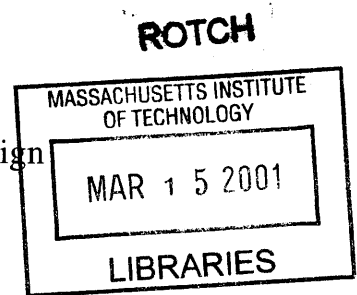


Mediterraneità and Modernità:
Architecture and Culture during the Period of Italian Colonization of North Africa

by

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Master of Science in Architecture and Building Design
Columbia University, 1986
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Abstract

This dissertation examines the intersection of the modern and the colonial in architecture and culture during the period of Italian colonization of North Africa from 1911 to 1943. Rather than see the colonies as merely a projection of the metropolitan context, this research reverses this relationship by examining how colonialism was crucial to the formation of modernity. The focus of this investigation has been the appropriation of indigenous Libyan constructions by Italian architects working in this region – an appropriation that was justified by the contention that this culture was Mediterranean. The incorporation of these vernacular buildings within a Mediterranean tradition was a means of designating their modernity. It was also a method for these architects to efface the Arab content of these sources by creating a broader geographical category whose identity was Italian.

This general theme has been structured around three distinct but interrelated topics of investigation, with the objective being to create a more complex understanding of this phenomenon. These topics are; the discourse on modernity in Italian architecture in magazines and publications and its intersection with the prospects for a modern colonial architecture, the "politics of representation" of the indigenous culture of Italy's colonies in exhibitions and fairs in Italy and abroad, and the formation of a Mediterranean identity in the creation of a tourist system in the Libyan colonies. This research has examined these themes against the broader cultural context of Italian colonialism; such as the "indigenous politics" of the Italian colonies, the exoticism of colonial literature, and the scientific practices of anthropological and ethnographic research.

This project ultimately reveals two different approaches to the appropriation of local culture by architects working in the Libyan colonies – both of which are modern. The first of these viewed the vernacular as the abstract basis for a contemporary architecture, while the second argued that these references should be literally re-enacted to harmonize with the pre-existing environment. This dissertation asserts that the conflicts and confluences between these two modernities characterized both the architecture of colonialism and the larger "cultural" project of the Italians in Libya.

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A particular socio-historical moment is never homogeneous, in fact, it is rich in contradictions. It acquires a "personality," it is a "moment" of development, by the fact that a certain fundamental activity of life prevails over others, and represents a historical "peak": but this presupposes a hierarchy, a contrast a struggle. One who represents this predominant activity, this historical "peak," should represent the given moment; but how should one who represents the other activities, the other elements be judged? Are these not also "representative"? And is not one who expresses "reactionary" and anachronistic elements also "representative" of the "moment"? Or should the one who expresses all of the forces and elements in contrast and struggle, that is, the one who represents the contradictions of the socio-historical whole be considered representative?

Antonio Gramsci, "Arte e lotta per una nuova civiltà," *Quaderno del carcere* 23, §3, 1934.

Contents

Abstract	5
Acknowledgments	6
Contents	11
Introduction	13
A. History of Italian Colonization in Africa	18
B. Literature on Modern Italian Architecture and Colonialism	30
C. Historical Method	40
D. Project Objectives	47
Part 1. Modern Italian Architecture and Colonialism	51
A. Carlo Enrico Rava and the "Svolta pericolosa" of Italian Rationalism	57
B. Carlo Enrico Rava and the Discourse for a Modern Colonial Architecture ..	121
Part 2. Italian Colonial Architecture and Representation	175
A. Italian Colonial Exhibitions and the Representation of Local Culture	181
B. The <i>Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli</i> and the Politics of Representation	233
Part 3. Colonial Architecture and Tourism	287
A. Tourism and Colonization	293
B. Italo Balbo and the "Valorization" of Tourism in Libya	340
C. Florestano Di Fausto and the Architecture of Tourism	391
Conclusion: Modernism, Colonialism and the Vernacular	439
Appendix A. List of Archives and Libraries	450
Bibliography	451
Illustrations	481
List of Illustrations	587

Introduction - Modernity and Colonialism in Italian Architecture

This dissertation examines the intersection of the modern and the colonial in architecture and culture during the period of Italian colonization of North Africa from 1911 to 1943. The primary focus for this investigation has been the appropriation of the forms and typologies of the indigenous Libyan constructions by Italian architects – an appropriation that was understood and justified by the contention that this culture was essentially Mediterranean. The incorporation of these vernacular constructions within a Mediterranean tradition was, on the one hand, a means of designating their modernity. It was also a method for these architects to erase the specifically Arab identity of the Libyan architectural traditions by creating a broader geographical category whose origins were asserted to be Italian. Through their identification as both modern and Italian, these vernacular constructions were thus rendered an acceptable basis for a modern architecture proper to the Fascist colonial project in North Africa.

The use of indigenous sources by Italian architects working in the Libyan colonies began in the late 1920s, when both the modernity of colonial architecture and its contextualism were raised as important issues by the local authorities. However, this tendency was merely the product of an already existing theoretical discourse in which "the vernacular" was constructed as a viable source of inspiration for Italian architects seeking to avoid historicist formulas. This conversation primarily took place in the pages of *Architettura e Arti Decorative* – a magazine which began publication in 1921. Under the direction of Gustavo Giovannoni and Marcello Piacentini, this journal proffered the concept of an *architettura minore* understood as both a repository for the distinctive character of individual cities and the basis for

contemporary architectural expression. Through the course of the 1920s the idea of a Mediterranean vernacular arose under various guises within this discourse. For some architects like Edwin Cerio, who was mayor of the Island of Capri during this period, it was a historical patrimony that needed to be defended against the forces of modern development. For others, like Giuseppe Capponi it was the direct model for a modern architecture. However, despite these differences, in all of these cases the indigenous architecture of the Italian coastal regions was believed to be the legitimate foundation for a contemporary national identity.¹

This Mediterranean discourse first appeared in the Italian colonies in 1929, which was the first year of the Governorship of Pietro Badoglio. These ideas surfaced within the context of a debate over the future development of the city of Tripoli, whose regulatory plan was in the midst of a preliminary examination. This was a period of considerable building activity in the Libyan colonies – an activity which benefited from the appointment of architect Alessandro Limongelli as *Consulente artistico* to the municipality of Tripoli and the participation of a number of well known Italian architects, like Piacentini and Alberto Alpago-Novello, Ottavio Cabiati and Guido Ferrazza, in government sponsored colonial projects.² The source of these theoretical speculations on the appropriation of the local vernacular was *Segretario Generale* of Tripolitania Maurizio Rava, who presented a report to the mayor of this city in September of that year. This document largely echoes the

¹ For a general discussion of the concept of a modern vernacular architecture in the 1920s in Italy, see: Richard Etlin, "A Modern Vernacular Architecture," in *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991), 129-61. In this discussion, Etlin examines the particular contribution to this discourse of Piacentini, Giovannoni and the journal *Architettura e Arti Decorative*. He also touches upon the various interpretations of a Mediterranean vernacular by architects like Cerio and Capponi.

² The development of the city of Tripoli is examined in: Marida Talamona, "Città europea e città araba in Tripolitania," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, ed. Giuliano Gresleri, Pier Giorgio Massaretti and Stefano Zagnoni (Venezia: Marsilio Editore, 1993), 242-77. Piacentini proposed the new Teatro Berenice in Bengasi of 1928-32 along with his assistant Luigi Piccinato. Alpago-Novello, Cabiati and Ferrazza were well known Milanese architects who began their study of the new regulatory plan for Benghazi in 1928. They also eventually developed a proposal for a new regulatory plan for Tripoli (1931-33).

sentiments of the earlier polemics for an *architettura minore* in *Architettura e Arti Decorative* by calling for the preservation of the characteristic qualities of the traditional city and oasis – a policy that Giovannoni referred to as *ambientismo*, or contextualism. These arguments were also profoundly influenced by the architect Carlo Enrico Rava, son of Maurizio, who was one of the most important polemicists for the architectural movement called Italian Rationalism. This report rejects the use of the Moorish style that had characterized this colony's early development, instead arguing for the appropriation of the local Arab vernacular. Due to the modernity of the appearance of these constructions and their careful adaptation to the climatic demands of the colonial environment they were deemed by the elder Rava to be a sound basis for a modern colonial architecture.³

The arguments contained in this report were merely the beginning of an exchange between architectural discourse in the metropolitan and colonial contexts that would continue over the next decade – an interaction in which the Libyan vernacular was offered as the legitimate foundation for a modern Italian architecture. The next instance of this Mediterranean discourse – or *mediterraneità* as it was referred to by architects and critics – was the publication of a series of articles by Carlo Enrico Rava in *Domus* magazine beginning in January of 1931. In these essays Rava critiqued the "intransigence" of contemporary Northern European tendencies in architecture, effectively distancing himself from the manifestoes he had authored in 1926-27 as a founding member of the Rationalist *Gruppo 7*. He argued that Italian architects should seek a more independent direction proper to their Latin cultural roots – a direction whose inspiration would be the vernacular architecture of the

³ Talamona provides a general outline of this report, arguing that Maurizio Rava "put the problem of the building development of Tripoli in the foreground." *Ibid.*, 270. This report was eventually published in several colonial journals under different titles, including: Maurizio Rava, "Dobbiamo rispettare il carattere dell'edilizia tripolina," *L'Oltremare* III, 11 (November 1929): 458-64.

Mediterranean region. In these essays Rava also asserted that a modern colonial architecture should follow a similar path, in this case basing itself upon the indigenous Libyan architecture. The appropriation of these vernacular sources was legitimized by the contention that they were essentially Mediterranean in their formal characteristics and Roman in their typological origins.⁴

This theorization of a modern rational architecture based on Mediterranean vernacular sources arose at a particularly contentious moment in architectural discourse in Italy. The essays of Rava were published around the time of the second *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale*, which opened in March of that year. This event, which was organized by the *Movimento Italiano per l'Architettura Razionale*, generated a considerable criticism of the work of these young architects, which was deemed to be under the sway of foreign influences.⁵ It was in this context that Rava, who did not participate in this exhibition, argued that a Mediterranean vernacular was the appropriate means of creating a national identity for modern architecture in Fascist Italy. For critics like Edoardo Persico, who was an ardent supporter of modern architecture, these arguments signified architecture's surrender to political demands. This *mediterraneità* of modern architecture eventually had a number of distinct trajectories through the course of the 1930s in Italy. For Rationalist architects like Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini, who participated in the magazine *Quadrante*, it signified a continuity with the Purist canons of the architecture of Le Corbusier. For the architect and critic Giuseppe Pagano, who was joint editor of *Casabella* magazine during this period, the sober functionalism of

⁴ For concise summary of the arguments provided by these writings by Rava, see: Fabrizio Brunetti, "L'idea di *mediterraneità* negli scritti di Carlo Enrico Rava e del gruppo di *Quadrante*," in *Architetti e fascismo* (Firenze: Alinea Editrice, 1993), 203-16.

⁵ For an examination of the *Movimento italiano per l'architettura razionale* and the two *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* (held in 1928 and 1931): see: Dennis Paul Doordan, *Architecture and Politics in Fascist Italy: Il Movimento Italiano per l'Architettura Razionale, 1928-1932* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1983).

vernacular forms was an important lesson for contemporary architects. This Mediterranean discourse also continued in the pages of Gio Ponti's *Domus* magazine in the late 1930s, where the *casa al mare* was a common theme in the work of architects like Ponti, Luigi Cosenza and Bernard Rudofsky.⁶

The *mediterraneità* of Rava also had a considerable influence on architectural discourse in Italy's North African colonies. By redefining the Libyan vernacular as both Mediterranean and Roman, he was providing an intellectual justification for the appropriation of these references by Italian architects working in the colonies. In using these forms, Italian architects were merely assimilating their own past and their own building traditions. Although the fusion of a metropolitan modernity with the indigenous architecture of this region became the dominant paradigm during this period, by the mid 1930s two distinct interpretations of this approach emerged. For Milanese Rationalist architect Giovanni Pellegrini, who published his own "Manifesto dell'architettura coloniale" in 1936, the Libyan vernacular was an abstract source of typological and technical solutions to the problem of constructing in the colonial environment. This specifically modernist discourse was countered by Florestano Di Fausto, who was the main architect of the municipality of Tripoli beginning in 1934. For Di Fausto, who was an architect of classical training and eclectic tendencies, these indigenous sources were direct models for a modern *ambientismo*.⁷

⁶ For a general discussion of the idea of a Mediterranean vernacular during the Fascist period, see: Silvia Danesi, "Aporie dell'architettura italiana in periodo fascista - mediterraneità e purismo," in *Il razionalismo e l'architettura in Italia durante il fascismo* (Milano: Electa Editrice, 1976), 21-26. In this essay, Danesi pays particular attention to the political connotations of the recourse of modern Italian architects to indigenous Mediterranean sources.

⁷ A general outline of the activities of Di Fausto and Pellegrini in Libya is provided in: Gian Paolo Consoli, "The Protagonists," *Rassegna* 51 (September 1992): 55, 58. The general context of the development of Tripoli in the later 1930s is discussed in: Talamona, "Città europea e città araba in Tripolitania," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 274-75.

The appropriation of vernacular sources by Italian architects working in the Libyan colonies was not merely the product of architectural discourse in Italy. It was also closely tied to the cultural politics of Italian colonization of North Africa. It was the direct consequence of a relatively systematic program developed by the Italian colonial authorities to preserve the indigenous culture of this region while at the same time fully integrating it, as Italy's "fourth shore," into metropolitan society – a promise that was largely achieved under the Governorship of Italo Balbo (1934-40). In the first case, the approach to governing the North African colonies practiced by the Italians called for religious tolerance, the preservation of Muslim historical sites and the support of indigenous artisanal and agricultural industries. In the second, a substantial effort was made to elevate the living conditions in the Libyan colonies to a metropolitan standard in preparation for a political and administrative integration into Italy. This modernization process was linked to a more general policy of using these colonial territories as outlets for excess population, thereby solving Italy's emigration problems.

A. History of Italian Colonization of Africa

The *politica indigena*, or indigenous politics, practiced in the Libyan colonies should itself be contextualized within the full historical development of the politics of the Italian colonial project. Although the first settlement in Africa was in the port of Assab on the Red Sea in 1869, it was not until over twenty years later that the newly unified Italian state would claim its first colonial possession. This delay was certainly not due to the lack of effort of groups of colonial enthusiasts like the *Società Geografica Italiana*, which agitated for Italy to join the "scramble for

Africa." Even after the loss of Tunisia to France in 1881, Italy did not participate in the conference in Berlin in which the major European powers agreed upon the division of Africa. It was not until the election of Francesco Crispi as Prime Minister in 1887 that the Italian government actively pursued a colonial policy. This initiative resulted in the consolidation of settlements in East Africa to form the colony of Eritrea in 1890 and Somalia in 1905. Notably, Crispi was also held responsible for one of the most humiliating chapters in Italian colonialism – the defeat of the Italians at Adowa in 1896 by the army of the Abyssinian Emperor Menelik.⁸

The two most influential arguments put forward by the early colonialist movement in Italy were that colonies in Africa would represent both an affirmation of the country's status among the great powers of Europe and a solution to its emigration problems. These views continued to have currency during the period leading up to the invasion of the Libyan colonies of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in 1911 – a military campaign that was preceded by some thirty years of economic and cultural penetration of this Ottoman territory. In the case of the North African colonies, these general assertions were joined by the popular belief that this region was part of Italy's "historic destiny." For Nationalist commentators and intellectuals like Enrico Corradini, Giosuè Carducci and Gabriele D'Annunzio the conquest of this region would recapture the glories of Italy's Roman past.⁹ Behind this imperialist

⁸ The so-called scramble for Africa began with a conference organized by Leopold of Belgium in 1876, which set up an "International organization for the Exploration and Civilization of Africa." Following the explorations of Stanley in Africa and those of a French explorer de Brazza, there was a great impetus to formalize already established treaties and make new agreements. This resulted in the conference in Berlin, held in November of 1884. For more detail, see: J.M. Roberts, "The beginning of Imperial rivalry, 1880-90," in *Europe 1880-1945*, Second Edition (New York: Longman Inc., 1989), 105-18. For information on the early Italian colonization of Africa, see: Martin Clark, *Italy 1871-1982* (New York: Longman Inc., 1984), 99-101. With regard to the battle at Adowa, Clark notes that Italy was the only European colonial power to lose to an African army.

⁹ For a general discussion of the issue of Italian colonization during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, see: Claudio Segrè, "Emigration and Empire in Liberal Italy," in *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), 3-19. Segrè notes that with regard to the Libyan conquest, a good deal of impetus was created by Nationalist political commentators like Corradini and poets like Carducci and D'Annunzio.

rhetoric, which viewed the remains of colonial towns like Leptis Magna as symbols of this destiny, the Italians also had a strategic aim in colonizing North Africa. With the British protectorate in Egypt and the French in Tunisia, the colonies of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica would provide Italy with a beachhead that would reinforce their presence in the Mediterranean. This tactical dimension to the Italian colonial project was revealed in the relatively swift response by Italy to the consolidation of French rule in Morocco in July of 1911. In October of that year, Italy began a year long military campaign against Ottoman and Libyan troops that resulted in the capturing of the most significant coastal enclaves like Tripoli, Benghazi, Derna and Misratah Marina. However, an initial peace treaty with the Ottomans in 1912 was followed by a turbulent period of guerrilla warfare, internal squabbling amongst the local leaders, and active resistance by the Libyan populations. The initial military accomplishments and successive gains were countered by a number of humiliating defeats, leaving the Italians in much the same position in 1921 that they were in 1912.¹⁰

The government of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica during this period was as unstable as Italy's rather tenuous foothold in these territories, with numerous different officials presiding over their administration in the first ten years of the Italian occupation. The form of government which the colonial authorities attempted to institute during this period was a collaborative one which relied on the cooperation of Muslim religious leaders. This structure was formalized with the passing of statutes in 1919 that created two separate parliaments in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica and conceded a number of rights to the Libyans, including the ability to claim Italian

¹⁰ A detailed account of the Libyan war and the initial years of colonial rule is provided in John Wright, "A Historic Destiny," and "The Years of Accord," in *Libya* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1969), 118-38, 139-46. In the first of these chapters, Wright notes that the Libyans were not swayed by the Italian propaganda that argued that they would be freed from Ottoman domination by Italy. For the most part the Libyans took up arms with the Ottomans against the Italians, one of the reasons being their shared religious beliefs.

citizenship.¹¹ These liberal gestures were both unsuccessful and short-lived. With the appointment of Count Giuseppe Volpi to the Governorship of Tripolitania in August of 1921, the approach taken to governing the colonies took a more authoritarian direction. Volpi ended what he called a politics of "humility, brotherhood and favors" by abolishing the parliament and employing a more strict and hierarchical handling of the local populations.¹² The political situation in Cyrenaica remained unchanged until after the rise to power of the Fascist government and subsequent appointment of General Luigi Bongiovanni as Governor in January of 1923.

It was with the Volpi administration in Tripolitania that a coherent *politica indigena* was initially developed for the governing of the Libyan colonies. The first ingredient of this politics was a firm political and military control of the colony – a policy that was intended to command the respect of the local populations. The most important aspect of Volpi's politics was a series of rather brutal military campaigns that were aimed at the "reconquest" of Tripolitania. These operations began in January of 1922 with the invasion of Misratah Marina, and resulted in the control of all of the coastal regions of this colony and some of the most strategic posts within the interior by the end of Volpi's Governorship in July of 1925.¹³ These military

¹¹ The statute for Tripolitania was passed by the Italian Government in June of 1919, with a similar one that applied to Cirenaica being approved in October. For a copy of the Tripolitanian statute, see: "Lo "statuto" concesso alla Tripolitania nel 1919," in *Il colonialismo italiano*, ed. Giorgio Rochat (Torino: Loescher Editore, 1973), 106-11.

¹² The exact statement is as follows: "The old politics of humility, of brotherhood, of favors, costly and empty, that fed the continuous alternations of revolts and submissions, true speculations on our weakness and ingenuousness, was substituted by a more sound politics, that reestablishing the prestige of the force and superiority of the dominant people through the action of the military and the provisions of the Government in all branches of commonweal, affirmed, in plain view, the effective sovereignty of Italy, the superiority of our kind, the indisputable right to govern, though respecting the local religion and customs." In "Tripolitania. Rapporto Gr.Uff. Niccoli e Governatore Volpi sulla situazione politica della Tripolitania." November 23, 1924. ACS-PCM 1924 17-4-3093.

¹³ For a more detailed account of the military campaigns in Tripolitania under Volpi, see: Sergio Romano, "Governatore in colonia. La guerra," in *Giuseppe Volpi. Industria e finanza tra Giolitti e Mussolini* (Milano: Bompiani, 1979), 102-12. These campaigns, which were led by General Rodolfo Graziani, were aimed at recapturing areas that were initially under Italian control and

activities were the necessary pretext for a program of modernization of the public infrastructure and improvement of the local economy of this colony. There was a considerable effort made to create a viable system of roads and public institutions that would serve both military and domestic needs. The improvement of the economy of Tripolitania was primarily linked to agriculture. To facilitate this initiative, the Volpi government enacted laws to allow for the claiming of all uncultivated land and provided incentives for private companies to develop agricultural estates.¹⁴ In addition to this modernization program, Volpi was committed to the preservation of the Roman and Muslim historical patrimony of this colony. This program involved the creation of a commission to study the buildings and objects of historic, artistic and archeological interest and the eventual restoration of many of these artifacts and monuments. The final component of this *politica indigena* was a series of policies that were aimed at the appeasement of the local populations. Although the Libyans had only a minor political role in Tripolitania under Volpi, they were given complete religious freedom, something which provided them with a measure of self-regulation. Volpi also created the *Ufficio Governativo delle Arte Applicate Indigene* as part of a program of enhancing Tripolitania's indigenous artisanal industries through the study and preservation of their traditions.¹⁵

then extending this military presence to the Libyan interior. By 1925 the town of Ghadames, some 800 kilometers south-west of Tripoli, was under military control.

¹⁴ For a detailed discussion of the policies with regard to land and agriculture, see Segrè, "The Volpi Era: Colonization and Capitalism," in *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya*, 47-56. In this discussion, Segrè notes that the Italian authorities argued that the claiming of uncultivated land was based upon Muslim law, which stated that any individual could use land for agriculture as long as it was cultivated – becoming public domain after three years of laying fallow. This rather questionable interpretation, along with the poor records kept by the Ottoman authorities allowed the Italians to claim almost all of the best agricultural land.

¹⁵ In November of 1921, Volpi created a commission of citizens and functionaries who were given the task of identifying the most significant buildings and objects of historic, artistic and archeological interest in Tripoli and environs. These identified buildings included Roman monuments like the Arch of Marcus Aurelius in Tripoli and Muslim religious buildings like the Mosque in Tajurah. For more information, see: Renato Bartoccini, "Gli edifici di interesse storico,

The policies developed by Volpi were extremely influential on the future governing of this colony. In fact, the accomplishments of his administration were documented in a commemorative volume entitled *La rinascità della Tripolitania* – a book which was fittingly presented to Benito Mussolini on his first visit to this colony in April of 1926. In Cyrenaica the situation was somewhat different due to a lack of resources and a more precarious relationship to the Libyan rebels. Although the Italian authorities pursued similar military objectives in this colony, with the gradual conquest of the coastal regions beginning in 1923, there was little economic activity and few public works initiatives. Cyrenaica also suffered from weak political leadership with the appointment to the Governorship of Generale Ernesto Mombelli in May of 1924 and Generale Attilio Teruzzi in November of 1926.¹⁶ In Tripolitania, the legacy of Volpi's policies were continued by *quadrumviro* General Emilio De Bono, who was appointed as Governor in July of 1925. One of the most significant accomplishments of the De Bono era was the beginning of a more conscious effort to communicate the activities of this colony to a metropolitan audience. This propaganda effort was symbolically initiated by Benito Mussolini's five day visit to Tripolitania – a voyage which the Duce stated was intended to give a "violent shake" to the sensibilities of Italians so that they would turn their attention to the colonies. Through a succession of highly staged ceremonies and rhetorical speeches,

artistico ed archeologico di Tripoli e dintorni," in *La rinascità della Tripolitania. Memorie e studi sui quattro anni di governo del Conte Giuseppe Volpi di Misurata* (Milano: Casa Editrice A. Mondadori, 1926), 350-52. Volpi created the *Ufficio Governativo delle Arte Applicate Indigene* in January of 1925 following a period of study of these industries by Francesco Rossi. The motivations behind this effort were both economic and political, creating an economy for the Libyans that was labor intensive and thus would keep them busy. For more information on this effort, see: Rossi, "Le Piccole industrie indigene," in *La rinascità della Tripolitania*, 513-19.

¹⁶ For a discussion of the military operations in Tripolitania and Cirenaica, see: Wright, "La riconquista," in *Libya*, 147-68. The rebels of the Sanussi sect, whose outpost was the desert oasis of Al-Jaghbug on the Egyptian border, were the most evasive throughout these military operations.

Mussolini was hoping to communicate the historical and contemporary value of this region and the political will of Italy to possess it.¹⁷

This prominent visit of Mussolini to Tripolitania was responsible for making colonial propaganda a new and important component of the *politica indigena* practiced by the Fascist authorities in the North African colonies and in Italy. Despite the existence of groups like the *Istituto Coloniale Italiano* (ICI), which was founded in 1906, there was a widely held belief during this period that Italy had not yet developed a *coscienza coloniale*. In order to address this absence, the *Ministero delle Colonie* formed an *Ufficio Studi* that was intended to handle matters related to research and propaganda. Immediately following this trip a number of new initiatives were undertaken including the organization of the first *Giornata Coloniale* by the *Istituto Coloniale Italiano* on April 21, 1926 – an annual event held in major Italian cities that celebrated the Italian colonies.¹⁸ Several prominent publications on colonial themes also emerged in the aftermath of this visit, including the previously

¹⁷ The term *quadrumviro* refers to the fact that De Bono, along with Mussolini, Italo Balbo and Michele Bianchi, were the four leaders of the March on Rome on October 28, 1922. It is also worth noting that De Bono, as head of the Public Security, was the main Fascist official to be accused and tried in the slaying of Socialist minister Matteotti in 1924. See Franco Fucci, *Emilio De Bono, il Maresciallo fucilato*. Milano: Mursia, 1989. Mussolini arrived in Tripolitania in April 11, 1926 and departed on April 15. He traveled from Zuwarah on the west, near the Tunisian border, to the archeological site at Leptis Magna on the east and south to the Gharyan, an area of agricultural development by the Italians. For more information on this visit, see: "La visita del Duce in Tripolitania nel 1926 e lo "Scossone" coloniale," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea. Anno XV. Orientamenti e note ad uso dei giornalisti* (1937), 1-11. Angelo Del Boca argues that Mussolini's motivations were both personal and rhetorical. He was interested in underscoring his interest in the region, including viewing the current activities in the agricultural development of Tripolitania. This message was certainly aimed at Italians, but most importantly they were intended to get the attention of the adjacent colonial powers of Britain and France. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi* (Roma-Bari: Guis. Laterza & Figli, 1991), 83.

¹⁸ For information on the *Istituto Coloniale Italiano*, which became the *Istituto Coloniale Fascista* in 1928, see: Luigi Federzoni, "La nuova vita dell'Istituto Coloniale Fascista dell'Africa Italiana," *Rivista delle Colonie* XIII, 1 (January 1939): 3-12. For information on the propaganda efforts of the *Ministero delle Colonie*, see: Angelo Piccioli, "La Ricognizione scientifica e la propaganda," in *La Nuova Italia d'oltremare* (Milano: A. Mondadori Editore, 1933), 1717-57. The *Giornata coloniale* was primarily sponsored by the ICI, with the assistance of the Fascist government. For general information on this event, see: "Giornata coloniale sotto l'alto patronato di S.A.R. Luigi di Savoia, President d'onore a S.E. Mussolini." ACS-PCM 1926 - 17.1.934. For a discussion of the colonies related to the first *Giornata*, see: Maurizio Rava, "La Giornata Coloniale," *Rivista Coloniale* XXI, 2 (March-April 1926): 111-20.

mentioned *La Rinascità della Tripolitania* (1926) and the monthly journals *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* and *L'Oltremare*, both of which were first issued in November of 1927. The most prominent of these initiatives was the involvement of the *Ministero delle Colonie* and the ICI in colonial exhibitions – an effort that sought a wide field of dissemination for information about the Italian colonies. These activities included the *Istituto Coloniale Italiano* sponsoring a competition for the *Padiglione delle colonie* at the *Fiera di Milano* – a competition that was won by the Rationalist architects Carlo Enrico Rava and Sebastiano Larco and completed in 1928. The *Ministero delle Colonie*, which had already been involved in a number of prominent exhibitions in Italy and abroad, organized the *Mostra coloniale* at the *Esposizione di Torino* in 1928, and the Italian representation at colonial exhibitions in Antwerp in 1930 and Paris in 1931.¹⁹

These kinds of publicity efforts were no less important to the *politica indigena* of Governor Emilio De Bono in Tripolitania, who created his own *Ufficio Studi e Propaganda*. This group was active in presenting this region to a metropolitan and colonial audience through commissioning books, newspaper articles, and films. The most prominent publications undertaken during this period were a series of books entitled *Vigor di vita in Tripolitania*, which presented accomplishments of the De Bono administration under the guise of documenting the activities of this colony.²⁰ Despite certain financial limitations due to economic

¹⁹ The journal *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* was the official organ of the *Ministero delle Colonie*, while *L'Oltremare* was sponsored by the *Istituto Coloniale Italiano*. For the jury report on this competition, see: "Concorso per il Padiglione delle Colonie alla Fiera di Milano. Relazione della Commissione giudicatrice," *Rivista Coloniale* XXII, 5 (May-June 1927): 177-80. For more information on the organization of the Italian participation in colonial exhibitions by the *Ministero delle Colonie*, see Part 2, Section A. The culmination of these efforts was the Italian participation at the *Exposition coloniale internationale* in Paris in 1931, which was the final colonial exhibition that enjoyed the participation of most of the major colonizing nations.

²⁰ The *Ufficio Studi e Propaganda della Tripolitania* was created by De Bono in August of 1926, with the express purpose of sponsoring propaganda efforts in the colonies and in Italy. These efforts included a series of monographs studying different aspects of this colony and a film on Tripolitania commissioned from the *Istituto Luce*. The series of books *Vigor di vita in*

problems in Italy, De Bono also presided over the further pacification of Tripolitania. Beginning in January of 1928 General Rodolfo Graziani began a series of successful military campaigns that claimed the entire coastal region of Tripolitania and pushed the Libyan rebels further south into the desert regions. The modernization of this colony followed closely behind these territorial gains, with the extension of road improvements and a network of colonial institutions into recently claimed territories.²¹ De Bono also made important contributions to the development of agriculture in Tripolitania. In contrast with his predecessor, he favored government sponsorship of smaller scaled farms, an approach that would make a more significant contribution to the demographic goals of the Italian government for the colonies. The first step in this process of systematically populating this region with agricultural colonists was the passing of the "De Bono Laws" in 1928. The most significant contribution of De Bono to this colony was the organization of the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli*, which was first held from February 15 to April 15 of 1927. This annual event was an almost perfect illustration of Italian colonial politics, combining the display of metropolitan goods with the presentation of colonial products.²²

Tripolitania were published in 1926, 1927 and 1928. For more information on these efforts, see: Piccioli, "La ricognizione scientifica e la propaganda," in *La nuova Italia d'oltremare*, 1730-36.

²¹ Del Boca notes that in the aftermath of the visit of Mussolini, De Bono only reluctantly and belatedly received the financial support of the Fascist government. This was in part due to the financial difficulties of the government, although De Bono believed it was because the finance minister was the former governor Volpi, who did not want him to enjoy any success in Tripolitania. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 85, 90. For a brief account of the military campaign of 1928, see: Wright, "La riconquista," *Libya*, 159-60. For information on the public works campaign of De Bono, which was alleged to have included 600 completed projects, see: Piccioli, "L'opera di S.E. Emilio De Bono in Tripolitania," in *Vigor di vita in Tripolitania (Anno 1928-VI)* (Tripoli: Ufficio studi e propaganda del Governo della Tripolitania, 1928), 17-22. One example of the extension of infrastructural improvements into captured territories was with the improvement of the coastal road between Tunisia on the west and Sirt on the east.

²² For information on the agricultural colonization process during the Governorship of De Bono, see: Segrè, "The De Bono and Badoglio Eras: Colonization in Crisis," in *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya*, 57-81. The full history of the Fiera di Tripoli is presented in: Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli," *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana* I, 2 (August 1938): 497-566. This topic is discussed in greater detail in Part 2, Section B.

With the appointment of Marshal Pietro Badoglio as Governor of both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in January of 1929, these two colonies, and their related politics, took an important step toward their unification. It was under the guidance of Badoglio that the continuing military operations of General Graziani were concluded in January of 1932 after the complete "pacification" of these two colonies. However, this accomplishment came with a heavy price for both sides. In Cyrenaica, the Sanussi rebels were bombed with mustard gas, so-called *sottomessi* were put into concentration camps, and their leaders, like Omar Mukhtar, were publicly executed. The Italians not only sacrificed lives and money in this struggle, their reputation in the Islamic world suffered greatly.²³ Although a large amount of the government resources were dedicated to this military effort, Badoglio was no less active than his predecessors in extending the existing infrastructure of roads and public amenities into the remotest areas of these colonies. It was during this period that the regulatory plan of Benghazi (1930-36) and Tripoli (1931-33) began to be studied by Alpago-Novello, Cabiati and Ferrazza, and that a number of well known architects proposed or constructed projects in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. The infrastructure and institutions of these colonies thus began to be developed according to metropolitan standards. An indication of this progress is the fact that it was during the Governorship of Badoglio that the creation of a viable and extensive tourist system was undertaken. In order to facilitate this effort the Italian authorities set up the *Ente turistico tripolitano* in 1929 to organize and promote tourism in Tripolitania. This institutional structure was bolstered by a modest program of

²³ For a concise account of the military operations under Badoglio, see: Wright, "La conquista," in *Libya*, 160-68. Led by "Butcher Graziani," as he was known by the Libyans, the final conquest of these colonies began in the Fezzan of Tripolitania in 1929-30 and concluded in Al-Jaghbub and Kufra in Cyrenaica in 1930-31. The tactics were particularly brutal in Cyrenaica, where over 90,000 *sottomessi* or refugees were put in concentration camps in the eastern coastal regions. Omar Mukhtar was the leader of the Sanussi rebels, who were the main nemesis of the Italians in Cyrenaica. With his capture and execution in September of 1931 the rebellion was near an end.

constructing new hotels, including Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava's *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* of 1931 and Alessandro Limongelli's *"Grand Albergo agli Scavi"* in Cyrene of 1932.²⁴

The military and domestic accomplishments in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica under the Governorship of Badoglio provided a stable context for his successor, Air Marshal Italo Balbo, who was appointed in January of 1934. Due to the complete military control of these colonies, not only was Balbo able to follow the *politica indigena* of his predecessors, he aggressively expanded upon these initiatives. The first of these programs was a series of political and administrative reforms that saw the unification of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica into the single colony of Libya in April of 1935. This initial measure was merely the pretext for a more ambitious effort to integrate this colony and its bureaucratic structures into metropolitan Italy. This second aspiration came to fruition in January of 1939 when Libya became the nineteenth region of Italy.²⁵ The Balbo administration also organized two very prominent public works programs that gave concrete expression to the unification of this colony and its integration into metropolitan Italy. The first of these was the completion of the *strada litoranea* in February of 1937 – a coastal highway of military, commercial and touristic importance that stretched from Tunisia on the west

²⁴ The *Ente turistico tripolitano* was a para-state organization set up by the *Governo della Tripolitania* and the *Camera di Commercio* of Tripoli. Their statute called for a diverse array of activities, from coordinating the tourist companies, to developing propaganda, to providing for the conservation of historic sites, to collecting statistical information. See: "L'organizzazione dell'Ente turistico tripolitano," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* V, 1 (January 1931): 53. Both of these hotel projects were located along the coastal region of these colonies in order to serve existing archeological sites, the Larco and Rava project was near Leptis Magna and the Limongelli project near Cyrene. The tourist system in the North African colonies is discussed in greater detail in Part 3.

²⁵ This first law was proposed on December 3, 1934 and passed into law on April 11, 1935. For more information on the administrative reorganization of this colony under Balbo, see: Giuseppe Bruni, "Il nuovo assetto politico-amministrativo della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 1-14. This second law was passed on January 9, 1939 and called for the annexation of the four provinces of Libya (Tripoli, Misratah, Benghazi, Derna) into Italy and the extension of the syndical corporatist structure over all of the populations of the four provinces. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 279-80.

to Egypt on the east. The second was the orchestration of the so-called *ventimila* in October of 1938 – a mass emigration of 20,000 agricultural colonists that partially fulfilled Italy's demographic goals for the colonization of Africa.²⁶ The progress achieved by Balbo in the unification of Libya and its integration into metropolitan Italy was symbolically recognized by Benito Mussolini's second visit to Libya in March of 1937 – a visit which was organized to inaugurate the newly constructed *strada litoranea*.

The voyage of Mussolini underscored the second part of the *politica indigena* practiced by the Italian colonial authorities in North Africa under Balbo – the preservation and support of the native culture of this region. This propaganda visit included numerous ceremonies that incorporated the local populations, with the intention of conveying an image of Mussolini as a protector of Islam.²⁷ Although the Italians were never regarded as benevolent rulers by the Libyans, Balbo had been somewhat successful in improving his country's reputation through a combination of firm rule and strategically measured acts of reconciliation. The Balbo administration initiated a number of programs that were more directly aimed at the preservation of the culture of the Libyans. One such measure was related to the indigenous artisanal industries, for which the *Scuola musulmana di mestieri ed arti indigene* was established in Tripoli 1935.²⁸ The intervention of the Balbo administration into the

²⁶ The program of the *strada litoranea* is presented in Balbo, "La litoranea libica," *Nuova Antologia* LXXII, 1559 (March 1, 1937): 5-13. For a detailed discussion of the emigration of agricultural colonists to Libya in the *ventimila*, see Segrè, "The Balbo Era: The Ventimila," in *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya*, 102-111.

²⁷ This visit was from March 12 to March 21, 1937 and began in Derna near the Egyptian border and traced almost the entire length of the *strada litoranea* reaching the archeological site at Sabratha on the west. One of the ceremonies designed to symbolize Mussolini's warm relationship with Islam was ceremony in which he was given the "Sword of Islam" (which was actually made in Florence). For a detailed outline of this visit, see: *Il Duce in Libia* (Milano: S.A. Stab. arti grafiche Alfieri & Lacroix, 1937).

²⁸ For more information on Balbo's organization of the activities in favor of the local populations, see: *L'Italie pour les populations islamiques* (Roma: Società Editrice "Novissima," 1940). For information on the organization of the artisanal industries under Balbo, see:

indigenous craft industries reveals something about the nature of this *politica indigena*. It was intended to preserve the cultural practices of the Libyan populations while at the same time redefining those practices according to the demands of metropolitan society. This dialectical relationship was made abundantly clear in the Fascist government's concession of citizenship rights to the Libyans. The legislation that incorporated this colony into Italy in 1939 allowed the local populations to apply for a *cittadinanza italiana speciale*, however this citizenship was only valid within the territorial limits of Libya.²⁹ The Libyans were thus afforded a peculiar status within this legislation. Although their territory was defined as Italian, their personal identity remained colonial. The *politica indigena* practiced in the Libyan colonies thus incorporated this region into metropolitan society, while the culture and political status of the local populations was preserved according to an essentially racist politics.

B. Literature on Modern Italian Architecture and Colonialism

This project is situated in relation to two major areas of scholarship, the first being modern Italian architecture during the Fascist period and the second the architecture of Italian colonialism in Africa. The first of these topics has a longer and more substantial scholarly tradition, something that, at least in part, is due to some early efforts at compiling documentary material from this period. Some of the most

Guglielmo Quadrotta, "Appunti sull'artigianato libico." In *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 1-31.

²⁹ For a general discussion of the issue of the extension of this new citizenship to the Libyans, see: Segrè, *Italo Balbo: A Fascist Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 328-31. The arguments involved in the development of this legislation will be discussed in more detail in Part 3, Section B. One particularly important contribution was made by Professor Alfonso Nallino, who was an expert on Islamic law, and who argued that it was incompatible with any kind of European citizenship.

important of these early volumes are Giulia Veronesi's collection of the critical essays of Edoardo Persico on modern Italian architecture and culture from 1964 and 1968 and Enrico Mantero's *Giuseppe Terragni e la città del razionalismo italiano* of 1969.³⁰ These early monographic compilations were followed by several notable thematic volumes, including Luciano Patetta's *L'architettura in Italia, 1919-1943. Le polemiche* of 1972 which gathers essays related to certain architectural movements, like the Novecento and Italian Rationalism, and specific topics, such as the polemic between Marcello Piacentini and various Rationalist architects. The most influential of these early compilations is Michele Cennamo's two volumes from 1973 and 1977 on the *Esposizioni italiana di architettura razionale* of 1928 and 1931. These books contain crucial information on the content and organization of these two events. They also assemble a wide array of critical essays related to these exhibitions and the more general debate surrounding Italian Rationalism.³¹

These early compilations had an intimate relationship with contemporary scholarship on modern Italian architecture during the Fascist period, in many cases becoming an instrument of this work. This relationship could certainly be asserted for North American interest in Italian Rationalism, a good deal of which came at the same time as the publication of English translations of the founding manifestoes of the *Gruppo 7* in *Oppositions* in 1976 and 1978.³² These documentary publications

³⁰ These editions by Veronesi on Persico are as follows: Edoardo Persico, *Tutte le opere (1923-1935)*, ed. Giulia Veronesi (Milano: Edizioni di Comunità, 1964). (Primo volume: politica, letteratura, pittura, scultura, teatro, fotografia, grafica, varie; Secondo volume: architettura); Edoardo Persico, *Scritti d'architettura (1927/1935)* (Firenze: Vallecchi Editore, 1968). The Mantero volume is: *Giuseppe Terragni e la città del razionalismo italiano*, ed. Enrico Mantero (Bari: Dedalo Libri, 1969).

