identity for victims through thoughtful design that encourages personal interpretation and reflection.

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More recent publications on the subject are the following: Andrea Borsari, Giovanni Leoni, *Hypermnesia and Amnesia. Remembering (with) the Body and Post-Conflict Memorials and Architectures* in: AA.VV., *Questioning Traumatic Heritage*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2024: 81-89; Giovanni Leoni, *Las responsabilidades de la arquitectura en los procesos conmemorativos de personas desaparecidas a causa de crímenes políticos. Una perspectiva europea* in: AA. VV., *Procesos de memoria en América Latina y el Caribe. Encrucijadas y debates*, Bogotá: Instituto de Estudios en Comunicación y Cultura IECO Centro Editorial Facultad de Ciencias Humanas Sede Bogotá, 2024: 215 – 225; Andrea Borsari, Giovanni Leoni, *Hypermnesia and Amnesia: Remembering (with) the Body and Post-Conflict Memorials and Architectures*, «HERITAGE, MEMORY AND CONFLICT JOURNAL», 2022, 2: 29 – 38; Giovanni Leoni, *In Memory of the Other Resistance. The Places and Architecture of the Fossoli Memorial*, in: Matteo Cassani Simonetti, Roberta Mira, Daniele Salerno eds., *The Heritage of a Transit Camp Fossoli: History, Memory, Aesthetics*, Oxford, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, New York, Wien: Peter Lang, 2021: 107 – 160.

One of the themes characterising architectural research in the second half of the 20th century is the need to modify the modern structure of the project, centred on formal conception, to make it subservient to the circumstantial unfolding of life within the architectural work. In many authors, after the experience of the Second World War, the idea of an architectural language that is a direct translation of existence becomes crucial. Architecture is no longer the result of a formal prefiguration but the outcome of an action that generates forms during circumstantial events. A processual idea of the project that transforms the circumstance, the design actions of governing and reorganising the circumstance, into architectural form. The main objective of such a stance is to de-emphasise the conflict between the form individually conceived by the personality of an architect-artist on the one hand, "the life of forms", and, on the other hand, to place architecture in the flow of the "forms of life", thereby accentuating a collective, processual, impersonal dimension brought into the project.[1]

The confrontation with the "authentic myth", as Manfredo Tafuri defines the search for a "language of existence" in one of his illuminating essays,[2] the pushing "thorough the threshold of what is verifiable" that such a commitment implies, from the Second World War onwards, the confrontation with the place, both physical and inner, in which what Giorgio Agamben has defined as "bare life" appeared, that is, with the space of the Lager, a place in which "an extreme and monstrous attempt to decide between the human and the inhuman, which has ended up dragging the very possibility of the distinction to its ruin".[3]

What makes the memorial commitment of architecture applied to the theme of concentrationary space extreme and, therefore, paradigmatic is the confrontation with the component of the unspeakability of the victim's experience in such places.

This enormous theme has engaged every form of artistic expression, but architecture has a specific field of action and, therefore, responsibility.

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1    The subject is difficult to summarise as it spans entire design researches. Limiting ourselves to theorisations and just a few examples directly related to the present discussion, we could cite the writings, as early as the 1940s, of Ernesto Nathan Rogers in the magazine *Domus* (Ernesto Nathan Rogers E.N. (1940-41) "Confessioni di un Anonimo del XX Secolo", *Domus*, no.158: 45; no.159:67; no.160: 59; n.161: 69; no. 162: 69; no. 164: 31; no. 167: 17; no. 170: 94; no.176: 333) and Leonardo Ricci's text dedicated to the Anonymous (Leonardo Ricci. *Anonymous (20th Century)* (New York: Braziller, 1962; translated into English by Elisabeth Mann Borgese). Rogers writes as an author on the verge of being personally affected by the racial laws, Ricci, twenty years later, puts the theme of the Anonymous in close connection with the questions opened by the Shoah. In this regard, we refer to Giovanni Leoni, "Anonymous as a theme of discontinuity in the culture of Italian architecture between the first and second halves of the 20th century: E.N. Rogers and L. Ricci" in *Progress(es) - Theories and* Practices (Leiden: CRC Press Balkema Taylor and Francis Group, 2017), 9-13; Giovanni Leoni, "L'Anonimo come tema di discontinuità nella cultura architettonica italiana tra Primo e Secondo Novecento" in: AA VV, *Un palazzo in forma di parole. Scritti in onore di Paolo Carpeggiani*. (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2016), 463 - 47.

2    "It has been said that the humanistic Renaissance of the antique gods 'mythologized' life… For Sansovino, acceptance of the Venice of Leonardo Moro seems to have signified a traumatic, if liberating, encounter with authentic myth: one embodied in the life and legitimized by interiorized traditions… Once again, the beginning and the end of our reflections touch. The unfounded condition we have read between the lines of Alberti's text is fused wit Sansovino's immersion in the language of existence, which provided an alternative to the artificial tradition legitimized by those very same pages. To those who would maintain that: in our readins, we have passed thoroughthe threshold of what is verifiable (*l'accertabile)*, this *complexion oppositorum* has – or so it seems – little to say. Yet, for the author, it puts into question – without anticipating the answer – the rootlessness that our historical condition must confront." Manfredo Tafuri, *Ricerca del Rinascimento. Principi, città, architetti,* (Turin: Einaudi, 1992) eng. trans. Manfredo Tafuri, *Interpreting the Renaissance. Princes, Cities, Architects* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 2006), 257-258.

3    Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 22.

The specific field of architecture is that of the component of invisibility, as well as unspeakability, of the deportation and concentration experience, which derives from a deviant structure of the design of the places in which it took place.

The bodies that move, as victims, in the "exceptional space" of the Nazi concentration camps are deprived of identity but also of the possibility of individual experience, of making sense of space other than the imposed one, of constructing a temporality other than the constant present of pure survival.

From the perspective of the discipline of architecture, we could say that the prisoner of the Nazi concentration camps lives deprived of the possibility of designing the place into which he is forced, meaning, by design, the process by which everyone reconstructs and adapts the places he inhabits to his own individual experiences and sensibilities, modifying them physically or mentally. He is thus deprived of the possibility of generating a physical imprint of his own existence, an individual imprint that, combined with others and thus becoming collective, is a usually central component of the changing of places over time. A stratification of traces over time that is here denied and that is the basic material for every design action connected to memory in the field of architecture.

However, in the concentration camps, the absolute loss of design power by the inmate does not only concern space; it also concerns the body. Carefully elaborated and cruelly imposed practices - shaving, nudity, insufficient nutrition - lead the prisoners' bodies to be, very quickly, all alike. The "demolition of a man", of a man's corporeity, perpetrated in life, such that, as Primo Levi writes, "we became aware that our language lacks words to express this offence".[4]

From denying deportees any possibility, even the slightest, of "designing" their own lives, a denial which begins at the very moment of arrest, it follows that the architecture of the Nazi camps and every space connected to them to form the concentration camp system, if taken in their naked physicality, bear witness to the will of the executioner, leaving the victim only the trace of what the executioner wanted them to be. This "silence", this invisibility of the places of deportation, attributes, even to architecture, a " moral obligation towards those who were silenced", as Levi defines it in the chapter *Shame* of his *The Drawn and the Saved*.[5] The obligation, we might call it, to restart the deviant design of the camp in favour of and in memory of the victims. The exercise of this "moral obligation," Levi himself defines as inevitably failing and yet, precisely because of this, necessary, presents specific torments and difficulties in every expressive discipline. Architecture, too, has found and finds, in its confrontation with the

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4    Primo Levi, *If This is a Man*, trans. Stuart Woolf (New York: The Orion Press, 1959), 21.

5    "I must repeat – we, the survivors, are not the true witnesses. This is an uncomfortable notion, of which I have become conscious little by little, reading the memoirs of the others and reading mine at a distance of years. We survivors are not only an exiguous but also an anomalous minority; we are those who by their prevarications or abilities or good luck did not touch bottom. Those who did so, those who saw the Gorgon, have not returned to tell about it or have returned mute, but they are the 'Muslims', the submerged, the complete witnesses, the ones whose deposition would have a general significance… We speak in their stead, by proxy. I could not say whether we did so or do so because of a kind of moral obligation towards those who were silenced, or rather in order to free ourselves of their memory; certainly we do it because of a strong and durable impulse." Primo Levi, *The Drawn and the Saved* (London: Michael Joseph, 1988), 63-64.

theme, new tasks that lead it to a ruthless as well as illuminating confrontation with structural aspects of architecture as a discipline.

First, the memorial task of architecture dedicated to the Shoah addresses the outcome of a deliberate human action of violence whose aim is to erase all physical traces of the victim. This does not allow one to draw on a well-established field of memorial architecture, namely monumental celebratory production, since nothing, in this case, is to be celebrated.[6]

It is also impossible to take funerary architecture, whose purpose is to preserve the memory of the lives of those no longer alive, as a reference. An architecture, therefore, that, if it certainly bears witness to a loss, nevertheless draws on positive content, expressible in an affirmative form.

Instead, the task here is the memory of annihilating violence, an experience of death in life that offers no positive values and thus raises the question of how to express the absence generated by violence.

Secondly, the memorial task of the architecture dedicated to the Shoah concerns a loss that unites millions of individuals with very different fates in a shared experience/non-experience. Individuals whose personalities were, because of a deliberate political project, erased in life or through mass murder. This gives rise to a second paradox that undermines the established tradition of memorial architecture.

The memorial architecture dedicated to political and racial deportation during the Second World War is not only at the service of collective memory, it is not only at the service of individual memory, but it is at the service - if we look at its most difficult and primary task - of an experience of anonymity, of the loss of individuality and of the very sense of belonging to a community. One could call it an anonymous memory.

For if memorial literature restores personal stories, if history restores the collective experience that deportation was, there is an "immemorial" component to borrow a concept from Giorgio Agamben, who makes the distinction between "immemorial" and "archival" memory.[7] The expression, thus the entrusting to memory time, of an "immemorial" component, adds a paradox, a challenge if you like, to the "moral obligation" of giving voice to "those who were silenced". A challenge that, by disciplinary statute, history, which has the archive as its foundation, cannot take on and that must be entrusted to creative disciplines.

Therefore, we could say that memorial architecture is faced with a double

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6    "Here in Italy, there is a great tradition of celebratory architecture, but not only in Italy. However, there is a fact to be considered. It is easier to remember a victory than to remember such suffering... Usually, one celebrates victories, never defeats. In the case of the concentration camps, it was complex. First, the phenomenon was very broad because it was not just soldiers but an entire population that was sacrificed and killed because of a different thought or a different race. It still happens. Why do we still insist, we veterans?... because from Chile to certain Siberian camps, they do it, now; it's still quite widespread. And these are things that are usually kept hidden. If Germany had won, nothing would exist here any more, they would have swept everything away". (from a private conversation between the author and Lodovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso, held in Milan in June 1989).

7    Agamben clearly relates this distinction to themes of architecture when writing about the *Memorial for the Murdered Jews in Europe* by Peter Eisenman. See: Giorgio Agamben *"Die zwei Gedächtnisse"*, *Die Zeit*, 4 Mai 2005, but see also Giorgio Agamben, *Idea dell'immemorabile* in Giorgio Agamber, *A cui punto siamo?* (Macerata: Quodlibet, 2020).

1a



1b

lacuna: the absence of a place and a body to remember on one side and, on the other, the absence of an individual personality to remember. In other words, translating this double difficulty into an operational task, memorial architecture finds itself in the need to restore place and body to memory and in the need to restore name and identity to the victim. A double action that takes the complexity of the usual structure of the architectural design process to the extreme.

In fact, memorial action may concern the space of loss itself - the places where events occurred[8] - or spaces of memory, which may or may not coincide with the places of events, giving rise to memorials, museums, and monuments. Such spaces - of loss and/or memory - can be physical and/or mental, individual and/or collective, existing and/or erased by time or human action. Each of these conditions tests different established areas of the project: conservation, reconstruction, restoration, and design from scratch.

If we then consider the actors involved, the picture is no less complex.

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8    The obligatory reference in relation to the definition of the "place of memory" as a concept and as a field of operation is Pierre Nora's studies (Pierre Nora, *Les Lieux de Mémoire*, 3 vols). (Paris: Gallimard, 1984-1992).

Fig. 1a - 1b
M. Fiorentino et. al., *Monument to the Martyrs of the Fosse Ardeatine*, 1945-48 (ph. GL)
Sol LeWitt, *Black Form*, 1987

2a - 2b

2c

We have those who were involved in the loss directly - the witnesses whose disappearance for reasons of age we are now facing for the first time -those who witnessed the loss indirectly - and in this case, the chronology is stretched to infinity with the theme of individual and collective legacies of memory. This applies, of course, to both sides: victims and perpetrators. Memorial practices, then, as time progresses and the task becomes more and more complex, themselves involve a multiplicity of actors: the custodians of memory - direct or indirect - those who, not being direct witnesses, take on the task of preserving or restoring it - for reasons that may range from simple civic commitment to professional activities - and, finally, those who elaborate memory through creative practices. A multiplication and often professionalisation of memories that is, on the one hand, a dutiful task, on the other, hides risks of memorial excesses in which objectives linked to current events - political, social, cultural - may obscure the underlying reasons for the memorial process.

Within this framework of actions and actors, it is then necessary to evaluate certain specificities of the architecture.

Fig. 2a - 2b - 2b
A. Burri, *Cretto*, 1984 ff.
P. Eisenmann (with R. Serra), *Memorial for the Murdered Jews in Europe*, 1994 ff.

3a - 3b - 3c - 3d

4



Fig. 3a - 3b - 3c - 3d

BBPR, *Monument in memory of the fallen in the concentration camps in Germany*, 1945 (ph. GL)

M. Labò, *Monument in honour of Italians*, 1955

BBPR, *Museum Monument to Political and Racial Deportees*, 1963 ff. (ph. GL)

R. Boico, *Risiera di San Sabba*, 1967-74 (ph. GL)

Fig. 4

G. Deming, *Stumbling Stones in Amsterdam* (ph. GL)

5a - 5b - 5c

First, architecture does not represent but constructs (or reconstructs or destroys) places.

