

TOWARDS INELUCTABLE ARCHITECTURE

carlo moretti

English translation by Rodney Stringer

In 1960 the population was 4 bn
in 2020 8 bn
in 2050 expected to hit 10 bn

BUT the architecture lags behind in
small houses, phalansteries and
skyscrapers, in the districts of
cities past and present

SOCIETY DEMANDS SOLUTIONS TO MAJOR ISSUES

INDUSTRY will produce HOUSES
AND CITIES just as for more
than a century it has been
producing as many as
required

AND ARCHITECTURE will turn
it into a POEM

Pag.VIII

“A dream seems like a dream until you start somewhere; only then does it become a proposition: something infinitely greater.”

Adriano Olivetti

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The reasonings set forth on these pages develop and complement concepts previously expressed in my book “La città che non c'è”, Electa 1986.

Gathered here is a selection of dreams, thoughts and images that have ripened over the years. It is neither a treatise nor a systematic collection of principles, but a way of thinking about Architecture through an IDEA OF THE CITY that takes shape in terms of tradition, territory, new social, economic and ecological dimensions, and “Signs”, History and Myth.

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INFINITY BECKONS

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MORETTI'S IDEAL CITY

AN ESSAY BY PIERRE RESTANY

Architecture, like all the synthetic visions of the human spirit, has its marginal systems, its miraculous codices that create the critical mirror of real history. Carlo Moretti belongs to the critical family of architectural thought. A theorist by instinct and by nature, he speaks of formulas, thinks in the form of a "treatise" with a confident ambition and a broad rational vision.

In the preface to his recent book titled "The Missing City", Daniele Geltrudi speaks of the rationality of Carlo Moretti's inventions: "they are not random, but seek to work out a theory of architecture". A complete and even exhaustive architecture on a spatial level. Concretized in terms of space are the two fundamental concepts of centre and distance, meaning the structural essence of the history of architecture. A theory that is not only complete, but absolute from the point of view of form: Moretti's ideal city, like all other ideal cities, corresponds to an interpretation of classical language conceived as a value in itself and ever present in its historical variations. Like all rational poets, Moretti starts out from an absolute observation in terms both of spaces and of forms. "The consumer age is identified with wastage, among which that of land is the most macroscopic and dramatic".

Starting from this critical severity and its implied awareness of the negative destiny of the historic city, all compensatory dreams are valid. Moretti's masterly style reminds us of Le Corbusier's visionary outbursts. It is true that Le Corbusier was right at the time of his Plan Voisin, when he was thinking of restoring its former peace to the whole of historic Paris. And thus it is also true that Carlo Moretti is right in this second phase of our consumer era in proposing to history, rather than to us, the miraculous

solution of a “missing city”.

A rational poet, Carlo Moretti is a man of actualized passion, an architect and scholarly historian who believes in the mission of architecture: to design an environment built for the present.

Wastage of land is the result of the contradictions of today's design culture. Architecture today is expected to be traditional and specific or abstract and re-inventive. In the former, an abuse of citation and analogy, in the latter of conceptual generalisation as a way of producing autonomous structures. The citationists adapt to place and maybe all too closely, to the point of fitting into it as perfect decoration. The abstract conceptualists renew even typological reality by creating enormous leaps in the scale of self-sufficient objects. The whole history of our postwar architecture has been dominated by a conflict between these two opposite trends.

“The missing city” - and therein lies its great merit – is situated beyond this conflictual situation. Moretti's analysis is, so to speak, of the pedestrian type. The inspired surveyor sticks to the plan step by step, as the city's permanent brand, and this guiding thread blossoms inevitably into the concept of a “city-in-the-city”. The layout is the former memory of an urban personality. But it can also be conceived as an entirely modern dimension: the network of motorway infrastructure. The motorway plan marks a modern city-in-the-city”, developed independently alongside the old historic city. At the starting point of Carlo Moretti's theoretic analysis comes this dualist structure, two cities: the old and the modern, distinct and autonomous. How to act in a drastic and realistic way on this type of operative schema? Switching from the historic mini-lane to the spectacular highway automatically creates a new scale of intervention. “The missing city” has to adapt to this broad dimension of territory, but it must also be complementary to the historic centre which it flanks. Complementary but analogous in its autonomy; it must be imposing and large in order to match these new territorial dimensions, and also civilised in its technical rationality. To express these fundamental necessities Moretti has thought of proposing a volumetric archetype, the cylindrical tower, which belongs to the immemorial vocabulary of architecture. Abstract and symbolic forms that lend themselves easily to an actively typological composition:

a concentration by way of clusters, semi-circular columns and linear perspectives. Depending on how the skyscraper-columns are laid out, two types of city will appear: the Theatre, conceived as a space contained by the columned enclosure; and the Propylaeum-City, a transit place defined by the alignment of its columns. The Theatre is inserted in the territorial fabric, starting from a point recognized as strategic to its historic plan. The Propylaeum City fits into the perspective continuity of the axis. In the spaces thus defined, Moretti's rationality is expressed with the utmost precision in every smallest detail: conditioned spaces, community life distances subdivided into squares and pedestrian areas, prefabricated modular structures, traffic interchanges, transit facilities, etc.

"The missing city", this ideal city in the city, is not a phantom, but an objective expression of a twofold existential function: that of the Theatre and that of the Gate. The system ideated by Carlo Moretti eliminates the existence of the concept of suburb, the super-cancer of our present-day cities. It is the most reliable weapon, for the poet-adventurer intent upon overturning our traditional urban-planning culture. To demonstrate that this radical outlook is not the expression of a pure utopian projection, Moretti sets his model of a city in a precise territorial dimension: that of the Po Valley. The two planned elements, Theatre and Gate, thus come to form a total city, based on the ancient flexibility of three historic nuclei: Milan, Ferrara and Venice, linked to the new nuclei spread along the geographical course of the river Po. The happy union of history and geography give us the Master Plan of this new conurbation. The realistic recovery of history and geography creates the spectacular fascination of Moretti's grand design.

"The missing city", but one that could exist, would be the ideal city of the 1980s, the city of our post-consumer happiness, as well tuned as a new musical instrument.

To dream with Carlo Moretti is a highly challenging way of facing the reality of our world. Present and conscious: dreaming with Moretti is also, perhaps, a deeper way of feeling and of seeing farther into the distance, of living better.

Milan, 12 January 1988

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BEYOND UTOPIA

CONSIDERATIONS ON A PROPHETIC ARTISTIC AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BY PAOLO BOSSI

In his introduction in 1996 to the Italian translation of *The Story of Utopias*, the fundamental volume with which Lewis Mumford had in 1922 already launched a new literary-scientific genre of architectural writing and laid the foundations for his personal involvement ten years later in the committee appointed to edit the catalogue of the Modern Architecture exhibition at the MoMA, Franco Crespi stressed the substantial risks which city planning still had to consider on the eve of the new millennium:

“When the end of utopias is wrongly interpreted as the triumph of ‘reality’, as a criterion of discrimination between an effectively attainable place (project) and an illusory non-place (utopia), we are condemned to a respect for the established, while shutting into the present the infinite resources of our creative imagination and hope. Thus we lose our critical capacity, by absolutizing the scope afforded by the particular place in which we find ourselves. In other words we end up falling into the other type of illusion, which is to maintain that the place in which we now are is the only real place.

If intended correctly in its proper sense, utopia, by forcefully underlining the non-place, enables us to avoid both the illusion of treating the place in which we are as the sole possible place, and the opposite illusion of looking for a non-existent place.” (1)

Nearly thirty years later, from many points of view the underlying ambiguity looks the same today. And likewise, no less easy and illusory appears the (false) solution of an escape from the cogency of matters posed by reality and by the burden of checking out theses upheld in a non-existent world. In effect, we need to remember that Thomas More, known in Italy as Tommaso Moro, who coined the term “utopia” itself, had been less banal than people often tend to believe. As pointed out by Mumford in the wake

of his own “first master”, Patrick Geddes (2), a pioneer of human ecology and supporter of the “absolute necessity to reintegrate the concrete and complete man into the process of urban planning”(3), the verses by the poet Anemolio (the imaginary name and figure used, in the opinion of many, to conceal More himself), which precede the work, play on the assonance - particularly appreciable in the English language - between u-topia and eu-topia. Since the condition of every concrete eutopia is that it “arises from the real conditions of the everyday environment and at the same time returns to it by creatively altering it to bring it closer to our true desires” (4), it follows that “the ideal of eutopia that we must try to propose in this or that region is not a *carte blanche* that each can fill in according to their wishes and whims; certain lines have already been traced and certain spaces have already been filled.”(5) However much, and right from the start, an almost natural equivalence may appear between the two terms, which from a phonetic level is projected onto a substantial one, it is evident that even if utopia were to fade marvellously, always and in any case, into a eutopia, the matter of its placement would still be unsolved, as regards both the spatial coordinates (with the incumbent risk of never being able to actually let it “land” in a precise *topos*), and the temporal one (along which is manifested the attraction now towards a past steeped in nostalgia, now towards a future as vague and consequently as unrealistic as could be): in both cases, the idea would tend to elude any translation into concrete forms.

Anterotopia

In relation to the second of the two systems of reference, Roberto Mordacci, in his *Ritorno a Utopia*, convinced that utopic thinking is “perhaps the only possible salvation for the contemporary world, provided it is inspired by that realistic and humanistic model which More fully embodied, within the limits of the perspective afforded him by his time”, pinpoints a dominant tendency in the more topical reflection that can, if shared, definitely simplify the complexity of the problem.

“A vision which chooses to look at the optimal forms of coexistence, while thinking of them as possible and realistic as long as they are treated with a sufficient lucidity and commitment, is much more than an imaginative

exercise: it is a philosophy of history, in other words an attempt to answer the question of the sense of human action in time. It is in this direction that our present age needs to change step, to requalify the capacity to think in utopian terms.

History cannot be lived in a prey to nostalgia. Precisely our responsibility for the future is an obligation that seeks to refuse any historical determinism whereby a decline is seen as the sole possible outcome. A philosophy of history as decadence begets the decadence of history. Conversely, it is necessary to denounce the danger and to react to the nihilistic drift of postmodern thought, which for years decreed a refusal of any modern trust in human capacities to inhabit time and to contribute to constructing its sense.[...] What is imposed as an answer to the decadent temptations inherited from postmodernism is – to reverse Bauman's linguistic expedient - an anterotopia: a place situated in front of us, that encloses in a comprehensive vision the image of an appealing and desired future for human beings as such. [...] That the destiny of a city is inextricably tied to a global destiny was already clear to Kant [...]. The utopian challenge of the contemporary consists precisely in an attempt to think of the coordination of [...] diverse purposes (sustainability, equity, development, wellbeing, peace, rights), of their different concrete realisations (such as industry, mobility, investments, rules of international law, rights and with what guarantees) and of the diverse actors within the intricate mosaic of global relations, which are not only between countries, but also between economic, ethnic, political and cultural groups.

Anterotopia is simply the name of a utopia in the clear and now inescapable perception that the non-place in which to situate the right society is and must be the future:" (6)

With that, it is worth pointing out, the time variable becomes a constant (the future) and every consideration on realities different to the one in which we live permanently assumes the character of a design in its strict sense, not barrenly evocative, melancholic or consolatory.

Pantacotopia

Compared to the premise that a utopia can no longer be anything but intrinsically an anterotopia, on one hand an altogether different relevance

should be attached to the recurrent emergency priorities that have recently seemed impossible to avoid, issuing from the “gloomy and catastrophic” forecasts mentioned by Mordacci and, in the last analysis, from a millenarian vision of the world: the obsessive contrast to a “consumption” of land (a concept by now imposed as a substitute to that of a “critical use” and therefore assumed to be legitimate), to global warming etc; and on the other, which is what interests us most, a courageous manifesto is that of Carlo Moretti’s proposal for a “city that isn’t there” (yet) but which could – and in many cases perhaps ought – to be everywhere. His anterotopia, by virtue of its reliance on an iconic element capable like few others, of structuring space whilst also being surprisingly versatile, namely the column-tower, or “Archetypal tower” (in which distant roots are merged in time and space and are yet so conceptually close, from the peristyle of the Parthenon to the Loosian skyscraper for the Chicago Tribune Building), is characterised by a compositional and constructive principle formulated a priori and replicable in each distinct context. The perspective indicated by Moretti thus represents a gifted, visionary and perhaps even prophetic third way. It reaches beyond utopia, the abstract hypothesis, as referred to an illusory non-place mentioned by Crespi. But also beyond the pantotopia (the hypothesis simplistically identified with all places), in order to achieve a Pantacotopia, the project for a “city that isn’t there” (yet), but could be experimented in every single place, with which every different project solution, is necessarily expected to face and submit to verification.

Moretti dares to conceive an architecture “of ineluctability” as the outcome “of the ongoing planetary evolution” (p. 37) in a present that expands inexorably into not only the near future but is projected into a planetary “global unity” (p. 36), where each operation can only be inspired by one and the same logic – in terms of language, content, a vision of the world and of society – and incorporate all the other similar operations that have preceded and are accompanying it.

This, however, is not a matter of indifference to places, but the definition of an ethical-formal code that can create the physical and environmental conditions for the production of a *koinè* in which individuals can recognize themselves and overcome the growing fear of a lost identity: the key

element (varying from phoneme to morpheme, adaptable to the different scales of this common “language” is precisely the archetypal Tower, at once a column and an obelisk, the present-day translation of the myth of the Tower of Babel and endowed with a capacity to organize not only territory but also cosmic space, with a force equivalent to that of the *cardo decumanus* system, indivisible from the symbolic value of the linchpin that links the sun’s path.

In this flowing of “History and becoming” (p. 242), each replica of the “city that isn’t there” (yet) appears recognizable precisely by virtue of the architect’s capacity to establish a specific relationship with the physicality of the world and with traces of the past, thanks to an attitude based on a lucid analysis that makes no allowances, especially to those carrying it out, so that it is followed by an action which – once again – cannot be avoided. Architects are not privileged. They know they are the product of their time. And like their fellow travellers, they themselves feel torn and crushed by the conditions of the present time; simply driven by an irrepressible necessity to recount what they are given to see, to convince the doubters, to put forward less precariously balanced situations, and to guide their interlocutors towards that goal by personally blazing a trail.

The book

That goal can be perceived also from the product of which the outcome of this project by Moretti consists. Not an artistic professional biography like many, but rather a collection of reflections on diverse topics and contexts, scrupulously gathered and bound as in an ancient (or vice versa, very new) manuscript code through which appear – and can thus be demonstrated to others – fragments of a more comprehensive vision of the world and of History. On turning its pages, one is reminded of the words with which in 1958 Le Corbusier closed his preface to the reprint of *Vers une architecture*, the work with which Moretti is in a dialogue from start to finish, in his quest for a specification of his own architecture in order to free it from an inconclusive indeterminateness, and which he seems to hit upon precisely in the adjective “inexorable” and in the ineluctability of a horizon and a direction which that adjective imposes upon the originally open title: “Books were not generally printed like this in 1920-21. [...]

Vers une Architecture [...] bears witness to a free spirit. And in that same spirit, the path pursued so far has led to the manifestations of riper years, when art blossoms or matures to your liking. By the refined frequenters of salons (in Paris or in the USA) I am looked upon as a “baroque” architect - the most atrocious label that could ever be attached to me. Treated as a “vulgar engineer” in 1920 (I accepted the accusation), here I am cast into the depths of hell...! Nevertheless perhaps some pleasure may be derived from still being insulted at seventy!!!”(7)

One last, by no means marginal, merit to be emphasized is that of the illustrations to the text. Objectively beautiful to the point of being seductive and compelling, or indeed beguiling, they usher us, as befits the representations of an anterotopia, into a different space-time context: in exactly the same direction as that of today’s techniques intended to produce an “immersive reality”. Indeed, by reopening a tradition that sees Andrea Palladio as its progenitor, it is they that punctuate and develop the discourse, with the writing that accompanies the story and explains the concepts by way of a richly elegant caption. This aspect, like the meditated selection of sources underpinning its inspiration, is perhaps the only clue to Moretti’s belonging to a generation of architects whom we have watched with admiration and often nostalgia, amongst other things for their masterly way of turning, with pencil as with words, a vision into images.

Notes

- (1) The also appears as a preface to the reprint of Mumford's book published in 2017 by Feltrinelli (Crespi, 2017, pp. 12-3)
- (2) Mumford, 2017 p.22
- (3) Choay, 2000 p. 57
- (4) Mumford, 2017, p. 192
- (5) Mumford, 20117, p. 197
- (6) Mordacci, 2020, pp. 117-118
- (7) Le Corbusier, 19773, pp. 17-18

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PREFACE by Christian Vittorio M. Garavello

This collection of reflections and projects, together with a number of earlier writings by Carlo Moretti (1), is intended as a response to a certain way of designing Architecture that is, according to Moretti, one of the principal causes of today's environmental and economic ruin. To this scenario, in itself desolate, Moretti adds the fact that Architecture has progressively lost, in the vortex of over-production fuelled by speculation, greed, and very often compounded by short-sighted bureaucracy and over-acquiescent critics, its meaning and its quality.

Moretti, therefore, feels like a slave when designing buildings, be they residential, industrial or hospitality-related, as a cog in the mechanism that churns out "an arrogant mass of concrete piles" (2) the maintenance of which gobbles up an incalculable amount of land and resources.

Moretti sees this approach as a debasement of the discipline of Architecture. Deformed and no longer equal to its time, it has lost the urge to create solutions to the new necessities of humanity, but has also failed even to remedy the gigantic issues caused by them.

It must however be noted that over the years of its activity the studio founded and directed by Carlo Moretti has produced a large number of works, and with points of excellence that have at various intervals caught the attention of Italian as well as international magazines. (3)

But Moretti in any case maintains that small-scale works, even if they happen to be architectural gems glittering with the intellectual commitment of their architects and the culture of enlightened clients, are nevertheless "pearls in the gravel" (4) suffocated by the surrounding havoc. So, there is nothing on this scale that might be able to meet the challenges already posed in

the recent past, by now practically overwhelming and liable to get even more complicated in the near future. In this respect, as already underlined by Daniele Geltrudi in the preface to the book *La città che non c'è* (1986), Moretti maintains that the most pressing and complex problems must be tackled on the scale of cities and infrastructure, so as to attain a territorial scale of action (5).

The groundbreaking answer proposed by Moretti to these issues stems from a series of projects, driven in fact by his thinking on how to counter dispersion, by optimizing the relation between architectures and infrastructural connections. As noted by Pierre Restany in his comment written on the above-mentioned book *La città che non c'è* and published here (6), Moretti's designs focus on the archetypal form of the cylinder, derived from the column, as their ideal element. Composed in urban settings, this form manages to combine a symbolic value with a certain attention to technology and habitation. Furthermore, an experience gained during a stay in Greece while visiting the Olympeion (7) in Athens, proved of great importance to Moretti in understanding and sharpening a number of intuitions developed precisely after analysing the context and future prospects of cities.

His preliminary analysis of the state of urban settlements, mainly in relation to territory and infrastructure, proved crucial throughout Moretti's reflections on the city. It eventually led to the elaboration of a schema featuring the column-tower as a single element which, when associated with other column-towers, can build grandiose urban scenarios. When deployed at strategic points of the territory, or of the existing city, these towers are configured as poles and junctions connected by lines (8) that define a new landscape whilst also merging into stratified contexts.

The pivotal principle of this schema is the quest for an archetypal form. In it the cylinder column occupies, to be sure, a prominent position, but not the only and exclusively accepted one. Reflection on these primary forms is free from any aestheticizing to do with superficial minimalism, as well as from a functionalism that flattens every problem into a mere matter of numbers and technology. Moretti's work uses the archetype as a way of synthesizing form and at the same time as an effective instrument in

environmental and technological terms.

