Italia '61 otherwise RETHINK THE FALLEN UTOPIA

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Politecnico di Torino Department of Architecture and Design M.Sc. Architecture for Sustainability

Italia '61 otherwise: Rethink the Fallen Utopia

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To my families on both sides of the sea

...this must be what it means to be a ghost, being certain that life exists, because your four senses say so, and yet unable to see it... José Saramago, *Blindness*, 1995

My body is like the City of the Sun. It has no place, but it is from it that all possible places, real or utopian, emerge and radiate. Michel Foucault, *Utopian Body*, 1966

Intractable Architecture

The ruin is not often associated with the idea of modernity, and yet the human race has never produced as many ruins as in the last century. Multiple models with the intent to provide solutions to order and adjust to the needs of an increasingly fast and changing society have become obsolete more and more quickly. This speed has brought with it the uncontrollable mutation of the landscape, displaying a texture of wounds and residues resulting from unsuccessful or unsustainable attempts at human domination of the territory (Clement, 2005), and a constellation of inert monumental architecture stuck in the challenges of the past piling up in front of our eyes (Benjamin, 2003).

The symbolic power of modern architecture is indisputable. This has been able to reflect in its language, as never before, both a critical and a purposeful dimension of humanity in tension, conflict, and constant change. It has managed to accurately represent, through an incredible variety of models and forms, eras, and moments of modern society, whose extremely varied conceptions of progress branch out and deform based on its evolution and self-discovery. The politics, the economy, and the culture of a society located in a moment and geography have found a discursive platform and a linguistic range for a lasting symbolic self-construction.

However, architecture, a bit egocentric, a bit messianic, and within the logical ideals of modernity, tends to assume that its grandiose attempts will continue in the future to be the answer to the questions that originated them, and obstinately ignores the probability of one's own failure and the potential negative after-effects. We thus inherit a constellation of architectures embedded in the past with which it is difficult to make accounts about the future of the city: monumental objects whose ambitions expired before their materiality, and that beyond containers of meanings and history, become tanks of questions

INTRODUCTION RETHINKING THE MODERN RUIN

about the possibilities of its future.

If we think of cases of great relevance such as the Ruhr or Lingotto as legacies of the industrial landscape that materialize the extractivist culture, or Pruitt-Igoe that represents the ambitions of habitability with industrial logic, or the brutalist architectures of the communist regimes that freeze in the time the political and oppressive message that characterizes them, we recognize the difficulties for the treatability of said architectures.

The modern ruin suffers from the evil of functionality as if it were an addiction. It needs to be reactivated or succumb to its failure. These failing architectures play a marginal role in the political economy, however, the potentiality of the project cannot be emancipated from the economic capacity of the society that owns them. They remain suspended and frozen in time, awaiting the alignment of economic conditions that will return their profitability and allow for a possible reinvention.

The Three lenses

But at the same time, the modern ruin is a descendant of utopia, therefore, in order to promote its resignification, it is pertinent to discover the lights and the shadows, the values and the ghosts that beset them. The hypothesis of this work is to use the lenses of Utopia and Dystopia as a methodology of inquiry, and successively the lens of Heterotopia for the recognition of alternative ways, logics, and orders within the fallen utopia, rethinking and re-proposing it.

Utopia is the "original form" of the project of the city¹ (Secchi, 2000), however, in this work, it is not used as a category that constitutes the project (which means it is not intended to propose a new utopia) but as a tool of utopianism for criticism and searches for new perspectives of the future. Dystopia and Heterotopia, as analogous logics, are also used as project devices to reinterpret the city project.

Italia '61

In particular, the thesis focuses on a representative case capable of reflecting a specific economic condition (the Italian economic boom of the '60s), but which is also capable of rethinking cultural meanings and ideals characteristic of the Fordist utopia: Italia '61.

1. Secchi indicates in Thomas More the first urbanistic text, which describes a city and the society that occupies it. The city is in the utopian texts a conceptual figuration of a possible state of the society (Secchi, 2000). Italia '61 is a failed utopia of a technocratic model of society and this makes that place evocative of different reasoning. The international expo was born in Turin as a utopia of modernity and progress, which narrates the great Italian advances and achievements in technology during the economic boom, but unconsciously adopts that liberal model of exploitation and domination of the territory as synonymous with avant-garde and modernity, and that despite the high ambitions it pursued, over the years it becomes an antithesis of the utopian discourse that originates it, becoming an intractable space in the city.

Italia '61 carries with it a series of imaginaries about the future that, both during its origin and during its decline, lead to questioning the role of utopian thought in the construction of future scenarios and spatial research, and of the very transformations of the utopian exercise based on the transformation over time of the currents of thought.

The ideals of the society in the mid-twentieth century, strongly aligned with the rigid parameters of the organization of the territory, are currently no longer synonymous with modernity and development. On the contrary, like the great advances of industrial society at the end of the 19th century, which were conceived as a series of evils to be fought by modern urban planning, the modernist utopia of 60 years ago leaves a series of wounds and problems that lead to conceiving that utopia as an expired and erroneous one. However, within the utopian discourse of the configuration of order, despite its expiration, there are useful tools to exercise new modes of utopianism (Pinder, 2002)

Approach

The thesis addresses both the process of formation and evolution and a possible projective reconfiguration (hence speculative) of the case study through the categories of Utopia, Dystopia, and Heterotopia. Therefore, it is structured into two chapters related to the Fallen Utopia and its reinterpretation, respectively.

The first, *Utopia in Decline*, initially makes a historical reconstruction of the project that, in terms of the categories of Utopia and Dystopia, propitiates the origin, development, and failure of the project. *Utopian Ambitions* and Building a Modernist Dream comprise a careful description of the original project, which allows for further interpretation through a series of illustrations in Synaptic Imaginarium. Subsequently, the project is inserted within the Socioeconomic and Cultural Context to recognize the influence and heritage of the city of Torino and the utopian debate of the '50s and '60s. Next, in Towards Dystopia, the lens of Dystopia makes it possible to understand the deformation of the utopian values and the shift towards the search for new ideals in the changing society of the mid-20th century, uncovering the current state of deterioration

and neglect of a neighborhood that has been transformed in a contradictory way in the past 60 years.

The second chapter, *Italia '61 Otherwise*, seeks to use the lens of Heterotopia to recompose the dystopian imaginary of an Italia '61 fragmented in time and recognize and empower there the spontaneous and transgressive dynamics, which propose alternative logics of order to those inherited from the utopian project. The category of Heterotopia helps to identify other previously unperceived spatial logics: actors whose voices, absent in the project discourse, transgressively occupy the space. This category, in particular, allows us to identify otherness in the context, practices, and dynamics, both human and non-human, which collaterally appropriate the projected space and modify it. In this sense, the case of Italia '61 is a speculative case of an eventual non-project or, in other words, a catalyst for collaborating tensions in transforming the given spatial resilience. Spontaneous Italia '61 explores *Anthropic and Multispecies Heterotopias*, and how they interact and appropriate space, to finally propose two *Future scenarios* in which these Heterotopias are empowered in order to propose new modes of resilience and coexistence.

Utopia and Architecture

However, using the category of utopia requires an in-depth study of the literature on its relationship with architecture.

David Pinder, in his essay In Defense of the Utopian Urbanism, defends the idea that Re-thinking utopian urbanism is important in the collective debate on politics and society (Pinder, 2002). For him, especially in the current climate of despair and postmodern skepticism, we have moved away from the utopian exercise of simply imagining. It is a legacy of history and of the authoritarian attempts to materialize utopia in recent centuries. However, it is important to recognize in utopian thought the critical dimension beyond the impositional spirit, with the aim of imagining different cities and a different urban life (Ibidem). It is necessary to take another look at the construction of utopian imaginaries of the city, to rescue utopia through the use of new tools. Adapt the construction of ideals to the contents of the utopian exercise of the past.

The search for control and order by our societies has been constant throughout history, however, the literary and spatial representation of desire aspiring to the highest ideals was born under the term of Utopia around 1516. Thomas More coins the term in a game of homophones derived from Greek. Eu-topia and Outopia whose meaning is respectively no-place and good-place.

Following the example of the Republic of Plato, More gives rise to a speculative literary current useful to confront the social and political situation of his time, through a non-existent political entity in which all the contradictions and negative aspects of the 14th-century English society are transgressed: the island of Utopia. Particularly, for that time, the innovation lies in the proposal of the legitimacy of religious freedom and is developed as a criticism of the context of a religious war. We find here the first utopianist exercise. Utopia turns out to be a critical and reading instrument of conjunctural photography, which outlines a horizon towards which the author firmly considers that said society should go.

In turn, inspired by More and also by Plato, 'La città del sole' of 1602 by Tommaso Campanella also advocates an attempt to reconcile reason and faith. His utopia proclaims a civilization in which science and naturalism maintain a position similar to that of religion, in contrast to the theocentric contextual values that led to Campanella's conviction for heresy in 1599. Campanella's proposal means rupture and contradiction of the established values through a literary criticism that proposes a non-existent place with a different order.

Both proposals are taken up at the beginning of the 19th century for the formation of critical discourse in response to the great evils of the industrial city. Benevolo places the origin of modern urbanism there. In this time of great hopes, different attempts to advance initiatives for change seek to bring together technical and ideological arguments not only in the organization of space but in the construction of a democratic community (Benevolo, 1967). In contrast to the overpopulation of industrial urban centers, and the terrible living conditions of the proletariat, these utopias challenge the organizational model imposed by individual mechanical progress, in a new line of thought that suggests new modes of spatial and social order. The Utopias of Owen, Fourier, and Cabet consist of a series of settlement models based on a community logic that seeks to balance work in the factory with study and free time.

These attempts to organize the industrial city went beyond discourse and representation and attempted to approach the proposed utopian horizon: universal harmony (Guarneri, 1991). Beyond the success or failure they achieved, it is important to highlight their ability to conceive spatial order as a trigger for social order, despite remaining abstract and schematic solutions (Benevolo, 1967). In these examples, Utopia as a built spatial project was probably fruitful just in the immediate term, however, the utopianist exercise of resignifying parameters would give rise to the range of subsequent urban experiences, beginning with the Garden Cities which in turn, despite their ideological failure, would become the basis of urban planning proposed by the modern movement (Pinder, 2005).

Following the logic of a balanced way of life, Howard's Garden Cities promote a socio-spatial revolution through a polycentric scheme of a social city that recalls previous utopian visions (Ibidem). For Howard, the utopian exercise is fundamental since he considers it a kind of compass that indicates the direction in which to go, and in this context, he presents the Garden City as a spatial model with new ways of relating, to produce immediate improvement and foster more entrenched social change in the future. However, Howard's proposal to implement a social reform through the organization of space and activities depends on modes of restriction, control, and creation of pure space (Pinder, 2002) and once the social imaginary longed for by the model fades, remains an authoritative vision of spatial ordering directly connected to the modern movement.

The new modern visions of the first half of the century are strongly fueled by the flourishing of avant-garde activity and the reconstruction process after the Great War. Multiple visions and approaches to the problem of living and the modern city were developed contemporaneously, therefore it is impossible to deny the heterogeneous nature of the modern movement and reduce its utopianist exercise to a single orientation, however, due to its undeniable influence, the CIAM and their ideological transformation play a central role in the visions of the city and the construction of a utopian imaginary.

The Modernists' call to order conceived the change of urban space as the tool to generate a wider social chance (Pinder, 2002), through what Le Corbusier called 'the horrible and ineluctable life of tomorrow' (Le Corbusier, 1918), urbanism in tune with standardization and mass production. This vision quickly aligns itself with the authoritarian discourses that spread throughout Europe and that would unleash the Second World War (Pedret, 2013), and consequently, the distaste that the modernist utopia successively leaves behind in a society hit by war causes the adoption of a skeptical and anti-utopianist spirit that condemns and rejects that alienating spatial authoritarianism.

This degeneration of utopianism and the skeptical climate in which we find ourselves lies in the crisis and exasperation of the modern project. Kevin Robins identifies the current climate as a type of 'imaginative collapse' (Robins, 1991) which Pinder in turn defines as banality (Pinder, 2002). Our generation, hopeless and pessimistic, whose utopian reasoning is increasingly closer to the construction of dystopian imaginaries and less and less to the proposal of utopian ideals, cannot see beyond the "good enough city" (Robins, 1991). However, beyond the failures of the modern movement and the successive rejection that they caused, the separation between the modernist ideals –that have shaped the reality of contemporary cities– and their failure constitutes the starting point for promoting new ways of understanding and also alternative visions of ordering (Hetherington, 1997).

Whether Utopia or Dystopia, they offer an opportune platform to exercise a creative critique of the context and reality of the societies in which we live, playing a mutual complementary role in the construction of future scenarios. Their roles correspond respectively to the recognition and denunciation of the problems of society, and the proposal of ideal solutions to said problems.

New tools for utopianism

Utopias today must move away from the strict theological notions of progress until today: 'a fixed ideal of spatial and social order', and instead allow the participation of diverse voices "allowing the space for the articulation of different needs and wishes" (Pinder, 2002). Pinder considers that the main ingredients of contemporary utopian urbanism should be the rejection of authoritarian utopian schemes and the continuous questioning of established ideals and parameters. This rejection, however, is different from the denial of the historical forms of utopianism, which would represent a denial of the critical exercise itself. This anticipation of the utopian exercise is essential to analyze and diagnose the present in the search for potentialities that allow future transformations (Benhabib, 1986).

Utopia, as a design instrument inherited from the last century, makes no sense in a present that has overcome and rejected such dynamics of control and extreme rationalization. It is necessary to find new instruments that allow the creation of utopian imaginaries that go beyond the alienation and authoritarianism of the modernist utopia. Heterotopia would be a novel instrument for the discovery and recognition of alternative desires for order (Hetherington, 1997).

