Communities of Labor
Adriano Olivetti and the Humanization of Industrial Society

by

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This dissertation explores factories and machines, industrial environments to which I was exposed from a young age. My grandfather Robert Berthiaume was an inventor and engineer who owned a machine plant in central Massachusetts where some of my earliest memories were formed. Like the first Olivetti factory, my grandfather's plant made precision machine parts for manufacturing companies on a semi-artisanal model. But before he started his own business, he worked over a decade for others: Riley Stoker, Heald Machine, Leland-Gifford Company and Berlyn Extruders. During a 1972 meeting between Berlyn and a top competitor, he was involved in trying to determine the pricing system of other industry players. When the competitor's representative slipped into the bathroom, leaving behind a small black suitcase, the Berlyn management team saw a golden chance to swipe a stash of sales information. My grandfather was the closest; he stood up, walked out and never came back.

He knew that industry could not afford to ignore ethical questions. This was not a studied political stance, just a commonsense refusal to let the pursuit of profit trump the practice of basic human decency. These concerns are at the center of the following chapters, as they were at the center of twentieth-century reflections on industrial society. My grandfather passed away just before this dissertation was finished, and I wish to dedicate it to his memory.

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Abstract

Communities of Labor: Adriano Olivetti and the Humanization of Industrial Society translates the vast and expanding historiography on the Olivetti company from Italian to English and simultaneously critiques it along five different lines. The Italian historiography has developed what the dissertation calls a "standard Olivetti narrative," which paints company president Adriano Olivetti (1901-1960) as a visionary entrepreneur who opposed the Fascist regime, created tens of thousands of jobs, developed Italian modernity in the South and nourished the arts. While acknowledging these facts, the dissertation complicates them with new archival documentation that reveals the religious foundations of the Olivetti project, its ties with Fascism, its practice of courting reluctant intellectuals, the paternalism of its approach to the South and the obscurity of its transnational marketing strategies. This critique is held together by the theory of "communities of labor," which is extrapolated from the writings of Adriano Olivetti and describes the company's method of cultivating a modern interclass concrete utopia through the humanization of industrial society. The "communities of labor" theory insists that community has historically been built upon practices of labor, and it looks ahead to the late twentieth century transition from Fordism to post-Fordism, raising new questions about the construction of community in the age of neoliberal globalization, capitalist exploitation, automation, technological unemployment and the exportation of labor to cheaper markets.

Introduction
Communities of Labor

I first travelled to Ivrea during the summer of 2015, with only a vague notion of the town's most successful industrial company. I knew that in Italian, 'Olivetti' was shorthand for, if not synonymous with, industrial modernity, and since I wanted to understand precisely how this meaning had developed, I planned to spend some time at the Archivio Storico Olivetti. I had also rented an apartment next to the archive, probably the first one that had appeared in my internet search, and I arrived in the morning by train, from Turin, after a long transatlantic flight.

To my great surprise, this was not just any apartment building; it was L'unità residenziale ovest: a complex with eighty-five units, built in the late 1960s for the express purpose of housing Olivetti factory workers. The long two-story building had been constructed by the architects Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola on the basis of a company philosophy that might be formulated as follows: community is the result of people laboring together, labor provides the building blocks of community. My apartment was chock-full of industrial products like furniture and lighting designed by Gio Ponti, Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglioni. The photographs on the walls depicted factory workers, and I was pretty sure that they were taken just down the street at Olivetti. In an instant, I imagined myself as a company employee, part of a community that recognized, represented and returned my labor. I was the author of this space and all of its contents insofar as my coworkers, fellow operators on the assembly line, were the authors of industrial society.

The first goal of this dissertation is to introduce the case of Olivetti to an English-reading audience. The Olivetti company, and especially its longtime president Adriano Olivetti, have been the focus of much scholarship in Italian, and some academics have even made a career out of being exclusively Olivetti historians. This scholarship has developed what I would like to call a 'standard Olivetti narrative': an Italian story of industrial rise and fall that begins in 1908 with the founding of the company, peaks in 1960 with the death of Adriano Olivetti and declines over the past sixty years with the emergence of digital technologies and the shift in global hegemony from Italy to the United States. This narrative thus implies two things: an anti-American lament about the transition from industrial to post-industrial society and an Italian-centered nostalgia for a world where Turin was the capital of production. Whether either of these two images have any real historical merit is a question for this dissertation in its entirety, but we can already begin to see that the standard Olivetti narrative will have a difficult relationship with an English-reading audience.

The second goal of this dissertation follows immediately on these considerations, and it is to critique the standard Olivetti narrative. Thus, while introducing its main arguments and evidence in ways that I hope will be deemed generous, I have also pointed out the parts that are formally simplistic, analytically shortsighted or contradicted by extant documentation. Critiquing the standard Olivetti narrative implies, above all, critiquing Adriano Olivetti, and it is this aspect that will seem the most unwarranted to sensible people in Italy. There, the public memory of the industrialist is extremely positive: he was a visionary entrepreneur who opposed the Fascist regime, created tens of thousands of jobs, developed the South and nourished the arts. All of these things are true, but I have been told by more than one Italian historian that my 'sguardo dall'esterno' should help to rightly complicate matters.

The third goal of this dissertation is to analyze the philosophy of Adriano Olivetti as an industrial attempt to conjugate the concepts of community and labor. This is not an approach suggested by the scholarship in Italian; rather, it comes from my own direct engagement with the many texts (more than 750, inclusive of published volumes and essays and unpublished manuscripts) that Adriano Olivetti wrote during his lifetime.[1] Adriano Olivetti was not only an industrialist with his own company; he was also a journalist with his own publishing house, a politician with his own movement (he refused to call it a 'party'), an urban planner with his own professional organization, and an all-around Renaissance man, master delegator and public intellectual. What I call Adriano Olivetti's 'philosophy' was developed in all these contexts, and it constitutes a coherent attempt to make the machinery of modernity work for the people who operate it: to humanize industrial society. I have conducted research at four Italian archives: the Archivio Storico Olivetti in Ivrea, the Fondazione Adriano Olivetti in Rome, the Archivio dell'Accademia Nazionale di San Luca in Rome and the Archivio di Stato di Napoli in Naples, plus one American archive: The Museum of Modern Art Archives in New York. My conclusions about Adriano Olivetti, community and labor are drawn from these five archives, from the writings of Adriano Olivetti himself and from the scholarship in Italian.

The fourth and final goal of this dissertation is to show how the Olivetti company attempted to organize culture on an industrial level. Adriano Olivetti and his team were among the first in the world to recognize the *value* of culture, not only as a super-structural tradition of thought and experimentation, but also as a structural resource that could be made to generate an immediate profit. Instead of ignoring culture like most companies, the Olivetti strategy was to mobilize one of Italy's greatest and most overlooked assets, placing it in the service of industrial capitalism and

[1] For a complete bibliography of Adriano Olivetti's writings see: Maggia, Giovanni, editor. *Bibliografia degli scritti di Adriano Olivetti*. 2 volumes. Università di Siena, 1983.

effectively merging cultural with economic production. Within the context of Marxist theory, this suggests that one reason why capitalism has not fallen apart is that it has learned to absorb its own critique, including the creation of a capitalist culture and its dissemination across social classes. Chapters 2 through 5 of this dissertation bear this argument out by demonstrating how the Olivetti company leaned on and appropriated the disciplines of architecture and urban planning (Chapter 2), literature (Chapter 3), sociology (Chapter 4) and the visual arts (Chapter 5) for its own benefit. These chapters also further illustrate the communities of labor theory, which is at the base of all Olivetti activity.

The communities of labor theory requires further explanation. What I mean by 'community' is the fact of togetherness and the feeling of social belonging. What I mean by labor is not limited to directly productive economic activity; it includes mental operations, non-waged social reproduction and even leisurely recreation. It is that abstract combination of physical and intellectual practices with which an individual or group contributes, in the words of Antonio Gramsci from 1932, "a sostenere o a modificare una concezione del mondo", that is, to making and remaking community (1551). On this point, and as I will demonstrate in the chapters that follow, Adriano Olivetti would have agreed with Gramsci. As it turns out, my apartment at L'unità residenziale ovest was just one small part of a vast company welfare system that included cafeterias, libraries, cultural centers, medical services, schools and more, and by moving back and forth between all of these spaces I might have participated in Adriano Olivetti's concept of labor, and therefore in the moment-to-moment articulation of community.

Now, by the time I arrived at Ivrea, this was no longer possible. The Olivetti workforce had been reduced to less than 500 employees, much of the company's welfare system had closed, and even people at the Archivio Storico Olivetti were scandalized to learn that I was living at

Talponia (the not so affectionate local name for L'unità residenziale ovest). Come to think of it, the complex was rather labyrinthian, a mostly abandoned monument to an industrial society that either never existed or had since turned to dust. It made me realize that Adriano Olivetti's theory of communities of labor was firmly rooted in the Fordist production regime dominant during his lifetime, and that the transition to post-Fordism during the 1970s had comported labor's retreat to private spaces, its exportation to cheaper markets and, as a result of all this, the disintegration of community.[2] Adriano Olivetti was right: community has historically been built upon labor, and now that labor has been transformed, the industrial working class is searching for a postindustrial home.

This dissertation focuses overwhelmingly on the figure of Adriano Olivetti, but it is not a biography. There already exist three good biographies: Bruno Caizzi's *Camillo e Adriano Olivetti* (1962), about Adriano Olivetti and his father, Valerio Ochetto's *Adriano Olivetti* (1985) and Marco Maffioletti's *L'Impresa ideale tra fabbrica e comunità* (2016). The first book was commissioned by the Olivetti family and published by UTET; the second one was published by the Olivetti printing house, the Edizioni di Comunità; and the third one was published by the Fondazione Adriano Olivetti. In other words, they are all 'official pronouncements' of Olivetti history, and they are also the three main sources of the standard Olivetti narrative. I have been more selective, even leaving out some things that an English-reading audience might expect to find. To give one example, I have said little of the Olivetti company as a transnational business empire, thus forgoing any detailed discussion of design aesthetics or production techniques. This might be frustrating, as

[2] Gramsci also wrote, in 1934, about the relationship between labor and community (for him a "nuovo tipo umano") under Fordism: "Quando il processo di adattamento [del operaio al Fordismo] è avvenuto, si verifica in realtà che il cervello dell'operaio, invece di mummificarsi, ha raggiunto uno stato di completa libertà" (2170).

it is probably the most familiar version of the Olivetti story, but it would add almost nothing to my analysis of communities of labor, nor would it favor my critique of the standard Olivetti narrative.

Some American scholars have suggested to me that this dissertation is a slightly different type of biography. They say that my concern is not really with Adriano Olivetti, but rather with 'a man and his time'—after all, the industrialist was a friend of Clare Boothe Luce, T.S. Eliot, Enrico Fermi and Le Corbusier. What better way to study mid-century Italy in a transnational perspective than by taking up the case of Adriano Olivetti? There is something very powerful about such a suggestion, but my response has always been the following: If this dissertation is a biography of any type, then it is a very strange one. In my telling, it would be a biography of someone who failed many times, whose aspirations to completely transform the modern world were frustrated by petty politicking, who spread himself so thinly across many fields so as to become unrecountable in the biographical mode. This is not to say that biography as a genre must celebrate its subject of necessity, but faced with the shortcomings of the standard Olivetti narrative, my concern in this dissertation has been (in a way that I think disqualifies it from biography) with selective critique.

An example can help us here. The relationship between Adriano Olivetti and Fascism is still difficult to discuss, and the scholarship in Italian has responded in two ways. Some books, like Giuseppe Berta's *Le idee al potere* (1980), have chosen to begin in 1945, as if the first three-quarters of Adriano Olivetti's life were of no interest whatsoever. This is symptomatic of a general tendency in Italian Studies to emphasize rupture over continuity, and it is only recently that the field has drawn lines of contact between the years of dictatorship and the years of democracy. Other books, like Caizzi's, Ochetto's and Maffioletti's biographies, have decided to stress Adriano

Olivetti's antifascism while ignoring his sympathy for the regime. They edit history in ways that do not quite falsify the evidence, but that do paint a misleading picture.

It is worth pausing for a moment on this last point. Adriano Olivetti was, beyond the shadow of a doubt, an antifascist. He was born to Camillo Olivetti, a noted Piedmontese socialist, whose journal *Tempi Nuovi* was violently sacked by a Fascist street squad in 1924. Adriano Olivetti mixed regularly with his father's antifascist friends, including the Levi family and the Partito Socialista Italiano (PSI) founder, Filippo Turati. In September 1926, Turati was hiding at the Levi household, when there was a loud knock at the door. The novelist Natalia Ginzburg (née Levi) creaked it open to find a twenty-five-year-old Adriano Olivetti. "Aveva occhi spaventati, risoluti e allegri", she later wrote in her memoir *Lessico famigliare*. "Gli vidi, due o tre volte nella vita, quegli occhi. Erano gli occhi che aveva quando aiutava una persona a scappare, quando c'era un pericolo e qualcuno da portare in salvo" (84). Turati jumped in Adriano Olivetti's car, together with future Italian Prime Minister Feruccio Parri and the antifascist organizer Carlo Rosselli, and the four men drove to Savona, whence Turati fled the country on a boat to Nice. Another car, carrying the future Italian President Sandro Pertini, the antifascist organizer Italo Oxilia and others, was not so lucky. They were stopped by the Fascist police and arrested, while Adriano Olivetti returned to Ivrea undetected.

Almost two decades later, in the worst days of the Second World War, Adriano Olivetti travelled to Rome to meet with the Capo del governo, Pietro Badoglio. He had already been to see the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in Switzerland, and now he told Badoglio about an original plan to rid Italy of Benito Mussolini. This foresaw a complex combination of police action by King Vittorio Emanuele III, the proclamation of a Christian socialist government in exile and a peace agreement with the Allies brokered by the Princess Maria José of Piedmont. Badolgio

was not impressed, and he charged Adriano Olivetti with conspiring to overthrow the government. The industrialist was thrown in the Regina Coeli prison, but after three months, he escaped and fled to Switzerland, where he waited out the rest of the war. The Fascists pursued Adriano Olivetti's elderly father Camillo, who died of natural causes while trying to reach safety. By the time the Nazis arrived at Ivrea, the Olivetti factory had become the center of local antifascism, and the company lost a staggering twenty-four workers to the resistance effort.

The scholarship in Italian has focused most of its attention on these moments of antifascism, and it has often made excuses for everything else. Caizzi admitted that Adriano Olivetti's journal *Tecnica ed Organizzazione* carried the subtitle 'Uomini, macchine, metodi nella costruzione corporativa,' but he also insisted that this had nothing to do with that corporatism championed by Mussolini and Giovanni Gentile in *La dottrina del fascismo*. "Sembrava impossibile [negli anni '30]", Caizzi wrote, "avviare in Italia un discorso anche serio di problemi economici e tecnici senza rivestirlo di paludamenti corporativi" (196). Giuseppe Lupo has written an interesting introduction to Adriano Olivetti's journalism from the 1930s and 1940s, which Lupo seems to consider a challenge to the regime and a prophesy of its imminent collapse, "quasi a indicare il passaggio dal fascismo alla democrazia cui sarebbe andata incontro la storia italiana di lì a poche stagioni" ("Il sottosuolo" 21). How Lupo has arrived at such a conclusion is not clear, and even a cursory look at the articles that he himself has edited betrays an Adriano Olivetti expert in corporatist matters and enthusiastic about Fascism's political goals. "Accanto alla città vecchia, custode delle tradizioni del passato" Adriano Olivetti wrote in a 1936 *Casabella* article replete with Fascist tropes, "si esprimerà nelle forme della architettura moderna la vita sociale rinnovata dal fascismo" ("Architettura" 71).

If Adriano Olivetti was an antifascist who protected political fugitives, planned to overthrow the regime and even served some prison time, then he was also the general director and president of one of Fascist Italy's most successful industrial companies. It was not possible for someone in his position to be completely against the state, nor was it possible for the state to be completely against Olivetti. Already by 1926 Adriano Olivetti was publishing regularly in the Fascist journal *L'Organizzazione scientifica del lavoro*, and in 1933 he became an official member of the Partito Nazionale Fascista. When Italy invaded Abyssinia in October 1935, Adriano Olivetti profited greatly by saturating the East African market with his own company's industrial goods. When the League of Nations imposed economic sanctions on Italy, Mussolini responded with the policy of autarchy, giving Olivetti a near monopoly on the peninsula. The Olivetti company received official state protection from the Sottosegretario Fabbricazioni di Guerra, which together with the Istituto Nazionale Fascista Addestramento e Perfezionamento Lavoratori Industria financed an Olivetti training program that heralded international success in the postwar years. Starting in May 1937, Adriano Olivetti wrote enthusiastic letters to Mussolini, in an attempt to curry political favor for some of his town planning projects. Copying Adolf Hitler, Mussolini promulgated the Leggi razziali in November 1938, and Adriano Olivetti, who had been born a Jew, obtained a forged Christian baptismal certificate and was thus immune from persecution. When the Germans annexed Austria in March 1938, the Olivetti company intensified exports to Vienna, where the local factories were converted to military production, leaving industrial goods in short supply.

These are some of the moments that the standard Olivetti narrative has tended to ignore or downplay. It should be obvious that the relationship between Adriano Olivetti and Fascism is more complex than the scholarship in Italian leads on. Matthew Collins (13) has recently suggested that

we speak of Adriano Olivetti's antifascist 1920s, his Fascist 1930s and his antifascist 1940s. We should also remember that Fascism was not one stable idea, nor was it an unchanging political regime: it evolved from an anti-democratic social movement (1919-1922) to an institutional party (1922-1925), an anti-parliamentary regime (1925-1930), a builder of national popular culture (1930-1936), an experimenter in eugenics (1936-1938), a warmonger (1938-1943) and a romantic voluntarist organization (1943-1945).[3] If Fascism changed, so did Adriano Olivetti's attitude toward it. What is certain is that the industrialist benefitted greatly from the regime when it served his interests, and that he fought against it, enduring immense pain and persecution, when it turned against him.

My approach in the chapters that follow is indebted to the only other Olivetti dissertation written in the United States: AnnMarie Brennan's *Olivetti: A Working Model of Utopia* (Princeton University, 2011). Brennan is acutely aware of the problems of the standard Olivetti narrative, and she masterfully deconstructs it by linking Adriano Olivetti's postwar decisions to the prewar culture of Fascism. She shows how even after 1945, Adriano Olivetti continued to call on Fascism's interpretation of Taylorism, its philosophy of history and architectural rationalism, its economic goals and skillful mixing of art and salesmanship. This leads Brennan to reach a conclusion that is reminiscent of Pier Paolo Pasolini: that postwar capitalism and the society of the mass media are latter-day 'totalitarianisms'.[4] With regard to Adriano Olivetti, Brennan suggests that his approach to the world can best be understood as "total design": a fantasy of control where "total" means totalizing, if not totalitarian (24).

[3] These dates are indicative, and are not meant to mark any clear ruptures. For a good narrative account of the historical development of Fascism that blends these phases together, see Gentile, Emilio. "Il fascismo: Un profilo storico." *Fascismo: Storia e interpretazione*. Laterza, 2002. pp. 5-33.

[4] Pier Paolo Pasolini famously denounced the real continuity running from the dictatorship to democracy. See especially Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Fascista." *Scritti corsari*. Garzanti, 1975. pp. 288-93. [1974]

Fascism, however, is only one question among many. In this dissertation, I expand Brennan's critique to explore Adriano Olivetti's relationship with Christianity, orientalism, capitalism and business. In Chapter 1, I sketch a genealogy of the industrialist's concepts of community and labor, showing how he adapted them from the work of Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier. I find that the theory of communities of labor is ultimately rooted in the letters of Saint Paul, and I conclude that Adriano Olivetti called ambiguously for a specifically Christian politics. In Chapter 2, I recount Adriano Olivetti's attempts to turn Ivrea into a community of labor, including the development of the Olivetti company welfare system and his work on two town planning projects. I discuss the industrialist's praise for Mussolini, and his appropriation of Fascist rhetoric, arguing that the Olivetti approach to town planning was influenced by the ideas of the regime. In Chapter 3, I investigate the cultural dimension of the Olivetti project, addressing the presence of a large intellectual class at the industrial company. I consider Adriano Olivetti's cultivation of humanists and social scientists to be an effort at creating an intellectual community of labor, but I also reveal that it was directed by industrial capitalism's desire to instrumentalize oppositional cultures. In Chapter 4, I look at Adriano Olivetti's descent to the Italian South, where he attempted to organize communities of labor at La Martella and Pozzuoli. I show that behind these attempts was an orientalist approach to the Southern Question, one that represented the southern workforce as close to the natural world, and that associated social morality with economic productivity. In Chapter 5, I explore the Olivetti company's transnational marketing strategies with specific attention to two spaces in New York City. I argue that the Museum of Modern Art's 1952 exhibition *Olivetti: Design in Industry* and the 1954 New York Olivetti showroom were two constituent parts of a single innovative approach to corporate communication that legitimized industrial design by leaning heavily on an established institution of high culture. In the appendix,

I have provided the first translation in English of Adriano Olivetti's most famous speech: "Ai lavoratori di Pozzuoli." This was delivered in April 1955, and in my opinion, it is the most accessible and wide-ranging source of the philosophy I explore in this dissertation.

There is one glaring omission from the entire Olivetti story: the contribution of women. From the beginning, women played a real and decisive role in the company's success, but they were rarely recorded in official documents and have consequently been written out of the standard Olivetti narrative. Adriano Olivetti's theory of communities of labor is thus a homo-social vision that welcomes women only in traditional female spaces like the daycare, schoolroom and the home. The most visible women in the Olivetti story are material for graphic advertising, often sexualized typists who are part and parcel of the product for consumption. A history of women at the Olivetti company should be a priority of industrial scholarship, but the first question to ask is: Do there exist archival materials that document their historical presence?[5]

The greatest challenge of writing about Adriano Olivetti is finding a way to provide an overall interpretation of his countless, and often contradictory, endeavors. How does one analyze, in a coherent way, an industrialist, politician, publisher, and urban planner who was interested in economics, history, literature, political science, psychology, religion, sociology and so much more? Is it possible to furnish what the Italians call a 'chiave di lettura:' a guiding principle that points to the story's center while also embracing its marginal parts? For Brennan, the 'chiave' is "total design;" for Caizzi, Ochetto and Maffioletti, it is a combination of understanding, inspiration, strong will and charisma.

[5] For some thoughts on this, see my contribution to the Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project Interdisciplinary Italy at http://www.interdisciplinaryitaly.org/

I doubt that it is either possible or desirable to provide such a key. I prefer to think of Adriano Olivetti as moving between two poles: management and governmentality. Though he never used the latter term, its elaboration by Michel Foucault offers us a way to think about the Olivetti project as an investment in discipline. For Foucault, 'governmentality' means many things, but especially the manufacturing of obedient subjects through the repressive discourses and practices of modern institutions. It is associated with the state: "the way in which the behavior of a set of individuals became involved, more and more markedly, in the exercise of sovereign power" ("Security" 68). But the Olivetti project is also a case of governmentality because it uses affirmative technologies—the welfare system, the jobs regime, the organization of intellectual activity—to produce and reproduce subjects for whom industrial society 'just makes sense.' The term 'management' is the more difficult one for humanities scholars. We know that it means the administration of a company, including the direction of investment, production and distribution. In the business world, the term 'management' is associated with the writings of Peter Drucker, the Austrian-born American consultant who during the 1950s developed the most systematic version of management theory. For Drucker, management is the work of a new class of people, generated by the industrial revolution: "it implies consideration of human beings as a resource—that is, as something having particular physiological properties, abilities and limitations that require the same amount of engineering attention as the properties of any other resource, e.g., copper" (13). This sounds an awful lot like what Foucault called governmentality, and yet, the idea of management in capitalist society has preserved all of its positive connotations. Adriano Olivetti proudly claimed to be a manager, but one can hardly imagine him boasting of governmentality. From these considerations follow two questions that should guide the reader through this dissertation: What is

the relationship between management and governmentality? And how does Adriano Olivetti move between these two poles?

Because Adriano Olivetti was active in so many different fields, it was not uncommon for his writings to appear in one context, then be edited and repurposed for others. To give one example, the essay "Appunti per la storia di una fabbrica" was published in the journal *Il Ponte* in 1949 as an overview of Olivetti company history, then in 1952, it was renamed "Prime esperienze in una fabbrica" and included in the book *Società, Stato, Comunità* as a sort of intellectual autobiography. In 1958, it was translated into English as "Notes Toward the History of a Factory," and included in the photobook *Olivetti: 1908-1958*, which was intended to promote the Olivetti company's corporate image abroad. To ask which of these versions is 'the original source' would be to miss the point, and though it has been somewhat tedious to sort out these textual relations, I think that they have mostly contributed to a fuller understanding of the Olivetti project in its entirety.

Olivetti is, of course, just one company in the panoply of twentieth-century Italian industry. Any effort to assess it as typical or unique must take into account a larger history. The postwar Italian economy was characterized by what we call 'industrial dualism,' meaning that there was a small number of very large companies and a large number of very small companies. The former category included names like FIAT, Pirelli and ENI, while the latter included most of the districts engaged in flexible specialization in the area running from Tuscany to Friuli-Venezia Giulia. Like many Italian businesses, the Olivetti company was a family affair, but it grew into a transnational enterprise that became globally symbolic of the nation itself. Whatever Olivetti's real uniqueness, it is this symbolic significance that makes a study of the company foundational for an understanding of Italian industrial culture more broadly.

In what remains of this introduction, I want to provide a very brief biographical note about Adriano Olivetti. This is intended to sketch only the faintest outlines of his life, leaving the details for the following chapters. From here on, I will refer to Adriano Olivetti as 'Adriano,' in order to distinguish him from 'Olivetti,' by which I generally mean the industrial company.

* * *

Adriano was born on April 11, 1901 in Ivrea to Camillo Olivetti and Luisa Revel. The oldest of six children, Adriano had a liberal upbringing, and his parents even forbid any sort of formal schooling until he had reached the age of eight. Camillo's heritage was Jewish, his ancestors having migrated to Italy from Spain, but Camillo disliked religion and Adriano grew up in a completely secular household in a country that was predominantly Catholic.

At the age of thirteen Adriano entered the Olivetti typewriter factory, which Camillo had opened in 1908, but he hated the repetitive nature of manufacturing labor and was ashamed of his family's complicity in a system that alienated the local workers. The Olivetti company was one of the first heavy industries in the Canavese region, and the young Adriano vowed to find some other profession that was not connected to the factory. After a brief experience with the Alpini, where he arrived too late in 1918 to see any combat, Adriano enrolled at the Politecnico di Torino in a mechanical engineering program selected by Camillo. He soon defied his father's judgement by switching to industrial chemistry, graduating in 1924.

In the meantime, history had brought Adriano back around to the communion of Camillo, as they shared in the political adventures of the biennio rosso. Camillo was a well-known socialist veteran of the 1898 moti di Milano, and he was the founder of two left-wing journals, *L'Azione*

Riformista and *Tempi Nuovi*. Politicized by the social transformations of the first postwar years, Adriano cultivated great hopes for an imminent socialist revolution, and he published spirited pseudonymous articles in his father's two journals. These hopes were disappointed by the March on Rome and the installation of Fascist dictatorship, and Adriano decided that any possibility of social progress must begin from the material conditions at hand. He recanted on his vow to stay away from the Olivetti typewriter company, and he entered the family factory at the end of 1924.

Adriano's first task at the Olivetti company was to renovate the methods of industrial production. He travelled to the United States, visiting more than one hundred factories across a six-month period, and returned to Ivrea with more than fifty new books about the scientific management of labor. By 1927 Adriano's recommendations were ready, and the Olivetti factory began an intense transition from semi-artisanal manufacturing to modern mass production on the American Fordist-Taylorist model. The company grew quickly, hiring many new workers and opening the first foreign office in Spain in 1929.

In the meantime, Adriano's wife Paola Levi (Natalia Ginzburg's sister) had given birth to a son, Roberto, and Adriano began to spend more time at home. He also went to Milan, where the new Olivetti company advertising office opened in 1931. It was here that Adriano met many of the intellectuals whom he would call to collaborate in the years after the Second World War, both with the Olivetti company and on various other projects: Marcello Nizzoli, Luigi Figini, Gino Pollini, the architects of the BBPR group and others. Some of these intellectuals followed Adriano back to Ivrea where they laid the first structures of a generous company welfare system: a preschool, a residential neighborhood, a social services building with medical facilities, a factory library, a summer camp and more. Adriano's scientific management journal *Tecnica ed*

Organizzazione began to circulate, and in 1938 he was promoted to President of the Olivetti company.

Away from the family business Adriano was cultivating an interest in town planning, including the coordination and partial financing of five plans for local development in the Valle d'Aosta. These plans included recommendations for the construction of new residential neighborhoods, the provision of public services and more, and they combined to form one big proposal for a regional plan that would cover the entire territory. The regional plan was presented in 1937 at the Galleria di Roma, but as Adriano was unable to convince the various town councils to adopt his recommendations, the entire endeavor remained a dead letter. It was Adriano's first foray into the discipline of town planning, where he would take up a leading role in the 1950s. For the time being, he registered as a member of the Istituto Nazionale d'Urbanistica in order to keep an eye on the specialized literature.

Another discipline that piqued Adriano's interest was publishing. In 1941 he founded the printing house Nuove Edizioni Ivrea, and together with the literary critic Bobi Bazlen and the editor Luciano Foà, he began acquiring the translation rights of various foreign publications. But with the onset of the Second World War, the project disintegrated quickly, and not a single page of translation ever ran off the press. Adriano would return to publishing in the postwar years with the much more successful Edizioni di Comunità.

The Second World War was a disaster for Adriano, as it was for the Olivetti company. After a number of secret meetings in Switzerland with the American OSS, where he was registered as 'informant 660,' Adriano went to Marshal Pietro Badoglio's Rome with a plan to rid Italy of Benito Mussolini, and he was thrown in the Regina Coeli prison. He escaped three months later and returned to Switzerland, while both his father Camillo and his mother Luisa died in Italy. The

Ivrea Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale was organized at the Olivetti factory, and it helped protect the production lines from the retreating Fascists and Nazis.

During his Swiss exile, Adriano mixed with intellectuals like the future politicians Luigi Einaudi, Ernesto Rossi and Altiero Spinelli, and with writers like Ignazio Silone. Something of his youthful hope in imminent radical change resurfaced in a flurry of passionate discussion. He drafted his magnum opus, the 378-page political treatise *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità*, published by the Nuove Edizioni Ivrea in its final days, then reprinted in 1946, by the newly founded Edizioni di Comunità. In *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità*, Adriano advocated a complete reorganization of Italian society around a new territorial entity: the 'Comunità.' Italy was to be broken up into about 450 'Comunità,' each ranging in population from 75,000 to 150,000 inhabitants and determined geographically by a shared local history and culture. Depending on the dominant mode of local production, a 'Comunità' could be industrial, agricultural or mixed, and it was to be organized around the hegemonic company, the majority of whose ownership was to be turned over to the 'Comunità' itself. Town planning was to play a central role in the material transformation of social life, and decisions were to be made democratically, via a complex electoral scheme that conjugated universal popular sovereignty with the preferences of workers and the informed choices of cultural experts. Adriano imagined this system as a third-way alternative between American liberal capitalism and Soviet state socialism, the professed goal being to socialize wealth without nationalizing it. Each 'Comunità' was to enjoy a high degree of autonomy, within an organic federation under the more centralized but also less powerful administrative levels of the Regione, and the Stato. Around the time he wrote *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità*, Adriano became devoutly Catholic, and this entered into his political treatise, where he wrote that the law of the 'Comunità' was to be the moral law of the gospels. This did not

necessarily mean that one had to accept Jesus Christ as transcendent truth and savior, but merely that one should revere the social and human message of his life.

What *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità* amounted to was a concrete proposal for a new Italian constitution, albeit one that was wildly unrealistic, highly technical, long-winded and a great difficulty even for the most shrewd legal experts to read. Adriano circulated his proposal among a broad group of intellectuals, but when in 1946 the Constituent Assembly sat down to lay the groundwork for the Italian Republic, Adriano's thoughts made it nowhere near the page. It is indeed difficult to imagine how Adriano could have genuinely believed in the practicability of his proposal. If we understand the 'Comunità' system as an immense redistribution of wealth and political power from the hands of the business élite to those of the laboring masses, then it seems foolish to expect the hegemonic companies of each territory to surrender their position of relative advantage in order to satisfy the demands of a new law. That Adriano would have gladly given the Olivetti company over to the factory workers in Ivrea did not mean that others elsewhere were ready to do the same with their private interests. Moreover, Adriano's experience with Fordism-Taylorism had led him to consider all questions of social organization as technical problems, and in *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità* he underestimates the importance of politics in human relations. His models were the French communitarian intellectuals Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier (as I will discuss in Chapter 1).

Adriano did try to give the Olivetti company over to the factory workers through the institution of a special foundation that would oversee a gradual transfer of capital stock to the laborers themselves, giving them the right to vote on matters pertaining to all aspects of production and distribution. But he was blocked in this by the Board of Directors, with whom he was constantly at odds. Franco Momigliano, who had come to Adriano during the Nuove Edizioni Ivrea

adventure, suggested as a compromise the creation of a Consiglio di Gestione with equal representation for management and labor. The Consiglio was instituted in 1948, but the Board of Directors made sure that its powers never exceeded the management of the Olivetti social services. This included two new residences built in 1946 and a convalescence home opened in 1949. Inside the factory, the first automatic assembly lines were in operation by 1950, and in that same year the Olivetti Corporation of America opened in New York City. Adriano, who had separated from Paola Levi years earlier, married Grazia Galletti in 1950, and they welcomed a daughter, Laura.

Whiplashed again by the promise of radical change followed by deep structural continuity, Adriano retreated to the institutions that he himself had created. He published frequently in *Comunità*, the flagship journal of the Edizioni di Comunità, where he harked on the main points from *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità*, developing a critique of the two dominant political parties and what he considered their manipulation of public opinion. *Comunità* also published the fictional work of writers like Alberto Moravia, Cesare Pavese and Elio Vittorini, and Adriano saw it as tool for the promotion of a genuinely democratic culture, including politics, social sciences, literature, visual art and more. To this same end, he founded the cultural organization Movimento Comunità, which, in its first ten years of operation, set up eighty-six Centri Comunitari across the Italian peninsula. Here, members had access to vast libraries of books and magazines, professional development courses, cultural events, sporting groups, medical services and more. The Movimento Comunità prided itself on being outside the polarized party system, and one could hold 'dual citizenship' in the Movimento even as an active member of the Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI) or the Democrazia Cristiana (DC).

With much of Italy in ruins after the war and the first talks of financial aid from the United Nations and the United States, the discipline of town planning took center stage. Adriano joined

the joint housing commission of UNRRA-CASAS and the Economic Cooperation Administration in 1949, then became President of the Istituto Nazionale d'Urbanistica the following year. It was through these three institutions that Adriano helped direct unused reconstruction funds to the perennial problems of the Mezzogiorno. He organized the creation of entire towns like Cutro, La Martella and San Basilio, pursuing architecturally the ideal of preserving traditional cultures in the era of industrial modernity.

The 1950s was a decade of extreme intellectual fervor in Ivrea, and Adriano spent most of his time there. The town's social and cultural programming, which was the result of Adriano's work, seemed on par with major cosmopolitan centers like Turin and Milan. Writers like Franco Fortini, Giovanni Giudici and Paolo Volponi worked for the Olivetti company, and hundreds more intellectuals were brought to the Centro Culturale Olivetti for workshops, conferences, debates or performances: scholars, poets and writers, including Piero Calamandrei, Eugenio Montale and Cesare Zavattini. This was all organized under the banner of the Movimento Comunità, whose status as a cultural force was slowly transformed into that of a political movement. Adriano was elected Mayor of Ivrea in 1956, and he would eventually represent the Movimento Comunità in a brief stint as a member of the Chamber of Deputies in 1958.

After an alarming distribution crisis in the early 1950s, the Olivetti company responded by hiring 700 new salesmen and opening branch offices in Messina, Verona, Brescia, San Francisco, Chicago, Frankfurt and elsewhere. The crisis served to initiate a period of intense transnational expansion culminating in 1952 with a headline show of Olivetti products at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. In that same year the Edizioni di Comunità published Adriano's book *Società, Stato, Comunità*, a collection of previously presented articles and speeches that mixed his work as President of the Olivetti company with that as leader of the Movimento Comunità.

This was symptomatic of a general blurring in Adriano's life in these years between his business concerns and his political activism. When in 1955 he introduced a labor union wing for the Movimento Comunità the traditional political forces were furious. The Movimento's union, Comunità di Fabbrica-Autonomia Aziendale, quickly won the majority of the Olivetti company Commissione Interna away from the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro. The 'sindacato dei padroni'—as the other unionists mocked—was backed up by the theoretical sociology of Franco Ferrarotti who insisted, in open polemic with the Marxists, that the motor of history was not class struggle but rather active collaboration between capital and labor. Ferrarotti had written his Ph.D. dissertation on the American sociologist Thorstein Veblen, and was primed by his training in institutional economics to focus on industrialization as an inter-class phenomenon: workers, Ferrarotti thought, should constantly challenge this process in order to wrest from its grips what benefits could be had from its development. Comunità di Fabbrica-Autonomia Aziendale vied back and forth with the traditional unions for years, but the standard Olivetti narrative has effectively silenced the history of labor strife at the Ivrea factory. Against the myth that Adriano gifted the workers shortened working days, higher pay, more vacation time and better social services, in reality these things were won in active struggle that did not exclude exploitation, strikes, intimidation, suspensions and sackings.

On the town and regional planning front, Adriano founded the Istituto per il Rinnovamento Urbano e Rurale in 1955, providing consulting services and material assistance to business owners, farmers and artisans throughout the Canavese. Toward the other end of the Italian peninsula, he inaugurated a new Olivetti company factory in Pozzuoli, complete with a residential neighborhood unlike anything the local workforce had ever dreamed of. The Pozzuoli factory was the jewel in Adriano's southern crown, and it represented his most pointed contribution to the debate on the

Southern Question. That contribution was developed by Adriano in a number of speeches, and by Riccardo Musatti who published a defense of Adriano's position in his 1955 Edizioni di Comunità book *La via del Sud*. According to Adriano and Musatti, the southern Italian population showed a natural desire for community, but this had been stifled by programs like the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno that concentrated on the development of capital-intensive industry and the importation of finished goods. On the contrary, they insisted that the correct approach to fostering the construction of community was by allowing the population of the Mezzogiorno to labor together in industries like Olivetti's.

In 1958 Adriano stepped down from the Olivetti company in order to exercise the role entrusted to him as member of the Chamber of Deputies in Rome. A new social services building by Figini and Pollini was inaugurated in Ivrea, but despite this infrastructure the Olivetti Board of Directors took the opportunity of Adriano's absence to make deep cuts to the company welfare system. Adriano returned the following year, disillusioned from his stint in parliament, to find his town changed, his leadership seriously challenged and many of his intellectual friends departed. Nevertheless, he took up the reigns of the company again just in time to see the release of the Elea 9003 mainframe calculator, Olivetti's first venture into computer technology. Six months later Adriano surprised Italy and the world, when he announced that the Olivetti company had acquired a majority share of stock in the Underwood Typewriter Corporation, the famous American factory that had denied him entrance during his 1925 trip to the United States. This impressive accomplishment could not have come at a better time, as he was preparing the public release of his 1960 Edizioni di Comunità book *Città dell'uomo*. The book was truly a montage of Adriano's various successes, combining articles on the Movimento Comunità, speeches to the Olivetti

workers and to various town planning conferences, writings on the industrialization of the Mezzogiorno and more.

On February 27, 1960 Adriano was travelling by train from Milan to Lausanne when he had a brain hemorrhage and died just beyond the Swiss border near Aigle. The Presidency of the Olivetti company passed to Vice President Giuseppe Pero and a combination of difficult circumstances quickly ran Pero into trouble. The majority share of stock in the Underwood Typewriter Corporation had been purchased without the opportunity to view the American company's finances, and when the Olivetti Board of Directors opened the new balance sheets, they discovered a firm in deep budgetary crisis. In 1964 the Olivetti company was taken over by a holding group made up of Adriano's son Roberto, FIAT, Pirelli, Mediobanca and other Italian conglomerates and the most promising part, the electronics division, was sold to General Electric. Today, the Olivetti company still manufactures office machines in Ivrea, but it has become little more than a subsidiary of Telecom Italia.

Part I
The Philosophy of Adriano Olivetti

Chapter 1
A Genealogy of Adriano Olivetti's Concepts of Community and Labor

Adriano Olivetti's 1952 Edizioni di Comunità book *Società, Stato, Comunità* is a collection of articles and speeches, some previously published or publicly delivered, on topics like factory management and industrial relations, political science and philosophy, town planning and agricultural policy. In the book's long and meticulous introduction, an anonymous writer—scholars agree it is Adriano himself—makes a case for understanding everything that follows within the context of the communitarian movement, especially as it had developed in France since the early 1930s. "Una storia delle origini dei movimenti comunitari," the anonymous writer proposes, "dovrà spontaneamente distinguersi in due periodi" (Anon, "Introduzione" IX). The first period would need to cover the development of communitarian thought, running from the early 1930s to the early 1940s; the second period would need to focus on communitarian practice, which can only be dated to 1945:[6] "Patria d'origine del primo [periodo], la Francia; del secondo, l'Italia. Apostoli dell'uno, Jacques Maritain ed Emmanuel Mounier; dell'altro, l'autore dei saggi qui raccolti" (IX).

If this is truly Adriano writing about himself in the third person, then the introduction to *Società, Stato, Comunità* tells us something of how he wished to be interpreted. It suggests a line of approach that is completely absent elsewhere: that Adriano carried forward in practice the

[6] Such an opposition between thought and practice recalls Marx's response to Hegel in particular and pre-Marxian Western Philosophy in general: "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it." Marx, Karl. "Theses on Feuerbach." *The Marx-Engels Reader*. Edited by Robert C. Tucker. W.W. Norton & Company, 1978, p. 145.

theoretical projects of Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier. And it does so not in Adriano's name, but rather under the guise of anonymous criticism, thus constituting itself as autonomous discourse and staking a claim to exegetical authority above and outside the text. That Adriano was most influenced by Maritain and Mounier is not an unprovable thesis, and indeed I will demonstrate in this chapter that it is basically correct. But the anonymous writer of the introduction to *Società, Stato, Comunità* thinks that the most pertinent set of concepts here is that of community and person. In all three thinkers, the introduction insists, community is a site of confluence for unique yet related persons defined in balanced opposition to both liberal individualism and totalitarian collectivism. On the contrary, and in line with the overall focus of this dissertation, I will argue in this chapter that the more important conceptual set here is that of community and labor, something that Adriano found in Maritain and Mounier and elaborated in his own thought.[7]

Adriano adapted the concept of community from Maritain, and he adapted the concept of labor from Mounier, but the process was long and complex, involving years of difficult reading, private correspondence with both men and grueling efforts to publish parts of their work in Italian. The introduction to *Società, Stato, Comunità* effectively erases this whole history, presenting in a rather simplistic way the equation of Adriano with two interwar French communitarians. We must therefore make it our goal in this chapter to reconstruct such a history, to develop an intellectual genealogy of Adriano's thought that can trace the concepts of community and labor through

[7] The reception of French communitarian philosophy in Italy owes its beginnings to the cultural dialectic, dating back to the Risorgimento period, between France and Piedmont. In 1926, the philosopher Giuseppe Gorgerino published the short-lived Turinese journal *Il Davide*, which translated some of Maritain's work into Italian. The 1930s saw the development of an Italian strand of personalism, the philosophy promoted by Mounier's journal *Esprit*. Italian personalists included intellectuals like Armando Carlini, Augusto Guzzo, Michele Federico Sciacca and especially the Venetian Luigi Stefanini, whose main influence was Mounier. In 1947, the educator Piero Viotto defended the first Italian dissertation on Maritain at the Università di Torino. For more on the reception of French communitarian philosophy in Italy, see the following references: d'Orsi, Angelo. *La cultura a Torino tra le due guerre*. Einaudi, 2000, pp. 164-5. Possenti, Vittorio. *Dentro il secolo breve: Paolo VI, Maritain, La Pira, Giovanni Paolo II, Mounier*. Il Rubbettino, 2009, p. 138.