³¹ The Patetta book is: *L'architettura in Italia 1919-1943. Le polemiche*, ed. Luciano Patetta (Milano: Cooperativa libreria universitaria del Politecnico, 1972). The Cennamo volumes are as follows: *Materiali per l'analisi dell'architettura moderna. La prima Esposizione Italiana di Architettura Razionale*, ed. Michele Cennamo (Napoli: Fausto Fiorentino Editore, 1973); and *Materiali per l'analisi dell'architettura moderna. Il MIAR*, ed. Michele Cennamo (Napoli: Società Editrice Napoletana, 1977).

³² The publication of these translations was part of a "Documents" section of *Oppositions*, which was intended to bring new theoretical material to an English speaking North American audience.

also reflect the major tendencies within the larger body of research on modern Italian architecture. The first of these was the penchant for identifying specific movements, like Italian Rationalism, as the most "representative" of modern architecture during the Fascist period – a process that, until recently, largely excluded contradictory approaches. A second tendency in these publications has been the emphasis on certain figures, the prime example of this being the Rationalist architect Giuseppe Terragni whose work has enjoyed considerable attention both in Italy and abroad. The isolation of such individuals as characteristic of Italian Rationalism has had its own negative effect on scholarship by overshadowing the work of other architects. The early interest in Terragni was largely due to the effort of architect and critic Bruno Zevi, who was instrumental in organizing a conference on this architect in Como in September of 1968, entitled "L'eredità di Terragni e l'architettura italiana 1943-1969." As director of the journal *L'Architettura, Cronache e Storia* Zevi also oversaw the publication of two special issues on Terragni in July of 1968 and May of 1969. The attention on Terragni as the key figure of Italian Rationalism has resulted in the production of an enormous amount of scholarly material, the most definitive of which being a catalog, edited by Giorgio Ciucci, that was issued in conjunction with an exhibition of his work at the Triennale in Milan of 1996.³³

See: Gruppo 7, "Architecture (1926)," and "Architecture II: The Foreigners (1927)," trans. and intro. Ellen Shapiro, in *Oppositions* 6 (Fall 1976): 86-102; and Gruppo 7, "Architecture III: Unpreparedness -- Incomprehension -- Prejudice (1927)," and "Architecture IV: A New Archaic Era (1927)," trans. Ellen Shapiro, in *Oppositions* 12 (Spring 1978): 88-104.

³³ These special issues on Terragni are as follows: "Omaggio a Terragni." Special volume, *L'Architettura, Cronache e storia*. 153 (July 1968); and "L'eredità di Terragni e l'architettura italiana, 1943-1968." Atti del convegno di studi a Como, 14-15 settembre, 1968. Special volume, *L'Architettura, Cronache e storia*. 163 (May 1969). This conference was divided into three sessions, the first on "La figura e l'opera di Terragni," moderated by the architectural historian Giulio Carlo Argan; the second was on "Esperienze del razionalismo in Italia tra le due guerre," moderated by the architect Luigi Cosenza; and the third was on "La matrice razionalista dell'architettura contemporanea in Italia," moderated by Zevi. The exhibition at the Triennale was held from May 11 to December 31, 1996, and was accompanied by the publication of a 650 page volume comprised of both essays and documentation of Terragni's projects. See: *Giuseppe Terragni. Opera completa*, ed. Giorgio Ciucci (Milano: Electa, 1996).

The most important contributions to the historiography of modern Italian architecture have been aimed at compensating for the relative absence of a critical or analytical viewpoint in the early writings in this field. One of the central problems of these initial studies was the issue of the relationship between architecture and politics – a topic whose examination was often avoided. In other cases, like Veronesi's *Difficoltà politiche dell'architettura in Italia, 1920-1940* of 1953, the discussion of architecture and politics was a means of recuperating certain figures and their work from any relationship with Fascism.³⁴ Although Henry Millon published an essay in 1965 on the role of architectural historians in affirming Fascist doctrine, the first examples of this argument extending to Rationalist architects and their work emerged in conjunction with the exhibition at the Biennale di Venezia of 1976 entitled "Il razionalismo e l'architettura in Italia durante il fascismo." The catalog for this exhibition contains a series of essays by Italian scholars, like Giorgio Ciucci, Silvia Danesi and Cesare De Seta, whose research attempts to articulate the relationship between architecture and politics. The essay of Danesi is particularly applicable to this dissertation, as it examines how the concept of *mediterraneità* was used by architects as a means of negotiating the perceived conflict between modernity and tradition.³⁵

³⁴ Diane Ghirardo has noted that Veronesi argued that architects "played Fascist in order to do architecture." Veronesi, *Difficoltà politiche dell'architettura in Italia, 1920-1940* (Milano: Tamburini, 1953). See, Ghirardo, "Italian Architects and Fascist Politics: An Evaluation of the Rationalist's Role in Regime Building," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* XXXIX, 2 (May 1980): 109.

³⁵ See: Henry Millon, "The Role of the History of Architecture in Fascist Italy," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 24 (March 1965): 53-58. The exhibition at the Venice Biennale was held from July 14 to October 10, 1976. See: *Il razionalismo e l'architettura in Italia durante il fascismo*, ed. Silvia Danesi and Luciano Patetta (Venezia: Edizione "La Biennale di Venezia," 1976). The essays noted are: Ciucci, "L'urbanistica negli anni '30: un tecnico per l'organizzazione del consenso," *ibid.*, 28-31; De Seta, "Cultura e architettura in Italia tra le due guerre: continuità e discontinuità," *ibid.*, 7-12; and Danesi, "Aporie dell'architettura italiana in periodo fascista - mediterraneità e purismo," *ibid.*, 21-28. The essay by De Seta is a condensation of arguments made in an earlier publication, *La cultura architettonica in Italia tra le due guerre* (Bari: Laterza, 1972).

The work of these Italian scholars prepared the way for the most significant contribution to this discourse, Diane Ghirardo's "Italian Architects and Fascist Politics: An Evaluation of the Rationalist's Role in Regime Building" of 1980. This essay directly attacks what she argues is the major problem with the historiography of modern architecture during the Fascist period – the attempt to codify the Fascist content of architecture according to specific stylistic categories. She argues that the architectural historians attempts to identify the precepts of Italian Rationalism as "revolutionary," and thus antithetical to the reactionary politics of Fascism, were seriously flawed. Ghirardo asserts that such dichotomies were not useful in examining cultural products during this period, as Italian Fascism was a political program that openly embraced diverse ideological and artistic tendencies. She illustrates this argument by examining how the projects and writings of Rationalist architects were, in fact, closely tied to Fascist concepts of mass society and social hierarchy.³⁶ This essay was followed by other studies which explicitly examined the relationship between architecture and politics during the Fascist period, one of the most important of these being Ciucci's *Gli architetti e il fascismo. Architettura e città 1922-1944* of 1989. Focusing primarily on the cities of Turin, Milan and Rome, this book conveys a complex understanding of the changing relationship between

³⁶ Ghirardo, "Italian Architects and Fascist Politics: An Evaluation of the Rationalist's Role in Regime Building," 109-27. This essay is principally aimed at Italian scholars whose attempts to rescue Italian Rationalism from political concerns have clouded their judgment on these works. It is also an explicit critique of "theorists" like Peter Eisenman, whose writings on Terragni represent pure formal analysis aimed at producing a contemporary architecture. See: Eisenman, "Dall'oggetto alla relazionalità: la Casa del Fascio di Terragni," *Casabella* 344 (January 1970): 38-41; and "From Object to Relationship II: Giuseppe Terragni – Casa Giuliani-Frigerio," *Perspecta* 13,-14 (1971): 36-61. This essay was quickly followed by a second more detailed argument. See Ghirardo, "Politics of a Masterpiece: The Vicenda of the Decoration of the Facade of the Casa del Fascio, Como, 1936-1939," *The Art Bulletin* (September 1980): 466-78. See also: Ghirardo, *Building New Communities: New Deal America and Fascist Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

architecture and politics by examining the most crucial events that marked architectural discourse during the *ventennio* of Fascism.³⁷

More recently, the scholarship on modern Italian architecture has moved beyond these initial examinations of the relationship between culture and politics to situate itself within the larger body of historical research into Fascist aesthetics. The tendency of scholars working in this more general field of study has been to expand the categories in which Fascism was presumed to operate by examining previously unexplored artistic and literary tendencies like realism and expressionism. The common assumption underlying this work is that Fascist politics and modern artistic and intellectual practices were not contradictory. A number of the most important figures in this field of research participated in a conference at Stanford University in October of 1993 – a conference which resulted in the publication of a special issue of the *Journal of Contemporary History* in April of 1996. The essays in this volume include Ghirardo's "*Città Fascista: Surveillance and Spectacle*," which outlines the staging and reconfiguration of "traditional" festivals in the city of Ferrara.³⁸ Another important contribution is Ruth Ben-Ghiat's "Italian Fascism and the Aesthetics of the "Third Way," which examines how Fascist politics was translated into a modern literary aesthetic that was aimed at a mass audience. The arguments that are contained in this essay stem from her dissertation research, which dealt with the

³⁷ See Ciucci, *Gli architetti e il fascismo. Architettura e città 1922-1944* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi editore, 1989). This book was preceded by a number of notable essays, by Ciucci including: "L'autorappresentazione del fascismo: La mostra del decennale della marcia su Roma," *Rassegna* 10 (June 1982): 48-55; Ciucci, "Italian architecture during the fascist period: The many souls of the classical," *Harvard Architectural Review* 6 (1987): 76-87; and "The Classicism of E42: Between modernity and tradition," *Assemblage* 8 (February 1989): 77-97.

³⁸ This conference was entitled "Fascinating Fascism: Culture and Politics during the *Ventennio*," and was held at Stanford University on October 22-23, 1993. For these essays, see: *Journal of Contemporary History* 31, 2 (April 1996). Some of these include: Emily Braun, "Expressionism as Fascist Aesthetic," *ibid.*, 273-92; and Ghirardo, "*Città Fascista: Surveillance and Spectacle*," *ibid.*, 347-72. Other recent publications that include research into Fascist aesthetics include: *Fascism, aesthetics and culture*, ed. Richard J. Golsan (Hanover NH: University Press of New England, 1992); and *Fascist Visions: Art and Ideology in France and Italy*, ed. Matthew Affron and Mark Antliff. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

realist movement in literature and film during the Fascist period. A second essay by Ben-Ghiat from 1996 examines how film was used to reconfigure the concept of modernity according to the demands of Fascist politics.³⁹

This research on Fascist modernity have been accompanied by the work of other scholars who have attempted to expand studies on Fascist architecture to encompass new figures and include new objects of study. One such topic is the *Mostra della rivoluzione fascista*, which was the exhibition of the tenth anniversary of the Fascist revolution held in Rome in 1932. This event has been the subject of considerable scholarly attention, including a dissertation by Libero Andreotti in 1989 and a series of essays in a special issue of the *Journal of Architectural Education* in 1992.⁴⁰ A more specific example of this tendency is the work of Richard Etlin, whose book *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940* of 1991 contextualizes Fascist architecture within a longer historical trajectory. In so doing, he includes the activities of Marcello Piacentini, who had been largely dismissed by Italian scholars due to his close relationship with Fascist politics. In this discussion, Etlin underscores Piacentini's central role in the theorization of modern vernacular architecture in the pages of *Architettura e Arti Decorative* in the early 1920s – a discourse that was later taken up by the architects of Italian Rationalism. An equally significant contribution of this book to scholarship on architecture during the Fascist period is its examination of the relationship between Italian Rationalism and anti-

³⁹ See Ben-Ghiat, "Italian Fascism and the Aesthetics of the "Third Way," *Journal of Contemporary History* 31, 2 (April 1996): 293-316. Her dissertation is as follows: Ben-Ghiat, *The formation of a Fascist culture: The Realist movement in Italy, 1930-1943* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Brandeis University, 1990). She also published the following essay on film: Ben-Ghiat, "Envisioning Modernity: Desire and Discipline in the Italian Fascist Film," *Critical Inquiry* 23, 1 (Autumn 1996): 109-44.

⁴⁰ See Andreotti, *Art and Politics in Fascist Italy: The Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution (1932)* (Ph.D. Dissertation, MIT, 1989). This issue of the *Journal of Architectural Education* (45, 2 - February 1992) was edited by Diane Ghirardo under the heading "Architecture and Culture in Fascist Italy." The essays included are: Ghirardo, "Architects, Exhibitions, and the Politics of Culture in Fascist Italy," *ibid.*, 67-75; Andreotti, "The Aesthetics of War: The Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution," *ibid.*, 76-86; Jeffrey T. Schnapp, "Fascism's Museum in Motion," *ibid.*, 87-97; and McLaren, "Under the Sign of the Reproduction," *ibid.*, 98-106.

semitism.⁴¹ More recently a number of younger scholars have continued to extend the limits of this research to examine new areas of intervention of Fascism in Italian culture. One notable example of this kind of research is the dissertation of D. Medina Lasansky, which examines how the image of Italian Renaissance architecture was constructed during the Fascist period. These interventions were both theoretical and physical, including the substantial reconfiguration of Renaissance town centers for the purposes of Fascist public spectacle and tourist consumption.⁴²

Scholarly research on the subject of Italian colonial architecture and urbanism has been primarily conducted over the last two decades. Consequently, it has benefited from prior research on the Fascist period, which had already begun to examine the troublesome question of the relationship between architecture and politics. The earliest studies of colonialism appeared at the end of the 1970s, and primarily focused on questions of urban history. These initial inquiries into the theory and practice of colonial urbanism were followed by two important essays, the first by Marida Talamona on the planning of the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, and the second by Federico Cresti on the urbanism of agricultural colonization in Libya.⁴³ The major body of recent research on Italian colonialism emerged in

⁴¹ See Etlin, *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991). The chapters which examine these topics are as follows: "A Modern Vernacular Architecture," *ibid.*, 129-61; and "Italian Rationalism and Anti-Semitism," *ibid.*, 569-97. Ironically, Etlin's discussion of Italian Rationalism, the Novecento movement and the architecture of Fascism – which are the major body of this work – are less insightful than his research on the margins of these tendencies. In part, this is due to the fact that much of this material has been more compellingly examined by Italian scholars like Ciucci. See: McLaren, "Modern Italian Architecture and the Question of History," a review of *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940*, by Richard A. Etlin, in *Design Book Review* 25 (Summer 1992): 58-60.

⁴² See: D. Medina Lasansky, *The Italian Renaissance refashioned: Fascist architecture and urban spectacle* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Brown University, 1999). Other recent dissertation work includes: Paulette Singley, *The metalized marble body: D'Annunzio Vittoriale and modern Italian architecture* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, 1998).

⁴³ The first of these studies was published in Paolo Sica's series, *Storia dell'urbanistica*. See: Sica, "L'azione del fascismo nelle colonie," in *Storia dell'urbanistica. Il novecento. Volume 2* (Roma-Bari: Giuseppe Laterza & Figli, 1978),. 493-520. This was soon followed by the following two essays: Alberto Boralevi, "Le "città dell'Impero": Urbanistica fascista in Etiopia, 1936-1941," *Storia Urbana* III, 8 (May-August 1979): 65-115; Giuseppe Reitani, "Politica territoriale ed urbanistica in Tripolitania, 1920-1940," *Storia Urbana* III, 8 (May-August 1979): 49-65. The

conjunction with the exhibition "Architettura italiana d'oltremare, 1870-1940," which was held in Bologna in 1993 and curated by Giuliano Gresleri, Pier Giorgio Massaretti and Stefano Zagnoni. This exhibition was accompanied by a catalog of the same title, which is comprised of a collection of essays by Italian scholars on the architecture and urbanism of the Italian overseas territories. This exhibition was largely the product of the relatively recent availability of this material, and parallels the interest in colonial history by Italian scholars in other fields of research.⁴⁴

As the first wave of research on Italian colonialism, the value of the majority of this scholarly work has been not so much in its theoretical insights as in its presentation of new historical material. To some extent the lack of a critical position in this research is indicative of the more "scientific" approach of some Italian scholars to such material. Two specific exceptions to this tendency are the writings of Gresleri and Talamona. In his essay "Classico e vernacolo nell'architettura dell'Italia d'oltremare" of 1995, Gresleri provides a detailed examination of stylistic questions pertaining to Italian colonial architecture. In the case of Talamona, her writings on Libya carefully examine the changing relationship between modernity and local

two subsequent studies are: Talamona, "Addis Abeba capitale dell'Impero," *Storia Contemporanea* XVI, 5-6 (December 1985): 1093-1132; and Cresti, "Edilizia ed urbanistica nella colonizzazione agraria della Libia (1922-1940)," *Storia Urbana* XI, 40 (July-September 1987): 189-231. The essay of Talamona is particularly important as it situates the debate over the urban plan of Addis Ababa within the broader discourse for a modern colonial architecture.

⁴⁴ This exhibition was held in the Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Bologna from September 26, 1993 to January 10, 1994. The catalog of this exhibition is: *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, ed. Giuliano Gresleri, Pier Giorgio Massaretti and Stefano Zagnoni (Venezia: Marsilio Editori, 1993). In addition to its editors, this publication includes essays by the following scholars: Fabrizio I. Apollonio, Claudio Ceretti, Giorgio Ciucci, Cristina Delvecchio, Giovanna Rosselli, Ornella Sangiovanni, Lucio Scardino, Marida Talamona, and Francesca Zanella. Some of these same scholars published essays in an earlier special volume of the journal *Rassegna*, entitled "Architettura nelle colonie italiane in Africa" (51, September 1992). The contemporary interest in colonial matters is evident in a conference, entitled "Fonti e problemi della politica coloniale italiana," held in Taormina-Messina in October of 1989. See: Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, Ufficio Centrale per i Beni Archivistici, *Fonti e problemi della politica coloniale italiana. Atti del convegno, Taormina-Messina, 23-29 ottobre 1989* (Roma: Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, Ufficio Centrale per i Beni Archivistici, 1996).

influences that marked the discourse on architecture and urbanism in this colony.⁴⁵ A more critical approach to this subject is also evident in the recent dissertation research and published essays of two North American scholars, Mia Fuller and Krystyna von Henneberg. This work, both for its historical substance and theoretical rigor, represents the most advanced research on the topic of Italian colonial architecture and urbanism. In the case of Fuller, her essays, like "Building Power: Italian architecture and Urbanism in Libya and Ethiopia" of 1992, embrace contemporary post-colonial theory by examining discourses of power in colonial architecture and urbanism. The work of Von Henneberg, like the essay "Imperial Uncertainties: Architectural Syncretism and Improvisation in Fascist Colonial Libya" of 1996, contextualizes this colonial discourse within a more general understanding of the cultural politics of Italian Fascism.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ See: Gresleri, "Classico e vernacolo nell'architettura dell'Italia d'oltremare," in *Classicismo Classicismi. Architettura Europa/America 1920-1940* (Milano, Venezia: Electa, C.I.S.A. Andrea Palladio, 1995), 68-87; and Talamona, "Città Europa e città Araba in Tripolitania," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 256-77.

⁴⁶ The dissertation of Fuller is as follows: *Colonizing Constructions: Italian Architecture, Urban Planning, and the Creation of Modern Society in the Colonies, 1869-1943* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1994). See also: "Building Power. Italy's Colonial Architecture and Urbanism, 1923-1940," *Cultural Anthropology* 3, 4 (1988): 455-87; "Building Power: Italian Architecture and Urbanism in Libya and Ethiopia," in *Forms of Dominance. On the Architecture and Urbanism of the Colonial Enterprise*, ed. Nezzar alSayyad (Brookfield: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1992), 211-39; "Wherever You Go, There You Are: Fascist Plans for the Colonial City of Addis Ababa and the Colonizing Suburb of EUR'42," *Journal of Contemporary History* 31, 2 (April 1996): 397-418. The dissertation of Von Henneberg is as follows: *The Construction of Fascist Libya: Modern Colonial Architecture and Urban Planning in Italian North Africa (1922-1943)* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1996). See also: "Piazza Castello and the Making of a Fascist Colonial Capital," in *Streets. Critical Perspectives on Public Space*, ed. Zeynep Çelik, Diane Favro and Richard Ingersoll (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 135-50; and "Imperial Uncertainties: Architectural Syncretism and Improvisation in Fascist Colonial Libya," *Journal of Contemporary History* 31, 2 (April 1996): 373-395.

C. Historical Method

This dissertation examines the complex relationship between the modern and the colonial by historically situating Italian colonial architecture within the broader context of architectural modernity. However, rather than see the colonies as merely a projection of the metropolitan context, this research reverses this relationship by examining how colonialism was crucial to the formation of modernity in Italian architecture. The intention behind this approach is to address certain lacunae in the history of modern architecture, which has almost systematically excluded the influence of the colonial context. One of the rare exceptions to this pattern is the series of proposals for the restructuring of Algiers by Le Corbusier from 1930-42 called the "Plan Obus." However, in general histories of modern architecture like Sigfried Giedion's *Space, Time and Architecture* (1940) or Kenneth Frampton's *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (1980), this project has been presented as a product of the evolution of his urban principles towards the use of organic forms, with little examination of its derivation from or implications in the colonial context. The discussion of the colonialism of Le Corbusier has been reserved to more narrowly delimited studies like "Le Corbusier and Algiers" by Mary McLeod, which appeared in *Oppositions* 19/20 (Winter/Spring 1980). In this essay the "Plan Obus" is presented as a complex negotiation between metropolitan theoretical discourses and the political and physical context of this French colony.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ In *Space, Time and Architecture*, Giedion presents Le Corbusier's project for Algiers in reference to urbanism. This project first appears in a section entitled "The organization of outer space," where the individual buildings were referred to as "organic" skyscrapers whose arrangement was compared with the crescents at Bath of 1794. Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture*, Fifth Edition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 158-60. Frampton makes the following comment about this project: "Le Corbusier's 1930 Algiers plan was his last urban proposal of overwhelming grandeur. Reminiscent of the sensuous spirit of Gaudi's Park Güell, his ecstatic enthusiasm seems to have spent itself here in a passionate poem to the natural beauty of the Mediterranean." Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, Third Edition (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1992), 181. The sole exception to this approach in these general texts is William J.R. Curtis, who links the *brise-soleil* of the vertical skyscraper of the later

This research project will also attend to problems in histories of colonial architecture, which frequently do not attempt to articulate the connection between these colonial projects and architectural discourse in the metropolitan context. In many instances, such as Thomas R. Metcalf's *An Imperial Vision. Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj* (1989), architecture in the colonial context is theorized as an almost direct manifestation of a politics of empire. Even Gwendolyn Wright's *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism* (1991), which prefaces its discussion of the French colonies with a careful examination of the discourse on metropolitan urbanism, makes very few direct comparisons between urban projects in Morocco and their direct counterparts in France.⁴⁸ This incorporation colonialism into this more general history of modern architecture will help to create a more complex understanding of modernism in Italian architecture. In a similar manner, the examination of colonial architecture in relation to its parallel discourse in the metropolitan context will foster a more subtle reading of these works that also embraces their "modernity."

The historical method proposed by this project is to explore the imbrication of the modern and the colonial in Italian architecture through a single theme – that of the appropriation of the local culture of its North African colonies. This topic has

'Plan Obus' with traditional precedents. Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900*, Third Edition (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1996), 325-26. McLeod situates this project within Le Corbusier's theoretical trajectory – which at that time was linked with syndicalism – while also carefully attending to its impact on the colonial context, including his various attempts to adjust the project after its initial submission in 1932. McLeod, "Le Corbusier and Algiers," *Oppositions* 19/20 (Winter/Spring 1980): 54-85. For a more recent discussion of this issue, see Zeynep Çelik, *Urban forms and colonial confrontations: Algiers under French rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

⁴⁸ Although Metcalf makes certain connections between contemporaneous developments in architectural discourse in Britain and the colonial projects in India, the central focus of this, and the majority of books on colonial architecture, is on "the relationship between culture and power." Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision. Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989). In the first chapter of her book, Wright examines late nineteenth and early twentieth century urbanism in France as a prelude to her discussion of the colonies. However, this approach does not lead to any direct comparisons in the subsequent chapters which treat colonial urbanism in Morocco, Indochina and Madagascar. Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).

been analyzed over the course of a specific historical trajectory, roughly beginning with the rise to power of the Fascist party in 1922 and ending with Italy's entry into World War II in 1940. The intention behind this approach is to trace the transformation of this discourse according to the constantly shifting relationship between modernity, indigenous culture and their representation in architecture. The most direct precedent for the examination of colonial architecture according to such a broad historical span and focused theoretical viewpoint is François Béguin's *Arabisances. Decor architectural et tracé urbain en Afrique du Nord, 1830-1950* of 1983 – a book which explores the Arab influence on the architecture and urbanism of the French colonies in North Africa.⁴⁹

This general theme has, in turn, been structured around three distinct but interrelated topics of investigation, with the objective being to create a more complex understanding of the influence of Libyan vernacular sources on Italian architecture by examining the diverse and contradictory aspects of their appropriation. These topics are: the discourse on modernity in Italian architecture in magazines and publications and its intersection with the prospects for a modern colonial architecture; the "politics of representation" of the indigenous culture of Italy's colonies in exhibitions and fairs in Italy and abroad; and the formation of a Mediterranean identity based on the local architecture in the creation of a tourist system in the Libyan colonies. This format of a series of separate arguments written around a single theme is similar to that employed in numerous recent publications on the history of modern architecture, such as *Otto Wagner. Reflections on the Raiment*

⁴⁹ See Béguin, *Arabisances. Decor architectural et tracé urbain en Afrique du Nord, 1830-1950* (Paris: Dunod, 1983). This book examines the architectural and urban strategies that emerged during the period of French colonization of Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. This research establishes a certain shift in approach from what was called "the style of the conqueror" to "the style of the protector." Through this discussion "arabistance" is only defined in relation to the contingencies of each historical situation. In this sense this book examines an stylistic or aesthetic category not unlike that of the *mediterraneità* of Italian colonialism.

of *Modernity* in which a series of authors freely speculate on different aspects of the modernity of this architect.⁵⁰

The historiographic approach of this project is thus aimed at questioning a monolithic theorization of modernism in the Italian context. Through a succession of independent but overlapping arguments, a larger historical field has been created. Within each of these three topics, the appropriation of the local culture of the Libyan colonies by Italian architects has been examined in relation to a number of more general theoretical discourses. The assertion is that architecture is a complex cultural formation that is part of a larger discursive field by which it is influenced and in which it actively participates. These specific works are also seen to have certain aesthetic and theoretical qualities that transcend these discourses, that is, they are conceived as having the capacity for resistance. Historicizing these architectural productions involves establishing a balance between their contextualization and the process of interweaving "disintegrated and fragmented constitutive units" in what Manfredo Tafuri has called the labyrinthine path of historical study.⁵¹

In the first part of this dissertation, this effort has involved linking modern colonial architecture to both the more general discourse of modernity in Italian architecture and the "indigenous politics" of colonial rule. In a similar manner, the

⁵⁰ See *Otto Wagner. Reflections on the Raiment of Modernity*, ed. Harry Francis Mallgrave (Santa Monica: The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1993). This book provides an important alternative to the monographic volume written by a single author, as it both covers the full range of Wagner's work and offers a number of different critical viewpoints. Of particular note are the essays by Mallgrave, entitled "From Realism to *Sachlichkeit*: The Polemics of Architectural Modernity in the 1890s" and Stanford Anderson, entitled "*Sachlichkeit* and Modernity, or Realist Architecture," which provide diverse aspects of the implications of the concept of *sachlichkeit* in Wagner's writings and works.

⁵¹ In his introduction to *The Sphere and the Labyrinth*, Tafuri stated: "architectural history will always seem the fruit of an unresolved dialectic. The interweaving of intellectual models, modes of production, and modes of consumption ought to lead to the 'explosion' of the synthesis contained in the work. Wherever this synthesis is presented as a completed whole, it is necessary to introduce a disintegration, a fragmentation, a 'dissemination' of its constitutive units." Tafuri, "Introduction: The Historical Project," in *The Sphere and the Labyrinth. Avant-Gardes and Architecture from Piranesi to the 1970s*, trans. Pellegrino d'Acerno and Robert Connolly (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1987), 14.

discussion of colonial exhibitions in the second part has been contextualized in relation to both the architecture of the colonies and the institution of the colonial museum. In the final part of this project, the architecture of tourism has been connected to the exoticism of colonial literature and the scientific research into indigenous culture in the fields of anthropology and ethnography. An important precedent for the framing of colonialism in relation to a series of broader theoretical discourse is Paul Rabinow's *French Modern. Norms and Forms of the Social Environment*. One such example from this book is the concept of techno-cosmopolitanism, which he links with Tony Garnier's *La Cité Industrielle* of 1902 and contemporary theories of social reform. This "form of regulation of the social environment," which developed in metropolitan society, was eventually applied by General Hubert Lyautey in Morocco as a means of control of the local populations.⁵²

The arguments advanced in this project have been profoundly influenced by two major bodies of theoretical inquiry, the first of these being the concept of a Fascist modernism. The earliest developments of this line of interpretation began in historical studies in the 1970s, with scholars like Roland Sarti exploring the phenomenon of modernization in Fascist Italy. Observing that this political regime was not a monolithic ideological program, such historians posited Fascist politics as a dialectical mediation of reactionary and revolutionary impulses.⁵³ More recently

⁵² See Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989). In an argument that is explicitly inspired by a Foucauldian concept of modern discourses of social regulation, Rabinow places his major emphasis on the practices of urban planning. His concept of techno-cosmopolitanism is described in his article "Colonialism, Modernity" as: "the attempt to operationalize history, society and culture. It attempted to achieve this regulation through working over already-existing cultural, social and aesthetic institutions and spaces seen to embody a healthy sedimentation of historical practices. It was technological in that its operations were scientifically arrived at and could be specified; it was cosmopolitan in that these operations were applied to specific customs, cultures and countries." Rabinow, "Colonialism, Modernity. The French in Morocco," in *Forms of Dominance in the Architecture and Urbanism of the Colonial Enterprise*, 167.

⁵³ See: Roland Sarti, "Fascist Modernization in Italy: Traditional or Revolutionary?" *American Historical Review* LXXV, 4 (April 1970): 1029-45. Other contemporary arguments exploring the revolutionary aspects of Fascism include: Philip V. Cannistraro, "Mussolini's Cultural Revolution: Fascist or Nationalist?" *Journal of Contemporary History* 7, 3-4 (July-October 1972): 115-39.

Jeffrey Herf, in examining the culture and politics of the Third Reich, has offered the concept of "reactionary modernism." Rejecting the dichotomy of tradition and modernity typical to these earlier historical models of Fascist politics and culture, the thesis offered in this book is that reactionary modernists "incorporated modern technology into the cultural system of modern German nationalism, without diminishing the latter's romantic and anti-rational aspects." It is my contention that concepts in Italian architectural discourse like the *mediterraneità* of Rava – which fuse modernity with the vernacular into a single reality – is precisely this kind of reactionary modernist formulation.⁵⁴

The second area of theoretical speculation which this study draws upon is post-colonial theory. This form of cultural criticism was largely initiated with the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* of 1978 – a book which continues to generate a considerable body of scholarship on the relationship between the institutions and practices of cultural representation in the West and its exercise of political power over the non-Western world. Largely basing his analysis of Western literature upon the Foucauldian notion of discourse, Said argues that orientalism is "a *distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical and philological texts" – that is, it is a dissemination of the politics of Western imperialism through all of its various cultural productions, which

One more general argument from this period on the connection between technocratic theories and Italian and German Fascism is: Charles S. Maier, "Between Taylorism and Technocracy: European ideologies and the vision of industrial productivity in the 1920s," *Journal of Contemporary History* 5, 2 (April 1970): 27-61.

⁵⁴ See Herf, *Reactionary modernism. Technology, culture, and politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). In the introduction of this book, Herf states: "before and after the Nazi seizure of power, an important current within conservative and subsequently Nazi ideology was a reconciliation between the antimodernist, romantic, and irrationalist ideas present in German nationalism and the most obvious manifestation of means-end rationality, that is, modern technology." *Ibid.*, 1. The unique aspect of this theory is its insistence on the absolute simultaneity of these seemingly irreconcilable realities – a quality which also applies to Italian Fascism and its architecture.

effectively creates and maintains hierarchies of domination of West over East.⁵⁵ The orientalism of Said has been subjected to numerous re-interpretations, one example being Lisa Lowe's *Critical Terrains: French and British Orientalisms* of 1991. This book suggests that, in order to expand this form of cultural criticism, Foucault's concepts of discourse should be situated in relation to Antonio Gramsci's theories of cultural hegemony – a body of writings which recognize that mechanisms of power are not inevitable, as they are part of a complex process of negotiation, consent and compromise. Lowe offers this modification of orientalism as a way to suggest that discourses are heterogeneous, arguing that they exist in different forms in each domain and are subject to modification through time.⁵⁶ It is for this reason that I examine the appropriation of local culture in the architecture of the Italian colonies in North Africa as a form of cultural hegemony which is neither uniform nor

⁵⁵ The larger context of this statement is as follows: "It is rather a *distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical and philological texts; it is an *elaboration* not only of a basic geographical distinction (the world is made up of two unequal halves, Orient and Occident) but also of a whole series of "interests" which, by such means as scholarly discovery, philological reconstruction, physiological analysis, landscape and sociological description, it not only creates but also maintains; it *is* rather than expresses, a certain *will* or *intention* to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alternatively novel) world; it is, above all, a discourse that is by no means in direct, corresponding relationship with political power in the raw, but rather is produced and exists in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power, shaped to a degree by the exchange with political power (as with colonial or imperial establishment), power intellectual (as with reigning sciences like comparative linguistics or anatomy, or any of the modern policy sciences), power cultural (as with orthodoxies and canons of taste, texts, values), power moral (as with ideas about what "we" do and what "they" cannot do or understand as "we" do)." Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1978) 12.

⁵⁶ Of the use of Foucault and Gramsci, Lowe states; "In bringing together these diverse ideas, I sketch a picture of cultural production in which discourse designates the complex and uneven terrain composed of heterogeneous textual, social and cultural practices; this is the terrain on which the organization of social life, or cultural hegemony, is achieved, maintained, challenged, and ultimately transformed." Lowe, *Critical Terrains. French and British Orientalisms* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 11. Of Gramsci's concept of hegemony, Lowe states: "in Gramsci's thought hegemony is elaborated as a much broader notion [than in orthodox Marxist theory], one that also includes the complex interconnected relations between social, cultural and ideological practices through which a ruling group exercises domination. Hegemony is Gramsci's way of describing the entire process of negotiation, dissent, and compromise whereby a particular group or ideological formation gains the consent of the larger body to lead. In this sense hegemony does not refer exclusively to the process by which dominant groups exercise and maintain influence, but it denotes equally the process through which other groups organize, contest, or accommodate any specific domination. It is thus a question of a hegemonic process rather than a static or monolithic condition." *Ibid.*, 16.

unchanging. These writings have thus influenced the choice of examining this *mediterraneità* in three distinct areas – architectural discourse, colonial exhibitions, and tourism – and over the entire course of its historical development. The concept of hegemony has also influenced the means of analysis of this phenomenon through the entire social, political and cultural terrain of Italian colonialism.

D. Project Objectives

This dissertation seeks to explore a particular manifestation of modernity in Italian architecture that struggled with the question of a Mediterranean identity. The intersection of such a supra-regional expression with modernism is seen as characteristic of both modern architecture in Italy and the politics of Italian colonialism. At the same time, this project is careful to examine the diverse and contradictory aspects of this phenomenon by positing three distinct areas of investigation – the role of a Mediterranean vernacular in the discourse in architectural publications, the representation of the Italian colonies in exhibitions, and the relationship between tourism and colonial politics. These three topics have been examined against the broader cultural context of Italian colonialism; such as the "indigenous politics" of the Italian colonies, the exoticism of colonial literature and the scientific practices of anthropological and ethnographic research. This project ultimately reveals two different approaches to the appropriation of local culture by architects working in the Libyan colonies. The first of these, influenced by contemporary European tendencies, viewed the vernacular as the fundamental basis for a modern, rational architecture. The second, valuing the "authenticity" of these indigenous sources, argued that they should be re-enacted for the purposes of

harmonizing with the pre-existing environment. The arguments offered here are that the conflicts and confluences between these two modernities characterized both the architecture of colonialism and the larger "cultural" project of the Italians in Libya.

The most important aspect of the historiographic approach of this project is its configuration around the three topics mentioned above. Within the body of this dissertation, these areas of study are treated as self-contained arguments that define their own discursive fields of inquiry. In addition to creating a more complex understanding of the Mediterranean identity of the Italian colonial project, this method involves the examination of different historical "material" and, consequently the exploration of the diverse dimensions of this larger subject. Part one of this investigation makes use of the texts and textualities of architectural discourse in Italy during the Fascist period. It studies the constantly shifting identity of Italian architecture in the metropolitan and colonial context through the writings of the architect Carlo Enrico Rava. Part two of this dissertation explores the representation of indigenous culture through objects and displays. In this case, the context is fairs and exhibitions in Italy and abroad – including the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* – which have been interrogated in relation to the contemporary practices of the colonial museum. The third part of this project examines the interaction between the tourist system, public works projects and the *politica indigena* of Italian colonialism during the Governorship of Italo Balbo. The tourist architecture of Florestano Di Fausto is contextualized in relation to the more general conceptual and physical manipulation of the colonial landscape during this period.

This project thus moves from an examination of the appropriation of "the vernacular" in architectural discourse, to its manifestation in colonial representations and its appearance in the cultural geography of the tourist system. This exploration of the different dimensions of the term *mediterraneità* allows for its expansion from a

theoretical principle, to a representational and environmental one. Another consequence of this approach is that this work engages a number of distinct fields of scholarly research. Part One is situated in relation to research on modern architecture in Italy during the Fascist period by authors like Giorgio Ciucci and Marida Talamona. It is primarily aimed at broadening the current understanding of Italian Rationalism by underscoring the importance of the writings of Rava, and thus inserting the architecture of colonialism into the paradigm of modernism. Part Two provides a careful examination of the distinct qualities of the representation of indigenous culture in the architecture of Italian colonialism. In an effort to critique writers like Zeynep Çelik and Patricia Morton who have applied post-colonial theory to the examination of exhibitions, this project argues that the creation of a hybrid of "the indigenous" and "the modern" in Italian colonial displays was a deliberate political strategy. The third part of this dissertation attempts to move beyond the conceptual limitations of these post-colonial works by examining how the architecture of colonialism was more than a mere representation of colonial power.⁵⁷ In deference to the writings of Antonio Gramsci, this part studies how the architecture of tourism was a scenographic backdrop to the re-enactment of local culture by the Libyans and Italians – both of whom became participants in the negotiation of indigenous identities.

A second important aspect of the historical method of this dissertation is its use of a wide range of different cultural productions as critical "evidence" to define

⁵⁷ In his book *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture*, Mark Crinson specifies what he argues are the limitations of post-colonial theory in discussing architecture, stating: "Said's definition of the essentially textual nature of orientalism casts some doubt over a straightforward application of his ideas to built form... it is precisely because this architecture was involved in direct and complex bonds and ties with local cultures on a range of institutional, practical and symbolic levels, that rather different problems are entailed from Said's field of inquiry." Crinson proceeds by asserting that the issue of audience in architecture is more complex, and building inevitably addressing the local populations – that is, it was not only aimed at the metropole. Crinson, *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 6-10.

these three topics. This material has included a variety of published works, from critical essays, to news reports, to books and tourist brochures. The exploration of these individual subjects has been supplemented by published material which intersected with these discourses, such as colonial novels and essays and books of anthropological and ethnographic research on the indigenous culture of the Libyan colonies. The use of such a diverse array of material in historicizing architecture is related to a more general contention that these "products" are an important part of the cultural hegemony of Italian colonialism. This combination of published accounts and archival material constitute a larger context in which architectural "objects" can be understood. However, it is important to recognize that the diversity of research material examined in this dissertation has been limited by the very nature of this object of study. This project explores how the indigenous culture of the Libyan colonies was constructed through representations produced by and for modern Italian society. Although a consistent effort has been made to contextualize Italian colonialism in relation to the local populations, the "reality" of this research has been that of metropolitan society. The reception of these various cultural representations by the Libyan populations and their impact both before and after the period of colonization is an important topic for further study.

