The Decentralized Monument:
Marching Away from Piazza Venezia

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The role of architecture in the production of political propaganda is not so phenomenally transparent. While monumental architecture clearly serves the will of its patrons by physically dominating the public realm in which it is placed, the literalness of its message remains much more opaque and open to interpretation. Instead, the true propagandistic value of architecture lies in its complete integration into the bureaucracy of the state, which moves from its practitioners to its very users. This, and not some aesthetic assessment of the architectural form itself, is what I consider to be the benchmark from which to view architecture's role in political propaganda.

The pull of a monument on the imagination of a people is only so strong as the immediacy of its message: a monument's relevancy remains linked to the nation's popular culture. But

Fig. 1. View of Piazza Venezia and the Monument to Vittorio Emanuele II, circa 1932. Reproduced from D.Manacorda, R. Tamassia Il Piccone del Regime *(Rome: Armando Curcio, 1985), 131.*

over the course of the early 20th century, as my research here demonstrates, the monument as domineering symbol of the state gradually lost ground to newer forms of architecture moving into increasingly peripheral landscapes. The modern state was driven to assert its public presence in precisely those areas where tradition and memory were least present. In Italy, within just five years of fascist rule, the Regime's ceremonial culture transformed the style of public rituals permanently altering the way the modern urban environment was perceived and engaged. The shift from the city's hallowed backdrops and into the newest urban neighborhoods growing on the city's periphery reflected profound transformations in the fascist social occupation of space.

This study focuses on the urban modernization of turn of the century Rome and the historically critical moment in the transformation of the mass spectacle. What emerges over the course of this period between 1919 and 1929 is a Fascist styled political spectacle that gradually shifted away from the familiar and traditional urban landscapes and moved to occupy the austere modern residential neighborhoods rising on the periphery of the Italian capital. The architectural protagonist in this particular history was the Tomb to the "Unknown Soldier," set into the colossal monument dedicated to King Vittorio Emanuele II in the heart of the ancient city. The guardians of this monument were Italy's honored war Veteran's. The Veterans resisted Fascist overtures that would have compromised the national monument's unifying symbolism. The Fascist party was forced to find alternative sites to stage their political rituals, gradually leading to the development of a new style of spectacle fragmented into themed episodes and spread into the decentered landscapes on the margins of the capital.

What exactly would have driven Mussolini to abandon the very symbols of nationalism that were so closely associated with the historic city centers for the newly inhabited neighborhoods arising on the city's peripheries? The Futurists, who had aggressively advocated the radical dismemberment of past monuments, had lost credence within fascist political circles since the Regime's rise to power. And the Italian rationalist movement, a late comer with respect to Fascism's first wave, had barely recognized in their work aspects of new social housing theories that in Northern Europe were considered part of the progressive architectural discourse and had come into their own during the twenties.[1]

What then led the Fascists, already by the mid twenties, to forgo traditional urban forms of public procession and assembly and scatter into the stark and denuded environments of modernity? Unlike the case of Nazi Germany where the reassuring context of traditional cityscapes and historically laden landmarks were elevated to metaphysical prominence, in Italy the Fascists moved to occupy and spectacularize an architecture stripped of historic symbolism rising along the city's growing periphery.

While mass political rallies were increasingly common by the early twenties, modern propaganda techniques were still in their infancy with the printed press leading the way over other forms of communications such as film and radio. And while so much has been written on the power of the mass propaganda ritual in the service of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, very little of this same literature examines in detail how such events actually became the basis for the highly regulated and fully orchestrated spectacles growing more frequent in appearance by the late twenties. Could these rituals have evolved independently according to their own logic and manner of progression or were they inextricably linked to broader developments transforming Italian society?

Fig. 2. View of a "...modern Street in the Quartiere Italia," in the mid 1930s. Reproduced from G. Ceroni Roma *(Rome: Fratelli Palombi, 1942) Table XXIX.*

The development of the fascist mass ritual in the first decade after the Great War evolved within the interstices of a public realm increasingly manipulated by the persistent efforts of a diverse group of fascist leaders. Yearly anniversaries, commemorations and festivals grew by redundant practice, but the fascist spectacle by the late twenties had spread well beyond the standard canon of contemporary ritual references. The many disparate elements of Italian culture representing the broad spectrum of the population, from political societies to leisure associations, were gradually interwoven into a single centralizing fabric that could be wrung at will into a single cloth.