Of course, this does not exempt architecture from formal tasks. But the formal invention, in architecture, is always in relation, often in tension, with the material construction, with a progressive dissolving of the represented form into a physical presence, subject to mutation over time, populated by human presences and therefore subject to circumstantial transformations beyond the control of the author of the work.

The paradoxical task described above, to serve a memory of the "immemorial", to interpret an anonymous memory, to restore body and space to an "invisible" experience, finds opportunity precisely in the process that transforms architecture from the personal conception of an author into a constructed work. In this constructive process, the architectural idea expressed as a representation becomes an objective presence and, in its existence over time, progressively becomes a multi-personal place, individual and collective, at the same time, permanent but subject to constant transformation based on multiple interpretative experiences.

The change of register with respect to the theme now enunciated is already evident when observing the first post-World War II memorial realisations, even in works not directly related to the Shoah. With a change of sensibility that reverberates on all architectural themes connected to the memories of the War,

Fig. 3a - 3b - 3c - 3d
BBPR, *Gusen Memorial*, 1965
BBPR, *Monument in memory of the fallen in the concentration camps in Germany*, 1945 (ph. GL)
D. Libeskind, *Jewish Museum*, 1988 sgg.
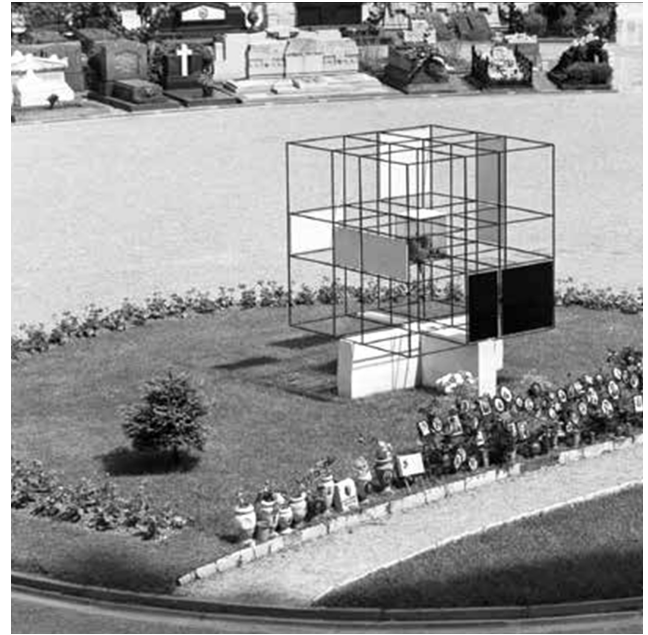
we pass from a monument understood as an object to be observed, endowed with a univocal form and fixed by the author, to a different conception of the monument, or rather to the creation of complex memorial devices that imply an active experience of walking through the places of memory by the visitor, closely connecting the physical act of walking through the places with the mental act of reflecting, rationally and emotionally, on what happened in the places.

The visit is no longer contemplation but action, and the visitor's body becomes the vehicle of this cognitive action, the measuring instrument of places. This means the constantly variable establishment of a complex physical and mental relationship with the place and its contents of memory.

Therefore, the visitor's body also becomes a kind of substitute for the victim's body. It takes on the task of understanding and reconstructing the experience, of compensating for the victim's loss of the project opportunity. The task of making visible the body and space of the victims offered by the memorial device is an individual task, therefore not fully predeterminable and circumstantial, and this constitutes a design theme.

The history of memorial architecture related to the violence of the Second World War and the fully ongoing work on the subject can thus be followed from two connected and distinct perspectives.

On the level of formal elaboration, architecture intertwines its efforts with the figurative arts in a new season of intense dialogue marked by the same difficulties and similar options for overcoming them.

Attempts to draw on symbolic form in the traditional sense are supplanted by a search for the counter-symbol to echo the established definition of counter-monument.[9]

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9    James Young is a reference author for the definition and history of the anti-monument or counter-monument; among his works, see: James Young, *The Texture of Memory* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993); James Young, *The Art of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History* (Munich-New York: Prestel Verlag, 1994); James Young, *At Memory's Edge: After-images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2000).

Fig. 6a - 6b
BBPR, *Monument in memory of the fallen in the concentration camps in Germany,* 1945, first version without the gravestones, final version - ph. GL – with the gravestones)

Architecture's response to the need to communicate the silence of the human, an expressive realm of the non-speakable and non-visible, is precocious. One thinks of the large out-of-scale "tombstone" of the *Monument to the Martyrs of the Fosse Ardeatine* (Mario Fiorentino et. al., Rome 1945-1948), an episode connected to the combatant resistance and not to the "other resistance" of the victims of deportation, but still an exemplary case of deliberate cancellation of the identity and body of the victims. A collective invention, the grey caesura interrupts the rich architectural and landscape narrative of the Ardeatine, anticipating by decades a public artwork such as Sol LeWitt's Black *Form* in Hamburg (*Black Form Dedicated to the Missing Jews*, Hamburg-Altona 1987).

On the other hand, one of the most powerful works of architecture centred on the expression of immemorial composition, The *Memorial for the Murdered Jews in Europe* (Berlin, 1994 ff.), was created in close collaboration with an artist such as Richard Serra and certainly with an eye towards *land art* and Burri's *Cretto* (Gibellina, 1984-89) in particular.

But the reliance on the pure expressiveness of matter in a counter-symbolic key had immediately been a theme within the memorial architecture dedicated to deportation, from the urn containing earth from the concentration camps placed at the centre of the *Monument in memory of the fallen in the concentration camps in Germany* by BBPR (Milan 1945) to the wall built by Mario Labò with the stones of the "death staircase" (M. Labò, *Monument in honour of Italians*, Mauthausen, 1955), from the cement stelae engraved with the names of the extermination camps in the *Museum Monument to Political and Racial Deportees* (BBPR, Carpi 1963 ff.), to the interplay between pre-existing structures and reinforced concrete surfaces that characterises Romano Boico's intervention in the *Risiera di San Sabba* (Trieste 1967-74).

The interplay between architecture and art, far beyond mere collaboration in the field, also occurs through sculptors and artists' commitment or creative needs. In addition to the tradition of the anti-monument, all played out on the boundary between sculpture and architecture, one thinks of an installation such as Gunter Deming's *Stumbling Stones*, started in Cologne in the mid-1990s, which takes the elementary and founding constructive act of architecture - the simple laying of a stone - as the focus of artistic and performative action. A choice that offers the extemporaneous artistic action a duration in time and an intimate belonging to the infra-ordinary dimension of the city, reinforcing the proposed memorial action.

Similar reflections could be articulated on the mutual relationships between writing and architecture that invariably mark the production we are dealing with. At times, architecture renounces its own expressive ambitions, offering itself as a simple surface for a written narrative, as very often happens, with different accents, in the production on the subject from the BBPR group (the *Monument-Museum* in Carpi, dominated by writing, but writing constantly returns in the works on the theme of the Milanese group as 'archival' support for architectural

and formal solutions). In other works, writing is at the basis of a process of generating architectural form, as is the case with the *Jewish Museum* in Berlin (1988) by Daniel Libeskind.

But, alongside the formal research that architecture shares and intertwines with other fields of expression, there is a story - and a lively field of action - concerning the specific opportunity offered by architectural design to introduce the reparation of space and a victim's body into the memorial action.

By its very nature, this component is difficult to recount in words and images since it relates, as mentioned, to the individual experience that one can have when visiting memorial architecture and goes beyond the field of representation. However, as the start of possible research, it is possible to describe what devices the architects put in place so that such an experience is possible and solicited.

The history of the experiential component of memorial architecture dedicated
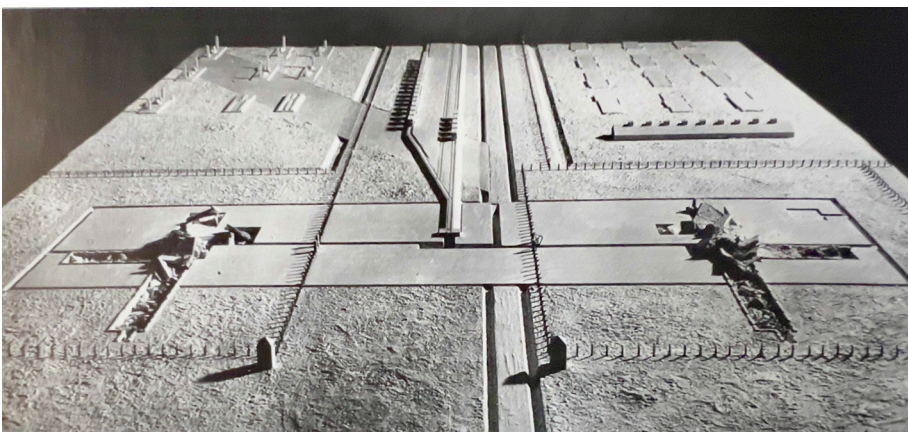
Fig. 7
M. Labò, *Monument in honour of Italians*, 1955

Fig. 8
AA VV, Auschwitz memorial, unified project (1959) (Giorgio Simoncini, *La memoria di Auschwitz. Storia di un monumento 1957-1967* (Milan: Jaca Book, 2011)

to political and racial deportation during the Second World War may begin with a failure.

The celebrated Monument erected by BBPR at the Monumental Cemetery in Milan has, in fact, a tormented design and construction history, which also includes difficulty in attributing exact proportions to the cubic grid and placing it in an appropriate position in relation to the observation of visitors. But this uncertainty, linked to perception, is accompanied by a more significant deficiency, namely the lack of an space offered to spontaneous actions of commemoration by the families of the victims (placing of photographs, remembrance of names, floral tributes). A space that is spontaneously generated over time in correspondence with commemorative moments and that BBPR then assume in the project by elaborating a new version of it.



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The availability, the offering of a scene, of an occasion for spontaneous commemorations is instead the choice that characterises Labò's *Monument in honour of Italians*. In fact, Mario Labò, a refined and cultured architect, decides to renounce all personal formal invention to reuse a material found and charged with painful experience, such as the stones of the infamous "death staircase" and to offer, in the elementary form of a wall, a surface available to spontaneous commemorations. A direct, personal, unguided interrogation of the painful material of which the camp was made up that we can consider extreme and exemplary with respect to the theme of an architecture that leaves room for spontaneous memorial rituals.

The complex affair of the *Auschwitz-Birkenau International Monument* (1957-77) certainly inaugurates another no less decisive and subsequently often recurring theme, namely the crossing, the exploratory, cognitive, meditative and emotional journey based on the conviction that there is a coincidence between memorial site and monument.[10] A theme anticipated and radically developed in an intervention of lesser international resonance but of extraordinary quality, such as the 1953 Kampor Memorial on the island of Rab by Edvard Ravnikar. Lacking the celebratory component, the memorial act is entirely entrusted to an interpretative action of the place that architecture must not completely

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10    See Giorgio Simoncini, *La memoria di Auschwitz. Storia di un monumento 1957-1967* (Milan: Jaca Book, 2011), especially the chapter *"Il Monumento è il Campo"*, 23-31.

Fig. 9
E. Ravnikar, *Kampor Memorial,* 1953 (ph. GL)

predetermine because there is an immemorial content that cannot be entrusted to a positive expression fixed by the author of the architecture. The project must, however, offer the visitor the tools and the occasion to search for the immemorial component in a repeated and necessarily individual investigation. An open action that is not entrusted to the hypostatisation of memory in a monument but is based on a process of constant and repeated effort to remember through bodily actions. Of course, all the "visiting experiences" offered by the preservation and/or reconstruction of the Nazi camps or other places connected to the concentration camp system are also part of this framework. Performative experiences, one might say, to which the visitor is called.

BBPR's *Monument-Museum* in Carpi is the first work that masterfully summarises and reinvents the combination of actions required of the visitor: historical knowledge, artistic suggestion, and emotional participation. The actions are clearly distinguished and intertwined in the project. The visitor must wander through the rooms of the museum, reading evocative phrases and observing images on the blank page of the walls of the castle, as if they were a normal place of art whose theme is memory. During the visit, he must look out over the uncovered tombs of the showcases where he finds the "few remains" of the concentration camp experience, the personal contact with the immemorial. An explicit design instruction by Lodovico Belgojoso makes it clear that the two paths must not interfere and that they are two distinct experiences. Again, the visitor must take himself to the *Hall of Names*, where the reading changes from evocative to testimonial and where the immemorial is healed through the process of naming. A use of the name that is reversed in meaning in the *Stele Courtyard* where the inscriptions recall not the victims but the names of the camps. The stelae, pre-monumental elements in themselves, thus become - in their remembrance not of the victim but of the place of the crime, admonishing rather than celebrating as the designer himself implies - radical forerunners of the anti-monument. The visitor is asked, in the face of the use of the same medium, a vigilant attitude that allows him to grasp the semantic gap in the use of the written text: evocation in the *Letters*[11] collected by Nelo Risi etched on walls, reparation in the *Hall of Names*, warning in the *Courtyard of the stelae*. Only at the end of the exhibition itinerary could one access a library room (never realised) to acquire historical knowledge. But, as the designers specify in the project report, "The emotional succession depends above all on the variations of the
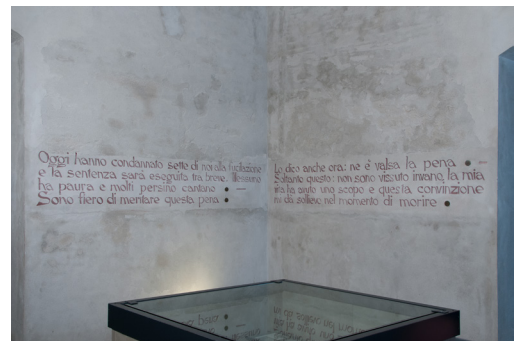
10a - 10b - 10c

Fig. 10a - 10b - 10c
BBPR, *Monument in memory of the fallen in the concentration camps in Germany*, 1945
(ph. A. Chemollo)

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11   The passages engraved on the walls of the Museum-Monument are taken from: Piero Malvezzi, Giovanni Pirelli, eds., *Lettere dei condannati a morte della Resistenza europea*, preface by Thomas Mann (Turin: Einaudi 1954).
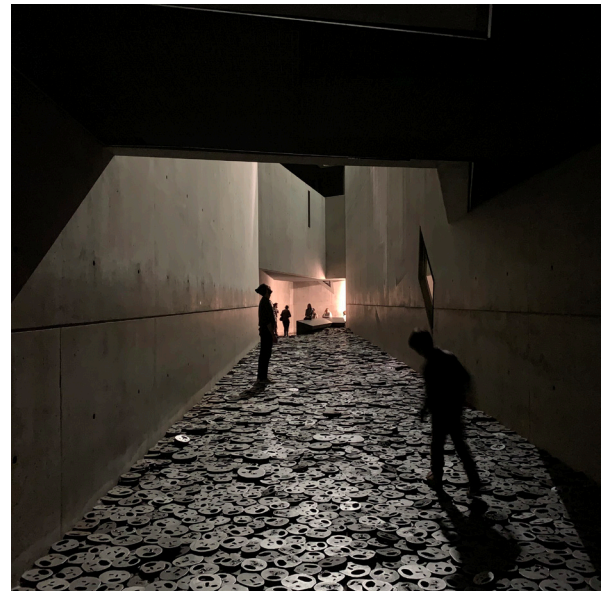
overall theme. The spectator will acquire the symbolic representation of events almost to the extent of his breathing along the winding path of the castle".[12]

The theme of the individual path, of the cognitive and emotional crossing, becomes almost unfailing in the subsequent architectures dedicated to the memory of the Shoah, from the *Gusen Memorial* by BBPR themselves (1967) to the *Risiera di San Sabba* by Boico, from the forest of stelae of Eisenman's *Memorial* in Berlin to *Jewish Museum* by Libeskind, which enriches it with real performative activities required of the visitor such as the walk - sensationally powerful - on the bed of metal discs representing the identical faces of the deportees.