Maritain and Mounier to Adriano, accounting at the same time for Adriano's own originality, which is of more than little import. Part of what this will reveal is Adriano's deep dependence on Christian theology, an aspect of the Olivetti project that scholars have grossly undervalued, and one that is at least potentially problematic in its political implications.

The Pauline Theory of Community and Labor

To get to the root of Adriano's ideas about community and labor we must reach back beyond Maritain and Mounier, to sources more remote. Raymond Williams developed a method for grasping the evolution of social meaning in relation to Western Civilization broadly, and his 1976 Oxford University Press masterwork *Keywords* contains entries for both 'community' and 'labor.' Since the fourteenth century, Williams notes, the word 'community' has taken on a variety of different meanings: the non-élite, organized society, the people of a district, a property or identity held collectively ("Community" 39). To some degree, Adriano's concept of community resonates with all these acceptations, but it really harmonizes with the seventeenth-century sense that 'community' is set off from 'society.' In Williams' words, "community was felt to be more immediate than society" (39), and we can already recognize this in the book title *Società, Stato, Comunità*—'comunità' is closer, more friendly, more effective than both the bureaucratic 'stato' and the nebulous 'società.' Such a characterization became a hallmark of Adriano's political criticism, aimed both at the Fascist society-state and the looming threat of Cold War communism.

As regards the word 'labor,' Williams remarks on a double-signification that, since at least the fourteenth century, communicated two senses "of work and of pain or trouble" ("Labour" 127), including the most obvious sixteenth-century use of 'labor' to mean childbirth (128). With the rise of industrial capitalism, the word gradually lost its association with human toil, and it was transformed by political economy to mean the abstraction of productive activity from an individual

or a social class (129). In light of these changes, Adriano's concept of labor is somewhat anachronistic: it retains a casual association with suffering that, in accordance with Christian theology, marks a prelude to salvation, elevating the laborer to the post of moral guide. One can easily see how Adriano articulated a brand of populist politics that accepted struggle as an ontological necessity even while developing the tools to fight against it.

The 'Italian' postwar reconstruction and the economic boom were really affairs of the industrial triangle, and of Turin in particular. FIAT was the dominant company, both in terms of employee numbers and in terms of business-to-business relations: automobile production required cooperation with countless other industries, from mining to metalworking, chemical production and advertising. The economic historian Valerio Castronovo has called 1950s Turin a "città-fabbrica" (638), underlining the developing relationship between community and labor at a company that was, for Adriano, a model to both emulate and reject. With respect to Williams' overview, and predicated on FIAT's dedication to Fordism-Taylorism, the word 'comunità' in 1950s Turin was closest to the fourteenth-century meaning (but still current in the twentieth century) of organized society. The word 'labor' meant progress through sacrifice, a process understood in strict relation to postwar economic destitution, the rise of Italy as an industrial country and its eventual participation, starting in 1957, in the European Common Market.

In the Christian tradition, meditations on the concepts of community and labor are as old as the Scriptures themselves, and what is remarkable is that, from the very beginning, they seem to share the same literary and ideological spaces. Susanna Barsella has captured this relation well in a recent article about Christian labor: "The innumerable metaphors in the Old and New Testaments of God as builder, architect, potter, farmer, testify to the persistently sought similitude between divine and human making as a principle of self-perfection, participation in the work of

creation, and, in Christianity, in the edification of the Christian community" (53). God made man; man can be like God by making other things—that is, by laboring. And by laboring, the greatest thing man can make is community, which potentially includes community-with-God. In the Christian tradition, humanity receives the concept of labor as the punishment for original sin, in the wake of Adam and Eve's temptation and the exile from Eden: that great loss of community-with-the-surrounding-world that labor can attempt (but only attempt) to restore.

The culmination of the biblical relationship between the concepts of community and labor is found in the letters of Saint Paul, especially the First Letter to the Corinthians and the Second Letter to the Thessalonians. In the first case, Paul addresses the problem in Corinth of a proliferation of religious sects that have developed around different theological leaders, and he reminds his readers that all who speak in the name of God are merely media for His single message and therefore should not be quarreled over. In Paul's elaborate metaphor, the leaders are transformed into gardeners with special roles: "The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building" (1 Cor. 3.7-9). The tack-on reference to "building" throws the metaphor open to every sort of constructive possibility, underscoring the fact that it is not agriculture of which Paul is speaking but rather labor in the abstract: the raw material of God's community. In the second case, Paul writes to console the Thessalonians, who are facing persecution for their faith, reminding them that Jesus too was persecuted and urging them to follow his example. For the Thessalonians, this boils down to what would become, during the sixth century, the Benedictine exhortation to *ora et labora* (Saint Benedict 248-52)—just keep laboring; work clarifies morality and in times of trouble it props up the Christian community. "For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies,

not doing any work," Paul writes, "Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living" (2 Thess. 3.10-13).

As regards Adriano's religion, he was the descendent of two minority communities: his father Camillo Olivetti was Jewish and his mother Luisa Revel was Waldensian. But since Camillo disliked religion, Adriano was brought up in a completely secular household. According to Valerio Ochetto (16), in an anecdote that should perhaps not be taken at face value, Adriano spent time with his grandmother, Luisa's mother Maria, who delighted in entertaining him with fascinating Bible stories. In any event, Adriano probably did not think too much about religion until 1938, when the promulgation of Mussolini's racial laws turned his Jewish heritage into a potential liability. It is difficult to imagine that the Fascist state would have seriously persecuted the public face of such a powerful national industry, but in any case the question was made moot when Adriano produced a forged Christian baptismal certificate, thereby 'proving' himself Arian (the same cannot be said for Camillo, nor for Adriano's siblings Silvia, Dino and Massimo (Ochetto 89)). His real conversion to Christianity, which he embraced with profound conviction, can be dated to the Swiss exile of 1944, when he was reading, among other philosophers, Maritain and Mounier.

The relation in Adriano's thought between the concepts of community and labor is too close to the Pauline theory to be ascribed solely to his readings of Maritain and Mounier. Indeed, we know from Adriano's most wide-ranging and spiritual article, titled "Democrazia senza partiti," that he had read Paul's letters and discovered in them an attention to the concept of vocation as "il principio primo di una divisione di opere" determined in society by God (163). Part of the article's goal is to identify the sorts of social activities that are appropriate to the development of the modern world as a Christian civilization, and all of Adriano's thoughts are filtered through a recognizably

Pauline framework of laboring communities: "Noi non abbiamo dunque altro potere, altra forza, altro compito," he maintains, "che quello di preparare con la nostra fatica, la nostra miseria, la nostra debolezza, quella forma di società che ci è stata additata dagli Apostoli secondo l'insegnamento del divin Maestro" (169). A Christian community must be actively constructed, Adriano writes, via practices of individual and collective labor: "ha per protagonista l'uomo *faber*, presenta una continua analogia e parellelismo con l'edificio della Chiesa" (169). Yet this is not all traceable to Paul, and there is certainly a good dose here of Thomas Aquinas' (1981) division of things into natural and supernatural, a foundational dichotomy for Maritain's philosophy that we must deal with in what follows.

In his role as President of the Olivetti company, Adriano was similarly indebted to Paul, and it was not uncommon for him to describe the factory workers as collaborators in the construction of a Christian community. They were the makers of typewriters and calculators, certainly, but they were also the makers of themselves, as individuals and as a collective; the spiritual value of abstract labor transcended the specificities of any industrial product. In a 1954 speech to the factory workers in Ivrea, we find Adriano's Pauline language in full force: "Il lavoro è […] spirituale," he proclaims, "e il lavoratore si sente anch'egli nel lavoro e sul lavoro vicino a Dio, come Suo collaboratore e servitore. Per questa ragione Gesù si presentò agli abitanti di Nazareth e al mondo che lo attendeva come figlio di falegname e fabbro" ("Alle 'Spille d'Oro'" 156).

Such language should not be taken as Adriano's unswerving norm, and indeed part of what has allowed scholars to downplay the religiosity of the Olivetti message is that his other writings contain statements that are explicitly areligious. We should be clear that the article "Democrazia senza partiti" and the speech to the factory workers at Ivrea represent the strongest moments of

Adriano's identification with Christian theology, but elsewhere he qualifies this approach and even defends his thought from an interpretation that would place too much emphasis on religion. If this were simply a case of Adriano moving, throughout his career, from a religious to an areligious standpoint, then it would be easy enough to describe such an evolution with reference to his life experiences and their effect on his philosophical outlook. But the reality is that throughout adulthood Adriano mixed Christian and lay messages, betraying an anxious ambiguity around the question of religion and its uncertain relation to politics. We will return to the areligious aspects of Adriano's thought at the end of the present chapter, where we will pay special attention to his own contribution, which can be previewed here as a partial secularization of the Pauline theory of community and labor.

Adriano Olivetti, Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier

The anonymous writer of the introduction to *Società, Stato, Comunità* is correct in arguing that the two most important and direct influences on Adriano's thought are Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier. In some sense, Adriano was an ordinary reader of these Frenchmen: he purchased their works, studied them closely and incorporated parts of their philosophy into his own thinking. But in another sense, Adriano was extraordinary: he had access to tremendous economic and political resources, including the ability to converse with just about whomever he pleased. He chose to establish and maintain personal contact with both Maritain and Mounier, to involve them in his publishing ventures and to develop his own thought in active dialog with their philosophy. The impetus for such a relation grew from Adriano's first readings of their works, which he completed between the late 1930s and the early 1940s.

It has become a commonplace in the scholarship on Adriano to remark that when it came to physical books he had little respect for their value.[8] Even Adriano's own daughter Laura Olivetti remembered the indifference with which her father treated his personal collection, his supposed "abitudine di strappare da un volume le pagine che lo interessavano, di lasciare nello scompartimento di un treno o sul sedile di un'automobile, dopo la lettura, preziosi volumi fatti arrivare da qualche università scandinava o da celebri centri di studio e ricerca nordamericani" (Fondazione Adriano Olivetti 9). Laura spoke alternatively and eloquently of a "biblioteca diffusa" (Fondazione Adriano Olivetti 10) that would ideally need to include all the Olivetti company factory libraries plus those of the Centri Comunitari and the catalog of the Edizioni di Comunità so precious to Adriano. It is certainly true that if all these sources could be brought together, then they would make up the most complete representation of the Olivetti vision in culture and philosophy. However, by searching for nuggets in far-away places, we risk overlooking the treasure chest right under our eyes. Adriano's personal library is housed in Rome, at the Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, where its comprehensiveness and organization pose a serious challenge to the belief that he was a careless reader.

At the moment of Adriano's death, in February 1960, his personal library of about three thousand volumes was divided up between Ivrea and Rome. It remained in place for more than thirty years, until the late 1990s, when the Fondazione Adriano Olivetti brought the Ivrea volumes to Rome, uniting the collection in a new office on the Via Zanardelli. Rather than tattered books with missing pages and tears across the bindings, what one finds here is a collection so pristine that some of the volumes—particularly those in French—still retain the printer's uncut quartos. But this is not to say that Adriano never read in his library. On the contrary, most of the volumes

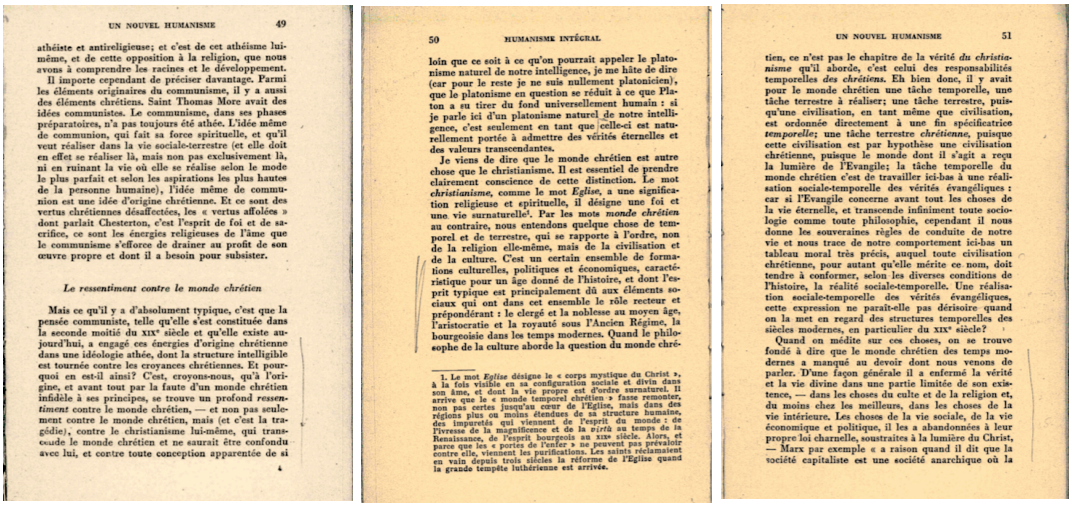
[8] See, for example: Ochetto, Valerio. *Adriano Olivetti*. Edizioni di Comunità, 2015, pp. 163-4. [1985]

show some signs of prolonged engagement, and many contain markings and notes in Adriano's own hand. The library represents a serious source for Olivetti research that scholars have by and large overlooked.

It would be implausible to say something general here about the multiple-thousands-volume collection, but we can benefit from speaking specifically about the presence in it of both Maritain and Mounier. Adriano owned sixteen books by Maritain plus four books by Mounier, and they are among his most marked-up volumes, though unfortunately void of any extensive notes that would really explicate his interpretation. Because Adriano limited himself here to elementary underlines and marginalia, including arrows, vertical bars and the occasional question mark, the best we can do is to register which parts of the text were interesting or confusing to him, something that must be subsequently triangulated with other evidence from his publishing ventures and his private correspondence.

Of the sixteen Maritain publications that Adriano owned, there is one that really caught his attention: the 1936 Aubier-Montaigne book *Humanisme Intégral*.[9] It is clear from the physical state of Adriano's copy that he read this book from cover to cover, and he seems to have concentrated his efforts on three moments in the development of Maritain's argument. First, Maritain chastises modern society for failing to follow the example of the gospels; second, he presents the doctrinal justification for his criticism; and third, he proposes new forms of social organization that are supposedly more compatible with Christian teachings. In other words, the

[9] After his death in 1973, Maritain's personal papers were divided between two institutes: the Jacques Maritain Center at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana and the Cercle d'Études Jacques et Raïssa Maritain in Kolbsheim, France. Neither institute received any correspondence with Adriano Olivetti.



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athéiste et antireligieuse; et c'est de cet athéisme lui-même, et de cette opposition à la religion, que nous avons à comprendre les racines et le développement.

Il importe cependant de préciser davantage. Parmi les éléments originaires du communisme, il y a aussi des éléments chrétiens. Saint Thomas More avait des idées communistes. Le communisme, dans ses phases préparatoires, n'a pas toujours été athée. L'idée même de communion, qui fait sa force spirituelle, et qu'il veut réaliser dans la vie sociale-terrestre (et elle doit en effet se réaliser là, mais non pas exclusivement là, ni en ruinant la vie où elle se réalise selon le mode le plus parfait et selon les aspirations les plus hautes de la personne humaine), l'idée même de communion est une idée d'origine chrétienne. Et ce sont des vertus chrétiennes désaffectées, les « vertus affolées » dont parlait Chesterton, c'est l'esprit de foi et de sacrifice, ce sont les énergies religieuses de l'âme que le communisme s'efforce de drainer au profit de son œuvre propre et dont il a besoin pour subsister.

Le ressentiment contre le monde chrétien

Mais ce qu'il y a d'absolument typique, c'est que la pensée communiste, telle qu'elle s'est constituée dans la seconde moitié du XIX^e^ siècle et qu'elle existe aujourd'hui, a engagé ces énergies d'origine chrétienne dans une idéologie athée, dont la structure intelligible est tournée contre les croyances chrétiennes. Et pourquoi en est-il ainsi? C'est, croyons-nous, qu'à l'origine, et avant tout par la faute d'un monde chrétien infidèle à ses principes, se trouve un profond *ressentiment* contre le monde chrétien, — et non pas seulement contre le monde chrétien, mais (et c'est la tragédie), contre le christianisme lui-même, qui transcende le monde chrétien et ne saurait être confondu avec lui, et contre toute conception apparentée de si

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loin que ce soit à ce qu'on pourrait appeler le platonisme naturel de notre intelligence, je me hâte de dire (car pour le reste je ne suis nullement platonicien), que le platonisme en question se réduit à ce que Platon a su tirer du fond universellement humain : si je parle ici d'un platonisme naturel de notre intelligence, c'est seulement en tant que celle-ci est naturellement portée à admettre des vérités éternelles et des valeurs transcendantes.

Je viens de dire que le monde chrétien est autre chose que le christianisme. Il est essentiel de prendre clairement conscience de cette distinction. Le mot *christianisme*, comme le mot *Eglise*, a une signification religieuse et spirituelle, il désigne une foi et une vie surnaturelle[1]. Par les mots *monde chrétien* au contraire, nous entendons quelque chose de temporel et de terrestre, qui se rapporte à l'ordre, non de la religion elle-même, mais de la civilisation et de la culture. C'est un certain ensemble de formations culturelles, politiques et économiques, caractéristique pour un âge donné de l'histoire, et dont l'esprit typique est principalement dû aux éléments sociaux qui ont dans cet ensemble le rôle recteur et prépondérant : le clergé et la noblesse au moyen âge, l'aristocratie et la royauté sous l'Ancien Régime, la bourgeoisie dans les temps modernes. Quand le philosophe de la culture aborde la question du monde chré-

1. Le mot *Eglise* désigne le « corps mystique du Christ », à la fois visible en sa configuration sociale et divin dans son âme, et dont la vie propre est d'ordre surnaturel. Il arrive que le « monde temporel chrétien » fasse remonter, non pas certes jusqu'au cœur de l'Eglise, mais dans des régions plus ou moins étendues de sa structure humaine, des impuretés qui viennent de l'esprit du monde : de l'ivresse de la magnificence et de la *virtù* au temps de la Renaissance, de l'esprit bourgeois au XIX^e^ siècle. Alors, et parce que les « portes de l'enfer » ne peuvent pas prévaloir contre elle, viennent les purifications. Les saints réclamaient en vain depuis trois siècles la réforme de l'Eglise quand la grande tempête luthérienne est arrivée.

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tien, ce n'est pas le chapitre de la vérité *du christianisme* qu'il aborde, c'est celui des responsabilités temporelles *des chrétiens*. Eh bien donc, il y avait pour le monde chrétien une tâche temporelle, une tâche terrestre à réaliser; une tâche terrestre, puisqu'une civilisation, en tant même que civilisation, est ordonnée directement à une fin spécificatrice *temporelle*; une tâche terrestre *chrétienne*, puisque cette civilisation est par hypothèse une civilisation chrétienne, puisque le monde dont il s'agit a reçu la lumière de l'Evangile; la tâche temporelle du monde chrétien c'est de travailler ici-bas à une réalisation sociale-temporelle des vérités évangéliques : car si l'Evangile concerne avant tout les choses de la vie éternelle, et transcende infiniment toute sociologie comme toute philosophie, cependant il nous donne les souveraines règles de conduite de notre vie et nous trace de notre comportement ici-bas un tableau moral très précis, auquel toute civilisation chrétienne, pour autant qu'elle mérite ce nom, doit tendre à conformer, selon les diverses conditions de l'histoire, la réalité sociale-temporelle. Une réalisation sociale-temporelle des vérités évangéliques, cette expression ne paraît-elle pas dérisoire quand on la met en regard des structures temporelles des siècles modernes, en particulier du XIX^e^ siècle?

Quand on médite sur ces choses, on se trouve fondé à dire que le monde chrétien des temps modernes a manqué au devoir dont nous venons de parler. D'une façon générale il a enfermé la vérité et la vie divine dans une partie limitée de son existence, — dans les choses du culte et de la religion et, du moins chez les meilleurs, dans les choses de la vie intérieure. Les choses de la vie sociale, de la vie économique et politique, il les a abandonnées à leur propre loi charnelle, soustraites à la lumière du Christ, — Marx par exemple « a raison quand il dit que la société capitaliste est une société anarchique où la

Figure 1: Three pages from: Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, Fondo Adriano Olivetti, Adriano Olivetti's personal copy of Maritain, Jacques. *Humanisme Intégral*. Aubier-Montaigne, 1936.

parts of *Humanisme Intégral* that received the most of Adriano's interest focus overwhelmingly on the analysis of community: What sort of community do we have, and is it a moral one? What is a moral community and how do we make one? All of the passages Adriano marked up address these sorts of questions, but he did not always assimilate their arguments without difficulty.

Judging by the overabundance of underlines and marginalia present in his personal copy, Adriano must have struggled at length with the section titled "Le ressentiment contre le monde chrétien." In this section, Maritain attempts to defend Christianity from a general public backlash by accepting the immorality of Christian culture but denying it any foundation in Christian doctrine. According to Maritain, the word 'Christianity' has come to have two very different meanings: on the one hand it is an eternal and universal moral law based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, and on the other hand it is a temporal culture of lived experience that can develop away from, and even against, the gospels. But the important issue of the relationship between Christian doctrine and a culture that calls itself 'Christian' apparently confounded Adriano, and he jotted question marks alongside a number of passages, including the most explicit: "Quand le philosophe

de la culture aborde la question du monde chrétien ce n'est pas le chapitre de la *vérité du christianisme* qu'il aborde, c'est celui des responsabilités temporelles *des chrétiens.*"[10] Such a distinction has its roots in Thomas Aquinas' (1981) division of things into natural and supernatural, where the natural is the territory of philosophy and the supernatural that of theology. These emerge strongly in Maritain, though with slightly different names, as the temporal and the eternal, and he stresses the parallel nature of their relationship, whereby eternal things must become the model for temporal things. For Maritain's concept of community, which was to become so important for Adriano, this means that the organization of society here on earth (temporal) must aspire toward the image of perfection represented in the gospels (eternal).

Like many great thinkers, Adriano must have been most fascinated by what he did not understand, because when it came time to publish something of Maritain's he chose the same *Humanisme Intégral* section "Le ressentiment contre le monde chrétien." This appeared in the Edizioni di Comunità's flagship journal *Comunità* as "Il risentimento contro il mondo cristiano" in September 1946. One can imagine that Adriano had time to sit at length with Maritain's complex passage, and that as the publisher of an Italian translation he had come to terms with its meaning for the concept of community. "Il compito temporale del mondo cristiano" the translation proclaims so clearly "è di lavorare quaggiù a una realizzazione sociale-temporale delle verità evangeliche" (2).

Many of the political implications of Maritain's idea were already made explicit in the pages of *Humanisme Intégral*, and Adriano seems to have paid heed to them too during his first reading in French. His personal copy of the book shows heavy signs of engagement in the section titled "La propriété des bien terrestres," where Maritain introduces a series of concrete measures

[10] Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, Fondo Adriano Olivetti, Adriano Olivetti's personal copy of Maritain, Jacques. *Humanisme Intégral*. Aubier-Montaigne, 1936, pp. 50-1. Emphasis in the original.

for the transformation of society along what he considers Christian lines. Arguing against both the communist abolition of private property and the more ambiguous 'totalitarian' policy of nationalization, Maritain insists that the best way forward is to preserve the institution of private property, extending it however to the working class: "La question est de donner à chaque personne humaine la possibilité réelle et concrète d'accéder […] aux avantages de la propriété privée des biens terrestres."[11] This suggestion was to be taken up very seriously by Adriano during the postwar period, when he attempted to place the management of the Olivetti company into the hands of a new and specially-instituted legal body, much of which was supposed to be owned by the factory workers themselves (Ochetto 141-3). For Maritain as for Adriano, such an arrangement was meant to give the working class a strong and definable interest in the company's success (and, by extension, that of industrial society more broadly)—a democratization not only of private property but also of the profit motive that is its law. It was impossible to pursue this discussion without positing some sufficiently-developed concept of community, and Maritain's words must have struck Adriano like a step-by-step recipe for his specific industrial context. He marked the following passage off with a long line down the margin: "Le problème n'est pas de supprimer l'intérêt privé, mais de le purifier et de l'anoblir; de le saisir dans des structures sociales ordonnées au bien commun, et aussi (et c'est le point capital), de le transformer intérieurement par le sens de la communion et de l'amitié fraternelle."[12]

Maritain had a tremendous influence on interwar French Catholicism, and his 1920 Téqui book *Eléments de Philosophie* was required reading for multiple generations of seminarians. At the United Nations, his thought was adopted in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948),

[11] Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, Fondo Adriano Olivetti, Adriano Olivetti's personal copy of Maritain, Jacques. *Humanisme Intégral*. Aubier-Montaigne, 1936, pp. 198-9.
[12] Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, Fondo Adriano Olivetti, Adriano Olivetti's personal copy of Maritain, Jacques. *Humanisme Intégral*. Aubier-Montaigne, 1936, p. 201.

and one of his closest followers, the Italian cardinal Giovanni Montini, became Pope Paul VI in 1963.

In accordance with Maritain's insistence that the temporal strive toward the eternal, the model for such a fraternal friendship here on earth needed to become the perfect fellowship portrayed in the gospels, and in the most practical terms this forced one main conclusion: that Christianity needed to constitute itself as a political force. Adriano must have recognized this point as the most easily-grasped and powerful idea in Maritain, because he chose its most open declaration—a section titled "Nécessité de nouvelles formations politiques"—for publication in the November 1947 issue of *Comunità*. "Necessità di nuove formazioni politiche" proudly announced that "il risvegliarsi della coscienza Cristiana ai problemi strettamente temporali, sociali e politici provocherà, crediamo, la nascita di nuove formazioni politiche temporalmente e politicamente specificate e d'ispirazione intrinsecamente cristiana" (5). But we will see in the final section of the present chapter that when it came time to jot down his own thoughts, Adriano was careful to dissociate himself from such a potentially problematic superimposition of religion and politics.

Such caution followed from the ambiguous relationship between the Catholic Church and Fascism in the late 1930s and early 1940s. On the one hand, communist-inspired groups like Lavoratori cristiani (later Sinistra cristiana) made important contributions to the fight against Fascism and the armed resistance, facing a moral conundrum in 1949 when Pope Pius XII excommunicated all PCI militants (Baldini 854). On the other hand, leading Catholics like Agostino Gemelli—the Franciscan founder of Milan's Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore—paid lip service to Mussolini's racial laws while glossing public anti-Semitism as divine punishment for refusing to recognize Christ as savior (Feinstein 173). For Adriano, political practice could

never be subordinated to nor determined by religious belief; if anything, faith could be made to inform the organization of society and to reform a culture lacking a general awareness of spiritual questions. As he wrote to Gemelli in October 1955:

> Le 'Edizioni di Comunità' hanno pubblicato, è vero, qualche testo al limite tra filosofia e religione, ma ciò aveva lo scopo, peraltro comune a tutta l'azione politica del nostro gruppo, di introdurre una dimensione religiosa nella cultura politica, di modificare il laicismo impoverito di una parte della tradizione italiana in una cultura più attenta a tutti i problemi dello spirito, e di far sentire la necessaria presenza della religiosità nel mondo contemporaneo.[13]

Adriano's intellectual relationship with Maritain did not end in his personal library, nor in the pages of *Comunità*. He also endeavored to become the Italian-language publisher of the philosopher's most important works, something that consumed a good amount of his time and effort but produced few concrete results. Writing in April 1952, Adriano urged Maritain to cede him the translation rights for *The Man and The State* (written in English), which he hoped to publish with the Edizioni di Comunità, and he took the opportunity to remind the Frenchman of what he felt was a great intellectual affinity uniting their lives' work: "Vous savez que le programme des 'Edizioni di Comunità' a précisément pour but la diffusion et la discussion des problèmes politiques et étiques auxquels depuis tant d'années vous dédiez votre esprit et votre coeur."[14] But Adriano was unable to convince Maritain on *The Man and the State*, and the case is representative of his more general failure to court the philosopher in these years. The book was released in Italian in 1953 as *L'Uomo e lo Stato*, but it was printed by Vita e Pensiero, Italy's premier Catholic publishing house.

[13] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Agostino Gemelli, Letter from Adriano Olivetti to Agostino Gemelli, 12 October 1955.
[14] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Jacques Maritain (1) 5, Letter from Adriano Olivetti to Jacques Maritain, 8 April 1952.

Maritain's presence in the catalog of the Edizioni di Comunità thus remains confined to only two books: *Cristianesimo e democrazia* and *I diritti dell'uomo e la legge naturale*. These were united in a single volume and printed in 1950, and even though Adriano would have preferred to publish more and other books, they ended up having a significant influence on the development of his own thought. Not surprisingly, these two works are among those by Maritain that deal most closely with the concept of community, and much of Adriano's thinking on the topic can be traced to their pages.

In *Cristianesimo e democrazia* Maritain sets himself the difficult task of overturning the prevailing knowledge of the relationship between religion and reason as it had developed in Europe since the French Revolution. While most historians agree that the advent of modernity involved a move away from religion and toward reason, Maritain (24-6) defends the view that the triumph of reason was itself actually a fulfillment of religious promises, and more specifically that the rise of democracy was driven by the spirit of Christianity. By this he does not mean to argue that the worldly institutions of Christianity (namely the Catholic Church) have been the historical champions of democracy, but rather that some enigmatic Christian spirit (the eternal) has begun to reveal itself in history (the temporal), pushing it toward the realization of fraternity, equality and liberty, which are all announced in the gospels. Maritain's evidence is not scriptural but rather doctrinal, and he writes pages upon pages setting up his usual model of two parallel temporal and eternal communities. What is new here is that the temporal can only approximate the eternal, and even though it cannot quite reach it, it has an ethical responsibility to try (35). The door to the City of God is barred by the fact of original sin, but humanity must organize itself in a way that can effectively prepare it to enter. Maritain's position thus represents a third-way alternative between Marxist and Catholic ethics: not active and immediate liberation, nor passive renunciation of

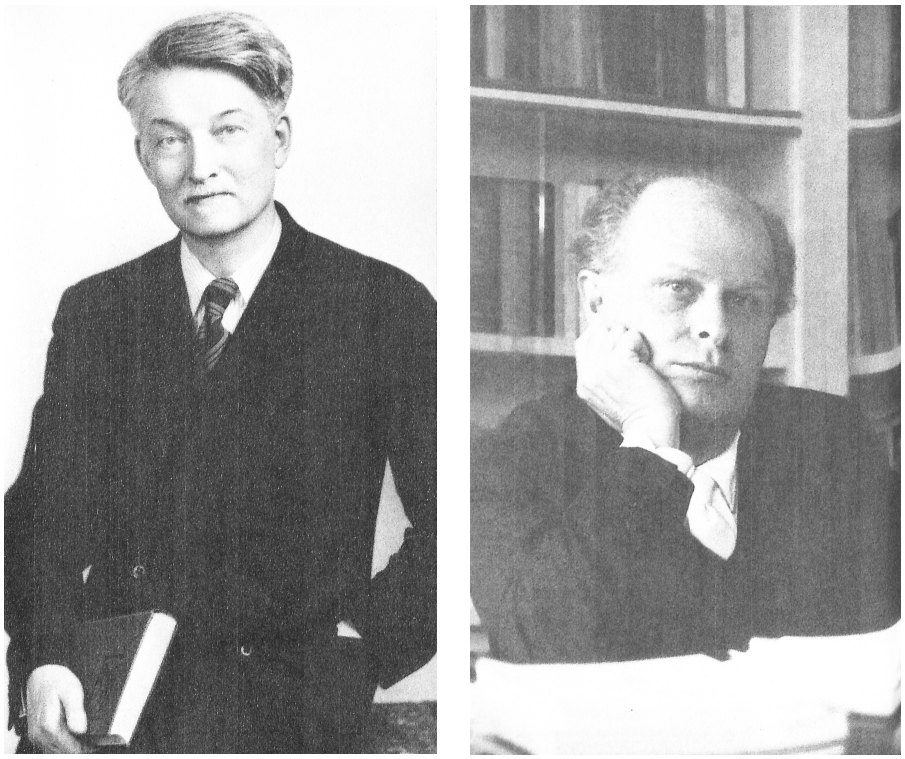


Figure 2: Back-facing portraits of Jacques Maritain and Adriano Olivetti from: Curcio, Gennaro Giuseppe, et al. *Per un'economia più umana: Adriano Olivetti e Jacques Maritain*. Edizioni di Comunità, 2016.

worldly problems, but a concrete commitment to the construction of a community that approaches the image of perfection. The Holy Spirit guides history toward a destination it cannot possibly go, but that it is destined to reach.

The concept of community remains a central focus in *I diritti dell'uomo e la legge naturale*, but here Maritain turns away from high theoretical speculation and toward mundane practical questions: When the war finally ends (Maritain is writing in 1943), who should have 'rights,' what should they be and how can they be rationalized? He responds by constructing a three-tiered system whereby workers have a right to negotiate labor conditions, citizens have a right to political participation and every person, by virtue of their being created in God's image, has an absolute right to human existence (131-56). Since all workers are created by God, and most workers are citizens, Maritain's system gives them the most rights. The political infrastructure of his community leans in the favor of the working class, something that will reappear strongly in

Adriano's own works. In *I diritti dell'uomo e la legge naturale* we can already begin to observe how the concepts of community and labor, so closely related in the Pauline theory but divided in the rest of Maritain, are moving back toward one another, to a space where Adriano will be able to complete their recombination.

The anonymous writer of the introduction to *Società, Stato, Comunità* is right that Adriano understood his own work to be in dialog with Maritain's. What Maritain offered was an opportunity to think deeply about the concept of community: What is a community? How should it relate to the divine? Who is the subject of its creation? Adriano understood his own work to be in dialogue with Maritain's, and he even sent the Frenchman free copies of his books in the hope of having some sort of feedback. Shortly after the 1945 publication of his Nuove Edizioni Ivrea treatise *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità*, Adriano wrote to bait Maritain: "sarà molto gradito avere—a suo tempo—con Lei un lungo colloquio per conoscere il Suo giudizio—al quale io tengo moltissimo sul mio libro."[15] Writing again to Maritain in 1952 about *The Man and the State*, Adriano found a way to send along the recently-published *Società, Stato, Comunità* by tacking on the following unrelated but opportune postscript: "Ps. Je me permets de vous envoyer, par courrier séparé, les deux derniers volumes récemment publiés par Edizioni di Comunità (Kelsen: Teoria generale del diritto e dello Stato — A. Olivetti: Società, Stato, Comunità)."[16] There is no indication that Adriano's efforts met with any success, and it is doubtful that Maritain ever read any of his work or offered any feedback. In the immediate aftermath of Adriano's death in February 1960, the editors of *Comunità* solicited statements from those intellectuals with whom he felt the strongest affinity in life. Pages of memories poured in from politicians like Amintore Fanfani and

[15] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Jacques Maritain (1) 5, Letter from Adriano Olivetti to Jacques Maritain, 21 March 1946.
[16] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Jacques Maritain (1) 5, Letter from Adriano Olivetti to Jacques Maritain, 8 April 1952.

Aldo Moro, architects like Le Corbusier and Bruno Zevi and literary figures like T.S. Eliot and Eugenio Montale, but Maritain could muster only the slightest self-reproach: "Rimpiango che le circostanze non mi abbiano consentito di incontrarlo personalmente più spesso" ("Ricordo" 18). His generic remark that "da molto tempo […] seguivo con particolare interesse gli sviluppi del suo pensiero" (18) does little to convince us that the course of influence running from Maritain to Adriano was anything but a one-way street.

As regards Adriano's relationship with Mounier, this too began as a textual engagement: Adriano owned four books by the philosopher, and he mined them all extensively for usable ideas. Today, the volumes housed at the Fondazione Adriano Olivetti bear testimony to Adriano's highly-selective reading strategies, and his hand varies widely across the four Mounier books from black-pen arrows to red-pencil underlines. Since such elementary markings do not qualify as sustained interpretation, we must be careful not to give this type of evidence too much exegetical weight. Nevertheless, Adriano's personal copies of Mounier's books can deliver us directly to the pages and ideas that most sparked his interest.

Of all these books, there is not one whose physical state is uncompromised: clearly they have all been read thoroughly from cover to cover, carried around between various offices and employed at length in study and writing. But the one that shows the most signs of prolonged use—the one that includes most of Adriano's markings—is the 1936 Aubier volume *Manifeste au service du personnalisme*. Here, Mounier gives a general overview of his theory of personalism, which aims to cultivate not liberal individuals, nor totalitarian masses but rather spiritual persons. Personalism is a third-way alternative to both consumer capitalism and absolute collectivism, founded on the belief that every person is created by God and thus imbued with a spiritual capacity ripe for development. Based on Adriano's markings, he seems to have pinpointed the two central

emphases of Mounier's unfolding account. First, Mounier introduces the concept of person, stressing the primacy of that subjectivity as the ultimate guide for the organization of society; and second, he proposes a legal and political framework designed to protect the integrity of that person while providing for its spiritual development. In both cases, Mounier must administer a complex notion of temporality missing in Maritain, the latter being too concerned with eternal perfection to pose himself the question of social transformation. Mounier's theory of personalism needs a concept that can adequately explain precisely how the spiritual is manifest in time, and he finds that concept, especially in these sections, in the performance of human labor. When does individual labor become social, and when does social labor construct a civilization? What sort of labor is spiritual labor, and how do we know it pleases God? These are the kinds of questions raised in Adriano's privileged passages.

More than with any other part of *Manifeste au service du personnalisme*, Adriano must have sat longest with the section titled "Ni doctrinaire ni moraliste," because it is here that his personal copy shows the heaviest signs of intervention. In this section, Mounier worries that the twin ideologies of political doctrine and religious morality have come to constitute two different but equally dangerous measures of social reality. Though they claim to provide a transparent lens on the world that can explain and judge its development, in the view of Mounier these ideologies actually form an opaque surface that blocks all comprehension. Political doctrine and religious morality were supposed to be exegetical representations of social reality, but their evolution has been too incestual, with reference only to internal theoretical principles, and the languages they speak have lost all connection with their purported subject-matters. Marxists look at class struggle and Catholics look at the forces of good and evil, but neither group is capable of seeing the real development of society, which is driven forward entirely by human labor. Mounier thus insists on

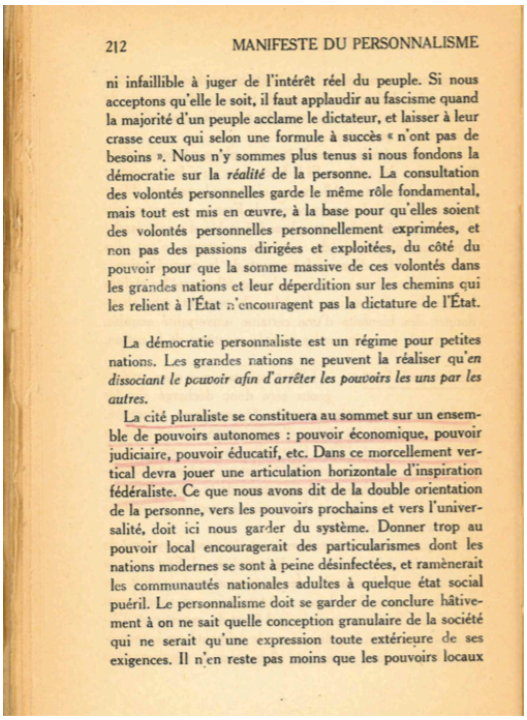
the complexity of reality, something that cannot be embraced by grand analytical models because it is always becoming, from moment to moment and from epoch to epoch, the sum total of all individual and social action. Adriano appears to have taken this point well, and he concentrated his underlines in Mounier's clearest passage: "Nous saisissons la civilisation dans toute son épaisseur. Elle est un amalgame de techniques, de structures et d'idées, mises en œuvre par des hommes, c'est-à-dire par des libertés créatrices. Elle est solidaire de tous ses éléments: un seul vient-il à manquer ou à se corrompre, sa carence compromet l'édifice tout entier."[17] By arguing against the presumed ideological excesses of both Marxism and Catholicism, Mounier seems to anticipate by more than a decade the polarized politics of Cold War Europe. By the time Adriano read the book in 1944, East and West represented distinctly differing visions of industrial modernity, and Mounier's interwar ideas must have struck Adriano as ready-made postwar solutions.[18] They suggest an ethics consonant with the philosophy of Maritain: a third-way alternative between Marxist liberation and Catholic renunciation that encourages a sustained dedication to social improvement as inspired by the tenets of personalism. For Mounier's concept of labor, which was to have a strong influence on Adriano, this means that all human activity must carefully contribute to the developing spiritual capacity imbued in each person by God.

Adriano was the first publisher to print any of Mounier's work in Italy, and this entailed making important decisions about which version of the philosopher was suitable for an Italian audience. In France, Mounier was known as a theologian, a teacher and a political commentator, but in Italy, under Adriano's direction, he was transformed into a third-way ethicist dealing with

[17] Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, Fondo Adriano Olivetti, Adriano Olivetti's personal copy of Mounier, Emmanuel. *Manifeste au service du personnalisme*. Aubier, 1936, pp. 10-1.
[18] The grotesque representation of two opposing and hopeless political cultures—one Catholic, one communist—was a commonplace of postwar Italian popular art. The most obvious example is Giovannino Guareschi's literary caricatures Don Camillo and Peppino, the former a politically engaged DC priest and the latter a communist mayor and leader of the local PCI section.

contemporary problems of Marxism and Catholicism. In March 1949, *Comunità* published a few short and anonymous paragraphs of introduction to Mounier's philosophy that seem to come straight from Adriano's reading of *Manifeste au service du personnalisme* and are almost certainly the words of the industrialist himself. Foregrounding the importance of third-way labor as the necessary motor of social progress, the anonymous writer recognizes in Mounier a "preoccupazione costante di non cadere nei tranelli di uno spiritualismo complice dell'ingiustizia sociale e una vigilanza acuta contro i pericoli di un 'tatticismo' che soffoca la generosità della lotta per un mondo migliore" (Anon, Introduction 7).

As regards a legal and political framework designed to protect against both excessively spiritual and tactical interpretations of social reality, the Mounier of *Manifeste au service du personnalisme* already had plenty to say. The section titled "L'équilibre des pouvoirs" outlines a set of practical proposals that received some of Adriano's most extensive markings. Mounier begins the section by affirming his strong belief in the institution of popular sovereignty, but he also warns that extremist political factions can sometimes manipulate expressions that appear completely free and democratic. Without mentioning Rousseau by name, Mounier's is a critique of the principle of the general will, something that he connects to totalitarian leadership long before the well-known accounts of Karl Popper (1945) and Bertrand Russell (1945). In order to guard popular sovereignty from the machinations of zealous agitators and the tyranny of a large majority, Mounier proposes that law and politics be formulated in accordance with two main rules: separate powers and decentralize political representation. Adriano would return to hark on both of these in his own writings, advocating a separation of powers into seven well-defined competencies (*L'Ordine politico* 84-5) and a decentralization of representative institutions from the level of the state to the level of the community (*L'Ordine politico* 43). For Adriano as for Mounier, these



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ni infaillible à juger de l'intérêt réel du peuple. Si nous acceptons qu'elle le soit, il faut applaudir au fascisme quand la majorité d'un peuple acclame le dictateur, et laisser à leur crasse ceux qui selon une formule à succès « n'ont pas de besoins ». Nous n'y sommes plus tenus si nous fondons la démocratie sur la *réalité* de la personne. La consultation des volontés personnelles garde le même rôle fondamental, mais tout est mis en œuvre, à la base pour qu'elles soient des volontés personnelles personnellement exprimées, et non pas des passions dirigées et exploitées, du côté du pouvoir pour que la somme massive de ces volontés dans les grandes nations et leur déperdition sur les chemins qui les relient à l'État n'encouragent pas la dictature de l'État.