Part 1. Modern Italian Architecture and Colonialism

The connection between modern architectural discourse in Italy and that associated with Italy's Libyan colonies was related to the fact that these were contemporary phenomena. This temporal convergence facilitated what would later become an intersection of their respective conceptual premises. The initial works of modern Italian architecture were built in the major urban centers of Milan, Turin and Rome during the politically turbulent decade of the 1920s. The architectural expression of this period was initially dominated by the neoclassicism of Novecento architects like Giovanni Muzio, Felice Casorati and Innocenzo Sabbatini, whose projects were connected by contemporary critics with the Metaphysical paintings of Giorgio Di Chirico and Carlo Carrà.¹ The emergence of the Novecento was quickly followed by Italian Rationalism in 1926 – a movement that was initiated by the publication of four manifestoes by the *Gruppo 7* in the journal *Rassegna Italiana*. The polemical statements made in these manifestoes by these young Milanese architects were reinforced by two important exhibitions held in Rome in 1928 and 1931. The work shown in these exhibitions, like many of the post World War I generation of architects, was an attempt to create an architecture that was aligned

¹ For a detailed discussion of the origins of modern architecture in Italy in the 1920s, see Giorgio Ciucci, *Gli architetti e il fascismo. Architettura e città 1922-1944* (Torino: Piccolo Biblioteca Einaudi, 1989), 37-92. Ciucci discusses the emergence of Novecento architecture in Milan, noting the complex nature of this term (which means, literally Twentieth century). Noting its connection to Metaphysical painting and specifically European connotations of this term in the writings of art critic Massimo Bontempelli on the one hand and the specifically Italian significance of this term in the case of the critic Margherita Sarfatti, Ciucci argues that Novecento was ultimately a stylistic term linked to a common interest in neoclassicism among a group of architects who were seeking a unified modern language. The works that exemplify this approach are: Muzio, "Ca' brutta" apartment building in Via Moscova, Milan, 1921-22; Casorati (with Alberto Sartoris), Teatrino di Casa Gualino, Turin, 1922-25; and Sabbatini, Alberghi per gli sfrattati alla Garbatella, Rome, 1927-29.

with contemporary European tendencies and yet distinctly Italian in character.² The first experiments in the development of a modern colonial architecture were undertaken in the city of Tripoli amid the climate of optimism created by the April 1926 visit of Benito Mussolini to this region. In 1928, Roman Novecento architect Alessandro Limongelli was appointed as *Consulente artistico* to the Municipality of Tripoli, and a new regulatory plan for Benghazi was undertaken by Milanese architects Alberto Alpago Novello, Ottavio Cabiati and Guido Ferrazza. The culmination of these initial efforts was the organization of a national competition for the design of the buildings surrounding Piazza della Cattedrale in Tripoli in 1930 – an event which saw the participation of a number of well-known Novecento and Rationalist architects.³

The development of modern architecture in the metropolitan and the colonial context was also closely related by its involvement in a parallel process of modernization. Following its rise to power in 1922, the Fascist Regime made a substantial commitment to the improvement and expansion of roads, railways and transportation networks throughout Italy. These changes were accompanied by the

² The original members of the *Gruppo 7* were Ubaldo Castagnoli, Luigi Figini, Guido Frette, Sebastiano Larco, Gino Pollini, Carlo Enrico Rava and Giuseppe Terragni. The manifestoes of this group were published in this journal as follows: "Architettura," *Rassegna Italiana* XVIII, 103 (December 1926): 849-54; "Architettura II: Gli Stranieri," *Rassegna Italiana* XIX, 105 (February 1927): 129-37; "Architettura III: Impreparazione, Incomprensione, Pregiudizi," *Rassegna Italiana* XIX, 106 (March 1927): 247-52; and "Architettura IV: Una nuova epoca arcaica," *Rassegna Italiana* XIX, 108 (May 1927): 467-72. The exhibitions were the first and second *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale*. The first was held at the Palazzo dell'Esposizione from March 29-April 30, 1928 and the second at the Galleria d'Arte from March 30 - April 30, 1931.

³ Marida Talamona notes that following Mussolini's visit to Tripolitania increasing attention was placed upon this colony and thus greater importance was placed upon the use of prominent architects and the construction of higher quality buildings. She argues that Limongelli's presence at the municipality encouraged others to follow, including Alpago-Novello, Cabiati and Ferrazza (Regulatory plan, 1928-32, and Governor's palace 1928-31, both in Benghazi); Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava (*Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna,"* Homs, 1928-31); and Marcello Piacentini and Luigi Piccinato (Teatro Berenice, Benghazi, 1928-29). The competition for Piazza della Cattedrale was held twice, in January and December of 1930, and, as Talamona notes, the entries were split between works of neo-classical influence and those indebted to a Rationalist vocabulary. Talamona, "Libya: an architectural workshop," *Rassegna* 51 (September 1992): 62-79.

reinforcement of existing public institutions, like post offices, rail stations and universities, and the creation of new fascist institutions, like the *Casa del Fascio*, the *Organizzazione Nazionale Dopolavoro*, and the *Gioventù Italiana del Littorio*.⁴ All of these initiatives involved the construction of new buildings or facilities, many of which were the subject of national competitions. The most infamous of these competitions are the *Stazione di Santa Maria Novella* in Florence of 1932 and the *Palazzo del littorio* in Rome of 1934 and 1937. The rapid growth of major cities necessitated the preparation of regulatory plans that allowed for the introduction of improvements within an existing historical context.⁵ A similar public works program was initiated by the Fascist authorities in the Italian colonies in North Africa – an effort that was primarily aimed at expanding the infrastructure of roads, transportation systems and public institutions. This gradual process of modernization – which was intended to bring these amenities up to the standards found in the metropolitan context – began with the so-called rebirth of Tripolitania under Governor Giuseppe Volpi from 1921-25, and concluded with the program of demographic colonization of this region during the Governorship of Italo Balbo from

⁴ For a general discussion of the public works projects undertaken by the Fascist Regime, see: Donatella Calabi, "The idea of the city and technical knowledge in modern Italy: Public works," in *Modern Italy. Images and history of a national identity. Volume 2. From expansion to the Second World War* (Milan: Electa Editrice, 1983), 263-70. She notes: "the social state found expression.. in the policy of constructing new services, boosted after 1926 by the plans for expansion of the road and rail systems, the building of new stations and the erection of community centers such as the offices of the *Organizzazione Nazionale Dopolavoro* or of the *Casa del Fascio* or... those of the *Gioventù Italiana del Littorio*." The first of these were the local political headquarters of the Fascist party, the second an after work club for party members, and the third a health and fitness organization for Fascist youth. For a detailed discussion of the *Dopolavoro*, see: Victoria de Grazia, *The culture of consent. Mass organization of leisure in fascist Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

⁵ For a broad survey of the competitions held during the fascist period, from the most minor public commissions to the *Esposizione Universale di Roma*, which was to be held in 1942, see: Carlo Cresti, "La stagione fascista dei grandi concorsi di architettura," in *Architettura e fascismo* (Firenze: Vallecchi Editore, 1986), 145-212. For a discussion of urban planning see: Giorgio Ciucci, "L'edilizia come forma della città e l'urbanistica come modello per il territorio," and "L'urbanistica fra arte di Stato e piano sociale," in *Gli architetti e il fascismo*, 9-36, 165-76.

1934-40.⁶ Improvements also involved the designing of regulatory plans for the major urban centers of Tripoli and Benghazi, and, in a more limited sense, the organization of design competitions open to Italian architects. However, the modernization of public infrastructure in the colonial context was more than a means of civic improvement. It was also one of the mechanisms that maintained a more efficient control of the local populations.

The most important connection between the theory of a modern Italian architecture proper to the Fascist state and the prospects for a modern colonial architecture was their shared conceptual foundations. The figure through which these theoretical discourses were linked was Carlo Enrico Rava, who was one of the founding members of *Gruppo 7*.⁷ It was Rava who, in 1931, published a series of articles in *Domus* magazine under the heading "Panorama del razionalismo." In these writings, he effectively re-situated himself in relation to European architecture in general and Italian Rationalism in particular. In the first of these essays, entitled "Svolta pericolosa: situazione dell'Italia di fronte al razionalismo europeo," Rava speaks of the characteristically Italian qualities which a modern and rational architecture should seek – qualities which he found best expressed in the indigenous

⁶ For a detailed account of the public works improvements introduced in Tripolitania during the Governorship of Volpi, see: *La rinascita della Tripolitania. Memorie e studi sui quattro anni di governo del Conte Giuseppe Volpi di Misurata* (Milano: Casa Editrice A. Mondadori, 1926), 187-397. This book includes information on all areas of government intervention, from colonization efforts, to financial improvements, to transportation systems, to education, to the justice system, to public works, to health and sanitation. For a general presentation of the public works efforts during the Balbo era, see: A. Giovannangeli, "Cenni sull'attività municipale di Tripoli," *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea. Anno XV. Orientamenti e note ad uso dei giornalisti* (1937), 1-13. A more specific presentation of the regulatory plans and construction of public institutions is found in: G. Bucciante, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia." *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 1-17.

⁷ Rava wrote the first and forth of the *Gruppo 7* manifestoes; "Architettura," (December 1926) and "Architettura IV: Una nuova epoca arcaica" (May 1927). In consulting the documents in the archive of Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini in Milan, it is quite clear that he was the crucial first contact with European figures like Sigfried Giedion, Walter Gropius, Hugo Häring and Le Corbusier. For a detailed examination of the contacts between the *Gruppo 7* and European architects, see: Marida Talamona, "Primi passi verso l'Europa (1927-1933)," in *Luigi Figini Gino Pollini. Opera completa* (Milano: Electa, 1996), 55-81.

architecture of the Mediterranean region.⁸ These vernacular sources were offered as an alternative to the "intransigence" of contemporary Northern European influences, and as something that would provide Italian architecture with an independent expression proper to its Latin roots. This concept of a "Latin spirit" within Italian architecture was also closely tied to Rava's discussion of a modern colonial architecture – a topic which he examined in the fifth and sixth articles in this series. In these essays, he argued that the indigenous Libyan architecture provided a rational solution to the problem of the colonial climate that was also Roman in origin.⁹ The appropriation of these vernacular constructions for a modern colonial architecture was thus a method of harmonizing with the North African environment, and a way of connecting this new expression with Italy's own past.

This intersection of modern Italian architecture and a modern architecture for Italy's Libyan colonies will be studied through a detailed examination of the theoretical debates documented in magazines and other publications. Of particular importance to this discussion are the writings of Rava, whose idea of *mediterraneità* was both an important reference point for Rationalist architects seeking to find the appropriate expression of a modern architecture for the Fascist State, and a key concept in the theorization of a modern colonial architecture.¹⁰ This examination

⁸ This series of articles were published in *Domus* magazine as follows: Rava, "I. Svolta pericolosa: situazione dell'Italia di fronte al razionalismo europeo," *Domus* 37 (January 1931): 39-44; "II. Spirito latino," *Domus* 38 (February 1931): 24-9; "III. Necessità di selezione, parte prima e seconda," *Domus* 39 & 40 (March & April 1931): 36-40, 84; 39-43, 88; "IV. Di un architettura coloniale moderna, parte prima e seconda," *Domus* 41 & 42 (May & June 1931): 39-43, 89; 32-6; "V. Giovani architetti nordamericani," *Domus* 43 (July 1931): 33-6, 88; "VI. Conclusione." *Domus* 47 (November 1931): 34-40. For a detailed discussion of these writings, see: Fabrizio Brunetti, "L'idea di *mediterraneità* negli scritti di Carlo Enrico Rava e del gruppo di *Quadrante*." *Architetti e fascismo* (Firenze: Alinea Editrice, 1993), 203-16.

⁹ In these articles Rava argues that colonial architecture was not to be derived from either the slavish copying of historical models, or the false Moorish style that characterized the early period of Italian colonialism in Libya. Rather, indigenous constructions provide the model for a modern colonial architecture due to its Roman influence, its primitivism and its general Mediterranean character. See Rava, "IV. Di un architettura coloniale moderna, parte prima e seconda," 39-43, 89; 32-6.

¹⁰ The concept of *mediterraneità* in Italian architecture during the Fascist period has been examined in Silvia Danesi, "Aporie dell'architettura Italiana in periodo fascista—*mediterraneità* e

will be contextualized within a careful study of the longer historical trajectory of an interest in vernacular constructions by modern Italian architects, with particular attention to the concept of an *architettura minore* advanced by Gustavo Giovannoni and Marcello Piacentini in the journal *Architettura e Arti Decorative* in the early 1920s. The theoretical position of Rava will then be mapped out in relation to the broader debate surrounding Italian Rationalism, with particular attention to the period between the original manifestoes of the *Gruppo 7* and the publication of Rava's writings in *Domus* magazine in 1931. This examination of the appropriation of vernacular sources by modern architects will conclude with a discussion of the broader dissemination of this term in the later 1930s, including the writings of the *Quadrante* group, the *architettura rurale* of Giuseppe Pagano, the *casa al mare* of Gio Ponti's *Domus* and Rava's later essays. The second section will study Rava's critical writings on modern colonial architecture in relation to his reconfiguration of Italian Rationalism and the construction of the Mediterranean in the political and cultural discourse related to Italy's North African colonies. Equally important to this broader contextualization is an examination of his various travels in North Africa, and the influence of his father Maurizio, who was a prominent political figure in Tripolitania from 1927 to 1931. The transformation of this discourse after the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 will also be discussed, with particular attention to the later writings of Rava and parallel activities of Giovanni Pellegrini, Luigi Piccinato and Florestano Di Fausto.

purismo," in *Il razionalismo e l'architettura in Italia durante il fascismo*, ed. Silvia Danesi and Luciano Patteta (Milano: Electa Editrice, 1976), 21-28. This essay largely focuses on the "Purist" strain of *mediterraneità* articulated by the Rationalist architects like Giuseppe Terragni, Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini, who were associated with the journal *Quadrante*.

A. Carlo Enrico Rava and the "Svolta pericolosa" of Italian Rationalism

We need to persuade ourselves that, at least for a time, the new architecture will be made, in part, by *renunciation*. It is necessary to have this courage: *architecture can no longer be individual*. In the coordinated effort to save it, to lead it back to the most rigid logic, to the direct derivation from the exigencies of our times, we now need to sacrifice our personalities; and *only* from this temporary leveling, from this fusion of all tendencies into one, will an architecture, *truly ours*, be born.

Il Gruppo 7 (Carlo Enrico Rava), "Architettura," 1926.¹¹

Based on the familiarity with the most true and vital Rationalism, and on those almost universal elements which it has imposed, we expect... that Italian architects will feel the need to create according to their race, their culture, their personality. We expect that they will discover the joy of liberty and of imagination; that they will dare to feel independent again, striving that their projects, even in their various singularities, will reflect the ideal climate of their time, the climate of Latin modernity. Finally, we expect that they will understand that the exceedingly uniform rationalist architecture of Europe awaits a supreme gift from the Italians...: the gift of independent intelligence.

Carlo Enrico Rava, "Svolta pericolosa. Situazione dell'Italia di fronte al razionalismo Europeo," 1931.¹²

¹¹ The original quotation is as follows: "*Occorre persuadersi che almeno per un tempo la nuova architettura sarà fatta in parte di *renuncia*. È *necessario* avere questo coraggio: *l'architettura non può più essere individuale*. Nello sforzo coordinato per salvarla, per ricondurla alla logica più rigida, alla diretta derivazione dalle esigenze dei nostri tempi, occorre ora sacrificare la propria personalità; e *solo* da questo temporaneo livellamento, da questa fusione di tutte le tendenze in una sola tendenza, potrà nascere la nostra architettura, *veramente nostra*." Il Gruppo 7, "Architettura," *La Rassegna Italiana* XVIII, CIII (December 1926): 853. With regard to the authorship of this article and the writings of the *Gruppo 7*, as will be noted later in this section, Rava claimed to have written the first and fourth of the manifestoes.*

¹² The original quotation is as follows: "Vorremmo... che, pur sulle esperienze del più vero e vitale razionalismo, e di quelli elementi ormai universali che esso ha imposti, gli architetti italiani sentissero il bisogno di creare secondo la loro razza, la loro coltura, la loro personalità; ritrovassero la gioia della libertà e della fantasia; osassero sentirsi di nuovo indipendenti, sforzandosi che le loro opere, pur nella loro diversa singolarità, rispecchiassero il clima ideale del loro tempo, il clima della modernità latina; capissero infine, che la troppo uniforme architettura razionalista d'Europa, attende dagli italiani... un dono supremo... : il dono della libera intelligenza." Carlo Enrico Rava, "Svolta pericolosa. Situazione dell'Italia di fronte al razionalismo europeo," 43.

In an article published in *Domus* magazine in January of 1931, entitled "Svolta pericolosa. Situazione dell'Italia di fronte al razionalismo Europeo," Carlo Enrico Rava argues that Italian Rationalist architects were at a crucial turning point, wherein two distinct views were emerging within current European tendencies. The first of these approaches had been elaborated by "intransigent" architects like Walter Gropius, Erich Mendelsohn, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier, whom Rava referred to as "pure," "dogmatic" and "absolute abolishers of individualism." The second of these positions was evident in the work of "independent" architects like Emil Fahrenkamp, Heinrich Tessenow and Alfred Soulek, whom he argued had "reclaimed the right to preserve their own personality through Rationalism," while being vigilant in their affirmation of "the distinctive national characteristics of culture and race."¹³ Linking the founding manifestoes of the *Gruppo 7* with this first line of thought – with the renunciation of individualism, the inevitability of production standards and the spirit of the series – Rava asserts that Italian Rationalism had made such great progress, that it was both possible and necessary for it to pursue a more independent approach. He stated that, rather than follow what he called the "intransigent socialist tendency": "not only must Italy opt for the nationalists... it was bound to lead it by destiny of tradition and race." According to Rava, the source of this nationalism was to be found in the "smooth white cubes" and "large terraces" of the vernacular architecture of Italy's coastal regions, that is, in the "Mediterranean spirit" of Italy's ancient and modern civilization.¹⁴

¹³ In speaking about recent tendencies within European Rationalism, Rava states: "It is itself divided into two principal and divergent currents: on the one hand, the Rationalists which we would call "pure," intransigent and dogmatic, absolute abolishers of individualism; on the other, we would speak of the "independents," who reclaim the right to preserve their own personality through Rationalism as unifier of structural form, and search to affirm the distinctive national characteristics of culture and race, also on the steady foundation of Rationalism." Rava, "Svolta pericolosa. Situazione dell'Italia di fronte al razionalismo europeo," 39.

¹⁴ The larger context of this first statement is as follows: "It seems evident that, between the intransigent socialist tendency and the nationalist one, not only must Italy opt for the nationalists,

These arguments would seem to be a dramatic reversal of the strain of Rationalism that Rava had elaborated upon as the *mente pensante* behind the *Gruppo 7*. In an article reflecting on the theoretical discourse within modern Italian architecture in *Domus* magazine in 1934, critic Edoardo Persico bluntly asked: "What had happened in two years to lead Rava from the *europesismo* of 1928 to the *mediterraneità* of 1930?" Answering his own question, he argued that the writings of Rava exemplified the fact that "the relationship between architecture and politics... had overturned the nature of the debate."¹⁵ The assertion of a specifically nationalist dimension in modern architecture can be directly linked to the intense political and ideological climate within Italian architectural discourse in the early 1930s – a climate in which critic Pier Maria Bardi argued that Rationalism should take on the challenge of becoming an *Arte di Stato*.¹⁶ The *mediterraneità* of Rava can also be understood as the means he employed to distance himself from his former colleagues – a process that had begun with his rather acrimonious split with the *Gruppo 7* in May of 1929, and that continued with a failed attempt to form a *Gruppo nazionale architetti razionalisti italiani* in 1930.¹⁷ These writings in *Domus* thus

but it was bound to lead it by destiny of tradition and race." Ibid., 41. Rava speaks about the Mediterranean spirit of Italian architecture in the final paragraph, linking it with the vernacular architecture of Capri, Amalfi and the Ligurian Riviera. It is this architecture which he argued was both rational, and steeped in the tradition of the Italian race and culture. Ibid., 44.

¹⁵ See Persico, "Punto e da capo per l'architettura," *Domus* 83 (November 1934): 1-9. This essay provides a critical survey of recent writings on modern architecture – something which is alluded to in its title, which means "full stop and new paragraph for architecture." In explaining this change of Rava, Persico argues: "The Europeanism of Rava, which broke out five years earlier in 1926, when many Italian intellectuals underwent the influence of the *nouvelle Revue Française*, has, evidently, given in to the political exigencies of *mediterraneità* in 1930." Ibid., 3.

¹⁶ Giorgio Ciucci notes that, in anticipation of the second *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* to be held in March and April of 1931, Pier Maria Bardi published an article entitled "Architettura, arte di stato" in *L'Ambrosiano* in January of that year. As a critic and important sympathizer with Italian Rationalism, Bardi called upon these architects to understand that the internationalism of Italian architecture had the duty to "support, accompany and illustrate the conquests of Fascism." Ciucci, "Architettura, arte di Stato," *Gli architetti e il fascismo*, 108-13.

¹⁷ According the archive of Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini, the split with Rava is confirmed in a letter from Adalberto Libera di Pollini dated May 20, 1929 and confirmed in a letter from Rava to Pollini dated May 27, 1929. AFP-Scatola 3, Cartella B. The attempt of Rava and Alberto Sartoris to form a *Gruppo Nazionale* is recorded in a series of letters held in the documents in the

represent a public confirmation of prior disagreements; the most immediate provocation being the upcoming second *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale*, which was to open at the end of March of 1931.

This theorization of a modern architecture based upon the indigenous constructions of Italy's coastal regions was tied to the tradition of modern European architects, who viewed these vernacular sources as a suitable inspiration for their contemporary works. Among the first to recognize this influence was Viennese architect Josef Hoffmann, who in an article published in 1897 in *Der Architekt*, argued that the vernacular manner of building on the island of Capri could serve as an example for a modern country house, though not by way of mimesis.¹⁸ To a great extent, Hoffmann's evaluation of the architecture of the Amalfian coast was influenced by the principles advanced by Otto Wagner in his book *Moderne Architektur* of 1896. He was echoing the earlier sentiments of Wagner, who in seeking a liberation from historicism, called for the rejection of the "broad path of imitation and custom" in favor of an architecture which corresponds to "the new materials and demands of the present."¹⁹ It is evident that in valuing these

Archivio Centrale dello Stato. See: ACS-MPI-Dir.Gen.AA.BB.AA. Divisione III-1930-1935. Busta 158. Fascicolo-1929 - Zurigo - Comitato Internazionale per l'Architettura. This process began on September 19, 1928 with a letter and report from Rava and Sartoris to S.E. Leicht, the *Sottosegretario di Stato* at the *Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, and concluded with Rava resigning his position as official representative to the *Comité International pour la Realisation du Probleme Architectural Moderne* (CIRPAM) in a letter dated April 8, 1930.

¹⁸ See Josef Hoffmann, "Architektonisches von der Insel Capri. Ein Beitrag für malerische Architekturempfindungen," *Der Architekt* III, 1897, in Eduard Sekler, *Josef Hoffmann: Monograph and Catalogue of Works* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 497. In discussing the houses of Capri in this article, Hoffman states: "The example of folk art, as it actually exists here in these simple country houses, exerts a great effect on every unprejudiced mind and lets us feel more and more how much we miss this at home." Despite this recognition of these buildings, he is careful to assert that this "should not lead to the imitation of this way of buildings, but should only serve to awaken in us a homely concept of housing."

¹⁹ Hoffmann's debt to Wagner is recognized by Eduard Sekler, who argues that there was a close personal and philosophical connection between these two individuals. Sekler also provides an excellent and concise explanation of the attraction of these modern architects for vernacular Mediterranean architecture – which he felt was as much for the design principles they represented as for their formal qualities. Sekler, *Josef Hoffmann: Monograph and Catalogue of Works*, 23. For a detailed discussion of the writings of Wagner, see Harry Francis Mallgrave, "From Realism to *Sachlichkeit*: The Polemics of Architectural Modernity in the 1890s," in *Otto Wagner*:

vernacular works as models for contemporary projects, Hoffmann was responding to the moral dimension of craft production that Wagner's writings had assimilated from Morris, Ruskin and the English Arts and Crafts Movement. There was also a regional connotation to an appeal to the vernacular, which linked this architecture to a specific geographical and cultural context – something that Eduard Sekler asserts was part of the contemporary process of "deliberately building up national consciousness and ethnic sensibilities."²⁰ The theoretical basis behind this appreciation of indigenous Mediterranean architecture thus reflects a tension between assertions of the material and programmatic determinacy of architecture – what has been referred to as its "realism" – and its reference to a regional culture and its attendant craft traditions.

In the Italian context, an interest in vernacular architecture was cultivated in the pages of *Architettura e Arti Decorative* – a journal which began publication in September of 1921 under the direction of Gustavo Giovannoni and Marcello Piacentini. The role of Piacentini in this discourse is particularly important, as in addition to editing this journal, he would later become an important critic of Italian Rationalism, and thus an impetus for the *mediterraneità* of Rava. This magazine was the official organ of the Roman *Associazione artistica fra i cultori di architettura*, a group which was founded in 1890 to preserve the historical patrimony of Italian

Reflections on the Raiment of Modernity, ed. Harry Francis Mallgrave (Santa Monica, CA: The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1993), 281-321. The quotations from Wagner are taken from: Wagner, *Modern Architecture. A Guidebook for his students to this field of art* (1896), introduction and translation by Harry Francis Mallgrave (Santa Monica: The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1988), 78.

²⁰ Wagner is critical of the "infiltration of art into industry" which he felt produced inferior works. He also strongly asserts that it was the task of art to "idealize the existing" to give new materials and methods a meaningful form. See Wagner, *Modern Architecture. A Guidebook for his students to this field of art*, 93, 118. The connection between Wagner's theory and the English Arts and Crafts is recognized by Harry Francis Mallgrave in his discussion of Wagner's writings, where he suggests that the moral dimension of architecture in Wagner can be linked to the teachings of Ruskin and Morris. Mallgrave, "From Realism to *Sachlichkeit*: The Polemics of Architectural Modernity in the 1890s," 290. The quotation from Sekler is taken from *Josef Hoffmann: Monograph and Catalogue of Works*, 22.

cities.²¹ With the guidance of its two editors, this publication provided a more academic and theoretical alternative to the technical focus of the only other architectural journal *L'Architettura Italiana*, which had been in existence since 1905.²² The influence of this magazine was evident in a wide ranging series of essays that included the critical presentation of contemporary activities in Italy and abroad, and scholarly articles on the history of Italian architecture. Through the contribution of architects and critics like Piacentini, Roberto Papini, Gaetano Minucci and Paolo Mezzanote, this journal became a crucial point of reference for contemporary debates within modern architecture and the decorative arts.²³ It argued for an appreciation for the vernacular traditions of the various regions of Italy through the presentation of current building projects, competitions and exhibitions. These local and national representations were carefully measured against European and international tendencies, which were given ample space in the magazine. *Architettura e Arti Decorative* was also a valuable resource for a more profound appreciation of the historical value of Italy's architectural heritage. Under the

²¹ For a detailed analysis of the activities of the *Associazione artistica* see Richard Etlin, "A Modern Vernacular Architecture," in *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991), 129-61. Etlin notes that while this group began as "friends of monuments" their focus shifted to the question of "minor architecture" and particularly that of the Middle Ages and the Baroque in Rome. For an investigation of the planning implications of this group's activities, see Etlin, "Contextualism and the Reasoned Picturesque," in *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940*, 101-28.

²² In a discussion of *Architettura e Arti Decorative*, Arianna Sara de Rose notes that the Torinese journal *L'Architettura Italiana* "privileged the technical aspect" through "pursuing an editorial policy... limited to the presentation of projects of already established authors, without conceding space to debate." de Rose, "Architettura e Arti Decorative," *Marcello Piacentini. Opere 1903-1926* (Modena: Franco Cosimo Pannini editore, 1995), 88-90. *L'Architettura Italiana* was the only Italian journal dedicated to architecture prior to the founding of *Architettura e Arti Decorative*.

²³ The contribution of Piacentini to this journal largely focused on the presentation of current architectural movements in Italy and abroad. In this effort, he encouraged the participation of critics sympathetic to his interests like Papini, Minucci and Mezzanote. Although Papini also wrote on subjects pertaining to historical topics, his primary focus was on contemporary activities like the Exhibition of Decorative Arts in Paris in 1925. In the case of Minucci, this Roman architect presented articles on industrial buildings and Dutch architecture. These interests reflect his subsequent participation in the Rationalist exhibitions in Rome. Mezzanote's articles were largely focused on the decorative arts.

guidance of Giovannoni, it provided important historical documentation of the minor architecture of each province and chronicled recent activities in the area of historic preservation.²⁴ These historical and contemporary interests were reinforced through the format of this publication, which combined critical essays with polemical commentary, bibliographic reviews and reportage of current realizations and events.

The heterogeneous nature of the presentation of vernacular architecture in *Architettura e Arti Decorative* is largely due to the divergent backgrounds and interests of its two editors. Giovannoni's contribution was more directly tied to the preservation activities of the *Associazione artistica*. In his writings, he espoused a scholarly defense of the importance of *architettura minore*, defined as the anonymous architectural organisms that expressed the distinctive character of particular cities. In an article from 1926 entitled "Case del quattrocento in Roma," Giovannoni argued that the medieval house was "closer to the life, ...the local tradition and sentiment and the positive rationale inherent in regional conditions" than the Cinquecento architecture of Bramante, which was seen to express a more specifically Italian identity.²⁵ [Figure 1.a-1] The culmination of his collaboration with the *Associazione artistica* was the publication of a series of books entitled

²⁴ In the first year of this journal, these historical presentations included the following articles: Corrado Ricci, "La porta di San Pietro di Perugia," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* I, 1 (September-October 1921): 17-31; Alberto Terenzio, "Restauro di edifici dell'antica Genova," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* I, 2 (November-December 1921): 139-52; Papini, "Il chiostro delle majoliche in Santa Chiara di Napoli," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* I, 4 (March-April 1922): 325-38; and G. Quirino Giglioli, "La tomba di L. Munazio Planco a Gaeta," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* I, 6 (July-August 1922): 507-25. In addition to these essays, this journal contained a monthly "Cronaca dei monumenti", gave titles of recent publications, and reported on the activities of the *Associazione artistica*.

²⁵ Giovannoni, "Case del quattrocento in Roma," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* V, 6 (February 1926): 241-57. This article argues that the architecture of the quattrocento was both more expressive of the regional character of Rome, and provided the precedent for Renaissance developments. It is interesting to note that the architecture of the Renaissance was seen to express an Italian identity as opposed to a Roman one, found in these quattrocento houses. This article provides a detailed documentation and analysis of medieval houses, including the Palazzo Mattei in Trastevere and the Palazzo Simonetti in Via del Gesù. For a general presentation of Giovannoni's theories and writings, see: *Gustavo Giovannoni. Dal capitello alla città*, ed. Guido Zucconi (Milano: Jaca Book, 1997).

Architettura minore in Italia beginning in 1926. By documenting these anonymous buildings, these publications were intended to address a lacuna within the history of Italian architecture.²⁶ They were also used as an intellectual justification for a policy of *ambientismo* in the modernization of historic centers of Italian cities – an approach which Giovannoni himself had developed in his proposals for the systemization of the Renaissance quarter of Rome of 1913. Largely inspired by Camillo Sitte's *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen* of 1889, this proposal called for the *diradamento* or thinning out of the area surrounding the Via dei Coronari – an approach that both responded to modern demands and carefully preserved the picturesque qualities of this quarter of Rome.²⁷ [Figure 1.a-2] Through the writings and proposals of Giovannoni, this historical interest in minor architecture was thus closely tied to the contemporary debate concerning the planning of Italian cities.

The concept of *architettura minore* in the writings of Marcello Piacentini was more clearly related to the theoretical discourse concerning the development of a modern architectural aesthetic. In the first issue of *Architettura e Arti Decorative*,

²⁶ Although many more volumes were planned, only three of these publications were produced between 1926 and 1940. The first two of these were on the city of Rome, while the third was on the province of Lazio. See Associazione artistica fra i cultori di architettura in Roma, *Architettura minore in Italia* (Torino: C. Crudo & Co., 1926-40). Volume I. Roma; Volume II. Roma; Volume III. Lazio e suburbio di Roma. In the introduction to Volume I, the program of this series was described as addressing the neglect of the more modest forms of architecture. This research was also seen to respond to the imminent need for change in Italian cities, these buildings acting as an "inexhaustible source for our architects, who can in their repetition, maintain the environmental character and remain within the practical themes of life."

²⁷ See Giovannoni, "Il "diradamento" edilizio dei vecchi centri - il Quartiere della Rinascenza in Roma," *Nuova Antologia* XLVIII, 997 (July 1, 1913): 53-76. Giovannoni argues that in order to respond to the need for hygiene within historic centers while preserving the local artistic aspect, the *diradamento* is the preferred solution. This article was preceded by a more general argument about the approach to urban planning, where these ideas of local character were also understood as design principles that could apply to the creation of housing quarters on the periphery of the city. Both of these essays explicitly reference the writings of Sitte and make similar arguments about the "artistic" and rational basis of irregularity in the planning of cities. See Giovannoni, "Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova," *Nuova Antologia* XLVIII, 995 (June 1, 1913): 449-72. For a more general discussion of the design principles espoused by Giovannoni see Vanna Fraticelli, "La formazione di una teoria dell'intervento nel centro storico," in *Roma 1914-1929. La città e gli architetti tra le guerra e il fascismo* (Roma: Officina Edizioni, 1982), 34-61.

Piacentini argued that, along with classicism and abstraction, vernacular architecture – or what he called rusticism – was one of the most important contemporary developments within modern architecture in Italy and abroad.²⁸ For Piacentini, a modern Italian architecture would derive from a dialectical mediation between the fundamental characteristics common to all countries – which he asserted were "sobriety, synthesis, and renunciation" – and the permanent principles that resided in the architecture of Italy's past.²⁹ Vernacular architecture was one of the most important sources of this past – a theme that was more fully developed in a subsequent article, entitled "Influssi d'arte italiana nel Nord-America." In this essay, which traced the influence of Italian vernacular constructions on the domestic architecture of North America, Piacentini argues that this minor architecture reflected a "response to the modest needs of life common to all men" and, as such, was an art that was "simple and spontaneous, free of any presumptions." In considering the contemporary value of these indigenous sources, he states: "This architectonic prose, of little personal content, but collective, anonymous, must be revived against the sterile attempts of the architectonic fashions of recent decades."³⁰ The connection

²⁸ See Piacentini, "Il momento architettonico all'estero," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* I, 1 (September-October 1921): 32-76. In this article, Piacentini provides a general survey of foreign architecture, characterizing these tendencies as all deriving from the same impulse for simplification, the suppression of false structure and the reduction of decoration. For a detailed discussion of this journal's espousal of vernacular architecture, see: Etlin, "Architettura e Arti Decorative: the Virtues of Rustic Architecture," in *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940*, 134-9.

²⁹ Piacentini, "Il momento architettonico all'estero," 72. In concluding this article, Piacentini states: "We have seen what the differences are between the various national schools and what are the new laws common to all. We must persuade ourselves of this and find in our past, and even more in our homes, the fundamental and permanent principles of our race. With only these two elements we must find our way."

³⁰ The larger context of these two statements is as follows: "These North Americans, like the Germans have for many years, have understood that we must not only study the courtly and monumental architecture. They have understood that the everyday demands of building... must be resolved, as in all past epochs, with modest intentions, with local materials, with minimal means, with popular art, simple and spontaneous, free of any presumptions. This architectonic prose, of little personal content, but collective, anonymous, must be revived against the sterile attempts of the architectonic fashions of recent decades, driven toward a beauty and a world that is not, must

between vernacular sources and contemporary artistic production was expressed in a very direct way in the organization and content of the *Salette d'arte rustica* at the Biennale Romana of 1922, where drawings of Amalfi by Camillo Jona, displays of local crafts, and photographs of contemporary architecture were combined. [Figure 1.a-3] One such architectural synthesis presented in this exhibition was a Villa in the Parioli quarter by Piacentini of 1916-18, which was described by Antonio Mariani as "employing rustic themes in the conception of a modern villa."³¹ [Figure 1.a-4]

In the pages of *Architettura e Arti Decorative*, vernacular architecture was thus validated as both a subject of scholarly interest related to the preservation of the historical center of cities, and the foundation of a modern aesthetic proper to Italian architectural culture. The difference between these views was evidenced in a number of recurring themes in the magazine – one of the most prominent of these being the architecture of the Island of Capri. For Edwin Cerio, who published an article entitled "L'Architettura minima nella contrada delle Sirene" in 1922, these indigenous constructions were an important artistic and ethnic patrimony that should be preserved in the face of the advancing forces of modernization.³² [Figure 1.a-5] Criticizing the lack of imagination evident in the work of engineers, and the arguments of building authorities for a "constructive economy", he argued that the

not and will not be that of today." Piacentini, "Influssi d'arte Italiana nel Nord-America," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* I, 6 (July-August 1922): 536-55.

³¹ In an article reporting on this exhibition, Antonio Mariani argues that rustic architecture, "is something more than a picturesque moment in the landscape, it is an architecture in its own right." The virtues of this architecture were seen to be its modernity, that is, "rustic architecture, in the elementary simplicity of its solutions, possesses a logical and exhaustive aesthetic." Its applicability to contemporary architecture was due to its direct response to the climate, the daily needs of life and the necessity of work. Mariani, "L'Architettura rustica alla Cinquantennale romana," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* I, 4 (March-April 1922): 379-85.

³² These arguments are presented in the following article: Cerio, "L'architettura minima nella contrada delle Sirene," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* II, 4 (December 1922): 156-76. As mayor of Capri, Cerio organized a "Landscape conference" in 1923, which was aimed at protecting this island from impending speculation related to its status as a tourist enclave. It is worth noting that among its attendees were futurists Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Virgilio Marchi and Enrico Prampolini. For a detailed description of the artistic life of Capri during these years, see: *Capri, 1905-1940. Frammenti e postumi*, ed. Lea Vergine (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1983).

traditional building technique of the battered vault was the most economical and technically superior system of construction. According to Cerio, who was both an architect and the mayor of this island, the preservation of the vernacular architecture of Capri necessitated the elision of modern technology – that is, indigenous techniques were seemingly hostile to modernity.³³ In contrast with this view, architects like Giuseppe Capponi asserted that the architecture of Capri, as a "genuine expression of the Italian spirit," could be a direct model for modern architects. [Figure 1.a-6] In an article entitled "Motivi di architettura ischiana" of 1927, rather than discussing these vernacular constructions in relation to their use of materials and building techniques, Capponi examined them for their visual qualities, which derived almost solely "from the movement of masses, from the good rapport between solid and void, from the impulse of the arches, and from the use of color."³⁴ He argued that the architecture of Capri could provide a lesson for contemporary architects that were pursuing what he termed a "materialist internationalism." These vernacular constructions were, for Capponi, "a clear demonstration that the rationality in the disposition of the organism and spaces could be well unified with an artistic intention, and harmonize with environmental elements."³⁵

³³ After underscoring the historical and cultural context of this island as the "region of the Sirens", Cerio proceeds to criticize the technical aspects of modern construction. One point of emphasis was the problem of asphalt roofing, which was seen to be inferior to the traditional techniques of battering and plastering. This article even provides a detailed description of this technique and documentation of the tools used by workmen; the *mazzoccola* (a trowel), the *jannara* (a tool for battering with a long handle), and the *scannetto* (a stool). Cerio, "L'architettura minima nella contrada delle Sirene," 163, 168-76.

³⁴ These arguments were presented in: Capponi, "Motivi di architettura ischiana," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* VI, 11 (July 1927): 481-94. This article was illustrated by a series of drawings by Capponi, combining both sketches of existing buildings, and Capponi's own proposal for a "Casa per un artista a Capri." This visual argument is accompanied by his own words, which assert that: "The houses of Ischia, conceived and carried out during a period so different than ours for the demands of life, technical means and construction materials, strangely expresses that idea that is so characteristic of the most modern conception of architecture."

³⁵ The larger context of this statement is as follows: "There is a lesson in these humble architectonic works that should not be lost on the architects who grasp for a materialist internationalism, since it gives us a clear demonstration that the rationality in the disposition of the organism and spaces could be unified well with an artistic conception, and harmonize with environmental elements." *Ibid.*, 492.

The dual aspect of vernacular architecture presented in this magazine – as both an object of preservation and a subject of contemporary artistic speculation – also extended to the decorative arts, where the preservation and cultivation of regional traditions was enjoying a period of revival in Italy. Recalling the much earlier *Esposizione etnografica* in Rome of 1919, art critic Raffaello Giolli proposed to "study and use this peasant art as the basis for a great industrial renewal of the Italian decorative arts."³⁶ Arguing that, in reality, Italy was constituted by a series of regional traditions, he asserts that a contemporary decorative arts should be based upon these "sincere" and "instinctive" sources. This emphasis on the regional identity of Italy as manifested in these peasant arts is clearly evident in the first *Mostra internazionale d'arte decorativa* held in Monza in 1923, which was organized in such a way as to emphasize the autonomy of the craft traditions of each province of Italy.³⁷ Rather than present what would have been a national expression of the Italian decorative arts, this exhibition displayed the *arte rustica* of Calabria, Lombardia and Sardegna in separate spaces. [Figure 1.a-7] Reporting on this exhibition, Paolo Mezzanote argues that the value of rustic arts in any country was not found in its folkloric content, but rather in its organic relation to the people

³⁶ See Giolli, "Arte paesana," *Pagine d'Arte* VII, 10 (October 1919): 85-7. In this article, Giolli speaks of the research of Lamberto Loria into the peasant arts, which was exhibited in the *Esposizione Etnografica di Roma* of 1911 and in turn given to the Museo Etnografico. He argues that this research would be a valid point of departure for a revival of the decorative arts, recognizing that Italy was by its nature defined by its regions. Moreover, he asserts that the sincerity and directness of these arts was a good model for contemporary production. It should be noted that there was no perceived contradiction between industrial means and these peasant forms.