The reflections and works featured with this text are proposals both for a debate that can no longer be postponed and is focused on diversified points of departure.

Certainly among the most urgent of these are: the role of the architect in contemporaneity; the challenges of the near future; the extremely delicate relationship between project and territory, inhabited or not; the inevitable questions about the relation between memory and project; the role played today by reflection on form in Architecture; and the list could be much longer.

These are the issues on which Moretti has never ceased to reflect. They are stated here as among the active working tools of an architect who does not want to be simply a technician doing a job limited to satisfying his clients, but a person striving to imagine solutions for a future that will inevitably affect the countryside and cities, and therefore for Architecture as a whole.

Notes

(1) Si vedano in particolare i volumi C. Moretti, *La città che non c'è*, Electa, Milano, 1986 e C. Moretti, *Verso la città che non c'è*, Edizioni L'Archivolta, Milano, 2007

(2) *Infra* p. 2

(3) *Infra* pp. 383 - 384

(4) *Infra* p. 3

(5) Cfr. D. Geltrudi, Prefazione, in C. Moretti, *La città che non c'è*, Electa, Milano, 1986.

(6) *Supra* pp. XII - XIII

(7) *Infra* p. 14

(8) Concetti già resi evidenti da Moretti in diversi scritti in particolare i già citati *La città che non c'è* e *Verso la città che non c'è*. E ben esplicitati da Geltrudi e Restany nei rispettivi testi di presentazione

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Prologue I

To Dinocrates

You designed, for Alexander (as written by Vitruvius and confirmed by Plutarch) a fantastic city in the lap of Mount Athos, which in human guise, bowed and solemn, supports it and gazes. . .

. . . the waters, flowing from the mountain slopes and collected in a vast reservoir, would have mirrored its magnificence, before overflowing and rushing iridescent into the sea

. . . and orders from the Prince were awaited to launch the works. . .

But His enthusiasm was already galloping from victory to victory, ever more distant, towards the boundaries of the world. News of the clamour of his triumphs arrived ever more feebly as the distances increased, until silenced in the astonishment of nothingness. . .

. . . and that silence endures. . .

. . . and I too have (almost) lost hope in the Prince! . .

I'll speak to you nonetheless of magical hours and extraordinary (dreamed) events and Ideal Cities (dreamed), demiurge of territory, amid urban signs oriented towards magnificence;

and I shall not tell you of the opaque succession of days, nor of the dark hours,

when meditation is violated,

when forced inertia is a discomfort

and incomprehension oppresses,

when the cry has no echo,

when the disinterest in what you believe is fundamental can be felt,

whilst on cherished scenarios the lights go out. . .

In this chaotic and distracted climate, vain would seem not only our waiting for the Prince, but the hopes of firing the collective imagination (and the infinite resources asleep in society) towards a grandiose environmental quality of which moreover History makes us heirs;

but "did you think perhaps that I would have hated life, that I would have

fled into the deserts?"

I persevere in dreams, and continue, irreducibly, to hope.

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Prologue II

To Dinocrates

You know the secret of the monuments that bejewel the earth,
(. . . forever renewing the emotion of their presence,
and which seem to rise every morning to amaze those who contemplate
them and this becomes a lesson for each new day. . .)

so you will explain to me, what impulse of faith, what ideal and moral order
desired that nobility of creations, what irreducible enthusiasm spurred
communities (certainly no more opulent than today's, in the individual and
in the collective) to endow themselves with such magnificence.

(a magnificence of which even its sense went astray)

and my disappointment will increase upon observing how those cities that
managed, in the past, to embellish themselves with such great beauty, are
today confused with the trivial image of the suburbs in which they are
drowning

and while events erupt like rivers bursting their banks,

while everything, as far as the eye can see, reveals a chaos of great and
uncoordinated forces,

there, it seems, in the face of so much disorder, the monuments rise with
a dignified resoluteness equal to the gesture of sacred images erected to
avert the scourges of ancient times.

It will be by that same Grace of their presence that you will let us reflect
upon what the past seventy years have done to distort centuries of culture
and natural landscapes and environmental heritages;

and it will be by that same Grace that you will reveal the conceptual and

moral order that gave rise to those works that have come down as relics of Ideal Cities . . .

You will highlight then the necessity of that aristocratic and universal message of which so much magnificence constitutes the legacy of the generations that preceded us, prompting a serious cultural exploration to drive social and political forces towards a passionate support of building the city: the same support that made the Pharaohs more celebrated than their treasures, the Caesars more than their triumphs, the Renaissance popes more than their sermons, the Princes more than their intrigues and if ever it were possible to prophesy a new Renaissance, hard won and tempered in the crucible of the thousand tensions of this epoch (and which, if suitably coordinated, would bring about the most resplendent season in history), this new Renaissance cannot but postulate our own indispensable, modern, IDEA OF THE CITY:

indispensable

to impress a turning point upon the present governance of territory, so that the contemporary Ideal City can compare with the real city, whereby the former can become a reference against which to gauge the order of the other,

modern,

so that it can regain through large-scale new territorial schemes and new social, economic and cultural situations the underlying matrix of urban originality,

ours,

as a synthesis of contemporary aspirations and demands, a celebration of a new civilised magnificence as the supreme work of art . . .

Therefore, "I enjoin you to kindly tell us your reason. . . "

Pag.1

PART ONE - REALITY AND EXPECTATIONS

Pag.2

HOW THINGS STAND

TO EXCORCISE THE WORLD FROM CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURAL CULTURE.

An arrogant tide of concrete heaps has swept everywhere.

It can be stated that the past seventy years have desecrated centuries of culture and disfigured, perhaps irremediably, time-honoured environmental systems and landscape images, and that the 20th century, by disregarding the underlying principles of a city has produced, with an obstinacy that is also theoretic, that built chaos (the suburb) that devastates the land and encloses ancient urban nuclei in the vice of its inexorable expansion, merging with the outskirts of other surrounding cities to ultimately become a total suburb.

Thus, their mess has suffocated historic centres, while the bigger signs of nature and mankind seem confused in a labyrinth, and our environmental treasures convulsed and buried. With a savage attempt on the life of the biosphere.

“We are undergoing a form of suffering which no other generation since the beginning of time has ever experienced before: an unhappiness due to the threat to Harmony on all fronts”.

The disappointment increases when we note the disfigurement in those parts of the world where the harmony of nature was superimposed by the extraordinary ancient palimpsest of human genius.

How was it possible to corrupt the wonders that had so deeply moved Stendhal, Goethe and Wagner?

It is alarming to compare the appearance of contemporary reality with the veduta paintings collected during the Grand Tour.

It is alarming to see the extent of the barbarian constructions perpetrated worldwide.

It is alarming to note that the environmental disaster of the 20th century “was not (paradoxically) caused by the magnitude of war damage but by the millions of cubic metres erected afterwards with presumptuous idiocy” (3)

How could this have happened in just a few decades?

Who could have prevented it?

If it weren't for a few prophetic indications in the first half of the 20th century, it can be affirmed that contemporary architectural culture (to which society has delegated the designing of houses, cities and the organisation of the territory) is staying afloat amidst anachronism.

Portoghesi argued that the destiny of the 20th century was to have filled an ideal museum with works of art in already cobwebby window displays, without having managed to tackle any of the major issues whose solution is impatiently awaited by the "others" and by now with evident rancour.

The "others" are millions of people:

who dwell live in agglomerations infesting most of our land, in conditions of demoralizing squalor, while millions of hectares of countryside and woods are erased by chessboards of maisonettes, villas and residences, low-rise blocks, ugly housing estates and sheds, in the ecological and economic collapse

who move in a maze of streets rendered endless by sprawling settlements, which, by making any decent public transport service unthinkable or unsatisfactory, force people to resort to private cars that burst into catastrophically dangerous promiscuous routes in the clamour and chaos of crossroads, traffic lights, no-entries, precedence, pedestrian crossings and hoardings . . .

This is the rickety image of today's cities, spawned on a late nineteenth century pattern, around ancient nuclei and characterised by a bewildering sample-range of building types; a grievous and sometimes pathetic journey through an epoch bound, in the lack of any courageous inspiration, to endure its evil to the very bottom.

But the bottom seems to have no end; the more people keep adding more "gambits" to the current ranges of building types, the more the warblings of media and printed matter are invigorated through the resonance of fairs, exhibitions and information services destined in most cases to the mass of students and young professionals harnessed to boost the system.

Thus, for more than half a century architectural culture has not only become one of the biggest examples of apparent life imposed on the consumer society, but has taught and circulated to the point of exasperated consequences, apathetic repetitions and exhausting variations on themes which time and

circumstances had already condemned.

And to make matters worse, many architects, in an attempt to reanimate the exhausted repertoires (and to appear to cut a fine figure), feel compelled to exaggerate the model of departure and in their rush to appear, abandoning themselves with theoretic claims to the worst outbursts and thereby reducing the city to a dismal array of architectural experiences of those who insist on applying leitmotifs to building types that are in any case ever less suited to the complexity of contemporary needs. . . and meanwhile the occasional good work is lost, like a pearl among gravel, as the pile and confusion of built litter gets steadily worse.

The withering of worthwhile propositional thrusts has gradually consigned the growth of cities to a conformism/dirigisme adumbrated almost always by earnest and circumstantiated functional/economic goals: beginning with the axiom “functional is beautiful” and “functional is economic” and finally “economic is beautiful”, to fall thus into the jaws of speculation and exploitation of resources. With the result that the so-called “functionalist” city turns out to be anything but functional, while its anti-economical basis and management are there for all to see.

There emerges the difficulty of contemporary culture in formulating theories and methods to tackle the flood of contemporary phenomena, in a tumultuous crisis starting from the second half of the 20th century: the growth of urban populations, of mobility, infrastructure, services, products, refuse, demand, consumption, information, necessities and wastage. Stories of deep tensions and contrasting political, economic, social and cultural alternatives, which the staggering technological and scientific progress augments in a whirling spiral: To deal with this it would be indispensable to have the agile and timely elaboration of valid models to orchestrate available resources, whilst making sure that the changed dimensions don't end up distorting and disfiguring the sense of the city and its laws of development and harmony.

In response to the demands of our times, culture has faked the modes of classical, medieval, renaissance and academic tradition in their dimensions, scale and contents, by smearing them with modern cosmetics. Thus the modern movement, postmodern, high-tech, deconstructivism and all the latest trends, including expressionism, from organic to technological, took turns to

usher in exhausted restylings on top of building types and planning methods (homes, bungalows, villas and housing estates, public and private buildings for all and any purpose, sheds and skyscrapers, estates, etc) belonging by now to outdated standards.

Not that these manifestations failed to produce “architecture” (notable examples exist), but whilst art is timeless, because in all times it is equal to itself, it is also true that art assimilates time as influence and poetry: hence as the specific interpretative expression of the historical moment of which it inevitably assumes the role of representation.

The whole of the past bears this out. And today architecture represents contemporaneity NOT through the awesome grandiosity of its conquests or the vastness of issues raised, BUT through a constructive inadequacy in relation to those same conquests and those same issues. All in all, Architecture today represents a culture incapable of interpreting (pursuing) History: the settings of these past seventy years accuse it and condemn it.

Moreover:

After the second world war, in concomitance with the modern movement (in crisis), with high-tech and the architecture of the ephemeral, kitsch, postmodern, revivals and deconstructivism, having flowed into the bizarre (just as tragedy followed farce), in society, there came to be asserted, obsequiously and with a progressively invasive impact, the cancer of a borrowed nihilism. It devastated everything in its path: obscenely ludic, by making everything spectacular, it managed to ratify all things and their opposites, to deliver humankind, bewildered and without ideals, into the degrading jaws of modern practice, victims of conformism, cynicism, apathy, bureaucratic mal-planning, acquiescence to the worst, the praises of fashion, of the ephemeral, consumerism, provocation and righteous hypocrisy.

Thus the culture of nothingness has spread, corrupting everything, distorting and poisoning, while twisting languages into a tangle.

As written about the Tower of Babel.

Pag.5

LIGHT BEYOND THE CHINK

It would be suffocating to operate in a world thus configured as a concentration of paradoxes, without the certainty of “severe ideals” as an answer to the problems besetting us and as an incentive to social evolution. The “severe events” are fostered by culture, experience and tradition and stimulated by the mysterious implication that is Myth, likewise rooted in tradition, culture and experience but in a virtuous synergy that transcends them. For whilst the former teach, Myth inspires; and whilst the former persuade, Myth exalts; if the former write History, Myth converts History into Poetry and, in its projection from contingent to universal, it grasps an interpretation of the world and of life with a capacity to define the actions, expectations and ardours of a civilisation” – Victor Hugo.

If in Myth humanity dreams, Myth is not an alteration of reality nor even an illusion; and, whilst truth without Myth seems bare, Myth, far from being a travesty, is a “sedimentation of a social sentiment that enriches the ordinariness of value and meaning, so as to become the supreme expression of a people’s language and passion” - Friedrich Nietzsche; because, by translating events, tragedies and heroisms into an epic version, it victoriously vies with time for the memory of the tensions and sufferings of a community to attain its ideals. How otherwise than with their eyes fastened on Myth were whole generations pervaded by the inspirations that enabled the construction of the Pyramids, the Acropolis, the Theatres, Forums and Amphitheatres, the Basilicas, Cathedrals and Palaces, the Royal Palaces, the Great Walls and the fabulous Monuments, the fabulous Cities...

How else could Palladio have transferred civilised magnificence from city to countryside, to unite, on the Berico hill, the beauty of nature with the splendour of intelligence, by building for Signor Capra a stately home that seems more like the home of a god than of a man.

How else, in the last century, could the Plan Voisin have been imagined, and the metaphysical silences of the EUR have been created.

Western Myth is the epitome of all the Myths that forged the Old Continent:

- it is the pride of belonging to an astonishing historical/cultural cycle, the outcome of tears, blood and passions, along the vicissitudes of thirty centuries and attaining the noblest goals;

- it is the prophecy left by a formidable host of saints, philosophers, artists,

poets, men of letters and scientists;

it is the inebriation of the technical and scientific conquests which, besides freeing mankind ever more from material difficulties, continue to survey and enlighten the infinite twists and turns of Mystery;

it is the pride of believing oneself to be simultaneously a citizen of Athens, Rome, Jerusalem, Constantinople, Venice, Florence, Paris, New York;

it is Ulysses, Faust, Mephistopheles, Oedipus, Hamlet, Prometheus, Romeo, Hector, Isolde, Palinurus, Siegfried, Theseus, Tristan, Juliet, Antigone, Parsifal, Medea, Lear and a thousand others still;

it is tension and discontinuity, falls and redemption, pauses and impetuosities for the vastest dreams and most grandiose feats;

it originates from classical, Mediterranean, Judaic and Nordic cultural traditions, all of them filtered through the Word and Passion of Christ, re-blossoming in mysticism, humanism and modernity, in the universality of moral values and in the vastness of social purposes attained (and attainable) which today inevitably and profoundly influence global culture. (*)

So much victory and so much heritage cannot be squandered on anachronistic, humdrum or bizarre projects. Still less can they be degraded to the practice of cynicism, apathy, speculation and resignation to the worst, in the squalor of our everyday scenarios. On the contrary, they cannot but urge the heart and the imagination towards acts great enough to overcome contingent difficulties through grandiosity and the power so to achieve new goals of History and the make this a Poem

and thus to supply the Contemporary System with an orderly, exhaustive and magnificent solution in pursuit of today's imposing vicissitudes within a mighty organisation of the New.

In this respect, Architecture, too, will manage to update itself in scenarios endowed with strength in type, scale, criterion and magnificence.

All these reflections are radicalised by analysing the precipitation of contemporary events which, in their entity and vastness, are without precedent in the entire arc of History and are:

the fatal thrusting into an urban condition of hundreds of millions of people (just fifty years ago the planet had a population of 5 billion and within just a few more decades it will be doubled)

(hence) the hectic race to find and provide the necessary energy and food resources; it must absolutely eliminate wastage, of which today's architectural and urbanistic culture is, on a planetwide scale, responsible while provoking a chain of abysmal squandering:

the economic, ecological and behavioural collapse of metropolitan suburbs
the massive migrations of populations.

The scale of these phenomena, by upsetting all the methods, processes, habits and stereotypes of the present architectural discipline, cannot but impose upon its design a radical change of direction, as an ethical, social, economic, ecological, entrepreneurial and artistic challenge of the 21st century.

As it was for the civilisation of the Gods, the Heroes, the Empire, Theocracy, Humanism, Enlightenment and the Bourgeoisie, so also will Contemporary civilisation receive from Architecture its own representative poetic invention. Thanks to that arcane law governing the harmony of the universe (and human destinies too), nothing disappears without the world's heritage being enriched with fresh beauties, by the evocation of new ideas.

(*) important note

At this point an awareness occurs that it was precisely contemporary western culture (besides having driven art to collapse) that, with Myth, denied symbolic language. As in fact we are taught by the philosophers of scientific thinking, culture evolved in successive languages: (A) symbolic, (B) philosophic and (C) scientific. The latter ended up causing the DISCURSIVE BLOCK, because scientific language overrides those who speak it and performs by itself, reducing man to its mere executing instrument. In other words man, by submitting to the scientific dictate, ends up being "spoken" by functions, according to the directives of the apparatus. Example: building houses that can only be what the rules of building, hygiene, technology, economy and the market lay down. And so it is necessary to overcome the present phase, with the invention of a proposal capable of expressing a contemporary process of feeling, with the capacity to retrace the evolution of languages; in other words, the proposal of a symbolic language (A) – backed by philosophical lines of argument (B) – capable of instrumentalizing the mighty contribution made by science (C).

this procedure will be attempted in the next chapter.

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THE ORACLE

“DE-PERSONALIZE YOUR PERSONALITY IN PURE OBJECTS
MAKE SURE YOU ARE NOT THE PRISONER OF A STYLE BUT OF AN
UNCONSTRAINED SUBSTANCE
MAKE SURE YOU ARE THE INEXORABLE ARCHITECTURE TO ATTAIN
THE UNIVERSAL
MAKE SURE YOUR ILLITERACY IS A FERMENT: AN INSPIRATION”

from the thoughts of Arturo Martini

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PART TWO

On the threshold of your abode,
I rediscover the thoughts that hectic life scatters;
thus the arcane sky rejoins the vicissitudes of the earth,
and everything is fused into the magic of signs, words and sounds . . .

. . . and the signs become form, the sounds harmony, the words poetry, capable
of interpreting the secrets of the universe
and those of the stones guarding the screams of Hecuba, Nausicaa's smile
and the song of the Sirens;

but if these influences complement the charms which in isolated laments
the wind confides, they also have the power to evoke SILENCES (archetypal
figures) made of LIGHT, WHITENESS and SHADOWS . . . where you discover
the virtues of thought in search of the enchantment contained in forms, like
those of shells inside which you hear the Voice of the Infinite.

Pag.14

WHAT RISES AGAIN AND WHAT IS BEGUN
ES KLANG SO ALT UND WAR DOCH SO NEU!

„It sounds (a motif) so ancient and yet it it's so new“

Richard Wagner

... lying on my back on the stylobates of the Olympian Temple of Zeus, in
Athens, I could see its superb columns defying the sky;
from that angle, the absence of any other landmark allowed me to picture a
striking vision of towers:

urban scenario of extraordinary power
plan of a new and unforeseeable avant-garde
mind-boggling modernity of the ruin.