La démocratie personnaliste est un régime pour petites nations. Les grandes nations ne peuvent la réaliser qu'*en dissociant le pouvoir afin d'arrêter les pouvoirs les uns par les autres.*

La cité pluraliste se constituera au sommet sur un ensemble de pouvoirs autonomes : pouvoir économique, pouvoir judiciaire, pouvoir éducatif, etc. Dans ce morcellement vertical devra jouer une articulation horizontale d'inspiration fédéraliste. Ce que nous avons dit de la double orientation de la personne, vers les pouvoirs prochains et vers l'universalité, doit ici nous garder du système. Donner trop au pouvoir local encouragerait des particularismes dont les nations modernes se sont à peine désinfectées, et ramènerait les communautés nationales adultes à quelque état social puéril. Le personnalisme doit se garder de conclure hâtivement à on ne sait quelle conception granulaire de la société qui ne serait qu'une expression toute extérieure de ses exigences. Il n'en reste pas moins que les pouvoirs locaux

Figure 3: One page from: Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, Fondo Adriano Olivetti, Adriano Olivetti's personal copy of Mounier, Emmanuel. *Manifeste au service du personnalisme*. Aubier, 1936.

measures were meant to sketch the far borders of a general social structure within which progress could be attained via practices of individual and collective labor. To this end, it was the following Mounier passage that caught Adriano's eye, and he underlined every word with a strong red pencil: "La cité pluraliste se constituera au sommet sur un ensemble de pouvoirs autonomes: pouvoir économique, pouvoir judiciaire, pouvoir éducatif, etc. Dans ce morcellement vertical devra jouer une articulation horizontale d'inspiration fédéraliste."[19]

As regards the relationship, so important in Maritain, between social progress and religious inspiration, Mounier too believes that temporal history is somehow guided in its development by eternal forces. But Mounier's philosophy is the more complex, and he is sure to identify and map out the precise territory of human agency, which in his analysis happens to coincide with the social

[19] Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, Fondo Adriano Olivetti, Adriano Olivetti's personal copy of Mounier, Emmanuel. *Manifeste au service du personnalisme*. Aubier, 1936, p. 212.

space of labor. It is ultimately the Holy Spirit that guides history toward its fulfilment in communion with God, but humans too can make their contribution by simply performing their worldly work. This is the heart of Mounier's philosophy of history, something that Adriano understood very well, and he deemed it worthy of translation for an Italian audience in the March 1949 issue of *Comunità*. Adriano chose the section titled "Acte de foi" from Mounier's 1936 Montaigne book *Révolution personnaliste et communautaire*, reprinting it as "Atto di fede" alongside a photograph of Mounier in Italy. "Lo sprito guida il mondo anche quando sembra di abbandonarlo"—the section proudly proclaims the primacy of the eternal over the temporal. But it also warns against exploiting this conviction as an excuse to avoid human labor: "non bisogna considerarla come una maschera per coprire la nostra indolenza a lavorare sul mondo, e a spingere la verità contro gli ostacoli" (7). In his own writings, Adriano was to draw heavily on Mounier's rendition of the role of labor in history, but as we will see in the final section of the present chapter he was also to place less emphasis on its overtly religious aspects.

Just from reading the Frenchman's books, Adriano already knew that he wanted to meet Mounier, and he was convinced that the two of them would quickly find the sort of personal chemistry required for long-term friendship. In May 1946, he decided to write to the philosopher in Paris, and he wasted no time by requesting forthwith the translation rights to *Révolution personnaliste et communautaire* for the Edizioni di Comunità.[20] Such a rash solicitation (it was the first letter they had ever exchanged) must have been somewhat off-putting, and Mounier wrote back to say no, he would not cede the rights to Adriano, nor to anyone else in Italy. But the philosopher also made Adriano a counter-offer: "Je vous serais obligé de bien vouloir me communiquer votre décision" on the Italian translation of a different book, *Manifeste au service*

[20] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Emmanuel Mounier (1) 15, Letter from Adriano Olivetti to Emmanuel Mounier, 29 May 1946.

du personnalisme.[21] We have already seen that Adriano was intimately familiar with this book, and based on the markings in his personal copy we know that it was already having a strong influence on the development of his own thought. But for some reason, Adriano did not want to publish *Manifeste au service du personnalisme*, and he twisted Mounier's attention back around to the original request: *Révolution personnaliste et communautaire*. Based on the historical documentation conserved at the Archivio Storico Olivetti, it is not possible to fill in all the details of the exchange between Adriano and Mounier. What few letters we have suggest that Mounier probably defended his refusal with a number of false excuses or real hinderances, including claiming, in late June 1946, that the Nazis had destroyed every last copy that might have been used for translation.[22] We may never know the minutiae of their back-and-forth, but what is certain is that by mid 1947 Adriano had convinced Mounier to let him publish *Révolution personnaliste et communautaire* in Italian. In October of that year, Adriano wrote to Laura Fuà confirming payment in the amount of 100,000 lire for the translation of *Rivoluzione personalista e comunitaria*, which was released by the Edizioni di Comunità in 1949.[23] *Manifeste au service du personnalisme*, on the contrary, was never printed in Italian, neither by the Edizioni di Comunità, nor by any other publishing house.

Rivoluzione personalista e comunitaria is the only Mounier book in the Edizioni di Comunità catalog, and it is thus the one that is most publicly attached to Adriano's name. Adriano did attempt to publish more and other books by Mounier, but his efforts were consumed in tedious copyright negotiations that we will have occasion to mention shortly. For now, and with the inside

[21] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Emmanuel Mounier (1) 15, Letter from Emmanuel Mounier to Adriano Olivetti, 16 June 1946.
[22] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Emmanuel Mounier (1) 15, Letter from SAMPO Olivetti to Adriano Olivetti, 25 June 1946.
[23] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Emmanuel Mounier (1) 15, Letter from Adriano Olivetti to Laura Fuà, 21 October 1947.

knowledge of Adriano's dogged pursuit of *Rivoluzione personalista e comunitaria*, we must remark that it is the book by Mounier that deals most centrally and explicitly with the concept of labor. This may help to explain Adriano's special attachment to the text, and much of his own writings on labor have their roots in these chapters by Mounier.

In *Rivoluzione personalista e comunitaria*, Mounier is broadly concerned with the discrepancy between two images of society: one present and corrupt, the other future and righteous. As regards present corruption, the undisputed culprit is the development of liberal capitalism, something that has made domineering egoism the law of all human relations (164). Against this image, Mounier foresees a future of selfless cooperation and mutual prosperity that rejects the anarchy of the market, but without falling into the trap of state socialism (220-2). The important question is how society will move (and how to move society) from its present corruption to its future righteousness. In other words, Mounier sets himself the task of identifying the motor force of history, and he claims to find it in a combination of divine spirit and human labor (59-60). Since humanity can do very little to influence an unknowable and untouchable divine spirit, Mounier's commandment is crystal-clear: work, labor, elaborate the physical world—it is through this process that the individual becomes a person and the material becomes spiritual (132-3). But if in his other writings Mounier assumes or implies a concept of labor, in *Rivoluzione personalista e comunitaria* he takes time to define and explicate it. In the section titled "Nota sul lavoro," the philosopher returns to the biblical understanding of labor as something fundamentally ambiguous: simultaneously punishment and fulfilment, destruction and construction. On the one hand, Mounier proclaims that "la sofferenza è un elemento essenziale del lavoro," but on the other hand, he insists that "il lavoro […] deve accompagnarsi come ogni atto a una gioia sostanziale" (226-7). As in Paul, so too in Mounier such a tension must resolve itself in the creation of a Christian

community modelled on the work of God during the genesis of humanity. Here we are so close to the original Pauline theory of community and labor, and so close to what will become Adriano's own philosophy, that we are obliged to quote Mounier at some length, keeping in mind that what remain to be discussed are all these influences in Adriano:

> Il lavoro, coi suoi prodotti come col suo esercizio, crea fra tutti coloro che vi si dedicano una comunità stretta e il sentimento di partecipare non già ad una solidarietà astratta e utilitaria, ma a un servizio utile a un nucleo sociale. [La] gioia [del lavoro] può arricchirsi di una luce nuova quanto più il lavoro si allieta di un carattere di gioco e di poesia: allora il lavoro si espande in un canto, come, per esempio, nel teatro (*Manifeste* 227).

The overall effect that Mounier's work had on Adriano was to force him to interrogate the concept of labor: What is labor? What can it do? To whom does it belong? Who can claim its fruits? It does not seem that Adriano was very interested in having Mounier's perspective on his own writings, and he never asked the philosopher for feedback on *L'Ordine poltico della Comunità*, nor on *Società, Stato, Comunità* or on any other work. Still, he was happy to develop his own ideas in active conversation with Mounier, and by late 1947 he was already encouraging the Frenchman to pay him a personal visit: "Je suis heureax de vous confirmer que votre visite en Italie, visite attendue avec plaisir," wrote Adriano, "peut avoir lieu n'importe quand."[24] As it turns out, Mounier was glad to comply, and he came to Italy in November of that same year, delivering lectures in Turin, Milan and Rome under the auspices of Adriano's newly-founded cultural organization, the Movimento Comunità (Ochetto 129-30). Adriano paid all travel expenses and begged Mounier to focus "si possible sur un thème nettement personnaliste et Communautaire," while the philosopher agreed to cede *Comunità* an option to print some of his work in Italian.[25] This deal resulted in the publication of two short articles, both attempting to reconcile Christianity

[24] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Emmanuel Mounier (1) 15, Letter from Adriano Olivetti to Emmanuel Mounier, 10 October 1947.
[25] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Emmanuel Mounier (1) 15, Letter from Adriano Olivetti to Emmanuel Mounier, 10 October 1947.

Figure 4: Emmanuel Mounier in Florence from: *Comunità*, vol 3, no 2, 1949.

and Marxism, and released in consecutive issues from December 1947 ("Cristiani" and "Condizioni").

In addition to these writings, and along with *Rivoluzione personalista e comunitaria*, Adriano wanted to publish other Mounier books, especially the 1946 Éditions du Seuil treatise *Liberté sous conditions*. Elio Vittorini agreed to draft the translation on an Olivetti typewriter provided expressly for that purpose,[26] and the Edizioni di Comunità purchased the rights for 29,500 lire.[27] But no sooner had Vittorini begun the translation than Adriano made an unsettling discovery: part of *Liberté sous conditions* was already available in Italian—it had been published in 1947 by

[26] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Emmanuel Mounier (1) 4, Letter from the Edizioni di Comunità to Elio Vittorini, 11 March 1948.
[27] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Emmanuel Mounier (1) 4, Letter from the Edizioni di Comunità to Spett. Ditta Vittorio Gatti, Editore, 30 April 1948.

a certain Gatti Editore as *Dalla proprietà capitalista alla proprietà umana*. It would add little to the present chapter to recount here the ensuing legal battle between Gatti Editore and the Edizioni di Comunità, an affair that dragged on for more than ten months and seriously tested Adriano's patience. Suffice it to say that it provided the occasion for Mounier to intervene many times in support of Adriano, castigating the unethical scheming of Vittorio Gatti and joking that "même si l'editeur avait cru comprendre de ma part [d'avoir donné oralement l'autorisation] à une date que j'ignore, il aurait dû signer un traité."[28] At the end of the fiasco, Gatti Editore was forced to reimburse the Edizioni di Comunità for the unusable translation rights, at which point *Dalla proprietà capitalista alla proprietà umana* became an authorized Mounier publication.[29] Some years later, Mounier's 1950 Presse Universitaire de France book *Le personnalisme* entered Adriano's personal library, where its hand-written dedication still testifies to the reciprocal fondness between two communitarian intellectuals: "Pour M. Adriano Olivetti. Dans les pensées communes en souvenir amical. E. Mounier."[30]

Adriano Olivetti's Theory of Community and Labor

It would be too reductive to say that Adriano's own philosophy simply puts Maritain's concept of community together with Mounier's concept of labor, but nevertheless this is one easy and helpful way of characterizing the development in its broadest possible outlines. In what remains of the present chapter we will need to fill in all the details, to show precisely how in Adriano's own writings community is always the product of labor, and labor always provides the building blocks

[28] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Emmanuel Mounier (1) 4, Letter from Emmanuel Mounier to Monsieur Parri, Editore, 22 March 1948.
[29] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Edizioni di Comunità, Corrispondenza, Corrispondenza con Emmanuel Mounier (1) 4, Letter from Edizioni di Comunità to Vittorio Gatti, 17 January 1949.
[30] Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, Fondo Adriano Olivetti, Adriano Olivetti's personal copy of Mounier, Emmanuel. *Le personnalisme*. Presse Universitaire de France, 1950.

of community. If on the one hand we have stressed the fact that Adriano's communities of labor represent a development of the ideas of Maritain and Mounier, on the other hand they are closely related to the Pauline theory and thus hark back to previous models. This is the particularity of Adriano's thought: he moves forward through Maritain and Mounier by moving backward toward Paul, but together with all of the sedimented discussion of community and labor developed in the course of almost two millennia. Parts of Adriano's writings are deeply religious, including passages from "Democrazia senza partiti" that we have already addressed here. But considered as a total contribution to the history of philosophy, Adriano's thought ultimately distinguishes itself from Paul's by rejecting the necessarily religious basis of laboring communities along with, moreover, the necessarily religious basis of Christianity in its entirety. This is not to say that Adriano did not believe personally in the divinity of Jesus Christ, and if conviction is something that can be communicated in writing, then in my opinion Adriano's work is that of someone who is convinced through and through. But according to him, belief in Christ's divinity was really neither here nor there; much more important was the recognition of Christ's humanity, the acceptance of his ethical message as enshrined in the gospels. In genealogical terms, Adriano's philosophy can therefore be summarized thus: it recombines the concepts of community and labor, as developed separately by Maritain and Mounier, restoring the unity found in the letters of Paul, but also effecting a partial secularization of that unity—that is, displacing it downward from the level of metaphysics to the sphere of ethics.

The concept of humanity deserves further attention here. The historian Edmund E. Jacobitti (3) locates the origins of a specifically 'Italian' understanding of humanity and humanism in the historical and intellectual context of pre-unification Naples. In Giambattista Vico's time (the *Nuova scienza* was published in 1725), Neapolitan thought developed a powerful alternative to

both Roman Catholicism and European Enlightenment philosophy. While the latter two measured humanity against transcendental ideas of perfection and stability, Neapolitan thinkers, from Vico to Benedetto Croce and beyond, interested themselves in what humanity actually *was* (what it had been, what it could become) immanently. Moreover, they argued that the ideas of perfection and stability posited by Catholic and Enlightenment philosophies were not discoveries of the human mind, but rather its inventions. In Jacobitti's words, this new and

> concrete humanism, this hostility to abstract Enlightenment natural laws as well as to the transcendent Christian religion, marks the uniqueness and the prescience of modern Italian thought, the first formulation of that modern equation of humanism and historicism which stated that man and man alone had created this world and therefore man alone had the capacity and duty to remake the world (6).

Such an understanding of humanity, its capabilities and responsibilities was central to Adriano's philosophy, where the labor of men and women and the building of community was only empowered by the development of industrial society.

I have tried to capture the complexity of Adriano's philosophy in the title to this dissertation by foregrounding the category 'community of labor,' but we should be very clear here that such language has few and weak roots in Adriano's own writings. As far as I can tell, Adriano used the phrase 'community of labor' only once in his entire life, and within the context of a list of economic formations where each item was clearly meant to have a very narrow and technical application: "Democrazia industriale, Comunità di lavoro, Comunità di fabbrica, Fondazioni autonome" ("Società e stato" 28)—in his eyes, these formations were the strongest evidence for popular social organization in postwar Italy.

If we want to get an idea for what Adriano actually meant by "Comunità di lavoro," then the best we can do is rely on the writings of his close friend and collaborator, Franco Ferrarotti. In his 1950 Edizioni di Comunità book *Premesse al sindacalismo autonomo*, Ferrarotti explicitly

treats the phrase in a few short pages that give us insight into what it must have meant at the Olivetti company, the Movimento Comunità and elsewhere. According to Ferrarotti (51-2), the phrase 'comunità di lavoro' comes out of post-First World War Germany, where politicians like Walther Rathenau, Karl Liegen and Adam Stegerwald theorized the concept of *Arbeitsgemeinshaften*: a collection of laboring communities charged with reconstructing the country in the months after the Treaty of Versailles. This was transformed from a social vision into a codified institution with the incorporation of *Arbeitsgemeinshaften* into the 1919 Weimar Constitution, where it became a legally protected partnership between the working class and the owners of the means of production. With the rise of the Nazis, the concept fled quickly underground (or, rather, Ferrarotti avoids considering the role of labor in the *Volksgemeinschaft*), and it reemerged across the Rhine in France with the work of the economist François Perroux. Starting in 1937, Perroux used the concept of *communauté de travail* to construct a political system in which labor and capital received equal institutional representation, and at the expense of state control. If Ferrarotti's discussion of 'comunità di lavoro' reveals anything, it is that the phrase and the concept attached to it have never had a stable meaning. They appear very briefly in Maritain (*Cristianesimo e democrazia* 144-9) in reference to a self-conscious and European-wide working class, but not in Mounier, who is too philosophical to deal with such concrete social formations. Adriano's mention of "Comunità di lavoro" likely reverberates with all these meanings: it includes specific experimental histories from across twentieth-century Europe, but also a general abstract interrogation of the conceptual relationship between community and labor.

A quick glance down the list of projects that Adriano promoted exposes the rather open secret that he privileged the concept of community: Edizioni di Comunità, Movimento Comunità, Centri Comunitari, *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità*—the list goes on and on. It would seem

superfluous to remark here that of the concepts of community and labor, community is the more complex in Adriano's philosophy. Labor, on the contrary, is surprisingly straightforward: it basically means human activity, whether regular and remunerated work or *ad hoc* and goal-driven performance. The factory worker labors on the production lines, but so too do the shop owner on the sales floor, the bus rider on the commuter route, the schoolchildren in the classroom, and even the family on vacation. They all modify the physical and social world in one way or another, making unequal but decisive contributions to the dynamic montage of community.

The concept of labor was central to debates about the reconstruction of Italian society after the Second World War, and the Constitution of the Italian Republic (adopted in 1947) makes the connection between labor and community an absolute priority. Article 1 reads: "l'Italia è una Repubblica democratica, fondata sul lavoro" (Senato della Repubblica Italiana 8). Such language was meant to accommodate the labor philosophies of both Catholics and Communists, the two main actors in the resistance against Nazi-Fascism and the perceived redeemers of the Italian national community. But Adriano's concept of labor is again more expansive than this: it is not merely 'lavoro' in the sense of a legislated jobs guarantee; it coincides in its entirety with the verb 'fare.'

As for 'community,' the word today might be readily associated with the fact of togetherness, a feeling of belonging, acts of cooperation and the like, but such intuitions only place us in the general vicinity, bringing us up short with respect to the concept of community as developed by Adriano. If we want to bridge the gap, then we must grasp the following insight: that for Adriano the word 'community' is almost always a technical term. Especially where he writes 'Comunità' with an upper-case 'C,' Adriano does not mean 'comunità' in the conventional sense: he means a specific unit of social organization as theorized in his magnum opus, the appropriately-

titled political treatise *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità*. The 'Comunità' hypothesis is a proposal to institute a new administrative geography that is simultaneously smaller than the Stato and Regione but larger than the Vicinanza and Comune. In Adriano's opinion, all politics and government should be concentrated at the level of the 'Comunità,' a historically and culturally coherent territory made up of 75,000 to 150,000 inhabitants (*L'Ordine politico* 36). Indeed, he insists that the Italian situation practically demands the 'Comunità' system: the peninsula has developed into a patchwork of precisely these territories, all suffering from a lack of autonomous administrative authority. The best way to encourage meaningful civic participation is to decentralize power from the state to the community, and Adriano riffs on the well-known Soviet slogan by declaring "tutto il potere alle Comunità!" ("Democrazia" 151).

During the most frightful days of the Second World War, it became clear to Adriano that the future organization of Italian society would be settled chiefly by the United States. This spurred him into action, and he scrambled to get the 'Comunità' proposal into the hands of international decisionmakers. Adriano travelled to Switzerland, where he knocked unsolicited on the door of the American Embassy, and it seems that the OSS was happy to have the cooperation of such an influential Italian businessman. He probably performed at length an animated and detailed rendition of the central points from *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità*, but Ochetto reports that the Americans were less than impressed.[31] In Ochetto's telling, Adriano was too hopeful, theoretical, even wildly dreamy to convince the OSS director Allen Dulles of the feasibility of his 'Comunità' solution: "ha esposto i suoi piani, soprattutto le sue teorie sul dopoguerra, a un interlocutore al quale interessano invece le informazioni strategiche" (104).

[31] It is also likely that the OSS suspected Adriano may be a communist. Later on, American intelligence determined that this was not the case, and that Adriano and the Olivetti company represented an opportunity to encourage democratic participation in Italian culture. For more on this, see Bonifazio, Paola. *Schooling in Modernity: The Politics of Sponsored Films in Postwar Italy*. University of Toronto Press, 2014, p. 81.

Reading Ochetto's account, one gets the impression that the concept of 'Comunità' was so abstract and mercurial that not even Adriano really understood what it was all about. But if we look at Adriano's writings, then we see that this is not the case at all: Adriano did not mince words, he knew exactly what he wanted and he described how to achieve it to a T. In a 1954 article titled "La dimensione 'ottima' dell'autogoverno locale," the industrialist-philosopher went out of his way to outline, point-by-point, what it would take to build a real 'Comunità':

> Le condizioni per attuare la Comunità mi sembrano le seguenti:
> 1) un *optimum* spazio vitale organizzabile: un territorio;
> 2) una struttura amministrativa adeguata;
> 3) l'organizzazione della Comunità in vista dei suoi fini ultimi, attraverso un piano formale che descriverò in seguito;
> 4) il miglioramento della vita sociale ispirato ai valori spirituali (45).

However complex Adriano's concept of community, it was always subject to the litmus test of its own realizability: it was frequently adjectivized as "una Comunità *concreta*," something that could, in the frank words of its creator, "far coincidere su di un solo territorio l'unità amministrativa, l'unità politica e l'unità economica" ("Come nasce" 20).

So much for Adriano's two concepts of community and labor as treated in isolation from one another. The more important discussion revolves around the precise process of their recombination: How did Adriano take what he had learned from both Maritain and Mounier, reviving the Pauline theory of community and labor but without all the religious overtones? Adriano knew enough about sociology to understand that the study of civilization demands not only an attention to the development of social processes in and of themselves, but also a close consideration of the conditions of their possibility. In his opinion, community and labor could not be effectively harmonized outside of the fulfillment of a certain set of social accomplishments which corresponded, for all intents and purposes, to the concrete realization of a living 'Comunità.' Thus we cannot ascribe the category 'community of labor' to any social geography of Adriano's

time; a laboring community would require the sort of administrative decentralization that makes community immediately felt as the product of local labor and local labor tangible in the surrounding community. For this reason, Adriano's communities of labor are often imagined as possible futures, such as the one he paints in the 1952 article "L'industria nell'ordine delle Comunità." As the title suggests, Adriano's goal here is to define the role of industry in his 'Comunità' system, something that provides the perfect context for describing the contributions of factory work to the development and reproduction of social cohesion. The contrast with the reigning form of industrial capitalism is salient:

> La gioia nel lavoro, oggi negata al più gran numero di lavoratori dell'industria moderna, potrà finalmente tornare a scaturire allorquando il lavoratore comprenderà che il suo sforzo, la sua fatica, il suo sacrificio—che pur sarà sempre sacrificio—è materialmente e spiritualmente legato ad una entità nobile ed umana che egli è in grado di percepire, misurare, controllare poiché il suo lavoro servirà a potenziare quella Comunità, viva, reale, tangibile, laddove egli ed i suoi figli hanno vita, legami, interessi (46).

The image of a community of labor thus remains subordinated to the political project of *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità*, but it also enjoys the status of crowning example of the sorts of things that might be realized under a new and revolutionized administrative order.

Adriano fully understood the rhetorical power of such an image—its integral narrative of reciprocal development between the individual and the collective, its connection to storytelling (anyone can picture the surrounding world unfolding as a result of vibrant human activity)—and he called upon it sparingly but effectively wherever there was a large and non-specialized audience to entertain. One such place was the new Olivetti factory in Pozzuoli, where Adriano gave the inaugural speech in April 1955. "Ai lavoratori di Pozzuoli" is today the most cited of Adriano's many public statements, and much of its rhetorical strength derives from the central and meticulous account of a laboring community. This is the ego-ideal of the Pozzuoli factory, the community of labor it is destined to become: "Lavorando ogni giorno tra le pareti della fabbrica e le macchine e

i banchi e gli altri uomini per produrre qualcosa che vediamo correre nelle vie del mondo e ritornare a noi in salari che sono poi pane, vino e casa, partecipiamo ogni giorno alla vita pulsante della fabbrica" (167-8). The objectification of labor denounced in Marx finds its resolution in the community of labor (the *noi* of "vediamo" and "partecipiamo") announced by Adriano. Whether Pozzuoli would live up to such a wholesome image is another question entirely, one that will be addressed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

That Adriano's philosophy is firmly rooted in the tradition of Christian theology is evident from the genealogy developed thus far: he combines aspects of the letters of Saint Paul with the theories of Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier, and to these must be added the names of minor Christian influences who appear in the catalog of the Edizioni di Comunità—Sören Kierkegaard, Denis de Rougemont, Simone Weil and others. But Adriano's approach to questions of religion is basically that of an agnostic: it may be true that Christ is the divine savior, as it may be false—human knowledge simply cannot comprehend the metaphysical reality of such absolute claims. Rather than negate the grounds for belief, this liminal predicament is the condition of it, transforming necessity into freedom by making the profession of faith an active (and always uncertain) human choice. Christianity is thus thrown open even to the avid nonbelievers: it becomes a simple ethics that, in the words of Adriano, upholds the trinity of "*amore*, *verità*, *carità*" (*L'Ordine politico* 45, emphasis in the original). Anyone who acts in accordance with these values is, as far as Adriano is concerned, a Christian: love, truth, charity—these can be accepted "da cattolici e non cattolici, da credenti e da non credenti" (*L'Ordine politico* 45). Certainly there is something problematic about Adriano's commandment in *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità* that "la legge superiore della Comunità è l'Evangelo" (44), especially in light of subsequent histories involving the development of theocracy and the gradual violation of church-state separation. This

is one of the pressure points where, pushed just a bit, Adriano's heritage becomes deeply ambiguous, and those in control of the standard Olivetti narrative have been very careful to avoid the question of religion.

In Adriano's opinion, the Italian people are generally faithful to two very similar churches: Christianity and socialism. His proof is in the election results of the first Republican legislature (1948), where more than 85 percent of the votes went to either the DC or the Fronte Democratico Popolare, under the guidance of the PCI. But Adriano contests the illegitimate hegemony of both centralized parties, insisting that the Italian people had something slightly different on their minds. "Milioni di voti sono stati dati al *cristianesimo* e non a una particolare struttura di partito, milioni di voti sono andati al *socialismo* e non a una particolare struttura di partito" he reasons, "onde il significato è chiaro: il popolo italiano è socialista ed è cristiano. Potrebbe dirsi semplicemente socialista perché *naturalmente* cristiano" ("L'Industria" 43, emphasis in the original). Just like Croce, whose signature appeared first on the March 1948 manifesto "Europa, cultura e libertà," Adriano was worried about the polarization of DC-PCI politics and the subordination of cultural production to the political directives of the Communists (Rizi 256-7).

Adriano would not live long enough to see the end of the blocked democracy, with the admittance in 1963 of the PSI to Prime Minister Aldo Moro's first government. What he would see was the growing tension between a party that called itself 'Christian' and the principles of a genuinely Christian ethics that he recognized as belonging to the gospels. Unlike De Gasperi's DC, for whom religion served the function of a smokescreen, Adriano's professed goal was "lo stabilirsi di una civiltà cristiana" ("Democrazia" 159), much closer to other party currents like the Cronache sociali or Politica sociali. He had plenty of time to reassure his readers against a narrowly theological interpretation of his philosophy: "non implica per nessuna una sottomissione *politica*

all'autorità religiosa, ma è il riconoscimento definitivo da parte dei laici credenti e non credenti, cattolici e non cattolici, dei valori spirituali eterni contenuti nell'evangelo" ("Democrazia" 160, emphasis in the original). Whether Maritain and Mounier would have agreed with such a tenuous declaration—and indeed whether Adriano agreed with it himself—is a matter for debate.

Part II
Making Culture Industrial, Making Industry Cultural

Chapter 2
Architecture and Urban Planning: Ivrea and Other Concrete Utopias

Adriano Olivetti has been called many names, both during his lifetime and since his death, by collaborators and critics from across the entire political spectrum. But no name has been more unrelenting than the one with which Adriano's detractors have sought to preempt any discussion of his accomplishments: 'utopista.' Adriano was a utopian, such critics insist, because his grand dream for a complete reorganization of Italian society, as laid out in his 1945 Nuove Edizioni Ivrea treatise *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità*, was so wildly unrealistic that it must have been the result of delusion, if not an underhanded joke. Even I have taken up the position in the introduction to this dissertation that Adriano's 'Comunità' system was from its inception impractical insofar as it foresaw an immense redistribution of wealth and political power from the hands of the business élite to those of the laboring masses, and without raising the obvious problem of resistance. Adriano was guilty of that excess of hope in a new world that accompanied the transition from Fascism to democracy, and thus as long as our analysis remains at the abstract level of political philosophy we cannot help but agree that Adriano was an 'utopista.'

But the moment we move closer to any one of Adriano's projects or initiatives the charge of utopianism quickly exposes itself as a crude misnomer. Against such a charge, Adriano was highly pragmatic, if selective, in what we might call 'geographies of intervention'—Ivrea, the Canavese, the Valle d'Aosta, Matera, La Martella, Pozzuoli. It would seem silly to insist with anyone who lived here during the middle years of the twentieth century that their medical services,

libraries, movie theaters, sports groups, cultural programs, apartment buildings and more were nothing but the byproducts of impractical utopianism. Adriano did make a real difference in the physical and social transformation of local life, and if we want to understand the relationship between community and labor that is our central concern here then we must skirt the concept of utopianism and descend to these geographies of intervention.

Such an approach was already advocated by Adriano's own daughter Laura Olivetti who regretted that her father's name was so tied to the word 'utopista.' "Personalmente ho sempre sentito un moto di profonda ribellione verso questo aggettivo," Laura lamented, "poiché mi pare che all'idea sia seguita l'azione e infatti restano segni molto concreti del suo aver pensato e operato" (XIII-XIV). With regard to Adriano's critics we can underwrite Laura's amusing remark that "tranne rarissimi casi, quando viene spiegato perché [Adriano] fosse un utopista si elencano automaticamente molte cose invece portate a termine e la parola utopia si dissolve" (XIII-XIV).

In this chapter, I will focus on Adriano's most intimate geography of intervention: Ivrea. Nowhere outside of his hometown did Adriano's ideas have a more concrete impact on daily life, and nowhere else was Adriano so successful in realizing what we are calling a community of labor. Take for example the testimony of Olivetti company employee Alberto Berghino, a foundry worker who arrived at Ivrea in 1953:

> [Ricordo] i servizi sociali che venivano offerti. Quelli sanitari: infermeria gratuita, odontoiatra, medico (anamnesi personale); le biblioteche a disposizione di tutti (90,000 volumi); il cineclub; il gruppo sportivo; al "Salone dei Duemila" venivano invitati attori (ricordo Gassman e altri) e personalità della cultura: da mezzogiorno alle due, un migliaio di persone di tutti i ceti era lì ad ascoltare; inoltre, le case dei dipendenti Olivetti (Novara et al 250).

Such a system of social services was realized with an eye toward Olivetti company employees, but it also enjoyed active and widespread participation from the general public.

Neither the English- nor the Italian-language scholarship on Adriano offers an exhaustive account of the history of Olivetti company social services in Ivrea, and we must thus attempt to develop such an account in this chapter.[32] But first, there is something more to be said about the debate over Adriano's utopianism. While Adriano's detractors and his defenders may disagree about the appropriateness of the word 'utopista,' all seem to accept that utopianism is an insult and—what is more telling—incompatible with politics. We have seen how Laura Olivetti categorically denied all talk of utopianism in discussion of her father's legacy, and scholars on both sides of the Atlantic have made efforts to protect Adriano's memory from the charge. One recent case comes from the historian Matthew Collins, who has sought to reframe Adriano's Ivrea as an instance of what Foucault called 'heterotopias.' For Collins, heterotopias are "microcosmic embodiments of the unachievable macrocosmic utopia" (3), a gloss that nicely rejoins Adriano's local accomplishments to his global aspirations. But even Collins disapproves of utopianism, insisting that in discussions of Adriano's legacy "utopia may not be the right term to use" (1).

But there is no obvious reason why utopianism should be anathema to politics or—what is a more plain way of putting it—why Adriano's global aspirations should have hindered his local accomplishments. On the contrary, it would be more helpful to think about utopia *as* politics insofar as all political activity must posit as an end goal a global image of society: a utopia. Such a utopia is an ideal type, unrealized and unrealizable. Like the target of an asymptotic curve it is approached but never reached, something that does not diminish its guiding power. Utopias

[32] There do exist two very helpful accounts, but neither of them can be considered serious scholarship. One is a commemorative book self-published by the Olivetti company for its fiftieth anniversary: Ing. C. Olivetti & Co. *Olivetti, 1908-1958*. Ing. C. Olivetti & C., 1958. The other is a brochure-guide to Ivrea's Museo all'aperto di architettura moderna: Bonifazio, Patrizia and Paolo Scrivano. *Olivetti Builds: Modern Architecture in Ivrea*. Skira, 2001.

become goals but never achievements; they are the imagined global models for local political activity.

Such an understanding of the relationship between utopia and politics can help us to reconsider Adriano's utopianism as something desirable and even necessary. The physical and social transformation of Ivrea that will be our central concern here was, far from a retreat from Adriano's utopian aspirations, a move toward their fulfilment. This was captured nicely in the title of a recent book by Franco Ferrarotti (2013), and I have borrowed such language in order to focus our discussion of Ivrea as a "concrete utopia."

Olivetti Company Social Services in Ivrea

Of all the towns whose history dovetails with that of the Olivetti company, Ivrea has certainly enjoyed the most profound and lasting effects of such a relationship. The interpenetration of civic and industrial concerns, which developed most intensely during the course of Adriano's life, has been so complete so as to earn Ivrea the UNESCO designation of "Industrial City of the Twentieth Century." Nevertheless, the Olivetti company's interventions in the urban fabric were affected in highly concentrated areas that make up, more than a homogeneous company town, a cluster of diverse working-class neighborhoods.

Adriano did harbor ambitions for a total reorganization of the town's physical and social geography, and we will deal with his efforts in such a direction further on in this chapter. What is important here is to point out that such efforts were consistently frustrated by bureaucratic difficulties, forcing Adriano into very specific and undeveloped zones where he could rely on the private initiative of the Olivetti company.

Such a practice had already been inaugurated by Adriano's father Camillo who in 1894 chose to build Ivrea's first industrial factory in an empty field well beyond the town center (Caizzi

19-20). When the Olivetti company moved there in 1908 the surrounding land was still largely undeveloped, offering the possibility of close growth that might include productive machinery but also social services for the workers drawn in by industrial employment. Camillo acquired the land adjacent the factory to the north, where in 1926 the first Olivetti company workers' housing quarters opened (Bonifazio and Scrivano 149). The land was developed and expanded throughout the 1930s to form the company's first working-class neighborhood, financed with industrial profits and appropriately named 'Borgo Olivetti.' Because Borgo Olivetti includes the first company factory and all the additions it has garnered over the course of a century and more, it is usually considered Ivrea's industrial district *par excellence* and indeed it enjoyed disproportionate coverage in the recent UNESCO decision. We should thus focus our attention on Borgo Olivetti as a first site for the exploration of the development of Ivrea as a community of labor, a concentrated geography where the concerns of the Olivetti company were conjugated with those of civic life.

The 'fabbrica in mattoni rossi,' as the 1896 factory is still affectionately called, was the beating heart of the Olivetti company's early production and it has been elevated to the status of a mythical *topos* in the lore of industrial history. According to the standard Olivetti narrative, it was here that Camillo first and then Adriano dreamed up a line of typewriters that would revolutionize the modern office, devising brilliant solutions to the problems of industrial organization and exhorting the workers to showcase their superior skill and dedication. Recent research has begun the long process of exposing the holes to such a simplistic narrative, mainly by dethroning the Olivetti patriarchs and restoring to the center of attention the immediate producers of the company's economic and social value: the workers. Juliet Guzzetta (291-306) has gone one step further, under the guidance of autonomist Marxist feminism, reconceiving the motor of value

production certainly in the factory workers but especially in the non-waged labor outside and surrounding the factory, the 'women's work' necessary for the reproduction of the company's social relations. For Guzzetta such labor is embodied in the housework of Camillo's mother Elvira Sacerdoti and his wife (Adriano's mother) Luisa Revel, both of whom were integral to the early success of the Olivetti company but both of whose histories have been erased according to the demands of a masculinist and productivist labor historiography.

Guzzetta is certainly right in emphasizing the importance of women's work in the community surrounding the fabbrica in mattoni rossi, but what I want to point out here is that the same gendered labor regime was also operative inside the Borgo Olivetti factory. As a result of the biased historiography that Guzzetta so skillfully exposes, there exist no histories of women's work during the Olivetti company's first decades. But what we do have is a small number of photographs from the inside the factory, all taken during the working day and clearly showing that industrial labor was women's labor. The amount of information concentrated in these photographs is truly astounding, and we should take up one example if we want to peek into the early years of Borgo Olivetti.

In the commemorative book *Olivetti, 1908-1958*, self-published in 1958 in celebration of the Olivetti company's fiftieth anniversary, the writer Libero Bigiaretti (33-6) honors Camillo's first associate, the late Domenico Burzio, with a short essay about his life and work. Bigiaretti's essay thus falls in line with the standard Olivetti narrative insofar as it seeks to present the company history in relation to the activity of one of Ivrea's most powerful men. But the accompanying photograph of Burzio on the job shows him standing around in sober conversation while a group of women work at his back. Such a photograph brings us inside the factory at Borgo Olivetti and evidences the gendered division of labor there between male-centered intellectual and female-

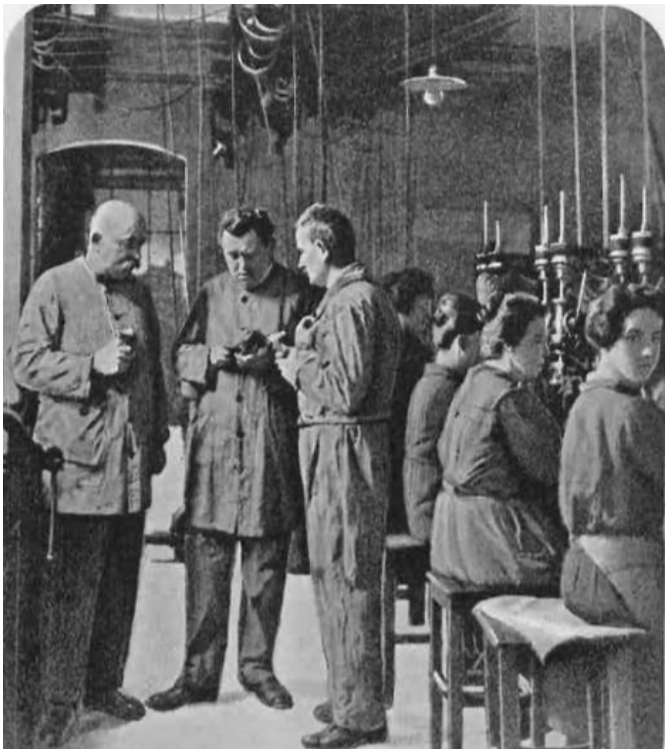

Figure 5: Domenico Burzio and female workers from: Ing. C. Olivetti & Co. *Olivetti, 1908-1958*. Ing. C. Olivetti & C., 1958.

centered manual jobs. The manual laborers have been pushed to the edges of the frame, as if in an attempt to erase their history, but the most marginalized woman—whose face is about to be forced out—stares steadfast into the camera's lens, as if to challenge us the viewers to recognize her labor.

It is difficult to know how many of Camillo's workers were women, but some early yearbook-style photographs of the factory staff suggest that they made up about fifty percent, certainly providing more than half of all the company's manual labor (Ing. C. Olivetti & C., *Olivetti, 1908-1958* 26). If the 'fabbrica in mattoni rossi' was the beating heart of Borgo Olivetti then the lifeblood of such a neighborhood was that of anonymous female laborers.

When Adriano became general director of the Olivetti company in 1933 he made the development of social services in Borgo Olivetti a top priority. Two years of experience at the Olivetti company advertising office in Milan had acquainted him with the rationalist architects Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini, and he brought the duo back to Ivrea, giving them free reign on the

land surrounding the factory. Figini and Pollini's first move was to expand the factory itself, something that they would do four times between 1934 and 1958 (Brennan, *Olivetti: A Working Model of Utopia* 85). With this the label 'fabbrica in mattoni rossi' lost something of its currency, as the expansions were forged in a combination of steel and glass that was the signature style of the rationalist vernacular. Each successive step saw the Olivetti factory spread further down Via Castellamonte, and the smooth façade came to dominate the neighborhood with its intimations of modernity, organization, efficiency and prosperity.

Like Camillo before them so Adriano, Figini and Pollini all understood that production was only one moment in the life of the Olivetti company, and they began to organize the leisure time of Borgo Olivetti's growing workforce with multiple new housing projects in 1937 and 1940 (Bonifazio and Scrivano 149). These were complete with shared services like running water and waste disposal, some of the first modern utilities in Ivrea. They were followed in 1941 by the first Olivetti nursery school, where the children of company employees enjoyed free education based on the ideals of creative play rather than those of rigid instruction (Bonifazio and Scrivano 24).

At the same time that Borgo Olivetti was developing into a community of labor, Camillo and Adriano made efforts to connect the new neighborhood with the rest of Ivrea and with the surrounding region. This they did both in terms of material infrastructure and in terms of social programs that sought to manage risk and resources across the community at large. Thus by the outbreak of the Second World War Borgo Olivetti was the center of a complex welfare system that traversed the neighborhood while transcending its boundaries, including a commuter bus network, an industrial research center, a doctor who made house calls and another who remained inside the factory, a cafeteria, a library, and a company savings bank plus generous compensation packages comprising nine months of maternity leave, zero-interest mortgages, accommodation in the

Olivetti company convalescence home and visitation rights to a number of seaside and mountaintop vacation camps acquired and developed under Adriano's direction (Ochetto 68-70).

Borgo Olivetti became a sort of model for other Olivetti company neighborhoods that cropped up in Ivrea during the 1940s and 1950s. As the factory spread southwest along Via Castellamonte Figini and Pollini followed closely with new housing projects some of which were too far from Borgo Olivetti to be considered part of that neighborhood. Around the two most peripheral high-rises, built in the late 1940s, they developed a new company neighborhood, appropriately named Castellamonte after its only means of access. Castellamonte was inaugurated in 1942 with the opening of seven two-story apartment buildings, all designed in the austere quadrangular style that was a visual hallmark of Mussolini's regime (Bonifazio and Scrivano 150). The neighborhood was expanded after the war by Adriano's long-time collaborator Marcello Nizzoli who worked alongside the architect Giuseppe Maria Olivieri to open six more housing projects there by 1952 (Bonifazio and Scrivano 152). What is remarkable about these projects is that, unlike anything else in Castellamonte or Borgo Olivetti, they were self-contained one-family and two-family homes destined not to waged factory workers but rather to salaried company managers. Thus the social transformations of the postwar period were reflected in the urban fabric of Adriano's Ivrea.

Nizzoli and Olivieri's final contribution to the development of Castellamonte came in 1955, with the opening of a new high-rise apartment building for eighteen middle class families (Bonifazio and Scrivano 152). Such a building was complete with a ground level parking structure and long inter-apartment balconies that allowed for constant communication and encouraged active engagement in community life. The model proved immediately successful, and the building was expanded many times during its first years, receiving more than sixty families by 1958.