³⁷ For contemporary documentation and commentary on this first exhibition, see Paolo Mezzanote, "La Prima Mostra Internazionale delle Arti decorative a Monza," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* II, 10-12 (June-July-August 1923): 391-404, 429-57, 481-95. It should be noted that the Biennale of Monza became the Triennale of Milan in 1930. A more general historical study of these exhibitions is provided in Anty Pansera, *Storia e cronaca della Triennale* (Milano: Longanesi, 1978). Although the general intention of these events was to provide a meeting ground between designers and producers, historians have viewed these initial exhibitions as an expression of the backwardness of the applied arts in Italy. See Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, "Architecture, Painting and the Decorative Arts in Italy, 1923-1940, from the First Biennale to the Seventh Triennale," in *Italian Art, 1900-1945*, ed. Germano Celant and Pontus Hulten (New York: Rizzoli, 1989), 69-76.

of the nation and their attitudes and qualities, which he asserts, "remain unchanged through the vicissitudes of time."³⁸ These local artistic traditions were not only tied to anonymous artisanal production, they were also of great interest to the avant-garde artists who participated in this exhibition, most notably Fortunato Depero. In his *Sala futurista italiana Depero* – which displayed a combination of paintings, tapestries, cushions and small wooden toys – Depero created a fusion of the techniques, themes and pictorial traditions of the peasant art of the Trento region with the visual and coloristic tendencies found in post-World War I futurism.³⁹

[Figure 1.a-8]

The arguments of Rava from 1931 concerning the Mediterranean identity of a modern Italian architecture based on indigenous sources should thus be seen against the backdrop of the numerous interpretations of architects and artists like Piacentini, Capponi and Depero, for whom the vernacular was both a source of inspiration and projective screen for their personal desires. The *mediterraneità* of Rava can also be measured against the more philological concern on the part of scholars and commentators like Giovannoni and Cerio – an interest which is evidenced in the vast body of publications that documented and analyzed these vernacular traditions,

³⁸ These comments immediately follow a discussion of the comments of the art critic Ugo Ojetti on this exhibition, who, according to Mezzanote, argued that rustic arts were only important in countries without a great national art. Mezzanote follows these observations with the following statement: "It appears to me that in substance it is better to distinguish what has only a folkloristic importance from that which has a true artistic content and meaning. The people are a wonderful reservoir of the qualities and attitudes of their kind that remain unchanged through the vicissitudes of time." Mezzanote, "La Prima Mostra Internazionale delle Arti decorative a Monza," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* II, 10 (June 1923): 402.

³⁹ The publications on Depero's work are numerous, but all stress his debt to the materials, techniques and themes of the craft traditions of his region, Trento, in addition to recognizing his application of Futurist painting themes to these works. Of particular interest is Carlo Carrà's book on the Monza exhibition, *L'arte decorativa contemporanea alla prima Biennale internazionale di Monza*, of 1923. See also *Catalogo della prima mostra internazionale delle arti decorative. Monza* (Milano-Roma: Casa editrice d'arte Bestetti & Tumminelli, 1923). For a more detailed understanding of the work involved in the Monza exhibition see, Gabriella Belli, *La Casa del Mago. Le Arti applicate nell'opera di Fortunato Depero, 1920-1942*, (Milano, Firenze: Edizioni Charta, 1992); Mario Universo, *Fortunato Depero e il mobile futurista* (Venezia: Marsilio Editore, 1990); and Maurizio Scudiero, *F. Depero, Stoffe futuriste. Arazzi e cuscini, Moda, Costumi Teatrali, Tessuti*, (Trento: Manfrini Editori, 1995).

including numerous books and essays on the indigenous architecture of Italy's coastal regions.⁴⁰ The *mediterraneità* of Rava was preceded by more than a decade of scholarly and artistic activity – a discourse that generated a number of distinct interpretations of this vernacular. For the post-World War I Futurist architect Virgilio Marchi, the rural constructions of Amalfi and Capri were the work of "primitives", who, in applying instinct and intuition rather than erudition, adapted their buildings to the necessities of life and made use of available materials. In his book *Architettura futurista* of 1924, under a section entitled "I Primitivi," he argues that these "primordial and barbaric" constructors practiced an art that "in its crudeness, reaches a certain level of perfection."⁴¹ Plinio Marconi, an architect and frequent contributor to *Architettura e Arti Decorative*, expressed a similar interest in these vernacular constructions in an article from 1929 entitled "Architettura minima mediteranee e architettura moderna." However, for Marconi, these "minimal" buildings represented a dialectical fusion of modernity – found in the desire to live in an up-to-date manner – and primitivism – found in the spontaneous, rudimentary, elementary and native.⁴²

⁴⁰ In addition to the previously noted articles in *Architettura e Arti Decorative* by Cerio and Capponi, two other significant works were: Renato Paoli, "Bellezze d'Italia: Amalfi," *Emporium* LV, 325 (January 1922): 41-51; and Roberto Pane, "Tipi di architettura rustica in Napoli e nei Campi Flegrei," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* VII, 12 (August 1928): 529-43. The books published on the architecture of Italy's coastal regions during this period included: Camillo Jona, *L'Architettura rusticana nella costiera d'Amalfi*, (Torino: C. Crudo & Co., 1929); and Giovanni Battista Ceas, *Capri. Visioni architettoniche di Giovanni Battista Ceas*, (Roma: Biblioteca d'Arte Editrice, 1930). This last book, which was published as a limited edition, was a large format edition illustrated by original lithographs by the author.

⁴¹ Virgilio Marchi, *Architettura futurista* (1924), in *Virgilio Marchi. Scritti di architettura*, ed. Ezio Godoli and Milva Giacomelli (Firenze: Octavo - Franco Cantini Editore, 1995), 47-100. A translation of this section is as follows: "The *Primitives* are constructors by innate virtue. They adapt the building to the necessities of life using the available materials. As can be understood by the terminology they do not have a degree, but are authorized by instinct and intuition. They reveal the outlines of an art that will be or that, in its crudeness, reaches a certain level of perfection to suggest studied experiences or surprising aesthetic flourishing. The means of marrying architecture and landscape is interesting. They can be found in all epochs among primordial and barbaric people or in groups that have not felt the influx of scientific progress. A marvelous example that merits a careful examination: the rural architecture of Amalfi and Capri."

⁴² Marconi, "Architettura minima mediteranee e architettura moderna," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* IX, 1 (September 1929): 27-44. This article was written as both the culmination of a period of research within the pages of this magazine and a polemic for a contemporary

This intellectual activity generated a series of new theoretical terms, from the *architettura minore* of Giovannoni and Piacentini to the *architettura minima* of Cerio and Marconi. The vernacular was thus already constructed as a complex field of interpretations that Rava was able to selectively appropriate and modify.

The *mediterraneità* of Rava was also an integral part of a longer theoretical trajectory which began with the publication of the founding manifestoes of the *Gruppo 7* and continued during the period before and after the two Rationalist exhibitions held in Rome in 1928 and 1931 – a time that has been referred to as the *periodo squadrista* of Italian Rationalism.⁴³ These first polemical writings – which were published in the journal *Rassegna Italiana* between December 1926 and May 1927 – are widely regarded by architectural historians as the first sign of the emergence of a modern Italian architecture that was explicitly aligned with Northern European tendencies. In his book *Gli architetti e il fascismo*, Giorgio Ciucci argues that the unique contribution of these writings was their interjection of the idea of the rationality into architectural and urbanistic discourse. They have also been understood to represent the initial attempts by Italian architects to find a suitable expression for a modern architecture appropriate to the political exigencies of the Fascist period – introducing questions of modernity, tradition and the specifically

architecture proper to Fascist Italy. The idea of a "minimal" architecture by Marconi suggests the dialectical nature of his reading of this architecture – that is that it was both modern and primitive. These two terms were understood by him to be the most important influences on contemporary culture, placing Cubism, Surrealism and the machine aesthetic in this first category and Dadaism and "Negritism" in the second. In concluding this essay, he states: "we love the poetry and primitive power of the formative processes of these simple buildings. We believe that, if they could be in our environment, in proportion to our culture, with recent technical possibilities, as fecund and fantastic as the man of the earth in his primitiveness, we can create beautiful and mature things."

⁴³ This term was originally coined by Giuseppe Terragni in a note on the reverse side of a photograph of the *Casa Del Fascio* of Como (1932-34) from just after its completion. This phrase, which means literally "team period", has been taken by historians like Giorgio Ciucci to signify the period of a unified front among Rationalist architects which began with the first manifestoes of the *Gruppo 7* in 1926 and ended with the second Rationalist exhibition in 1931. For a copy of this original note, see Giacomo Polin, *La Casa Elettrica di Figini e Pollini* (Roma: Officina Edizioni, 1982), 38. Ciucci uses this term in his book *Gli architetti e il fascismo. Architettura e città 1922-44*.

Italian identity of modern architecture into the contemporary debate.⁴⁴ These manifestoes were the product of an intense period of collaboration among a group of recent, and soon to be, graduates from the *Politecnico di Milano*, the initial members being Ubaldo Castagnoli, Luigi Figini, Guido Frette, Sebastiano Larco, Carlo Enrico Rava, Gino Pollini and Giuseppe Terragni. Art critic Carlo Belli has aptly described this process as "like an orchestra tuning themselves before beginning to play."⁴⁵ Although the extent of Rava's contribution to these writings is difficult to determine, in publishing a volume of his collected essays in 1935 entitled *Nove anni di architettura vissuta*, he claimed the first and last of these as his own.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ The connection between the manifestoes and the work of the *Gruppo 7* and contemporary architectural discourse in Northern Europe has been made by numerous historians, including Dennis Doordan (*Building modern Italy. Italian architecture 1914-1936*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988) and Giorgio Ciucci (*Gli architetti e il fascismo. Architettura e città 1922-44*). The most extensive examination of these manifestoes is provided by Fabrizio Brunetti in a chapter entitled "Il programma del Gruppo 7" from his book *Architetti e Fascismo* (Firenze: Alinea Editrice, 1993). With regard to the relationship between architecture and Fascist politics, Diane Ghirardo has long ago dispelled assertions that certain works were outside of its influence. She has also been critical of attempts to create easy connections based on formal differences. See Ghirardo, "Italian Architects and Fascist Politics: An Evaluation of the Rationalists' Role in Regime Building," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 39 (May 1980): 109-127. The more recent writings of Ghirardo and other historians have sought to theorize a fascist modernism, explicitly critiquing the creation of domains of artistic activity that are outside of the influence of Fascism. See especially Ruth Ben-Ghiat, "Fascism, Writing and Memory: The Realist Aesthetic in Italy, 1930-1950," *Journal of Modern History* 67: 3 (September 1995): 627-65.

⁴⁵ The original members of the *Gruppo 7* were all students of the Politecnico, Castagnoli being replaced in 1928 with Adalberto Libera, who graduated that year from the School of Architecture in Rome. In his book *Il volto del secolo*, Belli provides a vivid and somewhat romantic description of the collaboration involved in the writing of these initial manifestoes, where he argues a sense of collective responsibility toward these polemical declarations developed among the members. In this discussion he characterizes Terragni as impetuous, Figini and Pollini as enthusiasts and Rava as a dialectician who was not able to define himself. These comments were originally published in an article entitled "Origini e sviluppi del Gruppo 7," (*La Casa* 6 (1960): 176-97.). See Belli, *Il volto del secolo. La prima cellula dell'architettura razionalista italiana*. (Bergamo: Pierluigi Lubrina Editore, 1988), 5-36.

⁴⁶ Not only did Rava publish these two writings in this volume as his own, in the preface to this book he claims to have both founded the *Gruppo 7* and introduced the concept of Rationalism into the group – and thus more generally into architectural discourse. See Rava, *Nove anni di architettura vissuta, 1926 IV - 1935 XIII* (Roma: Cremonese editore, 1935), 7-9. With regard to the origins of the term Rationalism, Giorgio Ciucci notes that Rava was not alone in this claim, both Alberto Sartoris and Giuseppe Terragni made the same assertions after the fact. Ciucci, *Gli architetti e il fascismo. Architettura e città 1922-44*, 70. As for the *Gruppo 7* manifestoes, the original manuscripts in his handwriting are in the Centro Studi ed Archivio di Comunicazione (CSAC) at the University of Parma. See Archivio Carlo Enrico Rava - "Articoli, manoscritti, estratti, riviste del "Gruppo 7" e di Rava sue gruppo-1927/36." It is worth noting that the

The first manifesto, which was simply entitled "Architettura", was the first major polemical statement concerning the prospects for a modern Italian architecture following pre- and post-World War I Futurism – a legacy which this article referred to as "an empty, destructive fury that confused good and bad." It argues that the "artificial impulse" of the avant-garde, which was deemed to have been an unfulfilled promise, had been replaced in the current generation with the need for "clarity, revision and *order*."⁴⁷ In addition to distancing themselves from Italian avant-garde practices in this essay, the *Gruppo 7* attacked their immediate predecessors – the architects of the Milanese Novecento movement – whose work was described by these young architects as having "fallen into pure decoration."⁴⁸ Despite these disparaging comments, Giovanni Muzio's seminal essay, "L'Architettura a Milano intorno all'ottocento" of 1921 is the direct antecedent of Italian Rationalism. In searching for the appropriate identity for the public face of modern Milan, he argues for the adoption of a regional precedent – the Lombard neo-classicism of the early nineteenth century. This use of local references was regarded by Muzio as an important means to reassert "the principal of order" in Italian architecture – a gesture that was carefully measured against what he described as "the confusion and

publication of these manifestoes in *Rassegna Italiana* was due to the influence of Rava's father, Maurizio, who had a long standing relationship this journal and its editor, Tomaso Sillani.

⁴⁷ In discussing the avant-garde practices, this manifesto argues: "the Futurist and early Cubist experiences, even with their advantages, have stung the public who expected a better result from them... The youth of today follows a completely different road. We all feel a great necessity for clarity, revision and *order*. The new generation *thinks*; and its seriousness is so unexpected that it appears as presumption and cynicism. The legacy of the avant-garde that preceded us was an artificial impulse—an empty, destructive fury that confused good and bad. The natural right of the youth of today is a desire for *lucidity* and *wisdom*." Gruppo 7, "Architecture," 851.

⁴⁸ Although this manifesto reserves a certain degree of respect for these architects, stating: "we recognize them for having been the first to break with a tradition of superficiality and bad taste," they ultimately argue: "...by now their style has degenerated into too simple a code," they go on to state: "they... have fallen into pure decoration, into the insincerity of an architecture which varies its effects through expediciencies, alternating broken facades, candelabras, cupolas, and crowning obelisks." Gruppo 7, "Architettura," 852.

exasperated individualism of recent architecture."⁴⁹ Although the *Gruppo 7* rejected the idea of creating a new architecture based upon specific stylistic precedents and was highly critical of this aspect of the Novecento architects, in this article these architects were nonetheless echoing the statements of Muzio in their criticism of recent historicism and their call for the renunciation of their identities as individuals.⁵⁰ Moreover, despite their blunt condemnation of the intentions and accomplishments of Italian Futurism, the tone and rhetoric of this essay was clearly indebted to these avant-garde practices, even borrowing the format of the manifesto as its chosen means of expression.

This initial polemical statement of the *Gruppo 7* was also derivative of contemporary European architectural and cultural discourses. In proclaiming that "a new spirit has been born," these architects were both attempting to create an intellectual space for their proclamations and explicitly aligning themselves with the earlier programmatic statements made by Le Corbusier.⁵¹ This specific connection

⁴⁹ Muzio, "L'Architettura a Milano intorno all'ottocento," *Emporium* LIII, 317 (May 1921): 241-58. In this essay, Muzio is careful to argue that the neoclassicism of this region of the early 19th century was not the product of the Napoleonic era, whose plans he describes as having never been realized. Rather, this architecture arose during the following period where a spirit of civic improvement flourished and in which this urban neo-classicism developed. In concluding this historical examination, Muzio states: "still today to us a reaction to the confusion and exasperated individualism of recent architecture seems necessary, and the re-establishment of the principle of order for which the stylistic characteristics of architecture, an eminently social art, must first of all be continued in a place, in order to be capable of diffusion and forming with the complex of buildings a harmonic and homogeneous totality." *Ibid.*, 258.

⁵⁰ The *Gruppo 7* actually compliment the Novecento architects in this manifesto, stating: "we have had a sincere admiration for the architects who immediately preceded us. We recognize them for having been the first to break with a tradition of superficiality and bad taste." They go on to even recognize "we have in part followed our predecessors." *Gruppo 7*, "Architecture," 852. Giorgio Ciucci has recognized this connection between the Milanese Novecento and the architects of Italian Rationalism, arguing: "the necessity of "order," the "renunciation of individualism," the problem of "rhythm," are some of the most evident similarities. There exists a sort of congruity between the idea of rationality expressed by the *Gruppo 7* and the neoclassicism of the Milanese, due to the abstraction from the contingent and the particular in favor of a formal composition and recomposition of surfaces, volumes, tones and elements." Ciucci, *Gli architetti e il fascismo. Architettura e città 1922-1944*, 73.

⁵¹ The larger context of this statement is as follows: "A "new spirit" has been born. It exists, we would like to say, in the air, like a thing by itself, independent of single individuals, in all countries, with different appearances and forms, but with the same foundation – a prodigious gift which not all art epochs or historical periods have possessed. We live, therefore, in privileged

was part of a more general effort of the *Gruppo 7* to legitimize its arguments by claiming to participate in an "exchange of influences" among foreign artists and intellectuals like Picasso and Stravinsky. It also reflects the considerable personal effort made by Rava on behalf of the *Gruppo 7* to establish contacts with major figures in European architecture like Giedion, Gropius and Le Corbusier and to have the work of this group published in foreign journals like *Die Baugilde*, *Wasmuths Monatshefte für Baukunst* and *L'Architecture Vivante*.⁵² In one correspondence with Le Corbusier from January of 1927, Rava makes clear the intellectual ambitions of the *Gruppo 7* by citing their two most important influences as *Le Rappel à l'ordre* of Jean Cocteau and *Vers une architecture* of 1923.⁵³

The connection between these French sources and the first manifesto of the *Gruppo 7* is evident in the style of writing used – in the tendency to employ their concise, polemical prose – and in the specific content of these arguments. These architects proclaimed that "the new architecture" was to be based on logic and

times since we can witness the birth of a whole new order of ideas." Gruppo 7, "Architecture," 849. This article credits this statement to *Vers une architecture* in its notes. The reference in *Vers une architecture* comes from the chapter entitled "Des yeux qui ne voit pas - Les paquebots," where it is stated: "A great epoch has begun. There exists a new spirit. There exists a mass of work conceived in the new spirit; it is to be met with particularly in industrial production. Architecture is stifled by custom. The "styles" are a lie. Style is a unity of principle animating all the work of an epoch, the result of a state of mind which has its own character. Our epoch is determining, day by day, its own style. Our eyes, unhappily, are unable yet to discern it." Le Corbusier, *Vers une architecture*, 67.

⁵² As previously noted, Marida Talamona chronicles this effort in her article, "Primi passi verso l'Europa (1927-1933)." *Luigi Figini Gino Pollini. Opera completa*, 55-81. These activities began as early as January 1927, with letters to Giedion, Gropius and Le Corbusier on the constitution of the *Gruppo 7* and parallel correspondences to E. Völts at *Die Baugilde*, Werner Hegemann at *Wasmuths Monatshefte für Baukunst* and Jean Badovici at *L'Architecture Vivante*. This last effort resulted in the following publications: "Moderne Architektur in Italien," *Die Baugilde* 14 (25 July 1927): 790-91; Adler, Leo. "Modernistisches in Italien, Stuttgart und so weiter," *Wasmuths Monatshefte für Baukunst* VI, 11 (November 1927): 402-6. "Le groupe 7," *L'architecture vivante* (Fall-winter 1927): 49, Fig. 41-2, 42. These letters are primarily contained in the private archive of Milanese architects Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini. See "1927-28. Corrispondenza coll'estero (Rava e Figini)." *Scatola 3, Cartella A*.

⁵³ This four page letter, which was written in French, attempts to bring the writings and ideas and works of the *Gruppo 7* to the attention of Le Corbusier, at the same time making clear their debt to the latter's own writings – referring to their work as an "Esprit Nouveau" architecture. Letter from Carlo Enrico Rava to Le Corbusier, January 20 1927. From *Fondation Le Corbusier*, Paris, E2-20-138, 139. Published in *Alberto Sartoris. Dall'autobiografia alla critica*, ed. Jacques Gubler and Alberto Abriani. (Electa: Milano, 1990), 140-43.

rationality, deriving its aesthetic value "exclusively from the character of necessity." Rejecting the idea of creating a style – which this manifesto associated with the decadence of the Italian Liberty movement – the *Gruppo 7* asserted that a style would be born through a process of "selection" – an approach which called for "the constant use of rationality" in the creation of a few fundamental types. These statements would seem to derive almost directly from the discussion of the evolution of the design of automobiles from the chapter, "Des yeux qui ne voient pas" from *Vers une architecture*, in which Le Corbusier argues: "it is necessary to press on towards the establishment of standards in order to face the problem of perfection."⁵⁴ In a similar manner, the renunciation of individuality that the *Gruppo 7* saw as closely linked with this adherence to a standard, is similar to Cocteau's discussion of composer Erik Satie from his essay "Le coq et l'arlequin" of 1918, in which he stated: "Satie voluntarily abstained in order to... remain simple, clear and luminous."⁵⁵ This borrowing from French sources is made even clearer in the concluding comments to this manifesto, whose rallying cry – "the new generation seems to proclaim an architectonic revolution, a seemingly total revolution" – seems to echo the words of Le Corbusier from the chapter "Architecture ou révolution," which states: "the old architectural code, overloaded with the rules and regulations of forty centuries, is no

⁵⁴ The more complete context of these arguments by the *Gruppo 7* are as follows: "The new architecture, the true architecture, must result from a rigid adherence to logic, to rationality. A rigid constructivism must dictate the rules. The new forms of architecture must receive aesthetic value exclusively from the character of *necessity*, and only afterwards, by way of *selection*, will a style be born." Gruppo 7, "Architecture," 852. The prior argument from *Vers une architecture* is contained in the discussion of the design of automobiles, which in striving to reach a level of perfection were seen to achieve a harmony "beyond the mere practical side. Le Corbusier goes on to state that; "the establishment of a standard is developed by organizing rational elements, following a line of direction equally rational. The form and appearance are in no way preconceived, *they are a result.*" Le Corbusier, *Vers une architecture*, 109.

⁵⁵ The larger context of this statement is as follows: "Sick to death of flabbiness, fluidity, superfluity, frills, and all the modern sleight of hand, though often tempted by a technique of which he knows the ultimate resources, Satie voluntarily abstained, in or to... remain simple, clear and luminous. But the public hates candor. Each of Satie's works is an example of renunciation." Cocteau, "Le coq e l'arlequin," in *Le rappel a l'ordre* (Paris, Stock, 1926), 24.

longer of any interest to us; it no longer concerns us. There has been a revision of values. There has been a revolution in the conception of Architecture."⁵⁶

This initial manifesto of the *Gruppo 7* is thus carefully situated between Italian and European theoretical practices. However, in appropriating the arguments of Le Corbusier, these architects were selective – primarily borrowing from the most polemical arguments and either leaving out or classicizing any references to engineering or the engineer's aesthetic. They were quite careful to distance themselves from the direct analogies between architecture and the machine that were made in *Vers une architecture*, arguing: "architecture must adhere to new necessities, just as new machines are born from new necessities... but the house will not have the aesthetic of the airplane."⁵⁷ These statements reflect the fact that this manifesto was an adaptation of European sources that was aimed at asserting the Italian identity of modern architecture. This manifesto makes a clear distinction between the inevitable similarity of industrial buildings throughout the world and other building types which, it argued, "in spite of their absolute modernity, will retain the *national* characteristics in every country."⁵⁸ This question of a national dimension to modern

⁵⁶ The larger context of this quotation from the *Gruppo 7* is as follows: "The new generation seems to proclaim an architectonic revolution, a seemingly total revolution. A desire for truth, logic, order, and Hellenic lucidity. This is the true character of the new spirit." Gruppo 7, "Architecture," 854. The statement from "Architecture ou révolution" comes from the final chapter of this book, paralleling their own call to order with that of Le Corbusier. See Le Corbusier, *Vers une architecture*, 240-41.

⁵⁷ In his discussion of the argumentation of *Vers une architecture*, Reyner Banham speaks about the alternation between mechanistic and classical themes in the structuring of the chapters. Noting the chapter on automobiles, he also speaks of the interaction of these within specific chapters. Banham, "Vers une Architecture," in *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*, (London: The Architectural Press, 1960), 220-46. The *Gruppo 7* seem to ignore the most overt references to engineering – the chapter entitled "Esthétique de l'ingénieur, architecture." Strangely, they also do not make use of the most "classicizing" discussions of architecture such as "Architecture - Pure création de l'esprit." Rather, they seem to gravitate to the most polemical arguments linked to architecture – such as "Architecture ou révolution" – and provide their own classicizing interpretation of mechanical themes – particularly in the case of the chapters on ocean liners, airplanes and automobiles. The statement quoted is from: Gruppo 7, "Architecture," 853.

⁵⁸ The larger context of this statement is as follows: "Certainly the time is near when industrial buildings... will have the same appearance throughout the world. Such internationalism is inevitable, and, what is more, if monotony results, it will not lack a grandiose sense. Other aspects

architecture even extended to broader assertions of Italy's role in this process – which according to this manifesto was to "give maximum development to this spirit... until it dictates a *style* to other nations." While these comments can be understood as an extension of Fascist imperialism into architectural discourse, they also reflect a characteristic difference of modern architecture in the Italian context – that is, its recourse to history and tradition.⁵⁹

The most original aspects of the program of Italian Rationalism articulated in the *Gruppo 7*'s first manifesto are connected with the relationship between modernity and tradition. While a good deal of the emphasis in this article is on the existence of a "new spirit" in architecture – and on an aesthetic of simplicity and renunciation – these views are kept in balance with an equally significant discussion of the "spirit of tradition". Arguing that "there is no incompatibility between our past and our present," the *Gruppo 7* assert: "we do not want to break with tradition, it is tradition which transforms itself and assumes new aspects." The references made in this manifesto are extremely varied – from the marquetry of Francesco di Giorgio, to the wood engravings of the "Hypnerotomachia Poliphili." Notably, these "traditions" also incorporate those of the East, including Syrian gospels, Persian miniatures and Coptic fabrics – something which provides an early manifestation of Rava's later arguments about the Latin roots of Islamic architecture.⁶⁰ However, when speaking

of architecture, on the other hand, in spite of their absolute modernity, will keep *national* characteristics in every country." Ibid., 853-4.

⁵⁹ The gesture of the *Gruppo 7* towards Fascism is evident in the sentence preceding the one quoted above, which states: "Italy, because of its nature, tradition, and most of all because of the victorious period it is passing through, is most worthy of the mission of renewal." Ibid., 850. With regard to the connection between Rationalist architecture and Fascism, Diane Ghirardo notes that their polemics "straddled modernity and tradition no less deftly than Mussolini." Moreover, she notes that the special role of Italy in this new age of architecture was due to the "spirit of tradition" of Italian architecture. Finally, she argues that it was the link to Le Corbusier – whose writings were deemed to contain certain fundamental concepts that were common with Fascism – that made these architects' writings amenable to Fascism. Ghirardo, "Italian architects and fascist politics," 114, 122.

⁶⁰ This manifesto argues that these architects "have not been content simply to question built architecture, but have investigated art forms in their most hidden spirit." This implies that an interest in history is one which is linked with the deeper sense of these forms, rather than their

of historical traditions, this manifesto argues that a deeper understanding is necessary – one that would be derived from the inner spirit of these references rather than their physical form. It is at this more profound level that the past and the present were seen to coincide, and that, for example, the development of contemporary housing types was seen as parallel to the "modern nobility of the Florentine palazzi." In the end, it was only through what was described as the essentially "classical foundation" that modern Italian architecture could retain its characteristic national identity.⁶¹

This complex negotiation between modernity and tradition is continued in the final manifesto in this series, which is entitled "Architettura (IV). Una nuova epoca arcaica." Published in *Rassegna Italiana* in May of 1927, this was the only other essay for which Rava later claimed authorship. The two intervening manifestoes provide support for the initial arguments of "Architettura" – the first, entitled "Architettura (II). Gli stranieri," by contributing an extensive survey of foreign examples of the new architecture, and the second, "Architettura (III). Impreparazione, incompiutezza, pregiudizi", by responding to public criticism.⁶² This final essay,

visual appearance. This assertion is, in many ways, consistent with the idea that a "new spirit" links the various modern architectural movements in different European countries. A more complete quotation of the material cited is as follows: "Nothing prohibits us from admiring the architectural marquetry of Francesco di Giorgio and the wood engravings of Serlio, and to understand the rhythm, the almost Greek purity of certain factories and walls of glass. There is no incompatibility between our past and our present. We do not want to break with tradition; it is tradition which transforms itself, and assumes new aspects, few people may recognize it." Gruppo 7, "Architecture," 851-52..

⁶¹ In discussing the idea of the creation of a few fundamental types, this manifesto uses several historical examples to legitimize this as a process that had taken place many times in the past rather than one only evident in modern industrial society. These examples include the "basilica of the first Christian centuries," the "Tuscan and Umbrian houses of the Duecento and Trecento" and "the Florentine palazzi of the Quattrocento." Ibid., 853. With regard to the national identity of modern Italian architecture, this manifesto asserts: "here, in particular, there exists a classical foundation. The spirit (not the forms, which is something different) of tradition is so profound in Italy that evidently, and almost mechanically, the new architecture will preserve a stamp which is typically ours." Ibid., 854.

⁶² "Architettura (II). Gli stranieri" begins by stating its intentions as establishing "what exactly is the absolute and significant role in the work realized abroad." Although this article examines the contemporary architecture in a number of countries, including Germany, Austria, Denmark and Sweden, Holland, Russia and France, it uses a detailed discussion of German architecture to show how architects like Gropius and Mendelsohn were part of a renewal in architecture parallel to that proposed by the *Gruppo 7* for Italy. The final example in this manifesto is the work of Le

when read in conjunction with the first, provides a comprehensive statement about the nature of this "new spirit." It offers a material justification for the period of renewal alluded to in the first manifesto by proclaiming "a new archaic era" – an era whose character would be defined by the constructive possibilities of reinforced concrete. Stating that "architecture finds itself newly in possession of a marvelous tool," this article argues that "from its new possibilities (enormous projections, huge openings, and the consequent use of glass as a surface value, horizontal stratification, slender pilasters), it necessarily derives a new aesthetic."⁶³ The terms of this aesthetic were, in fact, a fusion of the traditional and the modern – a "classical monumentality" whose qualities were derived from their determination by rational exigencies. The architecture of Italian Rationalism was thus characterized as an "archaic return" – where modern materials and demands, given shape through a rational processes, would achieve a state of almost classical perfection.⁶⁴

The views expressed in these programmatic statements of the *Gruppo 7* were not received without criticism. A rather heated debate took place between these

Corbusier, which naturally takes a crucial position as an indication of an international phenomenon. "Architettura (III). Impreparazione, incompiutezza, pregiudizi" is a vigorous defense of the writings of the *Gruppo 7*. It begins with a discussion of the rigid and out-dated system of education for architects in Italy, then proceeding to critique the inertia of public opinion on artistic matters, linking this with bourgeois society and the lack of rigor in the area of art and architectural criticism. The final section covers a series of points of clarification of the first two manifestoes, a section which archival documents indicate was written (or re-written) by Rava. AFP Scatola 3, Cartella D.

⁶³ This essay begins by contrasting activities in the figurative arts with architecture, arguing that in the latter case there were material reasons – the advent of reinforced concrete – for the advent of a new architecture. It goes on to assert that "believing it necessary to hide the truth of a material under false casings and forcing it into typical stylistic schemes, has ended up causing us to keep on ignoring its extraordinary aesthetic possibilities." This aesthetic could naturally not be that of previous modes of construction, whose elements were determined by their own constructive logic. Gruppo 7, "Architecture (IV). Una nuova epoca arcaica," 467-68.

⁶⁴ In relation to the concept of monumentality, this manifesto argues: "If there is any material susceptible of achieving classical monumentality, it is precisely reinforced concrete, and it derives this quality from Rationalism." Ibid., 468. The idea of a "new archaic era" was seen to be reflected in "the simplicity of the plans, and the calm rhythm of solids and voids", which it was stated: "recall the periods of the beginning of Greek architecture." This "archaic return" was a product of the renunciation of individualism called for by the *Gruppo 7*, which among other things was related to "limiting to the utmost the number of elements used and refining them, bringing them to maximum perfection, to the abstract purity of rhythm." Ibid., 469-70.

architects and Marziano Bernardi, then editor of the Turinese newspaper *La Stampa*, during and after their publication. In an article from January of 1927, Bernardi was critical of the "useless heroism" of these young architects – which he associated with the renunciation of their originality and what he considered the utilitarian role which they proposed for architecture. Echoing the kind of Crocean criticism that was prominent during this period, not only did he argue that "the object of beauty serves no purpose," he asserted that the kind of loss of individuality proposed by these architects would undermine the status of the artist and thus destroy art.⁶⁵

Responding to these criticisms in "Architettura (III). Impreparazione, incomprendione, pregiudizi", the *Gruppo 7* rejected what they argued was an attempt to create a false dichotomy between art and utilitarian objects. Citing their own discussion of Florentine houses of the quattrocento, they repudiated his characterization of this architecture as a product of independent genius.⁶⁶ Bernardi responded in the pages of *Rassegna Italiana* in April of 1927, where he again asserted that "the work of art... stands by itself, independent of any concept of usefulness and necessity." The concept of architecture articulated by the *Gruppo 7*, he argued, was fraught with "an ambiguity which tends to identify the concept of architecture with the concept of

⁶⁵ Bernardi, Marziano, "Fra arte e letteratura." *La Stampa* (24 January 1927), trans. Ellen R. Shapiro. Reprinted in *Oppositions* 12 (Spring 1978): 99-100. After summarizing the arguments of the *Gruppo 7*, Bernardi states: "before this kind of abnegation, which resembles true asceticism, we remain pensive, as when confronted with a certain collective and useless heroism. Obviously, no one denies that architecture must also adhere to the new necessities, for the modern machine derives from and is altered by them. But the great ambiguity lies in the concept of usefulness: the machine must have a precise purpose; the object of beauty serves no purpose." With regard to the role of the artist, he goes on to state: "art arises exclusively from man, not from the thing itself, nor from its use. Destroy individuality (in aesthetics) and you end up destroying art."

⁶⁶ Much of this argument is contained in a footnote to this essay, which is responding directly to the statements of Bernardi. In rejecting the dichotomy between what is and is not art, it states: "the automobile is a machine, and in its category, can have an aesthetic value, in the same way that architecture is a work of art and can and must be, where required, a machine." With regard to the independence of the artist it states: "everyone realizes by now that the greatest architects of every epoch... did nothing but collect, fuse, and recreate in a perfect synthesis the best that their epoch had given before and contemporaneously." *Gruppo 7*, "Architettura (III). Impreparazione, incomprendione, pregiudizi," 251.

building."⁶⁷ In a final response to these comments, which followed the manifesto "Architettura (IV). Una nuova epoca arcaica," these architects once again critiqued the dialectical arguments of Bernardi by insisting that industrial buildings also possessed a certain artistic value. Moreover, they argued that even an architecture of necessity, such as that proposed in their series of manifestoes, could "enrich itself again and complete itself in the future with decoration."⁶⁸

In their response to these criticisms of these manifestoes, the *Gruppo 7* sought to affirm their theorization of an almost mechanical determinacy for Italian architecture. The recourse to history in these arguments – which posits an architecture that is both archaic and modern – was a means to validate its artistic value and identify its specifically Italian content. The lack of resolution between the modernity of the "new spirit" and its debt to history, between the internationalism of Italian architecture and its national identity, is in part due to the newness this movement – which had yet to produce a significant built work. It is also an indication of certain polemical differences that existed among the members of the *Gruppo 7* – differences that would eventually lead to the dissolution of this allegiance. Although the precise contribution of each member to these initial manifestoes cannot be easily measured, it is well-known that Rava introduced his

⁶⁷ In this article, though not denying that what is necessary could also be artistic, asserts: "to subordinate the aesthetic fact to an idea of usefulness and necessity means to totally deny ideal value." With regard to the relation between architecture and building, he goes on to state: "a building can correspond perfectly to its original purpose and not be a work of art, and in that case not be an example of architecture either." Finally, on this subject he observes: "I am not denying that some industrial buildings can be clothed in singularly pure lines and provoke a sensation of grandeur. Is this supposed to be a sensation of art? Not yet." Bernardi, "A proposito del Gruppo 7," *Rassegna Italiana* XIX, 107 (April 1927): 355-7.

⁶⁸ Gruppo 7, "Replica," *Rassegna Italiana* XIX, 108 (May 1927): 471-2. While agreeing with Bernardi that architecture should be identified as a building art, this article argues that, his theorization of architecture as only an art form denies industrial buildings any value as art works. In discussing the possibility of decorative value, it states: "we indeed said that "architecture, at its beginning, was born to serve man." But we certainly did not exclude the possibility that, through its development, it would take on decorative value as well." However, this decoration was both "born spontaneously," and possessed the "value of necessity."

colleagues to the writings of Le Corbusier.⁶⁹ These writings were instrumental in guiding the intellectual formation of these manifestos. They were also one of the sources of the conflicted relationship between an international or European perspective and an Italian identity manifested in these essays.

The first significant step in the transformation of Rava's theoretical position was the publication of the article "Dell'europismo in architettura," which appeared in *Rassegna Italiana* in February of 1928. This was the first of a series of individual essays by the various members of the *Gruppo 7* that were proposed for publication in this journal that year, only two of which were ever realized.⁷⁰ Written in the combative style typical of Rava's polemical writings, this article offers a vigorous defense of three major points of criticism of the group's earlier manifestoes – the imitation of foreign architecture, the idolization of the machine, and the loss of individual character through an architectonic internationalism. He argues that these accusations of appropriating foreign influences have to do with two profound misunderstandings on the part of critics. Asserting that there was a lack of knowledge in Italy of the true nature of foreign architecture, he states: "in reality our spirit is *so different* from that which informs German, French, Swiss, Dutch and Russian architecture." Rava also suggested that there was a fundamental difference between imitation and influence, the second of these – which clearly informed the works of the *Gruppo 7* – being "like a *conversation* among a few privileged ones"

⁶⁹ In her article "Italian Architects and Fascist Politics," Diane Ghirardo states: "Piero Bottoni singled out Le Corbusier and *Vers une architecture* as having had a decisive influence on his generation of architects in Milan. Carlo Rava, founding member of the *Gruppo 7*, brought copies of the book to Milan and distributed them among the young architects." Ghirardo, "Italian Architects and Fascist Politics: An Evaluation of the Rationalist's Role in Regime Building," 122.

⁷⁰ See Rava, "Dell'europismo in architettura," *Rassegna Italiana* XXI, 117 (February 1928): 133-9. In the final footnote of this essay, Rava states: "the architects of the *Gruppo 7*... will continue their collaboration with *Rassegna Italiana* this year, with a series of individual rather than collective articles; articles that even if detached from one another and without continuity of arguments like the preceding ones, nevertheless will always reflect the unity of their tendency." The only other essay to appear that year was: Adalberto Libera, "Arte e razionalismo," *Rassegna Italiana* XXI, 118 (March 1928): 232-36.

and quite different from "a simple exchange of ideas."⁷¹ Similar arguments were offered in defense of the Rationalist interest in the machine, stating: "the error is... in confounding the "machine aesthetic" with the "influence of the machine" – the first of these signifying a concern for its form, while the second representing an interest in the lessons of its "spirit of necessity."⁷²

The final defense of the polemics of the *Gruppo 7* offered by Rava in this article, concerned what he referred to as the "fear of architectonic internationalism" that was common in Italy – an argument that is crucial for an understanding of his later writings in *Domus*. These critics, he noted, attempted to oppose this so-called internationalism, which they linked with communism, with what he called a "traditionalist" architecture of sham classical, which "boasts of representing "Imperial" Italy."⁷³ Instead, Rava offered the term *europeismo*, which he argued could be understood as "the *overcoming* of the individual" in the creation of a work that "far surpasses the borders of the people that created it." At the same time, he argued that

⁷¹ Rava, "Dell'europeismo in architettura," 134-6. Rava argues that there was a great deal of confusion about the characteristics of foreign architecture, many critics ignoring more recent tendencies or conflating the contemporary architecture of different countries. Of this confusion he states: "if the use of some similar elements or constructive forms... justifies the *appearance* of some exterior analogies, which to an *inexperienced* eye might seem to be imitation, in reality our spirit is *so different* from that which informs German, French, Swiss, Dutch and Russian architecture." The difference between imitation and influence is presented as follows: "it might be useful to distinguish *influence*, an unconscious phenomenon, that is not only not to be feared, but may also generate unexpected and precious developments." Rava goes on to argue that the use of a few fundamental elements employed by the *Gruppo 7* is clearly not imitation. Ibid., 135.

⁷² The larger context of this argument is as follows: "here the error is precisely in *confounding* the "machine aesthetic" with the "influence of the machine"... the "machine aesthetic" can be considered that which *directly derives* the forms of architecture from the machine, and is inspired by *its exterior aspect*... for "influence of the machine" instead, is intended *more* to derive a constructive logic from a spirit of necessity *analogous* to that which guides the creation of the machine (*lesson of Rationalism*)." Ibid., 136.

⁷³ The precise statement of this argument is as follows: "It is certainly not worth the bother to demonstrate the inanity of such grotesque suppositions, but what is irritating is that, to this supposed international architecture, in Italy is *opposed* an architecture called 'traditionalist', made of sham classical, of sickening rhetoric and archeological reminiscences, as badly digested by those who compose them, as they are indigestible for those who look at them, passed off as the only, the true, the single 'Italian', and this official architecture boasts of representing 'imperial' Italy, while Imperialism is exactly the opposite of what is seen, just as communism is with Italian Rationalism." Ibid., 137.

this "Europeanism," by preserving its own character in each country, leads to an "ultra-nationalism." In the case of Italy, he noted: "the natural propensity for equilibrium in plans and the relaxed symmetry of volumes, that are characteristic qualities of our people and logically *continued* in the new architecture, profoundly *distinguishes* us from the other nations."⁷⁴ In other words, for Rava there was no contradiction between Italian architecture's national identity and its European status, and no limit to the potential role that Italy could play in this development. In the face of a traditionalist architecture that "believes to represent the spirit of an Imperial Italy," he suggests that Italian Rationalism is informed by the "logic, order and purity" of the archaic period that the new architecture is passing through. According to Rava, it remained for Italy to give new meaning to the Hellenic spirit of European architecture – a form of imperialism that he characterized as more worthy for Italy than that achieved by architects copying Roman architecture.⁷⁵

The concept of *europaismo* as theorized by Rava in this essay was an attempt to give definition to the balance between the European context of modern architecture and the potential for establishing an Italian identity through this new Hellenic spirit. Although the arguments in this essay are similar to those proposed in the original manifestoes of the *Gruppo 7*, the introduction of this new term into architectural discourse, and the consequent focus upon the question of the national

⁷⁴ Rava argues that *europaismo*, understood as an overcoming of individuality and the limits of a people, "is deserving of becoming part of the *national* patrimony." He goes on to state that: "each country preserving its own characteristics, the general directives, the *tone*, given by a single nation or people, is something possible; that in fact... this position has been taken by Nordic people, *is true*; however that today Italy can put itself at the head of this movement, and that only Italy can do this, *is certain*." *Ibid.*, 138.