Heterotopia is a medical coined for the first time in the discussion of space by Foucault in 1966 to describe "certain ones that have the curious property of being in relation with all the other sites but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invent the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect." (Foucault, 1967). The concept is ambiguous, however, it offers a conceptual base on which many authors would later theorize to deepen its development. Hetherington, one of them, finds Heterotopia as a contrary or alternative process to a pre-established contextual order, elucidating contradictions and tensions in the ways of being of the space (Ibidem). Hetherington's concept of heterotopia aligns perfectly with Pinder's central utopian issue of finding better ways of existing. The search for alternative logics of order is then the ultimate goal of utopia, and for this, heterotopia is an extraordinary instrument for the recognition of possible new logics of ordering that can be enhanced in the search to reach a utopian horizon. The goal of the work is not to build a new utopia but to offer a prospect of the future for a place that seems to have remained suspended in the past which, moreover, is not even real. A maladaptive reflection of the past to a contradictory reality of the present. The objective of this thesis focuses on using Heterotopia and the concept of otherness to approach new ways of thinking about space and the ideals that Italia '61 could pursue within the contemporary debate. The thesis is oriented towards a methodological inquiry about the adaptation of certain instruments from other disciplines and their use in the reading and projection of the future space in the contemporary city. Utopia, Dystopia, and Heterotopia are arranged as lenses that allow space to be understood from other perspectives, and especially the latter, reconfiguring and transgressing the logics of the first two mechanisms in order to approach new ways of thinking about the future in the city.

ITALIA '61, UTOPIA IN DECLINE



ITALIA '61 UTOPIAN AMBITIONS

The banner of the Italian identity

Italy celebrates the first centenary of its national unity in 1961. It is the centenary of a historical event that moved the whole world, gave new impulses to the national liberation movements, and rejoined the values of Italian civilization with the great currents of European thought. The centenary celebrations take place in Turin because the unification of Italy was launched from Turin and here was proclaimed on 17 March 1861 by the Subalpine Parliament. They began in Rome on 25 March with the solemn session of the Joint Chambers in Montecitorio, during which the President of the Republic addressed an entire celebratory speech to the Senators, Deputies, and the country that aroused wide echo in every environment in Italy and abroad."

Italia '61 is a project that was born as a representation and materialization of political and social discourse. In this way, and before any description, to understand the built and projected phenomenon of Italia '61, it is pertinent to deal with the conditions and context that define such a discourse. We refer in this way to the spirit of the times², a spirit in crisis, located in the final stretch of a period of rapid and radical modernization, and the germination of a thought that questions the *status quo*.

1. See 'Guida ufficiale Italia '61'.

2. Zeitgeist. Coined mainly by Hegel, the term defines the close relationship between the spirit of a people and the moment of history they are going through. Le Corbusier defines architecture as the result of the spirit of the times. In 'Toward an Architecture' he says: "A great epoch has begun. There exists a new spirit. There exists a mass of work conceived in the new spirit; it is to be met with particularly in industrial production. Architecture is stifled by custom. The 'styles' are a lie. Style is a unity of principle animating all the work of an epoch, the result of a state of mind which has its own special character. Our own epoch is determining, day by day, its own style. Our eyes, unhappily, are unable yet to discern it." (Le Corbusier, 1927)



Night celebrations. "Here the entire nation was eager to take part in a spectacular event that flaunted its personalities and identity." (Chiorino, 2005). Source: 'Italia '61: La celebrazione del centenario'.

On the one hand, we face a retrospective gaze, eager for the past and the great and ambitious interests of the modern movement. A period characterized by cities' full-speed industrialization and the exasperation of a consumption model. On the other hand, looking to the future, we have the appearance of the first lights of a critical and revolutionary sphere that questions the preconceived model, demanding a more humane and social face for industrial development.

Italia '61 is the representation of the urban processes of that situation. The hypothesis of this work is that it is developed mainly for the realization and exemplification of a functional utopian model that reflects industrial society, whose principles, however, are beginning to be criticized and contradicted by the new currents of thought that circulate in Europe. These reveal the tensions within the modernist project and, consequently, the validity of its utopian discourse.

Utopia inside Italia '61 assumes a dichotomous role. As David Pinder says in his writings on utopianism, a large part of utopian urbanism takes a successive

form of 'utopic degeneration'³ (Pinder, 2002) and consequently, the end of utopia is an endemic effect of the utopian imaginary⁴, consequently, the utopian project, and the particular case Italia '61, constitutes an idealistic state of thought and at the same time the basis for the contradiction exposed by a following countercurrent of thought.

According to this work, the most important goal of Italia '61 as a utopia is the representation of a series of ideals derived from the late modernist discourse that originated it. It identifies elements of the political, economic, and social situation and recounts them through the spectacularization⁵ of the Italian culture of the '50s, or what we will later see as the 'Italian miracle'. To this end, an international exhibition focused on the industrial culture and technological development of the time is being held.

'Risorgimento e Resistenza' and the Historical Exhibition

The justification for the realization of the show of Italian culture was then the celebration of the centenary of the unity of Italy. The entire country wore the tricolor that identifies it and adopted a unitary political and cultural discourse to become the host of great activities and renowned guests. Torino, the city that hosted the great celebrations for over six months, saw parading personalities of the stature of Queen Elizabeth, Walt Disney, and Le Corbusier, who added to the more than six million of visitors, celebrated the hundred years of the formation of the Italian state.

For the creation of such a unitary discourse, it was necessary to find the themes that would allow the commitment of the different social and political spheres of the time. There were two narratives for this. The first was about the origins and trajectory of a state that managed, a hundred years before, to be sheltered by a unitary political identity to maintain a harmonious plurality, despite the differences. The second narrative related the spirit of progress, the achievements, and the climate of well-being reached by the Italian society of that time.

^{3.} David Pinder emphasizes that in the absence of a critical exercise of recognition and questioning of reality, 'utopic degeneration' arises. It considers new utopian scenarios representing distorted values. In the case of Disneyfication, the utopian space becomes a permanent representation of the values and the dominant ideology and stays completely away from a progressive criticism (Pinder, 2002).

^{4.} Endemic insofar as a pendular dynamic is natural to utopianism, in which the negation of the previous stage of thought is necessary to produce new modes of utopianism (Pinder, 2002).

^{5.}Guy Debord, in 'The society of spectacle', criticizes human being degradation and accuses industrialization and consumer culture of it. They turn reality into an accumulation of spectacles that serves as an instrument for society unification and alienation (Debord, 1967).



Queen Elizabeth II of England greets from the balcony of Palazzo Madama. Source: 'Italia '61: La celebrazione del centenario'.

Both stories found the platform for their dissemination in a series of spaces and exhibitions arranged throughout the city, of which the most important epicenter was the brand new Italia '61 neighborhood. These exhibitions assumed a thematic role according to the topics to be disclosed: the narrative of the unification and the narrative of the progress.

The search for a banner of the identity of the Italian people was valid for the expression of both, the past and the present as a meeting point between the different faces of a country polarized by the post-war period. The Italian revolution and the liberation from Fascism were the themes that allowed the elaboration of a homogeneous discourse that could satisfy and include the various actors. The scenarios in which this first narrative, 'Risorgimento e Resistenza' was developed were the 'Historical Exhibition' and the 'Exhibition of the Regions'.

'Risorgimento and Resistenza' were the flagpole that allowed the flag of progress to be raised. The connection between these two episodes of Italian history⁶ would be those that found the greatest convergence between the different and distant slopes of the political sphere of the time, allowing the elaboration of a unitarist discourse of political and ideological consensus.

A new building or neighborhood was not necessary for the 'Historical Exhibition'. The city that gave birth to the Italian state a hundred years before, was itself full of meanings and historical values, more than enough scenery for this narrative. Palazzo Carignano, a building designed in the second half of the 17th century by Guarino Guarini, was the place that witnessed the proclamation of the new Kingdom of Italy and the place that, from March 17, 1861, occupied the first parliament.

The exhibition occupied 3,670 m2, distributed in 32 rooms, the hall of the 'Unitá d'Italia', the entrance hall, and the 7 rooms of the royal apartment. They illustrated the most important moments of the entire historical process that led to the proclamation of unity, with special emphasis on the decade immediately preceding 1861, in which the unitary movement reached its greatest relevance.

Simultaneously, complementary exhibitions took place in other historical places in the city. The exhibition 'Vecchio Piemonte' held at Palazzo Madama illustrated, with documents from Torino's state archives, the formation and functioning of the Sabaudo State. The exhibition 'Armi e Bandiere del

^{6. &#}x27;Risorgimento' and 'Resistenza' were the events that represented a common factor of unification. Others, as the Great War were painstakingly ignored, as the historical account approaches '900.



The Veneto Pavilion. Source: 'Italia '61: La celebrazione del centenario'.

Risorgimento (Risorgimento's weapons and flags) exhibited a collection of objects from the Risorgimento in the royal armory.

The Exhibition of the Regions

"... But only when you think that the centenary of 1861 does not refer to single life or an individual event, but to the life of millions of individuals (which have populated and populate the soil of our country) and to the event that translates into the unity achieved, the fact determines, for the non-superficial observer, a peculiar interest (these are things of our home!), arousing feelings now of consensus, now of contrast, in any case of comparison and scrutiny" (Casati, 1961).

These were the words of Adriano Casati, President of the 'Exhibition of the Regions' organizing committee. It was an exhibition in charge of recognizing the fundamental effort of each region in the joint elaboration of a society and nation project. A unity that favors and exalts variety⁻ was expressed through a cultural exhibition that tried, at all costs, to escape from folkloric and caricatured representations, where each one of the regions could expose a topic of personal importance in the contribution and formation of the country's unity.

The 'Exhibition of the Regions' unlike the 'Mostra Storica', was officiated



The Italian Pavilion. Source: 'Italia '61: La celebrazione del centenario'.

in a system of pavilions strategically designed and built for this purpose, which reflected the logic of the territorial layout of the regions. The plant was reminiscent of the map of Italy, its geographical order, its seas, and its lakes.

The exhibition consisted of two parts. The first, in the individual pavilions of each region, illustrated themes such as the regional industrial identity (Piemonte, Emilia Romagna), and the landscape identity management (Tuscany or Valle d'Aosta), and the ancient traditions (Sicily or Lazio). Water played a fundamental role and was recurrent in the topics discussed. In the Veneto pavilion, which was in contact with one of the Italia '61's artificial lakes, Carlo Scarpa illustrates 'Il Governo delle Acque'. In the Puglia pavilion, 'Acqua e Civiltà: Il ponte verso l'oriente mediterraneo' is illustrated. In the second part, radiography focused on recounting the joint work for the development of the nation, national unity, and recognition of the plurality and traditions of each region were extolled, in a story whose main element is time: the last century.

"We have divided these hundred years into successive epochs. And we will go through them twice: once backward and another forward, according to the technique of many films and many novels. 'The flash back technique'. Perhaps a very new system to put on an exhibition; but we believed we had to adopt it, precisely so that it would appear clear to everyone that the unification of Italy was not a work of one day or one year, but of slow, long and tiring one hundred years. 'A work that is certainly not finished yet and must continue'." (Soldati, 1961).

^{7.} See Mario Soldati's description in 'Guida ufficiale Italia '61'



The Basilicata Pavilion. Lucanian life. Source: 'Italia '61: La celebrazione del centenario'.

Instant contradictions

The spectacularization narratives and the claim to demonstrate the closest approach to the utopia reported, however, overshadowed and made invisible some elements of the real context. The celebrations of Italia '61 had to be structured based on ideal conditions of the city and society, within the official rhetoric, and for this the selectivity of the contents of the transmitted message was necessary.

The narrative of 'Risorgimento' sought to relate the solidarity work of the regions, however, the representation of these values was strong only in northern Italy. Stefano Garzaro mentions that affirmations about the true invasive role, instead of liberating, of the Piedmont hegemony in the conformation of the state would have been seen as blasphemies (Garzaro, 2010). In the same way, the 'Resistenza' personified by the 'partigiani' and its participation in the liberation war, is reduced to only one appearance in the last days of the celebrations.

The inability of the 'Risorgimento e Resistenza' discourse to allow disagreeing voices to enter, and the limited official narration tendency to sugarcoat the facts, are part of the characterization derived from the modernist *modus operandi*. However, subtle indignation signs appeared, such as Lucania '61, a work by Carlo Levi for the Basilicata pavilion, which represents the hard work of a peasant community, which, despite the humiliation of migration and oblivion, continues a struggle to improve their conditions (Pace, 2005).

The Nation on show. Progress, modernization and lifestyle

'Risorgimento e Resistenza' commemoration was the justification for the organization of the festivities, however, the poetry of the celebration speech was more inclined towards the exaltation of progress in industrial and technological fields in Italy during the economic boom. This Italy of the 'Economic Miracle' celebrated itself at that moment of prosperity and economic vitality, with the excuse of evoking the centenary. In Torino's case, this was precisely the opportunity to make a plot twist: overcome the 'Factory city' (Magnaghi et al. 1970) and instead project itself as a technological city. Compared to the second narrative (progress), and despite always being closely linked to it, the first narrative (unity) lost prominence in the official discourse. They were the modernization, the dynamism, and the economic impulse, the true components of vital relevance and worthy of the spectacularization in Italia '61. These put the Italian people on the same page.