The more these groups were integrated into a centralized political hierarchy, the more they could be brought together in relative conformity. Conversely, the stage for the mass ritual could slowly forgo its monodimensionality—no longer fixed by a single processional narrative and climax—and expand into multiple arenas exploiting a wealth of new urban and architectural typologies. In other words, the growth of the centralized state under Fascism permitted the manipulation of organized groups into many concurrent activities synchronized around different parts of the city. The formula created the perception that Fascism penetrated deep into daily society.

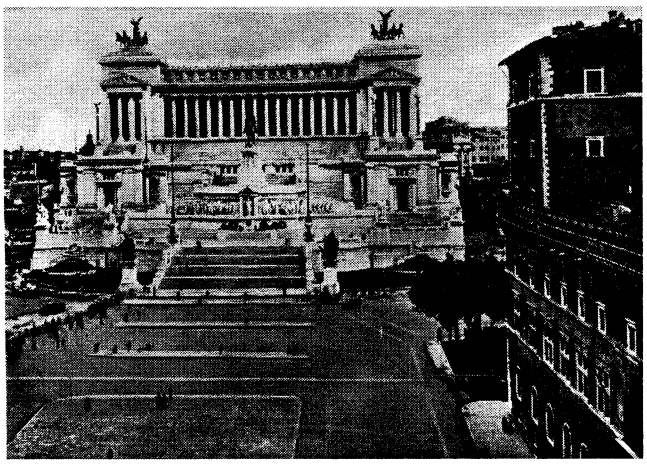

Fig. 3. View of the Monument to Vittorio Emanuele II before 1932, when the medieval era residential area below and to the right was cleared. The Capitoline Hill is seen behind the monument. Reproduced from L'Italia fascista in cammino *(Rome: LUCE, 1932), 205.*

The modern mass propaganda spectacle evolved through a combination of circumstances that were as unpredictable as they were at times irreversible. The objective of my research is to give definition to this mass phenomenon, to track in a sense, the moment in which the modern spectacle sprang into life. Such a definition is critical precisely because sufficient changes occurred in the spatial-temporal staging of the mass spectacle to clearly distinguish it from its antecedents. Until now the tendency to view the mass propaganda spectacle as a limpid symbol of Fascism's hold on its mass constituency implied the ascendant role of a powerful nationalist secular religion. But such a secular religion would have had to overcome Italy's fractious body politic, where no single national symbol held sway over the peninsula. When such a monument did eventually appear on Rome's horizon, it floundered for quite some time before it assumed its place as custodian of the capital. This paper presents the history of the King's monument and its strange role in dispersing nationalist rituals, causing the Fascist party to migrate into unclaimed areas going up outside the capital. In time, the Regime successfully substituted the King's monument, the Vittoriano, with a series of decentralized sites. This pattern of marginalization, I believe, was the beginning of the phenomenon that has come to dominate today's fragmentary anti-monumental landscapes.

Following King Vittorio Emanuele II's death in 1878, the Municipality of Rome decided to dedicate a commemorative monument to the King inside the capital. The project, in the