⁷⁵ In concluding this essay, Rava makes the following statement: "on the other hand, the period, recognized as being *archaic* that new architecture is passing through, precisely and necessarily conforms to the same Hellenic spirit, to the same logic, order and purity, it will be evident that, when Italy will be at the head of the new architectonic movement of Europe (and it has been demonstrated that *it can be*), it may come by consequence to *centralize in itself, how much* a European cultural movement, is inclined to a reborn Hellenism; that it can *develop*, carrying it to *perfection*, and, therefore renew the glory of Rome that knew to absorb and assimilate the Greek civilization, *bringing it again to the world*." *Ibid.*, 139.

identity of Italian Rationalism, was a tentative movement toward the *mediterraneità* of 1931. One of the important influences on the modification of Rava's position was the art critic Roberto Papini, with whom he began a relationship during the latter's review of the *Gruppo 7* work at the third Biennale in Monza of 1927.⁷⁶ [Figure 1.a-9] In an essay on this exhibition published in *Emporium* in July of that year, Papini praised the fervor and courage of these "archaic" architects, while also cautioning them that "Italian architecture is more meat than skeleton, more decorative rhythm than constructive rhythm."⁷⁷ In a series of letters that were exchanged over the next several months, Papini warned his younger colleague to be suspicious of the "abstract intransigence" of architects like Le Corbusier, whose influence on Italian architecture represented a "dangerous infatuation." He argued that, in order to take into account the conservatism of the established architects and critics in Italy, Rava and the *Gruppo 7* should adopt a more tactical stance than that presented through their founding manifestoes. Instead of professing Europeanism or an internationalism, Papini suggested to Rava that: "first of all, we must be Italian,

⁷⁶ The *Gruppo 7* participated in two major exhibitions in 1927, the first of these being the third *Mostra internazionale d'arte decorativa e industriale moderna*, held in Monza from May 31 to October. The representation of these architects in this exhibition was comprised of their own room which displayed models and drawings of recent projects of Figini and Pollini, Larco and Rava, and Terragni. For a general discussion of the context of the Biennale of 1927, see: Pansera, "III Biennale." *Storia e cronaca della triennale*, 185-214. The second exhibition was the *Werkbund-Austellung – Internationale Plan-und Modellaustellung Neuer Baukunst*, held in Stuttgart from July 23 to October 9. While no independent presentation of the *Gruppo 7* was made, the architects exhibited included Larco and Rava, Figini and Pollini, Terragni, and Libera. For a report on the participation of the *Gruppo 7* in this exhibition, see Talamona, "Primi passi verso l'Europa (1927-1933)." *Luigi Figini Gino Pollini. Opera completa*, 58-61.

⁷⁷ See Papini, "Le arti a Monza nel 1927. I - gli italiani," *Emporium* LXVI, 391 (July 1927): 14-32. In this review, Papini states: "the usual God- and tradition-fearing will be scandalized by much of modernism that until now is too close a relation to what is theorized and built on the other side of the Alps. But I watch these very young men with all of the sympathy that they deserve and I think of many, of too many youth of yesterday, wilted with the stylistic exercises of the academy and I feel that in those of today is the life, the fervor the courage, also in the mistakes, also in the excessive reason that they use. However, the difficulty for them, if they might stop in the position they have conquered and believe in having reached the goal, and not realize that Italian architecture is more meat than skeleton, more decorative rhythm than constructive rhythm." *Ibid.*, 16, 18.

learning from our ancients to be European only when we impose an Italian art on all of Europe."⁷⁸

"Dell'europismo in architettura" can also be understood in relation to the first *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale*, which was curated by Adalberto Libera and Gaetano Minucci and held in the Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Rome from March 29 to April 30 of 1928.⁷⁹ In conjunction with Adalberto Libera's "Arte e razionalismo," Rava's argument formed a polemical prelude to the opening of this exhibition by providing a lively defense of the position already articulated in the *Gruppo 7* manifestoes, and introducing new arguments into this discourse. The essay of Libera offers a more philosophical discussion of the position of Italian Rationalism within modern aesthetic theory, arguing that it was a mediation between the practical exigencies of the external world – considerations that were at the core of the earlier writings of the *Gruppo 7* – and the internal demands of the human spirit

⁷⁸ These letters written by Papini to Rava and dated July 12, August 6 and 19 and October 8, 1927, are preserved in the Figini and Pollini Archive in Milan. AFP Scatola 3, Cartella B. The second of these letters speaks of the influence of Le Corbusier, stating "quite frankly I consider him a charlatan. This is Rationalism? This is the research for a new order? This is the academy of modernism pure and simple, this is a gaudy sacrifice of the interior to the exterior, as in the ill-fated architecture of the nineteenth century." Letter from Papini to Rava, dated August 6, 1927. op.cit. The third letter speaks on a more personal level about Papini's own experience as a critic with *Corriere della Sera*, which meant that he was forced to not reveal himself to Ugo Ojetti, its primary art and architectural critic. He stated that this newspaper "is a fortress that you conquer one day at a time, with prudence, with moderation." With regard to the idea of a European architecture, he stated: "the truth is that *Europe* does not exist. It is an anti-historical and anti-scientific invention of the Masonic and democratic internationalism of the putrid nineteenth century... In art, more in art than in any other thing, internationalism and europeanism does not exist. The European fashions exist, as do the small Parisian figures or German theories, and they are the things that pass. But what remains, what lasts, what eternally flowers is the nature of the people, the origin, the nation, impermeable and unmistakable." Letter from Papini to Rava dated August 19, 1927.

⁷⁹ For a general description of this exhibition, see: Ciucci, "Due esposizioni razionali." *Gli architetti e il fascismo. Architettura e città 1922-1944*, 93-99. Ciucci notes that this was the first exhibition that gathered the work of the young architects of Turin, Milan and Rome, and as such was of great importance. He also observes that this exhibition reveals the areas of interest to these architects, which were primarily exhibition pavilions industrial and commercial structures and office buildings. See also: Brunetti, "La prima Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale," in *Architetti e fascismo*, 129-44.

– which was the primary focus of the writings of Benedetto Croce.⁸⁰ The differences between these two writings reflects the heterogeneity of the theoretical discourse of Italian Rationalism and, ultimately, the instability of the relationship between the various individuals that made up this movement. This volatility was further revealed in this exhibition, which, in attempting to present Rationalism as a tendency that was evident in many regions of Italy, included architects of radically different aesthetic tendencies. This approach drew harsh criticism from Rava who, in a letter to Minucci, stated: "your *great mistake*... is to not understand that in accepting works which of "Rationalism" do not have but the *form* and the most *superficial* and *exterior* aspect and miss the true *substance*... you have given a *splendid weapon* to the adversaries of Rationalism."⁸¹

Despite these cautionary words, the first *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* constructed an image of Rationalism as a unified movement. This impression was reinforced in the catalog to this exhibition, where Libera and Minucci

⁸⁰ Stating that "I want to establish that Principle of Aesthetics that will clarify and illuminate the recent spiritual movement of Architecture," Libera proceeds to discuss this aesthetic in relation to the dominant paradigm of Crocean aesthetics – which defined art as intuition and a product of the spirit. Instead, he argues that art has "two fundamentally different aspects" – the first of these taking into account what are the reasons, scope and means of art and the second related to its spiritual essence. Libera thus offers a dialectical formulation that combines Croce's idea of art as a creation of the "spirit" with the considerations of utility and functionality proper to Rationalism. In a more direct discussion of Rationalism, he argues like Rava that it is a negotiation between the international (evident in shared demands and new material conditions) and the national (which he argued were yet to be determined). "Libera, "Arte e razionalismo," 232-3, 235.

⁸¹ The first *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* included the work of forty-two different architects from the Veneto, Torino, Roma and Milano. The architects involved included the *Gruppo 7* and others of the younger generation and some notable members of the architectural establishment, like Alberto Calza-Bini and Innocenzo Sabbatini. For a detailed examination of this exhibition, see: *Materiali per l'analisi dell'architettura moderna. La prima Esposizione Italiana di Architettura Razionale*, ed. Michele Cennamo (Napoli: Fausto Fiorentino Editore, 1973). In the letter from Rava to Minucci, dated just a few days before the opening of the exhibition, Rava noted that he would not be present at the opening, having more important built works to supervise. He offers a number of complaints about the exhibition, including the disproportionate influence of the Roman architects (Libera and Minucci both being from Rome). He then argues that the inclusion of a number of architects whose work is not Rationalist (he cites Luigi Vietti and Piero Bottoni, among others) will undermine the movement, suggesting a smaller and more selective exhibition would have been better. Letter from Rava to Minucci dated March 23, 1928. ACS-AGM 40-366. Document 41.

claimed that the works presented were linked through a common approach which "recovers the harmonies, the rhythms, the symmetries in the new constructive schemes, in the character of the materials and in the perfect response to the demands for which the building is destined."⁸² The perceived unity of purpose of this exhibition also became a rallying point for the most prominent critics of this movement like Marcello Piacentini. In a review in the pages of *Architettura e Arti Decorative* he stated: "the error of our youth is in only seeing in themselves a new purely architectonic trend."⁸³ Vigorously defending the idea of architecture as an art – and as such as a product of the human spirit – Piacentini critiqued the Rationalist exhibition on a number of fronts, the most significant being its identification of the beautiful with the structural, and its use of economic concerns as a determining factor in design. [Figure 1.a-10 & 11] He was equally dismissive of certain stylistic tendencies that he identified in these works, like the prominent use of continuous windows and flat roofs, which he called "the new international drugs of architecture." Piacentini was also critical of the lack of contextualism of the projects exhibited, arguing that they belonged in the middle of gardens or along tree-lined streets outside of the city. Finally, he lamented that the denial of ornament in the architecture of Italian Rationalism was a repudiation of the decorative arts and

⁸² Minucci and Libera, "Introduzione all'Esposizione," *Prima Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale. Roma anno VI* (Roma: De Alberti Editore, 1928), 5-8. In this essay these architects argue that this exhibition was a solemn affirmation of Italian Rationalism – a term that is used to differentiate this work as coming from a genuine research. Noting that the beauty of the pyramids was in their structural organism, this fundamental law was seen to also govern contemporary architecture. Roman architecture was characterized in similar terms as "profoundly rational, utilitarian, industrial." They go on to assert that this architecture will even more assume a national character in the future.

⁸³ Piacentini, "Prima internazionale architettonica," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* VI, 12 (August 1928): 544-62. The larger context of this statement is as follows: "This first architectonic international is nevertheless a movement has a serious basis of the greatest importance. The error of our youth is in only seeing in themselves a new purely architectonic trend, in believing in the coming of a new style, of a new form of art, and... they take it for what it appears and not what it is; they take it for a definitive and comforting liberation, for a new verb." *Ibid.*, 549, 551.

ultimately of the ability for Italian architecture to express its own spiritual and cultural traditions.⁸⁴

The arguments of Piacentini in this and future articles on the subject of Italian Rationalism were a means for him to articulate his own interpretation of modern architecture as an "architecture of truth." According to Piacentini, in addition to embracing the scientific and technical development of modern society, this architecture should also serve the spiritual needs of the people. What he termed the "aesthetic vision" of modern architecture needed to address the people, the temperament and the environment of each nation.⁸⁵ The writings of the *Gruppo 7* and the first *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* were to a great extent the provocation for these views. Their pronouncement of a "new spirit" in architecture was the impetus for a debate that would take place over the next several years – a debate that would reach its highest point during the second *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* of 1931. The development of Rava's personal polemic throughout this period was not merely a product of these initial statements.

⁸⁴ The perception of Rationalism as a unified movement was particularly evident in this essay in the fact that no direct reference was made to any of the projects. Piacentini's argument thus applied equally to the numerous projects shown in this article, and thus to the entire movement. This essay begins with a general discussion of Rationalism, whose ideas of renunciation he describes as "architectonic franciscanism." He then proceeds to critique it point by point, first attacking the idea of architecture as pure structure. His criticism of various stylistic tendencies was part of a general accusation of internationalism that many critics made concerning Italian Rationalism. His discussion of the issue of the decorative arts is both an affirmation of the idea of architecture as an art, but also a means to suggest how Italian architecture could achieve its national identity. *Ibid.*, 544-62.

⁸⁵ A second article by Piacentini, entitled "Problemi reali più che razionalismo preconcelto," was published as a continuation of the arguments of "Prima internazionale architettonica." This essay reviews the proposals for the international competition for the League of Nations in Geneva, passing harsh judgment on the Rationalist proposals like those of Hannes Meyer and Le Corbusier. In concluding this examination, he offers the idea of an "architecture of truth" – an architecture that confronts contemporary problems with both technical knowledge and ideas rather than strict Rationalism. Piacentini concludes this essay with the following statement: "instead of losing ourselves in useless polemics on contextualism and rationalist aesthetic, we should decide to serve, spiritually and practically, the needs of the life of today, that are now truly ill-adjusted. Each should give the aesthetic vision and the decorative capacity according to their people, according to their temperament, according to the environment where they will act." Piacentini, "Problemi reali più che razionalismo preconcelto." *Architettura e Arti Decorative* VIII, 3 (November 1928): 103-13.

It was influenced by figures like Piacentini, whose criticism propelled many of the younger generation to search for an appropriate national identity for modern Italian architecture. Rava's engagement with the critical position of Piacentini is evident in, among other things, the latter's positive comments in the pages of *Architettura e Arti Decorative* concerning his *Padiglione delle colonie italiane* from the *Fiera di Milano* of 1928.⁸⁶

Despite Rava's continuing intellectual production related to Italian Rationalism in the late 1920s, the evolution of his theoretical position toward an embrace of vernacular sources is also related to his attempts to formally establish his status as an intermediary between Italian and European architecture.⁸⁷ This process had already begun in early 1928, when he and Alberto Sartoris were selected as the two Italian delegates to the *Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne* (CIAM), which was to be held at the Château of La Sarraz that year. It was in his capacity as official representative for Italy that Rava, along with Sartoris, attempted to consolidate the position of Rationalism as the official expression of modern

⁸⁶ Marida Talamona notes that Rava had contact with Piacentini over the publication of his work in *Architettura e Arti Decorative*. See Talamona, "Primi passi verso l'Europa (1927-1933)." *Luigi Figini Gino Pollini. Opera completa*, 64. The favorable opinion of Piacentini toward the work of these architects work is evident in an article, entitled "Due lavori di C.E. Rava and S. Larco," which also presented the Casa solari in S. Margherita Ligure. In speaking of the Padiglione delle Colonie, Piacentini states: "it is solid, pure, schematic. Beautiful light cut out in the white, smooth, naked materials. It is colonial, without being either Arab or Turkish. The cupola in the central room is ingeniously found, acutely characteristic." Piacentini, "Due lavori di C.E. Rava and S. Larco," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* VII, 11 (July 1928): 524-28.

⁸⁷ Rava published a series of three articles in *La Tribuna* in February, March and April of 1928. The first of these, entitled "Decorazione" attempts to refute the criticisms of Rationalism that it was not interested in decoration. In this article, Rava argues for a decoration "that defends us," calling for a "new decorative spirit that logically integrates itself with the new architecture." Rava, "Decorazione." *La Tribuna* (February 1928), in *Nove anni di architettura vissuta, 1926-IV - 1935-XIII*, 37-40. The second was entitled "Dioramma architettonico, o di un'ordine del cemento armato," and it attempts to ground Rationalism in the broader cultural context of modern society – likening the influence of concrete on modern architecture to these other cultural forces. Rava, "Diorama architettonico, o di un'ordine del cemento armato." *La Tribuna* (12 March 1928), in *Nove anni di architettura vissuta, 1926-IV - 1935-XIII*, 41-47. The final, entitled "Tipo e serie," elaborates on the research involved in the idea of construction in series – a research which involves both the design of types and specific architectural elements. Rava, "Tipo e serie." *La Tribuna* (13 April 1928), in *Nove anni di architettura vissuta, 1926-IV - 1935-XIII*, 49-52.

architecture of Italy and secure their status as delegates to CIAM and the related *Comité International pour la Realisation du Probleme Architectural Moderne*.⁸⁸ Shortly after the first CIAM conference, which was from June 26-28, 1928, these two architects initiated a series of correspondences with the *Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, which was the official fascist Ministry of education. In a memorandum to this Ministry dated September 19th of that year, Rava and Sartoris reported on the first CIAM, noting a request from the Central Committee in Zurich to constitute a *Gruppo Nazionale* of Rationalist architects, and asking for government sponsorship of this initiative and approval of their status as official representatives of Italy. In addition to reporting on the full details of this meeting, including the major points of discussion that were eventually codified in the "La Sarraz declaration", these architects were careful to point out to the Fascist authorities that Italian Rationalism would preserve its own national identity, according to the nature of the Italian people.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ The process of appointment of Rava to this group is recorded in a letter in the CIAM archive in Zurich. This correspondence dated March 13 and sent to the secretary of the organizing committee, Gabriel Guevrékian, notes a prior invitation from Madame Helène de Maudrot to the La Sarraz conference. In this letter he also offers the name of Alberto Sartoris as the other delegate. See GTA-CIAM 42-k-1928 Rava. For a more general discussion of the activities of Rava and Sartoris relative to CIAM, see Talamona, "Primi passi verso l'Europa (1927-1933)," *Luigi Figini Gino Pollini. Opera completa*, 61-73. See also: Brunetti, "La partecipazione degli architetti italiani ai CIAM e la nascita del MIAR." *Architetti e fascismo*, 145-56.

⁸⁹ See "Memorial a S.E. Leicht sulla costituzione dal "Gruppo Nazionale" degli architetti razionalisti italiani." September 19, 1928. ACS-MPI Dir. Gen. AA.BB.AA. Division III, 1930-35. Busta 158, Fascicolo - 1929-Zurigo-Comitato Internazionale per l'Architettura. This document was accompanied by a cover letter which informs Leicht, who was *Sottosegretario di Stato* at the *Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, of the CIAM conference, noting the necessity of creating this *Gruppo Nazionale*. It goes on to state: "the Central Committee of CIAM in Zurich has officially asked your excellency to sponsor this initiative, without which Italy will find itself in an inferior position in the face of other European nations in the field of architectonic renewal." The "Memorial" provides a detailed report on the activities at the La Sarraz conference under the following headings: Architectonic consequences of modern techniques; Standardization; General economy; Urbanism; Domestic education in schools; and Rapport between architecture and the state. These are, naturally, the main points of the La Sarraz declaration. Of particular concern in this report was the issue of constituting this *Gruppo Nazionale*. In this presentation these architects were careful to insist: "the intention is that Italian architecture will be able to have a unitary and national aspect, derived from the most essential characteristics of the Italian nature and its people, and profoundly different from that of the other countries."

The process of Rava and Sartoris formalizing a *Gruppo Nazionale* of Rationalist architects in Italy continued during the period leading up to the second CIAM conference, which was held in Frankfurt from October 24-26, 1929. In January of that year, *Sottosegretario di Stato alla Pubblica Istruzione* Pier Silverio Leicht accepted the sponsorship of the *Comitato Nazionale Italiano* of CIAM and ratified the nominations of these two architects as Italian representatives to this international organization.⁹⁰ This initial approval was followed by a concerted effort by Rava and Sartoris to solicit the membership of their colleagues in the formation of a *Gruppo Nazionale* prior to this second Congress – an initiative that was formalized with their forwarding of a "Regolamento del Gruppo Nazionale Architetti Razionalisti Italiani" to all potential members. This document represents an attempt to solidify the position of Rationalism in Italy through the creation of a new administrative structure that would mediate between CIAM, the *Sindacato Nazionale Architetti*, the Italian government and individual architects, while at the same time affording these two architects considerable power in both the nomination and policing of its members.⁹¹ Italian Rationalism would thus no longer be only a set

⁹⁰ The acceptance of the sponsorship of the *Comitato Nazionale Italiano* of CIAM is documented in a letter from Leicht on behalf of the *Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione* to Rava and Sartoris dated January 14, 1929. This letter would seem to openly embrace the rhetoric of Rationalism in stating: "I sincerely hope that the work of the Gruppo Italiano will continue to be not only a work of the highest *italianità*, but at the same time prestige for our vision of art in the field of modern architecture." Letter from Sottosegretario di Stato alla Pubblica Istruzione Pier Silverio Leicht to Rava and Sartoris. January 24, 1929. ACS-MPI Dir. Gen. AA.BB.AA. Division III, 1930-35. Busta 158, Fascicolo - 1929-Zurigo-Comitato Internazionale per l'Architettura.

⁹¹ This "Regolamento" was accompanied by a cover letter from Rava and Sartoris, which informed the recipient of the prior approval of their status as representatives of Italy to CIAM. It then goes on to invite membership in the *Gruppo Nazionale* through acceptance of the *Regolamenti* - adopting a rather blunt approach in saying "accept now or the invitation will be withdrawn." The "Regolamenti" is comprised of fifteen different articles which stipulate the rights and responsibilities of its members. In this document, Rava and Sartoris give themselves rather far reaching powers in administering this organization and overseeing the activities of its members – including the acceptance and suspension of members. Among the offenses for losing membership is designing a building that is not consistent with rationalist principles. See: Cover letter from Commissione Internazionale per l'Architettura Contemporanea, I delegati per l'Italia (Rava and Sartoris) to Egregio Collega. September 7, 1929. "Regolamento del Gruppo Nazionale Architetti Razionalisti Italiani." In AFP Scatola 3, Cartella B.

of theoretical principles disseminated in magazines and illustrated through exhibitions and built works. By creating a *Gruppo Nazionale*, the mediation between an Italian identity and a European context that it expounded was to be reified in an administrative mechanism that would assure this movement's continued integrity.

This attempt to affirm Italian Rationalism through a new organizational structure eventually failed both within the official circles of the architectural profession and among Rationalist architects. Alberto Calza-Bini, the *Segretario Nazionale* of the *Sindacato Nazionale Architetti* not only rejected the qualifications of Rava and Sartoris as representatives, he questioned the idea of the Italian government collaborating with an organization like CIAM, which "has Russia and Germany as its principal center, and tends to the internationalization of architectonic forms."⁹² This proposal was greeted with an equal amount of derision from the Rationalist colleagues of Rava and Sartoris, who were suspicious of the amount of authority they delegated to themselves in creating and directing this new bureaucracy. These suspicions were fueled by the acrimony that developed in the aftermath of Rava's departure from the *Gruppo 7* in May of 1929, and led to the eventual rejection of this proposal by all of the major figures within Italian Rationalism in October of that year.⁹³ The involvement of Rava in CIAM and the

⁹² In a letter to Giuliano Balbino, the *Ministro della Educazione Nazionale*, Calza Bini stated that neither Sartoris nor Rava were on the official roll of architects due to their lack of the necessary practical experience. As such they were not yet able to be members of the *Sindacato Nazionale Architetti* and as such they should not be recognized by the government as official delegates to any organization related to architecture. His dismissal of any interest in CIAM was unequivocal, inferring a communist sympathy for this organization. He concluded by stating that there was an already existing official structure, which he oversaw and in which they could participate, and no need to create more bureaucracy. Letter from *Sindacato Nazionale Architetti* (Calza Bini) to *Ministro della Educazione Nazionale* (Balbino). March 11, 1930. ACS-MPI Dir. Gen. AA.BB.AA. Division III, 1930-35. Busta 158, Fascicolo - 1929-Zurigo-Comitato Internazionale per l'Architettura.

⁹³ The rejection of this proposal by the remaining members of the *Gruppo 7* is recorded in a series of correspondences between Rava, Sartoris and Pollini. The "Regolamento" of September 7 asked for a response within twenty days. On October 1st, Rava sent a note to Pollini noting that this period had expired and asking for his response along with that of Terragni, Libera and

constitution of a *Gruppo Nazionale* ended in April of 1930, with Libera and the remaining members of the *Gruppo 7* attempting to create their own national organization, which was eventually called the *Movimento Italiano per l'Architettura Razionale* (MIAR). This change in leadership was completed with the nomination of Piero Bottoni, Gino Pollini and Luigi Vietti to represent Italy at the third CIAM in Brussels in November of 1930.⁹⁴ Despite the failure of Rava's attempt to create an official institutional framework for Italian Rationalism – one that reflected this movement's intention to situate the identity of modern Italian architecture within a European frame – this political struggle formed a crucial backdrop to the renewal of his polemical activities in the pages of *Domus* magazine in 1931.

The definition of a new direction for Italian Rationalism by Rava began with the publication of "Svolta pericolosa. Situazione dell'Italia di fronte al razionalismo Europeo," in January of that year – which was the first of eight articles written under the general heading "Panorama del Razionalismo." In identifying the architecture of Gropius, Mendelsohn, Mies Van der Rohe and Le Corbusier as the "intransigent" line

Figini. On October 10th, Rava sent a second note stating that Secretary General of CIAM in Zurich was asking for the final list of members and warning that they could wait no longer. This letter received a prompt response from Pollini on October 11th, which stated that they could not agree to join the *Gruppo Nazionale* without major modifications to the "Regolamenti", which imposed too many severe restrictions on its members. A second letter was sent from Pollini to Sartoris on the same date, noting the same disagreements, and noting "we believe that the "Regolamento" is not your work, but above all that of Rava." A final exchange of letters took place on October 13th from Rava to Pollini, accusing his former colleague of having verbally promised to join along with the other members of the *Gruppo 7* and then withdrawn his commitment. This letter enjoyed a similarly quick response from Pollini, who re-affirmed their intention to not join the *Gruppo Nazionale*, stating that "all of the blame for the miscarried Gruppo Nazionale is on you two delegates, who are the only ones responsible." See AFP. Scatola 3, Cartella B.

⁹⁴ This later attempt to create a *Gruppo Nazionale Architetti Razionalisti Italiani* (GNARI) is recorded in a memorandum from Adalberto Libera dated March 29, 1930. This document lists the leader of this group to be Libera, with the members being Figini, Frette, Minucci, Pollini, Puppo, Ridolfi, Terragni and Vietti. This larger group was in turn divided into a section for Rome (Minucci, Puppo, Ridolfi and Vietti) and Milan. ACS-AGM 40-366. Document 157. This initial effort was followed by a second proposal by Libera of May 20, 1930 which called for the creation of the MIAR as a larger organization that included the GNARI within it as a more select body. The MIAR was also organized into regional chapters, which were Milan, Rome and Turin. ACS-AGM 40-366. Document 164.

of European Rationalism, Rava was distancing himself from the official modernism of CIAM and the recent initiatives of his former colleagues from the *Gruppo 7*. He was also clearly revisiting the criticism of commentators like Piacentini who associated Rationalism with internationalism and the politics of communism – a view that was poignantly expressed in this essay in Rava's description of the cover of the special issue of *Das Neue Frankfurt* entitled "Deutsche Bauen in der UdSSR" from September 1930.⁹⁵ [Figure 1.a-12] This negative characterization also provided him with a context against which he could define a more "independent" direction for Italian Rationalism. This position was parallel to that of architects like Emil Fahrenkamp, whose work he described as reflecting "the climate of the highest civilization of Germany today." [Figure 1.a-13] The use of images from the German magazine *Moderne Bauformen* to illustrate this article further underscore the polemical and self-referential nature of this identification of an undercurrent within European Rationalism.⁹⁶ For Rava, Rationalist architects in Italy were "too faithful

⁹⁵ Piacentini's review of the first *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* was entitled "Prima internazionale architettonica," a subtle play on the First Communist International. In discussing the association of the beautiful and the structural in the text of this essay he states: "let us leave these dry and metaphysical speculations to the men of the North." Piacentini, "Prima internazionale architettonica," 548. In "Svolta pericolosa," Rava speaks of the intransigent line of Rationalism as "always sympathizing more with the unifying, leveling and socializing tendencies of the recent architecture in Russia." He then proceeds to state that the cover of the September issue of *Das Neue Frankfurt* is symptomatic of this, showing a German architect carrying a drawing table and case with one foot on the map of Germany and the second on that of Russia. He describes this as a graphic symbol which "reveals a true de-centering of extremist German Rationalism toward Russia." Rava, "Svolta pericolosa. Situazione dell'Italia di fronte al razionalismo Europeo," 39.

⁹⁶ In this article, Rava states that the value of the work of Fahrenkamp was "in his consistent fidelity to the most sane and indispensable principles of Rationalism, he affirms in the variety of confronted subjects, a manifold and vigilant personality, different in accordance with the different problems, and above all revealing in their work, a spirit which reflects all the aspects of the life of their time, seen through the highest cultural climate of modern Germany." *Ibid.*, 41. The use of images in this series of articles is a particularly interesting sub-text, as many of the journals from which these photos were taken were ones with which Rava had prior contact as representative of the *Gruppo 7* – in this way further emphasizing his attempt to re-position himself in relation to his past. All of the illustrations in this first essay came from the pages of *Moderne Bauformen*, a much more moderate journal than *Das Neue Frankfurt*, whose cover he singled out for criticism. Although he describes two tendencies within European Rationalism, the "intransigents" and the "independents," it was only the work of this second group that was presented in this article. In

to the dogma of a Gropius or a Le Corbusier" and as such, "shackled by formulas and terminologies that could be said to mask their horizon with abstract inhibitions." He suggested that Italian architects should "discover the joy of liberty and imagination" that comes from creating "according to their race, their culture, their personality." The source of inspiration for this new direction in Italian Rationalism was to be Italy's Mediterranean vernacular – an architecture through which, according to Rava, "we recover our most intimate essence as Italians."⁹⁷

In making an argument about the need for Italian Rationalism to create its own identity through an embrace of these indigenous Mediterranean sources, Rava was participating in the tradition in Italy and Europe of invoking the vernacular under the guise of a modern architecture. In so doing, he was clearly responding to the criticism of internationalism that was directed at this movement by offering a source other than the "new spirit" alluded to in the programmatic statements of Le Corbusier. Rava was also an unintentional participant in the broader critique of Italian Rationalism by reproaching his former colleagues in public for their dogmatism.⁹⁸ This article appeared the same month that Marcello Piacentini published "Dove è irragionevole l'architettura razionale" in the art magazine, *Dedalo*

addition to Fahrenkamp, the architects illustrated were Heinrich Tessenow, Carl Bergsten, Ernst Lichtblau and Alfred Soulek.

⁹⁷ The larger context of this first statement is as follows: "the Italian Rationalists for the most part... (we cite the architects of the "gruppo: 7," and some young Roman architects), still seem still too faithful to the dogmas of a Gropius or a Le Corbusier, they seem to have outlooks that are too unilateral, limited and stiff from rules determined by the aesthetics of Rationalism, shackled by formulas and terminologies that would be said to mask their horizon with abstract inhibitions." Ibid., 43. Rava then proceeds to suggest that Italian architects should "feel the need to create according to their race, their culture, their personality; that they would discover the joy of liberty and of imagination; that they would dare to feel independent again, striving that their work, also in its different singularity, would reflect the ideal climate of their time, the climate of Latin modernity." Italy's Mediterranean spirit is described in the conclusion of this essay where Rava states: "Our race, our lineage, our ancient and new civilization is Mediterranean." Ibid., 44.

⁹⁸ In discussing this series of articles published by Rava in *Domus*, Fabrizio Brunetti argues that they are not only interesting in relation to the question of *mediterraneità*. They provide a general evaluation of Rationalism understood as an international phenomenon, and appear as a "internal criticism" of this movement, given that it was conducted by one of its founding members. Brunetti, "L'idea di *mediterraneità* negli scritti di Carlo Enrico Rava e del Gruppo di *Quadrante*," in *Architetti e fascismo*, 203.

– an article that purported to examine the irrationality of rational architecture for the Italian context. In this essay, Piacentini identifies the principal qualities of European Rationalism as being the predominance of horizontality, the preoccupation with creating minimum standards, and the use of flat roofs. Although he recognized the suitability of some of these features to modern housing, he questioned their application to public buildings which, he argued, demanded a more monumental public presence.⁹⁹ In support of these arguments he noted that Le Corbusier's apartment house at the Weissenhof building exhibition in Stuttgart of 1927 – a project that was "still launched with fanaticism as dogma of the new art" – had already fallen into ruin, its terraces appearing "sad and deserted like the open space in a prison."¹⁰⁰ In a manner not unlike the arguments advanced by Rava in "Svolta pericolosa" concerning a more independent expression for Italian Rationalism, Piacentini asserts that "the questions of climate, of the temperament of the various races, and of the traditions of the civilizations must still be examined." He rejects what he perceived was the rigid and relentless application of rationality to Italian

⁹⁹ Piacentini, "Dove è irragionevole l'architettura razionale," *Dedalo* X, 11 (January 1931): 527-40. In this article, Piacentini attributes the horizontality of modern buildings to the demand for affordable housing in the immediate post-World War I period. Through this period the horizontal line became the predominant one, even in the composition of facades, which he argued, allowed for greater simplicity. The horizontal, according to Piacentini, was also an expression of the collectivity of housing – something that was preferable to the arbitrary expression of the individual. However, he notes that: "in constructing other buildings of a superior order, or even monumental, where the horizontal is not always typical – or in fact, often absurd because it is in contrast with the internal organism of the building – it is therefore *irrational* more than ever. *Ibid.*, 534.

¹⁰⁰ Piacentini remarks that the previous August he returned to see the houses that were constructed in Stuttgart for the Weissenhof building exhibition, noting with great sarcasm that "the celebrated villa of Le Corbusier, elevated from the ground as on piles, has gone bankrupt. That space – I don't know how you can exactly define it – subordinate to the house, that wanted to represent the sojourn in the open air, I found completely abandoned, dirty, with some twigs strewn on the ground and a garden broom on one side. This seemed to confirm to us that the villa might have been inhabited by people that did not know how to appreciate it." *Ibid.*, 537-8.

culture that was brought on by the machine age, arguing that "in Italian architecture the spirit has always dominated the material."¹⁰¹

The arguments offered by Rava in "Svolta pericolosa" were more fully developed in the second article in this series, which was entitled "Spirito Latino" – an essay in which he uses the example of Antonio Sant'Elia to assert what he argued were the Latin and Mediterranean origins of modern Italian architecture. Rava affirmed the value of Sant'Elia as an influential and important figure within European modernism whose research into the use of reinforced concrete and the resulting transformation of the modern city was parallel to that being conducted in other countries. He also asserted that Sant'Elia "did not know how to recognize the true tradition." – that is, his work did not express the Latin spirit that was the proper basis for a period of renewal within Italian Rationalism.¹⁰² For Rava, this inspiration was to be found in a different precedent. In this essay, he stated: "much earlier than the first European innovators, some North American architects realized numerous houses in California that were not only fully befitting... the canons of the not yet born Rationalism, but also... profoundly pervaded and permeated by that Latin spirit which... we have not perceived in Antonio Sant'Elia." Although Marcello Piacentini

¹⁰¹ As previously noted, Rava argued that Italian architects "feel the need to create according to their race, their culture, their personality." Rava, "Svolta pericolosa," 43. The parallel statement of Piacentini is as follows: "the questions of climate, of the temperament of the various races, and of the traditions of the civilizations must still be examined. Today all European architecture, from Malta to the northern cape has become Mediterranean." Piacentini concludes this essay with the following comment: "We think that all of this absolutist Rationalism cannot be supported, in the same way that the intransigent mechanicity of the life of today will not be supported. The spirit must find its place again. The rapid race of the perfection of mechanical means must not kill the product of the spirit." Piacentini, "Dove è irragionevole l'architettura razionale," 535, 540.

¹⁰² In this essay, Rava argues that "Sant'Elia has the merit of having been the first in Italy.. to foresee, in difficult times for our architecture, the laws and the necessities of reinforced concrete as a new medium of architectural expression, its infinite possibilities, and the consequent transformation of the urbanistic principles." He goes on to state: "the fact that a solitary Italian knew how to arrive by his own account at some of the conclusions which contemporaneously joined the parallel research developing in other countries of Europe is undoubtedly a momentous fact." The larger context of this final statement is as follows: "justly despising the false tradition as a vain formal academicism, he nevertheless did not know how to recognize the true tradition, that of the continuity of the spirit." Rava, "Spirito Latino," 24.

had already identified a link between North American domestic architecture and the minor architecture of Italy, Rava argued that the traditions reflected in these works could also be a model for contemporary architecture.¹⁰³ The reason behind this phenomenon was the convergence of a number of distinct influences, the first of these being the presence of ancient Spanish culture, which was asserted by Rava to be Latin in origin. The second factor, which came from the impact of Anglo-Saxon society on North America, was the technical advancement that had brought modern building techniques to the highest degree of development in the world.¹⁰⁴ Finally, he noted the work of these American architects in California showed a unique ability to harmonize with the natural landscape. This quality was exemplified in projects like the Mary Banning House by Irving Gill of 1911, which, according to Rava: "would seem to be have been born for our Ligurian Riviera."¹⁰⁵ [Figure 1.a-14] The *mediterraneità* of North American architecture was thus evident in its mediation of Latin cultural references with Mediterranean climatic demands by the means of

¹⁰³ Rava argues that although it had already been recognized that some years before Sant'Elia architects of other nations had already initiated these researches from which Rationalism was born, much less well known were these earlier realizations in California. The chronology that is offered by Rava in this article is that the work of Gropius was from as early as 1912, while the Ellen Sripes House of Irving Gill was from 1906. *Ibid.*, 25. As already noted, Piacentini published an article in 1922 on the influence of Italian art in North America, where he discusses the references to and pertinence of the minor architecture of Italy in this country. Piacentini, "Influssi d'arte italiana nel Nord-America," 536-38, 542, 554-55.

¹⁰⁴ On this first point, Rava argues that a series of circumstances contributed to this exchange, including; the intense contacts with South America that had opened the riches of ancient Spanish civilization to North Americans; the tourist travel to the Central American and Mexican territories that had been American protectorates. For Rava, these circumstances resulted both in a concerted effort to study these "Latin" traditions and a wide dissemination of this culture among the educated classes. On this second point, Rava stated: "that the United States of America represents the one, among the nations of the world, that has brought the conquests of modern technique to the highest degree of perfection... is a fact hereby universally acknowledged." It is worth noting that, according to Rava, this combination of Anglo-Saxon and Latin influences meant that North American architects could not aspire to the new Mediterranean civilization that was possible in Italy. Rava, "Spirito Latino," 25-6.

¹⁰⁵ The harmonization with the landscape was described by Rava as "the greatest art of the young North American Architects." He goes on to clarify this relationship as: "not only to harmonize the architecture with the vegetation of the place in which it rises, but to almost subordinate the form of the house to the greatest enjoyability of the surrounding nature; a concept which only later the European Rationalists have come to." *Ibid.*, 27-29.

modern technology – fusing an essentially racial designation of identity with a geographic one.

The third and fourth articles in this series, entitled "Necessità di selezione," provide a more specific presentation of what Rava regarded as the "intransigent" line of European Rationalism under the rather ironic use of a phrase from the earlier writings with the *Gruppo 7*.¹⁰⁶ He begins the first of these essays by arguing that the character of logic and necessity of Rationalism, while being an important foundation, was not sufficient to create architecture. Rather, there were other factors that should be considered, such as "intelligence, aesthetic, personality and race." In neglecting these concerns, the intransigent line of Rationalism, according to Rava, had discredited all rational architecture and was in danger of being overcome by the decadence of an almost industrial uniformity.¹⁰⁷ To illustrate this argument, he compares the work of Erich Mendelsohn, whom he describes as "one of the most authoritative and singular representatives of the German intransigents" with that of Emil Fahrenkamp, an architect who "superimposes the rules of Rationalism with his own liberally exercised intelligence." Although Rava found the exterior appearance of Mendelsohn's Schocken store in Stuttgart to be appropriate to its "clearly utilitarian and commercial purpose," he was quite critical of its restaurant, which he

¹⁰⁶ In the first manifesto of the *Gruppo 7*, Rava spoke of the idea of selection as that process by which forms were perfected over time. That is, "the new forms of architecture must receive aesthetic value exclusively from the character of *necessity*, and only afterwards, by way of *selection*, will a style be born." *Gruppo 7*, "Architecture," 852. In this context, the term selection signifies the ability for architects to be discriminating in their work, rather than following "the character of necessity."