The investigation into the experiential dimension of memorial architecture of the second half of the twentieth century related to the Shoah, starting with the matrix architectures mentioned here, would certainly deserve to be developed in terms of cataloguing and would benefit from a comparison with other productions in favour of victims who disappeared for political crimes. This would certainly also be challenging research in terms of methodology and means of cataloguing and dissemination since it deals with a component of architecture that escapes the usual disciplinary instruments of representation and would, therefore, require fertile disciplinary interweaving.



11a - 11b - 11c

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12    For a more in-depth discussion of these issues in relation to the Carpi Museum-Monument we refer to Giovanni Leoni, "In Memory of the Other Resistance. The Places and Architecture of the Fossoli Memorial" in: Matteo Cassani Simonetti, Roberta Mira, Daniele Salerno, eds., *The Heritage of a Transit Camp Fossoli: History, Memory, Aesthetics* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2021), 107 - 160.

Fig. 11a - 11b - 11c
BBPR, *Gusen Memorial*, 1965
R. Boico, *Risiera di San Sabb*a, 1967-74 (ph. GL)
D. Libeskind, *Jewish Museum*, 1988 sgg. (ph. GL)

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Raffaella Maddaluno

# Germano Facetti and the Sign as a Necessity of Memory

*Germano Facetti, Memory, Ludovico Belgiojoso, Yellow box, Narration*

## /Abstract

The experiences of war, of death, of pain, unspeakable by nature and perhaps due to the very limitations of language, must at some point be recounted, through interpretable narratives. This text attempts to reconstruct the complex experience of some of the protagonists of deportation, who, however, were not immediately, due to the pain caused by that event, active participants in the construction of memory, allowing everything to remain in the intimate sphere of affection. We refer to the story of Germano Facetti, a graphic designer of international fame, deported to Gusen, who after choosing silence for years, only began to recount his experience at the end of the 1990s, at almost 70 years of age. He does so by entrusting his 'yellow box', a Kodak photo paper box, in which he had kept a notebook for all those years, with drawings of the concentration camp and some documents from the Lager. The result will be a cinematographic narrative, which will trigger a long and active participation on Facetti's part to try to leave a testimony, to provide evidence, as he himself says before disappearing or committing suicide like the others. An attempt will be made to retrace the construction of his documentary memory, trying to enter into his personal expressive form, but also to tell, through his, the story of others such as Ludovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso, his point of reference, not only artistically, and part of the Milanese architecture studio BBPR.

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## Narration and memory: a methodological problem

> "But, now, in my old age, and in these dark times of fundamentalism, war and death, I feel the need to recount so that the youngest may know what we have experienced and may understand what bestialities hatred can lead to".

Germano Facetti [1]

War stories take one's breath away, but it is the historian's job to tell the tale. The telling comes after a careful and respectful analysis of documents, oral, written, and drawn. One often encounters the unresolvable dilemma of survivors who found themselves caught between the desire to keep silent and the impulse to recount something that was inexpressible in terms of intensity and pain. These experiences, for those who lived through them, are truly inexpressible, sometimes due to the very limitations imposed by language. For those who find themselves recounting the pain of others, perhaps, it is a cliché that it cannot be conveyed.

However, whatever the contingencies, these experiences are said at some point, and this saying translates into cultural constructions that constitute narratives to be interpreted and transmitted. The contradiction between narratives and the unspeakably of facts is blinding, but the historian must overcome it in the name of the right of facts to be told.

One of the elements that certainly complicates the narrative is that it is usual to distinguish the truth of the historian's facts from their representation. Actually, representations and facts are definable to the extent that we do not consider them on parallel tracks, but let them relate to each other. On the one hand, representations have facts as their material; on the other hand, facts are structured in order to be told according to the tools that they share with representations. One and the other meet insofar as they relate to the subjectivity of human beings. Whose task is it to make them interact? Perhaps to oral history, which is bound to facts as history but is confronted with representations for its working practice; or to art, to subjective sign expression, which starts from representations and arrives at the reconstruction of facts.[2]

Still in the methodological field, one may ask how it is possible to generalise broader frameworks from individual documents. How does the biographical, personal, subjective picture relate to the social, collective picture? Perhaps one of the generators of this misunderstanding is that we often use expressions such as life stories to define the subjective, biographical picture, giving greater weight and relevance to the word lives, rather than the word stories. [3]

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1  Benedetto Besio, "Mauthausen Facetti Belgiojoso", *Domus* (June 2005): 62.

2  Alessandro Portelli, *Storie orali. Racconto, immaginazione, dialogo* (Roma: Donzelli, 2017), 114-116.

3  Portelli says in this regard: "(...) the facts may be concrete and verifiable, but what we have at hand is not the

So does formalising the history of a person help us to think about the history of a society?

This question applies to all disciplines that deal with histories, such as literature. In literary criticism and the history of literature, tools are generally used to relate the individual to the social.[4]

The symmetry or balance between these two positions, individual and society or culture, goes towards the relationship between word and truth. This does not mean that everything the narrator says is necessarily true: what counts for every auto-biographer is the coherence of the narrative and the narrative construction of self.

It should also be remembered that no life story can be entirely summarised within general social frameworks because no person can be entirely summarised within general social frameworks. Todorov, in his book *The Fantastic Literature*, states that each work of art is a genre in its own right.[5]

For the sake of scientific abstraction, social reality is often represented in the form of a grid, made up of squares that are all the same. But this is an artifice because the world is shaped like a mosaic, each tile matching or overlapping, forming a whole in which we can recognise a form made up of the diversity that fits together.

The narration of both individual and collective stories always brings us back to the realm of memory. But even here, complex dynamics arise. Halbwachs legitimises in their scientific use expressions such as 'group memory' and 'collective memory' but always emphasises that the act of remembering and the process of memory are always attributable to the individual. He goes on to say that even if individual memory does not exist, it is common to read in testimonies and stories: 'I remember'. If memory were only collective, one witness for each collective would be sufficient. But this is not the case, because each individual carries a memory derived from a multiplicity of groups and always organises them differently. Like any human activity, memory is social and can be shared. However, as Portelli continues, like language with respect to words, it only manifests itself through individual memories and stories. It becomes a collective memory when it separates and abstracts itself from the individual. Collective memory is not a spontaneous expression of experience, but a mediated formalisation. There is not only an 'official' and 'ideological' memory on the one hand and an 'authentic' and pure memory on the other, but a multiplicity of memories all mediated on an ideological, cultural, and narrative level. Memory, therefore, must be extended in

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experience, the lived experience, the reality, but rather their narration, a verbal construction in which the narrator, thanks to the opportunity and the challenge brought by the researcher, gives narrative form to his own life. The authenticity and immediacy of experience will always elude us; on the other hand, we possess an object that bears at least a formal relation to the experience itself. After all, the narrative of life is also part of life'. Portelli, *Storie orali,* 241.

4    Jean-Marie Schaeffer, *Che cos'é un genere letterario?* (Parma: Pratiche,1992).

5    Tzvetan Todorov, *La letteratura fantastica* (Milano: Garzanti, 1977).

its spectrum, not limiting it to a dichotomy but to a multiplicity of different memories. It is only with this perspective that we can understand how fundamental and foundational is, for memory, another element, which Halbwachs describes as absolutely individual, solitary, which is f*orgetting*.[6] An approach that makes us realise how it is possible, often within the same people, that the individual desire to forget coexists with the social commitment to remember.[7]

## The choice of silence

How, then, are we to consider those who politely declined the invitation to testify and fled in front of a microphone? Was this, perhaps, a way of warning us that some form of sacralisation was taking place and that their testimony could have no place within the boundaries of testimonial legality? [8]

Annette Wieviorka has identified a true 'era of the witness', the period in which interest in all that was being told was concentrated in order to give voice to a desire to make us participants. (Wieviorka 1999) This interest, legitimate as it is, has somehow allowed the reality of those who felt uncomfortable when faced with the demand to transcribe their testimonies on a written page to be overlooked. Cavaglion writes that bibliographical attention and care, the value of testimony, and the cult of oral history are one thing, but respect for those who escaped the investigations of those who chased them with a microphone and a tape recorder is quite another. Perhaps, one should have thought of more sophisticated knowledge tools to understand their silences.[9]

And so, when we have recently begun to come to terms with the abuse of memory, with the rhetoric of commemoration, these prolonged silences have shown that they have retained a genuine modernity.[10] Many witnesses defended the right to silence, sometimes interrupted in limine mortis. The return home

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6    Forgetting allows memory to take on a form, through two modes: social memory needs to erase some memories and therefore tends to eliminate them to make room for others; because of an alleged incompatibility between memories, there is a tendency to select or to harmonise them. This schema that Lotman and Uspensky present to us is based on an opposition of positions: on the one hand the things that are remembered, on the other those that are forgotten, the act of remembering is possible because we forget. However, as Portelli points out, the memory of war complicates this dichotomous picture because it is too important to be forgotten but also too traumatic to be remembered. Again, it is important for social and personal memory, but because of its intensity and contradiction, it does not allow for a reconstructed construction.  On forgetting as part of the work of memory see Jurij Michajlovič Lotman,Boris Andreevič Uspenskij, *Tipologia della cultura* (Milano: Bompiani , 1973), 46-47  . In this text they write that "Culture is, by its very essence, directed against forgetting: it overcomes forgetting by transforming it into one of the many mechanisms of memory."

7    Portelli, *Storie orali. Racconto, immaginazione, dialogo*, 216.

8    In relation to this attitude common to those who have gone through traumatic events such as war, we can perhaps reflect on the possibility that memory and forgetting, are not analysed on two opposite sides, but part of the same narrative. A memory that Portelli helps us to define as "oxymoronic", i.e. a memory in which everything that is remembered is a way of forgetting, and within oblivion the unbearable memory can find space and comfort. Portelli, *Storie orali. Racconto, immaginazione, dialogo*, 197.

9    Alberto Cavaglion, «Immagini senza testo» In *Germano Facetti. Dalla rappresentazione del lager alla storia del XX secolo*, ed Daniele Moraca (Torino: Silvana Editoriale, 2008), 23-30.

10    It must also be emphasised that, for many years, official Italian culture did not give due value to the memories of traumatic events such as those passed in the concentration camps, not considering them suitable to be analysed with the tools of scientific and historiographical research. This attitude lasted at least until Primo Levi's death (1987). It was considered for a long time that the experience of the concentration camps was the prerogative of the witness account and should be placed at the margins of the debate between scholars and literati.

for them represented the beginning of a turning of the page, to be able to close all the horror of memories inside a box: a box with too short strings like Sergio Sarri's (Sarri 1999), or the yellow box, by Germano Facetti. [11] Then there are examples of some who did not want to publish anything but became characters in other people's works or allowed themselves to be published in the lives of others.[12] Paolo Crepet, psychiatrist and storyteller, for example, was fascinated by Facetti and made him the protagonist in his story 'The Reason for Feelings'.[13] (Crepet 2002)[14]

In addition to the complexity of the language that these silent testimonies recalled to us, there is also, in relation to memory, the indefiniteness of the perception of the events that occurred in their places of horror. [15]

Belgiojoso says "In camp life, the accounts of what was happening, outside and inside the camp, were very often misleading. They reflected, in general, much more the wishes and hopes of the inmates than the reality. (...) Much of this was not true, but it was enough for an assumption to resemble expectations or hopes that the news immediately ran from mouth to mouth, as if the facts had really happened. Desire created the facts, and proved them, confirmed them through the verdict of 'rumours'. How many accounts of the events of history could have come about in this way?" (Belgiojoso 2009, 86-87)[16]

The painful experiences of the camp forced one to return to the deeper meaning of each word spoken in relation to certain experiences. Belgiojoso reflects on certain episodes in the concentration camp in Gusen: 'I often made considerations about language, about our way of expressing ourselves, because it seemed to me that words had their truest meaning here, regaining a weight they did not have in normal life. The expression "deadly silence", for example: how

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11    Germano Facetti (Milan, 1926 - Sarzana, 2006), is internationally known for his activity as a graphic designer, particularly linked to the art direction of Penguin Book in the 1960s in London. He was deported to Mauthausen, little more than a teenager, for political reasons.