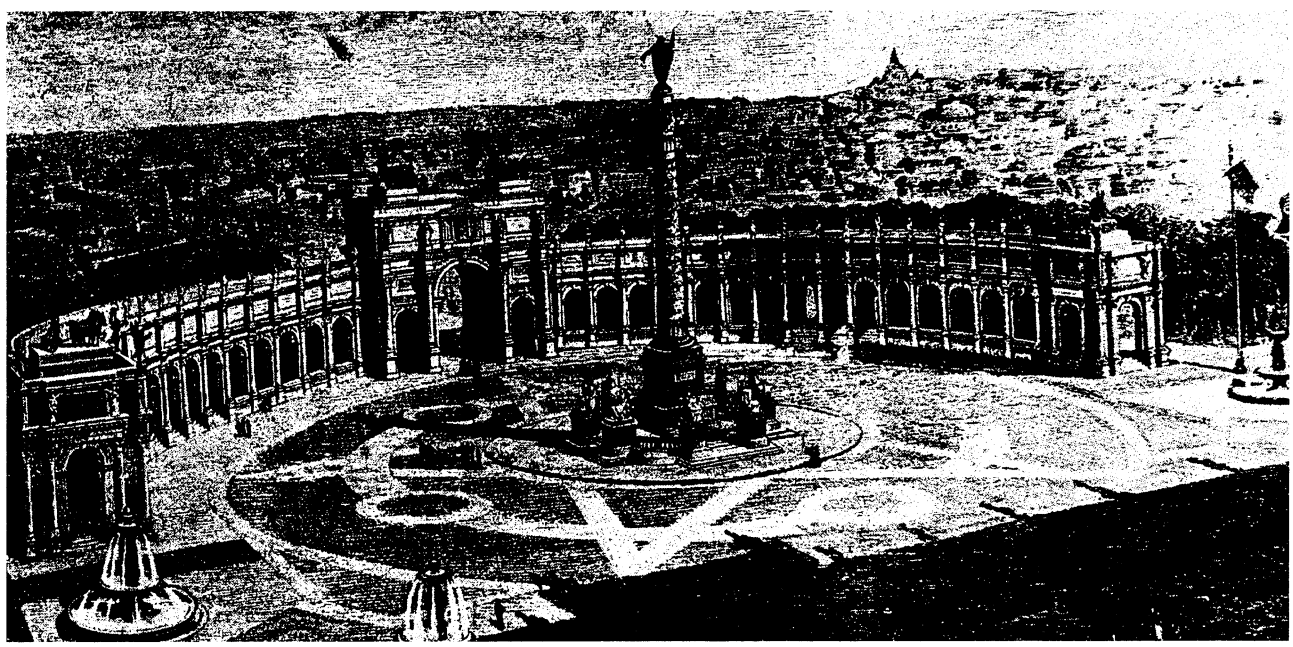

Fig. 4. First competition entry by Nenot, located at the then Piazza Esedra now Piazza Republica. Reproduced from D.Manacorda, R. Tamassia Il Piccone del Regime *(Rome: Armando Curcio, 1985), 127.*

increasingly caustic spirit of Unification, caught the imagination of the parliament, which took upon itself the study and execution of the project.[2] The result was the creation of a special commission that operated like a national task force charged with investigating and defining the parameters of this unprecedented search for a national symbol.

After much public debate, the commission settled for a competition format with no restrictions on foreign participants. Of 293 entrants competing in the first round reviewed in 1882, 40 were foreign submissions.[3] The first competition, published September 23, 1880 and concluded March 31, 1882, was remarkable for setting so few formal constraints. Many of the competition entrants situated their design proposals in the newer districts around the Central Rail station, thus avoiding the heavy burden of working in the ancient center.[4] The award winning entry by the French architect P.H. Nenot, proposed for the site of the piazza Esedra, failed to garner sufficient public support, probably because the area was distant from the historical center.

A political decision by the President of the Council Depretis on September 13, 1882 unconditionally established the northwest slope of the Capitoline Hill for the site of the monumental project.[5] On the second round, the competition focused on the site chosen by Depretis and included a proviso for an equestrian sculpture against an architectural backdrop.[6] The site was located behind the then relatively small Piazza Venezia and back ended into the Medieval neighborhood around the Capitoline Hill, seat of Rome's Municipal government. On the other side of the Capitoline Hill stretched the great ruins of the Roman Fora, and beyond the amphitheater of Flavius, also known as the Coliseum.[7]

The site for the competition lay above the ancient Via Flaminia, the Roman consular road linking Rome to the north and connecting to the Via Sacra to the south. The Palazzetto Venezia, a Medieval courtyard palace, stood directly in front of the location blocking its direct approach. At the summit of the northern face of the hill stood the Torre Paolo III. Immediately to the east were the ruins of Trajan's Forum, which had been largely overlaid by a tight network of Medieval streets and houses. Only the famous column stood visible in a small piazza. The foundations of a viaduct, together with several underground tunnels dating back some 2000 years, crossed below the site. Besides the noted Cloisters of the Ara Coeli, along the