¹⁰⁷ In this essay, Rava states: "rational architecture had its first beginnings from utilitarian presuppositions and its first impulses from technical and industrial reasons." He goes on to observe: "the major certainty of its future resides in these characteristics of logic and necessity present from its birth as long as it is never forgotten that if this is the necessary base of Rationalism, it is not sufficient to create architecture; an exalted term in which many other factors are implicit, including intelligence, aesthetic, personality, and race, just to name a few." In speaking about the decadence of intransigent Rationalism, he states: "almost all of the intransigent Rationalists, too tied to their dogma, are no longer capable of creating architecture that does not have a uniform industrial appearance, even when it deals with a villa or a cinema." Rava, "Necessità di selezione, parte prima," 36.

deemed to be "bare and poor, gloomy and desolate refectory for the Soviet proletariat." [Figure 1.a-15] In contrast with this evaluation, he argued that in the Michel store in Wuppertal, Fahrenkamp "was able to create an environment of completely cheerful and luminous elegance... with reduced means and extreme simplicity."¹⁰⁸ [Figure 1.a-16] These same observations about the need to establish a more independent position within Rationalism are echoed in the second of these essays, which examines what Rava called a "snobbism of new materials." In this discussion, he argued that there was no need for architects to impose limits on their work by prescribing the use of modern materials like linoleum and metal and prohibiting the use of traditional materials like wood and marble. This essay concludes with a discussion of the criticism of architecture, to which he granted an important public role. In the face of the "false modern," Rava called on the Italian public to be able "to distinguish, to discriminate, in a word to select that which will be presented as ours."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ In discussing the Schocken stores of Mendelsohn, Rava states: "given the clearly utilitarian and commercial purposes of these buildings... the decisively industrial characteristics that distinguish them are, in this case, perfectly justified and appropriate." At the same time, he later warns that when this approach is done in excess it "represents more than a new "academicism".... but, what is worse, a new baroqueism." He proceeds to argue that the task of designing a restaurant in a large department store demands a degree of freedom and fantasy, noting that "all Mendelsohn can produce in his Schocken store in Stuttgart, stiff by his ideology and his dogma, is a bare and poor, gloomy and desolate refectory for the Soviet proletariat, at the most expressing a dignified poverty. It is sufficient to compare this locale with an identical purpose, decorated by Emil Fahrenkamp in the building he constructed for the Michel department store in Wuppertal, in which, with reduced means and extreme simplicity, the architect was able to create an environment of completely cheerful and luminous elegance without making use of any decorative elements." *Ibid.*, 36-7.

¹⁰⁹ With regard to the use of new materials, Rava argues: "not only is the use of modern materials not sufficient to create a modern architect, it is not even sufficient to create any kind of architect." He then states: "today many of those sudden Rationalists... believe that it is enough to use buxus and chrome, celotex and nickel, maftex, eternit and linoleum, to become a modern architect, deluding themselves and others; there exists in all of this a snobbism of new materials, that is a snobbism of the petty bourgeoisie and the provincials for the "ways of the city." In discussing the lack of discriminating judgment in architecture he argues: "the first thing... to seek to remedy this perilous state of affairs must be criticism, in which we desire to demonstrate and extend that sense of 'responsibility' in the guidance of public opinion." The larger context of the quoted statement is as follows: "We wish, therefore to address to the sensible Italians (we hope) the nobility of our epoch, the invitation to not accept anything blindly, neither the old nor the new; to accustom themselves to make out, distinguish, to discriminate, in a word to "select" that which will be

In reflecting on the perceived crisis within European Rationalism, the first four essays in this "Panorama del Razionalismo" – which form the essential nucleus of Rava's argument – theorize a more independent direction for Italian architecture.¹¹⁰ In so doing, Rava was both re-evaluating his own position within Italian Rationalism and providing an explicit critique of the dogmatism of his former colleagues from the *Gruppo 7*. In order to better understand the significance of this gesture, these writings need to be viewed within the context of the formation of the *Movimento Italiano per l'Architettura Razionale* (MIAR) and the organization of the second *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale*, which was held at the Galleria d'Arte in Rome from March 30 to April 30, 1931. Following the failed attempt by Rava and Sartoris to constitute a *Gruppo Nazionale*, Adalberto Libera and the remaining members of the *Gruppo 7* created their own national organization of some forty-seven Rationalist architects – a group whose first and only major event was the second Rationalist exhibition.¹¹¹ This exhibition was used by these young architects as a vehicle through which to establish the status of Italian Rationalism as the official *Arte di Stato*. Not only did Mussolini make a prominent appearance at the inauguration of this event, the art critic Pier Maria Bardi wrote a "Petizione a

presented as ours: to open our eyes, to abandon the prejudices, in helping ourselves with our intelligence, in recognizing the imitation, in refuting it." Rava, "Necessità di selezione, parte seconda," 39, 42, 88.

¹¹⁰ Three of the other essays in this series – "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna" (first and second part), "Giovani architetti nordamericani" – provide particular arguments within this general theory, while the final essay – entitled "Conclusione" – is a summary of these essays and a response to their criticism. The two essays on modern colonial architecture will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

¹¹¹ Although, as previously noted, the formation of the MIAR began as early as May of 1930, it was with the second Rationalist exhibition that this group was fully formed. The list of its members was published in *Casabella* magazine in April of 1931 along with a report on this exhibition. The *Segretario generale* was Libera, with the remaining members of his *Consiglio direttivo* being Pollini for the *Gruppo regionale milanese*; Pagano-Pogatschnig for the *Gruppo regionale torinese*; and Minucci for the *Gruppo regionale romano*. There was also a fourth category, which was the *Gruppo interregionale*, which included among others Sartoris. There were eighteen members from Rome, ten from Milan, seven from Turin, and eleven from the inter-regional group. "Elenco degli architetti aderenti al Movimento Italiano per l'Architettura Razionale," *Casabella* 40 (April 1931): 68.

Mussolini per l'architettura" on behalf of the MIAR which argued that "if Fascism will have... its own architecture... this work will be that of the youth of our generation."¹¹² The hubris of this attempt to align Italian Rationalism with Fascist politics was exposed in the controversy over the display of Bardi's "Tavolo degli orrori" – a collage panel in which the work of established architects like Piacentini was visually associated with out-of-fashion clothing. [Figure 1.a-17] This critique led to the public censure of the MIAR in the pages of *Architettura e Arti Decorative* by Calza-Bini on behalf of the *Sindacato Nazionale Architetti*, and the demand for these architects to submit themselves to the regulations of this official organization or risk losing their membership. This controversy resulted in considerable discord among the members of the MIAR, and the eventual disbanding of this movement in September of 1931.¹¹³

The re-evaluation of Italian Rationalism in these essays can be seen as Rava's own attempt to link this movement with the political demands of the Fascist state. This intention was reinforced through his signing of the proclamation of the

¹¹² For a discussion of the question of architecture and politics in relation to this exhibition, see Ciucci, "Due esposizioni razionali," and "Architettura, arte di stato." *Gli architetti e il fascismo*, 104-7, 108-13. The "Petizione a Mussolini per l'architettura", which was originally published in *L'Ambrosiano* on February 14, 1931, appeared in its entirety in *Casabella* in a proclamation by the MIAR concerning the second Rationalist exhibition. "L'architettura razionale italiana, 1931," *Casabella* 40 (April 1931): 67-82. A longer version of this essay was published independently and appeared under the title, *Rapporto sull'architettura (per Mussolini)*. This pamphlet was given directly to the Duce for his visit to the inauguration of this exhibition on March 30, 1931.

¹¹³ For a detailed discussion of the controversy generated by the "Tavolo degli orrori" and the eventual disbanding of the MIAR, see Dennis Paul Doordan, *Architecture and Politics in Fascist Italy: Il Movimento Italiano per l'Architettura Razionale, 1928-1932*, (Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1983), 88-112. The censure of the Rationalist exhibition appeared in the May issue of *Architettura e Arti Decorative* under the title "A proposito della mostra di architettura razionalista." Noting that this magazine had intended to publish the work from this exhibition, Calza-Bini states that this event was an "unbecoming manifestation that in an incorrect and unjustified form and pettiness had caused the organizers to forget hierarchical respect and syndical discipline." While no measures were specified, Doordan notes that they were threatened with expulsion, and a number of the MIAR members from Rome lost their academic positions. A second notice appeared in the "Pagine di vita sindacale" in August of 1931, with Calza-Bini calling for the incident to be forgotten, with the implicit agreement of the MIAR to submit themselves to the existing hierarchy of the *Sindacato*. "Il Consiglio Nazionale del Sindacato Fascista degli Architetti" (17 Luglio 1931), *Architettura e Arti Decorative* X, 12 (August 1931): 635-7.

Raggruppamento Architetti Moderni Italiani (RAMI), which offered itself as an alternative to the MIAR in the aftermath of the controversy surrounding the second Rationalist exhibition – an event which, notably, did not include any of Rava's projects.¹¹⁴ This personal polemic was thus parallel to and participated in the more general discourse surrounding Italian Rationalism at the time of this exhibition – a debate that included numerous exchanges which took place in pages of journals and newspapers. One such interaction was between Piacentini and Pagano, whose "Del "monumentale" nell'architettura moderna" of April 1931 responded to the arguments of Piacentini that Rationalism was inappropriate for the design of monumental buildings by asserting that "the tendency of modern architecture possessed all the formal privileges of a monumental composition."¹¹⁵ Rava's participation in this discourse is evidenced in the final essay of this series, where he responds to the criticism he received from the representatives of the MIAR. Defending himself against the accusation of "having washed the dirty linen of Rationalism in public," he

¹¹⁴ The RAMI was comprised of Luigi Ciarrocchi, Mario De Renzi, Sebastiano Larco, Mario Paniconi, Giulio Pediconi, Concezio Petrucci, Carlo Enrico Rava, Oscar Seno, Luciano Tufaroli and Mosè Costantino Vetriani. Their article, entitled "Proclama del Raggruppamento Architetti Moderni Italiani," was published in *La Tribuna* on May 5, 1931. Dennis Doordan argues that "the creation of RAMI was an attempt to split the ranks of the MIAR by offering members of the MIAR, concerned by the severity of the reaction to the Rationalist exhibition, an opportunity to abandon the MIAR while still saving some face by appearing to support another "Modern" movement." Doordan, *Architecture and Politics in Fascist Italy: Il Movimento Italiano per l'Architettura Razionale, 1928-1932*, 98.

¹¹⁵ For a complete compilation of these numerous articles, see *Materiali per l'analisi dell'architettura moderna. il MIAR*, ed. Michele Cennamo (Napoli: Società Editrice Napoletana, 1976). Pagano was responding to Piacentini's article, "Dove è irragionevole l'architettura razionale" from January of 1931, which, as previously noted, critiqued the horizontal and anti-monumental aspects of modern architecture. Pagano provides a rather lengthy defense of the monumentality of modern architecture in this essay, which was published in the same issue as the preliminary article by the MIAR on the Rationalist exhibition. In this discussion, he argues "it is not only the dimension in the absolute sense that gives the true measure of monumentality, but their effective representation in rapport with the human scale and with the value in a qualitative and not a quantitative sense of the work of art." Pagano, "Del "monumentale" nell'architettura moderna," *Casabella* 40 (April 1931): 9-15. Piacentini responded in kind with the article, "Difesa dell'architettura italiana," published in *Il Giornale d'Italia* on May 8, 1931. Doordan describes this essay as "the opening salvo of a carefully coordinated journalistic campaign to discredit the Rationalist Movement." Doordan, *Architecture and Politics in Fascist Italy: Il Movimento Italiano per l'Architettura Razionale, 1928-1932*, 96.

asserts that "our precise purpose was to discern, in the rationalist tendency, the good and the useful from the bad and the harmful... to distinguish them from the vain, empty formulas." Rava concludes his response by stating: "today it is no longer a question of being "rationalists," it is only a question of being modern Italian architects... each searching within themselves for the most profound sincere and independent expression."¹¹⁶

This "Panorama del Razionalismo" was portrayed by Rava as a radical break from his Rationalist past. There was, in fact, a great continuity in his writings throughout this period. The "Hellenic spirit" of the founding manifestoes of the *Gruppo 7* was, in many ways, merely being substituted by the "Latin spirit" of the vernacular architecture of Italy's coastal regions. Moreover, Rava was not alone in his interest in a Mediterranean architecture, as these views were echoed in the polemics of the MIAR at the time of the second Rationalist exhibition. The presentation of this exhibition in *Casabella* ended with the following statement: "it is, above all, right and proper to recognize how the tendency can be more and more accentuated to exalt the character of *latinità* that has permitted this architecture to define itself as "Mediterranean."¹¹⁷ For Rava, a modern rational architecture was to be a product of a fusion of technical developments, climatic and environmental demands and the influence of Latin civilization. The appropriation of vernacular Mediterranean sources addressed a question that was inadequately answered in his

¹¹⁶ This essay begins with a discussion of a number of examples of the "Latin spirit," with a particular focus on the question of colonial architecture. The final section deals with what Rava calls the two accusations made against his writings, the first being the snobbism of his views. The second accusation, that he notes came from the supporters of "intransigent" Rationalism, was one of "having done harm rather than good to Rationalism." The larger context of the first quoted statement is as follows: "To those who have reproached us in print for having "washed the dirty laundry of Rationalism in public," we answer that despite everything this "dirty linen" appears to us to be sufficiently clean to not necessitate being washed in private any more." Rava, "Conclusione," 40.

¹¹⁷ "L'architettura razionale italiana, 1931," 82. It is interesting to note that Rava, in his "Conclusione", remarks that he felt considerable satisfaction in seeing the use of the term "Spirito Mediterraneo" in the conclusion of the manifesto of the second Rationalist exhibition, although he maintained that there few works in this exhibition that reflected this spirit. "Conclusione," 40.

earlier writings – that is, the need to forge a specifically national identity for modern architecture in Fascist Italy. The *mediterraneità* of Rava also resolved certain ambiguities in the relationship between the modern and the traditional for which these manifestoes were severely criticized.¹¹⁸ This use of the vernacular offered a well established source that had already been constructed, through an extensive pre-existing body of research and commentary, as being modern. The appropriation of these indigenous Mediterranean models by Rava was thus conditioned by a modern aesthetic practice toward a pre-determined end.

In the years following the second Rationalist exhibition and the publication of these arguments of Rava, the Mediterranean origins of modern architecture continued to be an important and contentious part of architectural discourse in Italy. One such dispute emerged in the January 1932 issue of *Domus*, where a letter from Luigi Figini and response from Rava was published under the title "Polemica mediterranea." Reproaching his former colleague from the *Gruppo 7* for claiming a primacy in the use of the word *mediterraneo*, Figini argues that this term had an altogether different significance from that associated with the "folkloristic Mediterranean and colonial elements" found in Rava's writings. For Pollini the qualities of a Mediterranean architecture were exemplified in works like Terragni's Novocomum apartment of 1927-29, which he described as "serene, peaceful" with "calm horizontal lines before the horizontal azure of the water" – an architecture

¹¹⁸ Silvia Danesi has commented on the concept of *mediterraneità*, arguing that this term was permeated with ambiguities that resulted from its use by artists and architects attempting to get work within the official structures of the Fascist bureaucracy. She asserts that this term was "sufficiently connected to official myths" to appeal to Fascism, while also supporting "the conquering of a no-man's land between tradition and modernity." In the case of Rava, she states that *mediterraneità* became "a unifying category... with which to reconcile nationalism with foreign culture" – thus explicitly linking it with fascist politics. Danesi, "Aporie dell'architettura Italiana in periodo fascista—mediterraneità e purismo," in *Il razionalismo e l'architettura in Italia durante il fascismo*, 21.

"made for the sun."¹¹⁹ This "Mediterranean polemic" opened up an alternative interpretation from that offered by Rava. As Silvia Danesi has noted, this view of a Mediterranean architecture was based upon the neoplatonism of the Purist aesthetic of Le Corbusier. It was also being strategically aligned with cultural themes that had been initiated by the Fascist regime – such as hygiene, nature and health.¹²⁰

This "Purist" interpretation of a Mediterranean architecture was primarily espoused in the pages of *Quadrante* magazine in the 1930s by a group of "intransigent" rationalists which included Figini and Pollini, and Banfi, Belgiojoso, Peressutti and Rogers. In their "Un programma d'architettura" of May 1933, these architects affirmed their commitment to the original manifestoes of the *Gruppo 7*. They also further qualified this tendency as an "affirmation of *classicism* and *mediterraneità* – intended in the spirit and not in the form or the folklore."¹²¹ This

¹¹⁹ In this brief exchange, Figini initially complains about Rava's claim to have been the first to have spoken of a "renewal of the Mediterranean spirit." He then proceeds to note his own commentary in *Natura* magazine from January 1930, where in reviewing Terragni's Novocomum apartment building he describes it as "anti-North, meridional, Mediterranean." Finally, he ironically states that this polemic is not for the sake of the polemic but to allow him to use this term without having to pay Rava for his rights to this term. Rava's response was equally sarcastic claiming that, indeed, his interpretation was different than that of Figini, and "much more complex and important." He concludes his comments by asserting that Figini's arguments about the difference between their interpretations contradicted his complaints about Rava's claim of being the first to use this term. That is, they were each, in their own way, according to their diverse interpretations, originators of this term. Figini and Rava, "Polemica mediterranea," *Domus* 49 (January 1932): 66.

¹²⁰ Danesi describes this interpretation as that of the *Quadrante* group, which will be discussed in the following footnote. For these architects "the Mediterranean meant Greece, the neo-platonism of the Purist aesthetics through the Le Corbusier of *L'Esprit Nouveau*." She further elaborates on this interpretation as a "re-examination of the Purist canon, of the golden proportion, the Pythagorean rhythms." She also argues that this Purism is linked with Fascist politics, stating: "from the myth of sunlight borrowed from the programmatic statements of Le Corbusier... is joined themes not extraneous to the desires of the Regime – hygiene, nature and health." Danesi, "Aporie dell'architettura Italiana in periodo fascista—mediterraneità e purismo." In *Il razionalismo e l'architettura in Italia durante il fascismo*, 22.

¹²¹ *Quadrante* magazine began publication in May of 1933 and was edited by the critics Pier Maria Bardi and Massimo Bontempelli. A general review of this magazine was published by Paolo Bettini in *Casabella* magazine. See: Bettini, "Quadrante. Documenti di storia e di critica dell'architettura: le riviste del periodo fascista." *Casabella* XXXII, 322, 323, 331; XXXIII, 332, 333, 334 (January, February, December 1968, January, February, March 1969): 52-57, 58-60, 53-61, 61-66, 52-57, 45-49. Piero Bottoni, Mario Cereghini, Luigi Figini, Guido Frette, Enrico Griffini, Pietro Lingeri, Gino Pollini, Gian Luigi Banfi, Lodovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Enrico Peressutti, Ernesto Nathan Rogers, "Un programma d'architettura," *Quadrante* 1 (May 1933): 1. This manifesto included nine different points, including one which states "5. Affirmation – in the

polemic continued in *Quadrante* over the next several years, at times producing its own conflicting views of a Mediterranean architecture. In presenting their *Villa-Studio per un'artista* from the Triennale in Milan of 1933, Figini and Pollini speak of the "Mediterranean civilization" which distinguished the modern architecture in Italy from that of its Northern European colleagues. [Figure 1.a-18] Not unlike the "programma d'architettura" of *Quadrante*, these architects described the essential qualities of Italian Rationalism as "classical, solar and anti-north" – attributes that were the consequence of a tendency to "subordinate of the functionalism of materials to the functionalism of the spirit."¹²² A considerably different view of a Mediterranean architecture was provided by Peressutti in his article, "Architettura mediterranea" of 1935. Using a vernacular house at Biskra as an example, Peressutti provides a poetic description of the experience of such Mediterranean houses, noting that, in being disguised as a novelty of Nordic origin, the lyricism of these indigenous sources had been lost.¹²³ A final example is the publication of Terragni's *Casa del Fascio* in October of 1936, a project through which critic Carlo Belli argued that "Italian art can finally recover its classical flight... illuminated by the

bosom of European Rationalism – of a resolute Italian tendency, linear and intransigent, as signaled in the fundamental polemics of the Gruppo 7." The subsequent point is as follows: "6. Specification of the characteristics of the Italian rationalist tendency. Affirmation of *classicism* and *mediterraneità* – intended in the spirit and not in the form or the folklore – in contrast with *north-ism*, with *baroque-ism* or with the *arbitrary romanticism* of one part of the new European architecture."

¹²² In this presentation, these architects state: "influences and appeals of a Mediterranean civilization have contributed to this differentiation. A North-South contrast is more and more accentuated in the bosom of modern European architecture." They also argue: "logically, instinctively, the Latin people, the young Italian architecture above all, count on the classic, solar, anti-north differentiation of Rationalism. Differentiation that tends more and more to subordinate the functionalism of materials to the functionalism of the spirit." Figini and Pollini, "Villa-studio per un'artista," *Quadrante* 2 (June 1933): 9.

¹²³ Peressutti, "Architettura mediterranea," *Quadrante* 21 (January 1935): 40. This brief essay begins: "the sun of Biskra sculpts rhythms in the serene air: a white rectangle, two small windows, the shade of a beam on the wall. Further below, more shade, sealed by a rigid vertical, has found refuge in another rectangle, dark and cool." He concludes this essay by stating: "A patrimony that was discovered by a Gropius, by a Le Corbusier, by a Mies van der Rohe, has been disguised as a novelty of Nordic origins, as an invention of the twentieth century. Many have believed this. Many have taken this disguise as a novelty, for a new solar law. Without noticing that this novelty lacks the life, lacks the words, lacks the lyricism of the Mediterranean."

inextinguishable Mediterranean beauty." The *mediterraneità* of the *Casa del Fascio* thus resided in the systematic application of the golden section in the proportioning of its facades, and in the belief that through this means one could both create and enhance its spiritual value.¹²⁴ [Figure 1.a-19]

The term *mediterraneità* had thus obtained an equivocal status within the pages of *Quadrante*, referring alternately to an architecture of Purism, the poetics of experience, and the spiritual value of proportion. A different trajectory for this term was mapped out by architect and critic Giuseppe Pagano, who, along with Edoardo Persico was an important contributor and eventual editor of *Casabella* magazine.¹²⁵ In November of 1931, Pagano published an article entitled "Architettura moderna di venti secoli fa," where the houses of Pompeii were compared, both visually and textually, with the modern house. In this essay, Pagano argues that it was the sober functionalism of these ancient houses that made them a "confirmation of that *mediterraneità* and that contemporary classicism that does not need to make use of broken tympanums, of spheres and pyramids to connect itself with the more

¹²⁴ Belli, "Dopo la polemica," *Quadrante* 35/36 (October 1936): 3-4. With regard to the use of the golden section in this project, this is discussed in the "Note tecniche," which states: "Recently Le Corbusier has reestablished the value of these fundamental or determining lines which, and it is right to insist, they must not be induced to believe that they can enhance or create spiritual value in a fact of architectonic composition." "Note tecniche. Linee fondamentali o di rettifica," *Quadrante* 35/36 (October 1936): 38. Silvia Danesi states that while Terragni remained above such questions of *mediterraneità*, his conception of the standard was not based upon a modularity that allows for serial production, but rather he pursued "the objective to abolish the regional vernacular in favor of a national idiom furnished by types-archetypes whose aesthetic-functional perfection was quantifiable in golden numbers, and then reproducible." Danesi, "Aporie dell'architettura Italiana in periodo fascista—*mediterraneità* e purismo," in *Il razionalismo e l'architettura in Italia durante il fascismo*, 24.

¹²⁵ For a general examination of the criticism of architecture during the fascist period, see: Cesare De Seta, "Critica e storia dell'architettura," in *La cultura architettonica in Italia tra le due guerre* (Roma-Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1983), 293-382. For a more detailed discussion of Pagano and Persico and *Casabella*, see: De Seta, "Edoardo Persico e Giuseppe Pagano a *Casabella*," *Casabella* 440/441 (October-November 1978): 15-20. Although Pagano and Persico became joint editors of *Casabella* in January of 1933, their involvement was as early as January of 1930 as graphic and editorial consultants. This collaboration continued until Persico's death in 1936. Pagano continued with this publication until it ceased publication due to World War II in December of 1943.

profound and lively traditions of our spirit and our art."¹²⁶ This modest interpretation of these classical sources was consistent with the critical viewpoint that Pagano developed in *Casabella* in the 1930s. He was a staunch defender of a "more sane, less rhetorical, more anonymous" modern architecture, and thus a frequent critic of what he considered the artistic excesses of the architects involved in *Quadrante* magazine.¹²⁷ The culmination of Pagano's interest in vernacular architecture was the publication, with Guarniero Daniel, of *Architettura rurale in Italia* – a book which documents an exhibit from the Triennale of Milan of 1936. [Figure 1.a-20] Rejecting the tendency to create a separation between aesthetic and function or high and low architecture, he offers this book as a "historically documented demonstration of the rapport between the architecture of history books and the most simple and least vain constructive necessity realized by man." In these spontaneous rural constructions, Pagano finds a ideal fusion between the abstract formal and sculptural qualities of architecture and its material, economic and technical demands. A rural architecture was thus a functional architecture that was the logical and natural precursor of

¹²⁶ Pagano, "Architettura moderna di venti secoli fa," *Casabella* 47 (November 1931): 14-19. The visual argument of this article is made with the presentation of images of Pompean houses and contemporary housing projects. Among those shown are housing estates of Dudok and courtyard spaces of Mies Van der Rohe. In this essay, Pagano states that there was "a new and functional architectonic theater: the building box of the Pompean family, constructed to obey a precise utilitarian function and according to a direction in taste very related to today." He proceeds to argue: "effectively the geometric discipline of the modern house, that ideal of clarity, that love for the essential things that raise the spirit to the comprehension of a synthesis stripped of any pleonasm, and generally all the care for the commodity or functional reason of things that enliven modern architecture find strange and moving precedents in the Pompean house."

¹²⁷ For a more detailed discussion of the position of Pagano, see: De Seta, "Giuseppe Pagano architetto e critico," *Il destino dell'architettura. Persico, Giolli, Pagano* (Roma-Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1985), 159-247. Pagano was a consistent defender of a functionalist architecture, arguing against both monumentality and artistic excesses. In an article entitled "Architettura italiana dell'anno XIV," he argues that in mobilizing Italian industry and to abandon anachronistic products and create an attitude of elegant simplicity among architects, this would lead to an architecture that is "more sane, less rhetorical, more anonymous and infinitely more deserving to belong to the Italy of today." Pagano, "Architettura italiana dell'anno XIV," *Casabella* 95 (November 1935): 2-7. With regard to his attitude to the architects of the *Quadrante* group, it is worth noting that Terragni's Casa del Fascio received only a minor notice in the editorial notes of *Casabella* in November 1936.

Rationalism. It was an architecture which he felt was "dictated by necessity, but saturated with artistic implications."¹²⁸

The idea of a vernacular Mediterranean architecture also became a place of literal and metaphorical refuge for the numerous architects who proposed or constructed *case al mare* in the later 1930s, including Giuseppe Capponi, Gio Ponti, Luigi Cosenza and Bernard Rudofsky. This discourse appeared in the pages of *Domus* magazine beginning around 1937, where Ponti made such projects and their related theoretical speculations a major feature of this magazine.¹²⁹ This theme was symbolically initiated in October of that year with the publication of an essay written by Le Corbusier entitled "Il "vero" sola ragione dell'architettura." In this article, the recently constructed Villa di Tragara on the island of Capri was described as exemplifying the kind of organic relationship between the life of its occupants, the available means of construction and the existing natural landscape, found in vernacular constructions. Throughout this discussion, which is replete with

¹²⁸ This book was one of several "Quaderni della Triennale" which documented specific exhibits within the larger Triennale, which was also directed by Pagano in 1936. This exhibition contained a series of photographs taken by Pagano of rural buildings in Italy, although notably some examples are from southern Algeria. Pagano and Daniel, *Architettura rurale italiana*. Quaderni della Triennale. (Milano: Ulrico Hoepli Editore, 1936). This book begins with a general explanation of the study of such buildings, stating that "the desire to know and demonstrate how the relationship between utility, technique, form and aesthetic were not recent inventions, but only recent revelations originating in an ethical need for clarity and honesty, makes us overcome any restraint to search for a historically documented demonstration of the rapport between the architecture of history books and the most simple and least vain constructive realities realized by man." Ibid., 10-11. He then argues that the value of this effort is as follows: "an examination of rural architecture... can be not only useful but necessary for understanding the rapport between cause and effect that the study of only stylistic architecture has made us forget. Rural architecture represents the first and immediate victory of man that draws his sustenance from the land. Victory dictated by necessity, but saturated with artistic implications." Ibid., 11-12. After a discussion of the history of such studies, the text concludes with a discussion of the examples illustrated in the photographs. With regard to the images, the section that includes the text is illustrated with the actual panels from the exhibition, while the final sixty pages are individual photographs taken from these panels.

¹²⁹ A general discussion of the design of such houses is found in Cherubino Gambardella, "Case sul golfo (1930-45). Il disegno della residenza," in *Case sul Golfo. Abitare lungo la costa napoletana 1930-1945* (Napoli: Electa Editrice, 1993), 47-90. This essay includes numerous photographic and drawn illustrations of these projects. With regard to the theme of the "casa al mare" in *Domus*, in addition to the publication of numerous individual projects, the June 1939 issue was completely dedicated to this theme.

references to the "limpidity and neatness" of what he calls "folkloristic architecture," Le Corbusier suggests that the kind of spiritual retreat found in these indigenous sources offers a positive model for contemporary architecture.¹³⁰ Equally notable for their indigenous inspiration were the various collaborations between Luigi Cosenza and Bernard Rudofsky, including their proposal for the Villa per Positano from 1937. [Figure 1.a-21] This speculative project was to be located along the steep cliffs of this coastal region – a setting that was described as "a pedestal and a background to an architecture." The project was comprised of a blank stone faced volume containing the sleeping spaces, against which two levels of only provisionally enclosed exterior living spaces were formed. The total integration of living and the environment achieved in this project was the basis of a series of other proposals and projects executed by these two architects over the next few years.¹³¹ The *case al mare* of Cosenza and Rudofsky also represents the translation of a Mediterranean vernacular beyond a mere aesthetic principle. The vernacular became an ideal for a spontaneous and open mode of living that arose during the darkest days of Fascism.

¹³⁰ Le Corbusier, "Il "vero" sola ragione dell'architecture," *Domus* 118 (October 1937): 1-8. This essay begins with a statement about the state of contemporary architectural discourse which was deemed to be a mere discussion of styles. In the face of this situation, Le Corbusier states: "there exist many definitions of architecture. The most expressive is: "architecture is the construction of a refuge." He then proceeds to describe "folkloristic architecture" in terms of this concept of refuge, that is, as a "reflection of the spirit." It was also deemed to reflect constructional conventions, as "the fruit of experiences made in a laboratory successively disclosed from one century to the next." The Villa di Tagara, which was designed by the engineer E. Vismara, was viewed as a contextual gesture: "an emanation from the rock, a descendent of the island, a vegetal phenomenon, almost an architectonic lichen, growing on the side of Capri."

¹³¹ "Una villa per Positano e per... altri lidi," *Domus* 109 (January 1937): 11-17. This general intentions behind the project were described as follows: "The architects Cosenza and Rudofsky have covered the coast of the gulf for days, from Miliscola to Amalfi, and have chosen this rock of Positano for this villa. It is adapted to be a pedestal and a background to an architecture. They have studied this ideal residence for an imaginary friend, of sound mind and body, without prejudices, happy and with a good appetite. And for this client they have conscientiously worked without polemical ideas and utopias." The other projects by Cosenza and Rudofsky include the Casa a Posillipo (*Domus*, December 1937). Rudofsky also made his own proposals, including the Casa all'isola di Procida (*Domus*, March 1938). Two other interesting articles by Rudofsky were "La scoperta d'un'isola" (also *Domus* March 1938) and "Origine dell'abitazione" (*Domus*, April 1938). This last article is an early prelude to his *Architecture without Architects* of 1964.

Following the publication of the "Panorama del Razionalismo" of 1931, the appropriation of a Mediterranean vernacular as a means of asserting the specifically Italian identity of modern Italian architecture, had its own separate evolution within Rava's continuing critical practice. A substantial amount of this later theoretical discourse dealt with the question of a modern colonial architecture, a concern that, as the following section will illustrate, can be traced back to his earliest writings, proposals and built works.¹³² As previously noted, the *mediterraneità* of Rava was discussed by Edoardo Persico in a November 1934 article in *Domus* entitled "Punto e da capo per l'architettura." In this essay, Persico argues that the foundation of Rationalism was "in that intuition for the necessity of new forces that insert themselves in a European state of affairs, not only as an aesthetic idea, but also as a cultural, economic, social and political force." He asserts that the most crucial aspect of these first manifestoes was understanding that it was not possible to "reduce this sentimental aspiration in an act of conscience; that is, in a style."¹³³ The writings of Rava of 1931 were, for Persico, representative of a more general lack of faith which Italian Rationalism expressed toward European tendencies during the period before and after the second Rationalist exhibition. He felt they were not dissimilar from Bardi's attempt to have Mussolini declare Rationalism an *Arte di Stato*, in that they

¹³² Part 1, Section B. will deal with this question more extensively, but here it is important to remember that two of the writings from the "Panorama del Razionalismo" were entitled "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna," writings which clearly situated colonial architecture within the more general context of architectural modernity. Two of Rava's first major built works – the *Padiglione delle colonie* at the *Fiera di Milano* of 1928 and the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* of 1928-31 – were linked with the Italian colonies.

¹³³ The more complete context of this assessment of Rationalism is as follows: "The architects, like the painters and sculptors of the Novecento... for the first time after the war, were engaged in making an honestly European experience. The value of this first Italian "Rationalism", is completely in the conflict of two antithetical worlds, in which the hostility is as insuperable as their renunciation to the reason of art, to clash on a practical level. The foundation of "Rationalism", of the Milanese and Torinese, is in that intuition for the necessity of new forces that insert themselves in a European state of affairs, not only as an aesthetic idea, but also as a cultural, economic, social and political force. The foresight of an Italian architecture connected to the fortunes of a European movement remains even today the major advantage of this first "Rationalism". Its crucial point consisted in not reducing this sentimental aspiration in an act of conscience: that is, in a style." Persico, "Punto e da capo per l'architettura," 4-5.

sought to define the relationship between architecture and the Fascist state through an aesthetic principle. Persico concludes this critique by stating: "unconscious of the feeling that put it on the same plane as German or Russian architecture, [Rationalism] exhausted itself in a desperately romantic search."¹³⁴

Rava responded to this criticism of Persico in an essay entitled "Architettura "europea," "mediterranea," "corporativa" o semplicemente italiana?", which appeared in his *Nove anni di architettura vissuta* of 1935. This publication is itself an important documentation of Rava's theoretical trajectory, assembling his most significant writings from the founding manifestoes of the *Gruppo 7* to his most recent essays.¹³⁵ In this article, Rava initially undertakes a harsh critique of the general approach of Persico in "Punto ed a capo per l'architettura," which he describes as a "mania of citations and sources" whose result is "clearly and inevitably dilettantish." He then proceeds to respond to the major points of contention raised by Persico in this essay, with his primary focus being the so-called "political equivocation" of

¹³⁴ Persico noted that his discussion of Rava's "Panorama del Razionalismo" of 1931: "was not intended to provoke a personal lawsuit." *Ibid.*, 3. Rather, he saw this movement from "Dell'europismo in architettura" to "Svolta pericolosa" to be more generally representative of how Rationalism had departed from its initial manifestoes. He later argues that Italian Rationalism was "unwilling to accept the impulse of the European tendencies, because they did not have much faith in them." *Ibid.*, 5-6. The connection between architecture and politics was most clearly articulated in his discussion of Bardi's "Rapporto sull'architettura (per Mussolini)," which he argues was merely an attempt to have one Fascist style, that of the architects they were critiquing, replaced by Rationalism. In this discussion he states: "the main point is not to substitute an old oligarchy with a new oligarchy of architects, but to also establish a "modern" condition in the Italian architectural economy." *Ibid.*, 5. The larger context of this final statement is as follows: "the history of Italian Rationalism is that of a sentimental exasperation; unconscious of the feeling that put it on the same plane as German or Russian architecture, exhausting itself in a desperately romantic search. Then, Italian Rationalists are anti-historical; unaware of the single reality necessary for their conquest." *Ibid.*, 7.

¹³⁵ This book gathers a collection of published and unpublished essays taken from journals and newspapers. As previously noted, it only includes two of the original manifestoes of the *Gruppo 7*, "Architettura" and "Architettura IV. Una nuova epoca arcaica." These writings are presented with several others under the heading "Reazione." The second topic, "Pausa," includes an unpublished essay on scenography and three essays entitled "Tripoli e l'edilizia coloniale moderna" from 1929. The third section is entitled "Evoluzione," and this includes the "Panorama del Razionalismo" of 1931. The fourth section is called "Orientamento," and includes three essays from *Domus* from 1934 entitled "Prodromi dell'Antinovecento." The fifth section includes the single unpublished essay which is being discussed here. See, Rava, *Nove anni di architettura vissuta, 1926 IV - 1935-XIII*.

Rationalism related to the concept of *mediterraneità*. His initial response to this critique was to defend his own conduct, stating that his "conversion" from Europeanism to *mediterraneità* was not a product of political demands, but rather was a natural evolution for an intellectual who did not want his ideas to "crystallize or dry up in already assimilated formulae."¹³⁶ Moreover, Rava asserted that Persico had incorrectly linked his ideas with those of Bardi and the architects of the MIAR, as he had himself been critical of the polemical contradictions surrounding the second Rationalist exhibition. His final discussion in this essay focused on Persico's characterization of Rationalism, and his accusations of attempting to resolve the political demands of architecture through the creation of a style. Rava argued that, on the contrary, the most important aspect of Rationalism was in its "discovering its own conscience." It was to be found in that "Mediterranean spirit... through which our architecture will be complete, giving it, apart from any social or political speculations, the unmistakable mark of a *style*."¹³⁷

¹³⁶ Rava, "Architettura "europea," "mediterranea," "corporativa" o semplicemente italiana?" *Nove anni di architettura vissuta, 1926 IV - 1935-XIII*, 139-50. Rava's general criticism of Persico's essays focuses on his approach to this essay which he called a "demonstration of erudition" – accusing him of the dilettantish behavior he accorded Italian Rationalism. This criticism was based upon the fact that he was not an architect, but merely a critic, and on some of the judgments he made of contemporary architecture. He then identifies the four major points of criticism that Persico made toward Italian Rationalism as; the impreparation of these young architects; their romantic understanding of Sant'Elia; their denial of the reality that new architecture was a foreign suggestion; and the problem of the relation between architecture and politics. In defending his own actions he stated: "on my supposed *conversion* from Europeanism to *mediterraneità*... it is simply a question of that evolution that is, or should be, a natural process for any intellectual, where he does not want to crystallize or dry up in already assimilated formulae, and thus, at a certain point overcame them to search beyond." *Ibid.*, 145.

¹³⁷ Of the linking of Rava's writings of *Domus* with Bardi and the MIAR, he states: "Persico falls once again into the customary vice of extending to all the errors of a few." He also argues that he had already pointed out the contradictions in the declarations of the MIAR in the second Rationalist exhibition, which had spoken of "support for the most integrally rationalist tendencies (Le Corbusier, Gropius, Mies van der Rohe), and announced an "affirmation of decided Italian tendencies, of classicism and mediterraneità." *Ibid.*, 145-6. The larger context of this last quotation is as follows: "the crucial point consisted precisely in "discovering its own conscience", in "recognizing the legitimacy of its own Hellenic and Latin derivation", and in recognizing and finding itself in that "Mediterranean spirit", through which our architecture will be complete, giving it, apart from any social or political speculations, the unmistakable mark of a *style*." *Ibid.*, 147-8.

The creation of a style was, for Rava, not a sign of the compromise of Rationalism, but rather an indication of its "will to relate to the essential traditions of the Latin people." This theme had already been explored in a series of three articles published in *Domus* in 1933-34 under the heading, "Prodromi di un nuovo romanticismo."¹³⁸ In these prior writings, and in this more recent essay, Rava argued that the creation of a Mediterranean spirit in Italian architecture would be strengthened through a renewed interest in craftsmanship. This "new Romanticism" was not the product of an act of desperation but rather a gesture of "free, healthy and vital creation." It was a dialectical fusion of the modern and the traditional, which reflected the ability of architects to utilize contemporary building techniques and embrace traditional materials and trades. Rather than a denial of the modernity of Rationalism, Rava argued that this approach was a means to "amplify it in a much more vast and comprehensive interpretation of the term."¹³⁹ "Architettura "europea", "mediterranea", "corporativa" o semplicemente italiana?" represents a logical extension of the premises of his "Panorama del Razionalismo" toward a more profound embrace of the question of technique.

¹³⁸ In response to Persico's accusations that the use of style will compromise the modernity of Italian architecture, Rava argues that "the will to relate to the essential traditions of the Italian people, can give rise to an extremely contemporary architecture." *Ibid.*, 148. Rava, "Prodromi di un nuovo romanticismo," *Domus* 72, 74, 77 (December 1933, February, May 1934): 634-5, 56-7, 35.

¹³⁹ In these earlier essays Rava stated: "what is most important in the research we have spoken about, is a return to the values of decoration, no longer understood as a calligraphic and pleonastic addition, independent from architecture, but as an organic completion of it, only after the their perfect harmony and their logical unity will they be able to give us the complete expression of a style." Rava, "Prodromi di un nuovo romanticismo," *Domus* 74 (February 1934): 57. In this more recent essay, Rava responds to Persico's critique of the lack of opinion of Rationalists on the question of craftsmanship and production in series by stating: "the opinion should be, in my view, that these two terms do not exclude each other, but can instead complete each other." He then proceeds to assert that "we will, in fact, never have a truly profitable and vital "standard" production, if there will not be a production "outside the series", of exception and of luxury within it." It is in this sense that he regards the inclusion of craftsmanship within Rationalism to be an amplification of its premises. For Rava, the true Rationalism was in the "reconquest of a profound sense of italianità" whose Romanticism was "one of a free, healthy and vital creation." Rava, "Architettura "europea", "mediterranea", "corporativa" o semplicemente italiana?" 148-49.