The columns (simple and majestic archetypal volumes) as the last witnesses
of the monument, rose as the mighty figuration of future urban scenarios,
in a curious and ambiguous play of reflections linking the future to memory.

The following sequence therefore springs to mind:
the CYLINDER (archetypal figure) becomes a TOWER (functional structure) as being congenial to residential, service and hospitality purposes and congenial, thanks to the aggregation of similar elements, to building and industrial building site criteria
the CYLINDER turned TOWER, assembled with other similar elements, becomes in the imaginary a COLUMN (representative element)
the aggregations of COLUMNS (CYLINDER-TOWER-COLUMNS) are translated into scenarios of Forums, Naves, Temples, Basilicas, Propylaea, Halls, and Gates, on a scale never seen before. Capable of configuring scenarios of city, they are the outcome of new and significant architectural and social experiences, since they are suitable and versatile to contemporary demands. These, even in their interpretation of the new scale, rediscover the grandiose impact of their significance. As the designs illustrated below are intended to demonstrate.

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APHORISMS

Looking at certain images one thinks neither of the interesting nor of the pleasant, nor of their creator and not even of art in general; one feels only the necessity"

Friedrich Nietzsche

"One does not feel the presence of an artist in works which, since they tend to the universal, assume an anonymous aspect; whereas in the world-famous there is always the key : determination, personality and all the astuteness and magic that send people into raptures. The universal is where the finger does not yet touch God but where passions are filtered and all personality is erased. Personality in fact is a nervous tic, and the universal does not spring from the artist's sentiments but from the immanence of art's substance."

Arturo Martini

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ON FORM

NAVES FORUMS TEMPLES BASILICAS AND PROPYLAEA NEVER SEEN IN A NEW MAGIC REALISM

The use of archetypal forms removes design from individualistic free will, expressing it in rules where figurations are defined by unrestrictive laws when the result tends towards the essence of things and design, dying with the egoism of formal expression, acquires a superior compositional truth. In the aggregation of these figures lies the evocation of a world attained, through unexhausted echoes, by the History that educated us: a world which mysteriously (and curiously) leads to deeply fascinating solutions.

This organisational/architectural proposal is defined as a discipline based on a primordial original condition (thus still poetry and emotion) suitable for composing synthetic representations of the contemporary city, in the complex variety of its functions.

There ensue plans connected by exact choices of kinship. They are called upon to demonstrate their congeniality to new (updated) urban systems, as being capable of fascination and sense and of a versatility, attainable in industrial terms enabled by the repetitiveness of models: a CITY OF ARCHITECTURE in that it is conceived with the spatial and formal means of architectural language, where thought is manifested through the composition of archetypal volumes related to one another and to their surroundings. This relationship – or “mathematical creation of the spirit” – Le Corbusier – is the language of architecture.

In other words this IDEA OF A CITY becomes a model, achieved with elements to be found in architectural language, in tradition, in culture and in the collective memory. As such, it is a linguistic expression that becomes an architectural one, ready to be “evoked” according to criteria determined in the territory to which it belongs. By virtue of these criteria and territorial signs, the model assumes concrete expressions with variable aspects.

We are talking about the meaning of architecture and its role, as well as about its potentiality to synthesize – at the very source of aspiration – history, sentiment and myth in scenarios of archaic power, to celebrate grandiose visions of ... urban scenarios, as the highest principle of collective identity, retraced to the richness and pride of their ancestors...

... compact urban scenarios, in a respect for nature and inserted as a

“monument” of the territory...

... scenarios evoked by a discipline that elevates social values to the dignity of a cult, while giving a “unity of style and grandeur of lines to ordinary living...” - Mario Sironi

...urban scenarios of epic poetry, composed of quiet and grand lines...

... precise, majestic, hospitable urban scenarios with the capacity to relate through updated processes to territorial realities...

...scenarios imagined by those who, immersed in a shabby contemporary environment, perceive the exclusive and irreducible importance of essential values.

“Fabulous architectures for fabulous cities; not an architectural result but an architectural ecstasy, an effective explosion of dimensions never seen before, of a new magic realism: this is the undertaking, the challenge, the poetic courage.” So prophesied Giò Ponti (1938, on the subject of the EUR) which to this day strongly affects these reasonings, in the certainty that the discourse on Myth will in itself generate further Myth: the hope for an augured and courageous future: a project on how the architectural work can happily be at the service of mass society, to enrich its everyday reality.

This architecture in terms of pure elementary volumes (be they cylinders, composite cylinders, prisms, etc...) will also have the merit of expressing itself in meditative, introspective, solemn, solitary and contemplative terms mediating the tumult of life; the stronger this tumult is the more the necessity for silence will grow: the silence of the thousand “I”s of “everyday architectural creation”, which must be overcome and led back in a greater afflatus.

In terms of feasibility, the scale of operations and the repetitiveness of models will allow the application of constructive methodologies suited to the massive potential of contemporary technology. Take for example the constructive criteria and the capacity to assemble gigantic components offered by the shipbuilding industry.

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ON CLASSICISM

IN THE COMBINATION OF THE ARCHETYPAL FIGURES OF CYLINDERS

THAT BECOME TOWERS
THAT BECOME COLUMNS
LIES THE EVOCATION OF A WORLD ATTAINED THROUGH
UNEXHAUSTED ECHOES FROM THE HISTORY THAT EDUCATED US

The scenarios of column-towers with no entablature, by retaining the thrilling effect of re-living ancient ruins, indicate the potent feasibility of a contemporary classicism on a different scale.

Deadened and trampled underfoot by an arrogant (but fundamentally mean and conceited) culture, the linear demon of sign and style (De Chirico) was to return to call attention back to the poetic values of that grand classical tradition, solemn and enigmatic that knows no seasons inasmuch as it is ingrained in the human intellectual structure.

A sensitivity ready to be fertilised, after a century of arid functionalism, materialism, consumerism, relativism and nihilism, worked to uproot from people's hearts, through the imaginific, this fecund source of intellectual stimulation. It wasn't just a return to classicism, but a shining resurrection of it, in which the majestic signs of a millenary sensitivity were exalted.

The synthesis of the sign, ecstasy, and the amazement of reason express a straining towards primary and universal values, an intensification of the possibilities of thought and also a critical disenchantment over the historical identity that belongs to us: the new classicism in fact will not be a code of regulations or, rather, it could also be so, but will be above all (as it always was) a mental attitude, an attitude of intelligence: the striving to regain an ancestral lost paradise.

Thus the updated interpretative parameters of human settlements will restore to the city, with the blunt topicality of renewed images, the absolute and supreme meaning of a work of art; evaluations that express attention to a brand new and indispensable project based on reason and beauty:

on reason, because this typology of works can include and resolve the technical, structural and functional complexities that are part of contemporary disciplinary prospects;

on beauty because these works exalt, in form, dimension and aggregation, the "signs" of absolute value (cultivated by a millenary sensitivity) while directly

attaining to the emotional sphere.

This process of representation therefore, besides transcending scientific language, formed by the complexity of contemporary structures, also assimilates philosophical language in adherence, too, to what we find in De Chirico:

“...a fifteenth century notion of a space a priori to be sure, immutable in its innumerable variants, plotted by the objects and light; and in this kind of mysticism of line, which characterizes a truly classical art, can be described the aversion to useless masses, to what is extraneous to every spiritual subtlety...”

... and in Homer, the absolute rigour of pure geometric volumes evokes such perfections that can be imagined only in Olympus, where “neither winds nor tempests rage, but the ether extends white and cloudless above the light.

So, by what we have said and with reference to the final note (*) of the previous chapter, the conditions can be verified for a grand return of symbolic language (A), by situating the construction of the City within systems of emotion/communication, much earlier than in that of the relations between production and fruition.

In this way architecture will “regain its social function: an educational function” – Mario Sironi; a poetic prophesy and augury for a social state that bestows upon aesthetics a fundamental coordinative value, because “THE PERISHABLE AND PERENNIAL WORLD WAS CREATED ONLY TO BE CONVERTED BY ART INTO SOVEREIGN AND IMMUTABLE FORMS”- Gabriele D'Annunzio

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THE SHAPE OF THE CITY

The locations and interventions described here become major city phenomena as if by sorcery, and unveil urban events like no other and with extraordinary potential and character.

Scenarios of an architecture that is generated by evocation: Italian architecture by going its own ways, poetically blends the evocation of ancient architecture and visions of the architecture to come.

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CITY OF DIALOGUE AND COMMUNICATION

An IDEA OF A CITY, therefore, intended as the natural outcome of a compositional process. Having started out with the agora, forums and basilicas, via medieval, renaissance and baroque experiences, it brought about the synthesis of a millenary tradition. The central theme is the square, purposely constructed for a choral perception that is also communication and representation.

A concept which, lowered onto the ground of architecture and planning, leads back to the age-old tradition of civilised dialogue contained in the figuration of typical spaces (the square, the market, the basilica, the souk), if and when – and herein lies its importance – these spaces immediately interact with residence. The severity of forms and their order in territory highlight the attempt to organize social living precisely where urban disorder progressively confuses communicative capacities.

Therefore the urban plan that endorses the sociality of inhabitants, combined with the media and the agility of transport, are today the factors indispensable to the evolution of cities.

The lack of propositions in this respect, blandished by the planning currently in force, constitutes one of the main causes of today's crisis of architecture and urban planning; basically, of their incapacity to become truly modern.

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CITY OF ARCHITECTURE

AS BEING CONCEIVED WITH THE SPATIAL AND FORMAL MEANS OF ARCHITECTURAL LANGUAGE

Urban plans linked by a kinship of choices in exact order, called upon to demonstrate their congeniality as being capable of fascination and sense.

From a reading of the palimpsest of territories it emerges that cities have risen prevalently at the junctions of major (land or sea) communication lines. Today a new web of traces is superimposed on the older one, complementing and replacing it (in the past the caravan routes, today the railways, motorways, waterways and airports.)

The junctions of these traces (only them!) will regain the favour of future

settlements, safeguarding the territory against indiscriminate erosions. This will help to establish a city-countryside relationship which, by excluding oppression and favouring dialectic, will afford the city and the countryside the protection of respective laws of development and harmony.

From the dimensional point of view, the new architectural scale of intervention stands, in its relation to the new infrastructural routes, in the same relationship with which the ancient building typology compared with those of the past; and since the new infrastructure puts the old (present) settlement typologies out of scale, it can be deduced that the scale of intervention of customary building types is in fact out of date.

The principle of the transfer of buildable cubic volumes will need to be generalized, by organizing a sort of sample range of building scope, capable of protecting the interests of individuals and equal distribution among citizens. The building potentialities (established by territorial plans) will be high-jacked into salient points of the territory, where moreover the value of position is higher (firstly above active railways stations and freight yards).

Therefore, all real estate operations, settlement necessities and, basically, the cubic volumes identified by urbanistic tools (which will from now on need, in the smallest cases, to be on a regional scale), will be transferred and condensed solely into the highly significant and nodal part of the territory, according to the ordinating principle of land usage and in order to establish ZERO VOLUMES on all the free surfaces and disused areas so as to create, only where appropriate, occasions for intervention.

This principle will be extended as a battle for ecological sustainability, and the idea of the City will provide an alternative to the destruction of the environmental image, to the wastage of resources and to the dis-economy of territorial management, offering a new real estate richness attained through the synergic concentration of settlements and infrastructure.

The indication of legislative instruments and economic incentives seeking to propitiate new urban scenarios, responding to the necessities and worthy of 21st century aspirations, will constitute the crux of the cultural, political and economic debate.

ON THE SCRAPHEAPING OF SUBURBS

Suburbs do NOT represent, as maintained today in many quarters, the future

of cities, but represent instead only their tragic and ramshackle parody.

The suburb in fact

is by its classist, inhuman and alienating nature bound to pile into a disqualified limbo the least affluent social categories (rejected by the city or arriving from outside)

constitutes an unsustainable economic and social burden because it imposes an extravagant multiplication of infrastructure and services and, being scattered across the land, prevents the use of public transport (rail/subway). As a result, people are compelled to fall back on private transport, inevitably and immediately congesting road networks, with serious losses of time and increased pollution, wear and tear of cars, dangers...

is the ill-judged erosion of territory, to the detriment of the countryside, tends inevitably to merge into the outskirts of other neighbouring cities until a total suburb is created, with the disappearance of the natural landscape and environmental treasures, besides the identity of inhabitants and their history, is the absence of civilised magnificence: a ghastly sample range of built scenarios (already received as the wreckage of ideas from seasons long outdated by History) and often marked by the neuroses and idiosyncrasies of architectural design,

is an incubator of aesthetic, civil, economic, ecological and behavioural degradation.

The suburb is not the patient to be treated ("mended"), but the disease to be eradicated (by scrapping).

Whilst moreover it is true that the scrapheap process is better fitted to the actual nature of industrial production, (made to last relatively briefly) rather than to the concept of a house (built "forever"), it is also inadmissible to accept "forever" this unsustainable 20th century built heritage.

The new settlements, to be concentrated prevalently above operative railway surfaces (by considering the train to all effects as a "subway", will also be interconnected by motorways, to be regarded as the only possible home of the car. Centred on these settlements will be all the services, structures and highest standards of fruition and comfort, economically price-controlled by the synergic effects of the concentration and scale of intervention; so that, from the economic point of view too, the operation will achieve

profitable and optimal management levels, as regards both the operator (public or private agency etc) and the user:

This opportunity, by configuring a higher state of civil cohabitation, ought to induce citizens (especially the younger generations) to spontaneously abandon the suburbs, with a consequent gradual scrapping of outlying estates, starting from those that are already actually illegal due to their decaying structures and/or inadequate services and/or irregular planning of terrace houses, maisonettes, villas and building sites everywhere, which, although in compliance with regulations in force, in reality constitute (due to the vastness of their circulation) a no longer tolerable attack on the environment and an unsustainable squandering of collective assets (roads, channelling, lighting, infrastructure, services).

of industrial sheds not appropriately grouped into properly structured industrial zones.

Result:

reclamation of enormous swathes of land outside and inside cities, to be allocated to parks, agriculture and services, new prospects of environmental scenarios.

a return of countryside and woods where the practice of building sites has created the deception of residential quarters and garden cities (paradoxically known as “on a human scale”). In this regard, it should be pointed out that the respectable dream of “my home is my castle” – valid at the most until the early decades of the twentieth century – clashes with the disastrous territorial reality caused by this settlement phenomenon that echoes innumerable examples of metropolitan degeneration. Unfortunately, and despite everything, there are always some who insist on believing that “small is beautiful”, without realising that an endless mass of small things becomes a gigantic devastation.

It is therefore indispensable to erect these principles as a bulwark against the policy of numerous small constructions and countless small remedies cures dotted everywhere, on whose application politicians, administrators, professionals and conventional right-thinking folk, bureaucrats and speculators take their ease every day right up till the socio-economic-environmental collapse and degradation inflicted on the collectivity.

Consequences:

more acceptable and less expensive living conditions, in a pleasant and tidy territorial context

elimination of 80% of roads, pipelines and related running and maintenance costs

drastic reduction of the use of private transport (especially of car commuting) because the use of public transport services will become more logical and convenient in its availability to concentrated communities (it goes without saying in fact that public transport cannot guarantee its service to a scattered population).

lower levels of consumption, infrastructure, pollution.

Under the terms stated here, the reordering and general reorganisation of the territory becomes a political operation of the utmost economic and civil - and above all - cultural importance.

The ominous forecasts whereby cities would end up configured as a glued magma, where historic centres would be swallowed up amid the indifference of a built fabric (suburbs) extended into the scale of an economic region (reliable forecasts if today's culture continues), can be proved wrong by recapturing, through the beauty of landscape, the monumental interpretation of an urban presence.

The New Events (the Idea of a City), in the act in which they are established on the land (taking root on traces and interpreting their demands) set out the synthesis of a project between abstraction (reproducibility of a model) and adaptation (uniqueness of the intervention generated by place).

Thus the Idea of the City, inserted in the fundamental territorial traces dialectically related to the Old Nuclei and together with these, opposed to the proliferation of the indifferent suburb

Contributes to the building of the Future City.

As a work of art.

This vision therefore contrasts the logic of today's planning destination/quantification with the qualitative logic of a typological revolution arising from the Idea of the City.

Result:

producing space

where it is at present pulverised in the confused medley of numerous scattered buildings

producing time

where it is lost in the torment of connections to reach places

producing quality

where humiliating squalor rages today

producing richness

where it is currently dissipated by the present management of territory

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THE POLITICS OF TERRITORY

A new urban dimension overlaps the older one and is beginning to substitute the current disorder.

At present one of the biggest stakes is the competitiveness of territories in international regional competition.

The globalisation of the economy is producing a drastic rearrangement of the worldwide hierarchy of building sites: Cities and Regions vie with one another to host the best qualified businesses, in the production and in the service sectors and, consequently, in the residential one too. This competition starts from already established positions and from the capacity to conserve and acquire important new presences for the development of the area as a whole. Cities and Regions intending to take up the competitive challenge must equip themselves not only with international infrastructure but above all with an adequate decision-making style.

The means of achieving a vision of success of that magnitude lies in the strategic planning borrowed from the long term planning used by major corporations, namely urban marketing.

The excellent settlements across the land are determined by the time to market criterion. Once the investment has been decided, its location is favoured while guaranteeing and minimizing times so that the product (or service) can reach the market as quickly as possible.

It is therefore important to create a body which, by cutting traditional waiting

procedures, can through information actively support initiatives and the publication of operating conditions (mainly through international showcasing); a body with the capacity to seize opportunities immediately, by setting out ex ante all the necessary permissions and infrastructure: an authority thus set up especially for the promotion and governance of the area concerned. A high profile economic and territorial project. Its project coordination must occur at a Regional level in order therefore to be symmetrically extended on a local and government level.

General conclusion:

contrasting the short-sightedness of municipal planning are the scenarios of the "Territorial-City"

contrasting the city that swells and "patches up" suburbs is the Idea of the City on the traces of a territorial palimpsest

the recapturing of energy resources is subject to the elimination of waste

contrasting the wastage of land is the scrapping of suburbs

contrasting the absurd built dimension with which a distinction is drawn today between town-planning and architecture and the "randomness" of sites, size and style with which cities are built, is an urban scenario which through the power of the sign is the expression of a new civil magnificence.

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FROM TRIER TO BAALBEK

From Trier to Baalbek, in the arc of a great historic season, the design aimed to make a single city out of a disaggregated world was concretised. Formed by interrelated urban centres, these were linked in their turn to each different territorial necessity.

Having risen on crossroads to activate traffic and its interchanges, or in the bay of a port to fecundate a gulf and its hinterland, cities were ennobled by the power of a combined typological sign (interpreting the universality of a political message), albeit within the variety of specific solutions. Trier in fact was not similar to Baalbek, nor was Leptis Magna the same as Cyrene, nor Gerasa to Palmira and neither was Nîmes like Orleans or Arles. But the proposition

of a unitary figurative language, on three continents, was as reassuring as the uniformity and reiteration of the milestones on imperial roads and as gratifying as the repeated certainty of a theorem.

Indeed, although the extraordinary individuality of the above-mentioned cities remained intact, did they not all have the same triumphal arches, the same baths, theatres, amphitheatres and temples, to the point where it could be suggested that all these features might have been interchangeable, without the actual value of each of these cities (and hence their identity) being undermined? In other words, that similar cities, equally significant and celebrative of the respective communities and places to which they belonged, might have been imagined?

In our current season, the world, disaggregated in other ways, is being inevitably founded on a global unity. The staggering and ever-growing speed/availability of mass transport and the real times of communications combine to steadily and fatally erode ancient and modern barriers, ideological and social differences, while accelerating and perfecting the conclusion of this ineluctable event. With the result that humanity is hastening to live in a polycentric global reality, made up of cities in a constant dialogue with one another and conditioned by the thrusts of their respective territorial contexts.