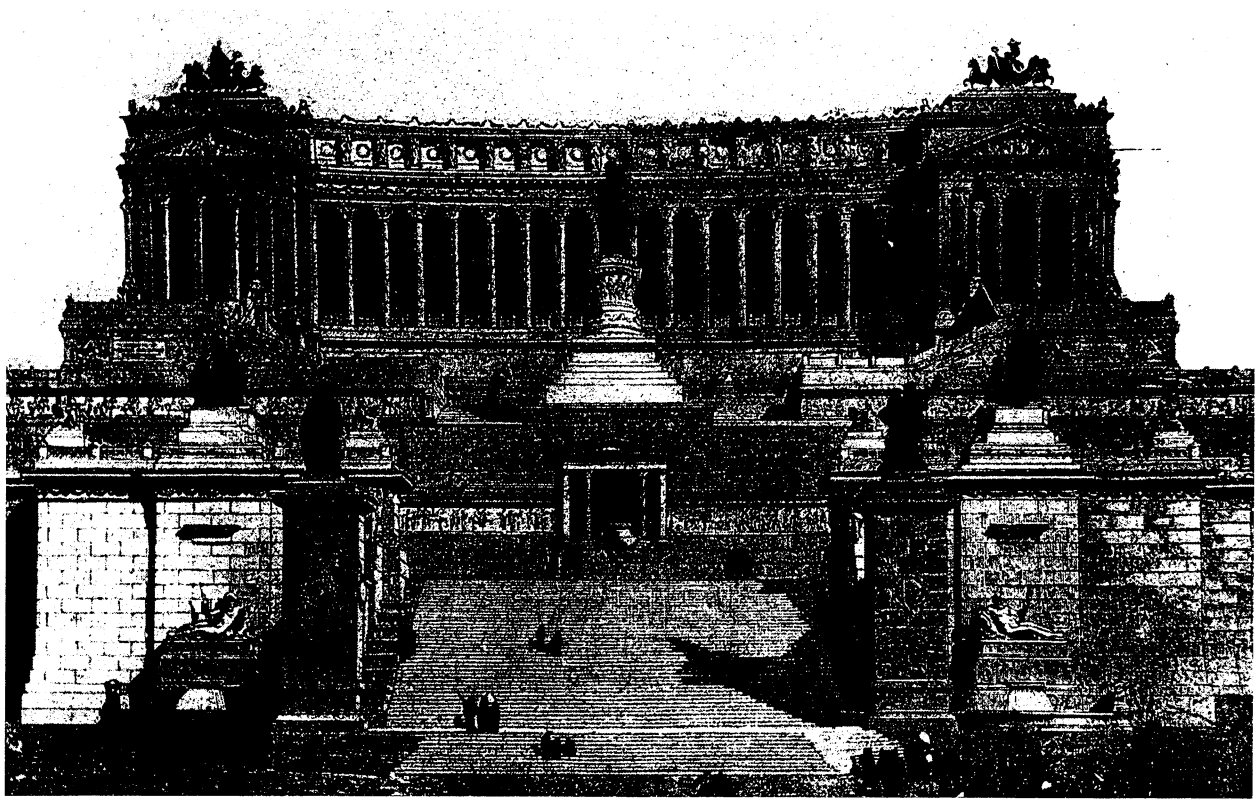

Fig. 5. Second competition, winning entry by Sacconi now located on Piazza Venezia. Reproduced from D.Manacorda, R. Tamassia Il Piccone del Regime *(Rome: Armando Curcio, 1985), 129.*

base of the hill were interspersed dozens of buildings and several small Baroque churches connected by a tight pattern of winding streets.[8]

The quality and creativity varied less than the first competition, but conversely the designs of the entries—predominantly by Italian architects—more closely resembled each other.[9] The winning design by Giuseppe Sacconi, awarded on June 26, 1884, borrowed generously from Beaux-Arts and Second Empire traditions.[10] The hybrid scheme was organized into three parts: a broad access stair ramp, a mid terrace with the King's equestrian statue, and projecting plinth surmounted by a horizontal portico. This last device featured an imperceptibly curved colonnade that was framed by flanking temple portals set in squat square towers. Each of these flanking portals supported a sculptural arrangement with a winged female figure leading a horse drawn chariot. The design for the Sacconi colonnade offered a neutral rhythmic backdrop to the King's equestrian statue.[11]

The monument grew incrementally over time, like a work in progress; changing more than once architect's hands and subject to a succession of works by a constantly updated roster of sculptors and artists.[12] Sacconi continued to modify the design and oversee the construction of the monument until his untimely death in 1905.[13] He was succeeded, after a year hiatus, by a new artistic and technical directorate, headed by Gaetano Koch, Manfredo Manfredi and Pio Piacentini.[14] The monument became a familiar sight over the years, as it grew to surpass the height of the Church of Ara Coeli, and as the architecture began to take shape amidst the debris from the surrounding neighborhood. Competitions were held to develop the monument's decorative features, continuing the process of allegorically rendering Italy's Risorgimento history.[15] The constant drum of competitions, juries, public exhibits, and the unveiling of completed works, assured the monument's place in the public eye.