This modernization process framed within the industrialization of the north of the country added to the strong shock that the United States' participation in Europe's reconstruction after the Second World War gives to the daily life of the Italian people, defining a new style based on productivity and consumption. The modernity of the 'Italian economic miracle' did not only embrace the industry. This, strongly related to the 'American lifestyle', came to the home of average Italians to accentuate the wealth and well-being imaginaries. It did so in the form of household appliances, originating and revolutionizing tourism in the Italian territory, expanding and democratizing the use of the automobile. And this was indeed something that necessarily should also be celebrated and spectacularized.

The International Exhibition of Work

The achievements of this highly advanced industry, the new manufacturing processes, and the technological and social modernization were, from the point of view of the organizers, 'by their nature long common to all countries'^s, and took place from 1861 to 1961 century. The last hundred years represented a series of situations and problems common to all of Europe and many other countries in the rest of the globe. The recognition of these conditions, in political harmony with other nations, turned out to exalt the relevance of the demonstrations.

That is why the 'narrative of progress' takes place in an international exhibition

8. See Italia '61: La celebrazione del centenario' p. 583.



The international Exhibition of Work. Source: 'Italia '61: La celebrazione del centenario'.

in which 23 countries are invited to participate. Each of them was invited to develop in a specialized and personal way one of the topics within a common world agenda that, had been and continued to be fundamental for the progress of the work. This is how the exhibition was structured in two parts: one of a scientific and specialized nature carried out by the invited countries and one of an emotional and poetic nature on the global nature of the technological conquests made by the host country.

'Man at work' frame inside the general theme of the '100 years of technical and social progress: achievements and prospects'⁹, illustrates the work, its history, and progress, through the unique participation of each country, developing topics such as energy sources, scientific research, industrial-technological development, agricultural mechanization, vocational training, artisanal work, labor legislation and social security, and certainly transportation, among others.

For its part, Italy, in its role as the host country, appealed to emotion through a spectacular tribute that accentuated the role of each country, and mainly its own, in the search for progress in technical matters. This was the epicenter and thematic nucleus of the Palazzo del Lavoro around which all the other exhibitions were organized. The Italian pavilion, a showcase of great industries

9. This was actually the official exhibition title. See 'Italia 61: La celebrazione del centenario' p. 582.



Transportation. Source: 'Italia '61: La celebrazione del centenario'.

such as Fiat, Olivetti, Pirelli, Eni..., also housed 'the evolution of form', an exhibition that brought together the work of the most important architects and artists of the time, to represent "the uniqueness and universality of style which is the fatal goal of modern working procedures determined by the needs of modern technology."¹⁰

Style, Fashion, Customs Exhibition

Italia '61 was in any way an experience rather than a simple exhibition. The endless entertainment possibilities in the technological city, and the variety of activities and spaces that modernity offers for those who need to occupy their free time¹¹, are what lead to the organization of different activities throughout the city.

The most original, and probably also the most contradictory (Garzaro, 2010), was the 'Style, Fashion, Costume Exhibition'. This certainly did not fit directly into the rhetoric of the celebrations, but this did not reduce its importance and success. Subtitled 'Signs of eras, faces of generations' it was the

10. See 'Italia 61: La celebrazione del centenario' p. 583.

11 Free time was also one of the topics displayed in the EIL, highlighting the importance of modernization which allows greater productive efficiency and consequently a greater amount of free time to spend and consume. perfect opportunity to exalt and show off the elite lifestyle resulting from the unprecedented industry success.

The exhibition hosted at the Palazzo delle Mostre or Palazzo a Vela included different sections related to consumption and entertainment. Fashion, cinema, and theater, applied and figurative arts, sports, and tourism among others, built an imaginary of the possibilities of the lifestyle of this contradictory society. It is through the exhibition of Dior haute couture, photographs of great personalities such as Marilyn Monroe or Sophia Loren, pieces of art by Picasso or Kandinsky, or famous Italian criminals' wax replicas, or bizarre characters extracted from horror stories, that a growing middle class is represented, which begins to have access to a wide range of entertainment possibilities, always a product of the climate of economic well-being.

Instant contradictions

However, it was enough to cross the railway to notice the contrast with what the true industrial city proposed, or at least the wound that it had generated for decades in the city and the society. The imbalances of a society in contradiction, plagued by class inequality generated by an industrial monoculture, which until then had caused huge displacements to cities that were not able to welcome such migration, were systematically ignored and sugarcoated. Beneath the Italia '61's bodywork, there was a jumble of gears, pipes, and mechanisms with no place in the 'Style, Fashion, Costume' narrative. For this 'black Italy' (Rosso, 2005), the true industrial city with its residential areas and its dynamics derived from the very rapid expansion of the city, there was no place next to the one occupied by the 'white Italy' in the Palazzo delle Mostre.



Fashion, Custom, Style illustration. Source: 'Guida Ufficiale Italia '61'.



BUILDING A MODERNIST DREAM

The new neighborhood

Once the values and parameters to be addressed in an event of such magnitude have been defined, it is pertinent to give way to the materialization of those ideals of the city and the society that inhabited it. The two great narratives that we dealt with earlier (unity and progress) needed a showcase to exhibit all the wonders that the industrialized Italy of the centenary had to show to the international community and the Italian people themselves.

The spectacularization of success, in this case at an urban level, could only refer to a well-positioned, although already in a process of decline, current of modernist thought. Italia '61 is, among the utopian expressions of the modern movement, a late attempt to realize an extremely functionalist model, perfectly inserted within a Fordist' city dynamic fostered by Fiat in Turin. The realization of this model implied the conquest of man and technology over the territory and the context, and as was longed for then for the creation of perfect functional order, the best alternative consisted in the construction of a new portion of the city completely from scratch.

The new neighborhood, baptized in the same way as the celebrations it hosted, was the greatest representation of the power of an industrialized society whose economy seemed to have no limits. This power, in effect, was demonstrated through the accelerated and efficient urbanization of an avant-garde arena with a Taylorist organization (Chiorino, 2005). There would be found the largest and most impressive works of architecture that would crystallize both the

1. Fordism indicates a system of political and productive organization based on the assembly line following the principles of Taylorism. This, for its part, is a theory of work organization that seeks to increase productivity through the maximum division and specialization of functions (Gramsci, 1978).



The construction site. Source: 'Italia '61: La celebrazione del centenario'.

knowledge and the technology developed until then.

From the perspective of the organizing committee, Italia '61 should represent Torino's automobile tradition, for which the plan was conceived following a strict highly scientific, and functionalist logic as if it were a 'well-oiled machine' (Chiorino, 2005). For this purpose, the project could not occupy an already consolidated space in the city, not even a temporary one. It was necessary to reinforce the discourse of unity and progress with the complete reconstruction of a peripheral area of Torino, in an attempt to make a tabula rasa and have full control of a territory where there were no obstacles to the rigorous project.

Millefonti before '61

The new neighborhood was found in the south of Torino, in the Millefonti area, the ideal place to lay its foundations, however, it was essential to thoroughly clean the previous conditions before starting the works. The site, located on the banks of the Po River, was initially occupied by makeshift wooden barracks, used by refugees and especially migrants, who had arrived in the city on the so-called 'Viaggio della Speranza².

2. 'Il Viaggio della Speranza' is understood as the mass migration process to the north of Italy, in search of improving living conditions and entering the labor market of the flourishing Italian industrial triangle (cfr. 'Il Viaggio della Speranza', Archivio Istituto Luce, 1964).



Millefonti before Italia '61. Source: Il Festival del Miracolo, Cinecittà.

Poverty and dirt are portrayed in the few existing photographs of Millefonti before Italia '61. They are completely contrasting images with what would be the project immediately after, and in effect, they were used by the official narration as a symbol of the success and propaganda of the initiative. The construction of this utopia meant, during the first stage of the company, a total disconnection with a contradictory context, which caused the misery located there to be displaced, probably to other parts of the city that faced similar conditions.

However, the landscape was modified in record time and promoted through grandiose figures, such as the number of hours or concrete used, to emphasize the efficiency of the feat and win public approval.

Italia '61's Plan

"Its primary aim was to display the technical advances made in the grate industrial city... This group of buildings was marketed as a modernist dream." (Chiorino, 2005)

Italia '61's plan was structured following a Taylorist logic that, despite all the uncertainty between the preparation and execution of the plan, always contemplated a rational organization. According to Nello Renacco in a document about the great structures of Italia '61, there were two fundamental parameters for defining the urban plan: the positioning of the two most



Italia '61's plan. Source: 'Documento sulle grandi strutture'.

important exhibitions, and the intention to give the plan a certain degree of elasticity in the face of possible variations.

The plan was developed on the sides of Corso Polonia, current Corso Unità d'Italia. to the West until it adjoins the residential areas of Nizza Millefonti, and to the ast, until it makes contact with the Po River. In this area, the exhibitions are arranged in a clearly delimited manner, confining the activities in independent architectural elements, strategically positioned with the intention of not obstructing the views of the hill. The restaurants, bathrooms, and other services were in the central area, depending on the proximity to the busiest accesses, those in direct contact with the city. There were four entrances at four cardinal points, whose character was accentuated by the presence of towers in each of them, and artificial lakes whose purpose was to connect, at least perceptually, the two halves separated by Corso Unità d'Italia.

The 'Exhibition of the Regions' suffered particularly from uncertainty as to what form it should take. This exhibition occupied a third of the project area, and it was discussed whether it should assume a monumental character with a third gigantic building, or if on the contrary as was finally decided, it should be arranged in a succession of architectural elements of a more moderate scale, assigned uniquely to each of the regions.

The pavilions, despite being governed by a modular logic and following the most regular approach of the entire plan, could be considered the most flexible component thanks to the multiplicity of elements and the links between them. With the pavilions of the 'Exhibition of the Regions' "...It is believed to have thus also responded to that need... for the coexistence of the different buildings in a single environmental landscape." (Rennaco, 1961). The Palazzo del Lavoro and the Palazzo delle Mostre would show more difficulty in adapting to new situations due to their size and monolithic character.

The synaptic city

Nevertheless, the urban plan in question went beyond its systematic organization. To become Torino's 'brand new well-oiled machine', Italia '61 had to stamp on the company its unique character as a city of the automobile, transport, and movement. Indeed, the real and proper personality of the Italia '61 urban project was analogous to that of a car. Coherent, from any point of view, with what Fiat represented for Torino and the program content of the celebrations.

As a matter of fact, Fiat is the one in charge of directing the work (Garzaro, 2010). The company made the 'Servizio Costruzioni Edili e Impianti' available to the organizing committee for the centenary celebrations, an institution through which the automobile company had developed numerous building projects in the city, from the Lingotto factory in 1915 to various working-class estate housing projects until the end of the 70s (Francesconi and Martini, 2020).

The system of flows and connections contemplates multiple subsystems. The most innovative, without a doubt, was the futuristic and fantastical Alweg monorail, which crossed the entire complex from north to south. Inside the park, it was possible to get around in multiple, varied and graceful taxis from different eras, served by a secondary road system derived from Corso Unità d'Italia. To get to Italia '61 from Parco del Valentino it was possible to take one of the three ferries ("Torino", "Firenze" or "Roma") to one of the docks along the Po. And thanks to the 'Ovovia', a cable car system made up of 61 small cabins, it was even possible to cross the river and overcome a drop of 120 meters to reach the top of the hill in a matter of minutes.

A recurring exclamation in propaganda documentaries of the time is: "all roads









lead to Rome but all means of transport lead to Itala '61"³. This turns out to be the spirit and vigor of the project, the raw material for the spectacularization. The means of transport are the ground on which Italia '61 acquires a personality and it is around this theme that all the other initiatives and interventions unfold: the great feats in terms of construction, the innumerable events, the story of the city, the fundamental role of Fiat, the economic wellbeing, etc. Thus, the modernist dream of the industrial city is built, a wonderland of transport and technology.

3. Watch 'Il festival del miracolo', Istituto Luce's archive documentary.

The jewels of Italia '61

For the final conformation of the spectacular spectrum, and to host the exhibitions, contents and other activities, the architectural devices arranged in the plan of the new neighborhood were the maximum expression of technological advances in construction achieved during the postwar period. The constructive philosophy of the great jewels of Italia '61 was based on the exaltation and expressiveness of engineering, and its ability to characterize space. "All focused on the value of the structural element as the bond between engineering and architecture, where building and architectural techniques converge with fantasy to create unique avant-garde buildings in terms of dimension and shape" (Zevi, 1960).

The general plan of Italia '61 resembled a car in its meticulous operation, however, the individual pieces should also show the capacity of the organizing committee representing Fiat, the city, and the entire country to produce the highest quality architectures, temples of modernity, whose construction was carried out with the greatest effectiveness and in the shortest possible time, and where the entire population of the 'Ville Industrielle' (Chiorino, 2005) could converge and be amazed.

The technological innovation was exposed thanks to the plasticity of the materials used, in total opposition to the traditional constructions prevailing in the city. They were conceived in the manner of the great exhibition halls of the 19th century (Chiorino, 2005), as universal structures produced industrially, following obsessively rational principles that, in effect, allowed the works to be carried out in record time. The same buildings, both during their construction and during their period of use in the celebrations, expressed an attempt to democratize science and technology.

The technologies used were varied. The pavilions of the 'Exhibition of the Regions', which had been initially thought of as temporary structures, were built with prefabricated iron and glass pieces to allow their subsequent dismantling; the chapel, dismantled once the celebrations were over, included a triangular gabled roof that rested on two supports, achieving stability with the use of cables at its ends. The monorail, with its prestressed concrete beams, the Palazzo del Lavoro, supported by its imposing pillars with radial ramifications, and the Palazzo a Vela, conceived as an immense shell supported at the ends, deserve a more detailed account.



The amazing 'raggiera'. Source: Italia '61: La celebrazione del centenario'.



The futuristic monorail. Source: Italia '61, 'The Nation on Show'.



