

The Role of Cultural Institutions and Events in the Marketing of Cities and Regions

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Dissonant historical heritage and the role of cultural institutions: the case of ATRIUM in Forlì

The search for a brand for a city or a region usually identifies a peculiar selling point, or rather, a particularity of the area which involves some element of uniqueness, a feature which cannot easily be copied by a competitor, some trait which is non-replicable and thus constitutes a cultural monopoly. Which city in the world can boast a heritage relating to St Francis comparable to that of Assisi? What other city in France can be so easily associated with ceramics as Limoges? The names of these cities themselves reveal their intrinsic market appeal. Other cities and areas are not so fortunate and have to search for local inhabitants or products which have in some way made their mark on the wider world but have an exclusive relation to the place. The case of the small town of Forlimpopoli, near Forlì in north-eastern Italy, is a good example. Home of Pellegrino Artusi, the author of what is considered to be the first Italian recipe book, *La scienza in cucina* ("The Science of Cooking"), Forlimpopoli has used this intrinsic cultural capital in order to make a small name for itself. The town boasts a documentation centre on Artusi and on cookery, "Casa Artusi", with a restaurant attached. Every year an "Artusi Prize" is given to luminaries in the area of food — including Vandana Shiva, Serge Latouche, il premio nobel Muhammad Yunus, and Oscar Farinetti, inventor of the Eataly brand. And for ten days in summer the town gives itself over to a gastronomic event in his name, the "Festa Artusiana." The challenge facing areas which are inexorably linked to negative characteristics, events or inhabitants is more complicated but in some cases unavoidable. How can Transylvania not market its links to Bram Stoker's fictional character Dracula, despite the negative connotations concerned? How can Predappio, a small town in the hills near Forlì avoid its fame as the birthplace of Italy's well-known twentieth-century dictator, Benito Mussolini? The situation of Predappio is further complicated by the fact that the town attracts a small but significant number of neo-fascists two or three times a year to visit

¹ The author was city councilor with responsibility for culture in the city of Forlì from 2009 to 2014.

Mussolini's grave². The question of how local institutions can deal with an uncomfortable or dissonant historical heritage such as this will be the principal focus of this paper, in relation to the city of Forlì.

Forlì does not have the family tomb of Mussolini but is nevertheless in many ways strongly related to the figure of the Duce. Mussolini spent his formative years there and, in the 1920s and 1930s repaid the area by transforming the city in terms of its architecture and urban design (Balzani, 1999). Forlì was not alone in experiencing a significant influence on its urban structure as Fascism sought to impose itself on the logistical, educational and administrative shape of Italian cities (Tramonti, 2014; Spiegel 2015)³. But given the special relationship between the city and Mussolini, it was Forlì which gained itself the name "la città del Duce" (Canali, 1999). In particular, leaving aside a number of new buildings in the city centre and a new sanatorium (now the hospital) built in the shapes of a tank, an aircraft and a warship (if looked at from above), the major innovation was a shift eastwards from the old city centre to an entirely new area of development. The city would be accessed from a new railway station building dominating a wide avenue which would end in another main square (to compete with the old one) and finally in an open-air amphitheatre (which, however, was never built). The reshaping of Forlì was accompanied by similar attempts to redesign other towns in the immediate area (Tramonti and Prati, 1999; Tramonti & Lucchi, 2010; Antonacci, 2014).

This new area of Forlì constitutes a major architectural and urban heritage from the Fascist period. But the city distinguished itself in the period 1943–45 for a number of important anti-fascist activities and thus this physical legacy has constituted for the city and its population an uncomfortable, dissonant heritage⁴. The dissonance of this physical heritage emerges most strongly with the presence of certain decorative elements, which highlight the contrast between the democratic present and the totalitarian past. Two examples may suffice. The first is a large black and white mosaic covering all sides of the square courtyard of the former aeronautical college, now a middle school, portraying the history of flight (see Sangiorgi, 2011). This history begins in the mythical Greek past with Icarus, ends with images glorifying the fascist bombing of Greece and Libya, and includes citations from Mussolini's speech on 10 June 1940 announcing Italy's entry into the war. The mosaic is thus a clear, explicit example of the propaganda of the Fascist regime. The second is the oath of loyalty of the young fascists in bold travertine letters on the tower of the fascist youth headquarters (GIL):

Nel nome di Dio e dell'Italia giuro di seguire gli ordini del DUCE e di servire con tutte le mie forze e, se necessario, con il mio sangue, la causa della Rivoluzione fascista. ("In the name of God and Italy I swear to follow the orders of the Duce and to serve with all my force and, if necessary, with my blood, the cause of the Fascist Revolution").