The full extent of the problem of incorporating tradition into Italian Rationalism was only fully revealed in one of Rava's final speculations on the question of an Italian identity for modern architecture prior to World War II. This essay, entitled "Architettura di razza italiana," was published in the journal *L'Architettura Italiana* in January of 1939. This article appeared less than two months after the initial passage of the "provvedimenti per la difesa della razza Italiana" by the Fascist authorities, and in the same cultural climate as the publication of journals like *Difesa della Razza*, which first appeared in August of that year.¹⁴⁰ In this essay, Rava traces the existence of a continuous line of thinking in his programmatic writings about the question of an Italian racial identity. Beginning with the founding manifestoes of the *Gruppo 7*, through the "Panorama del Razionalismo," to his most recent essays, his method of illustrating this trajectory was through a careful process of selecting and editing the most pertinent statements from this larger body of his writings. After the vehemence with which Rava refuted Persico's characterization of Italian Rationalism's surrender to political exigencies, this article would appear to be an abrupt about face. It provides a systematic verification of the complete imbrication of his writings with Fascist politics. In this essay Rava consistently underscores what he called "the perfect orthodoxy of our new architecture, *born of Italian thought and race.*"¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Rava, "Architettura di razza italiana," *L'Architettura Italiana* (January 1939): 37-45. This provision was called the Regio decreto-legge 17 novembre 1938-XVII, n. 1728, recante provvedimenti per la difesa della razza italiana, and was presented at the Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri for passage into law on November 25, 1938. *Difesa della Razza*, which appeared with the subtitle "Science, documentation, polemica," began its twice-monthly publication on August 5, 1938. It was overseen by the *Ministero della Cultura Popolare* and contained articles on issues of race, many of which were written by scholars in disciplines like history, anthropology and ethnography. The Italian racial policy was thus grounded in "science" through both contemporary and historical studies.

¹⁴¹ The intention of this article is quite clear from the beginning when Rava states: "It seems to me fundamentally right that today, after the racist principle, as natural corollary of the great autarchic battle in which every aspect of the nation has been engaged, has raised the issue of the "italianità" of the new architecture." Rava, "Architettura di razza italiana," 37. Rava then proceeds through a detailed chronological survey of his writings, directly quoting the passages that most

One of Rava's primary motivations in linking Italian Rationalism with racist politics was to legitimize this movement in the face of the scrutiny of the Fascist authorities, who were increasingly critical of the European outlook of Italian architecture. He was also quite clearly underscoring his own unique contribution to Rationalist discourse – defending himself against accusations of internationalism by distinguishing his writings from the more "intransigent" views. In so doing, he describes the transformation of Rationalism through his writings as "not an involution, but instead a logical *evolution*, of unsuppressibly Italian men, above all faithful to a spirit of *nationality* and of *race*."¹⁴² This essay can also be understood in completely biographical terms, that is, as a desperate act of self-preservation that would have served to obscure the racial identity of Rava's own family.¹⁴³ In the end, "Architettura di razza italiana" exposes a fault line within Rava's theoretical practice – one that reveals certain problems in creating an Italian identity for modern architecture through a recourse to indigenous Mediterranean sources. The "vernacular" was not only constructed as a repository of traditional culture by

clearly evidence the recognition of the Italian identity of Rationalism. In the founding manifestoes of the *Gruppo 7*, he refers to the passage that stated "the new architecture will preserve an imprint that is typically ours." In "Dell'europeismo in architettura" he quotes the discussion of Europeanism in architecture leading to an "Ultra-nationalism" in which each country would preserve their own characteristics. A major part of this essay is dedicated to his "Svolta pericolosa," with liberal quotations like: "our race, our culture, our ancient and modern civilization is Mediterranean." The larger context of the quoted passage is as follows: "This complex of citations.. seems sufficient to me to document and prove the perfect orthodoxy of our new architecture, *born of Italian thought and race*." Ibid., 39.

¹⁴² Rava notes that the error of most of the Rationalists was in having forgotten that their original manifestoes were written in reaction to a specific context, and thus viewed as only temporary measures. He thus describes his "Svolta pericolosa" as an evolution of these theories in which the use of the term Rationalism was no longer necessary. Ibid, 41-42.

¹⁴³ Although Rava's mother was Italian, his father's family was of Jewish origin, both of his grandparents having practiced Judaism throughout their life. Although his father converted to Catholicism and he was raised as a Catholic, suspicions about his father's religious beliefs surfaced in the later 1930s. This information is located in a file in the Central State Archive on Maurizio Rava. See: ACS-MI Div.PP.PP. Busta 1097, Fascicolo 1. Some of this information was confirmed in an interview with his daughter, Avv. Anna Rava, on June 18, 1999. Despite these efforts, Rava had to endure several visits by the *Delegati di Pubblica Sicurezza* in September of 1940, who were attempting to "ascertain his identity." See letter from Rava to Segretario Particolare del Duce, September 25, 1940. ACS-SPD.CO - 139.831. Rava, Carlo Enrico.

totalitarian regimes like Italian Fascism, it was also the material basis from which an identity could be produced – an identity whose "National" designation often disguised an oppressive politics of exclusion and racial purity.

B. Carlo Enrico Rava and the Discourse for a Modern Colonial Architecture

... from our Libyan coast to Capri, from the Amalfian coast to the Ligurian Riviera, each a minor architecture, ours and typically Latin, ageless yet very rational, made of white smooth cubes and large terraces, Mediterranean and solar, seeming to show us the way to recover our most intimate essence as Italians. Our race, our lineage, our ancient and new civilization is Mediterranean: in this "Mediterranean spirit" we should then look for the characteristic of *italianità* still lacking in our new rational architecture, as certainly this spirit guarantees us the re-conquest of a preeminence."

Carlo Enrico Rava, "Svolta pericolosa. Situazione dell'Italia di fronte al razionalismo europeo," 1931.¹

....the native architecture of our Mediterranean colonies presents, for those who may know how to recognize it, all the necessary requirements from which to deduce a perfect modern colonial architecture; rationality in planning, contemporary simplicity of form in their exterior appearance, perfect adherence to the necessity of the African climate, perfect harmony with the Libyan nature. When the frequent examples that they propose to us of vivid polychromies applied to affect and brighten up the nudity of the cubic masses and smooth walls are added to these qualities, it will be shown that the native architecture of Libya offers us all of the desirable elements for creating our present-day colonial architecture.

Carlo Enrico Rava, "Di un architettura coloniale moderna - Parte seconda," 1931.²

¹ The original quotation is as follows: "... dalle nostre coste libiche a Capri, dalla costa amalfitana alla riviera ligure, tutta un'architettura minore tipicamente latina e nostra, senza età eppure razionalissima, fatti di bianchi, lisci cube e di grandi terrazze, mediterranea e solare, sembra additarci la via dove ritrovare la nostra più intima essenza d'Italians. La nostra razza, la nostra coltura, la nostra civiltà antica e nuovissima, sono mediterranee: in questo "spirito mediterraneo" dovremo dunque cercare la caratteristica di italianità mancante ancora all nostra giovane architettura razionale, poichè certo questo spirito ci garantisce la riconquista di un primato. Rava, "Svolta pericolosa. Situazione dell'Italia di fronte al razionalismo europeo," 44.

² The original quotation is as follows: "...l'architettura originaria delle nostre colonie mediterranee presenta, per chi li sappia riconoscere, tutti i requisiti necessari a ricavarne una perfetta architettura coloniale moderna: razionalità di planimetrie, attualissima semplicità di forme nell'aspetto esteriore, perfetta aderenza alle necessità del clima africano, perfetta armonia con la natura libica. Quando poi, a queste qualità, si aggiungano i frequenti esempi che essa ci propone, di vivaci policromie applicate ad interessare e ravvivare la nudità delle masse cubiche e delle lisce pareti, si vedrà che l'originaria architettura della Libia ci offre tutti gli elementi desiderabili per creare una nostra architettura coloniale d'oggi." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna - Parte seconda," 36.

In the series of eight articles published in *Domus* magazine in 1931 under the heading "Panorama del Razionalismo," Carlo Enrico Rava included two essays, entitled "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna," which argued that the problem of a modern colonial architecture was closely tied to the more general question of architectural modernity. Noting that there was an almost total ignorance of the problem of the colonial context in Italian architectural discourse, Rava asserted that Italian architects working in the North African colonies should avoid the direct copying of Roman models. He was also critical of the Moorish influence on colonial architecture, whose presence in Libya, he argued, could only be found in the "false and monstrous" constructions already built by Italy.³ Instead of following these historicist approaches, Rava asserted that Italian architects should adapt the vernacular architecture of Libya, which had all of the desirable qualities for the creation of a modern colonial architecture proper to Fascist Italy. One of the crucial reasons behind the appropriation of these indigenous sources was that they were "modern." This modernity, according to Rava, was to be found in their adaptation to climatic conditions, their lack of superfluous elements, and their harmonization with the colonial context.⁴ These vernacular constructions were also an appropriate reference for a modern colonial architecture due to their connection with the Roman

³ In this first essay, Rava states: "the problem of a contemporary colonial architecture is one of the aspects of the general problem of architectonic modernity and, consequently... was directed... to be taken into consideration from the rationalist point of view." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna - Parte prima," 39. As will be discussed in Part 2, Rava is quite critical in this article of Brasini's project for the Italian Pavilion at the Exposition Coloniale Internationale in Paris in 1931, which he criticizes for copying the Roman Basilica of Septimius Severus in Leptis Magna. Ibid., 39-40. With regard to the Moorish influence, he states: "there have never been traces in Libya of that Moorish architecture that has instead gained a hold in Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and Arab Spain." He then notes: "the only Moorish that exists is that, false and monstrous beyond any description, that distinguishes many constructions erected... by us." Ibid., 89.

⁴ The modernity of these indigenous constructions was described as follows: "The conditions of nature and of the climate are here themselves the generators of architectonic form, and so these still appear today perfectly, unsurpassably rational, so also their exterior appearance, in which no elements appear superfluous (because all derive spontaneously of planimetric necessity), fully satisfies our modern aesthetic, so finally, this architecture born from the most elementary logic, harmonizing like no others with the colonial landscape." Ibid., 32.

colonization of North Africa. In this discussion he makes a distinction between the monumental ruins of sites like Leptis Magna – which he referred to as being "already dead," and having only "a purely archeological-touristic value" – and the indigenous architecture of this region. For Rava, the so-called Arab house was a reinterpretation of the Roman domus – inheriting both its classical plan and its central courtyard. To borrow from these Libyan vernacular forms was thus borrowing from the surviving traces of Italy's own building traditions.⁵

The idea of a modern colonial architecture based on indigenous North African sources was a logical extension of the theoretical arguments that Rava had already made for a more "independent" direction for Italian Rationalism. It is significant that these writings appeared within a "Panorama del Razionalismo" that was attempting to reconfigure this movement based on indigenous Mediterranean influences. One important link that Rava made between the metropolitan and colonial discourses was their common cultural patrimony. The "Latin spirit" of the indigenous architecture of Italy's coastal region was seen as the product of a tradition found in the imprint of Roman civilization in North Africa. The same arguments that Rava had made to evince the Latin influence on the architecture of Southern California were mobilized here to draw a comparison with the native Libyan architecture. He asserts "it is painful to think that the Americans were able, lacking a direct base of reference, to create and perfect the type... of a modern colonial "style", when instead, in spite of

⁵ In the first of these essays, Rava argues that the architectonic traces of Rome left in Africa had two aspects, the first of these being: "an already dead part, that has a purely archeological-touristic interest and value, and is represented in the monumental ruins." The second of these aspects was discussed as the: "part still alive... seen again in the Arab houses, which has inherited the classic rational plan of the ancient Roman house, and, from its central courtyard, they have derived the patio, around which it identically distributes their rooms." He goes on to argue that: "in such prodigious survivals is perpetuated the true tradition of Rome, the living and incancellabile impression of its dominance, and with it we must in logical terms inoculate again our colonial architecture, instead of examining columns, capitals and trabeation, which other than being dead things, are too frequently of a dubious stylistic purity." The transformation of these Roman models is described as follows: "as in Syria the Roman architecture suffered evident oriental influence, thus also in Africa it sought to harmonize with the local characteristics." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna. Parte prima," 41.

the precious suggestions that the indigenous architecture of our Mediterranean colonies can give us, we do not have hardly a trace until now."⁶ A second, and equally significant, argument was that the typical houses of Amalfi, Ischia and Capri, the Greek islands and the Tripolitanian region were all part of a larger geographical category that was defined by their adherence to the necessities of their southern climate. In fact, the Mediterranean status of the Libyan vernacular had already been established in "Svolta pericolosa," where these indigenous constructions were presented as one of several that could provide a suitable inspiration to a modern rational architecture.⁷

This theoretical discourse on the question of a modern colonial architecture was also closely tied to the cultural politics of the Italian colonization of North Africa. In the initial months of the Governorship of Giuseppe Volpi in Tripolitania (1921-25), the preservation of the indigenous architecture of this region had already been the subject of a major initiative undertaken by the Italian colonial authorities. The native artisanal industries of Tripolitania were the beneficiary of a similar effort in 1925, with the founding of the *Ufficio Governativo delle Arte Applicate Indigene*.⁸

⁶ In this essay, Rava notes: "the resemblance which... the architecture created by the North Americans in California in the "States of the South" present with [the Libyan vernacular], and inspired precisely, with an admirable sense of *latinità*, by the Southern nature in which they arise." He then proceeds to describe a number of specific examples of these North American constructions, including the Stuyvesant Pierpont house from Palm Beach, Florida by the architect Marion Sims Wyeth. Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna. Parte seconda," 34.

⁷ In this essay, Rava argues: "it is enough to compare the typical houses of Amalfi, Ischia or Capri, which everyone knows, with the houses, for example, of the coast and of the islands of Greece... and all these with the most simple Tripolitanian houses... to notice the obviously very tight relationship that binds all of them and leads us back to their common origin, the South." He later notes: "the confirmation that the rationality of the forms and of the typical architectonic solutions of Libya derive from their perfect adherence to the necessity of the southern and tropical climate, is given in the spontaneous, unquestionable resemblance that all of the houses located in the South present among themselves." *Ibid.*, 32-3. For the reference to the Libyan architecture in "Svolta pericolosa," see the initial quote for this section. Rava, "Svolta pericolosa. Situazione dell'Italia di fronte al razionalismo europeo," 44.

⁸ In November of 1921, Volpi convened a commission that was given the responsibility of identifying the buildings and cultural artifacts that had the greatest artistic and archeological interest in Tripolitania. The activities of this commission are discussed in greater detail in: Renato Bartocchini, "Gli edifici di interesse storico, artistico ed archeologico di Tripoli e dintorni." *La rinascita della Tripolitania*, 350-52. For information on the founding of the *Ufficio Governativo*

These two examples reflect a crucial aspect of what was eventually referred to in the 1930s as the *politica indigena* of Italy's North African colonies – that is, the selective preservation and reinforcement of its local culture. The second component of the politics of Italy's colonial rule was its relatively systematic attempt to incorporate this region into metropolitan Italy. This policy was evident in the substantial investment made by the Italian government in the construction of a public works infrastructure and the development of a viable agricultural economy – an initiative that was intended to make Libya a population outlet for Italy.⁹ Thus, in theorizing a Mediterranean spirit that included Libya, Rava was advancing arguments that already been expressed by Mussolini, for whom this region was a key element in Italy's Mediterranean destiny.¹⁰

Rava's "Panorama del Razionalismo" thus represents the complete integration of the modern and the colonial through an architecture that was "rational but Italian,

delle Arte Applicate Indigene, see: M. Rossi, "Le piccole industrie indigene." *La rinascità delle Tripolitania*, 513-19.

⁹ The concept of *politica indigena* arose during the Governorship of Italo Balbo (1934-40), during which times these policies reached their most refined developments, including the incorporation of Libya into Italy in January of 1939. For a specific outline of the policies of Balbo, see: Balbo, "La politica sociale fascista verso gli arabi della Libia." *Convegno di scienze morali e storiche. 4-11 ottobre 1938-XVI. Tema: l'Africa. Vol. 1* (Roma: Reale Accademia d'Italia, 1939), 733-49. For a discussion of the public works activities in Tripolitania up to 1932, see Angelo Piccioli, "Le opere pubbliche in Tripolitania." *La nuova Italia d'oltremare* (Milano: Casa Editrice A. Mondadori, 1933), 849-916. For a presentation of the later period, see: A. Giovannangeli, "Cenni sull'attività municipale di Tripoli." *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 1-13; G. Bucciante, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia." *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 1-17. For an extensive general discussion of the policy of demographic colonization of Libya, see: Claudio Segrè, *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1974).

¹⁰ Segrè notes that Italian colonial expansion was initially fueled by groups of colonial enthusiasts like the *Società Geografica Italiana* in Florence which had been active in sponsoring expeditions in Africa. This cause was in turn taken up by Nationalist politicians in the early 20th century, whose call to invade Libya were eventually followed by the Liberal government of Giovanni Giolitti. Even this pragmatic politician spoke of the "historical inevitability" of the Italian conquest of Libya. Segrè, "Libya and the Demographic Myth," in *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya*, 20-25. During the Fascist period, the idea of Italy's Mediterranean empire was extremely pervasive in the contemporary literature as well as in numerous speeches. One such example is the Discorso alla "Sciesa" of Mussolini of October 4, 1922, which speaks of the Mediterranean as Italy's lake. See: Mussolini, "Dal malinconico tramonto liberale all'aurora fascista della nuova Italia." Discorso alla "Sciesa" di Milano, 4 ottobre 1922, in *Opera Omnia di Benito Mussolini. Volume XVIII*, ed. Edoardo and Dulio Susmel (Firenze: La Fenice, 1956), 433-40.

modern but colonial."¹¹ However, this integration was not merely an appropriation of colonial references by a modern architect whose aesthetic sensibility was already well shaped. Rava's father, Maurizio – whose studies in law, literature and painting were the foundation for his own journalistic, artistic and political activities – was an important influence on his intellectual formation. The elder Rava was extremely well traveled, visiting Africa and Asia and participating in an expedition organized by the *Reale Società Geografica* to Lake Tana in Ethiopia in 1908.¹² In the 1910s he dedicated the majority of his efforts to political journalism and colonial matters. His first journalistic experiences came with the founding, along with Enrico Corradini, of *Carroccio* in 1909 – a journal which signaled the rise of nationalist sentiments in Italy. In 1923, he became the editor-in-chief of *Rassegna Italiana*, where he published numerous articles on questions of colonial politics. Maurizio Rava's political career in the Italian colonies began when he became *Segretario Generale* of the *Governo della Tripolitania* under Emilio De Bono in March of 1927, then assuming the post of *Vice-Governatore* of this colony from October of 1930 until

¹¹ The larger context of this statement is as follows: "we will resume and we will conclude the eternal work of *latinità* ... drawing, from the analogy between the indigenous Libyan forms and those of current Rationalism... we will be able to then, but only then, to consider to undertake in the works, which we will have built in our possessions of North Africa, rational but Italian, modern but colonial, the lasting sign of our present greatness, of our new civilization." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna. Parte seconda," 36.

¹² Born in Milan in 1878, Maurizio Rava studied law, literature and painting. He was a well respected painter, a number of his paintings of Africa becoming part of the collection of the *Museo dell'Africa Italiana*. His journalistic activities were extensive in the 1910s and 20s and his political career took him to the Italian colonies of Tripolitania and Somalia from 1927-35. He began his travels when he was only 19 years old, visiting India, Burma, Java, Sumatra and Ceylon in Asia and British East Africa, the Congo, Uganda, Ethiopia, Algeria and Tunisia in Africa. He also participated in the *Reale Società Geografica* expedition to Lake Tana in Ethiopia in April 1908, which was headed by Maggiore Alfonso M. Tancredi. As a journalist Rava kept a diary of the expedition which was eventually published as: Maurizio Rava, *Al lago Tsana (Il mar profondo d'Etiopia). Relazione del viaggio compiuto dalla Missione Tancredi per incarico della Reale Società Geografica*. (Roma: Presso la Reale Società Geografica, 1913). For a general outline of his various activities, see: "In Memoriam. Maurizio Rava," *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana* IV, 1 (May 1941): 331-3.

July of 1931, when he was appointed *Governatore Generale* of Somalia by Mussolini.¹³

These various colonial activities of Maurizio Rava unquestionably shaped his son's aesthetic sensibility. During his childhood he became fascinated with the experience of Africa through his father's travel diaries, paintings and collection of native objects.¹⁴ Moreover, Carlo Enrico Rava was a student in the *Scuola Superiore di Architettura* in Milan during the period when his father was a journalist and editor with *Rassegna Italiana*. He was thus directly exposed to the kind of nationalist political arguments that were typical to the colonial enterprise during the Fascist period. The elder Rava also brought his painterly sensibility to many of these writings, such as his vivid description of the port of Massaua in an article entitled "La nostra colonia primogenita: L'Eritrea" of 1923. The full significance of these journalistic activities are clearly evident in his son's programmatic writings on a modern colonial architecture, whose lively descriptive passages are combined with rhetorical assertions of the past and future dominance of Latin culture in the Libyan territories.¹⁵

¹³ Corradini was one of the best known figures in the Nationalist movement that emerged in Italy beginning in 1910. This group's political platform of a strong authoritarian state and colonial expansion was an influence on the subsequent rise of the Fascist Party after World War I. Segrè, "Italian Colonialism after Adowa: The Coming of the Libyan War," in *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya*, 16-19. Prior to his colonial political career Maurizio Rava was involved in the Fascist party leadership in a number of capacities beginning in March of 1919. Just prior to his appointment in Tripolitania, he was *Commissario straordinario* for the province of Pavia. His position as *Segretario Generale* in Tripolitania was under Emilio De Bono, remaining to work under Pietro Badoglio, who promoted him to *Vice-Governatore* in October 1930. He left this post in July 1931 to become *Governatore* of Somalia. Edoardo Savino, *La Nazione Operante. Albo d'oro del fascismo* (Novara: Istituto geografico De Agostini, 1937), 90.

¹⁴ Maurizio Rava kept extensive diaries, one of which was used to publish the record of the Missione Tancredi to Ethiopia. According to Anna Rava, their household had an extensive collection of African objects collected by her grandfather Maurizio, like elephant tusks, musical instruments, native weaponry, and wood carvings, many of which remain in possession of the Rava family. Interview of Avv. Anna Rava, Milan, March 26, 1999.

¹⁵ A majority of the writings of Maurizio Rava between 1921 and 1926 were published in a supplement to *Rassegna Italiana*, entitled *Rassegna Italiana del Mediterraneo*, which was eventually integrated into the larger magazine in 1927. These essays include the following writings: "Un'altra "zona d'influenza" perduta" (March 1922); "Per la colonia Eritrea e gli interessi Italiani in Etiopia," (August 1922); "Avvenimenti e problemi coloniali," (May 1923); "Il

The most direct consequences of Maurizio Rava's colonial activities came from his tenure with the colonial government in Tripoli. This administrative sojourn allowed Carlo Enrico Rava to undertake six visits to this colony between 1927 and 1931. These travels came at crucial point in his intellectual formation and during an intense period of professional activity in Italy and Europe. The first five of these visits to Tripolitania, which began in December of 1927, came after the publication of his *Gruppo 7* manifestoes and the writing of "Dell'europismo in architettura," and during the period of his participation in CIAM and his attempt with Alberto Sartoris to form a *Gruppo Nazionale* of rationalist architects. His final visit to Tripolitania during the period of his father's assignment in this colony was in March of 1931, at the same time as the publication of his polemical essays in *Domus* and coincident with the final preparations for the second Rationalist exhibition in Rome. The impact of these various travels is recorded in a pair of albums which compile a few studio images of tourist sites in Tripolitania with his own numerous photographs.¹⁶ [Figure

Congresso di Trieste per l'espansione economica e commerciale," (November 1923); "Colonie e governo nazionale," (June - August 1924); "Noi e l'Etiopia," (July 1926); and "La rinascità dell'Eritrea," (September 1926). The political rhetoric of such writings is evident in "Note sul presente e l'avvenire della Tripolitania," where, in describing the potential of Tripolitania as a colony, Rava provides a vigorous defense of the stature of Italy as a colonizing nation. Maurizio Rava, "Note sul presente e l'avvenire della Tripolitania," *Rassegna Italiana* XIX, 107 (May 1927): 498-510. In "La nostra colonia primigenita," Rava provides a detailed description of the Port of Massaua, stating: "its beautiful port with its azure sea, more intense and transparent than the sea of Capri." He also notes: "its multicolored people that the approach of the ship attracted." Rava, "La nostra colonia primigenita: L'Eritrea," *Rassegna Italiana del Mediterraneo* III, 25, 26 (February, March 1923): 21-35; 51-68.

¹⁶ Although Carlo Enrico's travels to Tripolitania are only referred to in a fragmentary way through various correspondences, they are precisely documented in these two photographic albums. His first visit to Tripolitania was from December 24, 1927 to February 9, 1928. Although "Dell'europismo" was published in February 1928, it was written in November of 1927. His second and third visits were April 18 to May 3 and November 1-17, 1928. The second visit was just before the first CIAM in La Sarraz of June 26-28 (which Rava did not attend) and during this third visit he traveled for the first time south of Tripoli to the Berber settlement of Nalut. His fourth visit to Tripolitania was from January 24 to April 10, 1929, during which he participated in a *Raid sahariano* to Ghadames (February 3-15). The second CIAM in Frankfurt of October 24-26 was followed by his fifth visit to Tripolitania from November 14, 1929 to March 18, 1930. On March 11-16 he visited the village of Kabao, also in the south. His final visit was in March of 1931, with a second voyage to Ghadames beginning on March 17. Information collected from: Carlo Enrico Rava, Album di viaggio, 1928-30 and 1931-32. Rava family, private collection.

1.b-1] The intersection of this experience of the colonies with Rava's theoretical arguments on Italian Rationalism is evident in the fact that the travel photographs from these albums eventually became the visual illustrations for his polemical writings about modern colonial architecture in the "Panorama del Razionalismo" of 1931.

Carlo Enrico Rava's interest in the vernacular architecture of the Italian colonies in North Africa can also be found in his early proposals and projects. As a student in the *Scuole Superiori di Architettura* he designed a *Chiesa in Oriente* in 1924 – a project which appears to be an abstract reinterpretation of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul.¹⁷ [Figure 1.b-2] Although this project is not directly related to Italy's colonies, it reflects a concern for the intersection of the East and the West in architecture. The impact of the colonial context on his design work was more evident after his graduation in 1926, when a number of his proposals and built projects were either sited in Tripolitania or based upon colonial themes. One of the most important of these early works was his proposal, along with Sebastiano Larco, for the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* at Homs (1928-31) – a project designed to serve the tourist demand for food and accommodation near the archeological site at Leptis Magna. The drawings for this project were prominently exhibited at the first *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* in Rome in March of 1928 – an exhibition that offered itself as a presentation of the most significant and representative Rationalist works. [Figure 1.b-3] Their publication in Marcello Piacentini's "Prima internazionale architettonica" meant that the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* was also viewed by critics as an important symbol of

¹⁷ Although the original drawings of this project no longer exist, photographs of this project can be found in the Archivio Carlo Enrico Rava of the *Centro Studi e Archivio delle Comunicazioni* of the *Università di Parma*. The project is dated as 1924, two years before his graduation from the *Scuole Superiori di Architettura* in Milan. The plan of the project was based upon a Greek cross with small chapels in the diagonal of each corner of the cross. The interior is a simple domed space with a single story colonnade. CSAC-Parma. Archivio Carlo Enrico Rava. "Progetti eseguita a Scuola: Palazzo in una città antica, Chiesa in Oriente." Collocazione 202/3.

Italian Rationalism.¹⁸ A second and equally significant early Rationalist project was Larco and Rava's *Padiglione delle colonie* designed for the Fiera di Milano – a project that was the result of a national competition sponsored by the *Istituto Coloniale Italiano* in 1927. [Figure 1.b-4] Not only did this pavilion appear in *Architettura e Arti Decorative* as one of the first built works by the architects of the *Gruppo 7*, it was published extensively in European publications, including the journals *Das Neue Frankfurt* and *Het Bouwbedrijf*, and Roger Ginsburger's *Frankreich*.¹⁹ Because of the extensive effort made by Rava to exhibit and publish these two colonial projects, they became synonymous with the public identity of Rationalism in Italy and Europe. The colonial influence thus did not come after the development of his rationalist vocabulary, but rather was fully integrated into these two early projects.

The *Padiglione delle colonie* and the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* were both realized during the period after the publication of the founding manifestoes of the *Gruppo 7* of 1926-27. These projects were an important testing

¹⁸ Larco and Rava's *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* was one of seven projects displayed in the first Rationalist exhibition, the others being proposals for the head office of a magazine, an office building and four different housing types accommodating income levels from working class to luxury. The *Albergo a Homs* as it was called in the exhibition catalog was presented through floor plans and front and rear perspective views. *Materiali per l'analisi dell'architettura moderna. La prima Esposizione Italiana di Architettura Razionale*, 108-17. The article by Piacentini, which was the most prominent public recognition of this exhibition, presented all three drawings of the *Albergo a Homs* along with two of the housing types. Piacentini, "Prima internazionale architettonica," 560-1.

¹⁹ The jury of this national exhibition was comprised of three prominent members of the architectural and artistic establishment: Cipriano E. Oppo, Enrico Del Debbio and Marcello Piacentini. For the report of the jury see: "Concorso per il Padiglione delle Colonie alla Fiera di Milano. Relazione della Commissione giuratrice," *Rivista Coloniale* XXII, 3 (May-June 1927): 177-80. After its completion for the *Fiera di Milano* of 1928, it was published in *Architettura e Arti Decorative* in July of 1928. See: Piacentini, "Due Lavori di C.E. Rava e S. Larco," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* VII, 11 (July 1928): 524-28. This project's publication in these European publications is as follows: "Anfänge neuer baukunst in Italien," *Das Neue Frankfurt* III, 2 (February 1929): 38; Theo van Doesburg, "Het elementair-constructieve beginsel in de Romeinse architectuur. Gruppo 7 Milano en de voortzetting van de traditie," *Het Bouwbedrijf* 6, 20 (27 September 1929): 401; and Roger Ginsburger, "Italien," in *Frankreich. Die Entwicklung der Neuen Ideen nach Konstruktion und Form* (Vienna: Verlag von Anton Schroll & Co., 1930), 121-31.

ground for the theoretical position Rava subsequently articulated in his "Panorama del Razionalismo." The *Padiglione delle colonie* was described by Marcello Piacentini as "compact, pure, schematic" with "beautiful light cut out in the white, smooth and bare material" – qualities that are very similar to those which Rava later used to describe the vernacular architecture of the Mediterranean. This connection is even more apparent in the comments of the jury of this competition, who characterized the facade as being "inspired by elements of Arab minor architecture" that were in turn "developed with a completely modern clarity and refinement."²⁰ The *Padiglione delle colonie* was thus understood as an assimilation of references to the vernacular architecture of North Africa into a genuinely modern expression. A similar fusion of the modern and the colonial was revealed in the publication of the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* in *Architettura e Arti Decorative*. Described as "one of the clearest affirmations of avantgarde Italian architecture," this project was recognized as being "completely contextualized with a Mediterranean country."²¹

²⁰ In presenting the *Padiglione delle colonie*, Piacentini stated: "It is compact, pure, schematic. Beautiful light cut out in the white, smooth and bare material. It is colonial, without being either Arab or Turkish. The cupola in the central room is ingeniously thought out, acutely characteristic." Piacentini, "Due lavori di C.E. Rava e S. Larco," 528. The following are the jury's comments: "It is the project that has more character than all of the others. An animated plan, variable and practical. The facades are inspired by elements of Arab minor architecture, elements more technical than decorative, due to ethnic reasons, and then developed with a completely modern clarity and refinement, although there are some less satisfying details to raise." "Concorso per il Padiglione delle Colonie alla Fiera Campionaria di Milano. Relazione della Commissione giudicatrice," 179.

²¹ The Rationalism of this project was described as being linked to its "good composition of masses and harmonic location of voids" which "gives to each part of the construction a homogeneous and unitary plastic value." Other qualities cited were "unity, compactness and continuity of masses", "cubicness of volumes", "perpendicularity of plans", "longitudinality and rectilinearity of profiles" and "abandonment of pleonastic structuring organs of pseudo-constructive elements." The harmonization of this project with the Mediterranean environment was found in its having "reasonably conserved the usual proportions of the houses of Libya in its voids." This article also later recognizes that "from the primitive intransigent Rationalism, the architect Rava has recently approached a more moderate vision." "Architetture libiche degli Arch. Carlo Enrico Rava e Sebastiano Larco," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* X, 13 (September 1931): 682-87.

The intersection of the colonial and the modern found in the *Padiglione delle colonie* and the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* is evident in a third project from this period – Larco and Rava's proposal for the competition for the restructuring of the area around Piazza della Cattedrale in Tripoli from January of 1930. [Figure 1.b-5] This national competition, which was organized by the *Municipio di Tripoli* and the *Ministero delle Colonie*, called for the design of three housing blocks that would form the remaining sides of this existing public space.²² In its publication in *Architettura e Arti Decorative* in August of 1930, the proposal by Larco and Rava was recognized for the utilization of modern planning criterion. It was also commended for its attention to the necessities of the North African climate, which was evidenced in the creation of ample covered terraces that allowed for proper ventilation of the apartments. This project was thus understood as the product of a Rationalist approach whose organizational ideas and aesthetic content had been tempered by its colonial context.²³ Although these observations would seem to be typical to the kind of critical commentary that often accompanied the publication of the results of architectural competitions, in this case they were also coincident with Rava's own evaluation of this project. In a letter sent to the critic Roberto Papini in March of 1930, he describes this project as "a *fusion* of the most modern and rational demands, with the local character and *colonial* demands." He goes on to state: "this

²² The competition brief was published in *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane*, the official journal of the *Ministero delle Colonie*, in November of 1929. It called for the design of three buildings of civic housing which would be comprised of one story of commercial and three stories of housing. The only aesthetic direction given in this brief was for the projects to be "imprinted with the dignity of a large city and the spirit of modern art in relation to the time and place." "Notiziario," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* III, 11 (November 1929): 1214-15.

²³ The planning of these apartments was commended for its "extremely modern distributive criterion," noting that four apartments on each floor were served by a single stair, allowing for the complete elimination of corridor spaces. This article also notes that the ventilation of the apartments was enhanced by the fact that some of the terraces were located in a transverse direction, which would allow the air to completely penetrate the block. In summarizing these comments, this article states: "the rationality of the forms is not cool or absolute, and appears tempered by a fusion... with Tripolitanian and Mediterranean stylistic elements." N.D.R., "Un progetto per il Concorso della Piazza della Cattedrale di Tripoli," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* IX, 12 (August 1930): 571-76.

work (which is one of my favorites) perhaps indicates the moment of an important evolution in my architecture."²⁴

These three colonial projects by Larco and Rava are testimony of the impact that the colonial context had on Rava's development during the initial years of his professional career. Many of the proposals he made, and a majority of his projects that were built in the period from 1926 to 1931 were colonial in their context or theme.²⁵ The modern and the colonial were so fully integrated in Rava's work that these "colonial" projects formed a major part of his public identity as a Rationalist architect well before the publication of his "Panorama del Razionalismo." Moreover, this intense period of professional activity from 1928 to 1930 – during which Rava spent around nine months in Tripolitania – acted as a kind of self-imposed hiatus from writing about architecture in which the basis for these later theoretical speculations was developed.²⁶ It is also important to recognize that this fusion of

²⁴ In this Letter, Rava begins by commenting on an article by Papini in *Corriere della Sera* from February 28, entitled "L'architettura d'oggi in Europa." He notes that Papini used certain phrases like "new archaic period" and "balancing function of the new Italian architecture in the general European renewal", which he claims were his own and that he now looks at with great detachment. With regard to the proposal for Piazza della Cattedrale, he states: "Both for the very particular and detailed study of the plans, and for the research, in the architectonic guise, of a fusion of the most modern and rational demands, with the local character and colonial demands, this work (which is one of my favorites) perhaps indicates the moment of an important evolution in my architecture." Letter from Rava to Papini, dated March 30, 1930. ARP - 453. Concorso Piazza Cattedrale e Piano Regolatore di Tripoli.

²⁵ Of the fifteen proposals or projects from 1926 to 1931 of Larco and Rava, five of these were "colonial." These were the *Padiglione delle colonie* for the *Fiera di Milano*, 1928; the *Albergo "agli scavi di Leptis Magna,"* 1928-31; the Competition for Piazza della Cattedrale, 1930; the *Chiesa di Suani-Ben-Adem*, near Tripoli, 1930; and the *Arco di Trionfo* for the visit of the Principe di Piemonte to Tripoli, 1931. Of these projects only the proposal for Piazza della Cattedrale was not built. Rava's only other built works from this period, other than interior design projects or furnishings, were the *Casa Solare a S. Maria Ligure*, 1926; and *Capella Oneto at S. Maria Ligure*, 1929.

²⁶ In the previously mentioned letter to Papini from March 30, 1930, Rava noted that: "in fact, for a while I have persuaded myself of the vanity of the polemics and propaganda, and for this, for some time now I have limited myself to being an architect and I don't write any more." Letter from Rava to Papini, dated March 30, 1930. As previously noted, between January 1928 and December 1930 Rava visited Tripolitania five times. The total length of these visits was nine months and two days, a good amount of time having to do with the ongoing construction of the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* (1928-31) and the *Chiesa di Suani-Ben-Adem*, near Tripoli (1930).

metropolitan and colonial identities existed in an indirect way within Rava's earliest writings. The first manifesto of the *Gruppo 7* was not reductive in its characterization of the Italian tradition, making reference to a search for the "hidden spirit" in, among other things, the "medieval East in the Armenian Codices, the Syrian Gospels, Persian miniatures, Coptic fabrics."²⁷ This Italian "tradition" was thus already a product of a colonial discourse, embracing the traces of a Latin influence outside of its own borders.

Carlo Enrico Rava's discussion of a modern colonial architecture in his "Panorama del Razionalismo" should be seen against the general background of the "colonial" activities of his early career. This discourse was also a direct product of a specific theoretical precedent – the essay "Dobbiamo rispettare il carattere dell'edilizia tripolina," which was published in various colonial journals in 1929 as the work of Maurizio Rava. Although the authorship of this essay is somewhat ambiguous, there is no doubt that it expressed the views of the elder Rava, who submitted it to the mayor of Tripoli in September of 1929 as a report on the present and future development of that colonial city.²⁸ In general terms this essay calls for

²⁷ The larger context of this statement is as follows: "In studying the past, the young have not been content simply to question built architecture, but have investigated art forms in their most hidden spirit: the Quattrocento in the wood engravings of the 'Hypnerotomachia Poliphili' and in the drawings of Maso Giniguerra; Byzantium in its enamel, glass, ivories, and in a pilgrimage of admiration through the treasures of the cathedrals; the medieval East in the Armenian Codices, the Syrian Gospels, Persian miniatures, Coptic fabrics – and exactly this much culture of the museum and the old bookstore overwhelms our thought and causes us to invoke *simplicity*. Gruppo 7, "Architettura," 851.

²⁸ Marida Talamona notes that this essay was submitted as a "Relazione" to the mayor of Tripoli, having been published as "Per una Tripoli più bella" in *L'Avvenire di Tripoli* on September 22, 1929. It was then published, again with Maurizio Rava listed as the author, as "Dobbiamo rispettare il carattere dell'edilizia tripolina" in *L'Oltremare* in November of 1929. The authorship of this essay is questionable, as it was published a third time, and in a somewhat modified form in Carlo Enrico Rava's *Nove anni di architettura vissuta* as one of his own writings. In this final case it was titled "Tripoli e l'edilizia coloniale moderna." In her Ph.D. dissertation, Mia Fuller asserts that this was unquestionably written by Carlo Enrico Rava. See Fuller, *Colonizing Constructions: Italian Architecture, Urban Planning and the Creation of Modern Society in the Colonies, 1869-1943* (Ph.D. Dissertation. University of California, Berkeley, 1994), 180. These speculations on authorship are, however, somewhat less important than the role this essay played in the discourse for a modern colonial architecture.

the preservation of the local character of the city of Tripoli through a careful program of conserving the most representative existing buildings and introducing new structures that would be in harmony with the colonial environment. This approach was to be implemented in the old Arab and Jewish quarters of Tripoli where, according to the author, "the impression of Africa and the Orient" could still be found. It was also applicable to the buildings of the surrounding oasis landscape, which "in their local *minor architecture*... represent the *true Arab style of Tripolitania*." Not only did this essay argue that it was no more costly to pursue this policy than to allow the city to develop randomly, it claimed that the preservation and enhancement of the most characteristic quarters of Tripoli was a means to "assure the future of the city as a great tourist center."²⁹ The approach to the planning and development the city of Tripoli described in this essay was derived quite directly from the *ambientismo* of the writings of Gustavo Giovannoni. This transposition of contextualism onto the colonial landscape became an important reference point for the future development of the city of Tripoli – the regulatory plan of Alberto Alpago-Novello, Ottavio Cabiati and Guido Ferrazza of 1931-33 almost directly adopting this approach.³⁰

²⁹ The general approach outlined in this essay was "conserving the characteristic quarters, isolating any interesting and unknown building instead of demolishing it, looking after the simple beauty of the quarters to be constructed, safeguarding under any conditions the integrity of the oasis." In speaking about the old city, it stated: "apart from the comfort of the European city, [the foreign visitor] finds the impression of Africa and the East in the old indigenous or Jewish quarter." Of the oasis, the author notes: "there are frequently constructions in Arab gardens along these streets, that cannot be defined as villas or urban houses, which, in spite of their modest aspect, have in their local *minor architecture*, an extremely great importance. In fact, these are the ones that represent the *true Arab style of Tripolitania*." The tourist value of the city was described as follows: "these characteristics represent the possibility of greater attractions each day for Tripoli, and would be criminal to diminish it even in a little amount or destroy it, while instead completing it means to assure the future of the city as a great tourist center." Maurizio Rava, "Dobbiamo rispettare il carattere dell'edilizia tripolina," *L'Oltremare* III, 11 (November 1929): 458-9.