The spectacular Circarama. Source: Italia '61, 'The Nation on Show'.

The futuristic monorail

The monorail was Italia '61's most important declaration of wanting to keep an eye on the future. Completely new to the eyes of Italy this year, it was a science fiction image that could have come from Lang's Metropolis of 1927.

Despite having already been invented in the 19th century, the period of war caused a suspension in its use. It is in the mid-1950s that, with modern monorails, this system manages to regain relative importance. The skyway of the U.S. Railway Corporation in Texas and the experimental project of the 'Societe' Anonyme Française d'Etudes de Gestion et d'Entrepises in Châteauneuf-sur-Loire' would be the inspiration to include a device with similar characteristics in the project.

The Alweg monorail⁴, developed in small-scale experimental programs at Disneyland and Füh-Lingen, would be the model to be designed and executed, this time on a real scale, for the centenary celebrations. Italia '61's Alweg monorail railway consisted of a series of beams supported six meters high by precompressed concrete pillars, manufactured in series and spaced 20 meters apart. The float was made up of three pieces that together reach a length of 30 meters, and that managed to reach a speed of 90 km/h, transporting 200 passengers in one trip and up to 25,000 passengers in one day.

In a monorail technical review published by the 'Società Ingegneri e Architetti in Torino', in which many of the constructive aspects of the project are minutely detailed, Carlo Bertollotti, responsible for the design and implementation of the transport systems of Italia '61, writes: "We believe that, in general, air railways will be very popular in the next few years; it will only have to give way to the 'subway' in the heart of the city, but then the monorail itself, making use of its ability to overcome slopes, will be able, once it arrives in the neighborhoods of the City, to go underground, to get out as soon as possible and launch itself into the air to reach the suburbs and satellite cities near and far" (Bertollotti, 1961). Well, it is not what happened after.

For its part, the Palazzo del Lavoro is the Italian monument to the international style and is defined immediately after its completion as a temple of modernity and a monument of Italian architecture. The suggestive and colossal work received the compliments of Le Corbusier himself who, during his visit to Torino, thanked Nervi for the work done. "These words pronounced in 1947, during a congress, by a Master, Le Corbusier, ... after having looked at the imposing and evocative structures of the Palazzo, he asked what he needed to

4 Named after this industry founder Alweg Lenard Wenner-Gren.

write and, in all simplicity, expressed his admiration: "Merçi, Nervi, pour cette magnifique réalisation"⁵.

Due to the lack of time, says Nervi, there was no other way than to carry out the great work using a mass production scheme. The engineer opted for a modular project that included the manufacture of isolated elements built one by one and in a progressive order, without affecting each other. The project proclaimed the winner of the competition in October '59, consisted of a series of 16 umbrellas 40 meters high, made up of pillars with a section that varies from cruciform at the base – to counteract the horizontal forces – to circular at the top – to connect to a system of radiating beams – organized within a reticulated gometry of twenty-by-twenty meters, and separated by skylights.

The project managed to respect the schedule for its construction. The simplicity and structural clarity allowed an efficient organization of the worksite so the construction of the building was carried out in less than a year. The Palazzo del Lavoro was "welcomed by the city of Taylorism with open arms" (Chiorino, 2005). "«The brilliant Colosseum of Nervi»; «Huge parallelepiped of crystal and concrete»; «Marvelous, imposing, gigantic construction»; «One of the most illustrious examples of that architecture by which our generation and our culture will be judged»; «It is one of the best monuments of Italian architecture»; «The Palace represents an advanced point in architectural time»; «A true monument to Italian work»; «The modern temple of human work»"⁶.

Regarding the Palazzo delle Mostre, Giorgio Rogitti explains in a review of its architecture and functionality: "For the former, the exhibition building must above all be a complex 'bon à tout faire'. The building program demands great versatility. It requires the ability to quickly transform to receive all kinds of monumental scale displays and manifestations. For this, it raises the need for a huge free obstacles area free and a form with the capacity to house large-scale temporary structures. "The empty Palazzo delle Mostre, that is, when its form is completely graspable in all its breadth, is a lifeless, unused complex instead it lives when it is overloaded with heterogeneous normal elements that cram and overlap in an improbable way in the large volume, suddenly rise from the ground, simulate cantilevering in unstable equilibrium, fall apart at the roof like strange flying machines" (Rigotti, 1961).

The Palazzo is thus a great sail inflated by the wind, as described by the official guide of Italia '61. The building consists of a gigantic prestressed concrete vault,

6 Compilation of citations in the volume edited by the 'Comitato Nazionale per le Celebrazione del Pirmo Centenario dell'Unitá d'Italia'. resulting from the intersection of three barrel vaults spaced 120 degrees apart. The large hexagonal sail has only three supports and manages to cover an area of 15,000 square meters and a diameter of 150 meters, allowing free space and a panoramic view from the inside.

The importance of the construction lies in its marked difference from the contemporary architecture of the city. Despite not being an integral part of the plan and the main organization of the Italia '61 celebrations, the Palazzo manages to fit into the rhetoric of exalting modernity, as it manages to become an icon that remains in the memory of visitors. Its very form is an attraction, remarkably different from everything that surrounds it.

The Ciarcarama, on the other hand, is not surprising for any construction particularity or for being an architecture worth remembering. However, just like the monorail, it manages to inspire a futuristic science fiction sense and to capture the public's attention in an attempt to bring to Torino the latest entertainment technology directly from the wonderful world of Disney.

The circular screen built by Fiat was visited by a million and a half people, however, the company made an effort that it was Disney who received most of the credit. A propaganda strategy that is certainly ambiguous, but with which Fiat, despite being always present in the organization of Italia '61 and making all its tools available to hold its festival, achieves its goal of subtly capturing the attention of a huge audience.

⁵ See 'Italia '61, la celebrazione del centenario'.



AN ON-WHEELS UTOPIA

Synaptic imaginarium

Italia '61 is then a project with utopian ambitions whose protagonists are the means of transport. The car, represented by the very important production of Fiat in Turin; the monorail, which boasts a science-fiction style and a look towards the future; the boats along the Po, which imprint a unique romanticism to the transportation experience; the 'Ovovia', which represents the conquest of the territory by the air; the double-decker buses, to complement the spectacular nature of the system; and the tram network, which from all the ends of the city feeds the heart of Italia '61. They all form a system that characterizes the narrative of progress, the triumph of reason, and systematization. They give life and structure to a 'synaptic organism', whose essence lies in efficiency and in the multiplicity of means to achieve it.

The synaptic universe of Italia '61, and especially its utopian kind, easily escapes the official narrative and the archival photography of the project. Both the postcards and the videos of the time manage to portray only a global atmosphere without accents. Certainly, the built architectural jewels achieve relevant visibility due to their colossal character, however, the complexity of the circulatory system is blurred and incomprehensible. For this reason, it is necessary to promote an understanding of the utopia of connectivity through its use and not only thanks to the mere contemplation of its monuments.

We speak of a utopia that especially considers movement, and that attributes to its transport systems the propulsive character of its dynamics. As if it were an engine. And then, when the experience acquires an 'on-wheels' character, the urban space is understood not only from the perspective of a passer-by but is also framed within the devices that allow movement.

An important example of an approach to this fluctuating logic is Cedric Price's

flexible university proposal in Staffordshire, England. The representation of the Potteries Thinkbelt program (1964-1966) is manifested in a synthetic and certainly astringent (Cook, 2014) way through a cartoon-like expressiveness that, with the use of few elements, manages to narrate the technology based on the paradigm of a flexible network (Cline & Di Carlo, 2002).

Potteries Thinkbelt goes beyond the reuse of abandoned industrial infrastructure. It consists of converting an old and decaying railway along with its industrial facilities, into an extensive educational network. The system is made up entirely of a network of roads and railways, which duly connect mobile architectural elements that house university residences, laboratories, and classrooms. These mobile units can move thanks to the railways and facilitate interdisciplinary interaction with the territory and the industrial structures that occupy it.

Unlike Thinkbelt, Italia '61 does not enjoy Price's inspiring progressive vision in its planning, which continues to be valid and fully achievable today (Aureli, 2011), but objectively shares a utopian vision of transportation and mobility as an element structuring an urban program. In Potteries Thinkbelt, Price's vision puts the synoptic system of the railway at the service of a productive landscape, which operates based on the production of knowledge. In Italy '61 the synoptic system of the juxtaposition of various means of transport operates according to the programmatic spectacularization of the production of goods.









THE SOCIOECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

La 'Ville Industrielle' and the 'Miracolo economico Italiano'

"Turin goes to bed early and gets up early" (Gianni Agnelli)

Addressing the entire complexity of the period in which Italia '61 materializes and builds its meanings in tune with the diagnosis of a society that is represented in it, is a work that deserves to be the subject of a much deeper and more meticulous investigation¹. It would include, without a doubt, a detailed approach to the interactive dynamics of the different spheres for the definition of a sociological profile on different scales. It would be pertinent to immerse in-depth in the political history of the post-war period and the measures taken in economic matters for the reconstruction of Europe, in the tradition and continuous reinvention of Torino as the Italian capital in various fields during its history, in the processes of modernization carried out at high speed and the effects caused by them in the social fabric, in the cultural climate defined by the expiration of the ideas of the modernist discourse and by the germination of new revolutionary discourses in the succession of the modern movement. However, the objective of this chapter is not to delve into each of these arguments, but rather to rescue a series of elements from the situation of the 1950s and 1960s, which allow a series of associations to be made for the understanding of Italia

1. This Chapter has been wrtiten through reading:

- Bagnasco, A. (1986). Torino: Un Profilo Sociologico. Torino: Einaudi.

- Bagnasco, A., De Rossi, A., Olmo, C., Pace, S., Pacetti, V., Pichierri, A., Verri, P. (2008). Torino 011: Biografia di una Città. Torino: Mondadori Electa S.p.A.

- Francesconi, M., & Martini, A. (2020). Quando la Fiat costruiva la città. Corriere.

- Gramsci, A. (1978). Americanismo e Fordismo. Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore.

- Magnagli, A., Perelli, A., Sarfatti, R., & Stevan, C. (1970). La Città Fabbrica: Contributi per un'analisi di classe del territorio. Milano: Clup.

61's utopian ambitions.

Until now we had mentioned the moment of economic well-being that Italy was going through at that time, without emphasizing it. The so-called 'Italian economic miracle' is thus called 'miracle', in the definition of the rapid and satisfactory economic reactivation of the countries defeated during the Second War: Germany, Italy, and Japan; and supposed in the case of Italy in the 50s and 60s, after the reconstruction of the country from the damage caused by the war, a radical transformation of the economic, productive and social fabric, which goes from being substantially agricultural to adopting a primarily industrial character. This paradigm shift is characterized by a series of factors and problems present on a greater or lesser scale throughout the national territory, which, however, are especially evident in Turin, home to what as we have already mentioned, was the largest manufacturing company of the country, and that would condense in it the distinctive features of the origin of Italia '61.

The Italian economic boom is characterized by the consolidation of Italian industry as a European power. Various factors allow such an undertaking.

On the one hand, the search for an economic opening and the establishment of the bases for a European economic community in the Rome Treaties of 1957, allows customs synchronization, common policies in the field of transport and agriculture, freedom in the transport of goods, raw materials, labor, capital, and services. Good international relations, in addition to stability in the price of raw materials purchased abroad, allow an accelerated growth of production and exports during that period.

On the other hand, the discovery of inputs and energy sources in the national territory allows independence and growth not subordinated to external factors. The work carried out by the ENI (Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi) in the discovery and exploitation of new natural gas deposits, and by the IRI (Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale) in the creation of a modern iron and steel industry that supports the creation of new infrastructure and the supply of raw materials for the manufacturing industry, guarantee relative self-sufficiency.

The last factor, and not for that reason the least important, is the very high supply of labor at a very low cost, which makes it possible to reduce production costs and increase investment in technological development. This becomes one of the situations that characterize this period, in which, in ten years, almost 9 million southerners migrated to the cities of the Italian economic triangle, generating processes of depopulation and abandonment in the rural areas of the south of Italy.

The period is also characterized by a consumerist lifestyle. Between 1957 and 163 Fiat vehicles production fivefold, motorizing the Italian people. In this way, the fiat 600 and the fiat 500, the so-called 'piccoli gioielli', become the main icons of the boom and an irrefutable element in the consolidation of the world reputation of 'made in Italy'. Here, the city that had once been the capital of the Kingdom of Italy after unification, became the industrial capital and epicenter of the 'miracolo', regaining prominence and playing a fundamental role in understanding the social dynamics of the time.

Fordist Turin

Turin had traditionally been associated with a 'risorgimentale' past and a gray industrial present (Pace, 2005). In 'Torino: Biografia di una città', Bagnasco proposes in a didactic way an exercise in psychoanalysis on the city. According to him, it is indeed contradictory because cities do not have an unconscious, however, the exercise is useful insofar as it allows characterizing the personality of the city, in this case, such a pure example of a factory city, that would suffer a very fatiguing transformation in the future. Indeed, this is a city that has developed a morphology and an architecture consistent with the organization of work. It is a city whose order structures derive from the factory model.

Fordism, synonymous with mass production, is among other things equivalent to migration, class struggle, consumerism, and especially the great domain of a company that organizes the territory based on its needs (Pichierri, 2008). These situations derived from the economic phenomenon that the country is experiencing, are largely condensed in post-war Torino, thanks to the importation of the Fordist model by Giovanni Agnelli in 1912, which would ensure its subsequent development. The adopted model seeks to eliminate uncertainties and ensure predictability through standardization. In Bagnasco's words, it is a hierarchical-functional organization characterized by a clear division between the decision-making sphere and the execution sphere, which defines simple and error-proof repetitive activities, outlining and emphasizing the project of efficiency.