For a long time this heritage has lain dormant. Or rather, it has seen repeated interest on the part of architects and architectural historians, but has been avoided as a general heritage of the city. The left consensus which has been dominant in the city since

² See for example the interactive documentary on Predappio, *La Duce Vita* (<http://www.lemonde.fr/laducevita/#/prehome>)

³ Much Italian work has focused on the ideological or cultural aspects of architecture in the Fascist *ventennio*. For an approach which combines an emphasis on urban design and a European-wide perspective, see Bodenschatz, Sassi and Welch Guerra 2015. See also Melograni, 2008.

⁴ For dissonant heritage, see Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996.

1945 has been reluctant to recognize the important traces of fascism on the streets of the city. Or perhaps, the conflicts and inherent contradictions involved in a recognition (or worse, re-evaluation) of the impact of Fascism on the city landscape pose too many uncomfortable questions. In any case, this heritage may be seen as the crucial dilemma of the city of Forlì. Near to Rimini and Ravenna, branded internationally as a sea resort and the byzantine capital respectively, what could be Forlì's particular characteristic if not its uncomfortable twentieth-century architectural and urban heritage? Although this heritage is a dissonant one, Forlì can boast that it is one of the few medium-sized cities in Italy which has something to say in a clear and unequivocal manner about the early development of Fascism (Mussolini's origins in the area), its impact on the urban landscape (the new area of the city of Forlì) and its use of the most advanced architectural thinking and techniques (the examples of rationalism in particular in the work of Cesare Valle). A brand indeed, a difficult one but one which might capture the imaginations of a new generation for whom Fascism was to be rediscovered not as a viable political alternative but as a historical fact.

This is the background for the work of several cultural institutions which have been operating separately but broadly within the same framework around the possibility of projecting Forlì as a city with a story to tell about Fascism, about its urban and architectural history, and in a wider way about the road to "totalitarian modernity" followed by Italy and, indeed, other comparable regimes, both of right and left, both Fascist and Stalinist (Gentile, 2008). This work has resulted in the constitution of a European Cultural Route, ATRIUM (Architecture of Totalitarian Regimes in Europe's Urban memory) whose international office is in Forlì.

This work has involved contributions on the part of several different types of cultural institutions: the Forlì city council and its offshoot, the ATRIUM Association; a local cultural association with a particular political orientation, the Fondazione Lewin; another local cultural association made up of young architects, the Spazi Indecisi (Undecided Spaces); and the European Institute of Cultural Routes, the agency which implements the Council of Europe's cultural routes programme⁵. This paper will look in turn at these institutions in order to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their different approaches.

The City Council of Forlì and the ATRIUM Association

The principal agent behind the identification of the architecture of Fascism as a peculiar brand of the city of Forlì has been the city council itself. In particular, it has been the guiding force in the creation of three related areas of activity in this regard.

The first, chronologically, was the setting up of an ad hoc committee of the city council on Rationalist Architecture, a committee which was presided over by the city administration, with representatives from the majority and minority groups on the city council, from other towns nearby with a similar heritage (in particular Predappio and Castrocaro Terme e Terra del Sole), from the local Historical Institute of the Resistance, along with experts from the architecture departments of the University of Bologna (Cesena campus)

⁵ The focus here is on individual local and European institutions directly involved in the ATRIUM project and the ATRIUM cultural route. A separate issue is the support given to ATRIUM by a wide range of universities and research centres, as well as a number of distinguished academics in the fields of history of architecture, urban sociology, history and tourism studies. Both the original ATRIUM project and the current ATRIUM Association have benefitted enormously from the work of a number of universities as well as that of the two international scientific committees which have accompanied the project and the association.

and the University of Florence. It was thus a committee with a wide political and civil composition and indicated the opening up of a debate to other local authorities and to the universities. The inclusion of the Historical Institute of the Resistance should be noted: these institutes were set up in the immediate post-war period in order to assure a homogeneous and authoritative historical narrative of Fascism and of the resistance movement in Italy in the period 1943–1945, and in many ways represent the official left-leaning democratic historiographical consensus. Another element to note was the somewhat guarded (and indeed inaccurate) denomination: rationalist architecture, *strictu sensu*, only accounts for a small portion of the architecture of the Fascist *ventennio* in Forlì, but the term was useful perhaps in its avoidance of the specific historical reference. Any sense of a positive re-evaluation of the architecture of the regime, any sense of a weak theorization in terms of a legitimization of some of the activities of the regime without a strong critical historical framework was seen to be one of the principal dangers of the project.