12    The most emblematic case is that of Roberto Bazlen, founder of the Adelphi publishing house, who spent a lifetime publishing memoirs and testimonies of intellectual friends, but never published a note of his experience. The book that Bazlen never wanted to write was written by friends and collaborators after his death. Roberto Bazlen, *Note senza testo* (Milano: Adelphi,1970).

13    Paolo Crepet. *La ragione dei sentimenti* (Torino: Einaudi, 2002).

14    From 2001 to 2002, Facetti met at his home in Sarzana, Paolo Crepet, with whom he established a friendly relationship, and from whose conversations a pseudo-biography appeared in the novel *La ragione dei sentimenti*. This tale, as Crepet himself declared, is the only biography of Facetti that is not limited to the deportation story. The tale is therefore not a true biography, because his name is never mentioned, but it is considered a starting point for understanding Facetti's complex human story. The story is also the culmination of an acquaintance that began in 1972, when a pupil of Franco Basaglia, he had joined him in the latter's project to write a history of psychiatry, which would also involve Facetti. It is no coincidence that Basaglia's name can be found written in pen on the Yellow Box. Paolo Crepet believes that Facetti began to recount his experience of deportation when in 1978, he collaborated with him and the photographer Raymond Depardon, in the organisation of an exhibition on the loss of humanity in asylums and lagers. Marzia Ratti,«Raccontare Mauthausen. Intervista a Paolo Crepet.» In *Non mi avrete. Disegni da Mauthasen e Gusen. La testimonianza di Germano Facetti e Lodovico Belogojoso* , ed. Marzia Ratti (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana editoriale, 2006), 24-25.

15    See on this topic Guido Vaglio, ed., *The Words and the Memory. La memorialistica della deportazione dall'Italia. 1993-2007*, (Torino: EGA editore, 2007)

16    Belgiojoso, Lodovico Barbiano. *Notte, nebbia. Racconto di Gusen*. Milano: Hoepli, 2009, 86-87
In 1932, Lodovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso (1909-2004), together with his friends and colleagues Gian Luigi Banfi, Enrico Peressutti and Ernesto Nathan Rogers, set up the BBPR studio. During the war he was arrested for his anti-fascist commitment and deported to the Gusen concentration camp. After the war he continued the activity of the studio that contributed to the reconstruction of Milan: among the most significant realisations were the Sforzesco Castle Museum and the Velasca tower that changed the city's skyline.

lightly I had heard it pronounced so many times... and the adjectives "unbearable", "impossible", "unbelievable": what a precise, precise meaning they had in our field...'.[17]

Primo Levi also wrote on this subject: "On many occasions, we have realised how little use words have for describing our experience. They work poorly because they are poorly received, because we now live in the civilisation of the image, recorded, multiplied, and broadcast, and the public, especially the young, is less and less inclined to make use of written information; but they also work poorly for a different reason, because they are poorly transmitted. In all our stories, verbal or written, expressions such as *indescribable, inexpressible, words are not enough are frequent*....' [18]

When Facetti speaks, he does so by constructing his testimony with images without text, entrusting it to a notebook. A form of stopping memory, resulting from his meeting with Belgiojoso, who transmitted to him the possibility of finding in drawing first, and then in photography, his salvation. In fact, his notebook contains a parallel graphic narrative, his own and Belgiojoso's. Because against the lager's will to turn men into beasts, there is a countervailing will to tell, to *bear witness*, to survive. But in what way? Belgioioso will follow the path of architecture, Carpi the drawing, Facetti the graphics, illustration, design; Perresutti the photography[19].

Using the graphic sign as testimony was, for them, a form of guarantee that the message would arrive in its expressive immediacy. Facetti also, in his professional life, made the danger that a bad transmission might cause a bad reception a methodological motive. In his work as graphic director of the London-based Penguin Books, when he chose an image to illustrate a volume of history or a book, he made sure that words were not needed, and that the image resolved the communicative objective in its representational completeness[20] (Baines 2008).

Therefore, the problem of avoidance, instead of being considered a fault, should be considered in order to study a type of recollection that could be defined as being in exile and that uses tools such as drawing, graphics, and photography in its expression.

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17    Belgiojoso, *Notte nebbia,* 83.

18    These words come from the preface written by Primo Levi to a catalogue of photographs. It was the result of an exhibition that was organised in Trieste in 1987, on the initiative of the ANED (Associazione Nazionale ex Deportati Politici nei campi di sterminio Nazisti). His text was published posthumously, because Levi died before the exhibition. Primo Levi,«prefazione.» In *Rivisitando i Lager, di Catalogo della mostra*, ed. Teo Ducci. Firenze (Idea Books, 1987).

19    Serena Maffioletti, *Enrico Peressutti. Fotografie mediterranee* (Padova: Il Poligrafo, 2010).

20    Germano Facetti was appointed cover art director at the London publishing house Penguin Books in January 1961. The choice fell on him after the publishing house wanted to look for a designer, other than Hans Schmoller and John Curtis, who would help to modernise the company's image. This modernisation was not only limited to the choice of new fonts or new illustrative techniques, but proposed a characteristic identity for the company combined with a good dose of flexibility. Facetti succeeded in achieving this flexible identity by, for example, using Penguim's traditional colours, clearly separating text and image, giving more value to the latter. The illustrations were entrusted to young designers, or photographers. The first series Facetti edited was Crime. See on this experience Phil Baines, "*Germano Facetti presso la Penguin Books 1961-1972*", in *Germano Facetti dalla rappresentazione del lager alla storia del XX secolo* (Milano: SilvanaEditoriale, 2008).

Germano Facetti is not an isolated case: Leonardo de Benedetti, Levi's travelling friend, described in *La tregua*, after having signed with Levi the *Memoriale per Minerva Medica* (1946), would not publish a single line. In addition to medicine, he would dedicate himself to travelling and taking thousands of photographs. The camera will represent the other side of memory, another form of being a witness.

Also interesting is the case of Peressutti[21] also a member of the BBPR, whose wartime history is not easy to reconstruct. His daughter Marina recalls that he never spoke about it at home; the only traces were the photographs he took and the article 'Encounters in Russia' that appeared in the 1942 Bompiani almanac, signed 'Arch. Enrico Peressutti, lieutenant in the Engineer Corps. Layout by Bruno Munari, eleven photographs of the Russian campaign are arranged on four pages accompanied by a diary that begins on 3 August and ends on 24 October of the same year.[22]. He asks himself in these pages, "Can I still be an architect?"[23]. Even in a condition that is not contextualised by architecture, he never stops observing settlements and houses through the eyes of the architect. The photographs first represented modernist architecture, then the faces of women, old people, children, and the men at the front. When he could, he drew, pencil sketched Russian izbe; he was interested in the interiors and the ways of living.[24]

These silent witnesses, then, continues Cavaglion, do not represent the ancient *querelle* between the *man of the book* and the *man of life*, of life irreducible to the constraints of all forms, of unrepresentable tragedy. It is something more radical. [25] What is evident is that, as Bazlen points out in his 'note without text', 20th century tragedy has made essential a new form of narration and a new

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21    Enrico Peressutti (1908-1976) grew up between Italy and Romania. He graduated from the Milan Polytechnic in 1932, and associated with Gian Luigi Banfi, Belgiojoso and Rogers to form BBPR, an architecture studio in Milan that in the 1930s forged relationships with exponents of the Modern Movement. In June 1941, he was called up to arms and left for Russia as a Romanian interpreter in the Alpine Celere division. From a map we reconstruct his route, a journey to Austria, Hungary, Romania, to the front on the Dnepr river. In Romania he took part in Operation Barbarossa on the side of the Axis countries He stayed until November 1942, fell ill with typhus and was repatriated. He spent his convalescence in the military hospital in Bologna, thus avoiding the infamous 'Russian retreat' (January-February 1943), which only a third of his division comrades survived. His final act, in its disastrous epilogue, due to inadequate equipment, the hostility of the German ally, and the solidarity of the Russian and Ukrainian people, compose a picture of horrors that we can partly find in the stories of Mario Rigoni Stern, Nuto Revelli, and Giovanni Bedeschi. He later joined, like his comrades, the Resistance. Banfi and Belgiojoso experienced concentration camps in Austria; Rogers, of Jewish origin, took refuge in Switzerland. Banfi did not return from the lager, never did his comrades keep his name in the acronym of the studio. Peressutti combined his professional activity with various teaching experiences in Italy and abroad. Saibene writes that the expedition of the ARMIR (Italian Army in Russia) and before that the CSIR (Italian Expeditionary Corps in Russia), between 1941 and 1943, is one of the black holes in Italian history. Alberto Saibene, "Un architetto in guerra", in Serena Maffioletti e Alberto Saibene, eds., *URSS 1941, de Enrico Peressutti* (Milano: Humboldtbook, 2022).

22    Enrico Peressutti, "Incontri in Russia" in *Almanacco letterario Bompiani* (Milan: Bompiani, 1942).

23    *"26 September 1941...can I still be an architect? The assumptions, the reasons, the needs, the means of this being an 'architect' flashed like lightning in my brain. In that instant, I went through the history of mankind to get to myself. To myself as an architect, of course. then I found myself; the white walls of our studio framed me in an atmosphere that was 'ours', took me to a plane that had nothing in common - other than my person - with the life I live here. And between the two planes, I could not, despite trying, identify any momentary connection. Even between heaven and earth there exists, at times, that vortex of air that seems to unite and participate at least the pains of the one in the ecstasy of the other. I have not succeeded except by opening and closing, with sadness, valves and valves in my brain, except by cutting, as a scalpel can do, into the convictions I made for myself, and still have today. At the end of this bewilderment I found myself materially, and there; there in our studio, spiritually". Enrico Peressutti "Incontri in Russia."* (Milano: Almanacco letterario Bompiani, 1942*).

24    Alberto Saibene, «Un architetto in guerra.» In *URSS 1941*, di Enrico Peressutti, ed. Serena Maffioletti e Alberto Saibene (Milano: Humboldtbook, 2022), 8

25    Cavaglion, *Immagini senza testo*, 29

scansion of time, a different succession of historical cycles. "There is an epoch of prologues, the epoch of the opera, the epoch of epilogues". And he adds bitterly: 'but our dying people did not know how to epilogue'.[26]

## Open the box

"The day I went to Sarzana in March 1997 to visit my friend Germano, with the intention of searching through his archives for material for one of our projects on industrial utopias, I had no idea that I would return home with the idea of another film, completely different, to which I would give absolute priority. All because of a small yellow box of Kodak photographic paper; I had glimpsed it at the bottom of a desk drawer in the studio. I was curious about the box because Germano absolutely did not want me to open it (perhaps in truth, on the contrary, he wanted me to open it). The little box gave off an indefinable charge. "What is it?" I asked. "Nothing, it's not material for your project". I felt an increase in tension that I had not felt before. "But why? You never know...maybe...". We opened the box: many poisonous snakes came out of it, a real Pandora's box full of all the evils of this world."[27]

Germano Facetti, an internationally renowned graphic designer who was deported to Gusen, only began to recount his experience in the late 1990s, at the age of almost 70.[28]

He does so by entrusting a director Tony West with his 'yellow box', a box of Kodak photographic paper, in which he had kept a notebook and other documents for all those years.[29] The result will be a cinematic story, which will kick off a long and active participation on Facetti's part in trying to leave a testimony, to provide evidence, as he himself says before *disappearing or committing suicide like the others*.

Facetti opens the yellow box in front of a witness. The box had been in a drawer for a long time. It contains a notebook whose cover is made of the fabric of a deportee's uniform. In it are collected many drawings, original photographs, or taken from magazines, newspapers, German archives, extracts from poems, lists of names and addresses.[30] **[Fig.1]**

The opening of the box seems to want to free the painful memories by burying the container where they had been locked away, but above all this gesture

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26    Roberto Bazlen, *Note senza testo*. Ed. Roberto Calasso (Milano: Adelphi, 1970).

27    Tony West, "Note sulla realizzazione di La scatola gialla di Germano Facetti", in *Germano Facetti dalla rappresentazione del lager alla storia del XX secolo*, ed. Daniela Muraca (Torino: SilvanaEditoriale, 2008) 143-146.

28    Facetti arrived at Mauthausen in 1944 at the end of February, then was transferred on 7 April to Gusen camp, a sub-camp of Mauthausen, and liberated in May 1945 by the Americans.

29    "*The yellow box. A short history of hate*" in Archivio Istoreto, fondo Facetti Germano [IT-C00-FD31 "*La scatola gialla. Una breve storia dell'odio*" in Archivio Istoreto, fondo *Facetti German*  [IT-C00-FD29].