With the rapid expansion during the 1940s of Castellamonte from the southwest and Borgo Olivetti from the northeast, the two neighborhoods began to blend together to form one large company district. A similar process was unfolding a half-mile south on a more remote tract of land where two new Olivetti company neighborhoods were developing on opposite sides of Via Torino. The first neighborhood, to the east, was called Canton Vesco, inaugurated in 1943 with the opening of a new housing project by the architect Ugo Sissa (Bonifazio and Scrivano 155). Three years later Sissa returned to Canton Vesco with his associate Italo Lauro, bringing the number of apartment buildings there to seven by 1954 (Bonifazio and Scrivano 155). The neighborhood grew under the direction of Adriano, but with contributions from many different architects, lending Canton Vesco a physical and social character that was less uniform than that of Borgo Olivetti or Castellamonte. Such a practice continued throughout the late 1950s when Canton Vesco received the bulk of its social services, including another Olivetti nursery school, designed by Mario Ridolfi and Wolfgang Frankl, and a company primary school built by Ludovico Quaroni and Giancarlo De Carlo (Bonifazio and Scrivano 37-8). This last duo was particularly committed to the promotion of community life, and the primary school was furnished with a public gym, a sports field and even a row of commercial spaces available to local artisans and shopkeepers.

On the other side of Via Torino, to the west of Canton Vesco, a new neighborhood called Canton Vigna was developing into the Olivetti company's largest residential district. Here Adriano hired the architects Marcello Nizzoli and Annibale Fiocchi to build new apartment buildings in 1951 and 1953 (Bonifazio and Scrivano 156-7). Such buildings were arranged in groups of two or three around a central courtyard where facilities like children's playgrounds encouraged working-

Figure 6: Children playing outside of Olivetti company housing in Canton Vesco from: Ing. C. Olivetti & Co. *Olivetti, 1908-1958*. Ing. C. Olivetti & C., 1958.

class families to mix among themselves. Canton Vigna was home to many of the Olivetti company factory workers, and the neighborhood's farthest end was still only a one-mile walk from the production lines.

Taken together the neighborhoods of Borgo Olivetti, Castellamonte, Canton Vesco and Canton Vigna represent Adriano's contribution to the physical and social transformation of Ivrea across a period of almost thirty years. Such neighborhoods challenged the boundaries that usually separated company and civic life, producing a community of labor that we are glossing here as a concrete utopia. All of the area to the south of the city center was dominated by the Olivetti company, and most of the needs of its residents—whether or not they were company employees—could be satisfied by the complex welfare system developed there by Adriano and his architect

friends. Such a system had multiple centers, all of which expanded toward the others, but if we had to point to one site of critical importance it would certainly be Borgo Olivetti. During the mid 1950s Camillo's very first neighborhood received a new and monumental cafeteria that proved to be a meeting spot for generations of Olivetti factory workers (Bonifazio and Scrivano 32). In 1955 it saw the opening of a large sports and recreation center (Bonifazio and Scrivano 35), and in 1958 all of the company's social services were centralized in a new building designed by Adriano's favored architects Figini and Pollini (Bonifazio and Scrivano 35-7).

One of the fundamental ideas of *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità* as regards political economy was that the hegemonic company of each consolidated territory give over to the workers and citizens full control of the means of production, to be used for the accomplishment of collective, and specifically civic goals. One can easily understand why the PCI opposed Adriano's politics with such vehemence, and the loud cries against worker manipulation at the hands of the Movimento Comunità's labor union were only part of the real concern. More important to a political party steeped in Marxist theory was the fact that Adriano seemed to promise his workers all the things that Togliatti and his comrades claimed to fight for. Even Marx envisioned the transformation of society as negating the very institutions that would bring it about insofar as communism would rest on a classless order with no need for working-class parties or even politics as such. In a similar way the PCI fought for a society in which it itself would have no place, and if Adriano succeeded in socializing the Olivetti company then the party would find little favor inside the Ivrea factory.

Following every detail laid out in *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità* Adriano drew up plans for the creation of a new public entity that was to be named—in honor of his late father—the Fondazione Camillo Olivetti (Ochetto 141). According to such plans the Fondazione was to

receive a lump sum of capital stock in the Olivetti company, then gradually increasing amounts that would allow it to control all aspects of production and distribution. The Fondazione was to be managed according to a democratic vote that conjugated the preferences of all its members: Olivetti company workers, public officials, university administrators and the representatives of local cultural institutions. Adriano's model for such a Fondazione was that set up in 1889 by the German optical systems manufacturer Zeiss, and he unsuccessfully lobbied the economist Franco Momigliano to publish a study of the Carl-Zeiss-Stiftung with the Edizioni di Comunità.

Adriano presented his plans for the Fondazione Camillo Olivetti to the Olivetti company Board of Directors in May 1948, but the idea was strongly opposed by the other members, including some from the Olivetti family (Ochetto 141). They rightly understood the Fondazione as a means to shift power from their own hands into those of the factory workers, and indeed it is difficult to imagine why the Board would have agreed to such a proposal for self-expropriation. The Fondazione Camillo Olivetti remained a dead letter, but Adriano's bid had opened up a space for the discussion of worker control at the Olivetti company. Momigliano stepped in to suggest something of a compromise on the model of the postwar factory commissions, proposing the creation of a Consiglio di Gestione with representatives from both labor and management. The Board agreed, and the Olivetti company Consiglio di Gestione was ratified by the workers in 1950 (Ochetto 142-3).

In its final form the Olivetti company Consiglio di Gestione was structurally partial in the favor of management, as seven of its thirteen members were either from the Board of Directors or nominated by the president. The other six members were elected by labor, broken up into three representatives from the factory workers, two from the office workers and one from the supervisors (Ronci 44). According to the official Statuto del Consiglio di Gestione, reprinted in Donatella

Ronci's 1980 Franco Angeli book *Olivetti, anni '50*, such an entity was supposed to enjoy wide "poteri consultivi," including influence over the "orientamento e indirizzo del programma produttivo […], pianificazione degli impianti industriali […], miglioramento delle condizioni di vita dei lavoratori […], servizi sociali di assistenza" and so on (161). But because the powers of the Olivetti company Consiglio di Gestione were formulated so as to be merely 'consultivi' the Board of Directors was able to freely disregard any and all of its advise. In practice the Board did allow the Consiglio di Gestione to exercise some influence, placing the management of the Olivetti company social services entirely in its hands (Ronci 44-6).

Commenting on such a practice, scholars like Donatella Ronci and Giuseppe Berta have tended to stress the limits of the Consiglio di Gestione's effective power, as if the vast welfare system developed by Adriano made little impact on daily life in Ivrea. Thus for Ronci "il Consiglio non permette in realtà alcuna forma di effettivo controllo operaio o di cogestione *se non* nella sfera dei servizi sociali" (44-5, emphasis mine), a conclusion endorsed by Berta for whom the Consiglio di Gestione's sphere of action was "*delimitato* dalla logica distributiva che prevaleva su quella del controllo produttivo" (88, emphasis mine). We have complicated such a view by showing how the neighborhoods of Borgo Olivetti, Castellamonte, Canton Vesco and Canton Vigna became remarkably important sites for the making of Adriano's concrete utopia. To say that such a system was put in the hands of an entity that enjoyed strong participation from below is to give rather powerful evidence of a highly democratic community whose physical and social geography reflected the real needs of its citizens.

The Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta

Having treated the historical question of Olivetti company social services in Ivrea, there remains the conceptual one of Adriano's approach to town planning more broadly. I have already pointed

out how neighborhoods like Borgo Olivetti, Castellamonte, Canton Vesco and Canton Vigna were developed partially as a response to the bureaucratic difficulties of more comprehensive intervention, and indeed it was Adriano's idea to totally reorganize the physical and social geography of Ivrea. This meant leveraging not only the economic and political resources of the Olivetti company, but also those of the town government that alone could provide the legal justification to transform extant residential districts, commercial zones and other private spaces. That Adriano's efforts in such a direction were ultimately frustrated by contentious politicking should not give us cause to disregard their importance for understanding his approach to town planning. On the contrary, they have much to teach us about what Adriano wished to accomplish, something that—as I have argued—is integral to all he did accomplish.

Adriano tried two times to redesign his hometown from the ground up, first in the context of a broad regional plan for the Valle d'Aosta[33] and later in close partnership with Ivrea's mayor Giacomo Ottello. Each time he was involved in many years of preparation, including fundraising, sociological inquiries, map drawing, public presentations and so on, all of which has left us with a wealth of documentation despite their negative outcome. As regards the construction process itself such projects never broke any ground, but they do have a long history that is important to our discussion of Ivrea as a community of labor.

As I have remarked in the introduction to this dissertation, most of the scholarship on Olivetti has developed around Adriano's memory a standard narrative that is highly celebrative of his company, tending to ignore most serious critique and protecting against any conceivable connection to the Fascist regime. As a result of such an approach there has been very little written about the Valle d'Aosta plan, and if we want to revise the historiography, then we should put some

[33] Ivrea was part of the Valle d'Aosta until 1945, when it passed to Piedmont.

pressure—to the extent that it is warranted—on the question of Adriano's relationship with Fascism. One can easily understand why Olivetti historians have been so careful to avoid the Valle d'Aosta plan, as any discussion of town planning in 1930s Italy seems to conjure up images of Littoria, Sabaudia and other Fascist New Towns. Mussolini held the discipline of town planning in very high regard, and he was personally involved in numerous projects of land reclamation, urban renovation and so on.[34] The Valle d'Aosta plan was promoted within the context of such developments, and Adriano spoke of it frequently in terms of man's mastery over nature and the forward march of a redeemed Mediterranean modernity.

The intent of the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta was to provide a broad regional plan for the development of the area around Italy's border with France and Switzerland. Even before the rise of Fascism such plans were quite common, but they were always funded by individual town governments and thus their recommendations were made with an eye toward the local community only. On the contrary, the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta was the first plan to cover an entire geographical region, providing very broad and wide-ranging analysis of the evolution there of human civilization and its interaction with the territory (Caizzi 252). Such an approach was meant to challenge the boundaries of town planning as a discipline, extending its traditional focus on local housing development to include all aspects of the production and reproduction of social life. It is clear from the language of its official presentation that the plan aspired if not toward the totalitarian certainly toward the totalizing, insisting that the goal of town planning was to

> realizzare i presupposti della civiltà e del bene collettivo attraverso l'organizzazione dei luoghi destinati all'abitazione, alla produzione, alla distribuzione, alla vita collettiva, allo svago e al riposo, con le comunicazioni ed i trasporti relativi, tutto subordinando [sic] al

[34] For a full account of Mussolini's relationship to the discipline of town planning see: Caprotti, Federico. *Mussolini's Cities: Internal Colonialism in Italy, 1930-1939*. Cambria Press, 2007.

> disegno di un massimo di funzionalità e di perfezione architettonica, estetica, tecnica e sociale (Zvetermich and Lauro 17).

Our analysis of the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta must set out on the terms of such a presentation, which would seem to suggest that the representation of social space can be understood as the management of social life.

The Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta was Adriano's first foray into the discipline of town planning, and he gathered around him a team of architects and engineers who were specialized in a variety of skills. Alongside the famous Milanese group BBPR, made up of Ludovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Gian Luigi Banfi, Enrico Peressutti and Ernesto Nathan Rogers, there were Adriano's favored duo Gino Pollini and Luigi Figini plus others like Piero Bottoni, Renato Zvetermich and Italo Lauro. All the team members had close experience in traditional town planning, but Adriano's Valle d'Aosta project challenged them to think on a larger scale and in constant communication with one another. Their stated goal, as Adriano wrote to Mussolini in May 1937, was to develop a regional plan for the Valle d'Aosta that could be integrated into the Duce's Piano Nazionale Corporativo.[35]

Research for the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta began in 1934 under Adriano's general direction, and the first step was to identify within the broad region a small number of sites where the team might intervene. Thus from the start the project seemed to renounce something of its comprehensive aspirations, opting instead to create a sort of mosaic by bringing together related but independent town plans. The team decided to concentrate on five sites: Monte Bianco, the Conca del Breuil, the city of Aosta, the fraction of Pila and the town of Ivrea. Such sites were

[35] Letter from Adriano Olivetti to Benito Mussolini, 22 May 1937. Cited in: Ciucci, Giorgio. "Le premesse del Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta." *Costruire la città dell'uomo: Adriano Olivetti e l'urbanistica*. Edited by Carlo Olmo. Edizioni di Comunità, 2001. p. 64. Ciucci's research is based on the archival documentation housed at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato in Rome.

divided among the architects and engineers, leaving Pollini and Figini in charge of our main concern here: Ivrea. Already in these same years Pollini and Figini were expanding the 'fabbrica in mattoni rossi,' and their local presence in and around Borgo Olivetti permitted them to study Ivrea at first hand.

The plan they developed was thus put into relation with those of Monte Bianco, Breuil, Aosta and Pila to form one broad concrete proposal that Adriano hoped would find favor with Mussolini. The Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta was announced in July 1935 when Adriano published an overview of the ongoing project in the Fascist journal *Ottobre*. Here Adriano made mention of all five intervention sites, but special attention was given to Ivrea which he insisted might become "la prima realizzazione della città corporativa" ("Il piano" 61). In Adriano's view, such a city would find its place not in the town center, but rather "a lato dell'antica e bellissima città di Arduino" in a zone we already know as Borgo Olivetti ("Il piano" 61).

In anticipation of the release of the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta, Pollini and Figini (6-11) were allowed to send their Ivrea plan to the architecture magazine *Casabella* which published it as a one-off proposal in March 1936. As Adriano had already suggested with his remarks in *Ottobre*, Pollini and Figini's plan focused almost exclusively on the neighborhoods of Borgo Olivetti and Castellamonte, proposing to develop there a new community of labor that reflected Adriano's evolving ideas about social organization. *Casabella* accompanied the Ivrea plan with a short article by Adriano that sought to contextualize Pollini and Figini's approach to the project while reiterating the goal of transforming Ivrea into a "città corporativa" ("Architettura" 69). The connection with Fascism was made even more explicit as Adriano declared: "Accanto alla città vecchia, custode delle tradizioni del passato, si esprimerà nelle forme della architettura moderna la vita sociale rinnovata dal fascismo" ("Architettura" 71).

Research for the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta was completed during the first half of 1937, and arrangements were made for its public presentation at the Galleria di Roma under the auspices of the Confederazione fascista dei professionisti e degli artisti (Ciucci 64-70). Adriano knew that the success of such a presentation depended on the attendance of Mussolini himself, and in May he wrote to the Duce with a personal invitation. The presentation of the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta was shaping up to be a full-scale exhibition, and Adriano attempted to pique Mussolini's interest by sending along eighty-six photographs of the project (Ciucci 66). Adriano's main request was that his team's work be accommodated "nel più vasto Piano economico nazionale quale tracciato nel discorso del Duce sul Piano regolatore dell'economia italiana e nelle sue successive precisazioni alle Corporazioni."[36]

But Adriano received no response. The following month, in June 1937, he had the president of the Confederazione fascista dei professionisti e degli artisti Alessandro Pavolini try to curry some favor. Pavolini wrote to Mussolini announcing again the Galleria di Roma presentation and assuring him that the Duce's presence at the opening would be indispensable for the project's success. But Pavolini seems to have already known that such a request would go unfulfilled, and he added that in the case Mussolini were not able to attend he should send some other government representative in his place. According to the historian Giorgio Ciucci, the letter never quite reached Mussolini's desk, but it was read by his undersecretary Giacomo Medici who made a note of the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta and passed it through to the Duce. On July 3, 1937—just two days before the scheduled presentation—Mussolini took Medici's note and wrote across it one final word: *no* (Ciucci 70).

[36] Letter from Adriano Olivetti to Benito Mussolini, 22 May 1937. Cited in: Ciucci, Giorgio. "Le premesse del Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta." *Costruire la città dell'uomo: Adriano Olivetti e l'urbanistica*. Edited by Carlo Olmo. Edizioni di Comunità, 2001. p. 64.

The Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta was presented to the public on July 5, 1937 in a sprawling exhibition that included more than 450 pieces between charts, tables, maps, aerial photographs, plastic models and more (Ochetto 77). The opening was attended by two government representatives, the Minister of Education Giuseppe Bottai and the Minister of Finance Paolo Thaon di Revel, but the glaring absence of Mussolini himself did not bode well for the project's future (Ciucci 70). The exhibition closed without making much of a splash, but Adriano continued to insist that the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta be incorporated into the Piano Nazionale Corporativo. He wrote again to Mussolini in April 1938 but again had no response (Ciucci 70).

It was becoming clear that the project was likely a dead letter and Adriano made a last-ditch effort to force the Duce's hand. He published an article in the architecture magazine *Rassegna di Architettura* that sought to contextualize the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta fully within the social and cultural project of a developing Fascist modernity. In a sense there was nothing new to such a position, but what I want to point out is that here Adriano really threw all caution to the wind, fully embracing the language of Mussolini's regime and even calling the Valle d'Aosta project "un piano organico, totalitario" ("Piano regionale" 135). He also pandered to the Duce's warped sense of ancient history and its inevitable return, comparing his own team's work to the "opera romana di colonizzazione della Valle d'Aosta nell'epoca augustea" ("Piano regionale" 132). But like Adriano's previous overtures so too this one fell on deaf ears.

By early 1938 Adriano had come to accept the fact that his Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta would not be incorporated into Mussolini's Piano Nazionale Corporativo. What he was less certain about was whether Pollini and Figini's close study of Ivrea might still serve as a blueprint for intervention at the local level. Thus Adriano divested the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta of its remaining parts—Monte Bianco, the Conca del Breuil, Aosta and Pila were all cast

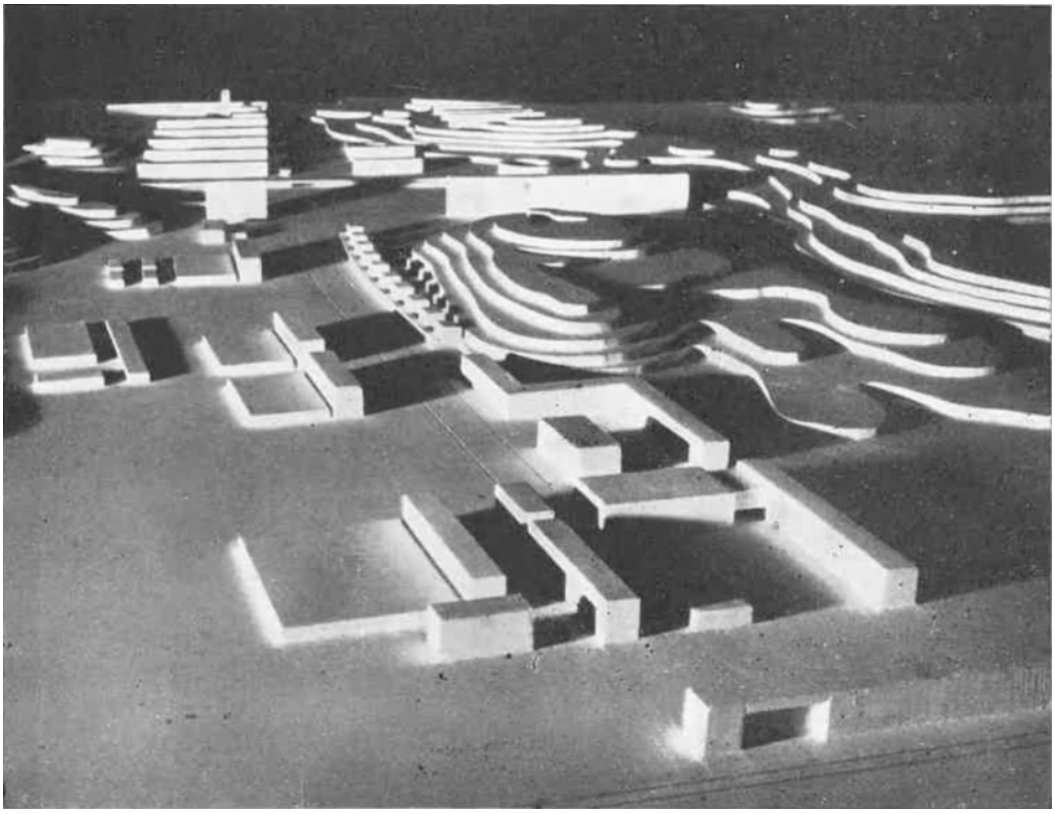

Figure 7: Public presentation of the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta from: Zvetermich, Renato and Italo Lauro, editors. *Studi e proposte preliminari per il Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta*. Nuove Edizioni Ivrea, 1943.

aside. He brought Pollini and Figini's Ivrea plan before the town government pledging to finance its further elaboration with a personal donation of 20,000 lira (Scrivano 85-6). In March, Adriano doubled this amount to 40,000 lira and in May the town government accepted his proposal, if with some reservations (Scrivano 87).

Research for Pollini and Figini's Ivrea plan was thus reopened in the spring of 1938, this time under the general direction of the engineer Egisippo Devoti, the town planner Luigi Piccinato and Figini himself (Scrivano 89). Such research lasted ten months, and the results were presented to the town government in March 1939. But the recommendations for intense intervention in Ivrea's historic center provoked strong resistance from the zone's residents and the plan was once again thrown into limbo (Scrivano 90). The town government flirted with the idea again in mid

1940, but with the outbreak of world war the question of local planning was to remain an extremely low priority (Scrivano 90-2).

There can be no doubt that Adriano was frustrated by the trajectory of the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta, a project that began with aspirations on the national stage and ended with rejection by a local town government. His reaction was to fall back on the private initiative of the Olivetti company, where he could freely develop the sorts of neighborhoods we considered in the first part of this chapter. Indeed, some of the most iconic buildings realized in Borgo Olivetti and Castellamonte can trace their first appearance to the pages of Pollini and Figini's Ivrea plan. Such is the case for the 1941 Borgo Olivetti nursery school, and for the seven Castellamonte apartment buildings inaugurated in 1942 (Ochetto 78-9).

As regards the wealth of documentation produced in the course of research for the Valle d'Aosta project, much of it was collocated in a volume titled *Studi e proposte preliminari per il Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta*, published in 1943 by the Nuove Edizioni Ivrea. By the time such a volume was compiled the project had already been rejected at both the national and local levels, and it thus represented a sort of alternate history for the development of a region that never came to pass. Adriano made veiled reference to Mussolini's disapproval in the introduction to the volume, writing bitterly of "un principio autoritario che risultasse incapace di comprendere e quindi sviluppare questi stessi valori [di libertà individuale e dello spirit umano]" (Zvetermich and Lauro 13). Nevertheless since the bulk of the research had been conducted and promoted in the context of a developing Fascist modernity, most of the volume's material remained heavily indebted to the regime's history, ideology and language. In the words of curator Renato Zvetermich, the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta was still to be accomplished "con lo stesso

spirito con cui sono state realizzate le bonifiche nell'Agro Pontino e nelle Paludi Pontine, la colonizzazione della Libia" (20).

Adriano's remarks about the romanization of the Valle d'Aosta from his 1938 *Rassegna di Architettura* article found questionable evidence in the volume's most out-of-place section dedicated to "Roma nella Valle d'Aosta" (Zvetermich and Lauro 40-4). This short portion was inserted just before the Monte Bianco plan in a forced attempt to legitimize the team's intervention by showing how the area's development was already made a priority in the first centuries after Christ. "Nelle vestigia romane della Valle d'Aosta" such a section proclaimed, "il Piano [Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta] riconosce un messaggio del passato ed un segno augurale" (Zvetermich and Lauro 44). Such material was likely used during the public presentation at the Galleria di Roma, though we know from other sources that Mussolini was not impressed.

For the purposes of our inquiry into the development of Ivrea as a community of labor, we must turn now to the final section of *Studi e proposte preliminari per il Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta*, which contains Pollini and Figini's Ivrea plan as it appeared at the 1937 Galleria di Roma presentation (Zvetermich and Lauro 223-33). This version is nearly identical to that published in *Casabella* in 1936, and since we know that it was developed in close collaboration with Adriano we can use it to glean something of his early and evolving ideas about social organization. It also became a partial blueprint for the real development of Borgo Olivetti and Castellamonte as concrete utopias, thus representing a first approximation of Adriano's approach to intervention in the area surrounding the Olivetti company factory.

Pollini and Figini's Ivrea plan sets out from the observation that the town has become a central destination for the growing industrial workforce drawn in by employment at the Olivetti company and elsewhere. Accordingly, the question of housing is given high priority, and the

architects propose to build two different types of apartments: “le case basse avranno carattere tipicamente operaio” and “le case alte potranno accogliere una categoria di persone a reddito limitato, ma già più alto” (Zvetermich and Lauro 226). Thus we are immediately faced with the prospect of a neighborhood segregated according to income, suggesting that in Adriano’s Ivrea the occupation of physical space is intimately tied up with class membership. Behind such an approach to town planning is a set of 1930s ideas about the stability and even fixity of social hierarchies, and the Pollini-Figini plan aims to develop a physical geography that accurately reflects the local composition of social forces.

But the idea that physical space merely reflects social life seems to conflict with something that I have already suggested here—that for Adriano space also manages social life. We can only reconcile two such statements by seeing the real differences in Pollini and Figini’s Ivrea plan between the representation of neighborhoods writ large and the exploration of their internal possibilities. Pollini and Figini propose to develop a whole new neighborhood, one that is “destinato al popolo” and therefore of a fixed social character (Zvetermich and Lauro 226). But internal to such a neighborhood are a set of material arrangements that limit the development of social life in definite and discoverable directions. Put more plainly, the list of spaces Pollini and Figini recommend—houses, sports fields, coffee shops and so on—is also a list of social activities supposedly appropriate for the working class—sleep, play sports, drink coffee and so on.

According to such a methodology, the representation of physical space can lead us to a set of underlying assumptions about class-based social activity. It will be useful here to quote Pollini and Figini’s Ivrea plan at some length. For the development of a new working-class neighborhood near the Olivetti factory, the plan recommends:

> a. ‘case alte’—a dodici piani—due corpi allineati; b. ‘case basse’—a tre piani—una serie di costruzioni affiancate, costituenti un quartiere di lottizzazione tipico; […] d.

> ‘sistemazione sportive’, al centro del quartiere, costituite da: campi di tennis, campo di gioco per calcio e tamburello, palestra, piscina scoperta con cabine e zone di prato e di sabbia […] e. ‘edifici collettivi’: caffè rotonda, al limite dei campi sportivi, con porticato—ristorante, e terrazzo anulare panoramico—scuola elementare, vasto edificio con cortile e giardino, e annesso nido d’infanzia. (Zvetermich and Lauro 226)

At times the plan’s language actually seems to slip from the programming of physical space to the programming of social life, such as when it recommends “negli spazi liberi tra casa e casa […] la costruzione di corpi di lavanderia con annesso porticato per i giochi dei ragazzi durante le giornate di pioggia” (Zvetermich and Lauro 232). And this of course all made possible by the dominant local company that in Adriano’s vision remains the motor of social wealth.

By the time *Studi e proposte preliminari per il Piano Regolatore della Valle d’Aosta* was published it was becoming clear to Adriano that the days of Mussolini’s regime were numbered. Thus the section on Ivrea incorporates a few small but very important revisions that serve to erase the memory of Fascism as it had been engrained in the 1936 *Casabella* plan. The training grounds of the Opera nazionale Balilla, the Casa Littoria—such spaces were central to the 1936 plan, but by 1943 they had completely disappeared.[37] So too had Adriano’s hopes to realize the plan disappeared, and the *Piano Regolatore della Valle d’Aosta* was to remain a blueprint for utopia.

The Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea

Italy’s entrance into the Second World War inaugurated for Adriano a period of personal and professional tumult that seemed to toss him in all directions. He went to Switzerland to meet with the American OSS, then to Rome with a plan to topple Mussolini’s government, landing in jail, then escaping back to Switzerland where he learned that both his parents were already dead. Such

[37] The training grounds of the Opera nazionale Ballila and the Casa Littoria are mentioned on pages 8 and 11, respectively, in: Pollini, Gino and Luigi Figini. “Piano di Ivrea: Descrizione tecnica.” *Casabella*, no 101, 1936.

were the historical and personal circumstances of those years that town planning remained an extremely low priority.

It was not until the fall of 1951 that Adriano returned to the discipline, writing in those months to Ivrea mayor Giacomo Ottello with a proposal to finance a new town plan (Scrivano 92). Unlike the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta, Adriano wanted this new plan to be associated directly with the Olivetti factory, and he explicitly made his request in the guise of president of the family's industrial company. Such a plan would thus represent Adriano's most pointed attempt to extend the economic and political influence of the Olivetti factory over the whole of social life in Ivrea, constituting an unrealized blueprint for a community of labor.

Ottello accepted Adriano's proposal, and the town government quickly formed a team of top-notch architects and engineers known as the Gruppo Tecnico Per il Coordinamento Urbanistico del Canavese (GTCUC) (Scrivano 92-5). Such a team included previous Olivetti company collaborators like Ludovico Quaroni and Annibale Fiocchi plus newcomers like Nello Renacco and Enrico Ranieri. Within weeks the town government had formally asked the GTCUC to draft a new plan for Ivrea, one that would be financed by the Olivetti company and thus reflect Adriano's vision of industrial modernity.

Research on the GTCUC's Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea began in February 1952, and the team's processes of data collection and evaluation were even more intense than those adopted during the Valle d'Aosta project (Scrivano 92-5). Such processes now included an elaborate door-to-door sociological inquiry that sought to determine both the physical state of various buildings and the social habits of their inhabitants, producing a profusion of information that was subsequently plotted on maps in an attempt to understand the needs of specific neighborhoods. The GTCUC planned to fill fifteen volumes with such information, but by the end

of 1954 there had been published only four (Ronci 59).[38] A fifth and comprehensive summary volume was published two years later, the only one that our present interest in community and labor requires us to take up here.

But first, what became of the Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea? The answer is not dissimilar to that which we gave for the Valle d'Aosta plan: it remained a dead letter. By 1954 Ivrea's sympathetic mayor Giacomo Ottello had been ousted, and when in September of that year Adriano presented to the town government the GTCUC's recommendations, he was received as little more than an oddly ambitious citizen (Scrivano 96). The Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea was voted down in March 1955 by a unified opposition of landowners and real estate speculators (Scrivano 97). Its details have come down to us in a wonderfully complete volume, published by the Olivetti company in-house press in 1956 and titled *Il Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea*. Like its forerunner the *Studi e proposte preliminari per il Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta*, so too the *Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea* was a stillborn publication, representing not so much a plan for future development as a sort of alternative history that never came to pass.

It is precisely this last point that I want to emphasize, because it bears on methodologies of map-reading that have developed since the eighteenth-century institutionalization of geography as an academic discipline. For most of its history the map was a representation of space, and different types of maps drew out from such space different features: topographical, political, climatological and so on. Thus the relationship between the map and the space it claimed to represent was fairly straight-forward: the space was present in the map, the map attested the space's existence. Such

[38] The following volumes were published: Talamo, Magda, editor. *Caratteri e problemi del tempo libero a Ivrea*. Ing. C. Olivetti & C., 1954. Brambilla, Francesco and Umberto Toschi, editors. *La determinazione dell'area di influenza di Ivrea*. Ing. C. Olivetti & C., 1954. Toschi, Umberto, editor. *L'economia industriale nella zona di Ivrea*. Ing. C. Olivetti & C., 1954. Insolera, Delfino, editor. *La famiglia, il lavoro, il tempo libero in Ivrea*. Ing. C. Olivetti & C., 1954.

an assumption remained unchallenged until the early 1990s, when scholars like Denis Wood formulated an insight that today seems entirely self-evident: that maps are power-laden systems of order. According to Wood in his 1992 Guilford Press study on *The Power of Maps*, maps actively shape the spaces they claim to represent by projecting onto those spaces discoverable social relations of power. Maps lie, in a sense, because they tell us what 'might be' but they pass it off as what 'already is.'

Wood and his followers were committed to pursuing such a methodology, somewhat psychoanalytical in its search for latent truth among manifest symbols, and it was certainly effective in steering the discipline of geography in new and fruitful directions. Wood's insight that maps are powerful is more than relevant to our discussion of the *Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea*, but his analyses remained confined to those maps that falsely claimed to be neutral representations. On the contrary, the *Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea* does nothing of the sort—it is full of maps that proudly announce their social relations of power. Moreover, since its recommendations had already been rejected by the time of publication, the volume's tense is not so much what 'might be,' as it is what 'might have been.'

The *Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea* opens with a short preface that seeks to contextualize the project, followed by three main parts dedicated to the GTCUC's methodology, the problems discovered by the team and the solutions it recommends. The discussion of methodology sets out to defend the plan against any possible accusation of paternalism, insisting that all conclusions were reached "attraverso il notevole contributo dato dalla popolazione alle indagini, soprattutto a quella sociologica e al censimento delle abitazioni, e i proficui contatti tra i pianificatori e i rappresentanti delle diverse categorie di attività cittadine" (Renacco 19). Such an emphasis on democratic participation from below is echoed in part two, covering Ivrea's most

pressing problems, where the discipline of town planning is defined simply as "l'istituire in città attrezzature che incoraggino certe tendenze o compensino certi effetti nocivi di altre" (Renacco 40).

Nevertheless, we can easily detect in the volume's language the residual cultural sediment of Mussolini's most popular rhetorical tropes. Ivrea's unproductive neighborhoods are not merely "condannat[e] ad una grave decadenza;" they are also diseased body parts that risk infecting more healthy portions of the organism: "[La decadenza di una parte] non può essere senza conseguenze per l'intero organismo sociale, che, appunto in quanto organismo soffre nel suo insieme per qualunque situazione di disagio in una delle sue parti" (Renacco 42-5). Such elaborate medical metaphors were inherited from Mussolini's talk of 'sventramento,' 'intervento' and 'risanamento,' ideas that entered the discipline of town planning with the Duce's 1927 "Discorso dell'ascensione."

It is unnecessary here to give a full summary of the findings of the GTCUC, the problems discovered by the team in Ivrea and the solutions it recommended. What the 104-page *Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea* amounted to was less a proposal to modify parts of the town's urban fabric than it was a blueprint for the foundation of a whole new community. Nevertheless, we can say that for the GTCUC, Ivrea's many flaws boiled down to one central problem: that the town was divided between an old agricultural center and a new industrial one (Renacco 27). Indeed Ivrea in the 1950s was experiencing a profound identity crisis as its long agricultural tradition was threatened by the rise of modern industrial companies, and not a few old farmers saw their sons and daughters take up employment at the Olivetti factory. This meant crossing the Dora river, which separated the old civic and agricultural center (to the north) from the new industrial

neighborhoods (to the south), an internal migration trend that alarmed both Adriano and the GTCUC (Renacco 38).

In order to reestablish a healthy and sustainable equilibrium between agricultural and industrial production, the *Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea*'s central recommendation was that the town transform itself into a "città a nuclei"—a collection of semi-autonomous neighborhoods mediating between rural and urban populations (Renacco 68). Such neighborhoods would form the raw material for the development of a laboring community, each containing at its 'nucleo' a set of indispensable social services: "i negozi di prima necessità, l'Asilo-Nido con annesso campo da giuoco, la lavanderia e i bagni pubblici, i laboratori artigianali con alloggio destinati ad integrare la vita del quartiere stesso" and so on (Renacco 83). It is clear that such neighborhoods had in Borgo Olivetti, Castellamonte, Canton Vesco and Canton Vigna a group of tangible and reproducible models.

There is another concern that pervades all three parts of the *Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea*, and it deserves brief mention here to the extent that it exemplifies Adriano's efforts to totally reorganize the town's physical and social geography. Traffic had never been a serious problem for Ivrea, but with the rise of industrial society, the expansion of the Olivetti company and the town's relative proximity to major production centers like Turin, Milan and Genoa, the streets of Adriano's hometown began to crowd with automobiles, transporting people and goods in every direction, bogging down local business and complicating street life. As the GTCUC saw it, the central problem was the lack of separation between regional and local traffic patterns (Renacco 51). There were no large highways around Ivrea, and this meant that traffic, say, from Turin to Aosta, was forced through the narrow and crowded town streets.

Figure 8: Detail of proposed "città a nuclei" from: Renacco, Nello, editor. *Il PianoRegolatore Generale di Ivrea*. Ing. C. Olivetti & Co, S.p.A., 1956.

The *Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea* recommended building a new highway that would bypass the town, plus three large service roads surrounding the center in the form of a triangle (Renacco 93). Such an arrangement would allow for multiple levels of non-intersecting traffic, permitting regional automobiles to skirt the city and freeing the local community of their intensifying ubiquity. This important proposal was thrown out along with the broader Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea, and the town remained entirely unavoidable until the opening of the Autostrada A5 in 1961.

Despite many years of logistical and financial organization, data collection, critical discussion and difficult politicking, neither the Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta nor the Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea enjoyed any more than a pity hearing. But even though such plans failed to totally reorganize the physical and social geography of Ivrea, we might still consider them 'realized' to the extent that they are self-sufficient spaces-in-print. They willingly construct for us the utopian vision at the end of Adriano's politics, providing the context for all he was able to build

in Borgo Olivetti, Castellamonte, Canton Vesco and Canton Vigna. “L’ultima zona residenziale verso ovest: il quartiere Castellamonte” ran the caption to a photograph in the *Piano Regolatore Generale di Ivrea* (Renacco 79). “Espansione verso sud: Canton Vesco” declared another (Renacco 78). To the extent that Adriano was successful in transforming parts of his hometown into communities of labor, he remained ever-conscious of how such communities might fit into a broader patchwork of social organization. Adriano’s was in every sense a concrete utopia—a local politics that, far from suffering utopianism, drew from it guiding inspiration.[39]

[39] For Adriano, such a relationship between the unattainable yet perfect and the attainable yet imperfect is of undoubtably Christian origin, insofar as Christianity, and especially the type of Christianity Adriano assimilated through Maritain and Mounier, is a discourse about an ‘other’ space that is a ‘no’ space: a *ou-topos*.

Chapter 3
Literature: The Olivetti Intellectuals as Salaried Intellectuals

During the twentieth century, a growing number of European intellectuals—poets, novelists, painters, even musicians—found themselves needing to operate in a space that their ancestors would hardly have recognized: the modern industrial factory. This was especially the case in Italy, where companies like Pirelli, ENI and Olivetti set an early and important example by recruiting intellectuals for work in industrial design, product promotion, corporate image development and sometimes simple factory labor. Intellectuals at Pirelli included the poet Leonardo Sinisgalli, the industrial designer Bob Noorda and the graphic artist Albe Steiner. At ENI there were the poet Attilio Bertolucci and the architect Marcello Nizzoli. But Olivetti took the cake, filling whole departments with intellectuals who will become the focus of the present chapter, joining up with the major publishing houses and the PCI to become one of the centers of Italian intellectual activity in the 1950s. But while the 'Olivetti intellectuals'—as I will call them—have received a great deal of scholarly attention, their story has always been told from the point of view of management, as a chapter in Adriano's saga of collaborative industrial progress.[40] What is still missing is an account of the Olivetti intellectuals that privileges their own factory experiences, one that reveals their ambivalence about the very possibility of critical thought under industrial modernity.

[40] See, for example, the following two sources: Berta, Giuseppe. *Le idee al potere: Adriano Olivetti tra la fabbrica e la comunità*. Edizioni di Comunita, 1980, pp. 49-59. Saibene, Alberto. *L'Italia di Adriano Olivetti*. Edizioni di Comunita, 2017, pp. 65-82.

Franco Fortini, Giovanni Giudici, Ottiero Ottieri, Paolo Volponi and Giancarlo Buzzi maintained varying relations with the Olivetti company throughout the 1950s, and they all received payment for services in promotion of Olivetti products, cultural programs, political initiatives, or publishing ventures. This work was made possible by Adriano's far-sighted philosophy, which involved funneling company profits into seemingly tangential institutions like art studios, research centers, the Movimento Comunità political organization and the Edizioni di Comunità publishing house.[41] The latter had printed the treatise *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità* in 1946, outlining Adriano's vision of an industrial Italy where all companies would have a social responsibility to their surrounding communities. In accordance with this vision, the Olivetti company began to reinvest its earnings in corporate housing, private healthcare, a local transportation network, nursery schools, entertainment complexes and more (Ing. C. Olivetti & C., *Olivetti 1908-1958* 101-26). Such an extensive welfare system, which claimed to satisfy the everyday needs of the working class while providing the political and literary infrastructure for its own mass diffusion, became the obvious point of entry for a generation of intellectuals wishing to peddle their skills inside (or in the shadow of) a large industrial company.

During and after their employment at Olivetti, Fortini, Giudici, Ottieri, Volponi and Buzzi wrote a great deal of *saggistica* (what would today be called 'critical theory') and novels that engaged in diverse ways with the question of intellectual activity and its changing relation to industrial production. More than laborers or writers, they thought of themselves as career intellectuals, using both nonfiction and fiction to document lived experience and make creative contributions to the critique of power relations in contemporary society. In this chapter, I

[41] The practice of using corporate profits to promote the arts was very uncommon in Italy. It was somewhat more common in the United States, where the main example was the Rockefeller Foundation, founded in 1913 by Standard Oil owner John D. Rockefeller.

reconsider Olivetti-era texts by Fortini, Giudici, Ottieri, Volponi and Buzzi to explore their anxieties in relation to the philosophical ambiguities of the modern intellectual in such a new and unfamiliar environment. I work to complicate the standard historical narrative of the intellectual partnered with postwar capital by showing how such a partnership might be reconceived as destructive of the intellectual as such. This is especially important given that postwar business interests actively promoted an ideology of 'human-friendly' capital, one that silenced the discordant voices of these worker-intellectuals although it continues to nourish nostalgia today.

Michel Foucault famously noted that the role of the European intellectual was transformed by the rise of industrial society. For Foucault, the "universal intellectual" of the nineteenth century—someone whose claim to truth depended on the generality of his or her knowledge—had become the "specific intellectual" of the twentieth—someone with a well-defined field of expertise outside of which his or her opinions held little sway ("Truth" 126-7). Certainly Foucault's binary genealogy goes a long way toward contextualizing the work of the Olivetti intellectuals, men of letters who suddenly found themselves obliged to work as advertisers, psychologists, managers, editors and more. Yet, it overlooks how the alienation attendant on such positions was the result of a completely new and unmediated dependence on the wage structure of industrial capitalism. The Olivetti intellectuals received their paychecks directly from the dominant mode of production, something that renders them, more than "specific intellectuals," what I propose to call *salaried intellectuals*.[42] The salaried intellectual occupies a paradoxical position in which the exercise of critical thought, and particularly that which seeks to contest the reigning organization of economic

[42] Already in 1930, Siegfried Kracauer had used the language of salaries to explore the social role of white-collar masses in Weimar Germany. The salaried intellectual is a cultural counterpart to Kracauer's "salaried masses," appearing some decades later and relating to the German sociologist's subjects in ways that will become clear in the writings of the Olivetti intellectuals. For more on Kracauer's "salaried masses" see Kracauer, Siegfried. *The Salaried Masses: Duty and Distraction in Weimar Germany*. Verso, 1998. [1930]

and social life, tends to erase its own grounds, expropriating the thinker of the material conditions that make possible such an integrated expression of intellectual activity. At this point it is worth asking—as the Olivetti intellectuals asked—if the intellectual as such has not been superseded.

It is difficult to exaggerate the novelty of such a relation of dependence between culture and economy. Even as late as 1932, Antonio Gramsci could still make the point that "il rapporto tra gli intellettuali e il mondo della produzione non è immediato, come avviene per i gruppi sociali fondamentali, ma è 'mediato,' in diverso grado, da tutto il tessuto sociale, dal complesso delle superstrutture, di cui appunto gli intellettuali sono i 'funzionari'" (1518). Gramsci could not have foreseen the predicament of the Olivetti intellectuals: for him, the "intellettuale organico" (1514) who draws near the working class will obviously apply his or her knowledge in opposition to capital. But the Olivetti intellectuals all agree that intimacy with the laborers is purchased at the price of critique—that, in Gramscian terms, the organic intellectual is immediately made to play the role of the traditional class enemy.

The approach of the European intellectual to the capitalist mode of production was a slow one that, as Erminia Ardissino (121-2) has argued, is partially rooted in the work of Galileo Galilei. A scientist who rejected the long heritage of Aristotelian natural philosophy, which required distance from social life, Galileo exhibited a great passion for change, transformation, experimentation and the observation of everyday reality, especially in the fields of medicine, geometry and mechanics. Similarly, Foucault ("Truth" 127-9) locates the inception of the specific intellectual in the centuries after Galileo's death, with Charles Darwin and the post-Darwinian evolutionists, tracing this history through the institutional development of biology and physics in Europe. He finally arrives at the full materialization of the specific intellectual in the atomic

scientist of the early Cold War, a periodization that matches up nicely with the biographies of Fortini, Giudici, Ottieri, Volponi and Buzzi.