Torino existed and functioned according to the logic and requests of Fiat, it grew at its own pace and according to its requirements, developing a dual relationship with the city of separation and domination. (Pichierri, 2008) Separation in the sense of the absence of participation of external actors in the internal organization of the factory, and of a marked physical differentiation from the rest of the city: of a very marked authority. Domain regarding the synchronization of processes and times, and the ability to generate policies based on satisfying their own needs (Verri, 2008). This leads Torino to a deep internalization of its own identity based on its industrial vocation.



- Hain expositions
- Secondary expositions and places of interest
- Parks related to Ilatia '61 expositions
- Parks and green areas
- Tramway network

The growth of Turin

In the search for efficiency and predictability of production processes, Fiat, and the city driven by its development, make use of the extremely high supply of labor that consequently meant a reduction in costs, activating the migratory process from the South towards Torino and the consolidation of a monopsony². The great demographic growth of Turin between the 1950s and 1970s represents the relationship between the city and industry. The phenomenon of growth in this period (in which in twenty years it went from 719.300 to 1'167.968 inhabitants) is characterized by an expansion of the periphery proportional to the development of productive activities (Bagnasco, 1986).

This growth tends to imply a displacement of productive activities towards the outer growth rings of the metropolis, spreading to the municipalities surrounding the commune of Torino, and consolidating the industrial and productive character of these areas. By 1951 the working class was mainly in the center of Turin, however, by 1981 about half of this population had moved to the outskirts. An important factor in this phenomenon is in fact the specialization and development of means of transport, a sector that is obviously a strength of the city.

Industrial growth has undoubtedly influenced the integral development of the metropolitan city thanks to the inclusion of human resources in a great project

2. Monopsony: Situation that occurs in a relevant market when there is a single demander of the goods or services that it comprises. In the case of Fiat we refer to the demand for labor.



- Hain expositions
- Secondary expositions and places of interest
- Parks related to Ilatia '61 expositions
- Parks and green areas
- Tramway network

of economic and social innovation, however, the growth in ten years of 300.000, thus surpassing one million inhabitants, involves a series of social problems. In Bagnasco's words: "large organization, as a typical regulatory model of the local economy, does not also mean, in itself, a stable society".

The 1960s represented the apex of the Fiat Fordist success in the city, however, and consequently, strong processes of polarization and discrimination developed at the same time. The migratory processes defined the hierarchies and the professional opportunities for the different populations according to their origin. The different positions in the corporate pyramid depending on the place of birth of the employees were clear. Poverty and loneliness are, currently, the daily life of those who arrive in Torino on the 'Viaggio della Speranza', and there is no state or government that guarantees assistance or protection to the migrant population, accentuating the differentiation between southerners and northern.

All this added up turns industrial Torino into a simple city. "Simple because it is

not very differentiated: almost only industrial, with a marked specialization, and only one large company at the center of the local production system" (Bagnasco, 2008). In this way, it is easy to read the personality of the city, at least during the heyday of Fordism 'alla torinese', with an apparently organized, isotropic, and undifferentiated society (De Rossi, 2008).

The utopian debate in the '50s and the '60s

"The society that reshapes its entire surroundings has evolved its special technique for molding its very territory, which constitutes the material underpinning for all the facets of this project. Urbanism – "city planning" – is Capitalism's method for taking over the natural and human environment. Following its logical development toward total domination, Capitalism now can and must refashion the totality of space into its particular decor." (Debord, 1967)

The cultural context that influences our case study runs from the 50s to the 60s. Italia '61 was born in the overlapping of two opposing sides of understanding, not necessarily in tune with each other, sometimes despite them. In any way contemporaneously with the juxtaposition of a mode of modernist thought (with images and precepts consolidated as a function of industrialization and its logics of production and consumption, which adapt the city and the territory to their needs) and a highly critical thinking countercurrent that leads to a status quo questioning counterculture.

We are talking about a society in tension that has adopted the capitalist paradigm and developed its image and values based on merchandise, money, and consumption, but that begins to weave a criticism of alienation and the imagesaturated condition of post-war society at the same time. (Pinder, 2005) This period sees the publication of 'The Society of the Spectacle' (Debord, 1967), a denunciation of the late capitalist model established, fundamentally spectaclist and totalitarian about the territorial organization. Guy Debord's consumer society, framed within the critical activism of the Situationists International³ group, turns out to be a detailed portrait of a consolidated and decadent culture, and a contemporaneous gestating counterculture.

Debord understands modern society living in a constant over-representation of reality through an immense accumulation of spectacles, which serves as an instrument for unification and alienation. "The spectacle's social function is

3. Situationist International was a radical movement that brought together activists, artists, and writers founded in 1957. Its members were looking for new forms of arts and politics, in opposition to the post-war alienating conditions of society, through the research of ways of contestation and autonomy empowerment for changing cities and social space.



Guy Debord's Naked City, cover of "Psychogeographic guide of Paris". The territory is fragmented and depicts only the emotional connections of different places.

the concrete manufacture of alienatio. The 'growth' generated by an economy developing for its own sake can be nothing other than a growth of the very alienation that was at its origin" (Debord, 1967). The spectacularization of society is based on industry and consumption and subdues it to the same extent as the economy has done, degrading being in the face of having and appearing.

Regarding the territory and the interaction with it, the critique emphasizes the unification and trivialization of space caused by capitalist production. He blames the totalitarian nature of modernist urbanism for atomizing the workers and suppressing the street, referring to a system in which the individual is isolated but at the same time inserted into a pseudo-collectivity, that keeps him under control and always receptive to the 'spectacular message'. Debord calls it a 'vicious circle of isolation'.

Similarly, in architecture and urbanism fields, this paradigm shift and the overlapping process takes place in the dissolution of CIAM and the reconstitution of its members in Team X. Modernist thought about the city date back to the first attempts to provide an answer to the problems caused by the industrial revolution and the rapid growth of the nineteenth-century cities. From there, the vision of the modern movement and the following opposition to postmodernist thought will be constituted. In 'The Origins of Modern Town Planning', Benevolo places the first attempts to correct the industrial city illness at two extreme poles: the first one, starting from scratch and rebuilding the city based on theory, and the second one, solving problems separately one by one. To illustrate the first case, whose fundamental ideological component aligns with modern socialism, Benevolo approaches nineteenth-century utopias, and Owen, Fourier, and Godin's attempts to build them, however, this ideological coincidence with urban culture lasts only until the failure of the Revolutions of 1948. Since then, town planning will develop on the second extreme pole, through the application of building regulations based on conservative political ideologies and configured more as an anti-revolutionary technical instrument, to scarcely satisfy the demands of the working class.

On this political map, the urban transformations of the great cities in the 19th century (Paris, Brussels, Vienna, Florence, Barcelona...) are carried out, following unitary plans that imply the application of ideal models, radical and opposed to the current conditions of those cities. For this, a uniform and regular image of the city is necessary. This urban configuration based on order and geometry and utopian attempts like 'Familistère' and 'Phalanstère'⁴ are aligned with one of the most important proposals – and legacies – of this century to redirect the industrial landscape to human measure: Howard's Garden City. CIAM and the modern movement would share Howard's functional principles and use them to spread the saving society strategy through the orthodox establishment of a new order.

CIAM before and after the war

Since its inception in 1928, CIAM has undergone constant changes in the definition of its orientation and priorities. The institution was defined by a progressive character, or perhaps pendular, in which there was a constant discussion about the understanding and application of town planning methods. During the first five congresses, the vision shifted from an "organization that encourages a plurality of views about modern architecture to one devoted solely to the cause of furthering Le Corbusier's idealistic and authoritarian ideas about town planning." (Pedret, 2013).

The topics discussed during this period focused on the search for rational logical systems that would allow standardizing town planning. During the third congress, Le Corbusier presented 'La Ville Radieuse', hierarchical and rigidly

4. They are two forms of social organization proposed by the utopian socialists Jean Baptiste Godin and Charles Fourier. They are model systems of collectivist social organization, based on the free association of their members in self-sufficient communities (Benevolo, 1963).



differentiated, authoritarian and statically organized. "The idealized plan was based on the premise of a tabula rasa site" (Ibid). The doctrine expressed by 'La Ville Radieuse' is consolidated thanks to the growing European authoritarian climate of the 1930s, which also allows Le Corbusier to use the congresses as a platform for disseminating his ideals, reaching the apex of mastery of his concepts during the fifth congress, however generating a proportional skepticism.

Mass production-consumption and culture homogenization processes characterized the post-war period. Marshall Plan's great scope for Europe's reconstruction and the powerful relevance of the United States generated great fear as they represented a threat to the preservation of regional and national individual identities. Governors and architects had the responsibility of rebuilding enormous devastated cities, for which scientific planning and standardized construction turned out to be blamed for the sterilization of the territory.

The moment of pause during the war, added to the criticism towards the functional city originated between the fourth and fifth congresses (1933, 1937), allowed an evaluation to reapproach CIAM's priorities.

Fear after the war was widespread. It consisted of a rejection of the excessive rationalism experienced in the concentration camps. The universe had been mechanized and standardized, and the response to this concern was expressed in two ways: a reactionary critique and a progressive critique.

The first included matters of meaning. It consisted of resistance and a rejection of the progress modernist ideology with a looking toward politics and autonomy. Progressive criticism, for its part, saw the modern movement as a constant critical revolution, which included a return to modernist primitivism in search of alternatives to repair the engines of modernism: technology and functionalism. The most extensive way of progressive criticism was to pursue the incorporation of functionalism with more humanistic interests and the recognition of diversity. A pro-humanism was expressed through rhetoric that was opposed to rationalism by emphasizing the importance of adaptation and integration. The anti-rationalist approaches included the protection of individual identity, the recognition of values intrinsic to each context (*genius loci*), and the recognition of the everyday dynamics and a broader spectrum of psychological and spiritual needs.

The expression of fear and rejection of modernism was also expressed with an attitude oriented towards the acknowledgment of history as an intellectual source for modern architecture. Thus, critics arose that blamed the modern movement for the failure to address reality and the ignorance of all its complexity. The Socioeconomic and Cultural Context

Team X's criticism is just the tip of the iceberg of the reassessment period of CIAM's functionalist approach, to address a debate that favored the triumph of a historical dimension of the city over the functional one (Pedret, 2013).

New criticism

The birth of Team X within CIAM means revolution and rupture, but at the same time, it is the continuation of CIAM's principle of change and the search for new paradigms that characterized it from the beginning (Ibid.). Team X originates from a natural evolution process. With the growing participation of young architects and students in last congresses, the dissatisfaction with the Athens Charter functionalist scheme is expanding.

After the request to preside over the ninth congress (1953), the group generated an ideological revolt against the mechanistic concepts of order established by the previous generation of architects. From the tenth congress (1956), which gives rise to its name, Team X was recognized for the consequent dissolution of CIAM, and for making a clean break in the continuation of the modernist discourse, defined by them as alienating. For Alison Smithson, one of the most representative components of the group, it was necessary to face the deficiencies of the processes of architectural thought. The utopian model sought by Team X focuses on an experimental attitude, based on the understanding of the changing nature of reality and the multi-directionality given by the actors and thoughts that make it up.

Team X proposed a new modern architecture since it resolved the new needs of everyday life. However, it was postmodern also, since it required adopting a critical distance from the modernist utopia, whose alienating nature was a destructive factor for local culture and individuality. The modern movement's totalizing spirit seeks to be replaced with a pluralistic and inclusive spirit, through the inversion of the authority between center and periphery, in the assumption of a 'situationist' role by the architect⁵. "Team's X criticism of Athens Charter was a criticism of modernism's values by replacing hierarchy with overall systems, authority with democracy, idealism with reality, universalism with pluralism, formalism with realism, rationalism with empiricism, absolutes with dualisms". (Ibid.)

5. Pinder explains a 'situationist' approach in 'Visions of the city' introducing an activity that shoud be central for the situationists to new forms of politics and arts, 'the 'construction of situations' to promote a collective, free, and experimental construction of daily life.


TOWARDS DYSTOPIA

"The year in which Turin was the world's navel has now passed... Turin once again claims to the psychologist for a cure for his abandonment syndrome. The backlash to the lights and songs of the Italia 61 great party hits hard on the structures that had hosted them" (Garzaro, 2010).

Italia '61 quickly passed into oblivion and with it all the rhetoric about the utopia that we related in the previous chapter. In the six decades that have passed since the closing of the celebrations, there have been multiple episodes that have contributed to the project's degeneration, many discussions about recovering the national jewel's dignity, and unsuccessful attempts to achieve it. Nothing remains of the grandiose utopia other than the postcards in the houses of those who experienced the spectacular nature of the event. In this place, the reality stays completely away from the idealism immortalized in the historical images of the ambitious project.

With the passage of just over half a century, the neighborhood has changed its structure, its public space quality, and the cohesion of its atmospheres in relationship with the environment that surrounds them. The shiny utopian period, compared to the sixty years of the life of the real decadent neighborhood, was quite short. Besides the lack of a true vocation for Italia '61 in the city of Torino, the early mutation of the spirit of the project, which has led it towards the long-standing reality of abandonment, has been clear. The brilliance was transitory and the contradictions inevitable.

The existing documentation of Italia '61 centers its attention only on the project's moment of light, therefore, it is difficult to identify the nuances of change in a timeline from after the celebrations until today. We focus then on overlapping today's radiography and utopian one (1961), to promote an understanding of the category of dystopia in the project.



The neighborhood transformation

The first approach to Italia '61's current conditions is made through a morphological-descriptive lens, which allows us to recognize the discordant and contradictory elements in the structure of the case study.