Trier and Baalbek could be New York and Shanghai today, as the geographical and socio-cultural extremes of the world and their being emblematic urbanistic entities of present history (increasingly inter-related) drive them to a common correspondence of measure and sign, as the outcome of the growing unity of human society.

And so the contemporary metropolises, in reflecting the current planetary evolution, cannot but carry impressed upon themselves (as was the case with Trier and Baalbek) the common “signs” of their belonging to the present stage of history.

This book illustrates an IDEAL CITY from whose characteristics may be derived a series of FRAGMENTS, lowered into territorial realities as the option of a possible contemporary architecture.

The Ideal City, or its Fragments, formulated on the realities of New York, Berlin, Rome, Milan, Turin, Helsinki, Genoa and Athens (chapters of this book),

are the stepping-stones in an exemplifying route aimed to reach general conclusions, where sites are monumentalized and territories embraced in a combined design, as a grand contemporary architectural action: as from Trier to Baalbek, a discourse and a unitary, coherent and updated concept, which by anchoring on the peculiarities of places, can join functionality to poetry.

... where it will be demonstrated that archetypal figures, re-entering the world's imaginary in diversified compositional organisations, will constitute the alphabet which, decanted into a few letters, will provide the key to a universal language capable of covering a large quantity of emotions.

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HOW DO SKYSCRAPERS DIFFER FROM TOWER-ARCHETYPES?

We have already spoken of how the recent manifestations of contemporary architecture bear all the signs and contortions of a cultural basis by now exhausted.

The broad sample range of buildings of every conceivable type (business, management, hospitality, sports, museums, concert and entertainment halls, churches, single or group residences, etc) was bound to include the skyscraper. The latest product in the list of building types inherited from the 19th century and which would like more brazenly to represent, with the technological impulse onset of modernity, the tenacious – but desperate – attempt by contemporary architectural culture to survive.

Today skyscrapers spring up like mushrooms all over the world, from America to the Far East. Ever taller, they mostly bear the signatures of celebrated architects who, having exhausted the expressive forms of the early stylistic waves, are coming up with ever more curious examples.

As for the difference between skyscrapers and Column-Towers (archetypal forms):

skyscrapers are built due to the randomness permitted by the muddled programming of land, rising by individual inspiration to standards of formal, constructive, functional and economic exclusivity to endorse the needs of

focused users; the Column-Towers rise, in their thematic aggregation, as a rational and poetic option made up of models replicated with industrial criteria and methods for a multiple, functional and economical response to the demands of an ever-changing society.

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THE CONTEMPORARY IDEAL CITY

Every epoch has produced its own urban planning and its own Idea of the City: both as new-founded ideal cities, and as the overlapping of ideal scenarios (fragments of ideal cities) on the stratified city.

The new goal consists of a scenario to be superimposed on the palimpsest of the city and the territory, fully in keeping with the spirit of our epoch:

a scenario with which to take a big step forward to overcome the distinction between urban planning and architecture

a scenario which with the potency of its sign can express the new civil magnificence.

Here are the characteristics:

1. the archetypal figures are composed of aggregations likely to identify the fundamental situations of architecture
2. the dimensions and design of an urban scenario configure a contemporary way of being civil space
3. the location and design of the work involve the major existing signs of cities and territory and, by drawing greater grandeur and magnificence from these, they restore their confirmation and monumental conclusion
4. the City becomes an interpretation of a contemporary lifestyle and culture, alternative to the randomness of sites, scale and style with which cities are still built to this day. The whole repertoire and catalogue of building typologies in existence today is part of the past: the new city will itself, in total, be the new building typology capable of responding to the complex demands of contemporary life
5. the City, by its dimensional and formal characteristics, will be built to industrial criteria so as to fulfil all the opportunities arising from those criteria: economy, quality, timesaving and reduced waste. An urban event capable of

being a monumental event (from the ancient root *monere*: form that becomes memorable); form simultaneous of an idea: the fabulous thing is that it will rise impetuously and will be at once steel, cement, marble, glass and city as in a spontaneous gemmation. The composition of archetypal forms, accumulating in itself the experience of centuries, will show itself to be a supreme expression of the modern

6. architecture in archetypal forms, by overcoming any arbitrary formal temptation proposes, from the distributive-functional point of view,

- a variety and flexibility for broad fan of residential, service and hospitality purposes and in the most frequent and updated dimensions:
- the compositional ductility of urban scenarios;
- the synthesis of the residence with all the structures (and infrastructure) of which the city is composed;
- the concentration of population in monumental compositions with a high degree of residential concentration must be matched by an immediate perception-fruiting of collective and functional spaces;
- total urban pedestrianization;
- the widespread return of greenery and countryside in the surrounding territory;
- the lift as an alternative to urban horizontal public transport.
- railways and subways on a territorial and national scale, flowing into an underground zone barycentric to the city, with just one stop
- the same concept goes for the motorway and its connected parking lots.

THE IDEA OF THE CITY IS THE RESULT OF A COMPOSITIONAL PROCESS SYNTHETIZING THE AGE-OLD TRADITION OF CITIES. WITH ITS CENTRAL THEME BEING THE SQUARE, AS A SYSTEM CONSTRUCTED FOR CHORAL PERCEPTION AND REPRESENTATION.

Pag.44

Ariosto: "Da lungi par che come fiamma lustri
né sia di terracotta né di marmi
più m'avvicino ai muri illustri
l'opra più bella e più mirabil parmi. . .

...

di sì forbito acciar luce ogni torre
che non vi più ne ruggine ne macchia. . .”

...

Wayfarer

You who hail from the Renaissance
and know of things precious and distant
do not stop at the threshold: enter and tell
the story of a city in the form of a temple
with the sky as its roof
and pure volumes
and perspective, axial, circular, vertical bases
leading to the centre of the enigma.

Where it emerges, but for you it was already clear,
that philosophical speculation,
artistic expression,
the operative act,
political will,
the uniformity of language
attain to
the enchantment of synthesis,
the fascination of mystery,
echoing the universal.

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URBAN SCENARIOS OF AN EPIC POEM COMPOSED OF QUIET AND GREAT LINES

Pag.46

“THESE FIGURATIONS ARE SO REMOTE AS TO SEEM TO HAVE ARISEN IN THE SAME SEASON IN WHICH THINGS VERY NEW ARE ABOUT TO BLOSSOM”. D'ANNUNZIO

Pag.50

Section of the city.

Where it is deduced that design cannot concern a specific typology linked to a particular function, but must conceive a new building type to synthesize the involvement of all the bodies of which the city is composed.

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THE CITY AS A TEMPLE WITH THE SKY AS ITS ROOF

Pag.55

UNITY OF STYLE AND GRANDNESS OF LINES FOR COMMON LIVING

Pag.56

THE CITY AS THEATRE AND THEATRE AS CITY

Pag.59

Gallery of hemicycles

Pag.60

THE CITY AS THE HIGHEST PRINCIPLE OF COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

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THE ENCHANGTMENT OF FORMS

Pag.64

SIMULTANEOUS FORM OF AN IDEA: IT ARISES IMPETUOUSLY AND WILL BE SUDDENLY STEEL, MARBLE, GLASS AND CITY LIKE A SPONTANEOUS GEMMATION.

The project will be delivered to the potentialities of large-scale industrial production.

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The project involves all the structures of which the city is composed

The large numbers of global phenomena will impose upon Architecture the

scale of macro-operations, consequently creating the formal assumptions congenial to the industrialisation of constructions together with a new building site philosophy

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PART THREE - THE IDEA OF THE CITY IN RELATION: TO IMAGE, TERRITORY, SIGNS, HISTORY, MYTH

Pag.70

DINOCRATES' CITY

Participation in an international competition

...opposite the island of Nausicaa stretches a broad bay that culminates to the south with a promontory rising steeply above the sea...

The competition announcement includes residential, tourist, hospitality, rest and care homes, sports facilities, an industrial port directly related to production settlements, as well as a business management centre.

... emerging from the depths of the sea, the god's large hand raises – oh Dinocrates – your city: inedited, as can be seen by those who leaving behind the sunset of a historic, mean and confused season, arrive, still full of distant memories, at the scenario of a new era...

A colony of Greek memory?

The motives for inspiration are not lacking where Legend, Myth and History make the shores of the Mediterranean one of the most significant places in civilisation.

... a THOLOS of towers standing on rocks above a stylobate similar to a large classical theatre;

... the mount, carved in the image of the gigantic god, protects and supports the city, recapturing the imaginary vision of Myth.

The stylobate is a flight of hanging gardens containing shopping centres, casinos, boat clubs, boutiques, culture and research institutes, a theatre, meeting-places, restaurants and banks. The towers are built to accommodate hotels, residences and offices, while further away, the Government Building, the Ecclesia, the open-air theatre, the hippodrome and all the facilities of an urban hub of international appeal.

The archetypal forms resemble the powerful columns of a Hall, as if the city were configured on a par with a fantastic Palace, in the same way in which,

on the same shores, further north, at Split – a fantastic Palace was configured as a City.

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FRAGMENTS OF IDEAL CITY LOWERED ONTO THE TERRITORY

Reflections on the future of the city and territory, theme of the national congress of architects in 2018, Rome.

ITALY TOMORROW

Major entrepreneurial initiatives are needed for the recovery of the economy and employment, followed closely by courageous choices to be made in the awareness that social and economic progress also depend on technico-planning-environmental solutions implemented with far-sightedness and speed. Otherwise the chaos will get much worse and drive us, through a sea of chatter and misunderstandings, towards a state of inexorable decline, of which disquieting symptoms are already emerging.

What is illustrated on these pages falls into the logic of contemporary dynamics and of a close evaluation of reality; whereas, as regards the problem of investments, it will not be difficult to glimpse among the works illustrated, those economic and entrepreneurial opportunities that could intercept investments subject to solid legal and administrative certainties.

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THE GEOPOLITICAL POSITION OF THE ITALIAN PENINSULA

Showing one of the most important international sea trade routes: Italy occupies its centre

Considerations on the enhancement of the extraordinary geopolitical position occupied by the Italian peninsula, interpreted as the first European landing place by an imposing trade from the Far East to Europe (which today sails past the Italian coastlines to reach the more distant ports of Rotterdam and Hamburg). The law 28/01/1994 n° 84 configures a Plan under which “the Region of Sicily will be able to perform the role of continental access (through the Corridor N°1 Palermo-Berlin)”: but the whole of the Italian peninsula is configured as a “berthing place and corridor” for sea traffic in transit towards Europe! This scenario would give Italy, to an enormously magnified extent, the historical

advantages that Venice once had: the reasons for the past fortunes that made the Serenissima rich and beautiful, when it traded and transformed goods imported from afar (Middle East) to pass them on farther (to Europe) and vice versa.

The goal must be to make Italian territory an integrated logistical platform, by exploiting the particular barycentric geographical link between the Peninsula and the Mediterranean, the European continent and the major commercial trade route connecting the United States, Europe and the Far East, with the extraordinary opportunity to intercept the continually growing trade flows. The stakes, destined to overcome the major national structural and social insular failings (as well as legal/administrative uncertainties), are of such value that for no reason can they be thwarted or procrastinated, on pain of a decadence that would be hard to shake off.

So it will be necessary to:

1. improve and connect all the Italian ports, from those of Sicily right up to Genoa, Trieste, Ravenna and Venice
2. endow territories close to ports with logistics and industrial structures for the purposes of warehousing, assemblage and recomposition of goods
3. build the Strait Bridge to be interpreted as the Southern Gate to Europe and Business/Receptive Pole of the Strait District Reclamation Scheme
4. set up rail structures for shipments from and to the Continent
5. develop the Po Valley area with:
 - navigability of the river Po
 - connecting Switzerland to the sea
 - the core centrality of Milan
6. create solid administrative certainties to guarantee the programme.

Pag.77

ITS LENS FOCUSED ON MILAN

TO THE CAMERA

Your lens is too young to know how hard our epoch has worked to desecrate the environment. If you could go back over time, you would seize the interesting

form created by the ancient city, to be compared with the fascination of the countryside and you would bring sharply into focus the traces of the Emilian Way that become Sempione, after having diametrically crossed Milan, to be projected north-west beyond the Alps; and thus you would fully appreciate the majesty of the Napoleonic Arch, the powerful solemnity of the plane trees (cut down to widen car lanes) along the road from the capital to the Alps and Paris (a major signal of territorial involvement) and the rhythm of pillars and cadence of milestones, eloquent clues (among others) with which we could still believe ourselves to be heirs to Rome.

But the Arch of Peace was de-classed to the state of a backcloth, and the ancient flagstones, confused among the maze of suburbs, are buried among the undergrowth, surmounted by a ruined placard of crooked metal. The vanished pillars have been replaced by the advertising hoardings beckoning to cherished billionaire fortunes, American dreams, prices, costs and supermarkets.

The countryside has disappeared, but then so has the city; not because we have crossed its threshold but because it is extended into an endless suburb where the arrogance of modern triviality flourishes and grows. Ruins of old houses lay bare melancholy interior walls and the empty sockets of their windows: the gloomy agony of ruins in contrast to the insolent resistance of ugly contemporary housing blocks...

But:

behind the mental confusion of this epoch, still incapable of directing its great energies towards new orders of functionality, harmony and beauty, within the strident contrast of violent juxtapositions, through the frame of a vanished poster devastated by new vandals, in the filigree finishing line of trellises, high tension poles and telephone lines,

In the colour of signals, in the mysterious expressiveness of technological systems, can be grasped the burgeoning of a fresh season: so that these images can be enriched with melancholy, irony, fascination and desperation, to form the poetry of contemporary contradictions, the same poetry that gleams in the implacable fixity of Polyphemus's eye.

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HOW BIG IS MILAN?

... that plain stretching between the rivers Adda and Ticino, between the lower northern slopes and the well-irrigated land of the "bassa", the south Po plain, has witnessed through the centuries the gradual formation of an ever more complex system of traces, settlements, infrastructure and services which today configures the polycentric Milanese metropolitan area. Milan, which was measured within the Roman fortress, later in the old circle of Navigli canals and then within the bastion walls and gradually within the ring road avenues, railway belt and motorway ring, is identified today, precisely in that polycentric metropolitan system, with its true dimension: that of a fan converging on the Duomo.

The territorial design should therefore be conceived in this light, with the capacity to efficiently implement policies of social development so as to configure propulsive urbanistic actions on a new scale.

It will, as Persico said, be a movement of collective conscience, as the substance of things hoped; in fact, in some climates of renewal Milan did manage, with highly original impulses, to strike THE IDEA OF A CITY

as in 1460 with Sforzinda, when for the first time in the history of architecture the idea of an Ideal City took shape. In a Europe still immersed in the Middle Ages, Milan realised that it could in that way be a capital, a major European city. The extraordinary alternative testimony of the Cà Granda remains;

as in 1802, with Antolini's Foro Bonaparte, when Milan pursued a new civil magnificence and the Revolution found one of its most emblematic urban expressions. With clarity and ahead of its time, the theme of the Business Centre came into shape. Compared to Sforzinda, a closer link to the existing city was sought, as witnessed by the presence of the Castle and by the attention paid to the Simplon axis that passed through it.

These two projects, albeit not fulfilled, constitute a genuine Milanese expression and qualify among the best moments of the City (which moreover, too often flounders in just as much short-sightedness). However, it may be concluded, with a famed (though not thereby consolatory) motto, that those things for Milan never came about, because they were always...

Today the city awaits an ideational leap in style and method to get it going again with vigour.

With these premises, the project is intended to highlight the fundamental importance of railway stations, as core centres of the new urban territorial dimension.

The growing speed of rail-metropolitan trains brings the existing Cities closer, to the point where the vision of a total Po Valley metropolis might be formulated. This network represents the new relation between the current city and the metropolitan future.

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ABOVE THE NETWORK STATIONS

Above the network stations, heavy density urban hubs (in height and in new forms) as an evolution of the metropolis

The operation consists in the recovery and enhancement of the immense public heritage represented by the "void" that exists above these stations and above their related yards (in activity): a "void" that can be transformed, without compromising the rail movement, into cities above cities, into the quality of new urban poles which, by lending a formally defined imprint to the metropolitan-city, constitute the core points of a future urban territorial dimension.

The project, by adding to the real estate market enormous public areas (above the railways) in already central urban zones, rediscovers a huge richness of public heritage capable of suddenly launching the epochal creation of a new metropolis.

With these results:

1. insertion of citizens in already highly urbanised contexts.
2. zero volumes on every other area of the city and territory still free, including those of disused railway yards,
3. a rail-metropolitan service, underneath the urban poles, which automatically puts citizens into the circuit of the metropolitan city, making public transport absolutely more convenient, with a drastic reduction of motor car commuting

and a consequent reduction of infrastructure, services, times, consumption, pollution, wastage, means and accidents

4. optimal redistribution of the population from the suburbs (to be scrapped) towards these vital centres, and a consequent return of nature (reforesting) wherever environmental, social, ecological and economic degradation thrives

5. consolidation of social relationships.

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THE FUTURE OF THE METROPOLIS ABOVE ACTIVE RAIL STATIONS

The Milan city council is the fulcrum of a territory that inevitably converges with it.

The project illustrated here offers a third millennium Milan the epochal opportunity to reinvent itself, while keeping the fundamental features of its imaginary vision unaltered:

- the austere severity of its communal and ducal inheritance
- the grandiose and dignified vision of its Napoleonic era
- the legacy of Carlo Cattaneo, meaning civilised magnificence as the sum and synthesis of functionality and beauty
- the wisdom of Leonardo da Vinci's designs (a multi-level city)
- its modern entrepreneurial liveliness.

Below are demonstrative examples of intervention processes in the Milanese metropolis

1. Building above the Central Station
2. Building above the Porta Garibaldi and Villapizzone/Bovisa railway stations
3. Building above the FNM Station
4. The Sempione Axis
5. San Siro hippodrome
6. San Siro and new football stadium
7. Building above the Sesto San Giovanni Station
8. Building above the Busto Arsizio and Gallarate Stations
9. Building above the Varese Stations
10. Building above the Laveno Station.

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BUILDING ABOVE MILAN'S CENTRAL STATION

The creation of a raised platform, above the rail level, from the train buffers as far as the Greco junction (220 m x 2 km = 440 sqm) will allow the completion of a city on top of the city; without compromising the rail movement below it. The towers, for service, residential and hospitality purposes, configure a grandiose URBAN NAVE and rise above shopping, cultural and recreational arcades.

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BUILDING ABOVE - PORTA GARIBALDI AND VILLAPIZZONE / BOVISA STATION

With the same criteria as those of the previous chapter, the City can evolve above the Porta Garibaldi Station, transforming into a park the entire area of the Farini yard and linking the latter to the new Urban Pole above Villapizzone and Bovisa stations.

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The park of the Farini area

A cycle-pedestrian promenade (roofing over the rail tracks) unites the URBAN HUB above Porta Garibaldi Station with that above the stations of Villapizzone / Bovisa (in the background). No need to bother Vanvitelli to transform the squalor of the Farini area into the splendid and grandiose breadth of a large urban park.

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The URBAN HUB above Villapizzone and Bovisa stations, seen from the north

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BUILDING ABOVE - TRENORD – CADORNA STATION

Sempione Park is a square in which:

- the South side is monumentalized by the Sforzesco Castle
- the North side is monumentalized by the Arena
- the West side benefits from the presence of the Palazzo dell'Arte, while

lowered in quality by the presence of the F.N.M. railway yard.