With the Olivetti intellectuals, the historical bearer of critique enters into direct relation with the dominant mode of production. Culture merges with economic production as the intellectual enters the factory—quite literally in the case of many Olivetti intellectuals. This appears in the immediate as a process of empowerment, giving the intellectual access to vast economic and political resources. But the risk is that the intellectual will then develop a long-term dependence on capital, which pays their wages, establishes the limits of critical thought, and punishes any transgression. It would seem unlikely at this juncture that intellectuals could contribute anything to the wholesale transformation of society, not least because their intellectual activity is redirected to tamper class struggle and to contain change from within.

To varying degrees, the writings of Fortini, Giudici, Ottieri, Volponi and Buzzi do address the paradox of the salaried intellectual. According to the standard Olivetti narrative, these intellectuals were eager collaborators of Adriano's, readily integrating their cultural humanism into the economic machinery of his industrial company. But before we look closely at their writings, it will be helpful to draw a more general picture: since the 1930s, the Olivetti company had played host to countless intellectual groups.

The Olivetti Intellectuals

Just like the factory workers and residents at Ivrea, La Martella and Pozzuoli, so too the Olivetti intellectuals comprised a sort of laboring community, albeit a deterritorialized one that was based not on manual work but rather on mental activity. Giuseppe Berta (49-50) has proposed a useful framework for classifying these intellectuals into three distinct categories that can be imagined as concentric circles around the Olivetti company itself. The innermost circle is made up of those

intellectuals who worked inside the factories. Following this is the middle circle of those who worked for the Movimento Comunità, either in the Centri Comunitari or in the editorial offices of journals like *Comunità*. And finally, there is the outer-most circle of those intellectuals who considered themselves defenders of the Movimento Comunità's politics, many of whom also published regularly in Adriano's journals or with the Edizioni di Comunità. The reason for which the Olivetti company can be imagined as the center of this three-part framework is that even those intellectuals on the outer edge who merely endorsed the Movimento Comunità's politics contributed, however indirectly, to the reproduction of a society in which companies like Olivetti had an important role to play.

But what really united all Olivetti intellectuals was the feeling of belonging to a democratic community of artistic and scholarly conversation. Much of this was worked out in the pages of Adriano's various journals, where intellectuals from all three of Berta's categories regularly published their work. There were the Olivetti company magazines *Rivista Olivetti* (1947-1953), the *Giornale di fabbrica Olivetti* (1949-1951) and *Notizie Olivetti* (1952-1968), Adriano's town planning journals, namely *Urbanistica* (1949-present), and the Movimento Comunità publications *Comunità* (1946-1968), *La Sentinella del Canavese* (1952-present), *Basilicata* (1954-1994), *Comunità di fabbrica* (1955-1971) and *La via del Piemonte* (1957-1958). Together with the Edizioni di Comunità plus a growing number of Centri Comunitari for the staging of live debates and discussions, these publications formed a thick network of correspondence that translated intellectual labor into a dynamic community of artists and scholars. Like Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities" (5-7), this was a social space the members of which did not have to know each other personally in order for there to arise a real and proud sense of belonging. But if for Anderson community was ideological and therefore ultimately unreal and requiring explanation,

for Adriano it was grounded in the material practices of intellectuals making real contributions to the transformation of social life.

The roots of this community of Olivetti intellectuals are to be found not in postwar Ivrea, but rather in inter-war Milan. In 1931 Adriano opened the Olivetti company Ufficio sviluppo e pubblicità in that city, and he began to pass much of his time there mixing with the all-stars of rationalist architecture and design. The purpose of the Ufficio sviluppo e pubblicità was twofold: to survey the international market for new sales opportunities and to create advertisements for current products. In other words, the work of this office was one of communication, and Adriano rightly surmised that the rationalist intellectuals had something to contribute here. He hired Renato Zvetermich as director, giving him a free hand to choose collaborators and assign projects. It was not long before the Ufficio sviluppo e pubblicità became a fixture of Milanese intellectual life, one of the first spaces where architects and designers experimented with selling their talents in the direct service of industrial production. Zvetermich's team included architects like Luigi Figini, Gino Pollini and the BBPR group, designers like Edoardo Persico and Marcello Nizzoli and visual artists like Bruno Munari and Luigi Veronesi. Together they identified new markets, dreamed up alluring images and invented catchy slogans for advertising copy. Their early success continued through 1937 when Leonardo Sinisgalli assumed the directorship, calling on the collaboration of a new generation of intellectuals like Elio Vittorini, Salvatore Quasimodo, Sandro Penna and Vittorio Sereni. Using Berta's model, we could imagine the intellectuals of the Ufficio sviluppo e pubblicità as inhabiting the inner circle of Olivetti company employees, and their heritage is conserved in the compilation of advertisements *Una campagna pubblicitaria*, published by the company in 1939.

Moving outward from this inner circle of intellectuals in direct relationship with the factory, we find already in 1941 two writers involved in the slightly more tangential territory of Adriano's publishing ventures: Luciano Foà and Bobi Bazlen. Together with Adriano these two founded the Nuove Edizioni Ivrea with the intent of providing Italian readers the best in foreign literature, philosophy and the social sciences. To this end they secured the translation rights of Søren Kierkegaard, Ernest Hemingway, John Maynard Keynes, Sigmund Freud, Carl Gustav Jung and others, but the onset of world war and the bombing of Milan forced them to flee the Nuove Edizioni Ivrea offices. By the time Adriano returned from exile in 1945 the translation rights had been lost, all papers had been destroyed and the project disintegrated quickly.

But it rose from the ashes the following year as the Edizioni di Comunità, a publishing house whose program was an early critique of the reigning Crocean separation between intellectuals and society. Adriano used this project to promote a Christian socialist politics that he believed could help form a moral and material basis for the reconstruction of Italian society. This focus evolved throughout the 1950s to a critique of the blocked democracy and to an investigation of the seemingly inevitable demise of liberal capitalism. To give some idea of this range, the following publications were issued: George Santayana's *L'Idea di Cristo nei Vangeli o Dio nell'Uomo* in 1949, Simone Weil's *L'Ombra e la grazia* in 1951, Luigi Einaudi's *La Guerra e l'unità europea* in 1953 and Joseph Schumpeter's *Capitalismo socialismo democrazia* in 1955. As the concerns of the Edizioni di Comunità were many, so too were the intellectuals who worked in the editorial offices, especially on the flagship journal *Comunità*, founded in 1946. But our interest here is in those intellectuals who were more peripheral still, making up what we imagined in Berta's model as the outer-most circle of occasional contributors to columns or articles. Even if we limit our attention to the sole journal of *Comunità* we can compile a long list of distinguished

names including Ignazio Silone, Alberto Moravia, Natalia Ginzburg, Franco Momigliano and Norberto Bobbio.

By the late 1940s Adriano's various cultural and political concerns began to coalesce around what would become his most personal project, the Movimento Comunità. Established in 1947 the Movimento can be understood as the heir to the vision laid out in *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità*. Here Adriano had advocated a complete reorganization of Italian society around a new territorial entity, the 'Comunità,' that was more feasible to manage than the Stato or the Regione and could benefit from long-term democratic planning. This vision thus set itself off from liberal capitalism on the one hand and state socialism on the other, advocating a third-way alternative that sought to socialize wealth on a more local and supposedly human scale. But his ideas had been ignored by the 1946 Constituent Assembly, and with the expulsion of the left from Alcide De Gasperi's government, Adriano saw his fears of extreme political polarization confirmed in the crystallization of a blocked democracy between the PCI and the DC. His reaction was to retreat from the level of constitutional law to the more organic and fluid sphere of popular culture. He had become convinced that any possibility of social transformation presupposed a long-term cultivation of critical civic engagement, and the Movimento Comunità was intended to promote just that.

The Movimento Comunità was a cultural organization that operated a number of Centri Comunitari across the Italian peninsula. Most Centri Comunitari were managed by their members, who paid a small fee to join, and had a library, a conference hall and some recreational space like a sports field. All members of a local Centro could borrow books and magazines, attend conferences and lectures on a wide variety of topics, enjoy performances like art exhibitions and concerts, join sports teams and even receive medical attention or apply for a loan. New Centri

Comunitari cropped up throughout Piedmont, in the Veneto, Liguria, Tuscany, Lazio, Basilicata, Puglia and Sicily, and by the close of the Movimento's first decade membership had reached 4000 nationwide. The most important Centro Comunitario was the Centro Culturale Olivetti in Ivrea, appropriately housed in the Olivetti company factory and possessing all the journal issues for *Comunità*, as if to blur the boundaries between Adriano's various endeavors.

It is difficult to speak of the Movimento Comunità without discussing the Olivetti intellectuals, as it was here that so many of them made their presence felt. With renewed reference to Berta's model we are in what we imagined as the middle circle—those who worked directly with Adriano in the institutional structures of the Movimento. On the Comitato Centrale there were Eugenio Montale, Paolo Volponi and Carlo Levi. Overseeing the activities of the various Centri Comunitari there were Geno Pampaloni, Giancarlo Buzzi and others. Franco Fortini and Giovanni Giudici also earned their income, however briefly, from the Movimento Comunità before they both went to Milan and joined the Olivetti Ufficio sviluppo e pubblicità.

If Adriano intended the Movimento Comunità to be a cultural organization beyond all parliamentary politics, he was soon convinced to reconsider its intellectuals, members and defenders as a possible electoral force. The 1953 national elections returned an acutely weakened center coalition of the Partito Sociale Democratico Italiano, the Unità Popolare, the Partito Republicano Italiano and the DC forces against an empowered left of the divided PCI and PSI. Adriano published a panicked article in the New York magazine *World* where he denounced the largest and Communist-dominated labor union, the Confederazione Generale Italiana di Lavoro (CGIL) for purposefully exasperating the Italian economy: "The CGIL is not really out to help the worker and the farmer. It cannot work for full employment and high wages—within the present

state structure—because communism could make little headway in such a society" ("How US" 61).

Adriano was an astute observer of Italian national politics, and he had anticipated this juncture at the end of 1952, taking the opportunity to transform the Movimento Comunità into a proper political party. The Movimento's Direzione Politica was made up of intellectuals like Lodovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Ludovico Quaroni and Riccardo Musatti, and the following year it published an official *Dichiarazione politica* with the Edizioni di Comunità. This *Dichiarazione* was part reiteration of the vision outlined in *L'Ordine politico delle Comunità* and part concrete electoral program meant to show very clearly what a vote for the Movimento would mean. As such it was a highly ambiguous statement that seemed to vacillate between the description of an alternate reality—where the world was organized into a collection of 'Comunità' at the service of the whole human person, there were no such things as political parties and professional technicians held sway over the management of social life—and immediately realizable proposals—requiring all major newspapers to publish local job offers, introducing social services into public schools, decentralizing power to the Regioni and so on. In its most powerful passage the *Dichiarazione politica* invited its readers to participate in the political process in diversified ways, insisting that "il Movimento Comunità infatti respinge l'interpretazione del partito o dell'azione parlamentare come unico strumento della lotta politica, e fonda tutta la sua azione sulla efficacia politica delle associazioni territoriali autonome, i sindacati autonomi, le forze della cultura" (Movimento Comunità 25). Such a declaration served to rejoin the new electoral program to the history of the Movimento as a cultural organization and the work of its Centri Comunitari.

Adriano rode this wave into Ivrea's Palazzo di Città, elected mayor in 1956 with the Movimento Comunità. The Movimento also sent another thirty-two mayors to town councils

throughout the Canavese. Two years later, Adriano teamed up with the Partito Sardo d'Azione and the Partito dei contadini d'Italia for the national elections, but the coalition barely broke half a percentage point at the polls, sending only one representative to the Chamber of Deputies: Adriano. He remained Deputato Parlamentare for the Movimento Comunità until October 1959, stepping down to return to Ivrea and leaving his seat to Franco Ferrarotti.

In addition to all the Olivetti intellectuals who worked on its various committees and in the Centri Comunitari, the Movimento Comunità was, since its establishment in 1947, a magnet for one-time performers and exhibitors. It was typical for a Centro Comunitario to host multiple events per month, ranging widely from concerts to poetry readings and philosophical debates. If the performers and exhibitors of such events can be called Olivetti intellectuals, then they were certainly of the most peripheral species. But they were an important and highly visible presence that served to solidify the public association between Adriano, the Olivetti company, the Movimento Comunità and the intellectuals. Limiting our attention to only the most important Centro Comunitario, the Centro Culturale Olivetti in Ivrea, we have evidence of art exhibitions by Renato Guttuso and Ottone Rosai, performances by Vittorio Gassman and Eduardo De Filippo, and live debates involving intellectuals like Gaetano Salvemini and Paolo Sylos Labini. In the decade after Adriano's death this tradition would continue with visits from Italo Calvino, Ernesto De Martino, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Claude Levi-Strauss and Pier Paolo Pasolini.

The Olivetti company was a pioneer in Italy of what has become known as Human Relations, and this portion of its concerns also provided a home to many intellectuals, mainly social scientists. The Centro di psicologia opened inside the Ivrea factory in 1942, followed by the Ufficio studi e ricerche sociologiche in 1955. Along with a handful of other offices at the Olivetti company's various factories, these institutions worked both with job seekers from the outside and

Figure 9: Pier Paolo Pasolini at the Centro Culturale Olivetti in Ivrea from: Archivio Storico Olivetti.

with troubled workers from the inside, applying methods like scientific management and social psychology in the service of industrial production. Even more than at the Milan office, where Olivetti intellectuals wrote advertising copy for the company's marketing campaigns, it is here in the Human Relations departments where we can see most clearly a direct relationship between intellectual activity and economic production. For this reason, it is fitting to end our discussion of the history of Olivetti intellectuals here, as it was the model of Human Relations that became, especially in the eyes of Fortini, Giudici, Ottieri, Volponi and Buzzi, the proper representation of the relationship between intellectuals and industrial society more broadly.

It should be clear by now that Adriano gathered around him, throughout his life and across all his projects, a large group of accomplished intellectuals who for the first time had access, through him and the Olivetti company, to the vast economic and political resources of industrial society. This is not to say that no single intellectual had ever before worked at an industrial company, nor that each Olivetti intellectual had full and equal access to the system. It is simply to

assert that conceived in their totality, the merging of what we call 'the intellectuals' with what we call 'industrial society' finds no better flashpoint in Italy outside of Adriano and the Olivetti company. From Adriano's perspective, this merging was supposed to produce a free and experimental community of labor, but from the perspective of the Olivetti intellectuals—as we will now see—it became cause for alarm.

Saggistica: Fortini, Giudici

Some of the tensions internal to the writings of the Olivetti intellectuals have already been explored by the historian Simone Giorgino (255-6), who uses the case of Giovanni Giudici to show a growing discomfort around questions of factory labor. On the one hand, the production line was a space of potential emancipation, a site where physical and mental activity was translated into material and spiritual gain. But on the other, it was a dark inferno, full of monotonous drudgery that alienated the worker for the private benefit of the boss. Many Olivetti intellectuals tormented themselves with the thought that they were somehow complicit in the reproduction of that environment, but their dependence on its wages led to a gradual assimilation and the effacement of critique. This was certainly true for Giudici, and his poetry and criticism support Giorgino's call that we consider him—more than a specific intellectual—an "intellettuale aziendalizzato" (262). Such a label successfully conveys the relation of dependence running from Giudici to the Olivetti company, and we will need to return to the case of Giudici in what follows.

Giudici's ideas were formed in conversation with Franco Fortini, his officemate at the Olivetti advertising office in Milan. Fortini came to Olivetti's Ivrea in 1947 to organize a series of cultural events for the company, an initiative that brought him into daily contact with the factory workforce. When in the following year the anti-communist law student Antonio Pallante made an

attempt on Palmiro Togliatti's life outside of Montecitorio, Fortini incited the Olivetti factory workers to revolt, writing a series of manifestos that encouraged mass desertion throughout the armed forces. The PCI directed its militants to refrain from taking up arms, and Adriano defused the local tension by transferring Fortini to the Milan advertising office. Here, Fortini enjoyed a long and prosperous career, writing advertising copy and even naming some of Olivetti's most successful products. He also published a number of translations with the Edizioni di Comunità, becoming one of the most publicly visible Olivetti intellectuals, and retiring in 1963.[43]

By the early 1960s, Fortini had gained enough experience as a salaried intellectual to engage in a broad reflection on the state of critical thought in the era of industrial capitalism. What is particularly powerful at the level of methodology is Fortini's ability to draw out from an individual participation the general movement of social forces in which the intellectuals found themselves involved. "Tutta la nuova generazione di intellettuali," he wrote to friends in Piacenza in 1961, "trova o troverà opportunità di lavoro all'interno delle istituzioni culturali pubbliche o private (dall'ingegnere allo scrittore, dal biologo al regista) ma sempre in quanto *tecnici*" (89). Fortini's understanding of the 'proper' role of the intellectual in history is in keeping with the Marxist-Leninist position that intellectuals should show the people their real material interests and lead them to a revolt against the power relations characteristic of capitalist society. To Fortini, this seemed less likely to happen the more the intellectuals accepted wages from companies like Olivetti, and for two main reasons that I have already hinted at. On the one hand, the salaried intellectual's merging with industrial society served, in Fortini's words, to "accrescere distanza e incomunicabilità fra specialista intellettuale e massa" (89). And on the other hand, what critical energy might have created a connection between intellectuals and factory workers was

[43] Alberto Saibene, *L'Italia di Adriano Olivetti*. Rome and Milan: Edizioni di Comunita, 2017. 89-91.

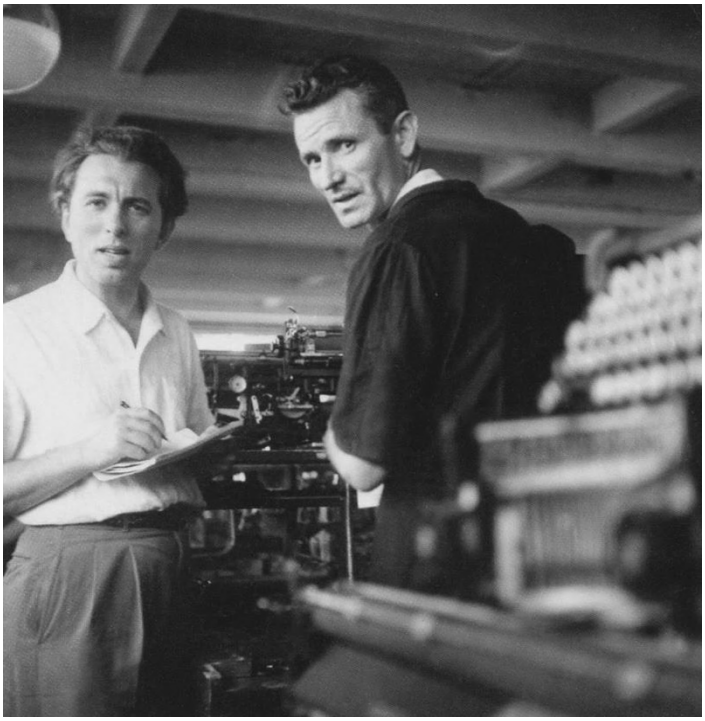

Figure 10: Franco Fortini (left), with a laborer inside the Olivetti factory at Ivrea from:Centro Studi Franco Fortini.

instrumentalized, "per ribadire lo sfruttamento generalizzato" in the guise of industrial psychology, sociology and even visual art (89). Fortini was profoundly pessimistic in front of the intellectuals' slow but steady co-optation by capital, and as the merging of culture with economy chipped away at Marxist teleology, his individual faith began to founder. Yet he still hoped beyond hope in the Gramscian idea of the intellectuals as a class, a historically necessary subject that would eventually be able to bring the workers to full consciousness.

We find similar concerns at the heart of Giudici's work, and can thus begin to discern in what he shares with Fortini a developing critique intended to challenge Adriano's enthusiastic cultivation of an Italian intellectual class. The circumstances of Giudici's entrance into the Olivetti company were similar to those surrounding Fortini's; Giudici came to Ivrea in 1956 to manage cultural programming in and around the factory. Like Fortini—only without the drama of a botched revolution—he was transferred almost immediately to the Milan office, where he wrote advertising

copy until 1979 (Giorgino 263-6). Giudici's reflections on the phenomenon of the salaried intellectual were published much later than Fortini's, but they are clearly rooted in the transformations that he was able to observe so closely beginning in the mid 1950s. The text I am concerned with here is a collection of critical essays titled *La letteratura verso Hiroshima*, published in 1976 by Riuniti.[44]

Giudici frames his intervention as a consideration of the evolving contrast between the intellectual's historical (and, he would say with Fortini, historic) purpose and the part the intellectual is made to play in industrial society. In Giudici there is a strong sense that the intellectual should aspire to what Foucault would call 'universality,' attaining a comprehensive view of society in order to judge it from a position above and outside daily life. This he calls the "funzione" (12) of the intellectual, but he notes that since the mid 1950s it has become nearly impossible for the intellectual to exercise this true social vocation. On the contrary, Giudici insists that the intellectual has been reduced to a mere "ruolo" (12), meaning the professional office designated for the intellectual by the development of the division of labor. What is at risk in the passage from "funzione" to "ruolo" is a comprehensive view of social life, or more precisely a "presa di coscienza del significato politico globale di ogni operare specifico" (17). Thus renouncing any claim to politics, the salaried intellectual is made to organize culture as just another moment of economic production.

In addition to the affinities with Fortini's analysis, what is important about Giudici's work is that it attempts to give an account of the genesis of the salaried intellectual by looking closely at the evolving needs of its employer, capital. Giudici ("Le rendite" 48) sets out from the basis that

[44] For a more comprehensive treatment of Giudici's work, including his poetry, see Giorgino, Simone. "Un colletto bianco all''Inferno': La poesia di Giudici e le utopie dell''Ingegner Adriano'." *Annali d'Italianistica*, vol 32, 2014, pp. 255-273.

the development of material forces has reached a point where it is no longer possible for capital to justify its rule with concrete appeals to the realization of profit. In other words, the critique of liberalism, and particularly that inaugurated by Marx, has successfully cornered capital into a decision between surrender and adaptation. For Giudici, capital has chosen to adapt to the challenge by abandoning the language of profit and co-opting that of culture. "L'intellettuale ha assolto il suo compito," he laments, "costruendo per l'industria l'ideologia di cui l'industria aveva bisogno" (48). Not only have Gramsci's organic intellectuals failed to serve the interests of the working class; Giudici's analysis suggests that they have come to constitute a hegemonic force in the service of capital. That the Olivetti company publicly fashioned itself as a culture-friendly organization did not necessarily mean that in private it was politically progressive. As early as 1949, the United States Information Service was recommending lists of anti-labor books for the Ivrea factory library, while workers were made to watch American-backed documentary films on the dangers of left-wing politics (Paola Bonifazio 81).

The betrayal of culture resounds throughout Giudici's work as a severe *mea culpa*, as if it were only in the passage from "funzione" to "ruolo" that the intellectual could recognize the social purpose he or she has been coaxed to forfeit. Nevertheless, Giudici remains hopeful, and indeed much of his analysis is intended to show the intellectual how to "eludere," as he says, "i termini impostigli dal 'ruolo' e di salvaguardare contemporaneamente le gelose prerogative della 'funzione'" (Giudici "La funzione" 13). It is only because the intellectual can still learn to double-cross industrial society—partaking of its prosperity even while critiquing its foundational assumptions—that Giudici and Fortini can pursue their analyses at all.

The Novel: Ottieri, Volponi, Buzzi

The rise of industrial themes in Italian literature between the late 1950s and early 1960s put many Olivetti intellectuals in a good position to contribute to the development of a new and singularly contemporary genre. English-language scholarship on Italian industrial literature is almost non-existent, and Italian literary historians have reached no consensus on the formation of a stable canon.[45] But in most cases whatever selection is made includes a number of subgenres, the most important of which is Olivetti literature. Giuseppe Lupo (*La letteratura* 121-6) has discussed these works as well as their critical stakes, and we can benefit from his work by concentrating here on the three Olivetti novelists who come closest to engaging with the salaried intellectual: Ottieri, Volponi and Buzzi.

Ottieri began work at Olivetti in July 1953, but he fell ill almost immediately with meningitis and was forced to leave his post for more than a year. During his twenty-month absence, Adriano continued to pay Ottieri's salary, and Ottieri went to Florence for a long cure with the only Italian doctor qualified to treat the disease (Saibene 95). Ottieri had abandoned the elitist intellectual milieu of Rome in 1948, moving to Milan with the hope of getting close to the industrial working class. By November 1954, he lay in convalescence, having barely succeeded in passing through the Olivetti factory gates, and with serious doubts about the possibility of ever representing industrial life (Licastro). Ottieri wrote in his diary that month:

> Il mondo delle fabbriche è un mondo chiuso. Non si entra e non si esce facilmente. Chi può descriverlo? Quelli che ci stanno dentro possono darci dei documenti, ma non la loro elaborazione: a meno che non nascano degli operai o impiegati artisti, il che sembra piuttosto raro. Gli artisti che vivono fuori, come possono penetrare in una industria? I pochi che ci lavorano diventano muti, per ragioni di tempo, di opportunità, ecc. Gli altri non ne capiscono niente ("Taccuino" 21).

[45] One important but very brief overview is provided in: Caesar, Michael. "Contemporary Italy (Since 1956)." *Cambridge History of Italian Literature*. Edited by Peter Brand and Lino Pertile. Cambridge UP, 1997, pp. 568-569.

From Ottieri's hospital bed two hundred miles south of Ivrea, industrial literature was beginning to look like a contradiction in terms.

But in early 1955, Ottieri recovered from meningitis, and his rhetorical and philosophical conundrums received an unexpected response from Adriano. The new Olivetti factory in Pozzuoli was set to open in April, and Adriano needed someone to build a local industrial workforce there. This was not an easy task, as Pozzuoli had long remained a small fishing village, but it did combine close observation of working-class life with an intellectual commitment. Ottieri happily accepted this assignment, and he arrived in Pozzuoli in March 1955. His duties included reading through applications, administering entrance examinations, conducting interviews and managing training programs (Saibene 95). It was a mutually beneficial agreement designed to give Adriano a smooth start in the Mezzogiorno all while permitting Ottieri a comprehensive study of the social situation that could be translated into intellectual inspiration.

Ottieri's experience led to the novel *Donnarumma all'assalto*, published in 1959 by Bompiani. The salaried intellectual who narrates the story has been brought to Santa Maria—a thinly disguised Pozzuoli—by a northern industrial company that intends to use his skills in its Human Relations department. He imagines this as an opportunity to conduct a close study of the working class, but he is quickly disappointed by the realization that he must perform a managerial role. It is a classic paradox updated to fit the measures of industrial society: the narrator can only get close to the workers by joining with the management, at which point he must renounce all claim to disinterested knowledge. Such a situation perplexed Ottieri throughout much of his career, even cropping up in his diary entries from 1955: "Noi giriamo fra gli operai, stiamo con loro, e non li conosciamo. Apparteniamo alla Direzione e raramente cogliamo i loro discorsi sul vivo" ("Taccuino" 59).

Figure 11: Ottiero Ottieri inside the Olivetti factory at Pozzuoli from: Archivio Storico Olivetti.

In *Donnarumma all'assalto*, this tension is manifest in the form of a double epistemology: industry produces its own knowledge regime that has nothing to do with the usual work of the intellectuals. Ottieri's protagonist seems nostalgic for what he imagines as the free commitment of his unsalaried ancestors; he wants to pursue a disinterested analysis of society that can serve as the groundwork for its future transformation. But he finds that his best efforts are constantly undermined, and the only knowledge he is allowed to develop is that which sustains the questionable goals of the management team and the capitalist class it represents. As the development of history pushes cultural production ever closer to economic production, the intellectuals have no choice but to give up on their own epistemology and to underwrite that of industry, or, what to Ottieri is the same thing, cease to be intellectuals altogether.

Donnarumma all'assalto also deals with the tension between imagined and attainable intellectual work by forcing Ottieri's protagonist to operate with the language of psychotechnics, a method of social psychology that claims to collocate individuals within the division of labor by

using personality and coordination tests to measure their 'natural' proclivities toward certain types of work. Psychotechnics was developed in the United States and adopted in Italy by Olivetti, where salaried intellectuals like Ottieri administered oral, written and physical exams. But the protagonist of *Donnarumma all'assalto* wants nothing to do with psychotechnics: he longs instead for the conventional language of everyday social intercourse that leads to human understanding, including, most importantly for Ottieri, between intellectuals and workers.

Donnarumma all'assalto first seeks to completely circumvent psychotechnics. "Non ci si può fidare soltanto dei test" (13) affirms Ottieri's protagonist, using a language that is highly colloquial, just like the relationships that he seeks. But with more than forty-thousand job applications, face-to-face meetings become wildly impractical, so he is forced to reevaluate psychotechnics as a language of expediency, if nothing else. This has some effect on the novel's form, which begins to adopt a more scientific language: "Se si debbono collocare determinati uomini a determinati lavori," Ottieri's protagonist reasons aloud, "e c'è uno scarto normale, direi umano, tra la domanda e l'offerta (sempre a favore dell'offerta…), la psicotecnica offre buoni strumenti di selezione e di scoperta delle attitudini: è già stato sperimentato" (19). Thus, both the novel and the character accommodate themselves to the world of psychotechnics, and the reader can almost hear the factory gates invoking Dante: "Lasciate ogne speranza, voi (intellettuali) ch'intrate!" The protagonist's failure to connect with the working class is enshrined in his encounter with Antonio Donnarumma, a particularly combative worker who refuses to submit to the psychotechnics examinations, thus eluding inscription into the well-defined factory knowledge regime and representing an unknown and unknowable threat.

The portrait of the salaried intellectual that emerges from *Donnarumma all'assalto* is one that, far from celebrating industrial employment as the saving grace of intellectual activity,

condemns the merging of culture and economy as a process that tends to abolish the intellectual as such. Ottieri clashed with more integrated Olivetti intellectuals over this position, including with Adriano himself, who personally stepped in to censor the publication of *Donnarumma all'assalto*. Ottieri had little choice but to acquiesce to the demands of his boss and, following minor changes to the names of some characters and places, the novel was finally released in 1959 (Saibene 97-8). Soon after this, Adriano offered Ottieri the directorship of Human Relations at the Pozzuoli factory, but Ottieri refused and left Olivetti, preferring to return—as he might have put it—to his vocation as an intellectual.

Paolo Volponi enjoyed a more rewarding experience at Olivetti, and unlike Ottieri he made a career at the company spanning almost twenty years. Volponi met Adriano in 1949 on the recommendation of Fortini, and the industrialist immediately recruited him for work on various town-planning projects in the Mezzogiorno. In 1956, Adriano brought Volponi to Ivrea as Director of Olivetti Servizi Sociali, a position he would hold until 1966, when he passed to the Public Relations department (Saibene 117-9). Thus, Volponi spent the late 1950s managing the many parts of Olivetti's generous company welfare system, including its factory cafeteria, family preschool, medical services, social assistance programs, cultural initiatives, summer camps and more. It was in this context that he wrote his first novel, dealing inevitably with the contradictions of the salaried intellectual, which was titled *Memoriale* and published by Garzanti in 1962.

In *Memoriale*, Volponi addresses the merging of culture and economy in ways that are more subtle than those used by Ottieri, and with different implications for the salaried intellectual. The first thing we notice about Volponi's protagonist Albino Saluggia is that he is not an intellectual at all, but rather an unskilled laborer, employed in a large Piedmontese factory just like Olivetti's. Albino works in a profoundly alienating environment where the division of labor has

developed to such a high degree that the workers have lost all notion of what their activity ultimately produces. In such an environment, Albino's neurotic behavior is perhaps more the norm than the exception, and we can thus take him for Volponi's general representation of the laborer's condition in industrial society. He struggles to remain healthy enough for work, shuttling between the factory floor, the company doctors and psychologists, and he is eventually diagnosed with tuberculosis and removed from his position.

Throughout *Memoriale*, Albino is kept in perpetual subordination by a scheming group of company intellectuals—doctors and psychologists—who appear to have an overdetermined role in the reproduction of social relations around the factory town. Indeed, these intellectuals' responsibility is not so much to promote the wellbeing of their patients as to safeguard the factory's productivity, something that only rarely coincides with the former aim. Albino's neuroses would seem to require a careful study and extended treatment, but the doctors and psychologists prefer to bring him up to working speed, just like a machine to be quickly returned to the factory floor. Only when they are faced with the reality of a condition that permanently threatens productivity—a case of tuberculosis that Albino may well have contracted on the job—are these intellectuals exposed as disciplinarians and forced to make their patient disappear.

But we should not underestimate the importance of Volponi's choice of narrator: *Memoriale* is focalized through the perspective of an unskilled laborer. Albino is an unreliable narrator who proposes in the opening pages to tell the story of his own mental demise. He thus readily admits to insanity, signaling that what follows is filtered through a very particular state of consciousness. Despite this problematic disclosure, Albino still succeeds in powerfully demystifying many of industrial society's most challenging contradictions, articulating what amounts to a total indictment of the compromised intellectuals.

In a dream that recurs throughout *Memoriale*, Albino imagines himself in the factory hard at work on—he does not actually know on what—some generic product, a "costruzione": "Verso la fine del lavoro la mia costruzione si mettesse a suonare, contrariamente a quelle di tutti gli altri che in fila accanto a me facevano lo stesso lavoro. Il suono della mia macchina non cessava se non ne smontavo un pezzo, tale da comprometterne la completezza." But just when Albino begins to despair, something happens: "D'improvviso arriva un capo, con l'aria del giovane operaio di Chivasso, il quale annunciava a tutti che secondo le ultime istruzioni le macchine avrebbero dovuto effettivamente suonare" (26-7). Albino's dream demystifies the knowledge produced by management, exposing it as completely arbitrary and thus without any claim to authority beyond its own domain of industrial productivity. Albino's "costruzione" is not desirable or undesirable in itself; rather it is made to be one or the other by the "ultime istruzioni," the knowledge elaborated by salaried intellectuals like designers and advertisers. Such an insight reveals the power of knowledge to determine all aspects of the working day, thus implicating the intellectuals in Albino's alienation and that of the modern labor force he represents.

As Director of Olivetti Servizi Sociali, Volponi managed teams of educators, doctors, sociologists, psychologists, architects, designers, advertisers and others, all of whom were engaged in producing a body of knowledge that underwrote in various ways the company's sustained success in Italy and internationally. It is difficult to say to what extent he truly believed these disciplines to be the legitimizers of capitalist exploitation, and any facile transposition of the politics of *Memoriale* to 1950s Ivrea would serve more to confuse than to clarify. But what is certain is that Volponi understood the risks of merging the intellectuals with industrial society, and he used *Memoriale* to explore the dangers to which such a process might lead.

Figure 12: Paolo Volponi outside the Olivetti factory at Ivrea from: Archivio Storico Olivetti.

Like Ottieri's novel, Volponi's poses a direct challenge to Adriano and his company, particularly as regards the cultivation of the Olivetti intellectuals and their transformation into salaried intellectuals. The hagiographic historiography has tried hard to wash Adriano's memory of Volponi's most staining criticisms, but with only partial success. Alberto Saibene (119), who discusses *Memoriale* in his 2017 Edizioni di Comunità book *L'Italia di Adriano Olivetti*, acknowledges that Volponi had serious doubts about "la logica pervasiva della società industriale." But he also reassures his readers, without citing any evidence, that these doubts were "nati dopo la morte di Adriano."[46] In Saibene's rendering (119), Volponi's protagonist struggles not against the alliance of management and intellectuals, but rather against some deep inner self, as a "vittima più che dell'industria, della scissione dell'io della società contemporanea." Such interpretations

[46] Adriano died of a brain hemorrhage on February 27, 1960. By this date, Volponi had already been Director of Olivetti Servizi Sociali for four years. *Memoriale* was published two years later, in 1962.

can be taken only as confirmation of the power of *Memoriale* to carry forward a line of critique already present in Fortini, Giudici and Ottieri, one that will reach its culmination in Buzzi.

Buzzi operated mainly within the ambit of Adriano's political organization, the Movimento Comunità, taking charge of its most active chapter, the Centro Culturale Olivetti in Ivrea, in 1955. He also oversaw ninety other Centri Comunitari spread throughout the Canavese before moving to the Olivetti factory in Aglie to manage the social services there in 1958. Buzzi's articles appeared in journals and newspapers financed by Adriano, namely *Comunità*, *La Sentinella del Canavese* and *La Via del Piemonte*, and his novel *L'amore mio italiano*, published by Mondadori in 1963, was the masterpiece that reflected his experience as an Olivetti intellectual (Lupo *La letteratura* 255). Thus Buzzi was, as Giuseppe Lupo (*La letteratura* 255) has rightly remarked, "un intellettuale destinato non tanto alla fabbrica Olivetti, piuttosto a quel vasto fenomeno che prevede i rapporti tra fabbrica e territorio, con un'attenzione sociale e morale." He went on to work at other major companies like Pirelli, Bassetti and Standa, becoming what we might consider the Italian salaried intellectual *par excellence*.

With *L'amore mio italiano*, the critique of the salaried intellectual as someone who is beholden to the dominant mode of production reaches full maturity, and in the hands of a writer intimately familiar with Adriano and his professional network. The protagonist of the novel is Paolo, a social psychologist living in an unnamed industrial town that is easily identifiable as Ivrea. Daily life is organized around the hegemonic local company whose president has anticipated the satisfaction of all needs with an extensive welfare system that includes housing, healthcare, transportation, entertainment and so on. The running of such a system requires the collaboration of myriad intellectuals, including Paolo, who works in the main factory hearing and resolving workers' complaints. But Paolo is not convinced that such an administered society is even

desirable, and he sees it rather as a means to exploit the workers while keeping them happy with vague promises of ever-greater material rewards. Nor is Paolo himself immune to such discourses, and he soon begins to buy into them, though with some reservations. By the end of the novel, Paolo appears to be drunk on industrial society, declaring his uncritical allegiance to the factory town and all it represents.

Thus, *L'amore mio italiano* is the story of an intellectual who, by virtue of entering into direct relation with an industrial company, forfeits all grounds for critical thought. Not only is Paolo unable to participate in the transformation of society; he is even made to play a conservative role, redirecting his activity as social psychologist to the diffusion of class tensions and the mitigation of internal change. This he laments in an embarrassing confession intended to explain his team's methodology:

> Ricevevamo gli operai bisognosi di soccorso, i disadattati al lavoro, quelli che avevano dei problemi familiari, quelli che chiedevano prestiti. Ci avevano spiegato tutto a puntino, lasciando ben poco alla nostra discrezione; ci avevano anche fatto frequentare appositi corsi. In sostanza, avevamo appreso, non era tanto importante soddisfare gli operai quanto lasciarli sfogare, ascoltarli con cordialità e con pazienza. Secondo gli specialisti, ciò li aiutava a comprendere i loro affanni, come si erano originati, per lo più da un equivoco o da un malinteso, e a superarli (31).

From Paolo's telling, it would seem that Freudian analysis is the ultimate tool of the salaried intellectual because such a method never fails to locate the origin of neuroses in the deeply personal recesses of the individual psyche, thus preventing the recognition of alienating social relations that might lead to the formation of working-class consciousness.[47] Against this method, and as a direct result of his observations, Paolo grasps what he believes to be the natural development of history,

[47] That psychoanalysis failed to grasp collective problems was a common bias of Marxist intellectuals in postwar Italy. However, it should be pointed out that Freud explicitly recognized the importance of social relations in the constitution and development of the individual psyche, including pointed discussion of "caste" relations his 1921 study *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*. I am grateful to Alessandra Diazzi for help with these insights. See: Freud, Sigmund. *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*. The Hogarth Press / Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1955, p.

which would tend, in his eyes, to unite the working class not only to itself but also to intellectuals like him. "Ci rendevamo conto di avere gli stessi problemi degli operai," he admits, "sicché invece di ascoltarli con distacco ci veniva voglia di unire la nostra voce alla loro" (31).

What prevents Paolo from relating his concerns out loud to those of the workers is the role required of all salaried intellectuals in the reproduction of industrial society. This Buzzi understands far too well for us to need to add much to his protagonist's words:

> Io e Francesco impersonavamo il desiderio della direzione di sopprimere ogni traccia del malcontento operaio. Eravamo strumenti ben lubrificati della lungimirante generosità padronale. La nostra frequente sensazione di non essere diversi dagli altri e il raro impulso a stimolarli a reazioni attive, erano sentimenti da tenere accuratamente nascosti; ci avrebbero accusati di venir meno al nostro dovere, di esasperare le angosce che dovevamo invece stemperare e tramutare in una durevole pace (32).

Caught in a double bind, Paolo's affinity with the workers must remain his own personal secret, and by virtue of the role that he is made to play as a salaried intellectual.

Only a short while later, Paolo finds himself 'on the couch,' so to speak, listening to a group of intellectuals who deal in the same psychoanalytic discourses with which he has become so familiar. Experts on the condition of the industrial working class, these intellectuals have been hired by the management's labor union—an organization that reminds us of the Olivetti union Comunità di Fabbrica-Autonomia Aziendale[48]—to pursue a live debate similar to those organized by the Centro Culturale Olivetti. "Discutevano in nostra presenza di noi, operai e impiegati," Paolo cries in disbelief, "come di pazienti da curare, non solo nel corpo, ma anche, e principalmente, nella psyche" (138). Paolo is embarrassed to recognize in these intellectuals something of himself, thus forcing a partial reckoning with his own power to manipulate the workers for the purposes

[48] In 1955 Adriano Olivetti introduced Comunità di Fabbrica-Autonomia Aziendale, a labor union wing of his political organization, the Movimento Comunità. The union advocated collaboration between capital and labor and was constantly mocked by the CGIL as the 'sindacato dei padroni.'

dictated by management. At the end of the debate, and despite the intellectuals' promise of shorter days and higher wages, the workers learn that there has been a company-wide commercial crisis that will require immediate sackings. The news swiftly consumes whatever might have remained of the intellectuals' authority and exposes them as puppets of management, completely out of touch with reality and unfit to lead the working class.

At this point, one might justifiably wonder why Olivetti intellectuals like Ottieri, Volponi and Buzzi placed so much importance on the fields of Human Relations, choosing to explore the merging of the intellectuals with industrial society by focusing unanimously on workforce recruiters, doctors, social psychologists and other such factory personnel. Part of the response lies in the fact that these men of letters were themselves engaged in Human Relations work, and writing about it was from the start an autobiographical pursuit. But other Olivetti intellectuals came from a much wider collection of fields, including architecture, design, literature, painting, advertising and education. With varying degrees of directness, all these disciplines were brought into relation with the Olivetti company, its industrial infrastructure, and the dominant mode of production. What is so important about Human Relations may have less to do with the details of any one discipline and more to do with the fact that medicine, sociology, psychology and their close relatives can serve as easy models for representing the relationship between the intellectuals and industrial society more broadly. These fields enjoy a high degree of public legitimacy, something that makes them ironically susceptible to corruption and transformation into what Foucault would call "technologies of power" (*Discipline*). In the hands of the Olivetti intellectuals, medicine, sociology and psychology become nothing more than tools for managing the reproduction of labor, a process that has much to gain from the collaboration of other specialists like architects, designers, educators—even novelists and painters.

In this sense, we should read Olivetti literature from a broad perspective that can relate narrative details to the general composition of social forces that they are meant to represent. It is not surprisingly in Buzzi, where the critique of the salaried intellectual is at its most developed, that we find an indication of the need for such an approach. "Essi avevano fiducia nella nostra saggezza" (138), Paolo says of the workers who come to discuss their troubles. "La monotonia e la scarsa drammaticità dei problemi che ci esponevano ci facevano toccare con mano quanto il benessere li avesse ormai irretiti. Il nostro ufficio era un eccellente punto d'osservazione per cogliere la nuova fisionomia della città e dei suoi abitanti, per gioirne e patirne" (31-2). Thus, Buzzi moves us very quickly from the factory out to the town. Paolo sits in "un eccellente punto d'osservazione," as an intellectual above society and as if to admire his own work of art, "per gioirne e patirne." It is clear that we are witnessing not merely the story of Paolo and the workers, but rather that of a much more complex relationship between the intellectuals and what Elio Vittorini glossed so skillfully as "la realtà industriale," the global "catena di effetti che il mondo delle fabbriche mette in moto" (20). And despite it all, Paolo somehow remains, to his regret, unable to reach such a reality. Buzzi permits him to look but not to touch, confined as he is to the space of the factory—a fitting vantage point for the salaried intellectual.