The Committee met only four times, but was important in giving an informed and authoritative judgement on the nature of the restoration of the oath of the young fascists. The decision of the committee was to recommend the “consolidation of the state and the maintenance of the readability level in the form, in which it was found at the beginning of the restoration project in order to testify to the effects that time and history produced on the inscription.”⁶ In other words, the traces of the inscription were to be maintained in order to show both the original oath but also the iconoclastic act of 1943, the hacking off of the travertine letters by anti-fascists. In this way, there could be no negation of history, no negation of the original intention of the decoration to propagate Fascist ideology, as well as a reminder of local opposition to this in the early period of the resistance⁷. The latter, of course, needs further interpretation in order to be explicit and the local Historical Institute for the Resistance was given the task of drawing up a text, which could be located on a panel or plaque outside the building explaining and narrating these events.

The second area of activity was the decision to apply for European funding in order to establish a cultural route on the theme of the architecture of totalitarian regimes. The city council's international relations office prepared a bid for funding from the South East Europe programme which involved 18 different partners in 11 different countries aiming to create a basis for economic development through cultural tourism based on a commonality of experience of architecture and urban planning in totalitarian regimes. This was to include both examples of the imperial expansion of the Italian Fascist regime in the 1930s in Croatia, Albania and Greece, but also the inclusion of a comparative element with Stalinist or post-Stalinist architecture in countries under Soviet domination until the 1990s: the Slovak Republic (Bratislava), Slovenia (Ljubljana and Velenje), Bulgaria (Sofia and Dimitrovgrad), Bosnia-Herzegovina (Doboj), Romania (Iasi and Bucharest), Hungary (Gyor and Dunaujvaros), Serbia (Subotica) and, again, Albania (Tirana). The project, approved in December 2010 and implemented in the period 2011–2013, had as its major outputs a transnational survey of relevant architectural heritage in these cities (71 case studies), a *Manual of Wise Management* overseen by the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Ljubljana (Zupancic et al, 2013), and a dossier of candidature of ATRIUM as a European Cultural Route. The Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe approved the application on 11 April 2014 and ATRIUM became an officially recognized cultural route of the Council of Europe (Leech 2014).

⁶ Minutes of the meeting of the Comitato per l'Architettura Razionalista, 7 July 2011.

⁷ See statement the author speaking as city councillor, 10 November 2011, “Restauro della torre”.

The city council's international relations department oversaw the entire project as a Lead Partner and subsequently proposed Forlì as international headquarters of the association whose task would be to manage the cultural route. This association, the third public institution to work on the requalification of the city's twentieth century architectural heritage, is at present made up of 7 Italian towns or cities and 7 towns or cities in other countries⁸. The former are all in the Forlì area (with the exception of Tresigallo, a small town near Ferrara). The latter cover the principal cities already mentioned as part of the project, although several cities which were the object of the transnational survey have not as yet joined the association (for example, Bucharest, Bratislava, Gyor and Dunaujvaros). The Association oversees, with its Scientific Committee, the activities of the local members and represents the members at international level.

The first case of local institutions involved in an activity of developing a city through culture, then, is a public institution, the city government. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this institution as a driver in this field? The former clearly include a city council's position as a recognized authority and interlocutor at local and indeed international level. This status was crucial, for example, in terms of obtaining initial funding. The South East Europe programme operated within the overall context of Territorial Cooperation funding, and thus, while encouraging the involvement of civil society, is primarily concerned with channeling resources through local government institutions. As a vehicle for local development, territorial cooperation programmes are clearly of strategic importance as they involve funding of a considerable size: the financing of the ATRIUM project amounted to nearly €2 million distributed amongst the 18 partners over a two and a half year period. The authority of the city council was also important in obtaining recognition by the Council of Europe. The institution which advises the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, the European Institute of Cultural Routes (see below) was adamant in its advice to restrict the membership of the transnational Association to local government authorities, in order to limit the diversity and variety of members which, in their experience, can give rise to management and organizational difficulties relating to their different structures and missions. Although this effectively led to the exclusion of particularly active partners in the ATRIUM project (for example, the University of Ljubljana and the National Institute of Cultural Heritage of Bulgaria), it is likely that the Association will function better with an underlying homogeneity in terms of its members.