But the monument also crept into the popular imagination through a number of periodic celebrations held throughout the course of its construction. Beginning anti-thetically with the burial of the King in the Pantheon in 1878, these newly conceived rituals gravitated to the monument. With time, the Vittoriano became an obligatory station for every political procession staged in Rome. With the presence of King Vittorio Emanuele II at the Pantheon, other more radical leaders of the Risorgimento were subsequently denied similar honors for their final resting-place. Garibaldi before the turn of the century, and the "Unknown Soldier" after World War I, were both excluded from entombment in the Hadrianic temple. The banishment of the more radical figures of the Risorgimento and the common hero to World War I had the effect of projecting popular sentiment elsewhere.

After the "Unknown Soldier" was denied the right to burial in the Pantheon in 1920, the national monument to Vittorio Emanuele II became the only logical alternative. The absence of the King's body and the subsequent replacement with that of the "Unknown Soldier's" dramatically transformed the monument into Italy's most popular national pilgrimage sites. The monument from then on would be popularly referred to as the Altar to the Fatherland.

As long as the Vittoriano remained without the body of the King, the monument remained a sterile architectural symbol in the city's landscape. But the underclass status of the "Unknown Soldier," considered undeserving of his due resting-place in the Pantheon, was instead given a crypt in the largest and most visible structure being completed in Rome at the time. This historical *slippage*, where the corporeal presence of the King was exchanged for one of his subjects, really an unpremeditated act of chance, had a staggering effect on the monument's future symbolic message.

The capital's urban destiny was sealed with the almost haphazard placement of the monument to King Vittorio Emanuele II at the end of the city's central axis at the dead end of the most ancient and sacred of Rome's archaeological districts. Had this symbol ended up as originally planned adjacent to the modern train station, than it would be rather easy to predict that the city would have continued to develop according to a polycentric pattern of growth. There would not have been the surcharged concentration of ancient and Risorgimento landmarks jammed against the Capitoline Hill. Nor would this monument have mustered the massive popularity it was to eventually engender, were it not for the choice to keep King Emanuele II's body in the Pantheon allowing for the "Unknown Soldier" to sweep up the attention.

The commemoration of the "Unknown Soldier," which the historian Vito Labita noted was characterized in the press like some epic chanson,[16] took the government and public by surprise. Clearly, as George Mosse observed, the cult of the soldier fallen in battle became the central element in the building of a secular nationalist religion, and in the immediate aftermath of World War I the trend towards the sacrilization of the "Unknown Soldier" was to have an enormous impact on the popular imagination.[17] According to Mosse "...at the end of the war, there flourished a new understanding of the fact that a democratic era had been born, an era of mass politics, in which the symbols of the nation had to (if one wanted them to work) attract popular attention and enthusiasm." "In the end..." Mosse noted, "...all nations made of the Tomb of the 'Unknown Soldier' a convenient central location for the cult of the fallen."[18] Such a trend crossed through Italy's parliamentary culture, penetrating the extreme nationalist groups as well: D'Annunzio's Fiume legions, and Mussolini's squadristi were all moving down the same path of mystical exaltation of the war and its human sacrifices. Catholics and socialists were also swept into the event, despite contradictory admonitions coming from their respective leaderships.

The honoring of the "Unknown Soldier" at the monument for Vittorio Emanuele II on November 4, 1922, became the first test of the new Fascist government's prodigiously honed propaganda skills. The commemoration on the steps of the monument was to be the first official public appearance for Mussolini's newly formed administration. The solemn occasion became an opportunity for Mussolini to demonstrate publicly the degree of

continuity between the past and the present, while setting the future style for his government. As the supreme national symbol, the Altar to the Fatherland belonged to patriots on both sides of the social divide: with Mussolini's assent up the steps of the Altar on November 4, the monument presented itself as the first set piece to symbolically legitimize the Fascist era.

The first celebration of the "March on Rome" with its finale staged at the monument to King Vittorio Emanuele II, succeeded in establishing a series of ritual precedents that would shape the future style of the Fascist anniversary rituals. The demonstrations were sufficiently spontaneous, the city and its monuments were still accessible, and the altercations remained minimal. But in the Spring of 1924 the Matteotti assassination sent a chill through Italian society that the Fascist party would never quite be able to heal. Veteran associations that had turned out in large numbers for the March in 1923, withdrew from the scene the next year. Student protests would become more bitter and violent. The form of the anniversary March itself would be questioned, making it far more difficult in 1924 to create a popular illusion of national consensus behind the Fascist state.