30    In addition to the notebook seen in West's film, the box contains other mementos, as he himself testifies in an article in Domus, such as a small notebook of wire-bound sheets of paper with poems by Belgiojoso. (Besio, "Mauthausen Facetti Belgiojoso") This is also mentioned in Crepet's book. Paolo Crepet, *La ragione dei sentimenti* (Torino: Einaudi, 200), 44.
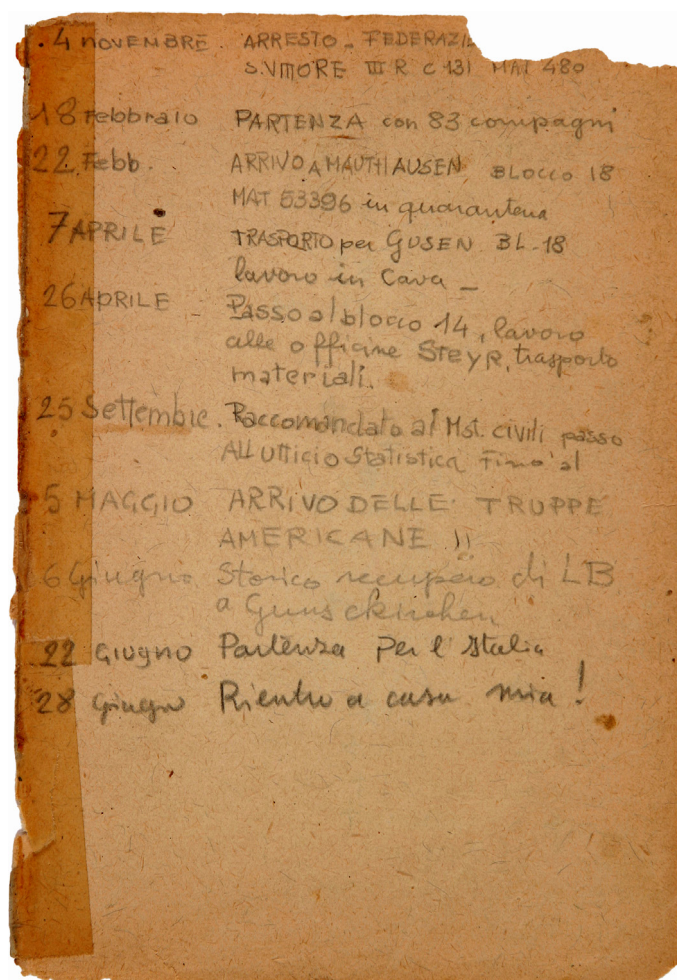
allows two things: an immediate return to a past time, the one in which the notebook was born, but it also allows the birth of the time of testimony. And this gesture is fixed in a film, in The Yellow Box, and marks the precise moment when the silent witness "takes the floor" on Gusen. [31]

A choice that speaks of memory as practice, as work, therefore as such, contradictory, partial and contingent.[32]

The expression "taking the floor" in Facetti's case takes on a specific meaning because his speech was very often soundless during the making of the film and turned into the gesture of showing the contents of his box. West himself speaks of the difficulties he had in filling the silences in film narration and says in his text: 'There were problems of continuity, which made it difficult to construct a clear and easy-to-follow discourse. Germano had a habit of disappearing in the pauses, without warning, and then returning dressed in a totally different way."[33]

The production of the film allows a fundamental historiographical passage: the notebook is transformed from a personal object into an archive object, available. Starting from this kind of matrix testimony, to which every subsequent disclosure will tend to refer, today's gesture of reading or analysing the document will be a historian's gesture.

The director's task in this case was not simply to 'collect' a testimony and structure a monologue, but to generate a narrative in the form of cooperation. And the tale was possible because they both had to learn to look each other in the face. The word inter-view means a mutual exchange of gazes in which the observer is also observed and is obliged to observe himself in the other's gaze. The interview and dialogue suspend while recognising the inequality that exists between the speaker and the listener, heroically trying to construct a possible plane in which we speak to each other as equals. From the interviews, we learn that both parties are confronted with an otherness from which they learn something and that even though control of the machine is in our hands, nevertheless,



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Fig. 1

Fondo Germano Facetti, taccuino, n. 003.

This and the following images belong to ISTORETO - Istituto piemontese per la storia della Resistenza e della società contemporanea 'Giorgio Agosti'

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31    Émilie Kaftan, "Il taccuino di deportazione di Germano Facetti: un 'oggetto malgrado tutto'", in *Germano Facetti. dalla rappresentazione del lager alla storia del XX secolo*, ed. Daniela Muraca (Torino: SilvanaEditoriale, 2008), 31-46.

32    Ronald Grele, "Introduzione", in *Storie orali. Racconto, immaginazione, dialogo*, ed. Alessandro Portelli (Roma: Donzelli), 2017 IX-XVIII.

33    West, *Note sulla realizzazione di La scatola gialla di Germano Facetti* ,145.

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authority is shared.[34]

From the interview from which the film originated, we no longer recognise a chronicle but a narrative, a construction based on memory. The interview does not only tell us what happened in the past, but also how the past acted in the life of the interviewee and interviewer. Ronald Grele writes that since the interview was created here and now but the dialogue had as its object the elsewhere, the past and the present were so intertwined in the dialogue that talking about past events was like evoking those of the present.[35]

### The notebook

Opening the box, therefore, reveals a notebook, the making of which is difficult to date. Facetti himself never provides this information, but considering its structure, it was probably assembled later, presumably in the period between the liberation from the camp and his repatriation to Italy, i.e. between May and June 1945. The cover of the notebook is made of clippings from Facetti's camp uniform and contains various types of documents, mainly drawings. [Fig.3] Those depicted are the significant elements of a closed universe, where one enters but does not leave: the roll-call yard, the grids, the granite quarries, and the crematorium. Each place represented recalls of confinement, exhaustion, death, and the absence of any possible way out. [Fig.4]

It also recounts, with sequence plans, the days that follow one another organised in the same way: the toilet, checking for lice, the queue for the soup distribution, and work. A daily life is always in contact with death. Beyond the factual information that the notebook object offers us about camp life and its value as a historical document, what is interesting is to consider the act that gave birth to it to try to understand what led Facetti to make that object in that way.

The notebook seems to allow for a form of catharsis because it not only allows for a return to the past but is also a means of projecting into the future. A rite of passage, containing the remnants of a past life linked to suffering and death, but locked away for decades in a box, on that tomb a new life is attempted to be rebuilt. This reconciling moment occurs not only when he opens the box in front of the camera but also when he decides to deposit his notebook and other materials in an archive.[36] Facetti says: 'I would like to be able to cat-



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34    Portelli, *Storie orali. Racconto, immaginazione, dialogo* ,VII-VIII.

35    Grele, "Introduzione", XI.

36    The Germano Facetti fund is currently located at the Piedmont Institute for the History of the Resistance and Contemporary Society 'Giorgio Agosti', in Turin. The archive, paid by the heirs to the institute as a deposit on 1 June

Fig. 2
Fondo Germano Facetti,
taccuino, n. 034

alogue well and make all the photographs I have intelligible (…) look at these folders, they are full of pictures, newspaper clippings, documents that help you understand'. [37]

So, the notebook took on a different role, representing the pivot around which Facetti centred his entire need to witness. [38] This necessity not only stems from a civil and social responsibility but is, above all, an inner one. In essence, drawings and documents represent a *substitute for memory*, a kind of *artificial memory* because testimony is subject to alterations and omissions; the notebook ensured the accuracy of the facts: notes, addresses, drawings, and lists.

### Art ar catharsis

The notebook represents the cruelty of the lager but also a collection of bonds between supportive people, who would become points of reference for Facetti. In September 1944, he met Gian Luigi Banfi and Ludovico Belgiojoso, both members of the BBPR architectural firm, examples of humanity and nobility of spirit. [Fig. 6] Belgiojoso, a courageous man, as Facetti himself describes

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2006, has a size that can be calculated at around twenty linear metres, 22,000 iconographic documents, stored in 118 boxes.  See on the structure of this archive the text by Andrea D'Arrigo, in the book *Germano Facetti. Dalla Rappresentazione del lager alla storia del XX secolo*. Andrea D'Arrigo, "Tra 'laboratorio' e meta-biografia: il fondo Germano Facetti presso l'Istituto piemontese per la storia della Resistenza e della societá contemporanea "Giorgio Agosti", in *Germano Facetti. Dalla rappresentazione del lager alla storia del XX secolo* (Torino: SilvanaEditoriale, 2008).

37    Crepet, *La ragione dei sentimenti*, 120.

38    It is quoted in all further testimonies, such as in Paolo Crepet's 2002 book. We also find it in the 2002 documentary *Antiutopia*, also made by Paolo Ranieri, and it becomes a substantial part of the exhibition *Non mi avrete*, from the title of a poem by Lodovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso.

Fig. 3
Fondo Germano Facetti, taccuino, n. 001

him, is determined to resist to pre-serve his dignity and inner freedom.[39]

This moral integrity can be seen in the way she portrays him: she draws him as a real man as opposed to his self-portrait identified only with a number. His figure is elegant and even gives him a name, LODO, thus an identity, which in the camp was the object of constant annihilation. [Fig. 2] He became such an impor-tant reference that he began to copy his drawings. Copying drawings, as well as being a form of homage, is also the beginning of the search for his own necessary form of expres-sion, and not possessing it himself, he borrows it from those he admires most.[40]

Belgiojoso drew with the stubborn-ness of one who intends to survive and rebel against annihilation. He used to tell of beauty, through the lightness of poetry that had the pow-er to evoke distant worlds and helped to endure all the horror of the camp, in a catarchic process that alleviated, comforted, strengthened dignity.[41]

This practice, common to artists in their imprisonment, makes us reflect on how figuration, in addition to the function of representing reality, can give voice to the need to communicate what one has experienced, allowing one to over-come the emotional and verbal blockade that painful events have caused.42 The image encloses in its synthesis episodes that emerge directly from con-sciousness. See, for example, the scene of the 'unloading of the contents' of a train. Facetti and Belgiojoso were in charge of unloading the train cars arriving at the camp. When they opened the hatches, they discovered 'piles of women



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39   Benedetto Besio, "Mauthausen Facetti Belgiojoso", *Domus* (2005): 62

40   Una grande parte dei disegni del taccuino sono copie di disegni attribuiti a Belgiojoso.

41   In a passage from *Se questo é un uomo*, we know that Primo Levi recites verses from Dante's Inferno to another prisoner. He says "Culture could, therefore, serve, even if only in some marginal cases, and for brief periods. (...) 'it could embellish a few hours, establish a fleeting bond with a comrade, keep the mind alive and healthy'. Primo Levi, "I sommersi e i salvati", in *Opere, di Primo Levi* , ed. Marco Belpoliti (Torino: Einaudi, 1997), 1103.

42   Walter Benjamin says that the image arises unexpectedly when words are "impossible". He writes: "Suppose, suddenly blocked, the movement of thought - it will be like a kind of backlash in a constellation overloaded with tension; a jolt that leads the image (...) to suddenly organise itself, to constitute itself into a monad... " Walter Benjamin, "Écrits français". Ed. Jean-Maurice Monnoyer (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), 346.

Fig. 4
Fondo Germano Facetti,
taccuino, n. 048

gasping on layers of corpses, children wrapped in rags and faeces, a few eye-balls looking on in terror'[43]. [Fig.7]

This horror immediately took the form of a drawing, much later published (1990) in *Il Parlamento Italiano*[44] but it was not until 2002 that Facetti's film *Antiutopia* was realised.[45]

The verbalisation although tense, did not lose the weight of emotion, so much so that when Facetti spoke about it, he could not hold back the tears. Director West himself, when talking about the experience of making the documentary, reports how difficult it was for Facetti to put into words the description of painful events. He writes: 'Perhaps I made a mistake, I had left freedom of language: but at the time it seemed better to give Germano the chance to express himself in the language that came naturally to him. Sometimes, he expressed himself with great difficulty; he could not find the words in any of the languages he spoke."[46]

The image thus transcends language and becomes a universally comprehensible language, arriving directly, albeit sometimes sacrificing factual accuracy in favour of impression. [Fig. 5]

Facetti's feat is not an isolated gesture; other eyes and, in other deported camps, create images. Aldo Carpi[47], and Alessandro Tartara,[28], using pencils or brushes, fix the cruelty of events on various media and with various techniques, choosing a realistic style to leave no room for interpretation. In fact, there are many artists who suffered deportation[48]. They had different personal stories, and different sensitivities, but in common, they had the desire to keep themselves alive through forms of expression, poor in instruments, rich in messages. Facetti's notebook, however, is, as a whole, the "art of holocaust"[49], an object that looks like no other. It is the result of a collection of different documents, a collection of borrowed drawings. It is as if an obsession was born in him to retrieve and carefully arrange archive documents of Germans saved from destruction, lists of comrades, poems, and photographs recovered from the various camps.[50] Even though the drawings are not by his own hand, Kaftan claims, the

43    Archive notes, box GF 94.

44    As Kaftan points out, there are three separate drawings of this episode. The original drawing is probably by Belgiojoso, made immediately after the incident. Facetti (or even Belgiojoso himself) would reproduce the drawing in the notebook. Much later, Belgiojoso would make a third version of this episode, representing it with a wider shot, and this is the drawing that is published in *Il Parlamento Italiano*. Émilie Kaftan, "Il taccuino di deportazione di Germano Facetti: un 'oggetto malgrado tutto'", in Daniela Muraca, ed., *Germano Facetti. dalla rappresentazione del lager alla storia del XX secolo* (Torino: SilvanaEditoriale, 2008), 39.

45    *"Antiutopia. Mauthausen - Gusen 1944-1945. Germano Facetti e Aurelio Sioli"* in Archivio *Istoreto*, fondo *Facetti German* [IT-C00-FD390].

46    West, *Note sulla realizzazione di La scatola gialla di Germano Facetti,* 145.

47    Aldo Carpi de' Resmini (1886-1973), was a Sicilian painter and sculptor. He won the chair in painting at the Brera Academy in 1930, where he taught until 1958. In January 1944, a fellow defector revealed the painter's Jewish origins to the fascists. They then informed the SS and Carpi was arrested and deported to Mauthausen and then to Gusen I: he managed to document life and death in the concentration camp with numerous sketches and a personal diary. See Aldo Carpi, *Diario di Gusen* (Milano: Garzanti, 1973).

48    Bernard Aldebert (1909-1974), Zoran Mušič (1909-2005), Renzo Biason (1914-1996), Giuseppe Novello (1897-1988), Goffredo Godi (1920-2013), among many.