The weaknesses of the city council as a driver are those commonly related to public institutions. In Italy these include stringent restrictions on spending, and complicated and time-consuming procedures for the selection of private associations and enterprises to carry out services aimed at guaranteeing transparency and impartiality. Moreover, particularly (but not exclusively) in contemporary Italy, there is an increasingly strong and widespread distrust of and even antipathy towards public actors (and politicians in particular). This leads to relative weakness on the part of public institutions in terms of their legitimacy with the general public and thus limits their capacity to act as a real engine of public opinion. The weaknesses of the ATRIUM Association are related, in this start-up phase, to its reliance on public support. As a subject in private law but heavily dependent on public financing and with its headquarters in Italy, it inhabits a grey area in terms of spending restrictions: the limits on public spending do not officially apply but informed advice is that procedures similar to those of public institutions should be

⁸ See the website of the Association: www.atriumroute.eu.

followed in order to guarantee transparency and impartiality. The Association, moreover, has an autonomous budget made up only of members subscriptions (which amount to 10–15 000 euro a year) and thus is in most cases not eligible for European funding opportunities, which often require a stronger financial base.

The *Fondazione Lewin* and the ‘900 Fest

Part of the success of ATRIUM at the local level was the capacity of the city council to involve civil society in the organization of a series of cultural events in June 2013, which were to serve as “pilot events” for the activity of the forthcoming cultural route. Over the week of activities, around 35 local institutions and cultural associations organized conferences, films, concerts, exhibitions and other activity in the Forlì area. Amongst these cultural associations, two played a particularly significant role: the *Fondazione Lewin* (Lewin Foundation) and *Spazi Indecisi* (Undecided Spaces).

The *Fondazione Lewin* is a small but active political and cultural association based in Forlì which takes its name from one of the Jews caught and shot near the airport in Forlì in August 1944. As an association dedicated to remembering the Shoah, to fighting discrimination and racism and “keeping high the ideals of social justice, liberty and democracy” (the members see themselves in many ways as heirs of the non-communist left in Italy represented by the Justice and Liberty party of the Rosselli brothers, murdered in exile by Italian fascists in 1937), it is particularly concerned with the ways in which the Fascist legacy, so present in the city of Forlì, is dealt with [see the *Fondazione*’s web site: “*Fondazione Alfred Lewin*”]. This concern manifested recently itself in relation also to an important art exhibition in Forlì in 2013 organized by the local banking foundation which had as its object “900. Art and Life in Italy between the wars.” This was an exhibition which looked at the “Novecento” art movement, at the influence of the movement’s leading critic, Mussolini’s Jewish collaborator and lover, Margherita Sarfatti, and in general at the art and architecture of the regime (Mazzocca, 2013). The subject matter of the exhibition was an area in which it was easy to slide towards a somewhat apologetic stance towards Fascism, and easier still that democratic sensibilities would perceive such a slide, whether real or not. The discomfort of many of the local anti-fascist organizations in relation to the exhibition coalesced around an event organized by the *Fondazione Lewin* called “Forlì non è la città del Duce” (“Forlì is not the city of the Duce”), an explicit call to arms to those committed to an anti-fascist narrative of the city in the twentieth century (Saporetti, 2013). The importance of the event was twofold. First, it involved a wide group of local associations, ranging from the *Fondazione Lewin* itself to the Mazzini Association, Forlì Open City Association, the Historical Institute of the Resistance, the local branch of the Italian National Partisans Association and all the major trade unions — in all 17 local cultural associations. Second, the meeting subsequently gave rise to a project to hold an annual event involving many of these associations, which would reflect upon the twentieth-century totalitarian experience of Italy and Europe. In 2014, a ‘900 fest’, a week-long cultural festival of conferences and films on the subject of Fascism and totalitarianism was held, the particular focus being that of the relationship of the First World War to the rise of totalitarianism. This was to be followed in October 2015 with another conference on the theme of gender and totalitarianism.