In the opening years of the twenty-first century, Francesco Novara, Renato Rozzi and Roberta Garruccio sat down with twenty-five former Olivetti employees to discuss the routine of daily life inside what was already a factory of the past. The resulting interviews were published by Mondadori in 2005 as *Uomini e lavoro alla Olivetti*, and they add texture to our discussion of the salaried intellectual. Underneath and across the individual interviews of *Uomini e lavoro alla Olivetti* there emerges a latent thesis about the decline of the Olivetti company that might be formulated as follows: Adriano Olivetti was a benevolent and selfless patriarch whose workers

duly repaid him; Carlo De Benedetti was a selfish capitalist who got what he deserved, which happened to be the disintegration of the Olivetti vision.[49] Yet despite such a tendency to exalt Adriano and his achievements, a number of these interviews actually confirm the repressive dimension of his cultivation of the intellectuals, including suggestions that this dimension was deliberate and openly discussed.

Manager Massimo Levi, who worked in the Olivetti Centro di psicologia, confirms that part of the purpose of the Centro was to break up the power of the labor unions: "Quando c'era una qualche grana di carattere sindacale, io ero a stretto contatto con il Servizio relazioni interne che trattava con la parte sindacale, ed era abbastanza normale l'intervento del Centro di psicologia, anche per verificare cosa ci fosse di vero nella controversia" (Novara et al 350). For Cornelia Lombardo, who worked under Volponi in the Olivetti Servizi Sociali, the goal was not so much to address the conditions of working-class difficulty as it was to "immettere di nuovo nel lavoro gli operai" (594). Such an approach was purposefully blind to all questions of alienation originating in the composition of social forces, because everywhere it looked it saw the same thing: an individual maladapted to the job. Thus, Lombardo never considers the question in collective terms; she says rather—in a language that reveals its own biases—"si cercava di capire quali fossero *i problemi di ciascuno*" (595, emphasis mine).

Both the *saggistica* and novels of the Olivetti intellectuals, as analyzed in this chapter, challenge us to reconceive the postwar alliance between cultural and economic production as one that was at least potentially problematic for the free exercise of critical thought and the

[49] After Adriano Olivetti's death in 1960, the company quickly ran into financial trouble. In 1964, it was taken over by a holding group made up of Roberto Olivetti, FIAT, Pirelli, Mediobanca and other Italian conglomerates, and the most promising part, the electronics division, was sold to General Electric. Carlo De Benedetti assumed the presidency in 1978 and expanded into the market for personal computers. But De Benedetti did little to return the fruits of production to the community in Ivrea, and his presidency ended in 1996, amid another financial crisis.

transformation of a developing and strikingly inequitable society. This is not to say that industrialists like Adriano successfully exiled critique from the public sphere, nor that the intellectuals failed in some fundamental way to survive their entrance to the modern factory. On the contrary, it is simply to point out that intellectuals were not used to working in such an environment—that this was a new space with new complexities that we must consider very carefully. They include both possibilities and limits, access to new resources and dependence on new authorities. Any attempt to evaluate the salaried intellectual must take account of these.

Chapter 4
Sociology: Industrial Society and the Southern Question from La Martella to Pozzuoli

With the 1945 Einaudi publication of Carlo Levi's novel *Cristo si è fermato a Eboli* and its 1947 translation into English by Farrar, Strauss and Company as *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, Italy's ugly Southern Question was forced onto the cultural radars of reading publics in both Italy and the United States. The material misery of life in the Italian South, and especially the disparity with conditions in the North, had long been a focus of academic inquiry and policymaking on the peninsula, and the intense debate had even generated a new discipline, called (not without some problems of its own) 'meridionalismo.'[50] But it was Levi's book that transformed the Question into a matter of popular discussion: no longer was southern suffering a mere object of socio-scientific analysis; it now became a workable—maybe even resolvable—responsibility of civil society.

Cristo si è fermato a Eboli is in part an autobiographical and documentary novel that recounts Levi's experience of internal exile, a punishment reserved for politically-active intellectuals of the left and meted out by the Fascist regime during the mid 1930s. Levi belonged to Carlo Rosselli's liberal-socialist political movement Giustizia e Libertà, and Mussolini sent him away to the small southern hill towns of Grassano and Aliano, both in Basilicata. The outstanding contribution of Levi's book is that it describes in great detail the anguished wretchedness of southern provincial life, and from the point of view of a northern visitor. In Levi's rendering, the

[50] For a good collection of important writings by *meridionalisti*, spanning from the 1870s to the 1960s, see: Villari, Rosario, editor. *Il Sud nella storia d'Italia: Antologia della questione meridionale*. Laterza, 1963.

society of the South is an "immobile civiltà," a place untouched both by Christianity and by Western modernity, where even time loses its heuristic value: "le stagioni scorrono sulla fatica contadina, oggi come tremila anni prima di Cristo" (3-4). Faced with such obstinate social paralysis and renouncing all ability to truly comprehend it, Levi cannot help but be personally wary of all optimistic attempts to improve the lot of the southern people.

And yet, in these same years the 'meridionalisti''s implicit point of comparison—the Italian North—was laying the groundwork for an intense process of industrialization that had at least the potential to reach to the depths of Basilicata and beyond. The arrival of democracy and the establishment in the United States of the European Recovery Program gradually nurtured in Italy an American-style mass consumerism that thrived on the availability of cheap labor and produced what was considered an economic 'miracle.' Much of the literature and scholarship on the Southern Question that grew up in the shadow of *Cristo si è fermato a Eboli* does not take adequate account of this process of northern industrialization—until very recently the Southern Question and the economic miracle were usually treated as separate research topics.[51] On the contrary, and as a center-stage protagonist of northern industrialization, Adriano Olivetti considered the prospects of southern reform in direct relation to the motor force of modern factory production.

In this chapter, I will concentrate on what Valerio Ochetto has called Adriano's "discesa al Sud" (177). I will begin by exploring the presence of the Southern Question in Adriano's writings, where a specifically southern community is imagined on the basis of locally constituted labor regimes. I will then recount the history of Adriano's interventions at La Martella and Pozzuoli, two important test sites for Olivetti's modern brand of 'meridionalismo.' What will

[51] One recent article that treats these two topics together is: Alacevich, Michele. "Postwar Development in the Italian Mezzogiorno: Analyses and Politics." *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, vol 18, no 1, 2013, pp. 90-112.

emerge is a Janus-faced picture of Adriano's relation to the South: one marked by profound and sincere concern for the welfare of the southern workforce, but also by the problematic strands of northern paternalism implicit in the historiography on the Southern Question.

Less Housing, More Jobs

After the publication of Levi's *Cristo si è fermato a Eboli*, and in partial response to a growing genre of international anthropological and sociological inquiry into the ills of the Italian South, there was a general rush on the part of organizations, governments and states to provide some sort of material relief to the war-torn parts of southern Italy. On the peninsula, this process was guided by two public companies, INA-Casa and the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno, both in the hands of the DC, since the PCI and the PSI had been ejected from Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi's government in 1947. INA-Casa focused on public housing projects, especially for those who had been displaced by the wartime bombings, and the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno provided heavy infrastructure like roads, energy and water distribution. Both companies outlived the immediate postwar reconstruction period, making decisive and long-term contributions to the material and spiritual recovery of the Italian nation, but they also became the targets of harsh public criticism, much of which was warranted.

As the wealthy president of a northern industrial company who came suddenly face-to-face with the grinding poverty of southern rural life, Adriano was openly receptive to the countless voices of contestation that sought to undermine the DC's management of the Southern Question. In a 1958 article titled "Per una pianificazione democratica nel Mezzogiorno," Adriano argued that the DC was using the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno not to alleviate human suffering, but rather to procure more votes for itself as a party (238). This was undoubtedly true, and one's claim to the services of both INA-Casa and the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno depended very much on personal

contacts, economic and social resources and willingness to elect the right officials. But instead of just echoing the circulating criticisms of DC reform, Adriano also raised his own voice and identified a central pressure point of the government's development strategy: enough with housing and public services, Adriano exhorted, what the South needs is jobs. "La piena occupazione della mano d'opera" was the only legitimate goal; the southern community was to be built on labor-intensive private industry, not on state-directed capital investments (285).

The Southern Question became an important part of the Movimento Comunità's cultural and political program, and the years between 1949 and 1956 saw the opening of Centri Comunitari in Basilicata, Puglia and Sicily (Caizzi 353). Like their sister centers in the North, so too the Centri Comunitari of the South hosted regular lectures, conferences and debates, but with an overall focus on southern issues. The most tangible result of this general turn toward the Italian South was Riccardo Musatti's 1955 Edizioni di Comunità book *La via del Sud*, which both diagnosed socio-economic stagnation and prescribed its cure along Olivettian lines. Since Musatti worked very closely with Adriano both in the context of the Movimento Comunità and as a regular contributor to the journal *Comunità*, Olivetti historians have long considered *La via del Sud* the highest expression of Adriano's own approach to the Southern Question, the unofficial manifesto for a "meridionalismo comunitario," in the words of Ochetto (183).

As the title suggests, *La via del Sud* is a programmatic text: How specifically should the wealthy North, and especially modern industry, contribute to the development of the poor South? In order to respond to such a question, Musatti must first find an explanation for the area's millenary and bitter misery, and he believes to have identified the root cause of the problem in the South's unique and unfortunate separation of labor and community. On the one hand, the southern peasant tills the fields of the powerful 'latifondisti,' but on the other hand he must return "con

qualche ora di mulo" to the city for some food, recreation and a bed (10). The space of work is thus severed from the space of leisure, giving rise to a whole set of economic and social difficulties: "i campi, lontani dagli abitati, si vedono sottratta una larga quota di quelle energie che vanno disperse nei lunghi tragitti" while "nelle 'città' si perpetua la stasi di una vita sociale depressa e elementare" (10). If only it were possible to force the geographic coincidence of community and labor, then the South would finally be capable, in Musatti's opinion, of nourishing a higher living standard.

Musatti is led to believe, from a rational appraisal of the long history of southern exploitation, that the local ruling class cannot be trusted to help in any way: the landed aristocracy will continue to resist change, using any and all physical and ideological methods to further consolidate its own power over the peasantry. What he proposes instead is that the northern bourgeoisie take up the torch of progress, guiding the laboring southern masses toward an evermore integrated and prosperous future (39). The necessity of an alliance between the northern bourgeoisie and the southern peasantry, Musatti insists, was recognized by all the major 'meridionalisti' from Giustino Fortunato to Guido Dorso, Gaetano Salvemmini to Antonio Gramsci. Especially in this last case, he is quite a long way from the mark, and Gramsci's 'blocco storico' between the northern proletariat and the southern peasantry is here twisted to the needs of private industry. This is perfect for Adriano, the president of a successful northern company with a strong sense of moral responsibility toward the southern workforce, and Musatti mobilizes his apocryphal brand of 'meridionalismo' in order to legitimize industrial intervention in the South.

To Musatti's credit, he acknowledges the historical particularities of the newly-tapped workforce: the southern laborer is not a carbon copy of the northern factory worker—he has a different culture that, far from constituting a commercial liability, might actually represent a

repository of fundamental human values that can pose a challenge to the unequitable development of postwar Italian capitalism in the North. In Musatti's own words, it would be a grave error for northern industry to "sradica[re] di colpo, con provvedimenti parziali, lenti e incoerenti, gli abitanti dalle loro vecchie comunità, dal calore di una vita retta in un millenario equilibrio, dai poveri ma complessi mercati di lavoro, che sono le piazze dei paesi contadini, l'imbocco delle strade che menano ai campi" (98). And yet, the ultimate goal must be to merge the space of community with the space of labor: to make the land accessible to the "paesi contadini," to provide jobs to the new industrial centers. Falling into line with Adriano's own critique of DC reform, Musatti admonishes the ineffective "onda di […] denaro importato" from the North in the form of housing, public services and consumer goods, something that can only leave unsatisfied the real desire for prosperity, which will be built on jobs alone (102).

This is not to say that Musatti and Adriano actively opposed the construction of popular housing in the South. Especially from the perspective of Adriano, who had been working in the discipline and institutions of town planning since the mid 1930s, the real need for shelter in a land thoroughly bombed out by wartime operations was more than apparent. But as he noted in a 1958 article titled "Ostacoli alla pianificazione," a large portion of the state funds allocated for housing development never quite reached its target (120). Certainly it was thinned out within the bureaucratic pipelines of so many offices and councils, and in some cases siphoned off to interested parties in *quid pro quo* agreements with the DC functionaries. It was fine to use whatever remained to roll back the rising rate of homelessness, but Adriano insisted that any long-term prosperity depended solely on the creation of jobs. His was the sort of 'teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime' advice typical of Cold War capitalism, and this left no room for doubt when it came to economic strategy: set up the basic facilities of agricultural and industrial production for

exclusive use by the southern workforce. Whether such a strategy were directed by the public or the private sector, the important thing was to square the question of jobs with that of housing: "non è più ormai possibile," Adriano declared, "dissociare la pianificazione economico-sociale dalla pianificazione urbanistica" (123).

Despite so many rapid and intense transformations of Italian society in economy, politics and culture, Adriano's position on the Southern Question remained remarkably consistent throughout the 1950s. Already by 1954 he was pushing for a transition from housing to jobs planning, poking fun at the DC, for its obsessive fixation with INA-Casa: "case, case, case per tutti rimane uno slogan politico eccellente" ("Perché" 94). The most powerful rendition of Adriano's critique is the 1954 article "Perché si pianifica?" whose title betrays a suggestive mixture of hope and resignation. Mobilizing the classical rhetorical strategy of the *reductio ad absurdum*, Adriano asks his readers to really think hard about the direction of the administration's sloppy reform program: "se noi […] non poniamo mano a riorganizzare e vitalizzare le industrie, rischiamo di continuare a far case per gente senza lavoro" (94-5). This deep distrust in the capacity of the state to act on its own professed goals was part of what led Adriano to try his own hand at the organization of labor in the South, to contribute a corrective—as he put it in 1959—to the "relazione tra le abitazioni e i posti di lavoro" ("Edilizia" 140).

When we speak of Adriano's concrete contribution to the development of southern Italy, we must speak first and foremost of the Olivetti factory at Pozzuoli. The history of this factory, which opened in 1955, has been the focus of a mainly eulogistic scholarship, and we will have occasion in the final section of the present chapter to narrate critically the course of the project from conception to inauguration. But here, we must anticipate one important conclusion: that the Olivetti factory at Pozzuoli addressed itself to the southern worker as more natural (more simple,

even primitive) than his northern counterpart. This is a potentially problematic aspect of Adriano's general approach to the Southern Question, and it crops up in the things he said and wrote. In the opening speech to the laborers—delivered at the factory inauguration and subsequently printed in the 1960 Edizioni di Comunità book *Città dell'uomo* as "Ai lavoratori di Pozzuoli"—Adriano laid bare for the southern workforce his own picture of their time-worn civilization: "l'uomo del Sud ha abbandonato soltanto ieri la civiltà della terra: egli ha perciò in sé una immensa riserva di intenso calore umano" (167). Of course, that the southern economy had been historically driven by agriculture (and, to some extent, commerce) was true, but Adriano's characterization also piggybacked on a long northern European tradition of representing the South in ways that justified its economic, political and cultural exploitation.[52] The signature move of that tradition was to associate the South with the natural world, devoid of all culture and asking—'if only it knew how'—to be actively civilized. Part of the idea behind the Pozzuoli factory was, according to Adriano, to respect "la natura e la bellezza" of the South, something that was understood as integral to respecting the southern man himself (167).

Since Adriano's death in 1960, political decolonization across the Global South and intellectual contestations of Enlightenment philosophy in the disciplines of the humanities and social sciences have made the issue of modernization and its fraught history highly controversial ones. Walt Whitman Rostow's classic text *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* was published by Cambridge University Press in the last year of Adriano's life, and it quickly gained a reputation as the foundational treatise for the budding field of modernization theory. According to Rostow and his students, all national economies must pass through five basic stages of growth: traditional, preparation for (capitalist) take-off, (capitalist) take-off, drive to

[52] For a good overview of this tradition, and especially its relation to southern Italy, see: Moe, Nelson. *The View from Vesuvius: Italian Culture and the Southern Question*. University of California Press, 2002.

technological maturity and high mass consumption. It is easy to see how Rostow's system, far from explaining any natural phenomenon, imposed upon the long history of Western civilization a tailor-made theory that normalized development in its capitalist guise, thus implicitly legitimating all past, present and future violence against the 'losers' of the free market. Indeed, one can invariably replace Rostow's term for the ostensible goal of "high mass consumption" with ones plainer like capitalism, commercialism and especially Americanism.

The strongest critique of Rostow's system, and of modernization theory in general, came from the so-called dependency theorists, an international group of economists and sociologists gathered around Andre Gunder Frank. In his 1966 New England Free Press book *The Development of Underdevelopment*, Frank argued that the problem with modernization theory is that it assumes that all national economies develop in complete isolation, influenced only by internal factors. On the contrary, Frank and his colleagues emphasized the dynamic relationship among a proliferating set of national economies, all of which were influenced by internal and external factors and intertwined to make up a complex world system (from this, in the mid 1980s, came world-systems theory). From the perspective of dependency theorists, there is no such thing as undeveloped nations, unable to meet the preconditions yet nevertheless ready for a capitalist take-off; on the contrary, there are only *under*developed nations, whose economies have been actively depreciated via the extraction of raw materials and labor by the capital-rich world.

As one would expect, the Italian case presents a number of difficulties, mainly deriving from the coexistence of dual economies within one nation-state. The complexities of modernization theory and dependency theory are squeezed into the small space of the peninsula, politicizing all sorts of public discourse along the North-South axis. The disciplines of history and sociology have generally drawn research inspiration from this situation, while in politics it has

provided the emotional raw material for the rise of separatist groups like the Fronte Nazionale Siciliano and the Lega Nord. To the question of whether the North should attempt to modernize the South, Italian national culture of the nineteenth century generally responded in two ways. On the one hand, most 'meridionalisti' since Leopoldo Franchetti and Sidney Sonnino agreed that the answer was yes—they just argued over what to do and how to do it.[53] On the other hand, the Italian literary establishment almost unanimously answered no—the loudest voice was certainly Giovanni Verga, who described southern civilization so memorably as a victim of "la fiumana del progresso" (11).

Apropos this last term, both the defenders and denouncers of southern modernization would have to wait nearly another century before Pier Paolo Pasolini would point out that progress is not always the same thing as—indeed, it might be antithetical to—development. In his 1975 article titled "Sviluppo e progresso," Pasolini argued in favor of "progresso": "una nozione ideale" connected to a rising living standard for the working class (220). But he vilified "sviluppo," which he considered "un fatto pragmatico ed economico" worshiped by the bourgeoisie and functional only to the concentration of resources and power by the owners of productive means (220). The common-sense understanding was that development and progress were one and the same, but Pasolini's merit was to show how the proverbial locomotives of industrialization and modernization had anything but fixed tracks: they could be directed toward the enrichment of a small group of business and property owners, or toward the benefit of the vast majority of agricultural and industrial laborers. By choosing progress over development, Pasolini did not quite contest the logic of production as such—he still believed in converting resources like raw materials

[53] See, again: Villari, Rosario, editor. *Il Sud nella storia d'Italia: Antologia della questione meridionale*. Laterza, 1963. This anthology includes parts of Franchetti and Sonnino's classic study of *La Sicilia nel 1876*, plus subsequent reflections on the Southern Question.

and labor into products like social services and consumer goods. What he did contest was the logic of distribution—he called for a more democratic participation in the total output of modern society, using humanity to measure the economy and not the other way around.

But it is widely acknowledged that Pasolini ultimately opposed modernization in all of its forms, and indeed the second half of "Progresso e sviluppo" carefully walks back all of the initial optimism. Since the processes of industrialization and modernization have long been cast in their bourgeois mold, Pasolini insists on the hopelessness of any progressive movement that claims to break with the usual methods of capitalist distribution (221). In any case, the political space of a third-way position opened up by Pasolini's writings—yes to modernization, but on the condition that it benefit the working class—was the same space that Adriano had occupied, and without ever renouncing it, more than fifteen years earlier.

Like Pasolini, so too Adriano held humanity as the measure of all things. In a part of his inaugural speech to the laborers at Pozzuoli that has rightly become famous, Adriano posed the following rhetorical question: "Può l'industria darsi dei fini? Si trovano questi semplicemente nell'indice dei profitti?" ("Ai lavoratori di Pozzuoli" 163) The implication was that the productive machinery of modern society must modify its direction in accordance with new goals. It was ultimately the goal of Adriano to humanize that society, to create a 'città dell'uomo,' as the title of his last book duly attests. When it came to the Southern Question, this meant using the resources of the economic miracle in the North in order to improve living conditions in the languishing South—not for the 'latifundisti' or any other detainer of traditional power, but for the much more numerous workers. This was the theoretical background for his interventions at La Martella and Pozzuoli, two Olivetti geographies of intervention whose stories can serve to add some color to the current picture.

La Martella

Never before and never since the period from 1945 to 1960 have there been active on the Italian peninsula so many national, transnational and international organizations: councils, committees, commissions, administrations, relief funds, programs, offices, charities, agencies, associations, institutes, institutions, public companies and non-governmental organizations, some with competing goals, many with overlapping jurisdictions and competencies, but all connected in some way to the postwar reconstruction effort. As a successful Italian businessman sympathetic to American and European internationalism, and with a well-publicized industrial philosophy that appeared to be a progressive alternative to the looming threat of Soviet Communism, Adriano was remarkably well-placed to play a leading role in many of these organizations. He even had some experience in the practices of opinion making and policy writing, skills he had honed as a member of the Istituto Nazionale d'Urbanistica (Italy's main town planning institute) since 1938 (Ochetto 151). It was not long before Adriano became wrapped up in a thick web of reconstruction efforts, something he navigated with both enthusiasm and frustration and that ultimately led him to La Martella.

The first hints of postwar cooperation and competition to shape the material and spiritual reconstruction of Italian society came in even before the Yalta Conference between Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin. Already in July 1944 the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration was on the ground in Rome with a delegation of international observers to assess the situation there (Talmona 175). But Adriano was nowhere to be found, having escaped from the Regina Coeli prison in September, and he was safely exiled in Switzerland, just waiting for the signal to return home (Ochetto 107-9). Adriano arrived back in Italy in May 1945, just as the United Nations delegation was reaching its first important conclusions. The wartime bombings

had wrought so much physical destruction, the group determined, that the only reasonable response was to build homes, and to do so fast (Ochetto 123). Thus in May 1946 the delegation teamed up with the Consiglio nazionale delle ricerche to constitute a special housing committee, called the Comitato Amministrativo Soccorso ai Senzattetto (Talmona 179). Since this committee technically operated as a branch of the United Nations group, their names were combined to form the cumbersome acronym UNRRA-CASAS.

In the first phase of its work, UNRRA-CASAS concentrated most of its efforts in the Italian North, and by summer 1947 it had already decided to withdraw from the peninsula entirely (Talmona 180). But since the DC readily recognized the continuing usefulness of the committee, De Gasperi extended its funding with a special decree that transformed UNNRA-CASAS into a tool of the Italian government (Talmona 181). Just as the United Nations was backing out of Italy, the United States was moving in, and the main instrument of American intervention was Truman's European Recovery Program, signed into law in April 1948 (Talmona 182). This program of mostly financial aid was directed by the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA), which wasted no time in teaming up with the newly-Italianized UNRRA-CASAS. Working together through the legal structures of both organizations, the Americans and the Italians set out to draft a new plan for reconstruction and modernization in Italy—one that would include, and indeed prioritize, the South.

In these same months, Adriano was just beginning to take up an interest in the Southern Question, and in early 1949 he joined UNRRA-CASAS as a steering committee member (Di Biagi 161). The first order of business for the new partnership with the ECA was to form two joint commissions for the investigation of everyday hardship in southern Italy. Adriano was named as a consultant to the first commission, on popular housing, and he was made president of the second

commission, on economic and social difficulties (Talmona 183). Such an imbalance was consistent with Adriano's developing preference for economic planning over housing construction, and it gave him powerful resources with which to affect a close study of the dire situation in the South.

Under Adriano's guidance, the commission's first goal was to identify the precise geographies where an UNRRA-CASAS and ECA intervention might prove most beneficial: Which southern hill towns were suffering the worst? Which cities were bombed out? Which farming villages were lying fallow? Given the non-stop coverage, in both the national and international press, of the troubled Basilicata, there was never much doubt that the commission's list would ultimately be topped by the town of Matera. Part of this can be explained by the publication of Levi's novel *Cristo si è fermato a Eboli*, whose exiled author-protagonist had served his sentence in Grassano and Aliano, roughly fifteen and thirty miles from Matera, respectively. Part of it can also be explained by the simple shock value of Matera images: here was an urban center, once part of the Roman Empire and now belonging to Western Europe, where after more than eight millennia of civilization thousands of people were still living in Paleolithic caves. The two largest sites were the Sasso Caveoso and the Sasso Barisano, home to about eighteen thousand cavemen and cavewomen that the United States government called, in internal records, "20th century tryloglytes" (cited in Paola Bonifazio 106). As news of their 'discovery' spread around the world, the Sassi di Matera became a symbolic stop along the campaign trail for many Italian politicians, two big "vergogne nazionali" as Togliatti fumed during an April 1948 visit (cited in Caserta 7).

The joint UNRRA-CASAS and ECA commission on economic and social issues arrived in Matera in September 1949 (Talmona 187). With Adriano in the lead, the team included James David Zellerbach, Guido Nadzo, Nallo Mazzocchi Alemanni and the future author of *La via del*

Sud Riccardo Musatti, and notwithstanding the town's poor reputation they were all overwhelmed by what they saw. This was a clear public health emergency, and the only reasonable response was to evacuate the Sassi immediately. But with the local housing market already stretched beyond its limits, there remained just one feasible option: start from scratch, build a new town in the fields outside Matera, a place that will match farmers with land, families with services and children with schools. Adriano thought of this project as a twofold opportunity to resolve a real humanitarian crisis all while rehearsing a communitarian modernity rooted in his own philosophy.

The case of Matera was made even more urgent in July 1950 when De Gasperi publicly promised to evacuate the Sassi without delay (Talmona 191). This caught Adriano's team by surprise, and it must have lit a fire under them, but the prime minister forged ahead, finalizing the details of his own party's plan. By October, the DC-majority parliament had passed the Legge stralcio, expropriating the southern 'latifundisti' of their massive terrains and turning the land over to a new public company, the Ente Riforma (Caserta 12). By January the government had set aside part of these holdings for the construction of a new town, called La Martella and intended to accommodate about two hundred families from the Sassi di Matera (Talmona 193). What was developing was a set of competing visions for the future of this population: one elaborated by Adriano with an eye toward the creation of a laboring community, and one directed by De Gasperi with the aim of establishing a new DC stronghold. This was a delicate dance of collaboration and contention, but De Gasperi was clearly leading, and since UNRRA-CASAS was funded by the government, Adriano knew that he could do little more than bend the momentum in his favor.

In any case, UNRRA-CASAS and the ECA were nominally in charge of most administrative decisions, and in March 1951 Adriano's team named Friedrich Friedmann supervisor of the La Martella project (Talmona 193). A friend of Levi's and an attentive reader of

Cristo si è fermato a Eboli, Friedmann was a German-born sociologist who had fled from the Nazis to the United States during the late 1930s (Caserta 10-1). He was also one of the first people to write about the Southern Question from outside of Italy, having published a series of studies that linked the modernization of the South to the development of a healthy, democratic morality (Paola Bonifazio 124). These appeared even before the American sociologist Edward Banfield's well-known 1958 book *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*, and they shared elements of its neo-orientalist perspective. The commission also reached out to the Istituto Nazionale d'Urbanistica, requesting the nomination of two architects to coordinate the town planning aspects of La Martella. Since Adriano had been named the Istituto's president in 1950 (Di Biagi 148), it was a pure formality for him to write back with two names: Federico Gorio and Ludovico Quaroni (Talmona 193). Notwithstanding the latter's enduring fame, it was really Gorio who took control of La Martella, becoming in time the official arbiter there of Adriano's communitarian ideas and De Gasperi's anticommunism.

Under the direction of Friedmann and Gorio, the commission began an intense inquiry into the town of Matera. By interviewing the inhabitants of the Sassi and compiling data on living conditions there, Adriano and the entire team hoped to better prepare themselves for the construction of La Martella: What were the main problems of life underground? How were families getting by? What sorts of houses and amenities did cavepeople want? In an unpublished draft report housed at the Archivio dell'Accademia Nazionale di San Luca in Rome, Gorio registers his first impressions upon entering a cave:

> Nel fondo del vano è sistemata la stalla per il mulo che in genere è solo separata dall'abitazione da un basso divisorio o da uno steccato in legno o più semplicemente da una tenda, la 'pagliera' e la legnaia.

> Per accedervi gli animali devono attraversare tutta l'abitazione e la stalla stessa riceve luce e aria dalla porta comune. Rarissimi i casi in cui la stalla ha una presa d'aria indipendente dall'abitazione del contadino.[54]

The team also needed to choose a precise location for the new town: Was it better to build in the valley or the open fields? Where was the most suitable land? When the inquiry began in April 1951 the commission intended to publish its findings in multiple volumes, but by the time it ended in early 1952 aspirations had been reduced to just one small pamphlet. This was printed the following year by the Istituto Nazionale d'Urbanistica and UNRRA-CASAS as *Matera: Uno studio* and totaling a mere thirty-two pages. It offered both a short recapitulation of the commission's methodology and a brief synthesis of the inquiry's findings, but its value as a tool of strategic intervention was clearly very limited. Nevertheless, *Matera: Uno studio* evidenced a truly dreadful situation, with the employment rate barely reaching 40% in the Sassi (Commissione di studio sulla comunità di Matera 27) and some families sleeping in the same rooms as the farm animals observed by Gorio (Commissione di studio sulla comunità di Matera 24).

Even though UNRRA-CASAS—the driving force behind the Matera inquiry—never released a full-length version of the commission's findings, it did have the occasion in these same years to present some of its ongoing work in contexts that inevitably give us hints about La Martella. In preparation for the fourth biennial Istituto Nazionale d'Urbanistica conference, to be held in Venice in 1952, Adriano asked nine of Italy's most active town planning organizations to draft general presentations about their ongoing projects (A. Olivetti, "Prefazione" VI). UNRRA-CASAS submitted a detailed history of its own work in the South, written by Bernardo Barotta

[54] Archivio dell'Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, Fondi Architetti XX Secolo, Fondo Federico Gorio, 17, Indagine sui Sassi di Matera, Gruppo di Studio sui Sassi di Matera, Elementi per una relazione preliminare, Roma 1952, 5.

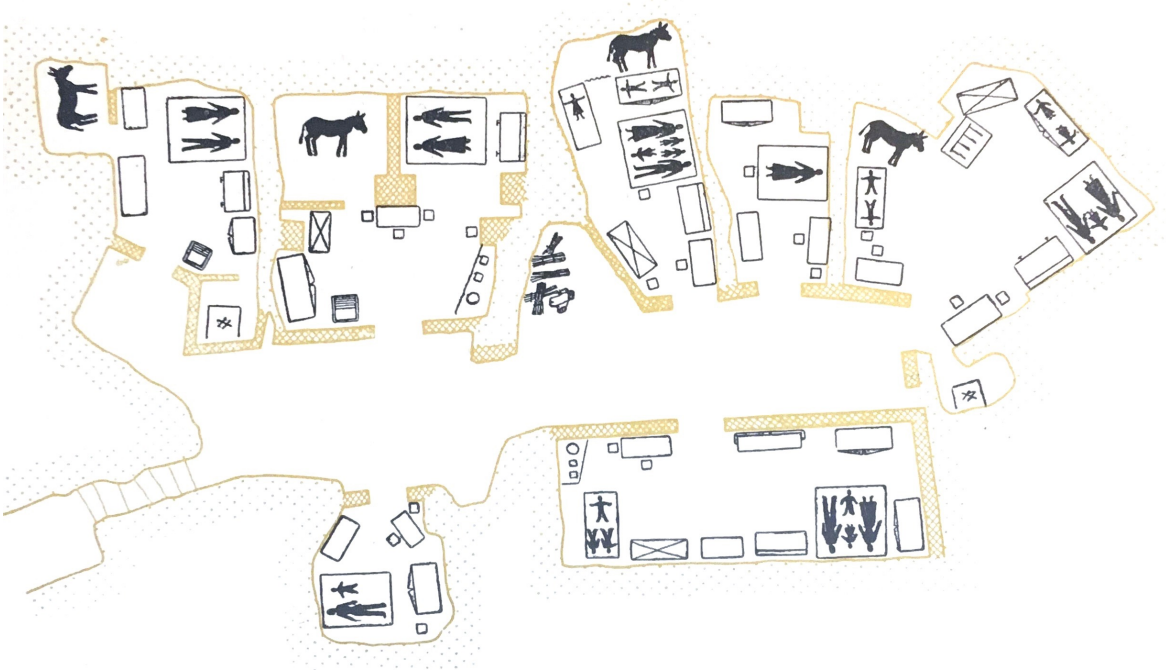

Figure 13: UNRRA-CASAS diagram evidencing shared living spaces among families and animals from: Commissione di studio sulla comunità di Matera. *Matera: Uno studio*. Istituto Nazionale d'Urbanistica / UNRRA-CASAS, 1953.

and published together with the other presentations in the Istituto's volume of that same year on *Esperienze urbanistiche in Italia*. As the long inquiry into the Sassi di Matera was just wrapping up, Barotta's chapter "Dalla ricostruzione post-bellica alla creazione dei borghi" was a first chance for UNRRA-CASAS to shape that dark story and its awaited resolution at La Martella.

To the extent that Adriano was a leader in the context of UNRRA-CASAS' steering committee, its commission on popular housing and its commission on economic and social difficulties, we can consider the approach to the Southern Question as outlined in Barotta's chapter to be at least tacitly shared by the northern industrialist. The chapter begins by introducing the institutional goals of UNRRA-CASAS, and indeed of the entire United Nations organization, which claims to prioritize the "risanamento fisico e morale [di] migliaia di persone" (111). Thus from the beginning, the chapter establishes an imaginary link between material prosperity and ethical righteousness, something that is reminiscent of Max Weber's "protestant ethic" and serves to legitimize the rule of advanced industrial economies globally and regionally. Paola Bonifazio

has shown how such an imaginary link, once imported to the Italian peninsula, was fractured along the North-South axis making of the Southern Question an argument over how to bring capitalism to a pre-capitalist society: "while appearing to promote a renaissance of the South, [representations of the Southern Question] enforced a 'northern' conception of the world by educating southern people on the imperative of work, productivity and efficiency" (116). As if the supposed moral superiority of the North were not enough to justify its authority, the UNRRA-CASAS chapter also suggested that the South was somehow physically and socially ill. This was a rhetorical trope that had been developed by Mussolini (a northerner) during the *ventennio fascista*,[55] and it now charged the purportedly healthy North with the job to "riammettere nel ciclo produttivo della Nazione tanti cittadini che, abbandonati a sé stessi, avrebbero finito per divenire cellule attive di focolai di infezione sociale" (Barotta 112). These were just two isolated but important peninsular echoes of what Charles S Maier has called the American "politics of productivity," a set of postwar assumptions about economic and human development that validated the United States' increasing control of European societies.

By the time the UNRRA-CASAS chapter was being written, the smoldering rivalry between Adriano and De Gasperi had erupted in full force, and the organization itself became a battleground where two opposing visions were hotly contested. On the one hand, Adriano wanted to bring his "concrete utopia" model from Ivrea down to the South, adhering to an architecture of shared private and public spaces that he believed would promote community through neighborly social intercourse. But on the other hand, De Gasperi feared that such an arrangement might

[55] Particularly in: Mussolini, Benito. "Discorso dell'ascensione." *Opera omnia*. La Fenice, 1964, pp. 360-390. [1927] For more on Italian Fascism's use of medical metaphors see: Horn, David. *Social Bodies: Science, Reproduction and Italian Modernity*. Princeton UP, 1994 and especially Rigotti, Francesca. "Il medico-chirurgo dello Stato nel linguaggio metaforico di Mussolini." *Cultura e società negli anni del fascismo*. Cordani, 1987, pp. 501-517.

encourage collectivism. He completely overlooked the Christian basis of Adriano's philosophy and saw only trouble—in De Gasperi's mind the southern population was uniquely susceptible to left-wing politics, and it was a short step from 'comunità' to 'comunismo.' The UNRRA-CASAS chapter reflects the growing influence of De Gasperi's line over Adriano's, carefully inscribing the discussion of housing construction within the discursive bounds of individualism:

> Il nuovo alloggio [doveva] sviluppare al massimo negli assegnatari il senso dell'individualismo, e della dignità umana. Si dovevano evitare pertanto quegli agglomerati edilizi che—se pure più economici—avrebbero perpetuato l'inevitabile ed irritante disagio morale e fisico che derivava dall'accentramento delle abitazioni (Barotta 113).

Without mentioning Adriano by name, the chapter thus criticizes his communitarian philosophy, showing strong symptoms of an internal struggle for control that, by all accounts, would sound the death knell for the entire La Martella project.

Notwithstanding these criticisms, when the UNRRA-CASAS chapter turns explicitly to La Martella, it tosses De Gasperi aside and even claims to promote "una possibilità di vita collettiva" for the inhabitants of the Sassi (Barotta 120). Such a turnabout probably reflects nothing more than Adriano's waning influence over this specific project, which is here described for the first and last time in substantial programmatic detail. The idea is to build two hundred houses for the cavepeople of Matera, plus a set of public facilities and social service centers deemed essential to modern life. These include municipal buildings like a town hall, a Catholic church, a post office and a police station, public health amenities like a hospital, three schools and a social assistance site, and economic provisions like grain warehouses, a livestock repository and some shops (Barotta 121). La Martella is to be located 3.5 miles west of Matera, based on the consideration of five factors: land availability, property divisions, existing roads, proximity to the village of Timmari, and especially "la preferenza espressa dagli abitanti dei Sassi nel corso dell'inchiesta" conducted by

the UNRRA-CASAS commission (Barotta 120). Because of the complexity and delicacy of the project, Adriano's team has requested the collaboration of various other public organizations, including the Centro Studi per l'Edilizia, part of the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, and the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno (Barotta 120-1).

By the time construction began in mid 1952, La Martella had become a march under three banners: the Comune di Matera selected the inhabitants of the new town, the government-run Ente Riforma assigned the land and UNRRA-CASAS constructed the houses and public buildings (Caserta 13). In accordance with Adriano's philosophy, the idea was to radically reduce the distance between the spaces of economic production and those of social reproduction: if the workers' fields were only close to their homes, then the worlds of labor and community would be able to reinforce each other in perpetuity. In the words of a didactic pamphlet distributed to residents during the town's inauguration, La Martella needed to "evitare che i contadini di Matera dovessero continuare a percorrere ore ed ore di strada per l'andata e il ritorno dalla terra."[56]

Ninety families received a house and some amount of land, plus a large carriage for produce transportation and a Brown Swiss cow for milking (Caserta 15-7). The houses were constructed on the basis of only three architectural models, but each family had the right to express its own individual preference, and in any case the units were rotated and combined in such ways that any semblance of repetition or uniformity was effectively mitigated (Ugolini 4). Amenities were rudimentary, but every house came with a package-deal of modern farming necessities: a stall for animals, a chicken coop, a barn, a carriage canopy and a small space for gardening fruits and vegetables.[57] During the UNRRA-CASAS inquiry, the cavepeople of Matera had been especially

[56] Archivio dell'Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, Fondi Architetti XX Secolo, Fondo Federico Gorio, 19, Pubblicazioni, Il Villaggio La Martella a Matera (6.6), Mutual Security Agency Special Mission to Italy, 1953.
[57] Archivio dell'Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, Fondi Architetti XX Secolo, Fondo Federico Gorio, 19, Pubblicazioni, Piegevole UNRRA-CASAS, 17.5.53, UNRRA-CASAS Prima Giunta, 1953.

vocal on the question of human-animal proximity, and even though they recognized the health risks of shared sleeping quarters, they still demanded that their livestock be accessible and even visible throughout the night. To satisfy this request, the engineering team decided to push the stall up against the bedroom, inventing a sort of shutter through which the farmer could easily peer in on the resting animals (Ugolini 3). At the main intersections and squares, La Martella was fitted out with all the public buildings and social services promised in the programmatic chapter from *Esperienze urbanistiche in Italia*.

Notwithstanding his decisive participation in the construction of La Martella, and in the transfer there of ninety families from the Sassi di Matera, the project's main architect Federico Gorio remained highly critical of any northern-directed efforts to modernize the South. Taking up a Levian position on the Southern Question, he held that when it came to projects like La Martella, the negative consequences would ultimately outweigh any positive benefits. Gorio even published a reflection on his misgivings in the pages of *Comunità*, part of a 1952 article titled "Zone depresse e risanamento" that went to press just as his construction team was about to break ground. The article represents a penetrating and unique consideration of the limits of the La Martella project, a critical and severe self-awareness on the delicacy of the Southern Question that Adriano never acquired. "Matera è una comunità antica, ricca di una storia sottile, intrasferibile" Gorio explains, implying that to move the cavepeople from the Sassi would comport the destruction of their entire way of life (42). In principle, most intellectuals would have agreed wholeheartedly: the underclass culture is one of poverty, filth, crime and immorality, and only by depriving it of a territory can one hope to stunt and uproot its growth. But Gorio has a special challenge for the would-be defenders of projects like La Martella, and he throws their operating assumptions into moral crisis with one simple question: "si conosce tutto ciò che si trascina nella demolizione e che si rischia di

Figure 14: La Martella houses during construction from: Archivio Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, Fondi Architetti XX Secolo, Fondo Federico Gorio, 19, Busta 2/3, Villaggio "La Martella."

non poter mai più riedificare?" (42) Gorio's merit is to point out that northern industry does not even understand the world it claims to civilize, and though he refrains from forswearing all active modernization, he does call it "un atto di violenza che va praticato con estrema consapevolezza di ciò che si disfa e di quello che si provoca" (43).

Perhaps the best Gorio can do, as one of the leaders of the La Martella project, is to listen for echoes of cheerfulness in the Sassi di Matera, trying to register their meanings and reproduce their effects in the context of the new town. It is quite literally music that he remembers so well from the UNRRA-CASAS inquiry: the sound of a trombone passing through the Sassi at four o'clock in the morning to signify that the community oven has reached baking temperature (Gorio 43). Even though Gorio had already decided to install domestic fireplaces for making bread at La

Martella, he quickly modified the plan and built one big community oven in order to preserve something of the old tradition.[58]

On May 17, 1953 La Martella welcomed the first ever 'martellesi' (Talmona 195)—a group of forty-nine residents from the Sassi di Matera whose caves had been deemed so squalid (or whose political contacts had been deemed so excellent) that they warranted immediate transfer to the new town (Caserta 15). With national elections only three weeks away, De Gasperi was present with a studied smile, handing out house keys and reminding each father of what the DC state could do for Italy's families (Talmona 195). A pamphlet distributed in the morning made no mention of Adriano, but it did remind everyone of De Gasperi's July 1950 visit to the Sassi and the hopeful speech he had made on that occasion. "Quel discorso oggi è tradotto in realtà" was the proclamation,[59] something that must have been felt by the mayor Giuseppe Lamacchia, who suggested naming the town's first-born child 'Alcide' (Francione 121).