49    Term from the title of a work by Sybil Milton and Janet Blatter, *Art of the Holocaust* (London: Orbis, 1982).

50    Belgiojoso published a small collection of poems he had composed in the concentration camp in 1986,
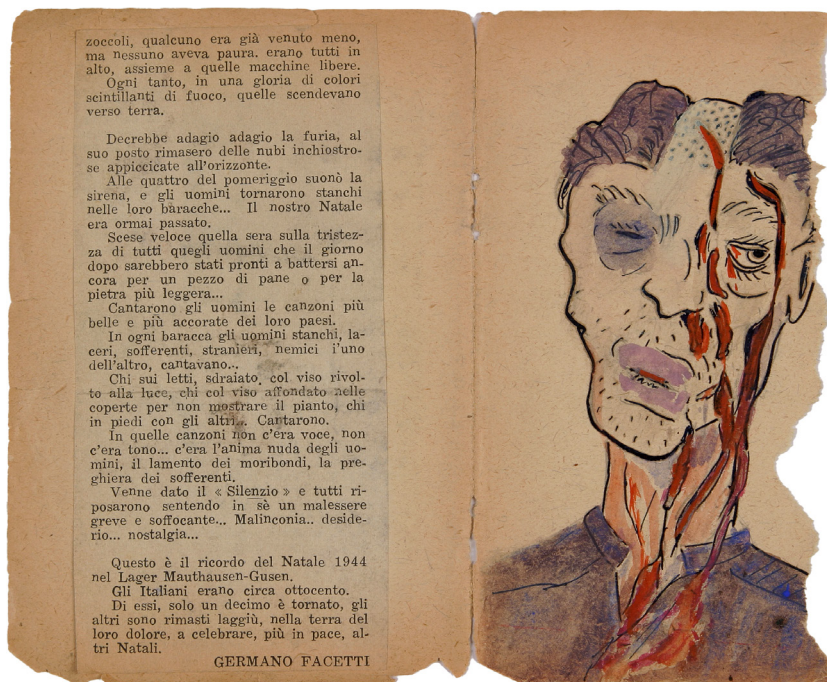
zoccoli, qualcuno era già venuto meno, ma nessuno aveva paura, erano tutti in alto, assieme a quelle macchine libere.

Ogni tanto, in una gloria di colori scintillanti di fuoco, quelle scendevano verso terra.

Decrebbe adagio adagio la furia, al suo posto rimasero delle nubi inchiostrose appiccicate all'orizzonte.

Alle quattro del pomeriggio suonò la sirena, e gli uomini tornarono stanchi nelle loro baracche... Il nostro Natale era ormai passato.

Scese veloce quella sera sulla tristezza di tutti quegli uomini che il giorno dopo sarebbero stati pronti a battersi ancora per un pezzo di pane o per la pietra più leggera...

Cantarono gli uomini le canzoni più belle e più accorate dei loro paesi.

In ogni baracca gli uomini stanchi, laceri, sofferenti, stranieri, nemici l'uno dell'altro, cantavano...

Chi sui letti, sdraiato, col viso rivolto alla luce, chi col viso affondato nelle coperte per non mostrare il pianto, chi in piedi con gli altri... Cantarono.

In quelle canzoni non c'era voce, non c'era tono... c'era l'anima nuda degli uomini, il lamento dei moribondi, la preghiera dei sofferenti.

Venne dato il « Silenzio » e tutti riposarono sentendo in sè un malessere greve e soffocante... Malinconia.. desiderio... nostalgia...

Questo è il ricordo del Natale 1944 nel Lager Mauthausen-Gusen.

Gli Italiani erano circa ottocento.

Di essi, solo un decimo è tornato, gli altri sono rimasti laggiù, nella terra del loro dolore, a celebrare, più in pace, altri Natali.

GERMANO FACETTI

Fig. 5
Fondo Germano Facetti, taccuino, n. 016

Fig.6
Fondo Germano Facetti, taccuino, n. 034

Fig.7
Fondo Germano Facetti, taccuino, n. 064

fact that he brought them together and combined them with other documents made this an 'art object' in spite of everything. Twenty years after the box was opened, Facetti began the construction of his own iconographic archive, and it seems that the notebook allowed him to find his personal form of expression: not a draftsman, not a photographer, but an assembler.[51]

## The absence of the "self"

Facetti's testimony, favouring general information, shows a certain character of discretion. Facetti remains outside the graphic narrative, and very often, the drawings or photos collected in the notebook do not concern him directly but relate to other concentration camps. Witnessing is expressed through the gesture of collecting to preserve and not writing to tell. This places the notebook outside the sphere of the 'private diary', and Facetti, by eschewing words, a difficult path for him, allows many to identify with his form of communication.

Perhaps this choice to evade the 'I' is a way of communicating avoidance or represents proof of the successful destruction of the annihilation that the perpetrators have wrought on the perception of the self. (fig. 8) This thesis could be reinforced, as Kaftan points out, by the presence of a self-portrait from which any sign of identity has been removed, transforming it into an abstract image of a prisoner like any other. An anonymous man, stripped of everything, barely identified by a number, who seems to have retained nothing of his previous life, not even his name.[52]

It is interesting to note how the absence of the self is also found in the form in which the archive has been organised. The pattern that emerges from an analysis of its structure is that the criterion with which the documents have been organised and catalogued, containers without any apparent uniformity, moves



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Non mi avrete (Spinea: Edizioni del Leone, 1986). Then, Come niente fosse (Spinea: Edizioni del Leone, 1992). Finally, two stories about his deportation experience: Lodovico Barbiano, Notte, nebbia. Racconto di Gusen (Milano: Hoepli,2009); Guanda, Parma, 1996 e Frammenti di una vita (Milano: Rosellina Archinto Editore, 1999).

51    Kaftan, Il taccuino di deportazione di Germano Facetti, 37.

52    Kaftan, Il taccuino di deportazione di Germano Facetti, 35.

Fig. 8
Fondo Germano Facetti,
taccuino, n. 014

away from the intention to suggest some form of biographical narrative. Thus, the narrating subject, even in this case, places himself 'outside himself' and outside the function of the protagonist of his story. This "conscious marginalisation of every evident trace of one's own biography" as D'Arrigo defines it, spares no document in the archive, subtracting it from individual experience and inserting it into the world of the transmission of historical knowledge.[53]

Therefore, to become objectively transmissible, the facts that have happened must free themselves from individual experience, the self-referentiality of which Facetti considers selfish. And transmitting becomes a gesture not only of narrative value, but political and civil. He himself says: 'I end my existence here; someone will pick it up somewhere else. We are all a bit like conveyor belts, except perhaps those who leave nothing to those who remain, because they have only wanted, selfishly demanded. Not leaving marks is sterile, not knowing nothing cancels".[54]

## A non-conclusion

Facetti's notebook is a complex object, an intermediary between two worlds of the same story: that of its editing and that of its function as a document-matrix. It was a tangible proof against the uncertainties of memory. It was the object that brought them back to reality by demonstrating the authenticity of what they experienced. In essence, drawings and documents are a substitute for memory, a kind of artificial memory especially when fifty years pass. Testimony is subject to alterations and omissions; the notebook was the guarantee that ensured the accuracy of the facts: notes, addresses, drawings, and lists.

On the one hand, there is a fixed past, immobilised in its events, and on the other, there is a present of a discourse about it that continues to evolve. On one side, there is testimony, on the other, there is history.[55]

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53    D'Arrigo, *Tra "laboratorio" e meta-biografia: il fondo Germano Facetti presso l'Istituto piemontese per la storia della Resistenza e della societá contemporanea "Giorgio Agosti"*, 134.

54    Crepet, *La ragione dei sentimenti*, 131.

Fig. X

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**Vincenzo Latina**

# Lampedusa.
# Memorial for the Shipwreck
# of the 3rd of October, 2013

*Memorial, Lampedusa, Quarry, Collective, Theatre*

## /Abstract

The report will describe an environmental recovery project carried out in an abandoned quarry in the island of Lampedusa, slightly embedded in the rock and overlooking the sea.

It is a striking witness of the southernmost strip of land in Europe.

This stretch of sea is the tragic "theatre" of people's migrations, of their hopes, anxieties, dramas, joys and sorrows, of humanity seeking for hope. At the same time the place is ideal to host collective events, it is a place of metaphysical suspension, suitable for quiet reflection, it is a witness-place for performances (events) and meetings.

Targeted interventions have been carried out by the inclusion of minimal contemporary "grafts" in order to activate, through their otherness, new relationships between the new and the existing.

The new has a laconic and essential character, therefore timeless, with a dry and minimal design, and evokes images and imaginaries of some important international events that have made the island of Lampedusa similar to a collective "theater".

The key words of the project might be: essential, poetic, laconic, sustainable, accessible.

On 3rd October, 2013 near the coast of Lampedusa there was a shipwreck with a tragic epilogue of 368 dead and 20 missing.

On the wall in contact with the coast, 368 holes were made, they look like air bubbles frozen in the rock which are trying to reach the surface. It is the transposition of a seabed.

The holes will be lit with wax lights at dusk and throughout the night, following a laic ritual. They will become like stars in the constellation. The loss, the absence of the hole in the wall becomes presence, becomes light. Death is transformed into life, hope.

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**Vincenzo Latina**, was born in 1964. In 1989 he graduated in Architecture at the IUAV in Venice. Since 2015 he has been Associate Professor of Architectural and Urban Design at the University of Catania; he has been a lecturer at the Mendrisio Academy of Architecture (USI). He has presented his works in several national and international publications and is frequently invited to show the design and research activity in many exhibitions, conferences and workshops.

He has received numerous awards and prizes, among which: the *"International Mediterranean Prize, City of Dialogue"*, promoted by the International Mediterranean Foundation (2020); the "Italian Architect Award 2015", awarded by the National Council of Architects, Landscapers, Planners and Conservatories; the *"ARCH&STONE'13 Architecture Award in stone of the new millennium. International Award - 2nd edition"* (2012); the *"Gold Medal for Italian Architecture 2012"* of the Milan Triennale; the *"International Award to the Client of Architecture Dedalo Minosse"* - under 40 (2004); *"The Prince and the Architect"* (2003) and *"International Award for Stone Architecture 2003"*

While Ulysses did everything he could
to return back to Ithaca,
the new migrants are in search
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living without the nagging worry
of the imminent end.

One of the greatest challenges to which humanity has been called is the phenomenon of the migration of entire human communities, in vast areas of the globe, due to multiple causes, amongst which a very fast climate change, as long as desertification, wars and conflicts, escaping from discrimination of all kinds and making every effort to improve one's own living conditions are the most important.

While causing great contradictions and social conflicts, the above are reasons for a political, social, economic and security confrontation and debate in large areas affected by migrations phenomena.

Let's hope these issues will be better managed and regulated: human beings cannot become trade commodities, or blackmail or be a threat of radical changes in human communities around the world.

Migratory phenomena are inherent in the human condition as "Homo Errans". The increase in global population and the fast growing environmental and geopolitical upheavals of modernity have hugely amplified these phenomena.

Since ancient times a large number of human events have seen the Mediterranean at the center of trade, navigations, conflicts, migrations and great shipwrecks of all kinds.

The oldest tale featuring shipwrecks is the Odyssey. Homer narrates of Odysseus' journey and the 14 places he has 'visited' in his 10-year wanderings, lost in the Mediterranean.

The opening shipwreck is caused by Poseidon, prompted by Apollo, one of Odysseus' fiercest antagonists.

During the third stop, in the country of the Lotophages, corresponding to the current Djerba, the crew fed on lotus flower and lost memory. From that moment on, it became a wandering in the Mediterranean between scary and captivating encounters, monsters and storms of all kinds.

Although more than 3000 years have passed, if we wanted to make a contemporary transposition of Odysseus' wandering, we could replace the ancient hero to contemporary migrations, the exodus from wars, famines and oppressions of all kinds. While Odysseus did everything to return back to Ithaca, the new migrants are searching for a new life, in the hope of finding a place where they can carry on living without the nagging worry of the imminent end. Like Odysseus, the journey is almost never straightforward, it is dotted with unforeseen events, frightening encounters, ancient and contemporary monsters, predators of bodies and souls, exploitation and multiple subjugations of all kinds. The desert crossing is the biggest challenge for many migrants from sub-Saharan Africa - a
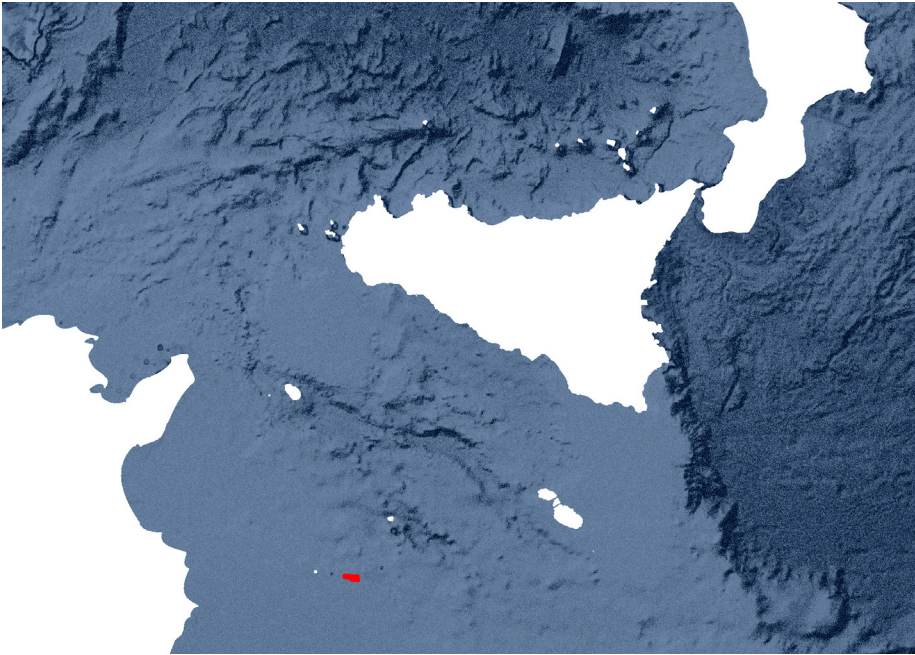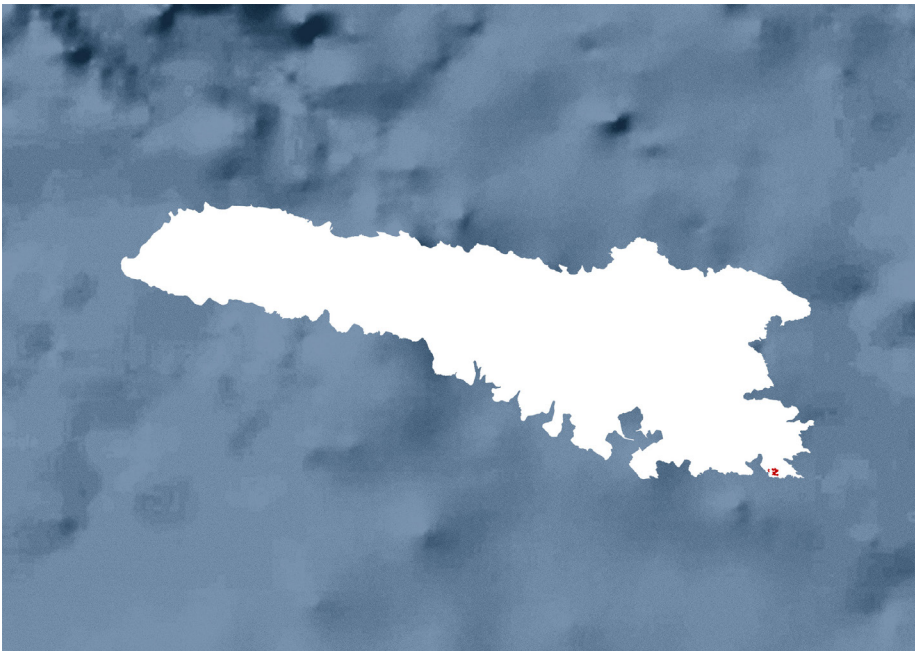
sea of hot sand - with numerous unexpected stops, suffering, and meetings of any type. Those who succeed, face the risk of being trapped in Libyan concentration camps, which can last months, with the aim of finding a way to pay or board a boat to Europe. For those embarking from Libya and Tunisia, the nearest European destination is the island of Lampedusa, the largest of the Pelagie archipelago. Geographically and geologically it is closer to Africa, being part of the extreme edge of the "African Plate".