We may say, then, that there is a diffused moment of reflection on the Fascist legacy in Forlì, with the parallel, intersecting but independent events such as the “900 Art and Life” exhibition, the local response of “Forlì is not the city of the Duce” and the ATRIUM project. The strength of the involvement of cultural associations, in this case the *Fondazi-*

one Lewin, is of course, in their local and sustainable nature. Real emanations of the perceptions and preoccupations of what is called the “territory” (local area) in Italy, they are vital to any long-lasting cultural development. Inherent in their strength in this regard is a corresponding weakness — a tendency to overstate the local and particular and to lose a larger perspective in the search for particular political or cultural positions, which of necessity need to be differentiated from the positions of other local actors in order to justify their existence. Thus the Fondazione Lewin, the Mazzini Foundation and the Forlì Open City Association may collaborate over one particular event but may on other occasions be very sure to mark their differences. This particular dialectic between different agents in local society is, I believe, highly characteristic of northern and central Italy (see Putnam, 1993).

Spazi Indecisi (*Undecided Spaces*)

It should be said that another weakness of the group of associations which coagulated around the Fondazione Lewin is a certain age weighting, or in other words a relative lack of young people involved. The Spazi Indecisi association, instead, is a group of young architects and designers whose interest in and collaboration with ATRIUM does not derive from the still highly-charged political and historical meanings of heritage but in the physical presence of buildings and urban spaces in the present which are disused or abandoned. Taking their cue from the Third Landscape theorized by Giles Clément, they are intent on exploring the potentialities of spaces and buildings, which have been discarded by contemporary society, places, which are neither untouched nature nor fully developed and functioning constructions of the present but rather spaces or buildings, which have been the object of development in the past but which now inhabit an no-man’s land between nature and the human world (see Spazi Indecisi web site: <http://www.spaziindecisi.it/>; Clément, 2005). The object of the association, then, goes beyond the specific interests of ATRIUM but given the extent of architectural and urban development under totalitarian regimes, the often uncomfortable relation of the democratic present to these areas and thus their consequent abandonment in many cases, there is an important area of overlap. Although in many cities the architectural and urban legacy of totalitarianism remains an important working element of the urban landscape, re-functionalised but often desemanticised, many of the buildings which more specifically recall their origins in a totalitarian past are now abandoned. Two well-known examples are the Buzludzha building in rural Bulgaria, an enormous folly built as the headquarters of the Bulgarian Communist Party but never used, and the Prora summer residential complex built by the Nazi regime for the workers and children of workers.

Spazi Indecisi, as part of activity promoted and financed by ATRIUM, launched a European competition called “Totally Lost” for photographs and videos of abandoned architecture of totalitarian regimes in the 11 countries covered by the original ATRIUM project. With little publicity apart from a canny use of social networks, an impressive number of photographs (nearly 2500) and over videos were sent in from around 200 photographers. The results were displayed in an exhibition in a disused transport depot dating from the 1930s in Forlì and later put on in Győr in Hungary and at the Architects’ Association in Luxembourg (see website: <http://www.totallylost.eu/what-is-totally-lost/>).

The strength of the involvement of this type of activity are clear, and relate to the expansion of the theme of ATRIUM to touch an area of particular interest to citizens in the early 21st century, that is, the restoration and revitalization of urban space. The activity of Spazi Indecisi dovetails with the explosion of the “Common Goods” movement in Italy

which has resulted in a number of city councils actively engaging with local citizens in common and shared planning for the re-utilization of hitherto abandoned areas of cities (see for example the website of the Labsus association: <http://www.labsus.org/category/beni-comuni/>). The interest of citizens, and young citizens in particular, in themes related to sustainability and reuse gives ATRIUM an important practical and non-ideological area of activity which, although not diminishing the political and historical concern, focuses attention importantly on present concerns. Spazi Indecisi attempts to map out and direct attention to a vast body of abandoned real estate in the Forlì area, in Italy and in Europe, to “patrimonializzare” (a useful Italian word indicating the process by which the present can look at and appropriate goods inherited from the past) inanimate spaces and buildings, to build a meaningful relation between these objects and the present, and this seems to have struck a particular chord in a new generation of Europeans whose concern is increasingly to explore the areas of sustainability and intergenerational responsibility. Interestingly, the association has tried to do this also through an alliance with contemporary art and theatre — exploring through contemporary cultural expression ways of bringing new life to un- or underutilized spaces in the present. Rejecting a philological approach, which begins with the uncovering of original meanings they focus instead on current meanings and then put these in relation to a past still to be discovered. The focus of the photographs and videos is resolutely “present-ist”, exploring the contours of the architecture in its present state. This approach also may avoid the pitfalls of nostalgia lurking in historicist or philological approaches, which have as their starting point the original design and execution, and which can easily move towards a lament for the fallen status of the object in the present.