The scholarship on Olivetti has generally responded to the case of La Martella in two ways: either by downplaying its real centrality to the Olivetti vision, or by making Adriano the sacrificial victim of De Gasperi's political scheming. Biographers like Caizzi (1962) and Ochetto (1985) hardly mention the case at all, while more recent studies by Federico Bilò, Ettore Vadini (2016) and Francesco Paolo Francione (2018) have sought to restore its memory before Matera is crowned the European Commission's "2019 European Capital of Culture." Already in the months after Adriano's death, Riccardo Musatti found room to praise La Martella as a courageous attempt to break the "indifferentismo della classe dirigente, politica e tecnica, del nostro paese," clearly indicting De Gasperi and the DC in a line of interpretation that has by now come to dominate the

[58] Archivio dell'Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, Fondi Architetti XX Secolo, Fondo Federico Gorio, 19, Pubblicazioni, Il Villaggio La Martella a Matera (6.6), Mutual Security Agency Special Mission to Italy, 1953.
[59] Archivio dell'Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, Fondi Architetti XX Secolo, Fondo Federico Gorio, 19, Pubblicazioni, Il Villaggio La Martella a Matera (6.6), Mutual Security Agency Special Mission to Italy, 1953.

historiography (cited in Caizzi 276-7). Most scholars point out that De Gasperi ultimately derailed all of Adriano's momentum, but they stand back from considering in just what direction Adriano himself was heading. It may be true that his imaginary La Martella was a favorable alternative to De Gasperi's real achievement, but as I have suggested it was also marked by a northern paternalism that linked human morality to economic productivity.

Paolo Francesco Francione's edited anthology *La voce di Matera*, published in 2018 by the Edizioni di Comunità, is the most developed account of the La Martella project, and it adds great color to the present picture. A collection of 39 interviews with 'martellesi' born after 1920, the book registers an astounding array of perspectives ranging from the joy of young children ("ci divertivamo a giocare a banditi e indiani, con grande fantasia" (181)) to the frustration of disappointed parents ("non capisco ancora oggi se le terre da assegnare non ce n'erano più, o se noi non avevamo i requisiti richiesti" (78)). In an introductory chapter jam-packed with details about the story of La Martella, Giovanni Caserta restates the standard Olivetti narrative in a crystalline and convincing way. "È fuor di dubbio," Caserta writes, "che la Democrazia cristiana aveva ogni interesse a creare un borgo omogeneo, modello di condiscendenza e subordinazione al potere dominante" (14). Pitted against this oppressive interest was the progressive vision of Adriano Olivetti, one that sought to conjugate job creation with housing and social services, community with labor. But power was in the hands of De Gasperi and his friends, and they did not trust the UNRRA-CASAS team:

> Questi, intervenuti nel Sud […] e per realizzare un borgo 'comunitario' presto ispirato alle dottrine di Adriano Olivetti, furono guardati come nemici della Democrazia cristiana, quasi comunisti. La loro azione, perciò, andava assolutamente neutralizzata, fino all'allontanamento. Cosa che avvenne (Caserta 19).

The DC certainly rushed to inaugurate La Martella ahead of the June 1953 elections. The town was not ready for residents; its public buildings and social services were still under

construction, and many would never be completed. Ochetto reports that the usual practice of drying materials before plastering was suspended, causing large blocks of volcanic tuff to weaken and become compromised in the summer heat (180). Some new residents regretted ever leaving Matera; some returned to the Sassi (Caserta 14). At La Martella, part of the land was accessible and fertile, but much of it was still miles away, unfarmable or even nonexistent (Caserta 16). The fabric of Francione's interviews is woven with the longest and firmest strands of social decline: seasonal departures (to Switzerland and Germany) followed by permanent migration (to the United States and Canada), school closings and the abandonment of La Martella by its very first residents.[60]

Pozzuoli

That Adriano Olivetti's mind was acutely tuned to questions of nature, climate and ecology has often been taken as evidence that he was, in one way or another, a forerunner of the conservation movement in its various political guises. As neoliberal capitalism and its regime of unaccountable pollution push the world ever closer to irreversible climate disaster, popular representations of Olivetti history have begun to highlight such a sensibility. Thus, in a scene from Michele Soavi's 2013 Rai telefilm *Adriano Olivetti: La forza di un sogno*, Adriano (played by Luca Zingaretti) takes a wrecking ball to Camillo's old Ivrea factory, exclaiming "ci saranno grandi vetrate qui, e

[60] The DC was internally divided in these years, and Adriano's relationship with the various currents was complex. Though in public he opposed the Party, he was personally close to the "Cronache sociali" group (1946-1951), led by Giuseppe Dossetti and including Giorgio La Pira and Fanfani. This group formed the foundation of the Party's left-wing current, "Iniziativa democratica," founded in 1951 and becoming slowly dominant during the 1950s. The shift of hegemony from De Gasperi's right-wing "Primavera" current to Fanfani's left-wing "Iniziativa democratica" current can be described as a turn from anticommunism to collaboration with socialists, something that attracted Adriano. When Adriano became a member of parliament in 1958, he sustained Fanfani's DC government.

si vedrà bene la luce, le colline, il sole, si vedrà tutto!" The idea is to open industry up to its surroundings: "la natura entra in fabbrica" Adriano shouts, "il dentro e il fuori communicano tra di loro continuamente!"

In a 2001 interview published by the Edizioni di Comunità as *Un imprenditore di idee*, Franco Ferrarotti made even more explicit statements in an attempt to link Adriano to the conservation movement. "Occorre oggi una riforma radicale del sistema industriale su scala planetaria" Ferrarotti ventures, "[e] qui ci sono grosse questioni che [Adriano] Olivetti già aveva in mente: l'ambiente, la difesa dell'equilibrio ecosistemico, tutta l'ecologia, la natura non infinita delle risorse naturali" (51-2). It is clear from Ferrarotti's language that he has a profound understanding of the ecological critique of capitalist production: the idea that society is developing not primarily towards class-based limits of social misery, but more importantly (and maybe first) towards universal limits of material extinction.[61] The problem is that social theory only began to formulate such a thesis in the years after Adriano's death, thus making Ferrarotti's retrospective attribution very interesting, but fundamentally incorrect. Just like everyone else of his time, Adriano had no understanding of the planetary ecological consequences of industrial production as such. This is not to say that he would not have shared such concerns, and in my opinion, he probably would have; it is simply to point out that bringing nature into factories does not constitute a total critique of the capitalist system.

On the other hand, it is true that Adriano wrote a lot about the relationship between nature, humanity and industry. In his mind, however, there was a strong connection between the natural world and the southern workforce that, precisely because of its proximity to nature, was imagined

[61] This important insight was translated into political praxis by the ecosocialist movement, founded upon the thesis that the capitalist system is fundamentally irreconcilable with human survival. For a good collection of essays on ecosocialism see Löwy, Michael. *Ecosocialism: A Radical Alternative to Capitalist Catastrophe*. Haymarket Books, 2015.

to be a long way off from industry and thus in need of northern modernization. Especially when it came to the factory at Pozzuoli, Adriano represented southern laborers in ways that Edward Said would certainly call "orientalist," providing some corroboration for Jane Schneider's provocative characterization of the Italian Southern Question as a sort of "orientalism in one country."[62] In fact, Adriano represented the South just as Said's Orientalist represented the East: slave to a timeless stasis, biologically incapable of achieving modernity, in close relation to the natural environment and reproduced via the systematic extraction of labor power. Olivetti culture defined itself *against* the South in the same way that "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self" (Said 3).

Strictly speaking, the idea to build a typewriter factory in southern Italy was not the Olivetti Company's, but that of Remington Rand. In 1951 the machine manufacturer from Rowayton, Connecticut decided to put the postwar settlement between American business and Italian society to good use, taking advantage of a set of international financial incentives designed to encourage economic development in the South (Ochetto 180-1). When the Italian Minister of Industry and Commerce Pietro Campilli got word of Remington's plan to build a typewriter factory there, he asked Adriano to beat the Americans to the punch (Ochetto 180). By proposing to transfer part of Olivetti's operations from Ivrea to Pozzuoli, Adriano could show that Italian business was already responding to the Southern Question, thus rendering Remington's project both redundant and potentially imperialist. The American company tried greasing the wheels of bureaucracy with diplomatic correspondence to Italian government officials, and by the end of 1952 it had received permission to build a factory outside of Naples (Ochetto 186). As soon as the Remington plant

[62] "Orientalism in One Country" is the subtitle to Schneider's volume, but the phrase never appears within the text. Said's methodology and its application to (or incompatibility with) the Southern Question deserves further attention from Italian Studies.

opened, Adriano and Campilli teamed up with Italy's largest employers' organization the Confindustria and the main labor unions to show that the Remington Super Riter typewriter was merely assembled in southern Italy; it was made in the United States (Ochetto 186). The verdict of this early and enduring debate over precisely what was to constitute 'Made in Italy' forced the Connecticut manufacturer to flee the peninsula and opened up a new market for the Ivrea company (Ochetto 186-7). The Olivetti factory at Pozzuoli—a fishing village nine miles west of Naples—was inaugurated in April 1955, and it remained in operation until the late 1980s.

Adriano always spoke of the Olivetti factory at Pozzuoli as a moral responsibility made obvious by his great financial success in the North: not a rational economic investment, but rather "un meditato omaggio ai bisogni di queste regioni [meridionali]," as he remarked at the factory's inauguration ("Ai lavoratori di Pozzuoli" 160). The effect of this has been to erase most of the history of contention with the Remington Rand company, a polemic that Adriano hardly mentioned during his lifetime and one that Ochetto has resurrected only by digging in to secondary journalistic sources. In Adriano's telling, the decision to build at Pozzuoli was completely autonomous and directed by ethical concerns, not—as the documentation actually suggests—a government charge that just happened to align with business interests. In general, this has made it difficult for historians to engage critically with the factory at Pozzuoli: it appears as a self-evident response to a clear situation—a space that was born of the economic boom, operated for three decades and slowly faded away. If we want to understand something of the process of Pozzuoli, including its importance for Adriano's approach to the Southern Question, then we must turn to the historical documentation housed at Archivio di Stato in Naples.

The official interpreter of Adriano's vision at Pozzuoli was Luigi Cosenza, a renowned Neapolitan architect whose contacts with the Olivetti company go back to the mid 1930s. Adriano

wrote to Cosenza in June 1951 to confirm his participation in the Pozzuoli project, and the two began working very closely together on the elaboration, design and construction of the factory there.[63] If the straight, angular grid of the international rationalist style was an appropriate model for architecture at booming Ivrea, it seemed obvious that the same could not possibly be true for the quaint fishing village at Pozzuoli. Here was a land of leisure, a 'paradise inhabited by devils,' to use an old northern European moniker for greater Naples, and its built forms needed to grow, even organically, from the overabundance of nature, the intensity of climate and the importance of ecology.[64] In an unpublished memorandum housed at the Archivio di Stato in Naples and titled "Appunti progetto Olivetti Pozzuoli," Cosenza explains to himself the theoretical approach supposedly demanded by the southern context: "Una fabbrica può uscire fuori dagli schemi razionali di valore universale e cercare di assolvere a [un] più elevato compito umano attingendo dall'ambiente, dal clima, dalla natura del luogo."[65]

In accordance with such an approach, Cosenza needed to reconsider the position of the laborer inside the factory, but he also needed to go one step further and study the location of the entire factory with regard to the surrounding environment. This meant taking account of daily and seasonal fluctuations in the presence or absence of natural light and its connection to warmth or cold, something that the architect mulled over at length in his working notes:

> Nelle prime ore del mattino i raggi solari apportano una gradevole sensazione di tepore. Nelle ultime ore del pomeriggio i raggi bassi, persistenti, determinano d'estate [un] insopportabile senso di afa. La temperatura dell'ambiente [è] influenzata non solo dai raggi

[63] Archivio di Stato di Napoli, Fondo Luigi Cosenza, Fabbrica Olivetti, Pozzuoli 1951-1954, PR9BIS, Stabilimento Olivetti: Lettere e Relazioni, 1951-1963, Letter from Adriano Olivetti to Luigi Cosenza, 25 June 1951.
[64] For more on the representation of greater Naples as a 'paradise inhabited by devils,' see: Croce, Benedetto. "Il 'paradiso abitato da diavoli.'" *Uomini e cose della vecchia Italia*. Laterza, 1927 and Moe, Nelson. *The View from Vesuvius: Italian Culture and the Southern Question*. University of California Press, 2002, pp. 46-52.
[65] Archivio di Stato di Napoli, Fondo Luigi Cosenza, Fabbrica Olivetti, Pozzuoli 1951-1954, PR9BIS, Stabilimento Olivetti: Lettere e Relazioni, 1951-1963, Appunti progetto Olivetti Pozzuoli, 1.

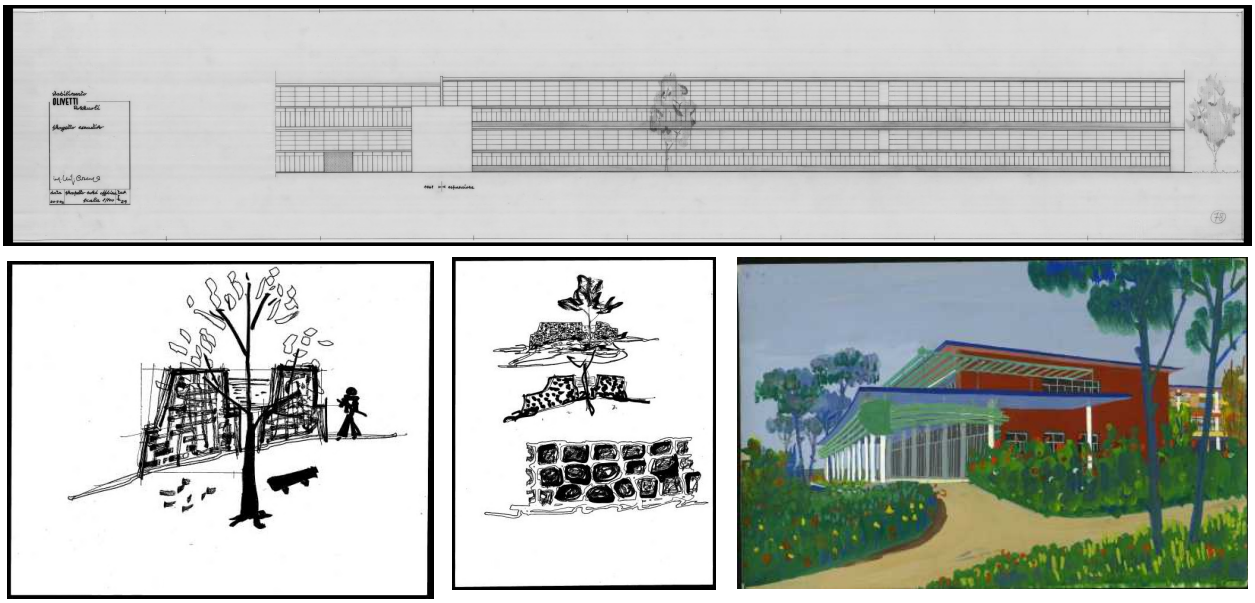

Figure 15: Four preparatory drawings of the Olivetti factory at Pozzuoli by Luigi Cosenza from: Archivio di Stato di Napoli, Fondo Luigi Cosenza, Fabbrica Olivetti, Pozzuoli, 1951-1954.

> diretti ma dalle riverberazioni termiche del terreno vulcanico: sabbia, materiali incoerenti, i quali assorbono il calore solare e lo riverberano con grande intensità e persistenza.[66]

Such considerations were illustrated by Cosenza's many sketches and drawings, some of which depict an individual laborer at his workstation, receiving different angles of sunlight as the day passes by. These experiments in spatial-temporal visualization were ultimately used to select the angles for factory windows and skylights, including the installation of an innovative mechanical system that allowed the management team to modify the interior highlights and shadows at the simple push of a button (Labò and Guiducci 61).

Cosenza made more than four-hundred preparatory sketches and drawings for the Pozzuoli project, and what emerges from a glance at this colossal corpus is the overwhelming presence in it of representations of the natural world. For an architect whose job it was to design an industrial factory, he must have spent a tremendous amount of time sketching, drawing (and even painting)

[66] Archivio di Stato di Napoli, Fondo Luigi Cosenza, Fabbrica Olivetti, Pozzuoli 1951-1954, PR9BIS, Stabilimento Olivetti: Lettere e Relazioni, 1951-1963, Appunti progetto Olivetti Pozzuoli, 3-4.

hills, plants, forests and other living faunae. This became somewhat of an obsession, and many of the pieces housed at the Archivio di Stato in Naples could be said to depict nature with the Pozzuoli factory, not the Pozzuoli factory in nature. One of the most powerful recurring tropes is the image of a single tree superimposed on the building, something that does not seem to suggest nature's relative proximity to the viewer, but rather its pure coincidence with the conceptual space of industrial labor.

When the Olivetti factory at Pozzuoli opened its doors in April 1955, it welcomed a sizeable workforce of more than one thousand southern laborers (Labò and Guiducci 58). As Adriano delivered his famous inaugural speech from the production lines, *Casabella* published an article furnishing all the details of the factory's technical specifications. Written by Mario Labò and Roberto Guiducci, the article pauses at length on the "sbalze, pergole, [e] vegetazione," the lavish adaptation of plant life to the industrial environment that creates, in their opinion, "elementi di inserzione, di immedesimazione, nel paesaggio" (57). Since Guiducci had also served as the day-to-day director of the Pozzuoli project, the article includes a sample of writings from his personal working journal. Here, Cosenza really stands out as a capable and accomplished architect who "intende ed interpreta la potenzialità d'espressione contenuta in [una] architettura artigiana" (70). The Italian South remains, as in Levi's characterization, a land without history: "una regione in cui i valori primitivistici non sono ancora consumati," and therefore a romantic place of "resistenza di modi di vita autentici" (70).

On the one hand, Adriano conceded the importance of preserving forms of culture made anachronistic by the development of industry, but on the other hand he wanted to bring to the population around Naples all the material and spiritual benefits produced by European modernity. Representing the southern worker as somehow more natural, simple and primitive than his

Figure 16: Olivetti factory at Pozzuoli from: Ing. C. Olivetti & Co. *Olivetti, 1908-1958*. Ing. C. Olivetti & C., 1958.

northern counterpart served as a pretext to charging the industrial bourgeoisie of the North with a new civilizing mission: confer a temporality on the South, bring it into the realm of history, make it healthy and ensure its continuing democratic inspiration. On the model of Ivrea, the Pozzuoli factory included a cafeteria with five hundred seats, a social services center, separate changing stations for men and women, and a library that in some of Cosenza's preparatory drawings was tellingly labeled "assistenza culturale."[67]

Adriano was thrilled with the results of the project, and in May 1955 he sent a glowing letter to Cosenza: "Di fronte all'importanza dell'opera da Lei compiuta a Pozzuoli, mi è difficile

[67] Archivio di Stato di Napoli, Fondo Luigi Cosenza, Fabbrica Olivetti, Pozzuoli 1951-1954, Grafici, 08.

trovare parole di congratulazione."[68] The merit of Cosenza was to have created a factory environment that entirely conformed to Adriano's own expectations: one where the South was visibly set in nature, with trees, light and air serving as a buffer to industrial modernity. Such images were drawn from the most patronizing assumptions of the discipline of 'meridionalismo,' and they served to legitimize large-scale industrial intervention as a method for civilizing the South.

On February 27, 1960 the Pozzuoli factory was preparing to celebrate its five-year anniversary. Adriano was travelling on a train from Milan to Lausanne, when he passed over the Swiss border, had a brain hemorrhage near Aigle and died. When the news reached Pozzuoli, the local management team considered what to do: How to honor the life of a man responsible for transforming this small fishing village into a center of modern industrial production? Taking their cue from Adriano's own approach to the Southern Question, they decided to plant some sort of tree—maybe a "cipresso argentato, [una] quercia elce, [un] ulivo, [un] pinus pinea", they debated.[69] At any rate, they agreed that it would have to be, like the factory, "una essenza capace di grande sviluppo nel tempo."[70]

[68] Archivio di Stato di Napoli, Fondo Luigi Cosenza, Fabbrica Olivetti, Pozzuoli 1951-1954, PR9BIS, Stabilimento Olivetti: Lettere e Relazioni, 1951-1963, Letter from Adriano Olivetti to Luigi Cosenza, 4 March 1955.
[69] Archivio di Stato di Napoli, Fondo Luigi Cosenza, Fabbrica Olivetti, Pozzuoli 1951-1954, PR9BIS, Stabilimento Olivetti: Lettere e Relazioni, 1951-1963, Composizione commemorativa dell'Ingenere Adriano Olivetti nello Stabilimento di Pozzuoli, April 1960.
[70] Archivio di Stato di Napoli, Fondo Luigi Cosenza, Fabbrica Olivetti, Pozzuoli 1951-1954, PR9BIS, Stabilimento Olivetti: Lettere e Relazioni, 1951-1963, Composizione commemorativa dell'Ingenere Adriano Olivetti nello Stabilimento di Pozzuoli, April 1960.

Chapter 5
Visual Arts: Italy on Fifth Ave, from the Museum of Modern Art to the Olivetti Showroom

On October 22, 1952 the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York City opened the doors to its first exhibition dedicated to the products of a single industrial company. The exhibition *Olivetti: Design in Industry* showcased the typewriters and calculators of the Olivetti company, Italy's preeminent manufacturer of office machines and a leading example of the Modern Movement in the rapidly expanding industrial arts. It also incorporated Olivetti print advertisements, technical instruction manuals, a model of the main factory, photographs of the Olivetti workers' housing quarters and an eight-foot tall commercial billboard taken from the Italian countryside and erected in the MoMA courtyard. Individually these materials were all worthy of serious critical praise, but the greatest merit of the Olivetti company—according to the MoMA bulletin—was "the organization of all the visual aspects of an industry, unified under a single high standard of taste" (Lionni 3). Olivetti was promoted as the paragon of modern design, the pioneer and flag-bearer of a coordinated corporate image that American industry, in its role as cultural producer, was fervently encouraged to follow.

The exhibition *Olivetti: Design in Industry* has become a frequent point of reference in scholarship on design history and Italian Studies. According to the standard narrative, it marks the entrance of industrial design into the temple of high art, or more precisely the recognition, on the part of the established art world, of the cultural legitimacy of mass-produced goods. This interpretation is often predicated on the assumption that the Olivetti company had no part in the

exhibition's organization, and that MoMA acted on its own accord in order to bestow such an honor on the Italian company. Thus Jonathan M. Woodham writes of the exhibition as "the first time a European manufacturer had been *invited* to display its products and graphic design at the Museum [of Modern Art]" (157, emphasis mine). Dario Scodeller is even more explicit, calling the exhibition a "*recognition* of Olivetti's corporate project" and "an *homage*" on MoMA's part (118-24). Likewise, Dominic Bradbury glosses the exhibition as one that "*validated*…the rapid growth of the company" (277, emphasis mine), while Kjetil Fallan and Grace Lees-Maffei describe the "international *recognition*" bestowed by MoMA, which "*chose* Olivetti for its very first monographic exhibition" (14).

A close look at the collections of the Museum of Modern Art Archives and the Archivio Storico Olivetti reveals that *Olivetti: Design in Industry* was organized and paid for by the Olivetti company itself, with the museum playing a relatively minor role of cultural legitimization. The fiction that MoMA simply 'recognized' Olivetti's outstanding contribution to the industrial arts was promoted, from the beginning, by both the museum and the company, and it has trickled down to the most current scholarship. But my interest here is not so much in correcting the historical record as it is in exploring what new types of analyses such a correction can enable. If *Olivetti: Design in Industry* was a clever case of corporate marketing, might this give us license to relate it with another New York location, the Olivetti showroom on Fifth Ave?

In this chapter, I will work toward a comparative analysis of these two spaces, both sites of art and merchandise, aesthetic contemplation and consumer acquisition. For context, I will begin with an overview of post-war Italian design at American museums before elaborating my claim that *Olivetti: Design in Industry* was organized and paid for by the Olivetti company. My comparative analysis of the MoMA exhibition and the New York Olivetti showroom will then

demonstrate how these two spaces were in constant communication, raising questions about culture, industry and the modern experience of objects on display.

Olivetti's New York presence is an illuminating example of the confusion, permeating the modern city, between art and technology, museum space and retail space. For Walter Benjamin, who meditated on this confusion in a very different time and place, the retail store was "the last promenade for the flâneur," an image that resonates certainly with nineteenth-century Paris, but also, as I intend to make clear, with 1950s New York (Benjamin 10).

Post-war Italian Design at American Museums

The first major review of post-war Italian design in the United States was a special issue of the New York magazine *Interiors* published in July 1948.[71] This issue boasted fifty glossy pages of recent Italian furniture and home décor, including products by Franco Albini, Pier Giacomo Castiglioni, Marco Zanuso and other famous designers.

The American industrial designer George Nelson introduced the review with a short note about artistic excellence in the face of material ruin. "Not the least of the virtues of poverty," Nelson proclaimed, "is the way it brings out the essentials" (71). Nelson purposefully channelled a Catholic sensibility (the note's title "Blessed are the Poor" echoes Matthew 5:3) in order to suggest that the destruction of war had revealed the Italian people's fundamentally moral character, making them most worthy of salvation. Implicit in this formulation was an understanding of Fascism as something foreign to Italian society, something whose evil spirit had invested Italy's body politic only to be exorcised in the wreckage of buildings and institutions. Now that this barrier

[71] American-led initiatives to import post-war Italian design into the United States began in 1945, mainly under the direction of the Italian American political theorist Max Ascoli. For more on these initiatives see: Hockemeyer, Lisa. "Manufactured Identities: Ceramics and the Making of (Made in) Italy." *Made in Italy: Rethinking a Century of Italian Design*. Edited by Grace Lees-Maffei and Kjetil Fallan. Bloomsbury, 2014, pp. 127-43.

had been removed, Nelson seemed to say, Italian civilization could resume the forward march of its long and storied tradition.

Being the first major note on post-war Italian design published in the United States, Nelson's introduction to the *Interiors* review set the tone for several magazine issues and museum exhibitions that would soon follow. While book-length interpretations of Italian Fascism were slow in appearing (due to the time requirements for research, organisation, writing, editing, printing, advertising and circulating), these more ephemeral media made the first post-war bids at understanding the Fascist period within the broader context of modern Italian history. They sought to restage and rehabilitate Italian national identity by presenting the harmless objects of everyday life: chairs, tables, desks, lamps, beds. They emphasised either Italian design's clean break with the recent past or its continuity with older heritages, especially the visual art of the Renaissance. In other words, they lifted the Fascist period from the timeline of modern Italian history and discounted its vibrant design culture as something unimportant, irrelevant or plainly bad.

In reality, all of the designers represented in the *Interiors* review had worked with the implicit blessing of the Partito Nazionale Fascista, and many were directly influenced by its most ardent champions, men like Gio Ponti and Giuseppe Terragni. The details of these relationships must be determined on a case-by-case basis (something that is beyond the scope of this chapter), but what is certain is that post-war Italian design was heavily indebted to Fascist ideas about tradition and innovation, nationalism and modernity. Most American commentators were willing to overlook this glaring continuity in favor of an approach to Italian culture that emphasised novelty, freedom and creativity. Accordingly, they presented the Italian people as victims of a powerful but ultimately inconsequential political aberration.

Benedetto Croce had articulated a similar analysis in his famous Bari speech to the first congress of the Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale on January 28, 1944. According to Croce, Italian Fascism was to be understood within the broader context of a centuries-old peninsular civilization that had given birth to the Roman Empire, the Renaissance, the Risorgimento and the Resistance. Though Fascism was by all accounts a regrettable historical episode, Croce insisted that this long-view of history revealed its status as a mere "parentesi" in the progression of Italian civilization ("La libertà" 56-7). From there, the step to excise and dismiss the recent past as something alien to the Italian tradition was short and easily bridged.

Nelson may have read Croce's article "The Fascist Germ Still Lives," published in *The New York Times Magazine* on November 28, 1943, and he was certainly familiar with its argument that Fascism was a disease ready to plague any feeble national body. Anticipating the Bari speech, Croce wrote to advise the American public: "I permit myself to suggest that Fascism be not judged as a 'morbus Italicus' but as a contemporary sickness from which Italy was the first to suffer" (45). Though Croce's intent was to warn against the spread of Fascism to other developed nations, the effect of his analysis was to provide American commentators with testimony of the animosity between the history of Fascism and Italian national identity. Nelson and his peers at other design magazines and cultural institutions mobilized the Crocean interpretation of Fascism in order to dramatize Italian national identity in industrial products and to reassure the American public that the Italian people were a moral, peaceable bunch.

The first major American museum exhibition to focus on post-war Italian design was the traveling show *Italy at Work*, organized by the Compagnia Nazionale Artigiana (CNA). *Italy at Work* opened on November 29, 1950 at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, and it closed on November 15, 1953 at the Rhode Island School of Design. In the intervening years it appeared in ten American

cities from St. Louis to San Francisco, Portland to Pittsburgh, and it generated wide-ranging debate about the outlook of Italian creativity in a moment of great economic uncertainty.

The exhibition *Italy at Work* was the result of assiduous planning, including a two-month voyage across the Italian peninsula during which a delegation of four men selected 2500 products from the studios of 250 artisans and craftsmen. The CNA was administered by the Italian Ministero del commercio con l'estero but financed by the United States government, and the exhibition's organizing committee was composed mainly of American diplomats and museum directors.

The industrial designer Walter Dorwin Teague led the selection committee on its trip to Italy, and he published his memories in the November 1950 issue of *Interiors*. Teague wrote: "Since the war, the artists of Italy have been frolicking like boys let out of school. The Italian spirit, so long suppressed by the heavy hand of politics, had been storing up its energy against this day when it can do as it pleases again" (199). In keeping with this understanding of post-war Italian design as a project wholly divorced from the recent past, Teague reported that the selection committee's main criteria were originality and contemporaneity. With only a few exceptions, the exhibition included objects produced after 1945.

Due to the exhibition's special historical and political intentions, the organizing committee decided that the standard accompanying catalogue of artworks was unsuitable for *Italy at Work*. Instead, the CNA published a full-length handbook to the exhibition that included substantial chapters on Italian society, the regional distribution of production and the main tendencies in modern Italian art. The Art Institute of Chicago curator Meyric R Rogers authored the handbook, whose appendix counted more than one hundred photographs of exhibition objects. Most of the objects represented were hand-made artefacts produced in small quantities, but some were the creations of industrial processes employing a combination of living and machine labour. Among

Figure 17: Olivetti products from: Rogers, Meyric R. *Italy at Work: Her Renaissance in Design Today*. Compagnia Nazione Artigiana, 1950.

this latter set were two Olivetti products: the Divisumma 14 calculator and the MP 1 typewriter. Olivetti does not seem to have received any particularly special attention in the *Italy at Work* exhibition, and its products were collocated under the handbook's final section dedicated to industrial design.

Like Nelson's review and Teague's memories before it, so Rogers' handbook subscribed to the Crocean interpretation of Fascism in order to present the Italian people as the rightful inheritors of the Renaissance tradition, a people whose creative energies had been momentarily suppressed only to be liberated with the arrival of democracy. But in Rogers' case this desire to settle the recent past was complicated by a quickly deteriorating political present. In the six months between the selection committee's Italy trip and the exhibition's opening, the United States

government had forcefully stepped up its policy of containment against communist revolutionary groups, especially after the June 1950 invasion of South Korea and the breakout of the Korean War. With the situation in Europe still meagre, it became more important than ever to affirm Italian support for American capitalism.

The *Italy at Work* exhibition handbook was an early Cold War document that betrayed deep-seated American anxieties about Italy's commitment to a liberal democratic political system. With rising unemployment across the peninsula and growing support for the Communists and Socialists, Americans needed to tell themselves stories about the Italian people's preference for liberal values. "The Italian is an individualist" Rogers declared in the opening line of the handbook's introductory chapter. "Hence this exhibition" (13). This supposed link between the nature of *italianità* and the need for a public presentation of everyday objects underwrote the exhibition's project of restaging Italian national identity. But it also belied any claim to do so impartially by showing how *Italy at Work* was filtered through a value system that presupposed American ideals. If the exhibition endeavoured to restage Italian national identity it was difficult to tell where its restaging ended and its construction *ex novo* began.

After testifying to the devastating wreckage of post-war Italy, Rogers commended the Italian people for their nevertheless entrepreneurial spirit. According to Rogers, the Italian acceptance of personal responsibility paired with an enthusiasm for hard work (highlighted in the exhibition's title) had allowed Italian craftsmen and industrial designers to succeed and even excel in creatively rebuilding their society. "Such action," Rogers wrote, "was possible only to a people radically untouched by government paternalism and instinctively distrustful of it" (13). If this seemed like a reference to the history of Fascism it was only partially that. More accurately, it was an expression of American anxiety about 'totalitarian' states, a term that in the 1940s and 1950s

made room for Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, Communist Russia and several Cold War-era Soviet satellite states (Todd 219-20). This slippage was reflected in Rogers' language, which mixed the simple past tense ("Such action *was* possible") with a temporally ambiguous participial adjective ("only to a people radically *untouched* by government paternalism") and a simple present tense descriptive adjective ("and instinctively *distrustful* of it").

The professed *raison d'être* of the *Italy at Work* exhibition was much simpler, and it originated in the economic relationship between the United States and Italy during the Marshall Plan years. The ECA Mission to Italy provided part of the exhibition funds in hopes that the show would stimulate a direct exchange of Italian consumer goods for American cash. In other words, the ECA sought to intensify the flow of American money into Italian households and to reinforce the commercial ties between two nations by encouraging the museum-going American public to 'buy Italian.'

The exhibition's selection committee chose only those objects likely to attract American eyes, and the excitement of aesthetic contemplation was never far removed from the possibility of consumer acquisition. Rogers' handbook made this link a priority:

> Since pleasure in [useful and beautiful objects] is always heightened by the possibility of possession, the stimulation of this exhibition should be all the greater in that practically all the exhibits or their equivalents are not only within the reach of the average buying public but will be so available. […] If the movement represented by the exhibition is to develop to the greater health of Italy and our western world the producer-consumer chain must be completed (18).

With *Italy at Work* museum space became retail space, while cultural institutions played a promotional role that was normally covered by trained marketing professionals. Museums were not obliged to renounce their claim to artistic appraisal, but they were made to broaden that claim until it included a statement of commercial endorsement. In the process, the inventions of Italian craftsmen and industrial designers were caught somewhere between art and merchandise.

The exhibition *Italy at Work* was an important precursor to *Olivetti: Design in Industry*, and the Olivetti company probably conceived the MoMA show through its participation in the former. Both exhibitions invited spectators to develop into consumers by challenging the boundaries that separate art from merchandise. But *Italy at Work* was not yet a case of corporate marketing. While it used museum space to promote the sale of consumer goods, its final goal was to push Italian public opinion in the direction of liberal democracy. It subordinated business to politics while denying Italian companies any say in the presentation of their products. Nevertheless, it made a major contribution to the perception of Italian design as simultaneously beautiful and useful. No sooner had the exhibition opened than the Olivetti company was arranging to put that perception to work.

Olivetti: Design in Industry

As Riamonda Riccini has rightly observed, the historiography of the Olivetti company—its focus on the charismatic founder Camillo and his visionary son Adriano—"runs the risk of becoming mythologised" and doing a disservice to its subject (92). This is partly because the scholarship on Olivetti is actively patronized by the family's estate, and most of the recent work has been printed by its publishing house Edizioni di Comunità.[72] Rather than concentrate on these men, their group of all-star designers and best-selling products, my approach to Olivetti focuses on the elaboration of discourses like art and industry, *italianità* and American-style consumerism.

[72] Edizioni di Comunità was founded in 1946 by Adriano Olivetti. Since 2015, the publishing house's Via Jervis series has printed studies of Adriano's business philosophy, political theory, intellectual profile, urban planning work and much more. Other series have included Adriano's biography and his major works, Camillo's correspondence and various company histories.

The Olivetti company opened its first American office on February 9, 1950.[73] The Olivetti Corporation of America (OCA) was located at 580 Fifth Ave in New York City, and it was run by the Olivetti family's most 'American' son, Dino Olivetti.[74] From 1950 to 1959, when OCA merged with the Underwood Typewriter Company, the New York office was an important center of communication between the Italian company and the American market. Dino corresponded regularly with his brother Adriano in Italy, and together they strategized the marketing, sales and distribution of Olivetti products throughout the United States.

During the first two years of operations, OCA did not have direct access to the American market; instead it provided advertising support and inventory to a network of independent American businessmen who owned exclusive company rights to specific territories. Sales figures were modest, barely reaching eight thousand units in 1951.[75] Starting in November 1952 OCA began to phase out this network, and by July 1954 the Italian company could sell its products directly to most of the American market, including all of New York City.

The earliest mention of *Olivetti: Design in Industry* comes from a letter written by Dino and sent to Adriano on May 1, 1951.[76] In this letter, Dino informed Adriano that the forthcoming issue of the New York magazine *Fortune* would include an article about the Olivetti company partially explaining the exhibition. Dino's casual remark, together with the usual time

[73] Commonwealth of Massachusetts Corporate Card File Database, CD 11710M(s)7-48-24113, February 9, 1950. The Olivetti Corporation of American was a registered business both in Boston, MA and New York, NY.
[74] Dino moved to Boston in the 1930s, earning a degree in engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He married an American, Rosemond Castle, and the two moved to Brazil where Dino oversaw the São Paolo Olivetti office. During the war, Dino was arrested by the Allied forces and sent to a prison camp in Trinidad. After the war, he was allowed to return to the United States, where he worked for companies in Missouri and Massachusetts. In 1950 Dino settled at the Olivetti Corporation of America in New York, where he remained until the early 1960s. Dino died in Milan in 1976.
[75] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Report "Distribuzione dei prodotti Olivetti in Italia e all'estero: Consuntivo del biennio 1950-1951, confronti con gli anni precedenti e programma per il biennio 1952-1953" from Giovanni Enriques to Adriano Olivetti, undated. 3.
[76] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Adriano Olivetti, 22.310, Letter from Dino Olivetti to Adriano Olivetti, May 1, 1951.

requirements for exhibition planning and article preparation, suggests that *Olivetti: Design in Industry* was already well underway and may have been many months in the making. The *Fortune* article, Dino wrote, had been proposed by the magazine's art director Leo Lionni, a Dutch-born Italian citizen living in the United States who happened to admire the Olivetti company. Citing the difficulty of translating Olivetti advertisements for the American public, Dino urged Adriano to consider recruiting Lionni for a position at OCA. By the end of the month Lionni was in charge of Olivetti's American advertising.

When the June 1951 issue of *Fortune* was published, it contained no mention of the exhibition *Olivetti: Design in Industry*. Lionni's anonymous article "Design with a Point" sang the praises of Olivetti, but it made no reference to the MoMA show nor to the possibility of any museum exhibition. It is difficult to say why *Fortune* did not follow through with the plan to announce and explain *Olivetti: Design in Industry*. One likely reason is that Lionni's late OCA hiring suddenly complicated the article's stakes, raising questions about the ethics of hyping an exhibition that could be shaped by a *Fortune* employee.

In any case, Lionni's *Fortune* article was still a full-scale dress rehearsal for the MoMA show. Six of the photographs from the *Fortune* article reappear in the MoMA bulletin, and some of the descriptions from the former are remarkably close to those of the latter. Where the *Fortune* article celebrates "one standard of taste [that] guides every visual aspect of the [Olivetti] company's operations" (Anon, "Design" 113) the MoMA bulletin cheers "the organization of all the visual aspects of an industry, unified under a single high standard of taste" (Lionni 3). Both documents share an imaginary and linguistic archive that is located in the person of Lionni and in the promotional materials available to him as OCA art director.

Figure 18: Inside the Museum of Modern Art northwest gallery, with a view to the outdoor courtyard from: Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York.

Since the June 1951 *Fortune* issue elected to pass over the exhibition in silence, the task of announcing *Olivetti: Design in Industry* passed on to MoMA. But rather than risk the consequences of a premature announcement, the museum decided to maintain the secret until some of the finer details could be arranged. By January 1952 Dino and Adriano had named Lionni director of the exhibition, and in February the museum finalized a budget totalling US $6462.[77] This included US $392 of "overhead" payable directly to MoMA, plus a US $1000 "packing, crating and insurance" fee requested for travel to fifteen other American museums. Later on, this idea to make *Olivetti: Design in Industry* a travelling exhibition was abandoned and the associated fee was dropped.

[77] The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records, 523.4, Letter from The Museum of Modern Art to Dino Olivetti, February 6, 1952, The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York.

On 13 June 1952 Dino wrote to the architect and MoMA director Philip C Johnson confirming that "the Olivetti company in Italy is willing to undergo the expenses of the exhibition."[78] The exhibition budget effectively became an invoice for the rendering of corporate marketing services and the Olivetti company paid all costs including MoMA's US $392 "overhead" commission. Lionni's personal collection provided much of the exhibition materials, while Dino and Adriano sent Johnson more resources from the company headquarters in Italy. The final list of items included Olivetti typewriters and calculators, sales displays and brochures, technical instruction manuals, print advertisements, corporate logos, a calendar, a model of the main factory and photographs of the workers' housing quarters, family nursing school and retail stores.[79] Arrangements were made for the spatial distribution of these items within the northwest gallery, and part of the exterior courtyard was reserved for the construction of an eight-foot tall Olivetti billboard taken from the Italian countryside.

MoMA finally announced *Olivetti: Design in Industry* on October 3, 1952, just three weeks before the exhibition was scheduled to open.[80] The press release highlighted some of the show's most exciting parts (the giant billboard took centre stage here) and it proclaimed Lionni director of the exhibition. But it did not say anything of his professional relationship with the Olivetti company. In the words of the press release, Lionni was simply the "art director of *Fortune* magazine," and there was no indication that at OCA he held the same title. There was also no indication that the Olivetti company had actively organized the exhibition nor that Dino and Adriano had paid the museum for agreeing to host the show. While such an open disclosure would

[78] The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records, 523.4, Letter from Dino Olivetti to Philip Johnson, June 13, 1952, The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York.
[79] The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records, 523.3, Olivetti exhibition checklist, undated, The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York.
[80] The Museum of Modern Art Press Archives. 'Advance Announcement.' Press Release. October 3, 1952, The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York.

have been unusual in a press release, MoMA's decision to keep quiet gave the American public no reason to question the exhibition's independence from business concerns. Instead, the press release presented *Olivetti: Design in Industry* as a disinterested tribute to a creative and innovative Italian company.

This misconception was reinforced by a second press release that coincided with the exhibition's opening.[81] "The purpose of the exhibition *Olivetti: Design in Industry*," it confirmed, "is to give recognition to the achievement of this manufacturer of business machines." This statement was not untrue, as MoMA did intend to acknowledge the Olivetti company's accomplishments in industrial design. But it was misleading because it smoothed over the Italian company's collaboration with the museum.

Even though the American public knew nothing of the cooperation between the Olivetti company and MoMA, *Olivetti: Design in Industry* was already a revolutionary exhibition. Before 1952 MoMA had defended a rather narrow definition of art that privileged architecture, painting, sculpture, theatre and photography. Exhibition series like *Machine Art* (put on in 1934, 1938 and 1940), *Useful Objects* (convened eight times between 1938 and 1948) and *Good Design* (presented in 1950, 1951 and 1952) had already displayed machine-produced consumer goods, but they had focused on the objects themselves, not the industrial processes of mass production. On the contrary, *Olivetti: Design in Industry* foregrounded the methods of modern industry. It drew less attention to the company's typewriters and calculators than to the Olivetti system as an organic

[81] The Museum of Modern Art Press Archives. 'Exhibition of Architecture and Design Executed for the Olivetti Company in Italy to go on View at Museum.' Press Release. October 22, 1952, The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York.

site of orchestrated production. In this respect, it expanded the field of modern art and forever changed what was admissible at a MoMA exhibition.[82]

The Olivetti company also paid MoMA US $2500 to print a special issue of the museum's monthly bulletin, dedicated entirely to the Italian company and timed to coincide with the opening of *Olivetti: Design in Industry*.[83] Dino and Adriano selected Lionni to design the museum bulletin, and the exhibition budget anticipated distribution for fifteen thousand copies.