The roof over this railway yard, from Piazza Cadorna to via Mario Pagano, would monumentally conclude the west side of the Park: an operation configured as a prestigious route along a pedestrian urban slab, flanked all along by the Park on one side and on the other by a stack (three-storey tiered building for business, service and district service purposes) with a passage opening onto the Axis of via XX Settembre-Palazzo dell'Arte-Arena.

Rising symmetrically above this Axis are two pairs of tower-columns (residence and service); the statue of Athena (echoing the one by Arturo Martini in front of the Sapienza university in Rome) is intended, on the perspective Axis of via XX Settembre, to enhance a continuity of the grand Italian cultural tradition in front of the Palazzo dell'Arte.

A fifth tower-column concludes the route along via Mario Pagano.

Surface of the "base plate"	30,000 sqm
gross floor surface of the "stack"	30,000 sqm
g.f. of the 5 towers	90,000 sqm

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View from the atrium of Palazzo dell'Arte.

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MILAN AND THE HISTORIC SEMPIONE AXIS

Milan's settlement principle is configured by a circle, with its north-west arched portion broken by the presence of the Castle: the circle was identified first with the Navigli canals, later completed with the Spanish walls, on which the Castle's presence bestows that direction and attention to the north-west side increasingly borne out in a territorial orientation towards Paris.

This condition was seized in masterly fashion by Antolini who, with his grandiose project for Foro Bonaparte, combined for Milan, in an emblematic scenario, the city's ring shape with the fundamental direction of its axis. Although the grandiosity of Antolini's sign was not implemented, its intention remains firmly established.

But the peremptory image which from the summit of piazza del Duomo along via Dante, the Castle, the Arch of Peace, and corso Sempione continues

towards the motorways, dissolves beyond piazza Firenze and without a “sign”, into a suburb devoid of quality. It is only natural therefore that a decisive urban intervention, by reversing the fate of a suburb, should configure the conclusion of the Axis characterizing the city.

The opportunity arises from the reasonable convertibility of two areas adjoining the viale Serra overpass and equidistant from the Sempione axis: one occupied by a pavilion/store, the other by a tennis club which could be advantageously expanded into the vast disused area of the adjacent barracks.

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SAN SIRO HIPPODROME

From hippodrome to public park (560,000 sqm).

There is no reason why the hippodrome should deprive citizens of the use of an extensive green area by now immersed in the city's fabric. The hippodrome could be more suitably situated in an area external to the city. Having assembled the motives of traditional Italian and European gardens, the park can draw spectacular effects from a long lake flanked by walks, lawns and arboreal backdrops, thus confirming, for a kilometre and a half, an imposing scenario of urban greenery.

Three towers (hospitality, residences and offices) rise high above a triangular stylobate-base at the intersection of the longitudinal axis stretching in a straight line from the Sempione/Malpensa, Switzerland, Venice and Turin motorway junction.

Hanging, cable-stayed, from the towers is an open air theatre (reversed cone) forming the closure of the skylight on the large auditorium below. The latter is a poly-functional structure with 5,000 seats (theatre, sports centre, congresses, exhibitions), around which multi-storey galleries will be built in spacious rings to be used as business premises, shopping malls and stores, cafes, restaurants, squares, museums and libraries, plus meeting rooms, auditoriums, amusements, gyms and swimming pools... an internal city liveable all around the clock.

Pag.126

SAN SIRO NEW FOOTBALL STADIUM?

The debate surrounding the substitution of the historic San Siro stadium with

a new stadium does not concern the pages of this book.

The interest here is focused on the concept relating to an urban operation as important as it is invasive: the football stadium has become a city structure which by scale, services, connections and attractions, by far exceeds the specific importance of a sports competition, which is moreover normally only celebrated once every 7 days (at the most every 3).

Here is an opportunity to create a system of vast interest, capable of overall urban valences that integrate to become a city in the city: hence an organic composition of home, hotel, commercial, service, recreational and sports functions for the completion of a propulsive URBAN HUB as an emblem of the evolving metropolis.

As for the site of the football stadium, it should be considered that the circumstance of a sports competition gives rise not only to the mobilisation of Milanese fans, but also to that of fans from a vast surrounding area, causing congestion of urban public transport and private traffic jams in the city.

It would seem appropriate to identify the facility in a location close to the city, barycentric to the region as a whole and easily accessed and exited by public and private transport.

In the Milanese case the opportunity is offered by the EXPO 2015 area, in its being very close to the Milan municipality and already efficiently served by the M1 metro line, the A6 and A8 motorways, and the railway stations (Turin, Sempione, Varese and Luino lines and only a few minutes away from the Central and Porta Garibaldi stations).

The project illustrated here includes:

1. A STADIUM to accommodate 60,000 spectators:

- access and exiting of spectators by autonomous routes reserved and mainly directed towards the metro station and car parks;
- private facilities belonging to the Milan and Inter companies (museum, meeting rooms/directors);
- health facilities, changing rooms, training gyms, etc.
- possible total roofing including over the pitch area

2. RESIDENCES: 7,000 inhabitants; the residential concentration is intended as a contribution :

- to the solution of Milan's critical situations
 - to the scrapping of suburbs while launching, chainwise, a virtuous circle of redistributed homes
3. SPORTS CENTRE / THEATRE (4,000 spectators)
 4. OPEN AIR THEATRE (300 spectators)
 5. HOTEL (600 rooms)
 6. FACILITIES AND SERVICES: schools: nursery, primary, secondary; shopping malls and shops, private and public offices, sports medicine, athletics and team sport gyms, covered pool, public amenities (bars restaurants, play/sports, multi-rooms)

The proposed project includes:

- gratifying the city with fresh resources and services
- making the best of investments
- making good use of land
- sparking a synergy of functions and resources
- eliminating duplicates and wastage
- economizing on building, maintenance, management and safety costs.

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MILAN TOMORROW

Scenarios of urban prestige derived from areas in full usage, in the heart of the city and with no further occupation of land.

The areas and disused rail yards and the suburbs to be scrapped are allocated to parkland or community services.

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BUILDING ABOVE - SESTO SAN GIOVANNI STATION

Aerial view of Sesto San Giovanni railway station, as it is today and as it could be. The new construction, above the railway scale yard, welds the city with the ex-Falk area converted entirely into parkland (except for the zone set aside for the health city).

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BUILDING ABOVE - BUSTO ARSIZIO AND GALLARATE STATIONS

ALONG THE SEMPIONE – VARESE – GOTTHARD RAIL TRACK

Since the railway lines were built in the late nineteenth century and thus close to historic centres, the new works on stations benefit from their proximity to those centres, with the advantage of providing rapid connections to central Milan and to the whole metropolitan area thanks to the rail-metro service at the foot of the operation which creates optimal assumptions for:

1. the creation of a “METROPOLITAN MILAN”
2. the scrapping of the suburbs and of the sprawl that infests the entire upper Milanese territory; consequently to guarantee an expansion of greenery and recovery of countryside.

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THE IDEA OF THE CITY IN THE PROVINCE OF VARESE ON THE SEMPIONE AXIS

COROLLARY TO EXPO 2015

From the report delivered to the appropriate authorities

This study is part of the REGIONAL OPERATING PROGRAMME F.E.S.R. 2007-2013 ASSE 4.

The Authorities of the Province, Region and Gallarate city council are invited to interpret the references, as above, in light of a proposal which rooted in the Gallarate council's territory involves in a synergy of intentions, the entire metropolitan area. With particular attention to the Arno-Olona-Malpensa territory and its existing basic infrastructure, in order to implement a decisive evolutionary urban planning/cultural/social/economic leap forward in keeping with the 21st century.

It being considered:

- that the globalization of the economy is causing a drastic rearrangement of the world's hierarchy of building sites (Cities and Regions vying to favour the placement of highest quality activities in their own territories; this competition occurs on the basis of positions already gained and of capacities to conserve and acquire new major propulsive presences)
- that Cities and Regions, aiming to back that challenge, must equip themselves not only with infrastructural elements of an international calibre, but also –

and above all – with a vision and a purposeful style: it is indispensable that the Province of Varese seize the opportunity to accomplish an event that can be configured as the conclusive outcome of what is inevitably ripening on its territory, where infrastructure of local, national and supra-national interest is joined by joined by:

A8 + A26 + SS 336 + the Nuova Pedemontana + SS Sempione
FFS Sempione rail (as well as the Varese and Luino lines)

International Customs

International road-rail interchange

Infrastructure which, combined with the proximity of Malpensa 2000 International Airport and the not distant Rho-Pero International Trade Fair, presents the outstanding opportunity to bring the Province of Varese into the European Polycentric System.

It being observed:

- that the AT 15 area is favoured by the abovementioned infrastructure being directly connected to the SS 336 and the Sempione SS

- that further accesses are planned with the Pedemontana

- that from the At 5 the distances and times to reach the most significant places (without requiring any other routes than the existing motorways) are:

Intercontinental Airport 8 km 5 minutes

Milan 27 km 20 minutes

International Trade Fair (Rho-Pero) 15 km 12 minutes

Turin-Genoa 150 km 90 minutes

A4-Bergamo-Venice 40 km 25 minutes

Switzerland-Chiasso 20 km 15 minutes

- that on the Sempione line a stop is guaranteed (equivalent to a Metro stop) to be directly connected to the area in question, the outstandingly exceptional nature of the circumstance can be confidently confirmed: everything is already there! The only thing missing, as in the most classic of a city's foundational rules, is the grafting of a settlement project which, by the rare excellence of its service tertiary/public and private business, hotel, service and culture, recreation, meeting and congresses, expresses:

a. the convergence of needs and interests of the entire southern area of the Varese province: a propulsive hub for an improved territorial and

national quality

- b. the alternative to the by now congested mono-centrism pivoted on the centrality of Milan
with a consequent transfer from the City of public or private structures that would much more advantageously be accessible from the whole region (and by the Milanese themselves) into the locations concerned; as well as the alternative to the situations of unacceptable degradation scattered across the immense hinterland
- c. the creation of a new pattern of urban evolution in the heart of the Arno-Olona-Malpensa district: an urban hub complete with an Experimental Centre concerned with the foundations of food of worldwide interest
- d. the re-qualification of a vast area that has by its position become one of the most interesting in northern Italy.

THE PROJECT

This project proposes:

1. in the AT 15 sector of the Gallarate P.G.T Masterplan the settlement of an URBAN HUB
2. in the Environmental Improvement sector south of the 336, the PERMANENT EXPERIMENTAL CENTRE;
3. in the industrial area (beyond the railway) the AERODROME.

URBAN HUB

Eight residential towers rise on a circular base emerging from the greenness of the park. At the centre, the open air theatre (reversed cone section, cable-hung from the towers) forms the roof over the large auditorium inside the base. This auditorium is the fulcrum of the whole operation: a multi-purpose structure (5000 seats) for use as a Sports Centre / Grand Theatre / Congress and Exhibition hall.

This structure:

- being a Congress/Exhibition Hall, will relate Malpensa 2000 to the hotel facilities above it, to the International Trade Fair (Rho-Però) and to the southern half of Europe as a Theatre and Hall for performances, it will attract the attention of the Po Valley area and that of the Canton Ticino.

- as a Sports Centre, it will be flexible to every sports event and fitted to the growing metropolitan and inter-regional necessities.

Set all around the auditorium in a concentric expansion will be:

first ring: shopping malls, shops, restaurants, cafes, exhibitions, museums libraries, multiplexes, amusement arcades, gyms, pools

second ring: a glazed arcade

third ring: compulsory schools, library, cafes, restaurants, university departments, physiotherapy and motor rehab departments (connected to the sports facilities extending from the auditorium to the surrounding park), university departments dealing with basic world food, in relation to the adjoining permanent Experimental Centre.

Access to the URBAN HUB is along a ring road accessing the parking lots below the base.

The project is drawn up in complete respect for the indices and building parameters laid down by the Gallarate PGT.

The concentration and synergic blending of purposes will generate:

- puntiform and high density cities, alternative to the dispersion of suburbs
- minimal wastage of land the remainder of which is allocated to park and open air sports facilities
- no need to build new roads; the only logical place for the car is, and must remain, the motorway
- minimalizing of infrastructural networks (water/electricity/gas/telematics/ sewage etc)
- total pedestrianization
- synergy of services and elimination of duplicates
- simplification of controls and security
- economy and management efficiency
- wide extension of green space as a crowning of the urban event.

The project is outlined on the landscape as the landmark of Arno-Olona-Malpensa territory, a sign oriented towards Mount Rosa which rises monumentally to qualify the Lombard landscape: the signal of a new architectural and planning season with cities evolving by hubs complementary to the existing historic centres and alternative/substitutive to the generalized suburb (which besieges and suffocates those same historic centres) so

shamefully ongoing everywhere. Hubs that can configure new urban events in harmony with the territorial palimpsest and fully in line with the spirit of our epoch: events that with the power of signs spread the manifestation of civil magnificence.

This Idea of the City arises as a body ready and total to be itself a monument of territory.

Theatre of an architecture arising from an evocation: it is Italian architecture which by proceeding along its own roads (on the pattern of ideal cities) joins the classical sign to the presage of future scenarios.

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PERMANENT EXPERIMENTAL HUB

Three cupolas ("bubbles" in Teflon with a 150 m diameter each) hanging from a central pylon (situated with a calculated consistency within the outer rim of the Ticino Park) create inner micro-climates and micro-environments as a simulation of the three fundamental "zones" of the planet: tropical, temperate, northern.

Conceived as "enclosed areas for permanent experiments", they will be allocated to botanical and zoological research. They will also be open to the public for interactive visits to survey, instruct and astonish, by sparking growing spirals of interest in the fundamental themes of evolution and survival on Earth: a programme to allow a continuity of the themes posed at EXPO 2015, which must not and cannot be confined merely to the time lapse of one specific international venue. At the base of these cupolas a crown of laboratories and explanatory/scientific/informative as well as commercial structures (interactive public participation, theme restorations, etc) completes the settlement, which is backed by a university offshoot located in the Urban Hub (see above).

Thus EXPO 2015 will bear out, in its proximity to the Gate to the World (Malpensa) the permanence of its message, by qualifying the territory of the Varese Province as a place of worldwide reference. From the summit of the pylon, a laser beam will focus on the Madonnina at the top of Milan Cathedral, describing a signal on a geographic scale across the Lombard territory.

AERODROME

Landing here will be the (HAC type SKY-KITTEN/ATG) airship catering to aerial excursions over the Po Valley from Milan to Venice, above the cities on the Pedemontano and via Emilia axis, as well as over lakes Maggiore, Como, Iseo and Garda.

The magic atmosphere of this airship, its silence and its relative speed (max 120 km/h), the possibility of aero-panoramic pauses at differing heights, its large seating capacity, economic running costs and landing that requires no major airport facilities, and the versatility emphasizing from new angles the extraordinary beauty of our country, correspond ideally to a tourist scale of international renown particularly attentive to the reading of landscape. Without moreover excluding the function of small and medium range passenger transportation – to and from the airport Terminal – which will be extremely competitive to that of trains, airplanes and coaches. An overhead rail will link the Aerodrome to the new rail substation, the Urban Hub and the Experimental Pole.

ATTENTION:

This proposal contrasts the short-sighted and deceptive custom of interventions geared to a parochial vision of urban management and of the parcelling of properties (albeit compartmented). A custom on whose power too many people still rest day after day, up till the collapse and degradation of our territory of which we are all victims and witnesses.

Therefore, it will be no surprise, for example, if the residential quota planned in the project may be higher than the effective necessities of the Gallarate area. It is precisely the characteristic of this intervention, strategically fitted into the quick of the Milanese metropolitan area, as well as its intrinsic connection to numerous and primary motorway and rail/metro infrastructures (and consequently its proximity in terms of time to the City-Metropolis body as a whole), that justifies the tendency to allow the dignity of a scheme also to those who still have the misfortune to live in squalid and humiliating housing estates (to be scrapped) that have sprung up all over the metropolitan area. This could constitute an emblematic example of how to resolve key provisions to renew the evolution of the metropolis, with a bull's-eye on targets and FESR financings.

Reflections that come under a broader and more civilised concept of coordinated regional planning, while extending in the case in point, the criterion and the advantages of the scrapping of suburbs beyond municipal boundaries, towards a harmonious arrangement of the territorial scenario, whilst also endorsing a spontaneous flow of citizens from the Milan nucleus. With the undoubted advantage of the whole environmental aspect and of how many people can be housed in structures in every way suited to the harmonious course of life, while optimizing times and modes to get to places of work, study, recreation, culture and leisure.

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BUILDING ABOVE - THE VARESE STATIONS

The distance today between the Varese stations on the Trenord and FFS lines jeopardizes the functionality of this rail junction. The problem could be solved by sliding the FFS station further up the line, to the Trenord station. In this case, the escalator, compensating for the gap between the two rail levels, will provide the functional seam between the two stations, as normally occurs between line A and line B of any metro station.

The project proposes a roof slab on piazzale Kennedy, extending over the Trenord yard and corresponding to the new FFS station.

Rising on this new base slab will be:

a City building, distinguished by an umbrella-roof underneath which will be situated:

- a compact volume (with totally mirrored external walls – to the point of vanishing while reflecting the landscape) allocated at different levels to a supermarket, tourist and information offices, exhibitions, agents representing industry, crafts, trade and service industries of the city and province, meeting-places
- a tiered grandstand to seat 1000 for programmes – in front of a maxi screen (25x20 m) – organized for major seasonal events (Varese festivals)
- underneath the grandstand, an exhibition and temporary exhibition gallery, and on the 1st floor an auditorium for theatre, concerts and conferences (300 seats)

Residences characterised by a succession of portals (housing blocks alternating with empty spaces): one at the east end of the new slab, the other, perpendicular to the previous one: the volumes being joined on the top floor with hanging gardens, primary and secondary schools, restaurants and meeting-places.

The same settlement concept is planned ABOVE the present FFS rail station.

These structures achieve:

- a physical and/or visual welding between the city's two sectors and the Varese-Giubiano centre, currently separated by the railway lines;
- the recovery and use of public heritages (railway areas above the rail structures);
- the complementariness between residence and district services, characterised by ZERO ground coverage (built above already operational structures);
- on the ground floor pedestrian transits and public offices;
- on the 1st floor a public walk with shops;
- on the roof (terrace-garden), civic and public spaces and places, enhanced by immanence in the city, by the (metropolitan and regional) train service at the foot of an outstanding panoramic site.

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VARESE, FROM THE RAILWAY JUNCTION TO THE REGENERATION OF THE VARESE VALLEYS

THE ENIGMA OF THE GARDEN

The evolution of rail service (from rail to metropolitan) and the Varese stations to be transformed from terminal to exchange junctions (Como-Switzerland-Milan, via Saronno, Gallarate and Malpensa) augment the converging of interests towards the Varese territory, thereby enabling the city to take a high quality step forward in the enhancement of its environmental, cultural and operational characteristics.

In this perspective the present project deals with the programming of a more agile public mobility (already favoured by the Varese-Laveno tram-train project)

by investing the entire territory (from the lake to the northern valleys) in the unity of a single body answering to the stations system.

Connecting Varese to the Valleys north of the city as far as Santa Caterina del Sasso, Luino, Ponte Tresa.

The places north of the city are subject to a steady de-population, with a consequent degradation and neglect of their territories, which are moreover rich in natural and landscape charm and historico-artistic interest.

The plan consists in the setting up of a public transport infrastructure, with agility and economic convenience to avoid the isolation of communities and places, creating commuter and tourist/cultural routes to become fully-fledged urban planning/territorial itineraries. Therefore a cable connection is planned between Varese Stations and: Sacro Monte, Campo dei Fiori, Brebbia, Cannara, and from there a branch to line to Casalzuigno and Santa Caterina del Sasso, the other towards Ganna, Luino or Ponte Tresa.