The one that was conceived as a public park, made up of an enormous and incessant expanse of green, in which a wide range of architectural containers became part of the continuous and free areas, no longer exists. Various settings of the original Italia '61 have been colonized by new activities or simple inactivity, which have directly affected the extensive public space system, which in turn has been colonized by fences and walls.

Those buildings that, over time, have been fortunate to find a vocation or use after the period of brilliance have done so by sacrificing the unity of the integral project. The activities carried out inside have reclaimed their relative portions of the park, declaring their independence. However, they are not negligible areas. They are representative portions of the initial project.

The system of pavilions that housed the exhibition of the regions now houses the UN International Institute for Research on Crime and Justice. This, delimited on its sides by the river and the Corso Unità d'Italia, is completely disconnected from the rest of the city, isolated behind its fences and apparently inaccessible.

Immediately to the South, in an initially intended public area for picnics and outdoor activities, there is currently a research center of the Società Metropolitana Acque Torino SMAT. The former Azienda Acquedotto Municipale di Torino was already present in 1961, however, the area occupied by the facility did not extend to the river, allowing Italia '61 to enjoy the Sangone river mouth in the Po. Although indirectly, the relationship between the Po, the Sangone, and Italia '61 is interrupted by the Azienda Acquedotto Municipale di Torino occupation and enclosure process. The modification of the course of the river and the subsequent disappearance of the peninsula that allowed Italia '61 to comunicate with the 'Parco delle Vallere' in the town of Moncalieri is attributed to the expansion process of the research center.

In the intermediate area, between the Palazzo del Lavoro and the Palazzo a Vela, the old pavilion of the Ministero del Lavoro, accompanied by two new constructions that replaced the dismantled Circarama, also claims sovereignty over a portion of the park. There is currently a chemical laboratory of the Camera di Commercio di Torino, a sports association, and a kindergarden. They have their front on Via Ventimiglia, relegating interaction with the Italia '61's core to limited visual continuity through the fences.













The two urban dinosaurs (Chiorino, 2005) continue to stare at each other across the lake, but now they do so from the isolation of their cages. The Palazzo a Vela has taken control of the adjacent area necessary for its operation as a sports facility. It opens an angle of its doors for big events, yet most of the time it remains silent, observant in the heart of Italia '61. The Palazzo del Lavoro has reclaimed its entire perimeter until reaching Via Ventimiglia, Corso Maroncelli, and Corso Unità d'Italia, creating confinement that shields a property awaiting its fate, which is in the hands of no one.

Thus, a system of fragments is formed. The pavilions system and the SMAT research center extract the inner island between the Po and Corso Unità d'Italia, completely separating Italia '61 from the river. The nucleus that includes the old pavilion of the Ministero del Lavoro and its adjoining facilities separate it from the urban fabric of Nizza Millefonti. In the same way, the territories claimed by the current Scuola di Amministrazione Aziendale of the University of Torino, and the new residential units near the automobile museum, degenerate the continuity of the public space, generating a necklace of secondary scenarios articulated by a residual system of connections.

In the original integral configuration of public space in 1961, the necessary elements for articulation only implied overcoming the fluvial obstacles or bringing outskirts areas of interest closer to Italia '61. At that time, only the Po and the Sangone represented an interruption to the continuity of the passable space, for which two bridges were built to connect Italia '61 with the hill. Additionally, to reach the Parco Europa, the Ovovia was built.

Currently, we find two types of new articulation elements resulting from the morphological transformation of space: those that go beyond the new barriers and those that result as a residue of the process of enclosure and fragmentation.

Unlike today's Corso Unità d'Italia, Corso Polonia, as it was named before the celebrations, did not have the incessant today's traffic. It used to be the vehicular axis of the project and it was often adapted for predominantly pedestrian use, however, it was not an obstruction isolating the halves arranged on its sides. Currently, due to its structural importance in the Torino road network, the Corso becomes an obstacle of important dimensions that accentuates the physical and perceptive division of space.

To overcome this obstacle, two pedestrian bridges have been placed at the height of the light fountain and the lake. The first one aligns with the existing bridge that connects with the hill. The second one communicates with the residual sidewalk made up of the UN campus and the SMAT research center island. The residual articulating elements mainly surround the perimeter of the fences and are often little used. The two entrances from the Nizza neighborhood to the lake area are fundamental to allowing access to a space that would otherwise remain completely isolated. The longitudinal sidewalks along with Corso Unità d'Italia, necessary from the point of view of the regulations, are actually of limited use.

Similarly, if we approach the current conditions of Italy '61 through a perceptual-descriptive lens, it is possible to deepen the fragmentation process characterization and the mutations suffered by the whole atmosphere.

The most important transformation falls on visual continuity. The original project anticipated the participation of the hill in the conformation of the landscaping, and the integration between Italia '61's core and the Po River thanks to the integrating role of the regional pavilions. Currently, even though green is continuous, its systematic organization within the UN campus insists on the enclosure process and consolidates the solid and impenetrable image of a piece that used to be flexible and fluid.

Something similar happens with the current Scuola di Amministrazione Aziendale. The green there, although perhaps wilder and freer, insists on the building's privacy, generating an increased perceptual interruption between the close urban fabric and the hill.

It is necessary to mention that, in addition to the fragmentation and abandonment dynamics, and added to the inability to manage an area of such importance and dimensions; Italia '61 has not taken part in the important urban renewal that Turin has suffered in recent decades. Only in the preparation for the 2006 Winter Olympics, the Palazzo a Vela was restructured and reopened, however, no special attention was given to the rest of the complex. The same happened with the renovation of Lingotto's Fiat factory and the current project for the 'Palazzo della Regione', in which Italia '61 remains completely disjointed and relegated to a simple mention in the name of the recently inaugurated metro station.









A Constellation of Fragments

"Desolation for Italy '61, dirt, noise, danger. It had to be the Turin of the future, it is a place where buildings that have cost billions become rotten."

Once a portrait of the current conditions has been drawn up, we proceed to overlap the radiography of utopia, to identify the spaces of contradiction. Oblivion, fragmentation, and abandonment are the three great protagonists of dystopia in Italia '61.

Nothing remains of the utopia of connections but a broken circuit. Corso Unità d'Italia has become a vehicular artery of a mere functional character and is in complete denial of what is happening around it, making its unitarian character now reside only in its name; boats no longer reach this far up and the docks are completely abandoned. The city has become totally disconnected from this neighborhood, in fact, no means of transport now leads to Italia '61 and the only use that Torino gives it, in terms of transport, is parking.

Of many of the jewels and wonders that once occupied a space in so many of the postcards of Torino, the world's navel that year, today only the trace of absence remains. The Circarama has completely disappeared and with it all its symbology. The 'Monorotaia', whose rail was partially dismantled, continues to be reflected on the murky waters of the lake as a monument to the absence of that which used to be the banner of modernity, but that no one remembers anymore. From the 'Ovovia' there is only one station left behind the fences and completely ignored by the eyes that pass nearby.

Nothing remains of the integrality of space but a constellation of fragments. The unitary Italia '61 that echoed this political and social moment of the nation no longer reflects that discourse. Multiple pieces that formed part of the integral photography of the project in 1961, have suffered until today a process of emancipation, exclusion, and seclusion, which has caused fragmentation and an interruption in the original urban dynamics of continuity of public space. Today Italia '61 is a labyrinth of residual precincts and autonomous atmospheres.

From the vitality, there is nothing left but astonishing prevailing loneliness. The absence that has taken hold of Italia '61 and how the public space is practically unused is especially disturbing. It remains immobile, artificial, appropriated, and modified only by the controlled dynamics of the same green that inhabits it, but practically ignored by the initiatives of human activity. The processes of fragmentation and enclosure have had more than an effect on their intent

1 'La Stampa' newspapaer headline in 16.03.1973











Source: Author's pictures.









Source: Author's pictures.



Finally, the veil of deterioration today covers the scenario that used to be modern, polished, and shiny. Abandonment occupies a place not only in public spaces but also behind the fences. There, the human absence and lack of maintenance added to frequent episodes of irregular occupation, has led to the development of a disturbing image and a degraded perception of those spaces.

The glorious Palazzo del Lavoro thus becomes the banner of dystopia. Abandoned, semidestroyed, and at the mercy of non-regular appropriation by all kinds of actors; ignored and completely emancipated from the urban dynamics of the city; introspective and inevitably sentenced to his individual reality; completely invisible and turned into a symbol of shame and mediocrity. At least a feeling of frustration and helplessness should remain from this journey towards dystopia, at least the intention to develop utopianist exercises of criticism and discussion about the failed utopia; however, of what for a fleeting episode turned out to be the greatest pride of the nation, nothing remains but shame and abandonment.







Matters of administration

The eternal headache of the public administration related to the management arises early². Italia '61, since its scheduled splendor period ended, has passed through the hands of an inadequate administration, which has led to its deterioration. However, the problem lies in the short-term planning of the initial project, which was interested only in satisfying the immediate requirements for the show realization, obstinately ignoring the need to assign new uses to the massive complex once the celebrations were over. The great infrastructures of the park cannot imagine worthy functions to host. Those buildings that entered the history of architecture cannot be satisfied with hosting activities and worldly tacky fairs (Garzaro, 2010).

A collection of newspaper articles, dealing with the promises and negligence that modeled the fortune of Italia '61's scenarios, is a useful tool to outline the problems behind the sixty years of the project's life.

During the same 1961, the new possible activities to be housed in the buildings of the international exhibition were discussed. From this moment, the management of the Palazzo del Lavoro is offered to the UN and the Bureau International du Travail BIT for its transformation into an international technical-professional institute. In 1964, an agreement was signed with the BIT for the creation of a center for developing countries' foreign students, for which a use concession would be granted for 19 years. During this period, the Palazzo del Lavoro and the regions' pavilions are the only ones that manage to maintain a constant and decorous destination.

In 1977 there was talk about transferring there, once the concession to the BIT ended, offices of the Piemonte government, however, once it passed into the hands of the regional government, new discussions and hypotheses began about the possible use of the building, which could become a cartographic center. Since 1983, it hosts a part of the Faculty of Economics of the University of Torino, which, due to the transfer of activities to a new location, temporarily did not have sufficient classrooms. By 1986, nearly two thousand students were confined to the three large makeshift temporary classrooms inside the Palazzo del Lavoro.

For the Palazzo a Vela, today's Palavela, it is difficult for many years to find a purpose, so it houses a varied and crazy number of activities to allow it to stay

alive (Garzaro, 2010). Until then considered a monument to uselessness, it manages to glimpse its vocation in the 80s, when the activities it hosts begin to be primarily sports. In '92, the maintenance of the equipment was unsustainable, forcing the municipality to call on the private sector to collaborate with its restructuring and administration.

The 2006 Winter Olympics turned out to be an occasion to discuss the future of the city, and with it, the reactivation of some degraded areas inherited from the industrial city. Though, in the case of Italia '61, only the Palazzo a Vela is invited to the city's renovation festival. The huge curtain wall façade was dismantled, while the great sail was preserved, and under it, a new structure designed by Gae Aulenti and Arnaldo De Bernardi was built to host the ice skating competitions.

In comparison, the fate of the Palazzo del Lavoro in the Olympic project was not so advantageous. In 2004 new agreements are discussed for the purchase of the Palazzo del Lavoro by the municipality for its restoration and use during the Olympics, still, it ends up shamefully covered only with an advertising wrapper for the event.

As the condition of deterioration progresses, discussions are being held only about the sale of the Palazzo del Lavoro and the new uses to house it. In 2017 there is talk of a shopping center and a technological museum, a project that still echoes, but about which there is not a minimum of clarity. The last proposal, carried out in the climate of the need for guardianship of the property by the Nervi family, consists of using the building as a repository for Torino's museums, in an attempt to revalue the Palazzo's architectural heritage and the city's museum heritage at the same time.

^{2.} The following paragrph shows a synthesis of a deep analysis of the 'La Stampa' archive. The inquiry is related to 1961 - 2021, and has been done by the author through the digital archive using keywords.

Source: Collage by the Author.



Il piano dell'assessora alla cultura per rigualificare l'opera di Nervi abbandonata da anni

Il progetto per trasformare il palazzo del Lavoro in un istituto internazionale

Stasera l'assessore Bosso riferirà al Consiglio comunale - Gli accordi sono a buon punto - Ieri la Giunta ha stanziato oltre un miliardo per opere scolastiche

Comune ha intenzione di riattivare la monorotaia e la funivia di Italia 61

La ferrovia aerea funzionerà al sabato e alla domenica: è già pronta - Per la seggiovia si dovranno spostare le stazioni, ma ci sarà la possibilità di prolungarla sino al Colle della Maddalena

Palazzo del lavoro, nel '92

ospiterà sedi universitarie

Il celebre edificio che fa capo alla joint venture tra la Cdp immobiliare, società della Cassa Depositi e Prestiti, e la Gefim della famiglia Ponchia ha affidato alla Cushman&Wakefield

Palazzo del Lavoro, accordo vicino

In cambio del lifting, per 30 anni al Comune

In vendita il Palazzo del Lavoro di Torino

l'incarico di valorizzare e cedere il palazzo

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3

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61

energia solare

nascerà





SPONTANEOUS ITALIA '61

The heterotopic appropiation

According to Kevin Hetherington, 'Heterotopia', despite being a fashionable and recurring term used in social and cultural studies in recent years, has been little theorized as a concept (Hetherington, 1997). In his book 'The Badlands of Modernity: Heterotopia and social ordering' he attempts to build a definition focused on situations and effects rather than mere spatial definition. He defines Heterotopia as spaces of an 'alternate ordering' in a relationship that accentuates the differentiation regarding the surrounding context.