The museum bulletin integrated Olivetti company history with an overview of current products. It included photographs of the exhibition materials, especially those that highlighted the Italian company's commitment to social goals. Some pages featured high-quality photographs of Olivetti typewriters and calculators shot in a studio with professional lighting equipment that was normally reserved for pieces of sculpture. Rather than present these products within the context of their daily use—on the desk of a busy secretary, in the hands of an enterprising businessman—the museum bulletin staged them in complete isolation, protecting their claim to arthood and promoting their appeal to an upper-middle-class New York public.

Penny Sparke has written about such representational practices in the international promotion of Italian design from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s. According to Sparke, the tendency to photograph Italian products by themselves, and to publish these photographs in glossy magazines like *Domus* and *Stile Industria*, revealed a desire to change the Italian household product "from a utility artefact into a covetable object" (128). The social consequences of this process, Sparke shows, were the reinforcement of an ethos of conspicuous consumption and the

[82] In the five years after *Olivetti: Design in Industry* MoMA hosted exhibitions on *Thonet Furniture* (1953), *Ten Automobiles* (1953) and *Buildings for Business and Government* (1957).
[83] The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records, 523.4, Letter from The Museum of Modern Art to Dino Olivetti, February 6, 1952, The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York.

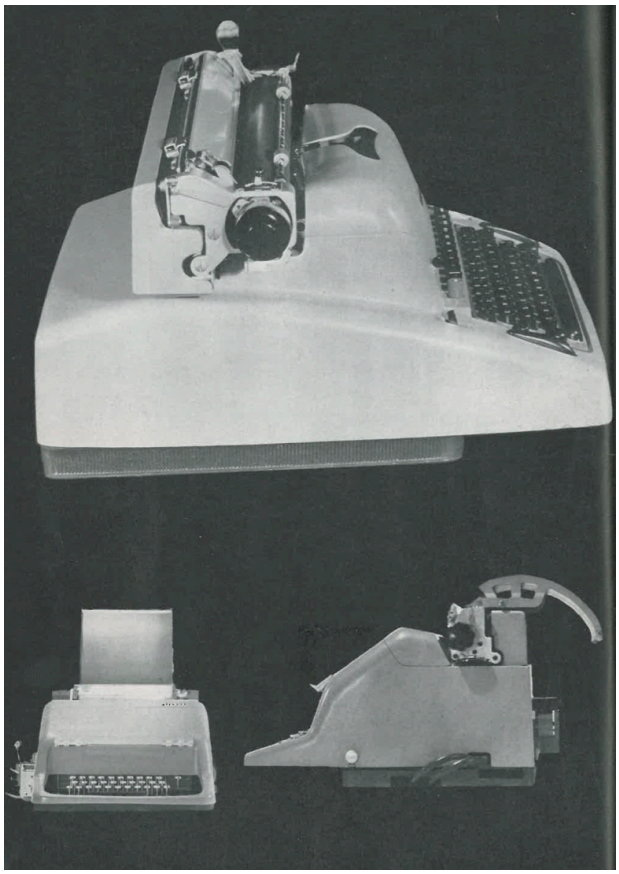

Figure 19: Olivetti products from: Lionni, Leo, editor. *Olivetti: Design in Industry*. Special Issue of Museum of Modern Art Bulletin, vol 20, no 1, 1952.

fetishization of Italian products: their removal from politically-motivated social contexts of use and their elevation to the status of formal art.

While I agree with Sparke that such representational practices tended to push Italian design in the direction of time-honored art, it is interesting to note that in the case of Olivetti the binary logic of "utility artefact" versus "covetable object" would miss the point of Dino and Adriano's radical challenge. *Olivetti: Design in Industry* did not simply ask the American public to stop considering the company's products as useful tools and to start regarding them as art. On the contrary, it contested the boundaries that separate the purely instrumental from the aesthetically appreciable by positioning Olivetti's typewriters and calculators somewhere between these two categories. Accordingly, the museum bulletin was not a company sales catalogue, nor was it a

review of MoMA artworks. But it mixed elements of these two genres and invited readers to confront Italian design in an ambiguous zone linking merchandise and art.

The museum bulletin announced on its opening page that Lionni was its designer, but it did not immediately disclose the fact that he was also employed by the Olivetti company. Through this strategic silence the museum bulletin gave itself the authority to mobilize Lionni's work in the service of Olivetti's reputation without appearing to compromise its stance of independence from business concerns. While this was true of the entire museum bulletin as a document that drew its materials from Lionni's OCA archive, it was particularly important for the first pages, which drummed up the Olivetti company's worldwide renown. The bulletin's first paragraph raved: "Even *Fortune* magazine joins the critics concerning Olivetti's excellent advertising" (Lionni 2). For Lionni, as we know from Dino and Adriano's correspondence, this veiled reference to the article "Design with a Point" amounted to little more than a self-citation.

For the reading public, it was possible to untwist the complex network linking Lionni, *Fortune* magazine, MoMA and the Olivetti company, but this would have taken considerable detective work and a bit of special knowledge. In a note buried toward the back of the museum bulletin, MoMA finally mentioned that Lionni "today produces the promotional designs for Olivetti in this country" (Lionni 17). This probably went unnoticed by most readers, either because they did not read the entire bulletin or because they did not grasp the connection between Lionni and the MoMA exhibition itself. Very few people would have recognized Lionni as the art director of *Fortune* magazine, a role that had little visibility among the American public.

It is difficult to say why MoMA, having carefully avoided the topic for so long, decided to include in the museum bulletin an explicit statement about the professional relationship between Lionni and the Olivetti company. It seems likely that MoMA foresaw the possibility that this

relationship would become public knowledge anyway, and therefore planted the statement as a defence against any eventual accusation of an unacknowledged conflict of interests. It would have made little difference to Dino and Adriano, who surely knew that the exposure from *Olivetti: Design in Industry* could not be retracted so easily, and at such a late moment.

There was, of course, nothing illegal about a cultural institution promoting the products of an industrial company from which it received payment. But the fact that MoMA and the Olivetti company took such care to limit the possibility that the American public would grasp the situation confirms the difficulty with which the art world would have struggled to tolerate such a practice. John Potvin has written about a similar agreement at the heart of the Guggenheim Museum's retrospective on *Giorgio Armani* (2000), which becoming public knowledge generated a critique that the museum had "transitioned into the business of renting space, using its cultural capital to amass cash reserves, unethically swinging its doors open to the highest bidder" (Potvin 52). Almost fifty years earlier, *Olivetti: Design in Industry* would have surely raised a cry.

But the fact that *Olivetti: Design in Industry* was organised and paid for by the Olivetti company itself seems to have gone completely undetected by the American public. Even the ever-astute Aline B. Saarinen, in a review for the *New York Times*, insisted that the exhibition was conceived "in proselytizing recognition of [the Olivetti company's] achievement" (Louchheim X9). This discourse of *recognition* has proven remarkably powerful, to the point that the exhibition has become, not without some irony, a marker of its opposite: a show *without* any company involvement. Thus AnnMarie Brennan, writing more than sixty years on, can gloss a 1964 Olivetti exhibition on *arte programmata* as one "unlike the 1952 MoMA show" because in 1964 the company "now performed the role of curator by sponsoring and orchestrating" everything ("Olivetti: A Work of Art" 244). It is not Brennan's goal to analyse the cooperation between

museums and companies, and she uses the example only to pursue a brilliant discussion of immaterial labour. Still, it is instructive to note how much of what Brennan says of the 1964 show could describe the 1952 exhibition:

> [The 1964 show] performed as a machine for the purposes of adding value to the Olivetti brand through its association with the art world. Indeed, the ambiguous association between product and art object, promoted through the Arte Programmata exhibition, becomes clear when we discover that Olivetti was not merely a sponsor of the exhibition, but in fact instrumental in its fabrication ("Olivetti: A Work of Art" 244).

The illusion that MoMA merely recognized the Olivetti company's greatness, on its own accord and at its own expense, was from the beginning a necessary part of the exhibition's marketing success. It was a discourse that distracted from an uncomfortable reality behind the rhetoric: that the Olivetti company had paid MoMA for the rendering of marketing services.

By insisting on the commercial nature of the relationship between the American museum and the Italian company, I do not intend to suggest that *Olivetti: Design in Industry* was in any way an illegitimate show, nor that Olivetti's industrial products did not belong in a modern art gallery. Such a position would be founded on the dubious assumption that art exhibitions before *Olivetti: Design in Industry* were always wholly independent from business considerations. Even (or perhaps especially) a show like *Italy at Work*, with its innocent presentation of struggling craftsmen and industrial designers, carried for its participants financial implications that were far more important than any tenuous stance of cultural solidarity with the United States.

Accordingly, what set *Olivetti: Design in Industry* apart was not a question of kind; it was a question of degree. Dino and Adriano understood the commercial benefits latent in museum space as an artistic medium, and they made those benefits manifest in the materials of the MoMA exhibition. They understood the unwritten financial implications of cooperation with a major American cultural institution, and they set down a formal agreement for the purchase of museum-

based corporate marketing services. This strategy purposefully aimed at what others had only achieved with much less foresight: the use of museum space as a marketing medium.

The one thing that MoMA could not do was to actually sell Olivetti's products. If the Italian company were to capitalize on the New York demand it would need to complete the cycle itself. It would need, as Dino and Adriano already knew, a local commercial presence.

The Olivetti Showroom

The idea of selling Olivetti products directly to the American market predated the opening of *Olivetti: Design in Industry*,[84] and by December 1952—just days after the exhibition's closing—Adriano was writing to Dino about the possibility to "aprire un ufficio vendita presso la Olivetti Corporation of America."[85] The Italian company already operated its own retail stores in many international capitals, including Paris, London, Mexico City, Vienna, Brussels, Johannesburg and Rome.[86] These stores were known for their liberal use of artistic imagery and for their superstar architects (the Rome store, for example, was designed by the famous rationalist architect Ugo Sissa).

On December 29, 1952 Dino sent an urgent telegram to Adriano confirming that OCA had acquired retail space for a store and that a commercial contract was in preparation.[87] The space was located at 584 Fifth Ave, in the same building as the OCA office, and it enjoyed ground-level street-front access to the heart of midtown Manhattan. It is important to realise that MoMA was

[84] In a memorandum sent to Olivetti employee Ignazio Weiss on September 15, 1952, Adriano wrote of "l'imminenza di una campagna in USA." Archivio Storico Olivetti, Documentazione Società, Disposizioni organizzative, Il Presidente, 1952, UA 1, SUA 5, 301.201, Memorandum from Adriano Olivetti to Ignazio Weiss, September 15, 1952.
[85] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Adriano Olivetti, 22.310, Corrispondenza Dino Olivetti, Letter from Dino Olivetti to Adriano Olivetti, December 16, 1952.
[86] In 1953 the Olivetti company would open its first two American stores, in Chicago and San Francisco.
[87] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Adriano Olivetti, 22.310, Corrispondenza Dino Olivetti, Telegram from Dino Olivetti to Adriano Olivetti, December 29, 1952.

located on 53rd Street, just steps off Fifth Ave, and anyone who walked down that avenue for more than a quarter mile would have seen both the museum and the Olivetti company's new retail space. Accordingly, the store location offered Dino and Adriano the chance to re-propose Olivetti's products to the local public, only this time in a context that was more explicitly commercial. In other words, the advantage of the retail space was not only its proximity to the OCA office, nor its position at the centre of America's busiest shopping district; it was above all the possibility of communicating with the same neighbourhood community that had seen *Olivetti: Design in Industry*.

The New York Olivetti showroom took more than a year to construct, and it saw the collaboration of many groups and individuals working both in Italy and in the United States. For the showroom's general layout, Dino and Adriano hired the Italian architects Ludovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Enrico Peressutti and Ernesto Nathan Rogers.[88] Before the Olivetti showroom, these three had worked together on installations for museum exhibitions, and it was not a coincidence that they were chosen to take up the mantle of *Olivetti: Design in Industry*. The trio was already well-known in the United States, having lectured at Harvard University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Princeton University and elsewhere. They had also been commissioned by MoMA to build the United States pavilion at the 1951 Triennale di Milano.

What Belgiojoso, Peressutti and Rogers offered was as much another art exhibition as it was a company store. The New York Olivetti showroom was a walkable landscape of creativity populated by typewriters and calculators that confronted spectators and customers as artworks and merchandise. A glass façade spanned the length of the building, allowing passers-by to survey the entire showroom from the street. Inside, the blue-green marble floors had been mined from a cave

[88] Belgiojoso, Peressutti and Rogers had, together with Gian Luigi Banfi, founded the BBPR architectural studio in 1932. Banfi was deported by the Fascists to the Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp, where he died in 1945.

Figure 20: New York Olivetti showroom from: Associazione Archivio Storico Olivetti, Ivrea.

in the northern Italian Val d'Ossola. They extended in all directions, like the glistening waters of a shallow sandbar, bending skyward here or there and anchoring the company's products to the sales floor. The cone-shaped lighting fixtures, reminiscent of giant seashells, had been designed exclusively by the Venini glassblowers of Murano. They hung from the ceiling to spotlight scattered workstations where Olivetti machines were ready for testing. A rotating dumbwaiter sent typewriters and calculators down to the basement for repairs, and an open riser staircase led up to the mezzanine level of sales desks and company employees.

The most original feature of the Olivetti showroom was the Italian sculptor Costantino Nivola's vast bas-relief, which occupied most of the south wall. Nivola was a long-time Olivetti employee who had been chased from Italy by the Fascist racial laws, settling first in France, then with his wife in Long Island, New York. He was the pioneer of a creative technique whereby sand sculptures could be cast in concrete and reproduced in unusual spaces. Nivola used this technique

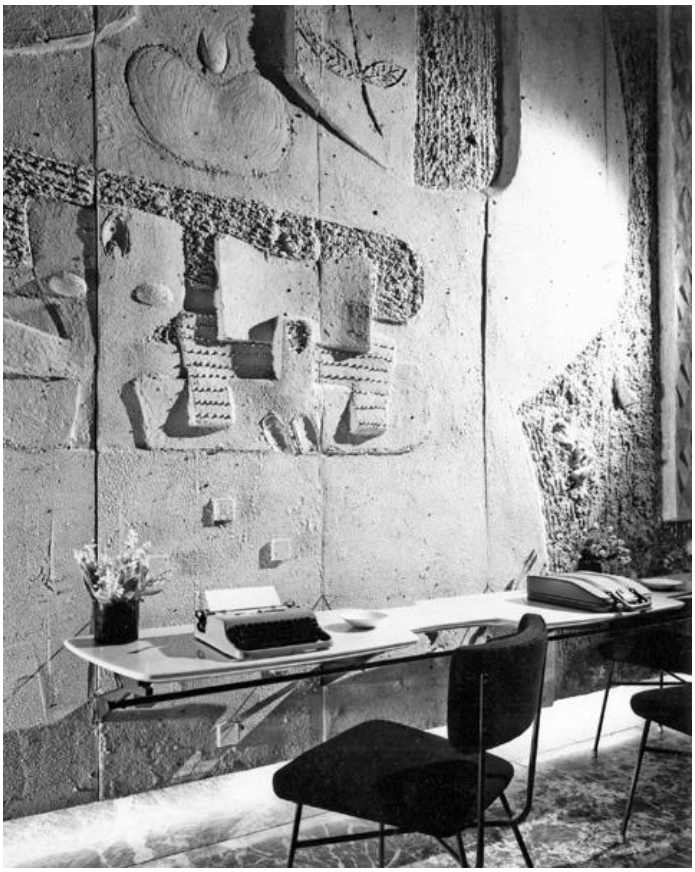

Figure 21: Costantino Nivola's bas-relief from: Associazione Archivio Storico Olivetti, Ivrea.

for the Olivetti showroom piece, transforming the space even further into a sort of art gallery with consumer goods.

On May 26, 1954 the Olivetti showroom opened for business. More than five hundred people attended the ceremonious event, including American businessmen, Italian diplomats, journalists and cultural figures. The president of the Fifth Avenue Association WES Griswold Jr had the honour of cutting a typewriter ribbon strung up across the showroom's front door, and Dino led the guests across the marble floors amid sustained applause and well wishes.[89] In a statement prepared and distributed to members of the press, Dino explained the Olivetti approach

[89] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Direzione communicazione ufficio stampa, terzo Versamento, articoli sul negozio di New York, SUA 850, C-N-1-5 (339), Memorandum about opening of Olivetti showroom, undated.

Figure 22: New York Olivetti showroom from: Associazione Archivio Storico Olivetti, Ivrea.

to the showroom's construction: "By using the materials and design talents of Italy, we hoped to bring something of contemporary Italian taste to Fifth Avenue."[90] In emphasising the *italianità* of the showroom's materials and presentation, Dino was tapping into a growing American interest in the *linea italiana* of industrial design, a series of products that masterfully combined form with function, beauty with utility. The national identity of industrial products is, as Grace Lees-Maffei has noted, at its strongest outside of the country of origin, an insight that companies like Alessi have since learned to exploit in their marketing ("Italianità").

[90] Archivio Storico Olivetti, Fondo Direzione communicazione ufficio stampa, terzo Versamento, articoli sul negozio di New York, SUA 850, C-N-1-5 (339), 'Olivetti – The Company Story' Press Release, May 26, 1954.

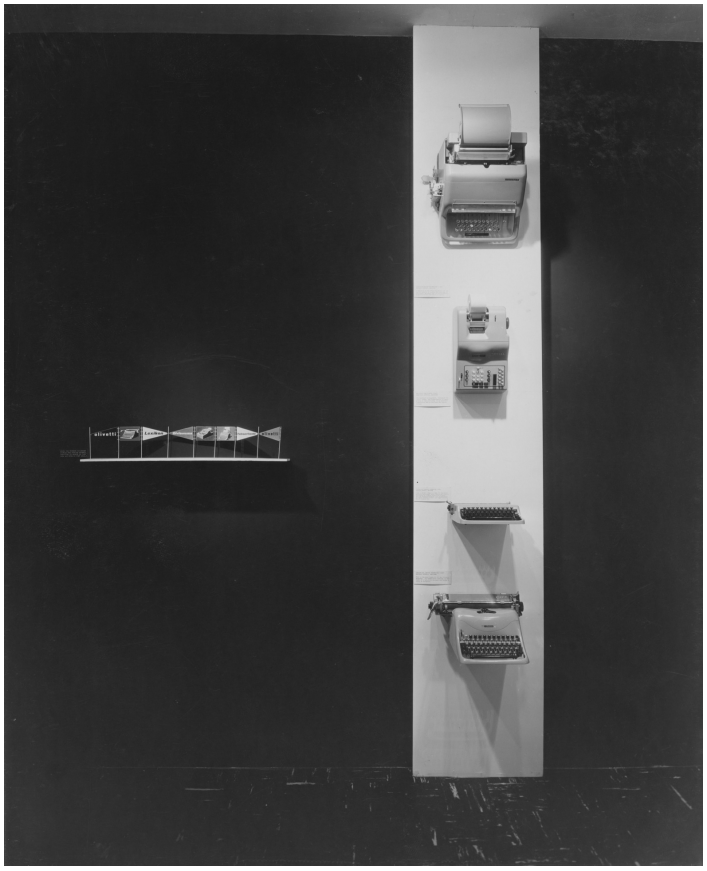

Figure 23: Olivetti products on display at Olivetti: Design in Industry from: Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York.

The Olivetti showroom's star product was the Lettera 22 portable typewriter, designed in 1949 by the Italian architect Marcello Nizzoli. Starting in July 1954 the showroom also sold the Divisumma 14 calculator, designed in 1948 by the same artist. These two products dotted the showroom sales floor, where they rested atop pedestals of glossy marble.

In addition to the ten pedestals *inside* the showroom, there was also one *outside* which furnished a Lettera 22 typewriter directly to the pedestrians of Fifth Ave. Passers-by could stop on the sidewalk and test the company's product even without entering the interior space of the Olivetti showroom. The exterior typewriter was regularly stocked with paper, and New Yorkers made ample use of it for communication, self-expression and philosophical musings. "Peace, it's wonderful" wrote one anonymous visitor (Hamill 4). "I love you, I love you, I love you" was the

Figure 24: Olivetti products on display at the New York Olivetti showroom from: Associazione Archivio Storico Olivetti, Ivrea.

message of another (Anon "Confidenze" 4). A nameless aesthete quoted from Chaucer: "Whan that Aprille with his shores soote"—only to be rebuked by the next typist: "Wake up, man, we're in the twentieth century!" (Anon "Confidenze" 4) A thorough discussion of these writings is beyond the scope of this chapter, but it is important not to think of them as mere trivialities. On the contrary, they are the valuable fragments of an ephemeral material culture, the result of a complex urban encounter between human intelligence and technological representation. They are the improvised record of a modern world, ranging widely in topic from pets to politics, religion to romance.[91]

[91] I am grateful to Alberto De Macchi for these quotes. The latter two were first published in the *New York Post* sometime before February 1955. They were translated into Italian and published in *Notizie Olivetti* in February 1955, but this translation did not include the precise source reference. My citations therefore refer to the Italian translation,

Anyone who looks at photographs of *Olivetti: Design in Industry* together with photographs of the Olivetti showroom will recognize the similarities of approach to the problem of presenting the Italian industrial object to the American public. In both cases, Olivetti's typewriters and calculators were proffered as self-sufficient tools, stand-alone products that might lend themselves to any modern context, whether professional or recreational. These were not the component parts of a composite office environment, to be placed on desks, against walls or beside files. On the contrary, they were complete workstations with nothing to hide, out in the open and begging to be inspected from all possible perspectives. Inspection, of course, meant two things at once: detached aesthetic contemplation and practical performance testing.

It is imperative to think of *Olivetti: Design in Industry* and the Olivetti showroom together, as one extended case of corporate marketing that took the form first of an art show, then of a retail store. One thinks immediately of Warhol's quip that "all department stores will become museums, and all museums will become department stores," wondering if the artist was aware that his words about the future were equally descriptive of the past (cited in Potvin 47). *Olivetti: Design in Industry* anticipated the Olivetti showroom, and the latter echoed the former. In other words, the art exhibition was *already* a sort of retail store, and the retail store was *still* a sort of art exhibition. In the minds of those who visited both, these spaces must have run together. Olivetti's products simply did not respond to the outdated and separate categories of art and merchandise. They lingered in an ambiguous zone between creativity and commerce, generating—perhaps uncomfortable but certainly effective—conversation about Italian design.

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which is rendered, in the first case, "Ti amo, ti amo, ti amo." On the contrary, the Italian translation kept the Chaucer quote in its English original, which I have simply transcribed here. The response to the Chaucer quote, in the Italian translation, is rendered "Svegliati, uomo, siamo nel ventesimo secolo."

The Olivetti showroom was widely reviewed in both the Italian and the American press, especially in professional architecture journals that normally ignored retail stores. These reviews were mixed, most praising the beauty of individual elements while lamenting the clutter of the space as a totality.[92] On the positive side of the spectrum there were Olga Gueft's article in *Interiors* and Gio Ponti's analysis in *Domus*, both of which might be summed up by Ponti's remark that the showroom was "pieno di inedito e di valori poetici" (3). These reviewers ignored the commercial side of the Olivetti showroom, treating the space as another work of visual art that could be exhaustively analysed with the critical tools of their discipline.

It took a sociologist like Lewis Mumford to unpack what was truly novel about the Olivetti showroom: its complex integration of business and art. In a harsh review published in *The New Yorker* Mumford chided the Olivetti showroom for its overwhelming and disorienting mix of disparate artistic styles, periods, materials, media and colors, more appropriate—Mumford joked—to Coney Island than to midtown Manhattan. "The one purpose of this showroom," Mumford wrote, "should be to give a buyer a chance to study the Olivetti machines in peace, without the nervous competition of many other objects" (116). For Mumford, the showroom's creative aspirations were at war with its commercial goals, producing a struggle for attention that ultimately left customers unable to make a decision.

Abstracting from the Olivetti showroom to reflect more broadly on the history of ideas, Mumford identified a tendency of modern thought to conceive industry in opposition to culture. This did not mean, according to those who subscribed to this conception, that industry and culture

[92] Ada Louise Huxtable's review in *Art Digest* is exemplary in this regard. She wrote: "One feels some sense of confusion, due to the multiplicity of ingenious and expensive details which never seem to be fully resolved into an integrated whole, but one is also aware of beauty and elegance, and of a corporate consciousness of design that is carried through to the last piece of company stationary." Huxtable, Ada Louise. "Olivetti's Lavish Shop." *Art Digest*, vol 28, no 18, 1954, p. 15.

were antagonistic, nor that they should be kept separate. On the contrary, it meant that industry and culture were complementary or, more precisely, that in the age of industrial society culture was a necessary corrective to rampant capitalism. Accordingly, Mumford surmised that the Olivetti company had employed art to address "certain feelings that [many people believe] are omitted by the calculus of the machine" (116). This was a mistake, Mumford implied, because Olivetti's typewriters and calculators were already in themselves cultural objects. If industry was already culture, then any attempt to introduce culture into industry was plainly redundant and caused confusion.[93]

It is somewhat ironic that Mumford took this line of critique with—of all companies—Olivetti, because nobody knew better than Dino and Adriano that industrial products were also objects of culture. This was the foundational idea undergirding the corporate marketing strategy that encompassed *Olivetti: Design in Industry* and the Olivetti showroom. But Mumford should not be dismissed so easily. On the contrary, his critique reopens a series of questions that we thought were securely closed. If Olivetti's typewriters and calculators are already in themselves works of art, what *are* they doing among all that marble, glass and sculpture? Do they really need these cultural crutches to prop up their claim to arthood? Is the Olivetti showroom nothing more than a projection of the company's ego ideal, a material attempt to resolve the identity crisis at the heart of industrial design?

That Dino and Adriano felt the need to surround Olivetti's products with so much conventional art confirms the distance industry still had to travel if it were to partake of culture. The Olivetti company may well have been confident in its identity as a modern artist, but the

[93] For a good discussion of the unstable concept of culture, including complexities specific to the Italian *cultura* see: Forgacs, David and Robert Lumley. "Introduction: Approaches to Culture in Italy." *Italian Cultural Studies: An Introduction*. Edited by David Forgacs and Robert Lumley. Oxford UP, 1996, pp. 1-11.

question was really not one that the company had the authority to resolve. On the contrary, it was the public that decided what constituted culture, and it was the public that needed to be convinced. The only way for Dino and Adriano to bring the conservative public taste around was by drawing on the practices and institutions already familiar to it. In the context of Olivetti's corporate marketing this meant drawing on Belgiojoso, Peressutti and Rogers' architecture, Venini's glassblowing, Nivola's bas-reliefs, and especially MoMA's name. Far from breaking with tradition, the Olivetti company—like much of revolutionary art—had its eyes set on the future and its feet planted in the past. It contributed not to a total redefinition of modern art, but to an expansion of the field to include everyday consumer goods and industrial products.[94]

On August 18, 1954 MoMA opened the doors to a new exhibition, *The Modern Movement in Italy: Architecture and Design*. A giant retrospective of Italian creativity since 1930, this exhibition finally emphasized the continuity—so repudiated by the Crocean interpretation—between the Fascist and post-war years. One of the design sections was dedicated entirely to the Olivetti company. It was not paid for by Dino, nor by Adriano or any other Italian businessman. This time around, it was MoMA's disinterested recognition of an innovative and thriving Italian company. The Olivetti showroom was preparing to celebrate its third month of business. Anyone who walked down Fifth Ave for more than a quarter mile may have seen two Olivettis, maybe more.

[94] The New York Olivetti showroom remained in operation until the early 1970s. The interior was dismantled in 1982 and the space sold.

Conclusion
Community and Labor in the Age of Deindustrialization

From a twenty-first century perspective, the philosophy of Adriano Olivetti seems completely outmoded. His attempt to conjugate the concepts of community and labor simply belongs to another world: one defined by unifying elements like fixed production facilities, material goods, mass politics and permanent employment. Since the 1970s, the process of deindustrialization in Italy, Europe and the United States has comported a transition to new conditions, characterized by divisive elements like virtual economies of knowledge-flows, the politics of identity and worker precarity.

The shift from industrial to post-industrial society has been felt most strongly by the old working class, which has seen its labor lose value in two main ways. First, the development of technology, and its application to production, has allowed machine work to replace human work, evacuating unskilled (and even skilled) labor from the center of industry. Second, the demands of competition have forced companies to seek out cheaper labor markets, exporting work (and the search for raw materials) to the margins of industry. This has been a one-two punch for the old working class. If the goal of labor is to create wealth for the owners of productive means, then its depreciation implies cheaper investments and, in the short term, higher profits. But if the goal of labor is to create community, as Adriano argued, then its disappearance implies mass unemployment and, in the long term, generalized social disorientation. This is the dark side of Adriano's theory of communities of labor: once labor is transformed, community enters into crisis.

What is remarkable is that Adriano seems to have understood this risk, and he issued warnings about both technological development and nomadic capitalism. As regards the first problem, he wrote in 1952 that technology has no inherently progressive value and that it therefore needs a human ethics, "poichè quando [un fine etico] manca[…], scienza e tecnica sottomettono l'uomo al dominio della macchina e di congegni che egli non è più in grado di controllare onde potrebbero portare la civiltà verso la propria distruzione" ("Come nasce" 21). Nor was Adriano an apocalyptic intellectual, and he wrote elsewhere that "per la prima volta nella storia della tecnica, i mezzi materiali a disposizione dell'uomo" are ready to "liberare forse l'uomo dalla sua condanna" ("Democrazia" 140). "Forse", but not certainly. This was Adriano's challenge: that humanity develop technology in a way that created prosperity, not suffering.

As regards the second problem, Adriano believed that a company's first priority is to its immediate territory. Anyone who uproots factories, chases cheap labor around the world and exploits migrant workers is simply not worthy of participating in the project of modernity. Already in 1952, Adriano wrote accurately of post-industrial society, identifying its effects on his community-labor nexus in ways that seem to announce the 1970s:

> La decadenza di grandi industrie e il sorgere di nuove, significa trasferimento continuo di tecnici, specialisti e di larghe masse di operai. Tali spostamenti sono praticamente inconciliabili con una politica sociale moderna fondata, in gran parte, su impianti fissi: abitazioni operaie, distributori cooperativi, scuole professionali, asili, centri sanitari, assistenziali e ricreativi. In generale, la rottura e lo spostamento di una vasta rete di interessi di produzione e consumo in una zona industriale, è un fattore sociale negativo non trascurabile ("La lotta" 62).

Adriano did not live long enough to see the rise of the famous industrial districts in the 'terza Italia' (the area running from Tuscany to Friuli-Venezia Giulia that generated the 'Made in Italy' craze of the 1970s and 1980s),[95] nor the abuses of women's domestic piecework on the peninsula and

[95] For more on the industrial districts in the 'terza Italia' see: Bagnasco, Arnaldo. "Sviluppo periferico e strutture produttive locali." *Tre Italie: La problematica territoriale dello sviluppo italiano*. Il Mulino, 1977, pp. 168-87.

abroad that underwrote that success.[96] But he did foresee the concomitant dismantling of his own company welfare system: the network of Olivetti workers' housing quarters, schools, medical services, recreational programs and more that was privatized or abandoned after his death.

It took economists, sociologists and historians about another half-century to pose the question: How does the devaluation of labor in post-industrial society have negative consequences for the concept of community? Jeremy Rifkin has argued, in his 2005 Putnam book *The End of Work*, that the development of technology will eventually displace human labor in its entirety. In a post-industrial society where all necessary economic activity is performed by machines (or virtual information processors), people will pursue their real desires, but they will also need to explore what Rifkin calls "new ways of defining human worth and social relationships"—things that have been historically based on labor (xviii). In Italy, where deindustrialization has taken a hard toll, Marco Panara has located the root of social discontent in the same devaluation of labor. In his 2010 Laterza book *La malattia dell'Occidente*, Panara pointedly observes:

> La perdita del valore economico del lavoro porta con sé una perdita del suo valore morale e sociale, che è un elemento fondativo della società occidentale, almeno quella degli ultimi secoli. Veniamo da una lunga fase della storia nella quale il lavoro ha rappresentato la chiave per realizzare le proprie aspettative e per definire il proprio ruolo nella società (6).

As the production process loses its social and moral value, the consumption process gains in importance. One's place in Italian, European or American society comes to depend on a set of cultural choices made more or less openly and in view of the general public. In the words of Pierre Bourdieu, "consumption is […] a stage in a process of communication," and what consumption communicates is the affirmation of an identity (2). Insofar as such identities are shared by many

[96] These abuses continue today, and they have only recently received public attention. For a good account, see: Toffanin, Tania. *Fabbriche invisibili: Storie di donne, lavoranti a domicilio*. Ombre Corte, 2016.

individuals, they seem to point toward community, but as the title of Bourdieu's book reminds us, they are always inscribed in the service of difference and *Distinction*.

If the age of deindustrialization has comported a devaluation of labor, then the question for the present is: How can we redefine community on the basis of new concepts, practices, affinities and assemblages? There is no easy answer, and the question implies some political risks. Zygmunt Bauman reminds us that community has always been more powerful as an idea than as a fact: "'community' is nowadays another name for paradise lost—but one to which we dearly hope to return, and so we feverishly seek the roads that may bring us there" (3). The twenty-first century has fallen back on old models like Family, Church and especially Nation. The point is to learn from the community-labor nexus, and to articulate new alternatives.

Appendix
To the Workers of Pozzuoli

Adriano Olivetti

translated by Jim Carter

This speech was delivered on April 23, 1955 in Pozzuoli, Italy, on the occasion of the opening there of an Olivetti factory. It begins with an overview of recent company history, including territorial expansion on the world market, then it develops a theory of industry as productive of more than just profit. Finally, it offers a reading of history that emphasizes the transition from agricultural to industrial society, the incompleteness of this transition in the South and its effects on humanity. It uses this history in order to justify the creation of the Pozzuoli factory, a symbol of North-South solidarity and a concrete contribution to the resolution of the Southern Question.

When we decided to build this factory, four years ago, the Ivrea factory was already well on its way to becoming an international enterprise. We were already aware of the Southern Question, in all of its painful magnitude, and when the assiduous Minister of Industry Mr. Campilli approached us about it, we were happy to give him our full attention.

We saw no problem with setting up shop in the South. But a sudden and demanding deviation might have distracted us from the strenuous efforts we had already launched in Europe, the Americas and South Africa.

We willingly took on the new burden. It was an act of faith in the future and in the progress of our company, but it was above all a reverent acknowledgement of the poverty of these regions. And we are not only talking about a monetary contribution, but also about a genuine sacrifice on the part of our workers. All of Italy has been hit by the painful disease of unemployment. Even if the general living conditions in the North can be considered objectively much better than those in the South, we have still seen many catastrophes demolish our own, once prosperous, regions.

Over the past years, and especially over the past months, the crisis in textile production, and in some parts of heavy industry, has gotten worse around Ivrea.

At the Zanzi company in Ivrea, five hundred mechanics have lost their jobs; in Agliè, one thousand textile workers; in Castellamonte, about one hundred more. And the recent closing of the cotton mill in Caluso has effected four hundred families.

The Ivrea factory used to hire hundreds of workers each year, but between 1952 and 1954, it was forced to reduce and practically suspend this rhythm, transferring the potential for increasing production to the South. Many young men could not find work; many fathers had to wait—and they are still waiting—for their sons to find a position where they themselves passed the best years of their lives. Still, nobody complained. Nobody blamed their difficult condition on the creation of this factory.

The conscience of our workers in the Canavese is alive in solidarity with their brothers in Campania, in Calabria, in Lucania.

Nobody dared complain. And at the end of last year, our sales management team developed a bold plan—meticulous in its execution, able to overcome all obstacles—that laid the groundwork for another great leap forward. Today, with a tremendous effort of men and resources, the factory is realizing this leap forward in all its sectors.

On the sales front, one important event for the history of our company in this year is the opening of a distribution network in Canada. On the production front, our greatest asset is the full efficiency of this factory.

The opening of offices in Toronto and Montreal is the latest development of a strategy we have pursued since 1921 to bring our products to the world market. But only in recent years have we seen its most complete expression, with our network of fourteen sister companies: three in the British Commonwealth, five in Europe, and four in Latin America, plus five factories in Barcelona, Glasgow, Buenos Aires, Johannesburg and Rio de Janeiro employing a total of more than three thousand workers.

We raised our banner in New York and in San Francisco, in Rio de Janeiro and in Mexico City—even in far-away Australia. We set up shops, trained salesmen, persuaded a clientele skeptical of Italian products, defended a high level of artistry and the graphic consistency of our advertising materials. No matter what the cost, we maintained integrity in our sales methods, and none of this was easy, nor was it quickly accomplished.

There are no limits to competition, to invention, to perfection, and so this struggle has no end. We must never show signs of weariness; we must always nourish our research laboratories and our study centers with new technical energy.

But fortunately, there is something that we have finally accomplished: a network of world distribution. We can consider the opening of our Canadian offices the end of an era of territorial expansion, and the beginning of an era of more refined market penetration.

In a couple of years, we will realize our ambition to make this Italian enterprise the type of enterprise that resembles those great overseas organisms in its dimensions and in its output. We will then begin to see the social consequences: higher salaries and reduced working hours.

These goals are no longer very far away, and we will reach them by continually increasing the number and quality of our products. Today, we have four calculator models and four typewriter models. They leave our factories at a rhythm of more than one thousand machines per day.

In 1925, the largest American factory, Underwood, was reaching these same numbers. One day, I stopped there to look at its orderly walls that hid a secret I longed to know. That secret was not new: it was already contained in the moral code that our enterprise had established, under my father's guidance, and in the ever-present scientific rigor of Italian ingenuity.

The secret of our future is founded, therefore, on the dynamism of our sales organization and its economic output, on our pricing system, on the modernity of our machines and methods, but above all, on the hardworking and self-conscious participation of everyone in the goals of the company.

Can industry set itself goals? Must these goals be the simple realization of profit?

Or is there not something, beyond the obvious rhythm, more fascinating: a destination, a vocation for the life of a factory?

We can respond: There is a goal, integral to our daily activity in Ivrea and in Pozzuoli. And if we cannot define this goal, then it is useless to hope in the success of the work we have begun.

For many years, our company's work has been informed by a great drama: an ideal drama, beyond the principles of business organization and inspired by our founder.

The social project of the Ivrea factory—a project that I will not hesitate to call incomplete—responds to a simple idea: create a new type of company, beyond socialism and capitalism. History is urgently warning us that these two extreme forms of posing the terms of the social question, one against the other, cannot resolve the problems of man in modern society.

The Ivrea factory acts under certain economic conditions, and it accepts their rules, but it has also directed its goals and its major concerns toward the material, cultural and social elevation of the place where it was called to operate. It has guided the region toward a new type of community, where the goals of all people—the protagonists of human events—are no longer substantially different, and where history is made day by day, in order to guarantee a future, a life worth living, to the children of that land.

Our company therefore believes in the values of the spirit, in the values of science; it believes in the values of art; it believes in the values of culture; it believes, finally, that the ideals of justice cannot be separated from the ongoing and unsettled contest between capital and labor. It believes, above all, in its own divine light, in the possibility of elevation and redemption.

This factory reaffirms the activity and the excitement of the Ivrea factory. We wanted to copy its rationalist rigor and its organization, to create an exact replica of its cultural and social services. These things remind us of the indissoluble unity that links this factory to that one, and to a concept of technology that must be placed at the service of man. Because man is not the slave of technology, but rather technology is the porter of man—to ever higher places, to places that nobody will dare limit, because they are destined by the Providence of God.

And so, this factory rose up in sight of the most characteristic bay in the world. The architect's idea was to respect the beauty of this land, so that each day beauty would be of comfort to labor.

We also wanted factory life to be accompanied by nature. If the building were too large, with closed-off walls, air conditioning and artificial lighting, then it would risk repudiating nature and transforming man, day by day, into a being different than the hopeful one he was upon entering.

The factory was therefore conceived on a human scale, so that each ordered work station would become a space of redemption, not suffering.

We wanted the windows to be low to the ground and the courtyards to be open, with trees in the garden so as to definitively exclude any idea of confinement or hostile enclosure.

In fact, today, this factory has taken on an exemplary value for the future of our work in the North. It encourages us to accomplish even more, to create new environments that can learn from this factory and devise even more favorable solutions.

Now that the factory is finished, it is almost entirely the responsibility of us managers to assure that it becomes, little by little, a working organism for social justice, a stimulant for families, a thoughtful advocate for the future of our children, and finally, a participant in the life of this land. This land will draw its economic nourishment and its incentive for social elevation from our progress. I want to allude here to the admirable city of Pozzuoli, and to its incomparable surroundings.

It was only yesterday that man was uprooted from the land, from nature, by industrial society. He has suffered in the depths of his soul, and we do not even know how many profound gashes, how many painful wounds, how much irreparable damage has resulted in the secrets of his unconscious.

In a little more than a generation, we have left behind a thousand-year-old civilization of peasants and fishermen. For this civilization—which is still the civilization of the Mezzogiorno—the light of God was real and important. Family, friends, relatives and neighbors were important. Trees were important; land, the sun, the sea and the stars were important.

Man worked with his hands, exercising his muscles, and drawing his sustenance directly from the land and sea.

The upheaval of two wars definitively pushed man toward industry and urbanism. It uprooted the peasant from his land, and it closed him in a factory. It was driven not only by poverty and misery, but also by the anxiety of a culture that a false civilization had denied to the southern countryside and confined to the metropolises.

Thus was born the working world of the North, where the light of the spirit is sometimes diminished and where the drive to acquire material goods has in some way corrupted true man. He was a child of God, rich with the gift of love for nature and life. He used to contemplate the twinkling of the stars, and he loved the green trees. He was the friend of rocks and waves, where between silences and rhythms, the presence of God made the mysterious forces of the spirit penetrate into his soul.

We have fought, and we will always fight, against this immense danger. The man of the South abandoned the civilization of the land only yesterday. He therefore has in him an immense reserve of intense, human warmth. The southern emigrant has brought and gifted this human warmth to all the countries of the world, and it is an unmistakable—if often unacknowledged—sign of the Italian sacrifice and contribution to overseas civilizations.

And that is why in this southern factory, by respecting nature and beauty within the limits of our abilities, we have intended to respect the man who will enter here. For many years, he will find among these walls, windows and vistas a little something that he may not notice, but that will weigh on his soul. When we come to work every day between the walls of this factory, among the machines, the work stations and other men, to produce something that we see move out into the streets of the world, returning to us in the form of a salary that in turn becomes bread, wine and a home, we participate in the pulsating life of the factory. We end up loving the factory; we grow

fond of it, and it is only then that it becomes truly ours. Our work slowly becomes part of our soul; it therefore becomes an immense spiritual force.

If the material and moral groundwork of our goals is maintained, then one day this factory will take part in a new and authentic civilization for a freer, happier and more self-conscious development of the human person.

This is the highest wish that I can express today in speaking, for the first time, with our workers in Pozzuoli. It is my hope that for many long years God will protect their principled and intelligent labor, so that it may shine with serene joy on their homes and on their cherished families.

Today, a Saturday of spring, we consecrate this factory—fruit of everyone's labor—with a cheerful ceremony. It is a day of celebration for Ivrea and for Pozzuoli, as it is for Turin and Massa, where the other factories are.

And we could call this celebration the celebration of friendship between North and South, the celebration of brotherly understanding between workers and bosses. This factory inaugurates a new era in the restoration of the Mezzogiorno. Here, Northern industry has demonstrated its awareness of the thousand-year-old problem of the South, and it has started to move, with dignity and human respect, toward a solution.

In the coming years, we will certainly need many other operations, many other initiatives and many other plans if we want the economic unity of the Mezzogiorno to become the indispensable groundwork for the moral unity of our Fatherland.

We will continue to work in this direction, enriching this factory and its initiatives year after year. In our plans, this factory is destined to grow larger when we add new models to the current production lines.

The revolution of Italian unification was interrupted when political unity failed to produce a true moral and material unity between North and South. In these years, that revolution is finally coming to a close. A new spattering of public works covers the peninsula, and a concrete hope of renewal is opening up for all Italians. Thanks to this factory, we too can be proud of having contributed, within the limits of our abilities, to such a joyful reawakening.

And so, we can conclude by saying that the Pozzuoli factory is—at least for us—much more than a capable and efficient instrument of production. It is a symbol of our belief in a certain way of confronting today's problems. It is a symbol of the things that challenge us, that animate us and that comfort us.

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