We need hardly pause to consider the spectacular nature of the panoramas offered by suchlike aerial routes, and still less on the value of such places (Sacro Monte and Campo dei Fiori) or on the monumental importance of San Gemolo, Bozzolo, Santa Caterina and on the liveliness of the terminals (Tresa and Luino).

A public mobility project that links the outskirts of the city to the lake district: from the rail/metropolitan stations the track will reach the Hospital and, via viale Borri, the University. Another branch of the system will connect to the viale Europa zone and from there closing the city circuit via Sant'Ambrogio and viale Aguggiari.

The route runs for the most part past some of the most memorable scenery in the Italian landscape (also consecrated by Bellotto), while firmly linking the amenities and pleasures of the lake, the settlements overlooking the lake and those of its slopes, to the life of Varese.

Objectives:

optimize and incentivize the use of public transport up till the total elimination of private car traffic in the urban centre

promote and enhance appreciation of the territory and its environmental/
monumental (cultural/tourist) attractions
boost international venues gravitating on sports events (boating championships
(*), cycling Tre Valli Varesine, gliding
make every cable car station a point of interest and aggregation.

Note: Cable transport (cable cars with a fixed grip) is deemed the most
suitable because
it is congenial to the orography of this territory and therefore not compelled
(unlike rail and road) to compete with the roughness of ground or with
environmental obstacles;
entails a minimal impact on the land;
does not pollute;
favours enjoyment of the panorama;
minimizes distances through straight connections;
minimizes transfer times more than any other transport system;
it is an economical public transport system to build and to run;
it is an agile and swift public transport system to build.

(*) Lake Varese is deemed by international sports bodies to be one of the
surfaces best suited to boating sports.

The cable car route for a revitalisation of territories north of Varese and for
a better link between the city and its lake

The mountains, lakes, towns and the Alpine chain dominated by Mount Rosa,
the magic of famed gardens, prestigious villas, the Sacro Monte, Campo dei
Fiori, the green valleys, the various hermitages ... an outstanding kaleidoscope
as a tourist/cultural attraction offered in spectacular "air crossings" conducted
by cable car.

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BUILDING ABOVE - THE LAVENO MOMBELLO TRENORD STATION

The project, located above the Trenord rail yard on the shore of Lake Maggiore,
bang in the middle of the small town of Laveno, envisages residential, hotel,

recreational and commercial structures as complements to a raised city square and theatrical stage open to the panoramic beauty of the landscape: the tiered steps covering the shops, the hotel and the theatre will draw citizens' and holiday-makers' attention to contemplation and choral events.

Standing out in the project are three "garden-villa" residential units, suspended to capture all the exceptional beauty of the surrounding environment. The project is concluded north-west by a pavilion-museum featuring local art ceramics.

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SUMMARY OF THE ROUTE

THE IDEA OF THE CITY AS A BULWARK AGAINST ANTHROPIC ENTROPY

Anthropic entropy is a largeness that measures the environmental degradation caused by the presence of humans on the planet.

The ever-increasing world population is affecting to a worrying extent the process of degradation of the earth's ecosystem, from increased planet temperatures to pandemics, from indiscriminate consumption and abuse of land to correlated chains of endless other calamities.

The pulverisation and planning of territories is one of the heavy responsibilities of contemporary architectural and planning culture... to this day, the incentive to create parks, gardens, planted balconies, patched-up suburbs and cycle lanes, with all the well-meant armaments of urban planners, erected as a barrier against the biblical gravity of the problem, may seem worthy but is in fact desolately inadequate. The comparative tables illustrate the sense of the turning-point proposed by the IDEA OF THE CITY.

URBAN POLES ABOVE OPERATING STATIONS WHAT FUTURE FOR THE METROPOLIS

Constructing URBAN HUBS above active railway systems demonstrates that the city can be regenerated by profitably regaining huge underused chunks of public heritage to produce, without occupying land, and on an updated scale:

- urban scenarios of civil magnificence, with a return to greenery on territories today convulsed by misjudged planning;
 - reduction of pollution by decreasing car commuting.
- All these suggestions embrace the territories in a grand urban design, formed by cities evolving vertically and by new forms above metropolitan railway network stations.

SUCCESS FACTORS INTRODUCING AN INDUSTRIAL PLAN

1. discovery of an imposing (public) heritage/real estate value to be invested in a vigorous urban revolution
2. settlements already inserted in the urban situation, with existing infrastructural services
3. real estate plus value extending across a vast urban radius surrounding the new interventions above the stations
4. land reclamation: safeguarding of all free or disused areas across the land (including those of the disused railway yards) that will be totally restored to green parkland or services
5. drastic reduction of private car usage
6. the growing trend (attraction, interests and exchanges) in Milan relates this proposal to its own target and could increase exponentially, with the acquisition of a political outlook capable of bringing into play the exceptional peculiarity of the Italian geopolitical position mentioned above, which would make the city an administrative and representative international hub.

As regards the domestic real estate market, the following must be borne in mind:

- a. existing between Milan and its surroundings are 7 million cubic metres of obsolete/uninhabitable built space or space unworthy of contemporary standards;
- b. entire degraded suburban estates constitute a sort of “non-city” and their endless sprawl constitutes an almost unbearable public burden
- c. there exists in our regional territory an endless sprawl, weighing extremely heavily on public management and already in many cases no longer responding, for logistic and economic reasons, to the expectations of its respective inhabitants (especially the younger generations).

Much of the tertiary sector, whose presence today disfigures our historic centres, would tend to be concentrated in the new intervention above the stations, thereby permitting a virtuous reintegration of homes, services and neighbourhood structures within the fabric of historic centres.

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THE PO VALLEY CITY AS A TOTAL CITY

That part of Italy lying between the Alps, the Apennines and the sea, as a large hollow set in Europe, identifies a geographical area accommodating peoples whose traditions, history, language and customs – as well as the awareness of common restraints – have naturally merged to ultimately create the unmistakable character of a City.

Here are some urban measures that could involve this territory in a single large contemporary architectural gesture, thanks also to the speed of transport systems.

The following are the fundamental plans in this project:

two decumani which, starting from Turin and Lugano, connect in Milan to become the alpine pedemontano trace and the Aemilian Way

the cardines, which interconnect the conurbations of the pedemontano trace (Brescia-Verona-Vicenza-Padua) with those of the ancient Roman Aemilian Way (Piacenza-Parma-Reggio-Modena-Bologna).

The traces were reinforced and confirmed with today's motorways and railways, whilst the cities have expanded abnormally, in frayed chains of conurbations.

In the territorial analysis of traces one very important one has for too long been neglected, namely that of the river Po which, made navigable by European class barges (*), outlines very clearly the new figure of the Po Valley City of which may be highlighted:

- the axis of which Milan and Venice are the terminals (but their extension as far as Turin is consequential)
- the limits in the Alpine and Apennine slopes and the sea
- the urban planning types, i.e. the ancient nuclei and the new ones complementary to them.

At the intersection of the river and the cardines (intermediate position between the two poles of the cities lying north and south) is the siting of extraordinary structures (university, health specialist, service industry, etc) complementary to both poles.

Perspectives of the scenario

- industrial ports and quayside industries along the river (consequent virtuous redistribution of the population)
- access to the sea from Switzerland
- the Po Valley system grafted onto the maritime peninsular coasting trade, links diverse regions and economies in the prosperity of a single system, bearing in mind that the Italian peninsula could represent the first European landing point to the ever growing eastern sea traffic.
- the big advantages of the water freight system (a single river barge in the European class suitable for maritime coasting transports a cargo of 5 rail trucks or 75 lorries at 1 tenth of the cost of road transport and one fifth of that on rail).

(*) see projects: SIMPO 1986 and IS 2018

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VICENZA

RAILWAY STATION AREA

The stylobate motif surmounted by cylindrical architectures is applied to configure:

- an ornamental frame to the Campus Martius
- a screen for the railway yard
- a monumental base to the panorama of Mount Berico, almost the finding of an enormous temple at the foot of the Mount.

CAMPUS MARTIUS AREA

Stylobates and cylindrical architectures will serve service industry/administrative purposes

partial alleviation of congestion in the historic centre.

The theatrical scenario of the auditorium involves the axis of viale Roma and monumentalizes the park which receives a theatre conceived:

- figuratively, as a geometric/spatial development of the CUBE (archetype)
- functionally, as a city theatre and ideal complement to the Verona Arena
- architecturally, as a base and homage to Palladio, depicted on the four-horse chariot of Apollo.

Set beneath the hemicycle of tiered steps framing the theatre are shopping malls, car parks and a bus station.

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ACCORDING TO VITRUVIUS 4 IS THE NUMBER OF MANKIND BECAUSE ITS ARMLENGTH CORRESPONDS TO ITS HEIGHT, BEING INSCRIBED IN A SQUARE; 4 IS THE NUMBER OF MORAL PERFECTION JUST AS THE TETRAGON WILL BE CALLED THE MORALLY SOLID MAN.

The theatre dominates the open air auditorium theatre

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VENICE

The Po Valley hydro-road urban planning and Mediterranean coasting system, linked to the waterways of the Venetian lagoon, would restore to Venice (combined with the international destinations mentioned earlier) that aptitude for commerce, production and trade that was the reason for the Serenissima's centuries of prosperity. Furthermore, that city's indisputable cultural vocation would foster the conditions for a "re-insertion" of Venice in History, with the processes congenial to it, thereby reversing its current state of decay and gloomy abandonment of the historic city by the Venetians.

These reflections are an introduction to a settlement project where the traces of terra firma extend into the historic city's lagoon: at the bareness of St Giuliano (and as far as the Mestre railway station) could be imagined an urban hub intended as the propylaeum of the Serenissima, or as a Nations trade quarter for the new planetary cultural dimension of Venice.

The intervention may be defined as:

- an interchange between the continental traces and those of the lagoon and sea

- a district in the fullness of Venetian tradition: a hub of representation, hospitality, culture, residences, pensioners, students, congresses.

and also identified as:

an urban alternative to the suburbs of Mestre and Marghera

as a bastion and contrast to the non-Venetian demand for homes in the historic centre

as an operation suitable to accommodate functions on an international scale that would be difficult to situate in the historic centre in terms of size and/or structural complexity.

The project intends to propose a monumental “flooded nave” opening onto the lagoon scenario, where the world’s routes will flow solemnly together into the magic of a canal ending at St Mark’s.

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THE NEW DISTRICT OF NATIONS IS CONCEIVED AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE PRESENT DEVELOPMENT OF VENICE ON TERRA FIRMA AND AT THE SAME TIME AS A PROPYLAEUM IN FRONT OF THE EXTRAORDINARY CITY.

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TURIN

The speed of transport combines to weld Milan and Turin together, in the virtuosity of a single system.

This project considers the transfer of the Porta Nuova Station to the Mirafiori railway yard (next to the Customs pavilion) and its transformation into a transit station.

The entire railway area (which today divides the city from corso Vittorio Emanuele to the corso Dante flyover overpass) will be restored to the historic centre: the ensuing space will offer grandiose perspectives and vigorous resources for an urban evolution in the heart of the city.

The axis joining Palazzo Reale, piazza Castello, piazza San Carlo, corso Roma and piazza Carlo Felice extends (beyond the present refurbished station

building) into an “axis or royal Court”, as in the tradition of monumental urban plans in Turin. The axis will be flanked by a procession of portal buildings ultimately creating an urban composition that will rise with 8 coupled column/towers, resembling an “open-sky city hall”.

The stylobate on which the towers stand highlights the square plan of the “Urban Hall”

The interval between the corso Dante flyover and that of corso Sommeiller, freed of its railway, will become a new urban park (10,000 sqm) in the city centre.

An underground road and metro route will connect the intervention from corso Vittorio Emanuele to the new Mirafiori station and also available along this underground axis will be parking space for 4000 cars.

A viaduct joined to the bypass (where the latter intersects the railway line from Susa) will reach, above the existing rail trace, the new Mirafiori station, grating onto the above-mentioned underground traffic system as far as corso Vittorio Emanuele.

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THE OPEN SKY “CITY HALL” AS A BACKDROP TO THE AXIS STARTING FROM PALAZZO REALE

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GENOA

Participation in the competition to develop the masterplan titled “Blueprint Competition: a design for Genoa” 2016

Adopting the interesting proposal of an inner dockland canal linking the trade fair zone to the Old Port is intended to augment the expectations of the City's Administration by inventing for Genoa, with due respect for the competition's operational area, an urban hub where the presence of housing is not deprived of a sea view

not behind the blue pavilion

not below the historic wall

(as theorised by the competition announcement),

but which can enjoy, above the roofing of Pavilion S, transformed into a public square, the condition of a prestigious balcony of magnificence in front of the sea.

Three towers above the circular roofing of the Palasport use cables to support the square itself with an open air theatre in the middle that exalts the Sea scenario.

Pedestrian walkways connect the Urban Hub to the city's key points.

Running through the dockland-canal, instead of the housing settlements (which the masterplan would imprison for its whole length between the Blue Pavilion to the south and the historic wall to the north, without gratifying the residence with the view and presence of the sea 50 m away) are exhibition and trade pavilions, facing one another on opposite banks with the sinuosity of a progressive geometrical development of conical forms.

In this way the intention is:

1. to exalt, along the canal-docks axis, a growing interest in the conclusive point of the entire system (the Urban Hub on the roof of the Sports building)
2. in contrast, to the south, to the dull and static state of the Blue Pavilion
3. to the north, to avoid the disqualifying effect of a "trenched" path along the course of a road against the historic wall.

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HOMAGE TO GENOA

The rebuilding of the Ponte Morandi must incentivize the reinvention of the settlements in Val Polcevera, with the construction above the railway yard.

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FLORENCE

In controversy with the outcome of the competition, Bruno Zevi wrote : "... excluded from any recognition a contender like Carlo Moretti, who maintains that by shifting into the Castle district the main community interests, "the historic core is demoted to the status of a museum or shopping/walk" to erect yet another cathedral in the desert, whilst a plausible alternative would be offered by a slab of macrostructures floating above the Santa Maria Novella

railway lines in a vital junction of traffic interchange...”

From the competition report

The project is conceived thus:

1. Traffic interchange

- height 0.00 m: existing rail yard and station;
- height + 0,00 m : interurban bus lines station, public offices, post, bank, tourist offices, shopping, restaurants, urban public transport stop;
- height + 16,00 m : public offices of the new regional City;
- three connecting viaducts collect traffic from via Belfiore and viale Francesco Sforza (Historic Centre ring road) and from the viaduct along viale F.Redì (from the motorways) and channel it into a flyover above the S.M. Novella rail yard.

Here the bundle of overpasses branches out in three directions:

- a. private cars: obligatory route to the automatic car silos with its 10,000 car capacity;
- b. public car access to floor height + 10 m, where the interurban bus station and the public urban transport stops are situated, in a return and a slipway ring to the historic Centre;
- c. public vehicle access at + 16 m with *viale d'onore* in a perspective axis directed to the Arnolfo Tower, passing at a tangent to the new City, to descend at the S. Maria Novella apse towards the centre.

This traffic organisation assumes that access to the historic centre, safeguarded from the invasion of private vehicles (conveyed into the ample silos) is permitted only to public transport. With appropriate one-ways and underpasses, the study provides for the absolute fluidity of traffic on the station square too.

2. Above the interchange roof slab rises the Management Centre, which houses:

- offices of the Region and Agencies staff
- offices and organizations of Justice functions
- public and private offices and organizations
- political, trade union and category associations
- cultural and research institutes
- economic and financial business.

The solution envisages for the new Management Centre about 1 million cu.m., as prescribed by the competition announcement, but it should be borne in mind that, given the particular position in which the complex is situated, those service facilities used to “vitalize” a peripheral service centre as the Competition would become useless. In fact, in the S.M.Novella zone, the business management area is configured as a lively zone even after office closing hours; it is Florence itself! Since the issue is to give the heart of Florence, with its interchange point and Business Centre, the historical continuity of its very existence and vocation, an intervention is proposed which fits into the city with the same importance for which, in past centuries, and for the same reasons, its most important structures emerged.

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THE TERRITORIES OF THE APENNINE SPINE

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Reflections on the occasion of the Day of SEISMIC PREVENTION AND AWARENESS FOR THE WHOLE NATIONAL TERRITORY

The Apennine range, which stretches the whole length of the Italian peninsula, draws planning attention to key lines of argument:

- the territory is liable to seismic sensitivity,
- the territory is dotted with large numbers of urban nuclei and monuments of notable historical and artistic interest,
- the territory is of great landscape quality,
- the territory is at a high risk of abandonment especially by the younger population.

Flanking the strictly technical and economic issue of point number one, are those of political, cultural and infrastructural strategies of points two and three, as well as the disquieting matter of point four.

Which comes as no surprise, considering that already, almost two centuries ago, the young Leopardi longed to abandon Recanati (a delicious town from which he “admired the calm sky, the gilded roads, the orchards and the sea from afar and then the mountain”), describing it pitilessly as a “wild town”.

It is easy to imagine what the feelings of the younger generations may be, who today, for a thousand reasons of an economic, cultural and recreational nature (capable of conditioning the destinies of an entire existence), acutely perceive the appeal exerted by big national and foreign cities.

An adequate answer, if ever possible, to this problem, which is as evident as it is dramatic for the future of the social, natural, artistic and human heritage, calls for a decisive strategic socio-political-cultural plan with the capacity to restore to territories essential updated and propulsive interests.

A crucial factor is the institution of an infrastructural network of public transport, agile and dynamic, capable of avoiding the isolation suffered by communities and places, so as to create supple cultural and tourist routes of such an interest as to fully enter (guaranteed by the monumentality of the territory) into the primary itineraries of the international grand tour.

The implementation of this programme, besides being a moral and civil commitment, can constitute a challenge for a world-unique model: a spectacular mixture of landscape beauties and monumental qualities.

This basic approach can unleash multiple activities capable of seductive existential attractions for future generations: the promotion and strengthening of cultural, training, information, restoration, conservation and entertainment, plus hospitality, oenological/gastronomic, recreational, tourist and sports, in harmony with and increasing artistic, literary and musical activities to which may be added artisan activities flanked by those of agriculture, market gardening, agro-alimentary, dairy and cattle raising.

Basically, a territory which is at present marginal to the tourist/cultural flow would be organized as a museum-gallery-workshop-of-activities-and-ideas, becoming propulsive to the economy and the fascination of the nation as a whole.

It goes without saying that a programme of this type must obtain massive support from the State and from the European Union.

The public transport infrastructure imaginable between one hub and another, with the capacity to minimize times (and distances) is that of the cable car.

The safety guaranteeing of existing buildings assumes a logical consequentiality and ought in the course of time to coincide with

the creation of new Urban Hubs

the scrapping of works and urban developments no longer sustainable dating from the last century, which infest and outrage the territory (in the total absence, one suspects, of anti-seismic standards).

The new Urban Hubs will be densely inhabited, totally pedestrian (with populations varying between 5000 and 50,000), constructed with updated standards and situated, in full respect of rivieras (for the most part set back from the sea as are Atri, Loreto, Recanati, Osimo, Civitanova Alta, Pietrasanta, Querceto...) with the same principles that make the Italian landscape memorable:

once again THE IDEA OF THE CITY as a poetic synthesis of natural scenarios and the extraordinary palimpsest created by the brilliance of populations in past centuries,

once again archetypal volumes (residential prisms connected at the top by a floor of hanging gardens, schools, nurseries and services) set at intervals and pierced at the base in a succession of shopping malls laid out in such a way as to configure seductive urban scenarios and portal wings beyond which to admire "the gilded ways the orchards and from there the sea from afar and then the mount".