A heterotopic space is characterized by the presence of a structure inherited by an established order and at the same time by the presence of certain processes that spontaneously challenge and adapt the original order logics intrinsic to the space. In other words, within the definition of order, deviant forms are always present, experienced as paradoxes, and which overlap and join the established order in a kind of bricolage. (Gielen, 2009)

In this order of ideas, utopia is always present in heterotopia as it seeks to shape new parameters and meanings, however, as Hetherington considers, it is important to separate the concepts of eu-topia (*good-place*) and ou-topia (*noplace*) coined by Thomas More and review the neutral space (Marin, 1984) that is found in the middle. An intermediate space that is not a *no-place* but neither is it a *good-place* (Hetherington, 1997) but that moves in the gap of possibility and of the transition towards scenarios in which new modes of the *good-life* can take place.

We can consider heterotopia then as a process of transitional juxtaposition. There, the ideas and practices that occupy the space and that configure new orders and balances between control and freedom are recognized. "It is the juxtaposition of things not usually found together and the confusion that such representations create, that marks out heterotopia and gives them their significance." (Hetherington, 1997)

Heterotopia understood as a process, in the case of Italia '61, moves away from a subjective reading of urban space transformation in a journey that goes from utopia to dystopia. The reading of the project through the heterotopic lens is based on the recognition of otherness and of the practices not considered within a discourse of pre-established order, they nevertheless exert tension on said order due to the appropriation and spontaneous use of space.

Both the spontaneous dimension of the practices and the presence of actors not considered by the order establishment, give shape to a *counter-project*.¹ The idea of *counter-project*, aligned with Hetherington's theory on heterotopia, comprises the sum of the processes that contribute to configuring a new spontaneous organization different from the one projected. The counter-project, or rather the heterotopic system, is the structure of actors and practices that involuntarily transform space and the pre-established order, causing new tensions and balances, and also revealing potential new modes of social (and natural) ordering.

The fragmentary system that makes up Italia '61, whose origin and morphological conformation we have discussed in the previous chapter, is a fundamental part of the heterotopic reading of the project. These fragments (or residues) house the different initiatives of a spontaneous otherness, which we have tried to classify, despite its vast variety, into two groups: *Anthropic Heterotopia* and *Multispecies Heterotopia*. The Anthropic Heterotopia includes the practices of occupation and spontaneous use and the anthropo-functional characterization of public space fragments. The Multispecies Heterotopia includes non-human actors and practices that in the same way experience space and transform it. Both heterotopias coexist and collaborate, and their very definition depends on the contact and the modifications that the other structure makes in the context.

The Anthropic Heterotopia

Anthropic heterotopia, despite the partial and infrequent use of space, can be read and studied more easily than multispecies heterotopia due to the means available. However, it is less obvious.

1. We introduce the term counter-project in symmetry with the term coined by Foucault counter-space (Foucault, 1967). The counter-spaces of the Foucauldian heterotopia turn out to be elsewhere spaces that represent alternative marginal realities that contrast the original reality.





Source: Author's pictures.





Source: Author's pictures

As we have already said, the fragments configure the anthropic structure of the heterotopia thanks to the conformation of 'urban interiors'². Urban interiors are collective places, experienced as interiors. Ambiguous and provisional, particular atmospheres take place in them, in which multiple bodies meet to claim their participation in the public space (Bianchetti, 2016). Studying the urban interiors allows the recognition of the plurality of actors and the spontaneity of the practices produced in the public space, and in the same way, legitimizes and vindicates the different ways of occupying it.

The anthropic heterotopia in Italia '61 is based on the privacy search. In these disjointed fragments that result in an interruption of the continuity of the open space (Bianchetti, Urban Interiors Manifesto, 2017), the pre-established projected practices are superimposed by practices mainly of the individual nature of the encounter of a few individuals.

The pre-established component (or '*projectual*'³) includes the pedestrian paths inside the fragments, the urban furniture arranged along said routes, and in some cases the vegetation, which accentuates the principle of spatial order. The project activities are mainly of a recreational, children's, and sports nature. Where there is greater density in the distribution of these elements (which equip the park), specialized nuclei are created that preserve the preconceived logic and order. In them, heterotopia does not have much room for maneuver.

The heterotopic (or *counter-projectual*) component, on the other hand, recognizes the emergence of itinerant practices of a varied nature, whose development does not require specific park equipment, but instead flourishes in the particular concavities in which the perception of privacy and protection is accentuated. The decrease in traffic and noise, the particular reduction in the intensity of sunlight thanks to the vegetation, the difficult accessibility, and the abandonment and absence of a 'projectual' use of some existing infrastructures are fundamental. Thanks to these factors, mainly the migrant population, the elderly, and the young, they find a range of niches that favor individual use or not numerous meetings of same type actors. These dynamics include the non-regular occupation of public space by alternative and temporary forms of housing (like trailers), raves and other loisir activities, commercial exchanges, meeting rituals such as battuage, etc.

2. The exhibition 'Urban Interiors' exposes conceptual models of Turin's city places that function as internal spaces. It organizes part of the material produced in the homonymous urban project course of the Politecnico di Torino Architecture Bachelor program during the 2014-2015 academic year.

3. As opposed to the term 'counter-project'. The term 'projectual' in this case is conceived as the pre-established order, which heterotopia overlaps and/or confronts.





Source: Author's pictures.

Certainly, these activities vary in frequency and location during the year depending on the climate and the seasons. Despite greater or lesser use, the niches that make up the urban interiors of Italia '61 always offer the quality of privacy, however, they are not necessarily specialized to house specific practices. They are characterized by the context and the proximity.

The Multispecies Heterotopia

Multispecies heterotopia is perhaps more evident due to the great presence of green, however, it is much more difficult to study due to its complexity. Multispecies heterotopia is not limited to the horizontal plane that it shares with anthropic heterotopia, but rather occupies the subsoil, occupies bodies of water, occupies the air, and occupies so many places that the human perception of space reaches mediocrely. By unfolding in a three-dimensional manner, the nonhuman heterotopia manages to spread even further and overcome the physical barriers derived from the enclosure of anthropic space which we discussed in the previous chapter, however, it is even more susceptible to interruptions and divisions.

Otherness adapted under conditions of domination and subordination by the anthropic modification of the landscape. It is made up, in terms of Gilles Clément, of continuity of residues⁴ resulting from a variable process of exploitation. In these residues, the land, the green, the water, the air, and all the diversity that lives there, adopt their logic of spontaneous order, which in its autonomous development modifies and transgresses the anthropic design order.

The indecisive character of the space, and the relation of domination and power between the pre-established design order in Italia '61 and the free evolution of the multispecies heterotopia, may allow us to recognize the accumulation of fragments as a potential *Third landscape*⁵, whose purpose is to constitute a refuge for diversity (Clément, 2005). "By nature, the third landscape constitutes a territory for the many species that do not find space elsewhere; the residue of species that do not appear in the third landscape is represented by cultivated plants, farm animals, and those beings whose existence depends on crops and

4. See 'residuo' in 'Manifesto del Terzo Paessaggio': "the residue derives from the abandonment of a previously exploited land. Its origin is multiple: agricultural, industrial, urban, tourist etc. (Clement, 2005)."

5. According to the 'Third Landscape', coined by Gilles Clément in his manifesto of the same title, this kind of spaces "are spaces that differ in shape, size and status, united only by the absence of any human activity, but which taken together are fundamental for the conservation of biological diversity." (De Pieri, 2005)

farms." (Clément, 2005)

The green heterotopia, even the one found behind the fences of the Palazzo del Lavoro, enters into constant tension with the rigid layout of the design layouts. The environment in Italia '61 remains controlled so the garden hardly acquires autonomy despite the multiple non-human actors that add to the potential diversity that this green nucleus could house.

The environmental structure in Italia '61 is submitted – from the point of view of its autonomy – by the municipality. Trees are frequently pruned, their appearance meticulously cared for, and weeds completely removed, as is the case in many other city parks. However, the garden continues to be a refuge for multiple species, birds among the most recognizable, which is configured adjacent to the ecological corridor of the Po River and the Parco del Valentino.

Though maintenance is not the only factor that affects multispecies heterotopia. Air and noise pollution, a product of the anthropic activities of the adjacent urban fabric, and mainly of the incessant vehicular flow of Corso Unità d'Italia, affect the environmental structure continuity and create a harmful barrier that is difficult to overcome.

'La rivolta del verde'⁶ (the green revolt) turns out to be a natural and inevitable process obstinately interrupted in Italia '61. However, inside the enclosure of the Palazzo del Lavoro, the situation seems to be more encouraging. For some years now, behind the fences, the multispecies heterotopia has been gaining ground thanks to the abandonment and interruption of any type of human activity. The trees grow at their own pace and follow their own rules, and the land is dressed in an increasingly dense mantle of herbaceous plants. It has become a residue whose management exceeded human political capacity and has passed into the hands of diversity that gradually reconquers it. The 'Palazzo del Lavoro' is a clear representation of the third landscape in juxtaposition to the strong presence of a pre-existing urban structure, on which, however, the condition of domination begins to be inverted thanks to the exclusion of human participation.

6. La Rivolta del Verde' is the result of an investigation carried out by the Anthropologist and Research Doctor in Urban Studies Lucilla Barchetta. In this publication she tportrays a Turin's environmental history, in which she approaches biodiversity and the practices that resourcefully arise in green spaces that have suffered deep processes of abandonment along the rivers of the city.





Source: Author's pictures.





Fringila Coelebs Common Chaffinch



Delichon Urbicum Common House Martin



Regulus Ignicapilla Common Firecrest







Fulica Linnaeus Eurasian Coot

Gallinula Chloropus Common Moorhen

Anas Platyrhynchos Mallard



Phoenicurus Phoenicurus Common Redstart



Phalacrocorax carbo Great Cormorant



Turdus Merula Eurasian Blackbird



Parus Major Great Tit



Aegithalos Caudatus



Alcedo Atthis Common Kingfisher



Sylvia Atricapilla Eurasian Blackcap



Troglodytes Troglodytes Eurasian Wren



Serinus Serinus European Serin



Aythya fuligula Tufted Duck



Phylloscopus Trochilus Willow Warbler



Carpinus Betulus European Hornbeam

128

129

Cedrus Atlantica Atlas Cedar



Quercus Robur Common Oak

The Heterotopic System

The two heterotopic categories that we have explained are mixed and juxtaposed to the projected layout. The fragments are configured in a heterotopic system that represents the Italia '61's territory of otherness and is inserted within the logic of the brassage planetaire⁷ of circulation and encounters between the different species on the planet (De Pieri) (De Pieri, 2005).

The heterotopic system is made up of the intersectionality between anthropic practices and the green configuration. The urban interiors are characterized either by the presence or absence and by the quality of the vegetation that surrounds them and in turn, the non-human practices change density and interaction degree depending on the anthropic presence. The *counter-project* is thus defined, as which preserves and develops a particular order, composed of balances that go beyond the rigidity of the anthropic spatial project.

The environmental structure is a fundamental element in the definition of different privacy levels and in the conformation of the niches that house urban interiors. The rows and sets of trees⁸, whose densities filter the light that occupies these atmospheres, are established as devices that delimit and protect, or that expose and show the spatial structure. These devices act hand in hand with those that, built by man, collaterally affect the privacy of fragmentary residues.

The limits are clearly defined. They have been an indispensable part of the fragmentation process that Italia '61 has suffered, however the green, in its different degrees of autonomy and thanks to its natural growth, has led to the characterization of spaces for human use.

7. La brassage planétaire' or the planetary mixture refers to an ordinary mechanics of evolution derived from movement and the rapid increase in encounters between different environments, which provoke hybridization and naturalization processes that challenge endemism.

8. The trees surveys were carried out with the assistance of the cartographic material provided by Turin's municipality through its Geoportale. This allowed the recognition and positioning of a large part of the species present in the park. A subsequent series of inspections was also added to this investigation together with biologists and anthropologists aimed at identifying the specific spontaneous plant species that arose in the area. However, the survey is not very relevant: these are very common species in the abandoned places in Turin and unfortunately – at the moment – not very persistent. The only space in which these species have instead found a way to expand is the interior of the Palazzo del Lavoro, where human intervention is excluded. In this case, we are dealing with exotic species such as the creeping thistle, the dandelion, the Chickling vetch, etc.





Source: Author's pictures.

However, in an environment in which anthropic supremacy still plays a leading role, the relationship remains more oriented towards a survival approach than towards a coexistence one. Herbaceous species such as the creeping thistle, the dandelion, or the Chickling vetch, grow far from human concurrence. The concentration of birds⁹ moves towards less noisy and polluted areas. Anthropic practices fragment and isolate the multispecies continuity, characterizing and conditioning, in the same way, the practices of diversity through the constructed devices.

These devices in many cases, despite their anthropic-artificial origin, are adapted or conquered by the multispecies heterotopia. As we had mentioned before, in the 'Palazzo del Lavoro', due to the absence of human activity and control, the green does revolt. In the remaining structure of the dismantled monorail, the birds dominate the lake below that protects them from possible passers-by who may disturb them.

It is necessary to mention that many of this flora and fauna have found ways to guarantee their survival in the relationship they have established with an anthropized environment and that their evolution is already conditioned by coexistence with the dynamics of human survival¹⁰.

The fragments already witness a degree of coexistence between anthropic practices and non-human actors. However, due to the original configuration of the park, human domination continues to be prevalent and it is difficult to rebalance these urban tensions¹¹.

9. This concentration of birds was studied and determined thanks to a series of soundscapes recorded during the bird surveys carried out. Thanks to the assistance of applications such as Merlin Bird ID and iNAturalist, it was possible to recognize a large part of the species.