The retelling of the history of Fascism became ever more critical to the process of regaining legitimacy for the Fascist party. The party had to find a way to reconstitute itself in the face of growing public hostility. The celebration was revamped in 1924, while public security issues dominated the preparations. Mussolini's omissions from his program for a formal Fascist cortège to the monument of Vittorio Emanuele II, on the 31st, altered the very conception of the 1924 anniversary ritual.[19] For one, the absence of the monument to Vittorio Emanuele II in the March celebration substantially weakened the processional character of the event in the capital. From as early as 1921 the monument was the highest patriotic symbol in the rituals connected to the Fascist congresses and reunions held in the capital.[20] The lost association between the Altar to the Fatherland and Fascism, in 1924 however, diminished the symbolism of the event, creating a real physical vacuum in the progression of the ritual. The veterans' associations in this period between 1924 and 1925 solidly challenged Fascism's dominance over the most sacred of national monuments. To the national leaders of the veterans' associations, the annual celebration of the "March on Rome" lost any perceived expression of populist sentiment that had marked the 1923 event.

Without the use of the monument, the next year's anniversary celebration spread beyond Piazza del Popolo. The afternoon cortège planned for that day looped around the monument to Vittorio Emanuele II, never quite integrating this dominant symbol of Italian nationalism into its ceremonial march. Nor did the other events planned in Rome on the 31st come any closer to the Altar to the Fatherland. Instead, one of the most important rituals to gain national prominence in 1925 was the propaganda effort surrounding the Regime's public construction projects,[21] while the day's mass assemblies were planned around the national stadium and the huge hippodrome at Villa Glori at the city's northern outskirts.

The Fascist Party ordered that representations of the *littorio*, the Roman style fasces and other prominent Fascist icons be appended to all projects completed by the party and its local chapters.[22] The pervasive use of the littorio thus became an increasingly visible element in the composition of Fascist space from 1925 on. Just as significantly, the Fascist icon became a subtle symbol cropping into photographic images published in the daily papers, appearing in the scenic backdrops of photos and motion pictures conveying the public spaces behind the Fascist rituals.[23]

The choice to move the main events here in 1925 is significant precisely because the fascist organizers recognized the need to develop an alternative site to Piazza Venezia, and therefore targeted the one district that could best handle a large influx of both troops and public spectators. Easy access to the area actually brought far more spectators into the area than had been originally anticipated by the event's organizers.

Mussolini's persona could not will the people to piazza Venezia any more than a plethora of secular rites dedicated to Italian nationalism could urge crowds into the surrounding streets. To the contrary, each fascist rite or demonstration sought to compromise individual liberties or suppress spontaneous public reaction. The party's political setbacks were resisted through direct confrontation but also by compromised reactions. When the fascist spectacle was prevented from marching forward, it moved around into the marginal areas of the public realm. The constant pattern of dispersion, decentralization and peripheralization of the movement through the twenties established a fragmented fascist identity.

The very multiplicity of events and spaces only seems to have strengthened the fascist public spectacle, however, as each minor episode was rewoven into a much larger fabric of events. By 1929 fascist propaganda could represent the state *as* public society. Maternal wards, highways, factories, subsidized garden residences, but also youth brigades, athletes, workers, secretaries and soldiers were all integrated into mix of dedications, demonstrations and rallies taking place throughout the country.

The task of inventing new forms of public rituals proved frequently difficult to accomplish. The Veterans sequestered from the fascists the use of the tomb of the "Unknown Soldier." But such a setback, to the contrary, succeeded in inspiring the fascist leadership to discover more creative counter-responses for their anniversary programs. Mussolini's cadre of political advisors and propagandists worked diligently to conquer alternative public venues, spreading the celebration's activities into previously uncharted terrains. As the government became more repressive, closing down unregulated meeting clubs and political societies, Catholic associations and Socialist union halls, it moved to organize youth groups and after work organizations introducing political indoctrination, leisure activities and athletics. The state gradually recognized the importance of targeting the country's streets and piazze, playing fields and theaters, parks and cinemas with increasingly intrusive propaganda events.

By 1929, the March had settled into a different pattern of

rituals, dedicating a portion of its annual spectacle to empirical demonstrations exemplified through public works projects and demographic accomplishments. The nature of the celebration had clearly been transformed by the very marginality of its chosen locations. By 1929 the celebration included larger numbers of participants drawn from ever-greater distances beyond the capital. Space was found for the March celebrations in the great expanses of terrain located in the city's periphery. Far from the capital's ancient center, the party organized massive assemblies of athletic teams and militia squadrons, youth groups and worker leagues. The celebration featured reviews and competitive events, staging rallies in the open fields and sports spectacles in the stadia. The general public was invited to participate on the sidelines, or join in the many small fairs and exhibitions temporarily set up in these eccentric districts.