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THE FOURTH ROME

The third millennium was inaugurated while ignoring the recurrence of the two-thousand year old link between ROME and THE CHURCH, a binomial that burst into human vicissitudes to write pages of History and to become, for many centuries, a ferment in the evolution of human consortium. Today it continues as a universal reference.

The epochal date ought to have been monumentalized with a work worthy of tradition: because both Rome and the Church have always celebrated their histories with tangible and imperishable signs marking the incomparable and astonishing beauty of the historic-urban-architectural beauty of the city. The date could have inaugurated the urban development of the Fourth Rome, as the expression of a new course of History and of Urban Planning, through a scheduled evolution of the city: in other words Rome-Maestra could (and should) have – with the occasion and on the traces of the grand previous feats

– proposed, after the Rome of the Caesars, the Popes and of the 20th century, a FOURTH ROME, as the urban expression of cultural, social, economic and ecological demands of the 21st century.

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Now that we are well into the third Millennium, this appeal is renewed to mark Rome's candidature for the Olympics and still more for Expo 2030. Not as an alternative to the masterplan already prepared and based on the criteria of eco-sustainability and resilience, but as a complementary proposal to confirm Rome's ongoing mission of civilisation.

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THE FOURTH ROME - ABOVE OSTIENSE STATION

In the project, set along the greater sides of the rectangular slab above the Ostiense Station railway yard, are the buildings as a succession of portals: once again with primary volumes spaced and joined at their summits by a continuous floor occupied by hanging gardens, schools, kindergartens, recreations, restaurants and gymnasiums. At the slab level, the volumes are pierced to configure a series of shopping arcades. The slab is concluded at one end by an open air theatre, and at the other, by the monument to Caius Cestius.

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THE FOURTH ROME - ABOVE TIRBURTINA STATION

Above Tiburtina Station: a city with the same criteria as in the previous example

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THE FOURTH ROME - AND THE AXIS URBIS

The operation intends to take shape as a concluded episode, to be added to the major historico-monumental work by the Urbe, similar to the big architectural plans of ancient Rome, confirmed in themselves and set out by situation, largeness and orientation (from Romulus's furrow to the works of the Caesars) to sidereal and prophetic indications.

One of these indications is the AXIS URBIS (the extraordinary imaginary

line drawn by the History of Architecture, which optically and ideally joins St Peter's, the Campidoglio, the Via Sacra, the Colosseum, San Giovanni and, in the distance, the Tusculus theatre on the Albani Hills, the first Roman theatre and abode of Castor and Pollux, protectors of the Urbe).

The AXIS URBIS crosses in Tor Vergata a large area adjacent to the important road infrastructure connecting with the A1: here myth can be coupled with the rational... a multi-storey stylobate rises from the countryside as a tectonic form belonging to the world of forums: a potent "work of nature", on which rests the cloister of column-towers, as a grandiose "hand work". Closed space with an axial orientation like the Colosseum, the Forums, the Baths, the Campidoglio, St Peter's Square, piazza del Popolo and like all the buildings and authentically Roman urban interiors. Once again an oval piazza proposed as a universal basilica: hollow and measured by monumental Dioscuri.

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THE FOURTH ROME – AND THE EUR AXIS(*)

It is curious to note that the extension upwards MONTE of the main axis of the EUR plan perpendicularly intersects the AXIS URBIS between the Colosseum and San Giovanni in Laterano).

The haruspices of the Caesars would not have attributed to circumstance a simple act of chance, by dilating the prospect of growth of the Urbe to the following proposal:

THE FOURTH ROME AND THE EUR AXIS.

The criterion, as will be demonstrated below, is capable of myth and rationality and refers to the prophesy engraved on the pediment of the E42 Palazzo degli Uffici:

"ROME WILL EXPAND ONTO OTHER HILLS, ALONG THE BANKS OF THE SACRED RIVER AS FAR AS THE BEACHES OF THE TYRHHENIAN". (in this urbanistic "lapidary instruction" may be read, beyond its declamatory mode, an attention to the interpretation of places capable of combining the morphology of territory with history, urban planning and myth).

An attention borne out by the programming of Rome on the sea to which Adalberto Libera gave his imprimatur and perspective with the "Gate to the Sea", the Triumphal Arch, not built, and reintroduced in St Louis by Saarinen,

as the “Gateway to the West”.

New urban plans could thus be laid down on the principal extension of the EUR axis towards the sea, already existing with via Colombo and via Pontina. With a different image the scenographic-perspective fascination of Libera’s grand triumphal arch is confirmed.

(*) EUR today universally reappraised, after a *damnatio memoriae* had condemned this work (unfinished due to the war tragedy) to decay for decades and later compromising the result of the original design with inadequate additions and the failure to conclude ongoing buildings.

Amid enthusiastic acclaim and heated controversy, it represents the outcome of a cultural season (of architects, economists, political authorities) spurred by personalities like Piacentini, Piccinato, Rossi, Vietti, Libera, Terragni, Guerini, Lapadula, Romano, Moretti, Michelucci, Quaroni, Muratori, Aschieri, Samonà, Paniconi, Pediconi, B.B.P.R. with Vittorio Cini, Cipriano Oppo, Bottai, Ogetti, Ponti (and many more) who contributed in varying degrees to the designing and building, and artists like Sironi, Martini, Marini, Fontana, Messina, Basadella, Fornasetti, Melotti, Tozzi, Severini, Funi, Gentilini, Amato, Depero, Guberti, Barrera, Barillà, Frascchetti, Foresi Rosso, Griselli, Penagini Predonzani, Brancaccio, Saetti, Cascella, Cavalli, Prampolini, Morbiducci, Minguzzi, Longo, Guerrisi, De Lisi, Canevari, Quaroni, Capizzano, Ferrazzi, Pirandello, who should and could have adorned them (only a few finished works and numerous rough sketches remain).

“... it feels like a dwelling inside a metaphysical painting...”, said Federico Fellini on the subject of this remarkable urban-cultural operation, where the attempt to blend the IDEA OF ITALIANNESS with the universal IDEA of ROME resonates.

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An urban hub with the insertion of Olympic structures and solution to the “vexata questio” of the Roma-calcio football stadium: where the stadium does not appear as a decontextualized object, in just any area, but as a cog

in the growing city.

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Completion of an urban hub (Olympic city) where the south circular connects with via Cristoforo Colombo and via Pontina, together with the creation of major sports facilities to accommodate sports events on an international level.

Characteristics:

20,000 inhabitants, 2000 sqm surface, totally pedestrian, totally self-sufficient for water and energy supplies, hydroponic greenhouse for growing fruit and vegetables at 0 km and for export, total prefabrication.

Complete with:

Olympic level sports facilities:

football stadium to seat 60,000 (covered and conditioned) with possible roofing over the pitch area

swimming stadium with a closed/covered/conditioned interior to seat 5000, Olympic pool 50 x 25m.

velodrome with closed/open conditioned interior for 10,000 spectators

roller-skating and ice hockey

ice stadium with closed/open/conditioned interior for 10,000 spectators artistic and speed skating, hockey

sports building for tennis, basketball and handball for 5000 spectators

tennis sports gyms with 10 courts – ten more for handball, basket etc.

leisure: multiplex, amusement arcades, bars restaurants etc

commerce and service industries: shopping centres and shops

offices

culture

interactive museum, nurseries, schools of every type and grade, university campuses, library, theatre,

concert hall, open air theatre

hotel: 2 structures with a total 800 rooms,

Residences; homes for 20,000 persons.

It goes without saying that the concentration into a single hub of all these activities and structures endorses investments, makes good use of land, sparks the synergy of structures, functions and resources (e.g. the roof over the grandstand becomes the city's attractive square which in its turn is supported, by means of cables, by the residential tower structure).

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With this opportunity it might be interesting to include an aerodrome to establish tourist-commercial air services. Similar to the one evinced under the heading "Aerodrome" on pages 150-153.

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In the succession of projects for Rome illustrated, the new settlements are characterized by tiered stylobates (for commercial business, culture, recreation, administration) above which rise the columns for residential, service and hospitality uses.

All these Rome projects make it possible to achieve three results: the answer to settlement needs in the city, as an alternative to the expansion of suburbs and low-level housing blocks (to be scrapped) thereby restoring the spaciousness of parks around the Historic centre
decongestion of the historic centre of the cumbersome (and paralysing) presence of an existing service industry (ministries, public offices etc) and related traffic,
settlements of great "urban quality" on the road and infrastructure traces proportionate to their purpose.

Architecture in archetypal figures – as explained in previous chapters – to discourage any arbitrary formal and individualistic temptation, can bestow the image of a new accomplished maturity, "by inexhausted echoes of the history that taught us".

Contemporary culture, after having swept away academies and anachronistic movements, can thus impose new emotions, therefore:

- where the Forums, Baths, Basilicas, Circuses, Temples and the Colosseum were erected,

- where squares and settings like St Peter's, the Campidoglio, the Quirinale and

the Circus Maximus, piazza del Popolo, the Trevi Fountain and San Giovanni were built – but the list could go on forever!

It is necessary to dream new scenarios of updated, functional and potent beauty: the task is a daunting one but it is what the grand tradition demands. “Rome donates an abode to all the gods” – Goethe

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The end of the sea road

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MESSINA: THE SOUTH EUROPEAN GATEWAY

“...IN FRONT FECUND APPEARED THE LOVELY ISLE ...”

The Odyssey XII

The Bridge on the Strait could be configured

not as the surrogate of a ferry, but as an urban event, Hub of the Strait Reclamation Scheme. In which case, the Bridge is configured as the Southern Gateway to Europe

not as a technological product to be inserted in any scenario but as a highly functional organism capable of evoking both Myth and History: Myth, because in the Strait – celebrated by Homer and witness to the crossing of Ulysses – the Sirens' singing must still be perceptible.

And History, as the epochal conclusion to the chapter about the Island's physical, social and cultural complementariness to the Continent.

Examining the numerous studies and competition projects for the construction of the “bridge on the Strait”, it can be seen that the bridge structure could also benefit from a crossbar founded on a ridge of the sea bed (at a depth of 80/100 metres) situated halfway between Punta Pezzo and Ganzirri, exactly along the planned line of the bridge.

In this case, the crossbar could assume the interesting image of Poseidon – lord of the Strait emerging from the deep.

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The figure of Poseidon as a homage to Gargallo

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The pylons to be erected on the banks – from which the bearing cables would be hung – instead of plain structural stilts (valid in any context) could become the COLUMN-TOWERS of the New STRAIT CITY, which would face one another on opposite sides, as the ends of a Temple:

Erected on a tiered stylobate (for commercial, cultural and service purposes), the COLUMN-TOWERS (for tertiary, hotel and management purposes) would celebrate, with a magnificent urban image, the Southern Gateway to Europe.

BERLIN "WAITING SINCE THE EPOCH" ...

1958 for the Angel of Berlin

I saw you brightly reflecting the setting sun's rays, against a sky of tragedy and
you have stayed in my heart,

Angel of Berlin

And I say of you that, hovering above the storm, you watched two centuries
of History convulse the World

...and you counted, in the same footsteps of Frederick the Great (who, where
you are, loved to walk), the steps of Goethe, Beethoven, Heine, Hegel, Schiller,
Wagner, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Marx and a thousand other Greats; whilst,
with romanticism and idealism, expressionism, relativism and technicism took
turns with rationalism, Marxism, Nazism. . .

and I say of you that you saw the Kaiser's armies marching on parade to the
conquest of Europe

and those of the Third Reich launched in a conquest of the world

and the millions of dead returning from the first campaign

and the millions of dead returning from the second, dragging millions of other
dead from every corner of the world.

you saw the exaltation, the pride and the humiliation of generations straining
after ideal ambitions, overflowing in the delirium

and horrors of war, plundering and hate.

But may the flashes of immense dramatic intensity, reflected by your wings
in the stormy sky,

Angel of Berlin!

illuminate today

down there

at the end of the Axis dominated by your bulk,

a new urban scenario

as a new "Ilium splendidly risen on the silent ways"

as a memorial of the 20th century

as the preface to a new path

So that your shining image, poised in the whirl of so many vicissitudes, may become a MILESTONE between past and future,

New Angel,

Angel of Berlin!

Berlin crossroads of Europe: fulcrum of social, cultural and political processes of worldwide magnitude.

The restoration of the City, which the I.B.A. proposed with the intention to sew back together the urban fabric after the immense tragedy, proved to be an intelligent but timid theoretical attitude, with a modest result. The impressive wave of initiatives (such as the Potsdamer Platz), following the demolition of the Wall, resembles a babel of styles.

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BERLIN-CAPITAL EXPECTS FROM OUR CONTEMPORARY EPOCH AN UPDATED AND GRANDIOSE ACT, WORTHY OF THE COMPLEXITY OF ITS HISTORY, OF THE VASTNESS OF ITS TRAGEDY, OF THE IMPORTANCE OF ITS ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL REPOSITIONING IN A WORLD CONTEXT.

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THE COMPLETION OF BERLIN'S HISTORIC AXIS

In Berlin there exists a trace that indisputably represents the City;

This trace (not by chance) has witnessed events of planetary scale, because along its path passed the evolution of modern German society and all, or nearly all of the world's history of the past three centuries: the prestigious Unter Den Linden that links the historic centre to the Brandenburg Gate and, extending beyond it, enhances in twelve straight kilometres, the whole west side of the city, to emerge while bending to the right, into the heart of the Hanseatic region.

An architectural sign is called upon to conclude the importance of this urban trace and therefore,

where the historic straight line ends,

where the accounts of 20th century events emerge in concomitance:

- the 1936 Olympics plan, epiphany of a regime that profoundly connoted Germany in those roaring years
- the piles of war rubble Teufelsberg hill, conclusion of a catastrophe
- L.C.'s Unité d'Habitation, Housing Unit: beginning of reconstruction
- a small Jewish cemetery
- a shrine to the fallen (of both fronts) of the tragedy, rises, as a backcloth, New Civil Centre, as the counter-altar to the Old Centre.

This work, as an interpretation of the urban configuration, assumes, by the fatefulness of its location and the peremptoriness of its plan, the significance of a petrified testimony of Contemporary German History.

This project, formulated before the fall of the Wall, assumes a greater value after the unification of Germany.

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BERLIN AND THE CONTINUITY OF MYTH IN HISTORY

International competition for the design of the new Bundeshauptstadt at Spreebogen in 1992

Spreebogen: the Spree Ring and the Myth of the Ring

Five column-towers emerge from a Ring of water (inscribed in the ring of Spree) each of the same diameter (300 m) of the Grosse Hall des Volkes, the hall of Nazi gatherings, which exactly in that place would have been erected by Albert Speer and ideally plunged into the tumults of the war catastrophe, as in the whirlpools of the Rhine the MYTHIC RING of Nibelung tradition returned; abyss and redemption.

The column-towers as headquarters of ministries,

an underwater gallery (with transparent ceiling) along the circumference of the ring, affords access to the towers, the conference rooms, libraries, offices and general services, whilst also being configured as an Exhibition-Museum-Gallery; a celebratory walk, punctuated by monuments of the great German figures

that lent such a formidable thrust to the culture and progress of humanity, will circumscribe the whole composition.

It seemed significant that the Seat of Representation of the New German Republic should re-emerge in that way: from a Ring and from water, so that it could be qualified as a monument erected to the tragic continuity of Myth in History.

The evocation of those tempestuous past times will be read, in transparency, against the backdrop of the Ring, with the tessellated figuration of furious cavalcades smashed against the foundations of the Reichstadt.

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THE MONUMENTS TO GREAT GERMAN FIGURES ACT AS A CROWN TO THE SOLEMNITY OF THE RING

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THE INCREASED SCALE OF THE NEW WORK IS INTENDED TO MIRROR THE ENORMITY OF THE TRAGEDY EVOKED AND REPRESENTED.

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NEW YORK

WORLD FORUM 1999/2002

Why a project for New York?

(in the past Thebes, Babylonia, Athens, Rome, Paris, London, and now New York). Because to build in New York becomes paradigmatic and universally disputable. Because N.Y. represents the socio-cultural crossroads of the contemporary world and more than any other city can highlight the evolution of the third millennium's urban scenario.

Manhattan, the potent expression of extraordinary building feats, seems still to be waiting for a project as the synergic outcome of the gigantic potential that throbs in its veins.

The city presents dizzy drops in tension where within it coexist ambiguously the pride of prestigious settlements and the acceptance of a degradation in many other districts, plus the disuse of entire blocks. Manhattan shows how

much of its urban plan is no longer up to the aspirations of the society living in it.

THE WORLD FORUM

Manhattan's vocation is to be the World's Forum. Midtown and Downtown are there already. All that's missing is an incisive sign to join these two poles and, by drawing grandeur and magnificence from the existing signs, restore to them the confirmation of a still more structured support and monumental conclusion. In the belt that includes Fifth and Eighth Avenue and in the interval between the Empire State and 14th St (excluding therefore, Greenwich and Tribeca), stretches a string of blocks with disused or nearly disused businesses and in any case insufficient to endorse new and evolved urban potentialities, like those to be perceived along the magical axis that unites the mindboggling concentrations of Midtown and Downtown.

Objectives:

1. to recognize and enhance the Midtown/Downtown axis of Manhattan as a WORLD FORUM,
 2. highlight the spatial perception of the orthogonal grid of traces of Manhattan, intended as the fundamental matrix of the city's scenario,
 3. propitiate continuous and covered spaces for public frequentation, on the scale fitted to the metropolis and to its planetwide vocation,
 4. raise tall towers to celebrate the city's most distinctive building type, so as to confirm, on a proper scale and with the peremptory order of their arrangement, the design of an admirable monumental unity. This will need to emphasize Manhattan's longitudinal axis by linking Downtown to Midtown and Central Park
- ... thus the biggest entrepreneurial thrust of Manhattan, after the highly ambitious individual (private) experiences, will succeed in producing the choral, synergic manifestation of a new magnificence.

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PROPOSALS

Along the longitudinal axis of Manhattan and for a belt from 5th to 8th (and for the interval between the Empire State Building and 14th St) the

parallel alignment of two rows of tower-columns, will frame a large urban, uniting and empty space, obtained from the scrapping of the whole of the existing obsolete and disused built fabric. The demolished volumes will be advantageously regained through the construction of new towers and new arcades to join them together. In other words, the broad space of the Central Park rectangle is replicated mirror-wise in Midtown as a seam between the latter and Downtown, dedicated to civil magnificence and to Memory.

The new Manhattan scenario will be in compliance with the fundamental experiences of architecture:

the horizontal sign (archetype of the base): an immense transparent, straight gallery, intended as a “city place” which, in its image, becomes the stylobate on which to raise the vertical sign

the vertical sign (archetype of erecting): the cylindrical towers (abstract forms) become columns (representative figures) in their aligned composition (nave figure)

In the horizontal structures an exhaustive focus will be on commercial necessities and activities, public and private services, cultural, entertainment, leisure, meeting and pedestrian facilities.

In the vertical structures: residence and hotel and tertiary settlements.

The ensuing real estate wealth, its quality and its insertion between the Down and Midtown poles will attract wider international economic interests and will become propulsive for further phases of renewal/updating of the metropolis. The column-towers will emerge from the transparent roofs of the galleries, to frame the vast open space suitable for civil events and public magnificence (statues, fountains, arenas, memorials, etc). Running below this level will be the avenues and streets and their car parks. Pre-existing urban features worthy of conservation will prompt the reading of a monumental stratification. The plan will produce a powerful image, where the bold beginnings of Mid and Downtown will be sewn together by this evolutionary design of the City. The World Forum will be animated by the most extraordinary attractions, while rooting ever more deeply the vocation that makes Manhattan the crucible of planetwide interests.