10. A very intersting work about the relation between human infrastructures, flora and fauna has been developed by Anna Tsing in the "The Feral Atlas" and in the book "The mushroom at the end of the world: On the possibility of life in capitalist ruins" (2015).

11. The concept of "urban tensions" has been defined by Cerruti, Kërçuku, Setti, and Vassallo (2017 and 2021). In this case, anyway, i suggest to apply the concept not only to human relations, but also as a key description of a possible alternative to multispecies coexhisting.



FUTURE SCENARIOS: EMPOWERING HETEROTOPIA

We have found that the landscape remains under strict consequent control of the built Italia '61 neighborhood urban layout. The autonomy of the green is limited and consequently the spontaneous development of a garden that in many cases struggles against its domestication. This rigidity of the composition and organization of the green added to the constant domesticating care prevents the development of an unsubdued environmental structure that protects diversity and encourages the arrival of new species.

The challenge is to preserve and facilitate the growth of diversity through the consent of alternative ordering schemes or simply non-ordering, which promote autonomy and give political dignity to indecision⁷. We recognize that it is important to facilitate the dynamics of exchange between the anthropized space and the multispecies heterotopia within the existing urban fabric, leaving aside the schemes of subordination and survival, to allow and empower the biological continuity and the natural rhythms of life in the planet.

Clément recognizes the Third Landscape as a common space of the future that houses and allows circulation and interaction between the different species of the planet. He calls it the engine of evolution and the matrix of the global landscape that will come to pass. Man plays an important role in evolution as planetary anthropization has induced a catastrophic decrease in diversity. To avoid extinction, society and culture must begin to value and give relevance to biological growth over economic growth. Recover the bond with the Earth.

What we seek is to promote the self-determination of an environmental residue. The most important question is how to rebalance the human/non-

1. Among the challenges of the 'Third Lanscape' proposed by Clément is that of "preserving or encouraging the growth of diversity through consented practices of nonorganization" (Clement, 2005). human relationship. Our utopian approach is that of reversing the leading role (anthropic, dominant, and extractor) and not projecting from and for man only, but rather articulating spaces of coexistence with animals, trees, herbaceous plants, fungi, etc. in the urban fabric. We seek to empower multispecies heterotopia by simultaneously acknowledging current practices of human heterotopia.

Based on this, we propose two scenarios that seek to recognize and empower two logics of alternative autonomous ordering. In these scenarios, two different degrees of human participation in the configuration of the landscape are contemplated, to allow the self-determination of a structure of the non-human, of the feral, which is intertwined with the existing anthropic structure and is articulated with the other traces and natural corridors within the city.

A More-than-Human Garden

The 'Corpo Italiano di Liberazione'² Garden is constituted by a structure defined according to the artificial lake built for the centenary celebrations. This organizes the hard surfaces and the distribution of the green mainly according to the pedestrian paths. The structure of the dismantled monorail flies over the body of water, and thanks to the protection strip around it, it has been colonized by birds. The rail advances until it reaches the abandoned southern station, which, reduced to a viewing platform over the lake and an access staircase, is fundamentally used as a niche for couples or small groups to meet.

A certain degree of coexistence is found in the children and the elderly who are frequently attracted by the ducks and turtles that navigate the battered waters of the sixty years old lake, by the birds that recycle urban structures underutilized by man, and by the privacy generated by the different densities of the vegetation. The multispecies heterotopia is strongly determined by the urban structure, but it occupies and modifies it in a process of self-determination that needs to be recognized and promoted.

This first scenario focuses on the search to reinforce the spaces of coexistence, granting political dignity to the multispecies heterotopia to negotiate its self-determination. It consists of elevating the decision-making role of the non-human and giving it the power to negotiate and dialogue with an anthropic environment that has subjected it until now. In this scenario, both heterotopias reinforce each other and protect the very dynamics that occupy the space. We isolate the green, we accentuate the process of fragmentation and enclosure, not based on anthropic practices, but reinforcing non-human activity, accepting the controlled participation of man in a laboratory in which to carry out the recognition of horizontal interspecies interaction.

The spatial operation consists of extending the limits of the body of water to form a wetland area that overcomes the project rigidity of the park and that fosters the development and arrival of new diversity. The More Than Human Garden recognizes the current non-human heterotopic dynamics of appropriation, and through empowering the green self-protection, configures a space to welcome biodiversity in the city, articulated with the biological structure of the Po River to help to establish and reinforce corridors for biological continuity.

2. This is the actual name of the lake's garden in betwen the Palazzo del Lavoro and the Palazzo a Vela.








Accentuating the conformation of a protected nucleus requires reinforcing its limits and weakening the dominant anthropic use. For protection from the context, a green barrier surrounds the perimeter to filter air pollution and to protect from excessive noise levels caused by Corso Unità d'Italia. Regarding the downplay of human use, but ensuring the current qualities of use of public space, a low-impact platform's network is arranged according to the logic of routes and encounters. Nodes, niches, and passages, articulated by the vegetation, translate the requirements of privacy of use and isolation by the anthropic heterotopia in the garden.

Renaturalizing the garden as a bioretention area would help reduce the amount of stormwater runoff by capturing and storing water during floods. Similarly, it would have the ability to regulate air temperature, reflect solar radiation, and influence humidity through natural processes. Additionally, it would favor the regulation of water quality thanks to the filtration of degrading organic contaminants and nitrogen, also preventing the arrival of these agents on the ground.

Concerning human presence, the constructed inland wetlands, along with adding diversity to the neighborhood green areas, would be an opportunity to create awareness about a more balanced and fair interaction with the environment, in addition to disseminating knowledge regarding the challenges of climate change and engage the community in recognition and renaturalization processes at a local scale.

The More Than Human Garden is an opportunity to promote new modes of sensory experience, coexistence, and learning about the natural urban landscape. It is a park that is not based on the dominant and domesticating use and enjoyment of the environment. It goes to another level in which human activity comes into contact with the green dynamics and with the memory of the place. In which the patrimonialization of this space also conceives the progressive modification of recognition of other actors' importance within the territory.

The park is juxtaposition. It is made up of different spatial and temporal layers of history, of human activity, of vision and perspective of a society, of the different temporality of evolution, of a non-human who also suffers from the dynamics of a changing anthropic society and that adapts to it. It is a juxtaposition of mutable nature, a mutable society, and mutual political recognition.











A Feral Palace

The 'Palazzo del Lavoro' remains motionless and forgotten in a corner of the Italia 61 park. Its fenced perimeter restricts access to any (human) intruder who intends to make the building a type of refuge or simply explore its suggestive interior deprived of any anthropic use. From the outside, behind the fences, two types of atmosphere can be recognized: a gloomy one that, confined to the interior of the louvers that protect the broken glass facade, is occupied by solitude and dust under the incredible 'raggiere'; and a feral one, which begins to be reconquered by the vegetation that, left to its own devices, has taken control of that threedimensional limit between the palazzo and the passable public space.

This has been a context exclusion for almost of two decades. Political and governmental actors have been unable to manage an urban facility of such dimensions, condemning it (if it is not rather an opportunity) to perpetual disuse and deterioration. Anyhow the multispecies heterotopia, in its search for self-determination, has found in this strip behind the fence a bastion to evade the constant domestication and intrusion of the man with his impetus of







Source: Fun Palace promotional brochure, 1964.

order. We want to reinforce this state of exception there.

This second scenario focuses on reinforcing the sense of anthropic exclusion, granting political dignity to the absence of order, indecision, and lack of productivity (Clément, 2005). We propose a Feral Palace. 'Feral' determines a claimed wild state that "...emerge within human-sponsored projects but is not in human control" (Tsing, Deger, Keleman, & Zhou, 2020).

'The Feral Palace' is a reinterpretation of Cedric Price's utopian 'Fun Palace', in the post-Anthropocene era. In the same way that Price's utopia (Potteries Thinkbelt) was a reference for Italia '61 itself (see An-On Wheels Utopia), we consider it appropriate to use this metaphor as an instrument of the heterotopian project. The playful dimension of abandonment, which in Price results in occasions of functional and social rediscovery, in our case becomes especially the "feral possibility" (Tsing, 2020), guaranteed by the exclusion of the human species within an anthropic infrastructure.

There we intend that reserve status be granted to a space in the process of reversing anthropization, whose submission has been gradually reduced. For this scenario, unlike the More Than Human Garden, the capacity for the dialogue itself in the search for coexistence would not be necessary. On the contrary, thanks to the complete restriction of human participation in said space, its autonomy is granted and respected and given complete freedom of evolutionary development.







As in the case of the More Than Human Garden, the formation of a protected nucleus requires the reinforcement of its limits. So we recognize the role of the barrier as a protective action, restricting any type of intrusive anthropic activity that modifies the dynamics of the multispecies heterotopia inside the Feral Palace.

From an architectural point of view, the operation consists of encouraging the feral conquest inside the 'Palazzo del Lavoro'. The Palazzo is partially stripped to allow the entrance of the nature that claims it. Part of the roof and facades disappear to allow the entry of water, air, and other inputs that allow the propagation of life, green, and diversity. The Feral Palace is articulated to the More Than Human Garden in the formation of a reception center for diversity that defends biological continuity on the anthropized territory.

The configuration of the Feral Palace as an urban forest would help to reabsorb and retain precipitation water through evapotranspiration and infiltration processes, reducing the risk of flooding. It could also help reduce heat island effects due to the ability of vegetation to reflect radiation and release moisture into the air. It would manage to mitigate soil and air pollution and establish itself as a bioretentive refuge that allows the propagation of local fauna.

The complete paradigm shift looks towards an integral recovery of the surrounding environment. The exploitation and submission of the landscape stops and instead gives way to an autonomous restorative heterotopia that improves the multispecies quality of life in the city. The aspiration to confer an anthropized space that historically had assumed the function of paying homage to an extractivist and consumerist logic to the non-human heterotopia, so beaten and diminished in the urban environment, opens the possibility of a dialogue about the future and the protection of the life on the planet. It would allow the initiation of a process of observation and understanding of the spontaneous renaturalization processes of residual spaces in the city, the knowledge diffusion about the effects and challenges of climate change, and the dissemination of a message of responsibility regarding our relationship with the Earth.

The 'Palazzo del Lavoro' that becomes a Feral Palace is an exercise in utopianism that calls for a paradigm shift. It means taking a step back, admitting our catastrophic responsibility in modifying the environment, and acknowledging our non-superiority over other species. The Feral Palace is a palimpsest that overlaps different stories originating at different times, which represent the same society always in the process of self-discovery.

AFTERTHOUGHTS

To rethink Italia '61, we have resorted to the categories of Utopia, Dystopia, and Heterotopia. We have carried out an unconventional reading of space using these categories as lenses, which has allowed us to produce three different radiographs, which superimposed condense the evolution and continuous rebalancing of the order structures that are part of the project. The objective was not to propose a new utopia but to use alternative instruments to exercise new modes of utopianism through the lessons of the Fallen Utopia and use them as survey devices for the project.

This project initiative has allowed us to highlight at least three issues on which it would make sense to continue investigating the sustainable city, utopianism, and heterotopia.

Biodiverity and Sustainability

The first conceives the recognition of biodiversity as an urban urgency. The sustainable city assumes responsibility for the catastrophic role of man in the territory and conceives of itself as a living organism that consumes resources and generates wastes (García Vasquez, 2004), therefore it requires connecting and juxtaposing urban and ecological structures.

The future of the biological evolution of the planet, after reaching the extended level of the anthropization of the territory, takes place in spaces of anthropic desertion, in which biodiversity gradually gains ground thanks to the human absence. These have the challenge of becoming a refuge for biological invention, and of reversing the current logic of land use practices linked to a liberal model with short-term profit goals (Clément, 2005).

Consequently, new questions arise. Regarding the autonomy of the green and the search for a feralization of the anthropized environment, it is necessary to

investigate the interaction degree between the feral spontaneity and its control. *How much does it make sense to restrict human participation in the configuration of landscape spontaneous dynamics and allow its self-regulation?*

The Post-Anthopocene Utopia

Successively, and always in tune with the catastrophic and authoritarian role of human supremacy over the territory, it is difficult to think of a "counter-space" (Foucault, 1967). The rigidity of the 900s utopia has led to the deployment of dominant structures that do not allow and barely identify spontaneous order. We recognize that Utopia is in itself a transgressive critical instrument that throughout history has allowed different views towards ideal scenarios, however, it has always done so from an anthropocentric perspective.

Deconstructing and reconstructing Utopia allows us to change the perspective of the future, to work on its construction in a way that approaches the context in a brand new way, recognizing contemporary issues and concerns about the territory. Climate change and the construction of sustainable cities are one of them. To ensure our future as a species, it is essential to rethink our relationship with the territory. Recognize the sharing with other actors and entities that until now have not had a voice in the construction of the anthropized territory, and whose participation is necessary to maintain a biological balance that in turn ensures the resources for a multispecies collective existence on the planet.

So how would it be possible to reverse the leading role? To continue inquiring about Utopia, we consider it pertinent to approach the category from a perspective that overcomes the anthropic preponderance and instead reconfigures itself to include peripheral voices in its theoretical exercise. *Is a different mode of non-anthropocentric utopia possible*?

Heterotopia for Utopianism

The latter leads us to consider again the role of Heterotopia as an instrument and not as a goal. Foucault has often been used in architecture with an aim: to build heterotopias. But Heterotopia is much more than a place, it is contrast, tension, and transgression. We consider that the objective of the design process is not to build "counter-spaces" but to recognize the "counter-project" to thus compose spaces for both anthropic and multispecies inclusion. In this case, the doubt is: that perhaps heterotopia is not an end but it is a tool. *Is it possible to design for others to approach new ways of utopianism*?

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