By the 1930s the revered Altare della Fatherland containing the tomb to the "Unknown Soldier" reemerged as a landmark in the Fascist repertoire, but from now on the Vittoriano would be no more than one of many set-pieces in the day's list of scripted events. Mussolini, in relocating his offices from Palazzo Chigi to Palazzo Venezia in 1929, transferred the focus of public attention from Piazza della Colonna to Piazza Venezia. The momentum of the annual celebration would soon follow Mussolini to his favorite forecourt, but by then the essence of these spectacles no longer resembled those produced in the same location during the first years of Fascism's rule.

The key, then, to understanding the evolution of the mass propaganda spectacle is in the way the Fascist state insinuated itself in piecemeal fashion into the fabric of daily life, rather than through a focus on the fully evolved rituals themselves. This study on urban decentralization ultimately inspired me to formulate a new theory on the eccentric positioning of public place. I have found that the modern experience is contingent on the growth of a peripheral infrastructure, a condition that undermines traditional notions of urban form making. The decentralization of the Fascist spectacle, though lacking an explicitly intentionalist history, nonetheless explains the way the grand monuments were becoming perceived and engaged. The large-scale monument would no longer be necessary to capture an audience: other techniques were perfected that allowed a spectacle to be raised from far less centralized or dominant images. The public ritual and its attendant monuments could become far more mobile while becoming less dependent on the theatrical force evinced from exaggerated stage sets. Conversely, in today's society where the ephemeral has reached the heights of the monumental by way of a carnavalesque television media, the popular obsession with local ballparks and skyscrapers seems to reflect misplaced goals. But I am also skeptical of resistance to monuments through opposing monuments. The antidote to weighty symbolic dominance is the public's un-corralled free will.

ENDNOTES

1 Diane Ghirardo, "Italian Architects and Fascist Politics: An Evaluation of the Rationalist's Role in Regime Building," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* Volume XXXIX, Number 2, May 1980, 116. The social housing experiments conducted under the Weimar state evolved around the same time. The National Socialists were themselves far less committed to a singular stylistic expression than has been generally assumed, though the progressive architecture of the Weimar period was characterized as antithetical to the Nazi cause. See Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany 1918-1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 9.

2 A commission of 21 members, in addition to the Minister of Public Instruction and a delegate of the city Municipality, was assembled to deliberate on the nature of a future monument. Depretis, a respected politician of the Italian left who held top ministerial power for much of the six years during which the project was being formulated, was the backbone of the project. It took two years, according to Catherine Brice, to decide on a program, but the commission's first choice, to build a triumphal arch at the Piazza Esedra, was met with quick resistance from the local artistic community. The Regal Law of July 25 1880 authorized the creation of the competition. At the heart of the project was the search for a "national style," which fell to the judges appointed by Regal decree. Catherine Brice, "L'Immaginario della Terza Roma" *Il Vittoriano* Vol. 1, ed., Pier Luigi Porzio (Rome: Fratelli Palombi 1986), 13.

3 Ibid., 14.

4 Citing Catherine Brice, of 96 projects, 45 were placed at the Piazza Termini next to the Rail Station, 17 at Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II (part of the Piedmont inspired urban park behind the station), 7 at the Pincio (behind the Piazza del Popolo), 5 at the Capitoline Hill, and 5 at Prati (the new area being developed behind the Vatican). Ibid.

5 Tobia, "Il Vittoriano," *Luoghi della Memoria* M. Isnenghi ed., (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1996), 247.

6 Depretis imposed the Capitoline Hill in part to avoid having that area targeted by political extremists who might have chosen to erect memorials to Mazzini or Garibaldi there. Fraticelli, *Roma* 110.

7 According to Bruno Tobia, the shift from the overwhelmingly favored site at the Rail Station evident in the first competition's proposals to the ancient area of Rome at Piazza Venezia, subverted the inherent modernist direction to the city's development. This may be true, but the monument's final location nonetheless spurred the area's renovation. The second site for the monument would inevitably stimulate the modernization of the adjacent quarters and initiate the push towards the south, at great expense, of course, to the existing neighborhood. Tobia, "*Vittoriano*," 249.

8 As indicated in Rodolfo Lanciani's ancient plans of Rome drawn between 1893 and 1901. Reprinted in *Forma Urbis Romae* (Rome: Quasar, 1989) plate XXII. The Pianta di Roma, colle linee delle

Tramvie e degli Omnibus published circa 1925, by Enrico Verdisi, is used here for contemporary street references.