The European Institute of Cultural Routes

Local activities in Forlì but also in the municipalities involved in the original ATRIUM project or in the association have as their fundamental starting point, then, a relation to the immediate locality and the meanings of cultural heritage within these localities. But the European dimension to the route and to this activity is also paramount. The comparative framework has helped the city of Forlì and others to consider their particular heritage not as an isolated and unusual local legacy but as a heritage shared by many other cities in Europe, and one that places it in a privileged position to bear witness to certain fundamental issues in the history of the European twentieth century. The support of the Council of Europe and its Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural routes, and, in particular, of the European Institute of Cultural Routes (EICR) based in Luxembourg, has been essential to the success of ATRIUM in a number of ways (Cultural Routes Management, 2015)⁹. First, the idea of the European cultural route as a direct output of the ATRIUM project was agreed with the institute, which chaired the international scientific committee, made up of five academics from the fields of the history of architecture, architecture history, urban sociology, history and tourism studies. Second, the Council of Europe gave the project an important political umbrella: the strategic priority of the Council of Europe to defend and promote rights as a fundamental aspect of the building of common European citizenship underpinned the clear and unequivocal cultural and political orientation of ATRIUM and gave it an undisputed legitimacy. Third, the present orientation of the EICR towards an increased attention to the tourist as well as the purely

⁹ In particular, ATRIUM has had the unqualified support of two directors of the European Institute of Cultural Routes, Michel Thomas-Penette and Penelope Denu, and of Eleonora Berti.

cultural elements of the route, also with a view to encouraging economic development through sustainable tourism, has provided a forward-looking and dynamic orientation towards the elaboration of a cultural tourism strategy, enabling ATRIUM to move beyond a purely cultural and historical perspective. The current orientation of the European cultural routes can be seen in the Baku declaration adopted at the International Forum for European Cultural routes in November 2014, which indicated four key priority areas all of which are pertinent to the development of ATRIUM: cultural routes as drivers for sustainable social and economic development, as educational tools for understanding past conflicts, easing tensions and promoting peaceful cohabitation, as guardians of Europe's memory and living history, and as vectors for intercultural dialogue (see <http://culture-routes.net/events/baku-forum>). As a support institution for ATRIUM, the strength of the European Institute for Cultural Routes clearly lies in its ability to provide access to highly prestigious European institutions, which, in turn, can open funding opportunities and avenues to future growth.

Institutions are not written in stone; rather they are formal and legitimized structures whose function is to attempt to give a lasting form to social and political practices. But whether in the form of highly legitimized and legally solid entities such as local governments, fragile local associations with little formalized structure or organizations such as the European Institute of Cultural Routes, which rely on the year-to-year support of superordinate European institutions such as the Council of Europe, the perception of heritage, the ways in which past objects with their associated meanings are perceived and interpreted in the present, inevitably pass through institutions in one way or another. Various institutions effectively provide pre-constituted spaces in which the often prickly and complex issues relating to the meanings of dissonant heritage such as the one in question can be discussed and negotiated by different stakeholders. The institutions discussed here clearly respond to different needs: that of developing and rebuilding areas of the city as well as launching a new tourist vocation (the city council); elaborating and promoting a particular vision of the local experience of the traumatic 20th century (the Fondazione Lewin); fostering awareness of issues of architectural and territorial sustainability (Spazi Indecisi); and the promotion and development of cultural routes as drivers of tourism and vehicles for the sense of European citizenship (the European Institute for Cultural Routes). ATRIUM, with its own mission, that of channelling and promoting different meanings relating to the physical legacy of totalitarian regimes on the streets of European cities, clearly needs to work with and through all these institutions. Only operating in this way, with the legitimacy provided by local authorities, the spontaneous and generous contribution of local associations and the overall orientation and guidance given by an institution with a European perspective, will a project such as ATRIUM flourish.

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