NEW YORK AND THE WATERFRONT

Workshop organized in New York by the Milan Polytechnic and Columbus University.

The theme

The restoration and requalification of the Queens waterfront.

The subject discussed during the study days led to the identification of disused areas of Queens, as the appropriate place to incentivize the settlement of craft activities and medium-small industries (with particular reference to the sectors of printing, cinematography and packaging) which largely still reside – but incompatibly – in Manhattan. (cf. project for “NY World Forum”).

These orientations, which emerged from the debate with experts in the sector and with representatives of the industrial, planning, public administration and trade unions, should have given Queens an updated and pertinent vitality.

The proposal

An urban hub which, by assimilating the major signs of Manhattan, can seize their character and frame their scenario.

Result: a wide dockyard (concluded with an auditorium/theatre for mass entertainment) flung open onto the spectacular stage of Manhattan opposite the United Nations building. Two rows of Column-towers (residences, offices, hotels) by configuring an immense flooded nave, confirm, in a key complementary to the previous example, the new evolutionary image of N.Y.

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Sketch done during the workshop. In the background, the Manhattan scene with the UN building

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HELSINKI

NEXT HELSINKI

2014 The Next Helsinki competition.

Proposals for the future of the City.

This was an opportunity to reiterate a constant methodology that characterizes the projects featured in this book towards the solution of urban issues. They repeat and follow up in fact, the lines of argument set out under the chapter “From Trier to Baalbek”, namely the criteria which make the works “above the railway stations” the leitmotif of the future evolution of big cities. This methodological criterion seems to me to be so convincing and its application so logical that the reiteration of the proposal from one city to another is to my mind as indispensable as the proposition of a theorem. As in the case of Helsinki: the City Council calls, through a competition, for visions of the future of the City and once again for an operation to be conducted above the railway lines offers the opportunity to direct the future urban planning choices for the City. The entire roof over the railways from Central Station to Pasila Station could become the sumptuous route enhancing and revitalizing the entire urban central area whilst along it settlements can be built.

The future of the city could evolve, according to the concepts expressed in the previous chapters, above the existing railway yards with the construction of three urban hubs:

A. Pasila Station

B. Central Station

C. the intermediate stretch between these two stations.

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HELSINKI

LANDMARK

The Helsinki landmark as a lantern in the night, shining in the distance of polar latitudes, in the mystery of long winter nights, above the compelling grip of the icepacks.

At the end of the cliff that divides the ports (the old and the new) and at the summit of an oblique pyramidal stylobate, the lantern rises: a large glass case to enclose and protect, against the rigours of the climate, a fascinating Urban

Place: a winter garden with spaces for exhibitions, meeting-places, restaurants, panoramic café and hotel).

In the stylobate: shopping centres, exhibition galleries, covered plazas, meeting-places and entertainment facilities

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PARIS

THE TÊTE DÉFENSE COMPETITION 1982 AND REFLECTIONS ON THE IDEOGRAM OF A CITY

The exceptionality of the theme, the visibility of the construction, the emotion of its perspective axis, the fascination of the axial trace marking the history and physiognomy of a great City are the stimuli for imagining the installation of two Ministries (object of the Competition announcement) as the main pillars of a gateway at the end of the Champs Élysées and flung open to Infinity.

The “gateway to infinity” at the end of the Champs Élysées

Corollary to the competition

The fact of being able to note in my competition entry a certain affinity with the features of the deservedly winning project by Von Sprekelsen did not exhaust my attention to the fascination of an infinite extension of the Champs-Élysées, intended as a representative element of the City, but kindled in me the search to identify the urbanistic imaginary vision of Paris, capable of summing up the figurative ideogram of the City, with:

- the adoption of a historical memory which, in the case in point, dates back to the Roman Lutetia, on the still existing and confirmed trace from the axis of Rue Saint-Jacques and bd de Sébastopole ;
- with the adoption of the “Colonnade” motif of the Louvre, an architectural characteristic of one of the city’s most representative buildings.

Conclusion: the ideogram of Paris could be confirmed with a large new Colonnade (alignment of connected column-towers along the trace of the ancient Lutetia), which orthogonally intersects, at the Île de la Cité, the axis of the Champs-Élysées.

THE PROBLEM OF MASS MIGRATIONS

A PLANETARY PROGRAMME TO AVERT THE ISSUES RELATING TO MASS MIGRATIONS TO BE CARRIED OUT THROUGH INITIATIVES/ INVESTMENT OF A POLITICAL AND INTERNATIONAL BODY (UNO – EU)

- ...they are fleeing wars, hunger, poverty,
- ... they are fleeing to avoid being trapped by a system of perverse rules,
- ... they are fleeing to find places where social and individual interests are able to protect the environment and the peaceful evolution of existence
- ... they are fleeing in search of new resources and existential opportunities

A political, economic, social and urban planning proposal to deal with the drama of migrations and to implement the progressive relaunching of the whole African territory to be conducted through the initiative/investment of an International Political Body (UNO? European Union?).

This is the programme:

1. purchase a stretch of African coast of 20 km x 20 km (or better, to start, if along the main maritime/trade routes – e.g. a territory on the Cyrenaic coast, to be controlled by the army)
 2. surround it with vertical farms powered by solar panels (for 0 km production of fruit and vegetables)
 3. set up a provisional field of 100,000 refugees with schools and hospitals
 4. create the port and the airport
 5. create an industrial zone primarily for the making of the components of the future city under construction;
 6. build and manage an avant-garde free city, that can be wholly built rapidly.
- An advertising launch guaranteed by an International Economic/Political Body will interest and attract operators from all over the world thanks to facilitated economic/entrepreneurial/industrial/commercial prospects (purchase of land at symbolic prices, reduced taxation, market freedom, no customs, maximum

sustainability, rule of law, etc).

This autonomous, free, cosmopolitan city will be able, with the wealth of its initiative, to create those prosperities needed to expand virtuously on a wide radius within the territories thereby

erasing at its roots any migratory desire/necessity,

improving the conditions of populations,

magnifying the economic gains from the initial investment

(cf. the experience of Hong Kong and Paul Romer's "Charter City" theory).

The operation will be replicated at focused points throughout Africa, with urban modules in which functions are synergically fused into a single large architectural body, a multiplier of associative, social, functional, economic, operative, aesthetic and eco-sustainable advantages.

They will be Urban Hubs, see for example a settlement along the via Pontina in Rome under the previous chapter, with (aggregable) modules of not more than 100,000 inhabitants, a figure in which all categories of an evolved society are deemed represented, while averting the ailments of gross concentrations.

This is an experiment with a CONTEMPORARY CITY characterised by total prefabrication, a minimal occupation of land, absolute pedestrianization, eco-sustainability and new, attractive rules for economic management and conditions.

For a greater international appeal, this example of a City will be completed by all the structures required for Olympic-level competitions, as an early and advertising launch, a new transport system of great tourist appeal, so as to make the whole development still more prestigious: with new generation airships carrying 90 passengers (or 40 for luxury cruises 5*) or 90 tons of large cargos. They will float using helium (non-inflammable) gas and produce just 8% of aircraft emissions. Only seemingly clumsy, these aerostats can land and take off anywhere with no need for particular infrastructure, thereby revolutionizing the world of transport and offsetting the disadvantage of slower speeds than normal aircraft limited to the use of airport runways. Aerostats, therefore, suitable for the transportation of people or goods on small and medium flights and in particular desert zones. The airship flight

becomes still more revolutionary and interesting if related to tourism: the novelty of its spectacular windows, the emotions offered by panoramic in-flight stops, the possibility of carrying out air cruises even in places to this day considered imperious or hard to reach (it can fly uninterruptedly for 3 days) will give rise to inedited and interesting typologies of vacations and a new use of land resources (enjoyment of the boundless magic of deserts or savannas and further prospects of photographic safaris) with an international appeal both to elite and to mass tourism. The management of airships of this kind can significantly accentuate (especially if as world firsts) the attention to the initiative with advantageous commercial returns and notable influxes of foreign presences.

All in all, a shrewd management of the proposal, besides responding to an urgent socio-humanitarian problem, becomes an investment of extraordinary importance.

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PART FIVE - THE NEW DIMENSION

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A large-scale urban development bursts onto the world scenario with "NEOM": the 170 km linear city to be built on the north side of the Arabian desert, approximately along the 28th parallel.

The Saudi undertaking, however it may be judged, is impressive. But, in my view, it would (albeit in its vastness) be "lost" if it were not "extended/integrated" with another - perhaps more providential and grandiose - development: from the Nile to Tripolitania:

providential to attract and contain the steady growth of African populations (stirred by political/economic/social upheavals) in an urban environment enabling the universal targets of civil, economic and cultural evolution

and grandiose because, by highlighting the advent of Architecture (and Urban Planning) on a geographic scale, it celebrates, with monumental archetypes
THE PROPYLAEA OF AFRICA

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THE OTHER CITY

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1990 INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION TO JOIN INTO A SINGLE MUSEUM THE EXHIBITS OF THE ATHENS ACROPOLIS

THE CITY WHERE COLUMNS SUPPORT A MARBLE SKY

In 1993 Athens announced an international competition for the design of a museum to house all the works belonging to the Acropolis, most of which are held at the British Museum in London.

The Athens city council indicated three possible areas around the Acropolis on which to build the new museum.

Contesting

A. the sites proposed by the city council, for the reasons stated below

B. the recourse to the museum building type

a counter-project was proposed, with the following lines of argument:

the Athens Acropolis has lived for a long time as a theatre without actors, its lights still on, whereas humanity is intent on scrutinizing the secret of such beauty and the potency of that harmony; but all the marbles from the Acropolis, even if regained from the British Museum, must not be once again imprisoned in another museum (albeit Athenian and however beautiful it may be).

Because works of art, away from their specific situation, vibrate with intense disquietude, as used to be said in ancient Greece about the souls of the unburied; consequently it is indispensable to bring them back to life in that Hades, where the Greek Myth destined the Last Room.

Therefore:

- NOT the conventional atmosphere of a museum,
BUT the scenario of the CHAMPS ÉLYSÉES,
- NOT the solution of a problem,

BUT the proposition of an ENIGMA.

The Project

Inside the Philopappus (the mount opposite the Acropolis), in the marble of which it is built, is hollowed out a vast cavern which will have the majesty and the silences of Hades; the concept excludes the pretentiously painstaking efforts of museum spaces and imposes an impassioned interpretation of the Acheronian mysteries.

...down there the living will be able to enter to interrogate the MARBLES, as in the past Hercules, Orpheus, Ulysses, Aeneas and Dante descended into the underworld to interrogate the SHADES...

... and so, NOT as relics in a contrived setting (the museum), BUT as accounts set in their own universe, the sculptures will recount to visitors the plot of the magic spell concluded on the fateful hill of Athens and the secret of the Greek Genius and its season.

In the immense cavern of this new Tartarus, along the itinerary of a ramp rising in ever wider spirals the visitor will be guided, starting from the most ancient exhibits, by the astonishing progression of the Panathenaea. Thus the visitors' steps will be in harmony with the cadence of that sublime procession, until they reach the summit of this path (similar to the edge of a crater) where the tympani of the Parthenon, the caryatids, the statues, the metope and the friezes will speak of a human inspiration perhaps unequalled in the entire arc of History.

... from the mysteries of the Aegean sacrifices and from the shadowy initiations of Eleusis (from which sprang the origins of that epic) and on upwards to the testimony of the limpid season of Pericles and Phidias and beyond, where the disquieting (for us) serenity of such perfection is radiated.

The astonished and silent atmosphere of the immense marble cavern, animated by the sorceries of electric lighting will be confronted at the exit by the dazzling vision of the Acropolis immersed in the Attic sky. While enhancing, by difference and punishment by retaliation the allure of Orcus, opposite the Throne of the Gods.

Everything is carved into the marble rock

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WANDERING AMONG THE "ACHERONIAN TEMPLES"

Immensity of the Cavern

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Here, marble from marble, the columns burst forth to support the tall,
overbearing weights of a marble sky
there, glorious among columns, the Acropolis cloaked in infinity
in profundity, Tartarus
high above, the Olympus,
Night
Day
the mystery of Persephone
the glory of Athens.

If in the pomp of the latter we are accompanied by the joy of contemplation,
in the maze of the former we are guided by the trepidation of knowledge.
The modern design becomes the tool with which to exalt these wonders and,
while characterised in an exciting scenographic and technological challenge, it
draws on myth, making itself a metaphor of the ancient collective imagination.

These considerations bring us to our epilogue.

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EPILOGUE

To Dinocrates,

The imaginary vision of your world taught me to descry among the hidden
depths of the Caverns (analogous to humans, deep recesses) the throbbing
of ideas that have always since time immemorial pursued us like the Shades,
to return to Light and holding them passionately

by the hand,
with trepidation,
without distractions,
without looking back (to prevent their vanishing – Orpheus!)

This book was evoked thus;

and it is a Manifesto of Contemporary Architecture which
refuses the trap with which the usual right-thinking orthodox folk
would like to dismiss it (in the best of cases) as a flight from
reality or as the equivalent of an escapism.
rejects the cynicism and conventions that have for too long
armour-plated our epoch, by continuing to distort it and, by
drawing sap from the roots and reason from essential values,
intends to convert the omnipresent clutter of contemporary
building to the state of molten magma to be cast into
sovereign forms, as the definition of new scenarios of
eco-sustainability and civil magnificence to BUILD HISTORY,
NOT buildings.

Taking leave

The argumentations set out in this book seek to indicate orderly and meaningful destinations; the search for which was the reason for my journey, bewitched by scenarios of ancient and brand-new trophies, while the need to think big in quality and measure, to celebrate a new season, drove me inwardly, together with an unshakeable conviction that something extraordinary must somehow occur “whilst the harm and the shame continue”...

... but THE PRINCE is late. . .

while waiting, in coming back to your abode, I bear as a gift the experience gained through:

A THEOREM OF ARCHETYPES SET DOWN FOR A NEW DAWN

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... between these two scenes again runs a “journey” between ancient and

very new trophies. By comparison, the journey, as on the previous page, is incomparably more modest: the point being that – with the due proportions – it lands on the same conclusion enclosed in the enlightening verse of Kavafis which I put down as the “sauce of this whole story”.

ITHACA gave you the good journey
you would not have set out without her
who has nothing more to give you
and even if you find her poor, Ithaca has not deceived you
having become so wise with all the experience you have gained
now you will have understood what Ithaca means.

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THE RISING CITY: THE CHALLENGES OF URBAN REGENERATION

POSTFACE BY PROFESSOR VINCENZO SALVATORE

Professor of European Union Law, University of Insubria.

More than a century has passed since Umberto Boccioni painted his famous work, now in New York's Museum of Modern Art (MOMA).

That canvas emphasizes the dynamism of an expanding city, Milan transformed into a frenzy of movement. Typical of the futurist movement, it marks a period of urban transformation into a fabric where cranes and building sites abound as witnesses to progress that become symbols of economic growth and prosperity.

Today as then, we are living in a new season in which the utilization and governance of spaces are seen to be of primary importance, forcing us to reflect. The economic and financial crises that characterised the early years of this century, the radical climate changes that have induced countries to pledge to prevent, or at least to slow down, what promises to be an ever closer environmental catastrophe, plus the more recent health emergency caused by the Covid pandemic, have combined to raise an awareness of the necessity to reconsider the design and conversion of our urban fabric, while searching for a difficult balance between economic, social and environmental sustainability. In Italy the availability of fresh and vast resources, most recently through a

supply of substantial financial support from the European Union, have been allocated to a National Plan for Recovery and Resilience (PNRR). As a result, in order to encourage new developments in the urban planning and building sector, the need is to focus on brown field rather than green field investments. So all further saturation of land occupied by new building developments on green, or at any rate non-anthropized areas (green field), must be avoided. Instead, we need to boost the conversion and, within necessary limits, the enlargement, of existing buildings in areas already occupied (brown field). Numerous initiatives have been launched by the European Union in recent years.

Among the principal and most recent of these, the European recovery plan after Covid-9 must be mentioned. It is no coincidence that over one third of the resources planned by the Next Generation EU are allocated precisely to programmes concerned with climate protection and urban and industrial regeneration.

On 16 September 2020, in her first speech on the State of the Union, the president of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, launched a “new European Bauhaus”: an urban development plan focused on sustainable cities and buildings.

It has been pointed out that the history of European urban regeneration was marked, first in 2007 by the approval of the so-called Leipzig Charter, a plan for the sustainable development of urban centres, followed by the Toledo Declaration of 2010, the Territorial Agenda of 2011 and the Amsterdam Pact of 2016, through which for first time the aim to reconstruct 2% of city buildings existing in the continent was announced. A further objective pursued by the Union is to promote the “smart city”, an expression commonly translated as the “intelligent city”. In the absence of a more precise normative definition, this is generally used to indicate strategies of urban development - especially in metropolitan areas - based on the harnessing of updated information and telecommunications technologies (ICT).

In particular, the aim of smart cities is to make use of those technologies within an integrated strategic approach. This favours economic and environmental sustainability, improvement of the quality of life and the wellbeing of citizens, as well as lowering the costs of essential public services (transport, water,

energy, refuse, etc.) in a framework of optimized management, higher standards of quality, environmental compatibility and the incentivizing of economic development.

The sustainable development of urban areas by adopting the most advanced information and telecommunications technologies is therefore identified by the European Union as a major strategic objective.

Urban and territorial regeneration means however, also and chiefly, the recovery and enhancement of the existing built heritage and pursuit of the aim to cut land consumption.

According to OCSE data, within the next 10 years, 500 cities in the world will exceed the one million inhabitants cap. And those same projections indicate that in 2030 there will be 41 megalopolises with populations of over 20 million inhabitants, whilst in 2050, 70% the global population will be living in urban areas.

Cities therefore will need to be rethought, so as to allow the increase in urban populations to go hand in hand with a design strategy based on criteria of sustainable development and environmental compatibility, with regard both to infrastructure and to residential buildings.

A large city can gain experiences that can then be transferred elsewhere. And local excellences can introduce fresh solutions, to be tested and shared in their turn.

It is important then to foster knowledge sharing, to stimulate comparison, including through provocative proposals, to share virtuous experiences, and to promote works that optimize a logic of scale in metropolitan areas.

Our territory has the characteristics and the capacities needed to be at the forefront of developments to augment the efficiency of services while cutting wastage and management costs.

The vertical city, enlarged by means of designs to raise new constructions on top of existing buildings (think railway stations), presents a fascinating challenge. Entailing a confrontation among urban development decision-making, it cannot be reduced to an academic exercise in style or wishful thinking.

In this context the work of Carlo Moretti must be examined. A distinguished architect, lucid and visionary, he is blessed with imagination, in the Greek sense of the term φαίω (phaino), with the capacity to show and to represent a

virtual and future, yet possible scenario.

Carlo Moretti's projects, of which this volume is an anthology, are not merely an exercise in style, or simply the graphic representation of an ideal city. Instead, they stimulate a reflection on what has been done to date, and on what could be done and will be worthwhile doing. In the conviction that our territory has all the requisites to merit the management of innovative pilot schemes to the advantage of a better quality of life, while promoting an economic growth that will abide by the criteria of sustainable development in the pursuit of stricter environmental protection.

Moretti the architect stands as a new and qualified interpreter of the rising city, offering a precious and passionate contribution to the current debate on how best to tackle the challenges of a new urban regeneration.

The ultimate function of prophecy
is not to tell the future, but to make it.
Joel A. Barker