[9] Catherine Brice, who analyzed the patterns of Risorgimento symbolism evident in the entrant's compositions, theorized that this was in part due to the participants' over reaction to the severe criticism meted out by both the press and art historians over what they considered were the poor stylistic choices submitted. But the second competition's lack of creative diversity may have also been the result, according to Brice, of a gradual approximation of what would become a growing consensus on Risorgimento iconography. Among the popular eclectic expressions ranging from neo-Gothic to Liberty, the neo-classical style predominated Catherine Brice, "L'Immaginario della Terza Roma," 21.

[10] Renato Tamassia noted that the Pergamon Altar had been unearthed and reconstructed in Berlin in these same years, though he also suggests antecedents in Greek and Etruscan-Roman ceramic work. R. Tamassia. "Miti e realtà dell'archeologia dal 1870 al 1945" in Il Piccone del Regime, ed.s D. Manacorda and R. Tamassia, (Rome: Curcio, 1985), 134.

[11] It is interesting to compare F. Ferrari and P. Piacentini's entry with Sacconi's awarded entry for the second competition. These two examples share several characteristics, such as the tripartite terracing and the placement of the equestrian statue, but the Ferrari/ Piacentini entry features a central temple aedicula at the upper portico. Their design appears forced, distracting the view. See Fig. 9, Catherine Brice, "L'immaginario della Terza Roma," 24.

[12] The Vittoriano, according to Bruno Tobia, went through many compositional transformations, but sometimes these transformations were marked by works being dropped out. "Il Vittoriano" in *Luoghi* 251.

[13] In 1890 Sacconi eliminated the two fountains either side of the first stair and added in their place two parallel stair ramps. (the stair ascending from the rear of the base of the King's equestrian stature, originally broken by a wide landing surrounded by a three sided stair was redesigned into a "T" shaped stair ramp.) Sacconi also reduced the presence of illustrious Italians first included in the composition: these, he claimed, were shown to win the support of an egotistical Parliament, but Sacconi later preferred to feature allegorical reliefs instead. cit. in Pier Luigi Porzio, "La Forma architettonica del Vittoriano nei disegni e nei modelli della fabrica" *Il Vittoriano* 58.

[14] The monument represented contemporary Italy's supreme expression in creative talent. Derided by later modernist critics, the work fell out of favor. In an attempt to reevaluate the role of the monument in the context of Italian Risorgimento architecture, Alberto M. Racheli contested critics who dismissed the work outright. Among these, Racheli cited H.R. Hitchcock, who considered the monument a revelation of the sum total decadence of Europe, similar only to the Bruxelles Palace of Justice by Poelart built 20 years earlier. Architecture of the 18 and 19 century cited in A.M. Racheli "Un Monumento nella Città" in *Il Vittoriano* 27.

[15] See Nicoletta Cardano's essay "Il Cavallo sull'Altare: storia del progetto iconografico attraverso il dibattito contemporaneo" *Il Vittoriano* Vol. II, 13.

[16] Vito Labita, "Il Milite Ignoto" in *Gli Occhi di Alessandro,* ed.s : S. Bertelli, C. Grottanelli, (Florence: Ponte alle Grazie, 1990) 143.

[17] George Mosse, *Le Guerre Mondiali. Dalla Tragedia al mito dei caduti* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1990), 7.

[18] Ibid.

[19] The cortège in 1923 began at the Piazza del Popolo, and wended its way to the Vittoriano, finally reaching the King's palace at the Quirinale.

[20] Bruno Tobia documented the number of times the image of the Altare della Fatherland appeared films beginning with first ceremony dedicated to the "Unknown Soldier" in 1921. The first high peak occurred in 1929, not altogether surprising when one realizes that the monument only reappeared in the Fascist ritual the year before. Tobia, *L'Altare della Patria* (Bologna: Il Mulino 1998), 89.

[21] On the 27th Mussolini inaugurated the Edda Mussolini anti-tubercular institute in the presence of local party officials. An inauguration was planned in Rome on October 31st for the ground breaking of the Rome-Ostia *autostrada. Il Messaggero*, 6-7, October 1925. 1. Other projects inaugurated in the four-day period were Garbatella, a subsidized garden city housing project, and a museum on the Capitoline Hill, dedicated to Mussolini.

[22] Photo illustration published in: *Il Messaggero*, 6-7 October 1925, 1.

[23] A more detailed study could be made on the frequency with which the fasces appeared in background images published in the daily and monthly press.