1   Tunisia, Sicily and, in red Lampedusa

2   The area of the quarry near the airport of Lampedusa

A European can reach in a few hours, say no more than 3, any big city in the EU;

An Eritrean fleeing from a dictatorial regime that will chase him for kilometers, can take months walking to the coast, and even years to land in Lampedusa.
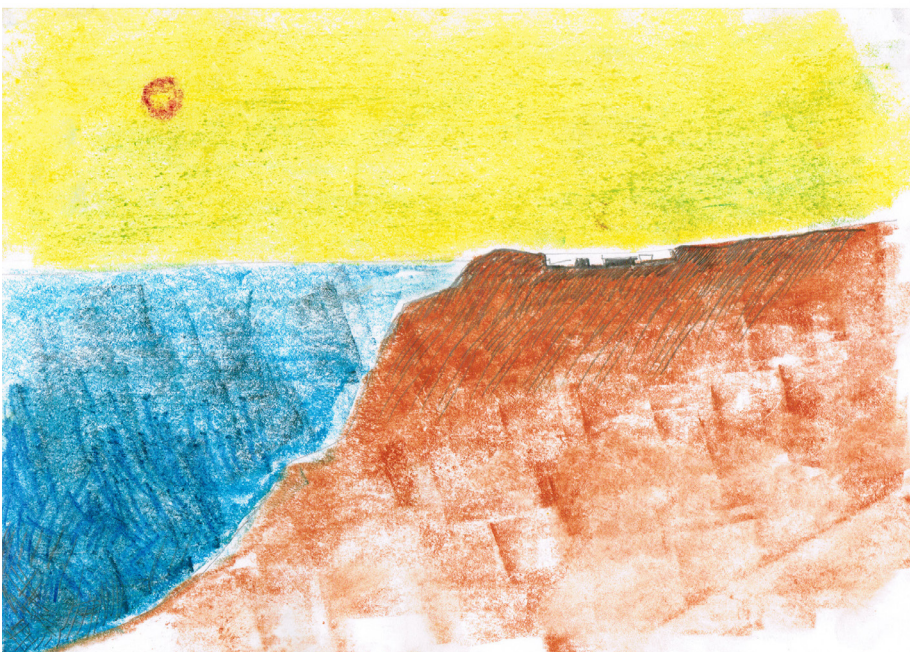
While a fictitious person, we call him by a fantasy name Marco, takes two

Fig. 1
Tunisia, Sicily and, in red Lampedusa

Fig. 2
The area of the quarry near the airport of Lampedusa

hours 2 and 45 minutes by plane from Catania to Berlin, Hamid (a young Eritrean migrant) took 1 year and 8 months from Asmara to Berlin and considers himself lucky to have achieved his goal.

Matteo Garrone's film 'Io Capitano', recently nominated for an Oscar as Best Foreign Language Film, 'managed to tell an epic journey without being trapped in rhetoric, mainly thanks to its ability to be inhabited by the stories of others'…. "Films about immigration can be very ugly: paternalistic, lacking in authenticity or didactic. The risk is to get trapped inside some rhetoric or to portray people in a caricaturist way or even to use them as a mirror. Matteo Garrone has not fallen into any of these temptations and has succeeded in making an almost impossible movie: telling a present story - consumed by continuous media representation - and transfiguring it into an archetype."[1]

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1    https://www.internazionale.it/essenziale/notizie/annalisa-camilli/2023/09/06/io-capitano-film-garrone (last accessed November 2024).
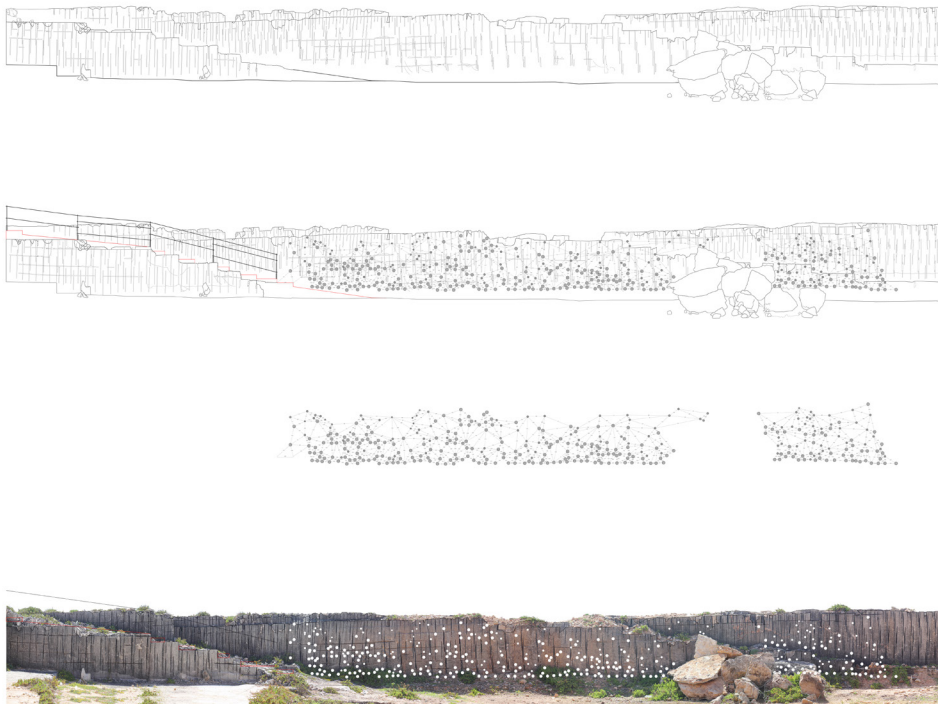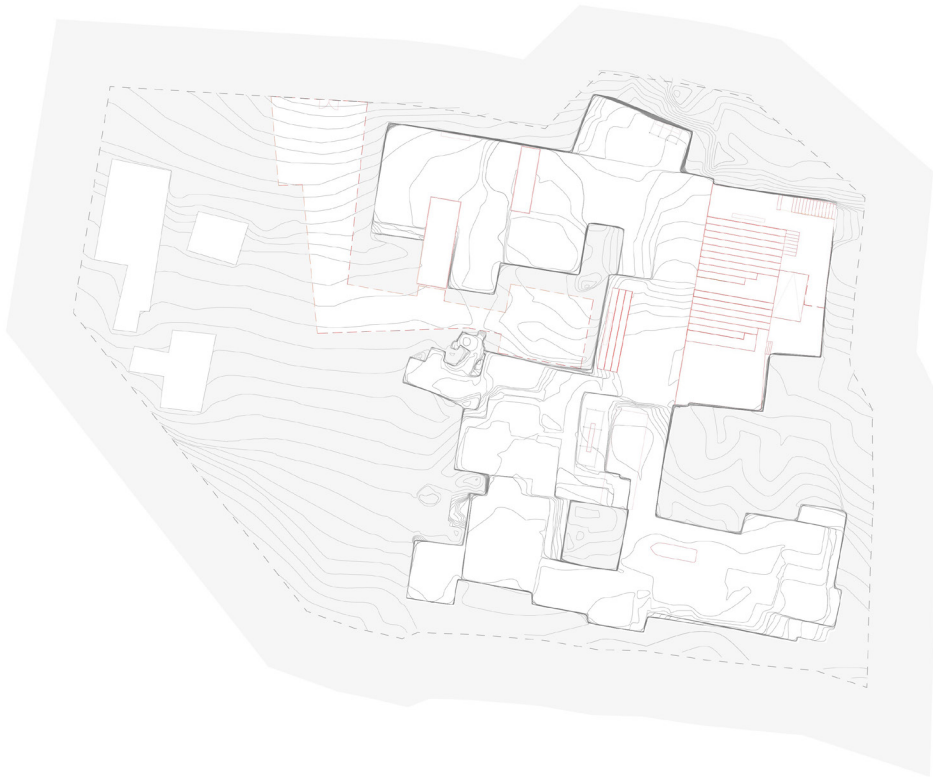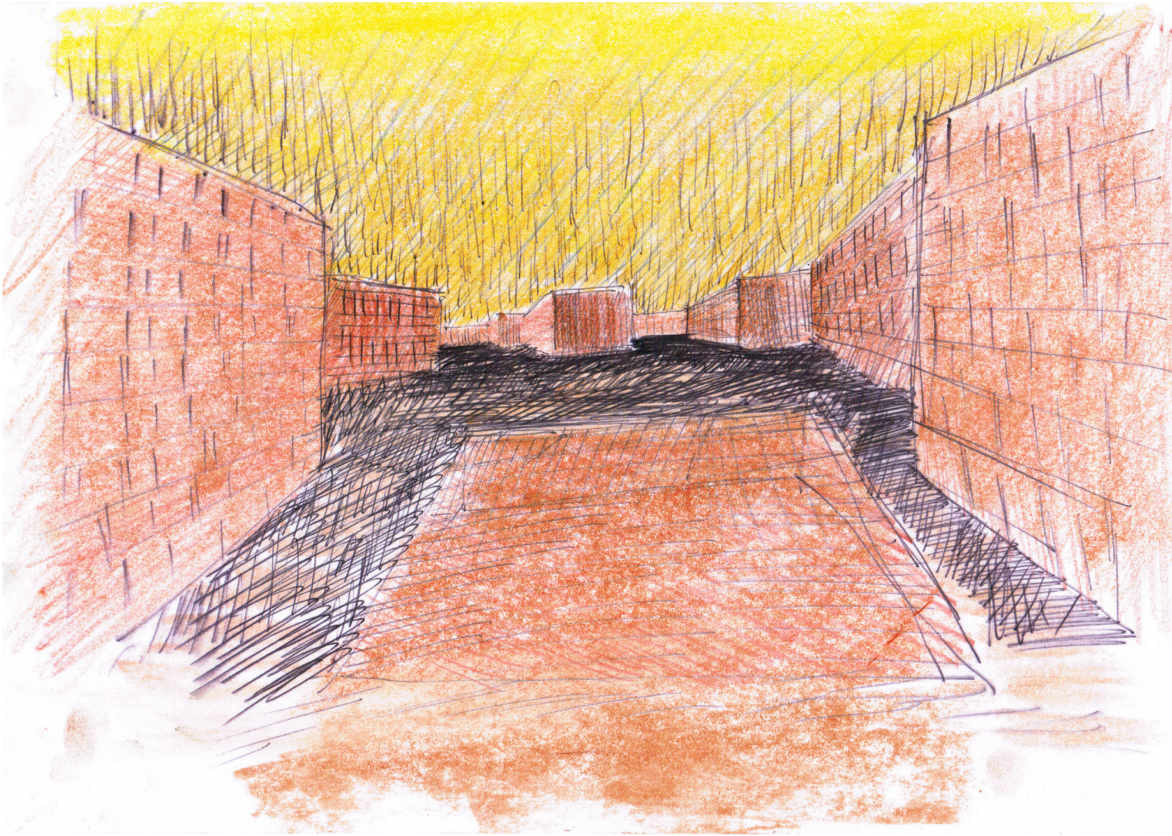
Fig. 3
View of the quarry

Fig. 4
Sketch of the section

Fig. 5
Plan of the quarry

Fig. 6
Wall of the quarry with
photomontage of the memorial
project

Similarly, the reports, recounts, memories and charges pressed by many relief workers, humanitarian associations and migrants are less well known and striking to the general public.

Two Sinti refugees from Ethiopia, who left Addis Ababa and were housed in a reception center in Rome, came up with the idea of drawing up a decalogue with twenty-eight rules for those who, like them, intend to set out on their journey. The first and last are given here – as a sample - as they can best figure out the dramatic lucidity and cynicism, mixed with luck, that a migration requires:

1. Never travel with brothers, wives, girlfriends, parents.

2. Share only with close friends, one or two people, the intention to leave.

3. On the day of departure do not greet the loved ones so as not to make even harder, if not impossible, the departure.

……………….

……………….

……………….

26. To become wisely selfish in order to help oneself, not necessary against others, but to give oneself an extra chance of survival.

27. Adapting one's character and spirit to the situation, knowing how to assert oneself when necessary.

28. Don't look behind

The migrants on the barges, setting sail from the Libyan and Tunisian coasts, see in Lampedusa the first patch of European land, hope, the southernmost outpost of Europe.

Fig. 7
Sketch of the inside of the quarry

**The project**

The redevelopment and restoration project of the ex Quarry, a site between Cala Francese and Punta Sottile, in the extreme south-east of the island, is part of a recovery programme for Lampedusa that involves the complex combination of the redevelopment of some degraded areas and to improve tourism on the island itself.

This programme began with the coastal and environmental recovery of Rabbit Island, which has recently become an exclusive tourist destination for those seeking a wild and little-explored marine environment and has been the scene of tragic events that have accentuated some of the opposition already present among the inhabitants. Sometimes these aspects - the tragic shipwrecks, the migrant landings and its tourist vocation - seem irreconcilable; at other times, they denote the great generosity of the people of Lampedusa towards those who find themselves overboard and in extreme difficulty.

Recently, this stretch of sea has been and still is - and presumably will be for a long time to come - the collective 'theatre' of people's migrations, of their hopes, anxieties, dramas, joys and sorrows of a fleeing humanity. For these features, the area suggests the character of a place of metaphysical suspension, suitable for quiet reflection: it is a witness-place. After hypothesising multiple interventions, the vocation of the place emerged and the creation of a 'Migration Memorial', a 'Natural Theatre' for civic, theatrical, musical and cultural events was imagined.

Among fundamental human rights there must also be the right to culture, such as the opportunity to access culture and the dissemination of different artistic expressions, for the sharing and exchange of ideas, for the protection of the Collective Memory: a space open to people, to host gatherings, music, theatrical performances and cultural events.

The 'Quarry's Natural Theatre' will therefore be a space for the people of Lampedusa, but also a site of tourist and cultural interest that will increase the island's attractiveness.

The environmental redevelopment project involves the recovery of the main quarry both for recreational and tourist purposes, and to commemorate the memory of some tragic events that occurred in the sea nearby the island. It is part of a widespread practice that combines various types of action: environmental recovery, territorial redevelopment and socio-cultural and economic enhancement.

Fig. 8  The theater area, view from north.

Fig. 9
The theater area, view from east.

Fig. 10
Concert in the quarry by the pianist Takahiro Yoshikawa, titled Lampedusa un mare di Pace, organized by Rotary Valle Sabbia, Brescia and supported by the Japanese Embassy in Italy, the Province of Brescia and the municipality of Lampedusa and Linosa, 8 October 2022.

The area is imagined as a two-faced herma, as a place that interprets the main 'vocations' of the island in recent years: that of the first reception of migrants who set sail from the coasts of north-west Africa; and that of the hospitality and tourist-vacation. At the same time, its shape inspires the installation of devices and symbols of the island's 'memory'.

The project is informed by some suggestions: travel, fire, memory, the obstacle as a catalyst of escape. In addition to the journey, the collective "theater" - the Memorial - is one of the founding themes of the project; it is not an object, a sculpture, a memento-warning monument. Far from it, it aims to renew the shared memory enacted by the ritual of light, of fire.

It is supposed that for 125 thousand years humans have started to regularly use fire which is a strange predator. The hypnotic power of fire must be in our DNA. When we light a fire to make embers or to heat the country house, we city humans, who live without a fireplace, stay there and never move from it – think about it. Fire is hypnotic, it reduces anxiety, it encourages social relations, parties, meetings, community ceremonies, sometimes it triggers tribal rituals: fire is contagious.

Fire requires apollinean skill to master it and arouses dionysian feelings too, at the same time it is an antimony, an unsolvable contradiction which comes out when two opposite opposing statements (thesis and antithesis) can be equally proved.

Some fire's antinomies are: life–destruction   terror - salvation   sacred - profane   eros-thanatos.

Among the antinomies of fire: setting fire, the firefight, which are some of the conflictual actions of the war; gathering around the fire is among the most ancient rituals of reconciliation, encounter and peace.

Fig. 11
Commemoration of the shipwreck of 3 october 2013. The light ritual consisted of the ligthing of the 368 openings in the wall of the memorial, 8 October 2022

FREUD resorts to polarities: that is, he believes that in every man operate essentially 2 types of drives:

- "life drive" ("Eros"), including libido and self-preservation drive;
- "death drive" ("Thanatos"), which manifests itself in self destructive and hetero destructive tendencies.

The project involves the setting up of actions that are respectful of the environmental peculiarities of the site and its natural orographic and topographic conformation: a quarry slightly set in the rock overlooking the sea. The quarry was active until the 70s of the last century, after which it was abandoned and used as an illegal 'open-air' dump.

A recent reclamation programme cleared the area of spoil, waste, rubbish and special waste accumulated over time, returning the quarry floor to the cultivation site.

The first survey of the area was characterized by a multitude of intense suggestions. The quarry, is slightly embedded in the rock, it displays the traces of excavation and extraction of limestone blocks used until the 1970s to build part of the island's inhabited centre. It was similar to an archaeological site of an ancient human settlement. The different extraction planes, at different heights, seem to be the bases or remains of the foundations of archaic temples or ancient buildings, a site that has been abandoned for thousands of years, one of the imaginary stops of the Odyssey.

The harshness of the site perceived by the 'client' as 'decay' to be remedied - proposing to create a garden - it was, in reverse, interpreted as an opportunity: the different plans of excavation "… which shuts from view so large a part"[2], the proximity to the sea, the roar of the waves, the salinity of the air and the extraordinary beauty of the place have become tools of the project.

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2    "che da tanta parte dell'ultimo orizzonte il guardo esclude" from the poem    "L'infinito", from the english translation by  Frederick Townsend – 1887 NY

Fig. 12 -13

The shade structures for the summer season

A wall bordering the coast became a 'memorial' thanks to the re-reading of one of Giacomo Leopardi's most intense poems, 'The Infinite'. One cannot look beyond the wall from inside the quarry. The elements of nature, though, may be sensed. The sound, the smell, the salty taste and the spray of the sea reaching the inside of the quarry when it lashes the coastline nearby make up for it, a multitude of sensations and emotions leading to bewilderment.

The wall of the quarry, in the same way as the "hedge", amplifies the imagination of feeling shipwrecked in the sea of emotions. The interventions reuse the "debris", the remains of blocks and embankments already present both outside and inside the quarry to create a large access ramp to the area and to create a large 'maritime theatre' on the already naturally exsisting slopes to accommodate the audience, having the sea the stage and the backdrop. The large terrace (steps) can accommodate events, commemorations, parties, theater performances and concerts up to 500 people. It consists of a theory of gentle steps that structure a peculiar cordon set into the existing quarry floor, which is partly outcropping. Such a location greatly reduces the need to fill the concrete with aggregates and pigments from the quarry itself. At the side of the steps, in correspondence with the axis of the scene, a large seat has been placed, apparently placed on a podium; this composition multiplies the points of view and in the specific case structures the relationship of the fragments existing in the area, as if they were archaeological outcrops.

Suggesting a further step towards the sea, the visitor is offered the prow of a boat, salvaged from the wreckage of migrants who recently landed on the island and laid there after having undergone a fire treatment, an ancient traditional technique for preserving wood[3].

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3 SHOU SUGI BAN "burn the cedar planks"

Fig. 14
views and overall view of the wall of the memorial

Its presence has lent it abstractness and timelessness, so that it has become an eerie, mute testimony of the peoples who have sailed and been shipwrecked in the Mediterranean over the millennia.

The fire has changed its identity, transforming it into a relic without age, a fossil belonging to distant, present and future memories, driven by the waves of the sea and temporarily lying in the quarry.

9  The theater area, view from  east

10   concert in the quarry by the pianist Takahiro Yoshikawa, titled Lampedusa un mare di Pace, organized by Rotary Valle Sabbia, Brescia and supported by the Japanese Embassy in Italy, the Province of Brescia and the municipality of Lampedusa and Linosa, 8 October 2022

11  Commemoration of the shipwreck of 3 october 2013. The light ritual con-

Fig. 15  Partial views of the wall of the memorial

Fig. 16  Detail of the commemorative candles placed in the 368 openings of the wall of the memorial

sisted of the ligthing of the 368 openings in the wall of the memorial, 8 October 2022.

Between the boat and the sea is the rock wall, the heart of the memorial, the last stage of the route. The wall was pierced following the plot of a constellation. There are 368 holes in a wall in touch with the sea, they look like air bubbles aiming to reach the sky, as many as the number of people who drowned near the island in the shipwreck on 3 October 2013.

In renewing the memory of the shipwreck, a secular rite of light has been imagined: at dusk, throughout the night, the holes will be lit up, like stars, forming a constellation. The loss, the absence that the hole in the wall represents, becomes presence, becomes light. Death is transformed into a symbol of new life and hope. The act of lighting and placing the fire inside the hole that lights up with vibrant light is an intimate tactile and gestural emotion. The fire becomes a visual metaphor for light in darkness through a secular, multi-faith ritual that predisposes to recollection and community.

Inside the quarry, two steel frames with an essential design, similar to trilithic structures are set in opposition to the massiveness and minerality of the site. These structures, with their metaphysical features, do not exceed the height of the ground level above the quarry and are incorporated into the area.

At the same time, for their essentiality and compositional dryness, they become the ordering elements of the site, underneath which large, bare seats are arranged; in the summer, shade cloths are to be installed to make the daytime stop less 'hot'.

Fig. 17
The theater area, view from south

The perimeter fence, in appearance shaky and temporary, consists of a wire mesh spaced from the ground that allows small fauna to pass through without difficulty. The gate at the entrance to the area, unlike the fence, is a gap marking the boundary between the inside and the outside of the quarry.

Targeted interventions involving the insertion of minimal contemporary 'grafts' that activate, through their weighed alterity up, new relationships between the new and the existing are at an advanced stage of realization and nearly completed. The intention is to 'equip' and endow the area, which is already extraordinarily full of charm and tension, with those essential devices and 'services' necessary for an effective, evocative, easy and safe use.

The new elements have a laconic and essential character, and therefore timeless, with a dry and minimal design, so as to interpret the area, effectively enhancing it in order for it to become a peculiar "place" on the island that evokes images and imagery of some important international events that have seen the island of Lampedusa resemble a "Collective Theatre".

12 -13  The shade structures for the summer season

14  views and overall view of the wall of the memorial

15  Partial views of the wall of the memorial

16  Detail of the commemorative candles placed in the 368 openings of the wall of the memorial

17  The theater area, view from south

On 3 October 2013, 368 people, mainly Eritreans, lost their lives in a tragedy off the coast of Lampedusa, nearby the Quarry. There were over 500 people on

Fig. 18

Detail of the commemorative candles placed in the 368 openings of the wall of the memorial. Lampedusa.

Ph. Vincenzo Latina

board, and they were close enough to see the lights of the coast. The boat capsized and only 155 of them survived.

It is imagined that every year, on October the 3rd, within a ceremony, at dusk and throughout the night, the same holes can be lit by wax candles, so as to become like celestial constellations.

On 8 October 2022, the quarry hosted a piano recital by the internationally renowned maestro Takahiro Yoshikawa, Milanese by adoption, who divides his concert activities between Italy and his native Japan.

The event entitled 'Lampedusa: a sea of peace' was promoted by the Rotary Club Valle Sabbia Centenario, District 2050, under the patronage of the Province of Brescia and the Embassy of Japan. More than fifty Rotary guests arrived on the island; the event was attended by some schools and the population of Lampedusa too. After the concert, at dusk, with the favour of the full moon, the Migration Memorial was re-enacted, with a secular rite of light that involved the participants, who took an active part in composing a sort of luminous constellation on a wall of the quarry, by lighting 368 small wax candles, one for each hole, commemorating the shipwrecked people who died on 3 October 2013. The holes arranged like air bubbles in the water aim to reach the surface, the sky.

It was an exceptional occasion of great collective emotion, a preview of future activities in the area.

## L'INFINITO
Giacomo Leopardi

Sempre caro mi fu quest'ermo colle,
e questa siepe, che da tanta parte
dell'ultimo orizzonte il guardo esclude.
Ma sedendo e mirando, interminati
spazi di là da quella, e sovrumani
silenzi, e profondissima quïete
io nel pensier mi fingo, ove per poco
il cor non si spaura. E come il vento
odo stormir tra queste piante, io quello
infinito silenzio a questa voce
vo comparando: e mi sovvien l'eterno,
e le morte stagioni, e la presente
e viva, e il suon di lei. Così tra questa
immensità s'annega il pensier mio:
e il naufragar m'è dolce in questo mare.[1]

## THE INFINITE
(Translated by – Frederick Townsend)

This lonely hill to me was ever dear,
This hedge, which shuts from view so large a part
Of the remote horizon. As I sit
And gaze, absorbed, I in my thought conceive
The boundless spaces that beyond it range,
The silence supernatural, and rest
Profound; and for a moment I am calm.
And as I listen to the wind, that through
These trees is murmuring, its plaintive voice
I with that infinite compare;
And things eternal I recall, and all
The seasons dead, and this, that round me lives,
And utters its complaint. Thus wandering
My thought in this immensity is drowned;
And sweet to me is shipwreck on this sea.[2]

1 Poem "L'infinito", Giacomo Leopardi.

2 https://www.lieder.net/lieder/get_text.html?TextId=971895 (last accessed November 2024).

**Project data**

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of the project: | **Environmental Recovery and renovation of the ex Quarry between Punta Sottile and Cala Francese  - Lampedusa e Linosa - Agrigento.** |
| Client: | **Comune di Lampedusa e Linosa, Agrigento** |
| Architecture: | **Vincenzo Latina** |
| Collaborators: | **Shai Cristallo, Roberto Germanò** |
| Consultant: | **Geologo Giuseppe Sorrentino, Agronomo Carlo Di Leo** |
| Building Company: | **ATI D.L. Costruzioni srl, Impresa Costruzioni Eredi Marotta Salvatore** |
| Use: | **Parco costiero** |
| Year: | **2017-2023** |
| Location: | **isola di Lampedusa** |
| Dimension: | **5000 mq circa** |