³⁰ The regulatory plan of Alpago Novello, Cabiati and Ferrazza was prepared between 1931 and 1933, although it was not adopted by the municipality until May of 1934. This plan was to provide for an orderly expansion of the city from 80,000 to 160,000 inhabitants, while preserving both the old city of Tripoli and the surrounding oasis landscape. This concern for the

In addition to making suggestions for the planning of the city of Tripoli and surrounding oasis, "Dobbiamo rispettare il carattere dell'edilizia tripolina" also offers some of the arguments that Carlo Enrico Rava would later make in "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna." In the former essay, the use of a *stile moresco* for a contemporary colonial architecture in Libia was rejected, arguing that "there has never existed a trace of it." It was suggested that "the simple house of local architecture... born in the same locus, offers an exemplary and characteristic example of how one can construct in North Africa."³¹ In following this minor domestic architecture, it was noted that the Italian architects in Tripolitania would be adopting a starting point for a contemporary architecture parallel to that of the architects in California, who had based their work on the indigenous Spanish architecture of Mexico and Central America. This essay argued that intention behind this effort was to create a type of housing that – like the bungalow was for British colonialism – was both colonial and European.³² The basis for the suitability of the indigenous

conservation of the existing environment unquestionably come directly from the report of Rava to the mayor of Tripoli. For a detailed outline of this plan, see: Maurizio del Rege, "Il nuovo piano regolatore di Tripoli," *Urbanistica* III, 3 (May-June 1934): 121-28. For a general discussion of the impact of Rava's report on the planning of the city, see: Marida Talamona, "Città europea e città araba in Tripolitania," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940* ed. Giuliano Gresleri, Pier Giorgio Massaretti and Stefano Zagnoni (Venezia: Marsilio Editore, 1993), 270-71, 274-75.

³¹ In a manner similar to Carlo Enrico Rava in "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna," this essay asserts that the use of a Moorish style in Tripolitania was a bizarre and deplorable tradition, given that the real Moorish architecture existed in Morocco and parts of Spain. It also notes that the those that did not follow this tendency pursued an even more dubious "search for inspiration in a Middle Ages of fantasy." It then proceeds to argue: "these rather gloomy buildings, beyond disfiguring the almost always beautiful region in which they rise, represent on their interior the height of discomfort... while the simple house of local architecture... born in the same locus, offers an exemplary and characteristic example of how one can construct in North Africa." Maurizio Rava, "Dobbiamo rispettare il carattere dell'edilizia tripolina," 462.

³² The argument concerning North American architecture, also prominent in "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna," is as follows: "when the architects and constructors resident or called from Italy will take into account a treasure of starting points as rich as that local *minor architecture*... and will know how to make use of these suggestions and these cues, as the North Americans know how to make a special style called Colonial-American from the old indigenous Spanish architecture of Mexico and Central America... they will begin to construct according to the correct criterion." Of the creation of a colonial style, the author states: "evidently it is not easy to create a type of architecture *colonial* but European, that will be for Tripolitania, or for Libya in general, that which the "bungalow" is for the English colonies." *Ibid.*, 462.

domestic architecture of Libya to a contemporary colonial architecture was multiple, the first of these being the visual effect of these vernacular constructions. These qualities were evident in the "geometric and alternating play of volumes," and the "coloration of the vast smooth walls with lively and soft hues." There was also a typological basis for the appropriation of the Arab house, which was typically organized around an outdoor courtyard. In discussing this exterior space this essay asserts: "the Arab patio is... the ideal and most logical solution that is also *intimately ours*, since it goes back in its time to the classical house of ancient Rome."³³

Moreover, the courtyard was understood as an important means through which these vernacular constructions accommodated the climatic demands of the North African environment – a concern that was evident in the contrast between their utilization of verandahs or covered spaces and ample greenery within this interior space, and their restricted use of openings within relatively mute exterior walls. In concluding this essay, the author argues that, due to the modernity of the "simple linear and cubic combinations" and "smooth and bare walls" of these vernacular sources, "it will be simple to fuse all of the technical specialization and practical comfort of the most modern European constructions with the local characteristics."³⁴

³³ Of the formal or visual qualities of the Libyan vernacular, it is argued: "One has only to open their eyes and *see*; for the *general mass of the building*, the Arab houses, that are almost always extremely balanced in the geometric and alternating play of volumes, offer innumerable models to inspire." *Ibid.*, 462-3. The author later speaks of the "coloration of the vast smooth walls with lively and soft hues according to the wall or their exposure; colorations in which the Arab houses are masters, and that under the beautiful African sun and sky give the indigenous quarters a particular charm." It is interesting to note that his discussion of the courtyard of the Arab house in this essay offers the same argument about the Roman origins of the courtyard as Carlo Enrico Rava in "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna." A second connection between these essays is that both speak of the Casa Riley in Tripoli as a good example of the positive environmental qualities of the courtyard. *Ibid.*, p. 463.

³⁴ The larger context of this statement is as follows: "since both in the simple linear and cubic combinations, and in the smooth and bare walls, the Arab houses are very similar, in fact in a way at times surprising, to the simplicity of plans and geometrical play of volumes of the most modern European architecture that is being affirmed and defended everywhere in the world, it will be simple to fuse all of the technical specialization and practical comfort of the most modern European constructions with the local characteristics." *Ibid.*, 463-4.

Rava's writings about a modern colonial architecture in *Domus* in 1931 can be understood as a refinement of this earlier essay whose purpose was to guide the future development of the city of Tripoli. The transformation of this argument was due, at least in part, to the context in which it appeared. Published in an architectural journal, the two essays entitled "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna" offered a theoretical program for a modern colonial architecture as part of a more general proposition for a new direction for modern Italian architecture.³⁵ The discussion of the indigenous architecture of Libya in these articles is both more analytical and more prescriptive – attempting to identify its major characteristics and derive a more precise program for contemporary architecture from these observations. These two essays are also a compelling testimony to the extensive amount of travel Rava undertook in Tripolitania between 1928 and 1931. Not only are his arguments primarily illustrated with his own photographs, the depth and complexity of his observations reveal his first-hand experience of these indigenous constructions. Largely due to this second influence, this essay is a hybrid of the programmatic statements typical to architectural discourse and the characteristic prose of Italian colonial literature – with synthetic and polemical assertions framing fragments of direct experience of the colonial context.³⁶

³⁵ As previously noted "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna" was published in two parts in May and June of 1931. These were the fifth and sixth of the eight essays to be published under the title "Panorama del Razionalismo." The first four essays – "Svolta pericolosa. Situazione dell'Italia di fronte al razionalismo europeo," "Spirito latino," and "La necessità di selezione" (part 1 and 2) – contained all of the essential aspects of his theory for a modern Italian architecture. In the final two essays, Rava provides further detail in "Giovanni architetti nordamericani" and reacts to the criticism of his arguments in "Conclusione."

³⁶ Of the twenty-two images presented in these two essays, fifteen were taken by Rava and all but three of these are contained in the two photo albums kept in the private collection of the Rava family. These two albums are themselves an important documentation of the sites which he visited in his travels to Tripolitania during this period, which, as previously noted, was comprised of nine months of stay between 1928 and 1930. The connection of this manifesto to colonial literature is only being hinted at here, but it is interesting to note that Rava published a book, *Viaggio a Tunisi*, which chronicles his visit to Tripolitania in March of 1931. This book adopts quite directly the stylistic conventions of Italian colonial literature, which was a romanticized and exoticized form of travel diary.

In "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, Parte prima," Rava provides a relatively heterogeneous reading of the Libyan vernacular architecture, arguing that it was the product of a complex exchange of influences. He notes that during what he called the Maghreb Middle Ages, this exchange took the form of "a continual movement of ebb and tide between the always vital Roman-Byzantine traditions" and "the new primitive but vigorous constructions of the black populations of the Sudan."³⁷ He illustrates the first of these influences with a discussion of the Berber castle at Qasr al-Haj, whose circular arrangement, he argued, was derivative of the Roman amphitheaters whose monumental ruins still existed in along the Mediterranean coast. [Figure 1.b-6] For Rava, the influence of the Sahara and the Sudan was evident in constructions like the ancient citadel at Mizdah, which he connected to the villages discovered by the Seabrook expedition south-east of Timbuktu.³⁸ [Figure 1.b-7] The Libyan vernacular architecture was thus presented in this essay as an interaction between Roman and African influences. The most compelling repository for this interaction, according to Rava, were the settlements constructed by the Berber populations of the sub-Saharan regions of Tripolitania. In fact, he argued that not only were both the Roman and Sudanese forms assimilated in

³⁷ The larger context of this statement is as follows: "the vicissitudes of the Libyan architecture in the very confusing centuries of the Maghreb Middle Ages could be represented as a continual movement of ebb and tide between the vital Roman-Byzantine traditions on the one hand, that from the coast reascend the mountains of the Berbers and descend into the Sahara up to the parallel of Ghadames and beyond, and on the other, the new vigorous but primitive contributions of the black populations of the Sudan, that from the Niger to the Sahara go up toward the coast; contributions whose traces still today find themselves, even in Tripoli itself." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale. Parte prima," 43.

³⁸ In discussion the Roman influence, Rava notes that the Castello at Kabao provides a more aboriginal and less organized prototype to the castle at Qasr al-Haj, which was described as: "a kind of Colosseum of the steppe some 200 kilometers from Tripoli, in the circular scheme of the Roman amphitheater, a scheme which through the grandiose ruins of amphitheaters that still survive in the African Mediterranean, have made a deep impression on the imagination of the indigenous persons." He goes on to note the "survival of not only the Saharan architectural elements... but of true and proper constructions of the Sudanese type at a distance not relatively large from the sea (250-400 kilometers). He then proceeds to cite both the Berber guard tower in the valley of Jadu and the ancient citadel at Mizdah located at the edge of the Hammadah al Hamra desert, connecting these with the villages of the *Habbe* tribe discovered by this American expedition. Ibid., 43.

these building traditions, it was through the survival of the Berber culture that these sources were eventually passed on to the Arab populations of the Libyan coastal region.³⁹

The most concrete example of a synthesis of these two traditions offered in this essay was the city of Ghadames, which is an oasis settlement on the edge of the Sahara that Rava had already visited on two occasions. In this discussion, the status of this city as one of the most important stopping points along the caravan routes from the heart of Africa to the Mediterranean became a metaphor for this interaction between Roman and African sources. Like the city itself, the architecture of Ghadames, as Rava stated: "has also been a place of transition and exchange between the forms of *latinità* and those of Saharan-Sudanese Africa."⁴⁰ Although he notes that the Sudanese stylistic characteristics were most evident in the crenelated towers of its houses, he also describes the central Mosque of Ghadames as a "bewildering example of Byzantine penetration." [Figure 1.b-8 & 9] This Mosque was presented as the epitome of this larger exchange. Rava argued that its courtyard was enclosed with walls derived from Sudanese architecture, and yet it contained panels similar to a Byzantine chancel screen that alternated with an edicule that was reminiscent of the Roman houses at Ostia.⁴¹ In concluding this general discussion,

³⁹ In this essay, Rava states that the Roman influence was preserved in part through its continuation in Byzantine forms. He then proceeds to note that it was: "through the long narrow alliance of the Byzantine principles of the coast with the Berber principles of the Jabal (mountain) against the Arab invader, that the primitive Berber architecture was transfused with numerous elements of Roman derivation, elements with the Berbers, in their turn, then passed on to the Arab-Libyan architecture, in which they are still today evident and viable." *Ibid.*, 41.

⁴⁰ Rava visited Ghadames on two separate automobile excursions, the first of these was from February 3-15, 1929, and the second, of approximately the same length, began on March 17, 1921. In speaking about the role of Ghadames in connecting central Africa with the Mediterranean, Rava stated: "this fascinating hypothesis may be presented... that the mysterious and very distant Ghadames... fabled city that unites traces of Rome to those of Tombouctou, and which represented a great center of "Tuaregh" civilization and culture, as it was the greatest caravan junction through which the Mediterranean communicated with the basin of the Niger, has also been, in some small way, the place of transition and of exchange between the architectural forms of *latinità* and those of Saharan-Sudanese Africa." *Ibid.*, 89.

⁴¹ Of the African influence on Ghadames, Rava notes: "it shows obvious Sudanese stylistic characteristics, and, with its house-towers crenelated on the edges, it makes one think of the fabled

Rava notes there was a more recent, but no less important, influence on the Libyan vernacular architecture. He argued that during the period of its Ottoman domination, the introduction of wooden loggias and roof terraces into the patio of the Arab house, led to a reinterpretation of this essentially Roman source that adapted it to the necessities of the African and Mediterranean climate – a contribution that was presented as an architectural corollary to the colonial status of this region.⁴²

In concluding this first essay, Rava provided a synthetic summary of what he regarded to be the principal qualities of the Libyan vernacular – the first of these being its Roman influence. However, rather than an archeological or stylistic connection to this classical tradition, he was interested in the "practical and organizing spirit of Rome" that was "still very vital in the scheme of the Arab-Turkish house." For Rava, the rationality of this indigenous source had to do with both its derivation from a Roman precedent and its correspondence with the functional and climatic demands of the colonial context.⁴³ A second quality which he identifies within the Libyan vernacular was what he described as "the impulse of a vigorous primitivism that... derives from its relations with the populations of the South." This tendency could be traced in the use of simple geometric forms in buildings like the

capital city of the great sultans... which it resembles." In discussing the Roman influences on the Mosque of Ghadames, Rava notes that what made these references remarkable was that these elements were not physically borrowed, but "executed on site... by the hand of local workmen." In this sense he is alluding to a deeper penetration than a physical borrowing or direct imitation. Ibid., 42-3.

⁴² Rava presents the Ottoman contribution as follows: "the most recent influence on the development of Libyan architecture, the Ottoman domination, introduced the use of wooden loggias and roof terraces, elements of a character essentially colonial, much in tune with the landscape of Mediterranean Africa and befitting the necessities of its climate – thus renewing and varying the possibilities of the Arab patio inherited from the porticoed courtyard of the ancient Roman house." Ibid., 89.

⁴³ Rava enumerates this first source as follows: "The Roman influence (the true, that is, the one of the practical and organizing spirit of Rome, not that of archeology, of style, of the ruins, is also imperial), still very vital in the scheme of the Arab-Turkish house, whose very rational plan is the exact reproduction of that of the ancient classical house, and still today constitutes, at the same time, the type of house that best corresponds to the climate and the demands of colonial life, that best harmonizes with the African landscape." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale. Parte prima," 89.

Mosque in Qasr al-Haj – a building which Rava also linked to the works of Russian constructivism.⁴⁴ [Figure 1.b-10] The final characteristic which Rava identifies in the indigenous architecture of this region was what he described as the "composing of blank rhythms of cubes and parallelipeds, opposing the cool shade of the patio, to the sun and the blue of the large superimposed and alternating verandahs and roof terraces." [Figure 1.b-11] These qualities, which he argued could be found in the most simple Arab house, linked these sources to the vernacular architecture of the Italian Mediterranean.⁴⁵

The primary characteristics of the Libyan vernacular provided by "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, Parte prima," was followed by a synthetic application of this knowledge to the problem of designing a modern architecture for the colonial context. This discussion begins in the second essay through the connection of the principal qualities that characterized the Libyan vernacular with the modernity of these sources. That is, the *romanità* that was found in the utilization of the plan of the Roman domus in these indigenous constructions, was described by Rava as the basis for their rational solution to the problem of the organization of the house. In a similar manner, the play of simple geometric volumes that was referred to as reflecting the primitivism of the local architecture, was understood to be the basis for the modernity of their visual appearance. Finally, the

⁴⁴ The second source is described as follows: "the impulse of a vigorous primitivism that, superimposing itself on the Roman scheme, it derives from its relations with the populations of the South (Sahara, Niger, Sudan), which leave their trace in that predilection for simple forms, cubes and parallelipeds, truncated pyramids and spherical caps, cones and truncated cones, that culminates in the astonishing composition of parallelipeds crowned by a spherical cap and by a pyramid, constituting the Mosque of Qasr al-Haj that, although rough, makes one think in centuries of distance, of the abstract creations of the very recent Russian "constructivists". Ibid., 89.

⁴⁵ These final qualities were described as follows: "The general mediterranean characteristic that, as much through the Roman scheme of the house, as through the composition of simple and linear geometric masses which has been spoken of, composing blank rhythms of cubes and parallelipeds, opposing the cool shade of the patio, to the sun and to the blue of the large superposed and alternating verandahs or roof terraces, relates the Italian local architecture of our Libyan colonies to that of our other mediterranean coasts, from Capri to Camogli." Ibid., 89.

mediterraneità of the Libyan vernacular was deemed to be a property that described its perfect correspondence with the modern demands of the colonial environment.⁴⁶ The modernity of these indigenous constructions – which defined their suitability as a model for a contemporary colonial architecture – was thus characterized in this essay as a consequence of their functional, aesthetic and climatic suitability to the colonial context.

The main body of "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, Parte seconda" was dedicated to establishing a direction for the architecture of Italy's Libyan colonies. After noting that almost everything that was constructed by Italy in these territories was not colonial architecture, Rava proceeds to offer some suggestions through a discussion of the architecture of North America and that of British colonialism. In the first case, he suggests the domestic architecture of California, "with their cubic masses and their white walls, and their wooden loggias and balconies," would be perfectly at home in Libya.⁴⁷ According to Rava, a similar formal solution was provided by the bungalow, which the British used as an almost universal type to house the metropolitan populations in the colonies. He then connects this contemporary colonial architecture with the indigenous architecture of Libya, comparing the wooden pergola of the Cutting house in Los Angeles by Garvin Hodson with the garden pavilion from the Villa of Hassun Pasha near Tripoli. [Figure 1.b-12 & 13] For

⁴⁶ These characteristics were summarized in the first paragraph of this second essay as: "the direct Roman derivation that reveals itself in the plan of the house, a plan which, as a result, is still the most rational in the colony; the general composition of the masses, simple geometric forms deprived of any ornament but alternating in a very skillful play of planes and of volumes, that harmonizes separately both with the African landscape and with our more modern and current taste; and finally the very notable Mediterranean intonation, that becomes related in a way more obvious to all the other architecture of Southern origin." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna. Parte seconda," 32.

⁴⁷ In this essay, Rava argues: "almost everything that we have constructed in Libya is not colonial architecture. Until today, save for very rare exceptions, we have made in the colony the false Moorish and the authentic Floreale, on the better houses, the classicism of the style manuals with some Renaissance accents." The architecture of California was described as possessing the same qualities which linked the architecture of the Mediterranean, a common response to the climatic demands of these regions which was expressed as their "sense of *latinità*." Ibid., 34.

Rava, all of these structures were "incredibly rational" in relation to their solution to the problem of the colonial environment.⁴⁸ The final paragraphs of this second essay restate the general thesis of his argument, that the indigenous architecture of Libya possessed all of the qualities necessary to create a modern colonial architecture. However, in this process the Arab identity of this vernacular was largely removed in favor of the qualities of *latinità* and *mediterraneità* that link these indigenous sources with Italian culture. Rava alludes to this exclusion in concluding this essay, stating: "we will not derive anything from the Arabs, but... we relate to the real, the great tradition of Rome, that admirably endured through the centuries, and today rejoins us."⁴⁹

The immediate context for Rava's "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna" was architectural discourse in Italy. Their publication in this "Panorama del Razionalismo" forever linked these arguments to the debate over the appropriate expression for a modern architecture for the Fascist state that took place during the period before and after the second *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* in 1931. At the same time that Pier Maria Bardi and the architects of the MIAR were attempting to have Italian Rationalism declared an *Arte di Stato*, Rava was offering

⁴⁸ Rava discusses British colonialism as follows: "we can see in England, imperialist nation like no other, that... striving to create their own colonial architecture destined for Europeans, and thus managing to import in all of their possessions the almost universal type of the "bungalow". He then proceeds to describe the bungalow as: "construction usually of one floor, sometimes of two, surrounded by a portico and a loggia, often on all four sides." The connection between the American and British sources and the indigenous architecture of Libya is described as follows: "today these identical characteristics, inevitably common in all the colonial constructions because they are rational, can also be found in Libya, imported... by the Ottomans." Ibid., 35.

⁴⁹ The assertion of the appropriateness of the Libyan vernacular to a contemporary colonial architecture is contained in the opening quotation of this section, which states: "the native architecture of our Mediterranean colonies presents, for those who may know how to recognize it, all the necessary requirements from which to deduce a perfect modern colonial architecture." The larger context of this final statement is as follows: "the Arab house... is nothing other than the ancient Roman house faithfully reproduced. Connecting then to this type that has been conserved until today, we will not derive anything from the Arabs, but, better than constructing classical, 15th century, or neo-classical buildings in the colonies, we related to the real, the great tradition of Rome, that admirably endured through the centuries, and today rejoins us." In this discussion it is quite apparent that it was only "with a modernity of intentions" that the classical house could be recovered through the indigenous Arab architecture. Ibid., 36.

the Libyan vernacular as a solution to the problem of constructing a contemporary Italian architecture in the colonial context. However, not only did he publish these two articles on modern colonial architecture in this "Panorama," five colonial proposals or built works by Larco and Rava appeared in *Domus* during this same period.⁵⁰ It is largely for this reason that in 1932 Luigi Figini sarcastically referred to the arguments contained in Rava's writings and works as "a renewal... of folkloristic Mediterranean or colonial elements." His theorization of a modern colonial architecture was also criticized by Edoardo Persico in "Punto e da capo per l'architettura," who saw these writings as the final confirmation of the descent of Rava's *europèismo* of 1928 into what he called "the political exigencies of *mediterraneità*."⁵¹

These writings about a modern colonial architecture can also be understood in relation to the interest in Mediterranean vernacular constructions that was already well established in Italian and European architectural discourse. Rava's arguments were based upon the concept of a *minor architecture* that was theorized by Giovannoni and Piacentini in *Architettura e Arti Decorative*, where the vernacular

⁵⁰ The rhetorical nature of Rava's assertion of a colonial architecture precisely at the same moment as the debate surrounding the second Rationalist exhibition cannot be underestimated. Not only did the two essays, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna" figure prominently in the series of writings in *Domus*, the first half of the final essay, "Conclusione", dealt with the issue of colonial architecture. The projects published in *Domus* were; Proposal for Piazza della Cattedrale, Tripoli (February 1931); *Chiesa di Suani-Ben-Aden*, Tripoli (March 1931); *Arco di Trionfo in onore di S.A.R. il Principe di Piemonte* (July 1931); *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* (August 1931); and *Palazzo della Fiat*, Tripoli (January 1932). Two projects on "Mediterranean" themes were also published; *Due ville in Riviera* (April 1931); and *Progetto di una casa per week-end* (August 1931). The *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* was also published in *Casabella* in November of 1931.

⁵¹ In the exchange of letters with Rava, Figini states: "for me, the term "Mediterranean" has had a quite different meaning from that which has been attributed to it by my friend and colleague in his writings and more recent works; since I believe that a renewal, however modern and intelligent, of the folkloristic Mediterranean or colonial elements is completely another thing, and is still one of the *formae mentis* of culturalism, perhaps the latest and most refined." Figini, "Polemica mediterranea," 66. The larger context of this statement is as follows: "the Europeanism of Rava, which broke out five years earlier, in 1926, when many Italian intellectuals underwent the influence of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, evidently had given way, in 1930, to the political demands of *mediterraneità*. The "Panorama" of Rava concluded in the need for a modern colonial architecture." Persico, "Punto e da capo per l'architettura," 3.

was a simple but spontaneous product of the basic needs of man, and an authentic repository of Italian cultural traditions.⁵² More direct connections to Rava's writings can be found in the arguments of Giuseppe Capponi in this magazine, who offers the indigenous architecture of Ischia as a rational organization of spaces that was also well integrated with its environmental context. The primitivism of vernacular architecture alluded to by Rava had already been identified by the futurist architect Virgilio Marchi, who, in his *Architettura futurista* of 1924, asserted that such architecture was the product of "primordial or barbaric people" who worked according to their "instinct and intuition."⁵³ However, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna" was more than a simple reformulation of an already existing body of theory on the modernity of indigenous architecture. By linking the concept of a Mediterranean vernacular to the indigenous constructions of Libya, Rava was expanding this category to embrace an even broader geographical conception of identity.

This inquiry into an Italian colonial architecture was not only closely tied to modern architectural discourse, the terms of Rava's analysis of the Libyan vernacular were also modern. In tracing out an exchange of influences that historicized the Libyan vernacular, he was utilizing the kind of traditional analysis that was practiced

⁵² These comments are discussed in greater detail in Part 1, Section A. where the impact of Giovannoni, Piacentini and *Architettura e Arti Decorative* on the concept of a modern vernacular architecture is traced. The most synthetic discussion of minor architecture in this journal can be found in an article by Piacentini, entitled "Influssi d'arte italiana nel Nord-America," which offered vernacular architecture as a collective and anonymous expression that could revive contemporary architecture. For a general discussion of the coverage of vernacular architecture in this journal, see: Etlin, "*Architettura e Arti Decorative: the Virtues of Rustic Architecture*," in *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940*, 134-39.

⁵³ Capponi published an article in this journal in July of 1927, where he examines both their technical and aesthetic qualities. Not unlike Rava, this vernacular is seen as an antidote to what he calls a "materialist internationalism," providing a model for both the organization and attention to the climate of a modern architecture. Capponi, "Motivi di architettura ischiana," 492. In his book *Architettura futurista*, Marchi speaks of the idea of primitive constructors whose process of design was determined by instinct and intuition rather than education. Although he associates this architecture with what he called "primordial and barbaric people," the rural architecture of Amalfi and Capri was noted to be a good example. Marchi, *Architettura futurista* (1924), in *Virgilio Marchi. Scritti di architettura*, 57.

by art historians like Lionello Venturi, which called for the classification of individual works within larger categories or movements. Although this approach to the study of art ran counter to the aesthetic theory proffered by the most influential philosopher of this period, Benedetto Croce – a philosophy which argued that art was a spontaneous expression of the human spirit and thus could not be historicized – there was a certain continuity between these arguments and Crocean thought.⁵⁴ Rava theorized the existence of a spiritual sub-stratum that allowed the Latin identity of the Libyan vernacular to persist through its subsequent reinterpretations. This "spiritual" continuity afforded these indigenous constructions a universal and permanent artistic value relative to their Roman origins. It is also important to recognize that Rava's experience of the vernacular, and his dissemination of its image, were modern. It was through the detached mode of encounter of the metropolitan traveler in the colonies, and the lens of the camera, that this "vernacular" was appropriated and eventually deployed. The primitivism of the pure geometries of the Mosque of Qasr al-Haj was not so much "present" in the original structure as it was crystallized in its image, which was already determined by a modern photographic aesthetic.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Lionello Venturi was one of the leading art historians of the Fascist period. In discussing his approach to the history of art, Gillo Dorfles notes that while Venturi relied on Crocean aesthetics for his conception of the work of art as an individual product of the human spirit, he deviates in his approach to art history. Venturi's approach is explained as follows: "from his standpoint, he derives the concept of art history, not as a sequence of isolated monographs, but as a living tissue where the relationships between individuals and artistic civilizations are to be sought." That is, Venturi dealt with the social, religious and technical factors related to a work of art. Dorfles, "New Currents in Italian Aesthetics," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 12 (December 1953): 194-95. Croce was critical of this approach, calling it a history of abstractions, and something that violated the uniqueness and independence of the art work. Croce, "Criticism and History of the Figurative Arts: The Present Phase," (1919) in *Philosophy, Poetry, History: An Anthology of Essays*, trans. Cecil Sprigge (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 365. For a detailed discussion of Croce's historical method, see: David D. Roberts, *Benedetto Croce and the Uses of Historicism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

⁵⁵ Although Rava did, indeed, see all of the vernacular buildings he discussed in "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna," and physically traversed the territories in which the historical exchange he described took place, it is also quite evident from the two photographic albums of his travels in Tripolitania that he utilized a process of selection in deciding which examples to

The interpretation the Libyan vernacular architecture offered by Rava in "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna" was derived from and participated in a specifically colonial discourse – that of the representation of the local culture of Italy's North African colonies. A number of scholarly examinations of this culture were made in the magazine *Architettura e Arti Decorative*, where the indigenous architecture of Italy's colonies was presented alongside articles discussing the *architettura minore* of the various regions of Italy. In one such essay, which analyzed the Mosque of Murad Agha in Tajurah, the same historical practices that were used by Gustavo Giovannoni to discuss the modest Quattrocento houses of Rome were applied to the examination of this 16th century religious monument.⁵⁶ This body of scholarly literature had already established a number of predominant themes related to the Libyan vernacular, several of which were revisited by Rava in his essays of 1931. The first of these was the Italian influence on Arab architecture, a connection that was examined by Pietro Romanelli in his article "Vecchie case arabe di Tripoli" of January of 1924.⁵⁷ In exploring the origins of buildings like the 18th century Qarahmanli House in Tripoli, Romanelli argues that "the plan of the Tripolitanian

include and which photographs of those buildings to publish. In this regard, his modern aesthetic sensibility was operative in conveying the interpretations of those buildings, like the Mosque of Qasr al-Haj.

⁵⁶ See Renato Bartoccini, "La Moschea di Murad Agha in Tagiura (Tripolitania)," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* III, 8 (April 1924): 337-46. The publication of this essay is related to an initiative by the Volpi Government in Tripolitania to declare the historical value of certain historical buildings in Tripoli and the surrounding territories. As such, it provides a detailed historical examination of this important Muslim religious monument and its founder, Murad Agha. This presentation includes photographs and drawings of the building, and its transformation since its construction in the mid-16th century. The article by Giovannoni, which is discussed in section a., provides a similar scholarly presentation of the 15th century houses of Rome, which also includes extensive photographs, drawings and historical documentation. Giovannoni, "Case del quattrocento in Roma," 241-57.

⁵⁷ See Romanelli, "Vecchie case arabe di Tripoli," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* III, 5 (January 1924): 193-211. This essay, which was published before that of Bartoccini, was also part of the initiative of the Volpi administration. This program was described as follows: "these houses of artistic and historical interest have been recently, on the initiative of S.E. il Governatore della Tripolitania, On. Conte Volpi, recognized one by one and subjected to a special disposition of guardianship. Exactly on the occasion of this census work it was possible to enter into many of these and gather the rudiments for their study."

house, more than that of any other Eastern house, comes close to the Roman house in its simplicity." [Figure 1.b-14] He defines this *romanità* through the basic elements of this historical model: "a central courtyard, with solid walls or columns, sometimes with a pool of water in the center, the *impluvium*, around which the rooms are gathered, from which they have access and onto which their windows normally open." Romanelli also argues that there was a less direct but no less important influence of Italian culture on these Arab houses. In discussing the craftsmanship of these buildings he asserts that their "unknown masters... were, without a doubt, Italian."⁵⁸ A second theme that frequently characterized the discussion of the indigenous architecture of Libya was its primitivism – a quality that was conveyed in Mario Corsi's examination of the Mosques of Tripoli from 1925. In discussing the oldest of these religious structures, the al-Naqah Mosque, he makes an analogy between the crudeness of its form and the austerity of Islam, also noting that "in its modest proportions and its rough and humble severity, makes us think of... the primitive type of Muslim temple."⁵⁹

⁵⁸ In discussing the Roman origins of the Arab house, Romanelli argues that "fundamentally this is the general and recognized type of the house in all of the countries of the East." At the same time, he asserts that this type developed, amplified and modified itself "to better correspond to the necessities and particular habits of the people who the house served." *Ibid.*, 195-6. In discussing the craftsmanship of these houses, he notes: "another influence was exercised on the Tripolitanian masters, and not in small measure, and it was that of the coeval art in Europe, and more particularly that of Italy." He then later explains: "many of these unknown masters, or at least their most valid and able collaborators, were without a doubt Italian, slaves taken by the barbaric ships, taken to Tripoli, and there obliged to work for the Pasha or their ministers." *Ibid.*, 211.

⁵⁹ All of the already cited essays communicate similar images of Arab architecture as a stark reflection of the primitive nature of Muslim culture and religion in Libya. In this essay, Corsi compares the campanile and the minaret, which he states: "has its own beauty, but more severe and certainly more gloomy." In examining the al-Naqah Mosque, he argues that "the stern rough temple of the Camella... reveals to us the grandeur and bareness of the fierce and intransigent monotheism of Islam." This quality of was found in the complete lack of ornamentation, "true to the most strict Muslim law." The origin of this building in a primitive Moslem temple was, according to Corsi, related to the legend of its founding. In this story, Omar, father-in-law of Mohammed, came to Tripoli from Egypt on a camel, making a pledge to Allah to erect a temple where his camel stops. Corsi, "Le Moschee di Tripoli," *Emporium* LXI, 362 (February 1925): 96-113.

The primitivism of the Libyan vernacular is largely derived from a second area of scholarly activity related to the Italian colonies – that of scientific research in the fields of anthropology and ethnography. Although the major efforts in this area of study did not begin until the definitive conquest of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in 1932, the earliest expeditions in the Libyan territories by Italian explorers took place in the late 19th century.⁶⁰ One of the first major publications that offered a detailed examination of Tripolitania is *Da Leptis Magna a Gadames*, a book written by Raffaele Calzini in 1926. Undertaken with the sponsorship of Governor Giuseppe Volpi, this publication offers a first hand description of the Libyan culture in the Sub-Saharan regions from a period before any significant transformation by the Italian colonization process. By 1931, with the organization of the first *Congresso di studi coloniali* in Florence, scholars conducting research in anthropology and ethnography began to produce preliminary studies of the Libyan populations and their characteristic culture. Two examples from this conference are Enrico De Agostini's "Etnografia delle popolazioni libiche" and Emilio Scarin's "Tipi indigeni di insediamento umano e loro distribuzione nella Tripolitania settentrionale."⁶¹ Through

⁶⁰ According to Angelo Del Boca, the first travels of Italian explorers to the regions that would become the Libyan colonies in 1911 took places shortly after the loss of Tunisia to France (1881). For a general discussion of these early research activities, see: Del Boca, "L'Italia e la spartizione dell'Africa. 1. In nome della scienza," *L'Africa nella coscienza degli Italiani* (Bari-Roma: Laterza, 1992), 7-22. For a general discussion of these activities from 1922 to 1932, see. Piccioli, "La ricognizione scientifica e la propaganda," *La nuova Italia d'oltremare*, 1717-57. Many of these early missions were undertaken by the *Reale Società Geografica*, the *Reale Accademia d'Italia* and the *Istituto Superiore di Scienze Sociali di Firenze*, which promoted missions in Tripolitania and the Fezzan desert region in 1932.

⁶¹ The study by Calzini was undertaken with the sponsorship of Governor Giuseppe Volpi, who commissioned him to document the newly conquered regions of Tripolitania. See: Calzini, *Da Leptis Magna a Gadames* (Milano: Fratelli Treves, Editori, 1926). There were a total of four Congressi di Studi Coloniali, which were held in Florence (1931 and 1937), Naples (1934 and 1940) and Asmara (1940). These were organized by the *R. Istituto Superiore di Scienze Sociali e Politiche "Cesare Alfieri"* and the *Centro di Studi Coloniali* in Florence with a substantial support from the Fascist government. These conferences assembled the most current research on a wide range of topics related to Italy's colonies. See: *Atti del Primo Congresso di Studi Coloniali. Firenze, 8-12 April 1931*, 7 vols. (Firenze: Sicc B. Seeber, 1931) ; *Atti del Secondo Congresso di studi coloniali. Napoli, 1-5 October 1934*, 6 vols. (Firenze: Tip. Giuntina di L.S. Olschki, 1934);

this emerging body of research, the Libyan people were constructed as a "primitive" society that could be understood through a direct reading of their customs and cultural artifacts. The empiricism of this scientific project was the almost universal basis by which the vernacular culture was examined by Italian scholars. It also formed an important backdrop against which writers like Rava formulated their own subjective interpretations of this culture.

The image of the vernacular architecture and culture of the Libyan colonies was also constructed through more popular representations, such as those related to the tourist experience of these territories. By the time of Rava's initial visit to Tripoli in December of 1927, a viable tourist infrastructure was already in existence in Tripolitania, as will be discussed in more detail in Part 3 of this dissertation. It was during the Governorship of Giuseppe Volpi (1921-1925) that a tourist system was established through the organization of adequate means of transportation and the construction of sufficient accommodation.⁶² The interest in this colony as a travel destination resulted in a wide proliferation of tourist related material, including guide books, pamphlets and postcards. An image of the local culture of Tripolitania was communicated through these various representations, with the vernacular architecture of cities like Ghadames being of particular importance. [Figure 1.b-15] The Italian Touring Club guide book for the Italian colonies and possessions of 1929 suggests that local culture of Tripolitania had retained more of its "Oriental, original, primitive fascination" in relation to other colonies in North Africa that had been more

Atti del Terzo Congresso di studi coloniali. Firenze-Roma, 12-17 April 1937, 9 vols. (Firenze: G.C. Sandoni, 1937).

⁶² For a more detailed discussion of the origins of tourism in Tripolitania, see Part 3. Although the first organized tourist excursion to this colony was held in 1914 by the Touring Club Italiano, it was not until the reconquest of Tripolitania under Volpi that this colony was secure, that adequate roads were constructed, that regular marine connections to Italy were established, and that sufficient hotels were built. By 1925 there were four hotels in Tripoli; the Grand, the Savoia, the Moderno and the Commercio.

substantially transformed by metropolitan society.⁶³ This culture was thus represented as being coincident with the primitive origins of the Libyan populations – a "scientific" view which this guide book shares with Rava's writings on the vernacular architecture of this region. The description of Ghadames in this publication conveys just such an image, stating: "the appearance of the town is quite singular, with a very irregular plan, with mysterious covered streets, ...the violent contrast between the dazzling reflections from the white walls in the sun and the dense shade of the covered passages."⁶⁴

The interpretation of the vernacular architecture of Libya that was presented by Rava in "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna" was also closely tied to a different popular means of representation of the Italian colonies – that of contemporary colonial literature. The development of this form of writing was largely due to the efforts of the *Ministero delle Colonie*, which undertook a broad propaganda campaign aimed at communicating the Italian colonies to a metropolitan audience in the aftermath of Mussolini's visit to Tripolitania in April of 1926. This initiative included a competition for the best *romanzo coloniale* in 1926, whose winner Mario

⁶³ The first tourist guide book was published in 1925. See: *Guida di Tripoli e dintorni* (Milano: Fratelli Treves Editori, 1925). The *Ente Nazionale per le Industrie Turistiche*, the state owned tourist agency, produced a hybrid of a pamphlet and a guide book in 1929. This publication, entitled *Tripoli* was published in conjunction with the *Ferrovie dello Stato*, and presented the major tourist sites of this city and its immediate environs. See Ente Nazionale Industrie Turistiche and Ferrovie dello Stato, *Tripoli* (Roma: Novissima, 1929). The first colonial guide book published by the Italian Touring Club came out in 1923, and it only covered the colonies of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. The publication of 1929 was an 850 page volume treating Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, the Isole Italiane dell'Egeo, Eritrea and Somalia. See: L.V. Bertarelli, *Guida d'Italia del TCI. Possedimenti e Colonie* (Milano: Touring Club Italiano, 1929).

⁶⁴ The part of this guide book which presents Tripolitania contains a general section on tourism which examines the "ethnic and folkloristic aspects." In this brief discussion, it is stated: "Tripolitania holds the supremacy over all the regions of the African Mediterranean for its oriental, original, primitive fascination, because the cosmopolitanism of the Egyptian, Tunisian, Algerian and Moroccan cities has not yet penetrated it." It goes on to argue that the Arabs live in a manner linked with their tradition, without contamination by metropolitan culture. *Ibid.*, 269. Although the descriptions of most of the tourist centers are relatively direct, primarily presenting historical background and factual information, this guide book contains a number of evocative passages, including the descriptions of the Qasr of Kabao and the towns of Nalut and Ghadames. *Ibid.*, 334, 336, 340-41.

dei Gaslini quickly became a prominent figure in various forms of colonial propaganda.⁶⁵ Dei Gaslini's winning novel, entitled *Piccolo amore beduino*, exemplifies the two major tendencies that defined this form of literature in Italy – realism and exoticism. In presenting an autobiographical story of an Italian military official stationed in Tripolitania just prior to World War I, Dei Gaslini was drawing upon the realism of the travel accounts and diaries through which the early exploration of Africa had been communicated. The exoticism of *Piccolo amore beduino* is evident in the general focus of its plot on the tragic love relationship between Dei Gaslini, as the protagonist, and a young Bedouin woman.⁶⁶ These two influences also inform the depiction of local culture in this novel, which is conveyed through a combination of intense description and an emphasis on themes of cultural difference. This combination of realism and exoticism was also operative in artistic circles, where characteristic scenes of native life became a prevalent subject for colonial painters. One such example is Giorgio Oprandi's "Mercato arabo" of 1925, whose representational conventions were consistent with nineteenth century Orientalist painting – depicting what Linda Nochlin has referred to as "a world of timeless, atemporal customs that were untouched by the historical processes that

⁶⁵ Angelo Del Boca notes that the propaganda initiative by the *Ministero delle Colonie* in the area of colonial literature was undertaken by Luigi Federzoni in 1926 with the organization of this competition. For a general discussion of this development, see: Del Boca, "La riconquista del Fezzan. Tra esotismo ed erotismo," *Gli Italiani in Libia. Dal Fascismo a Gheddafi*, 167-173. In addition to the publication of his novel, Mario dei Gaslini was the editor of the short-lived periodical, *Esotica*, which also began publication in 1926. A more specific examination of this literature is provided by: Giovanna Tomasello, "Il fascismo e l'esigenza di una letteratura coloniale. Mario dei Gaslini e Gino Mitrano Sani," *La letteratura coloniale italiana dalle avanguardie al fascismo* (Palermo: Sellerio Editore, 1984), 67-93.

⁶⁶ Tomasello notes that one of the themes that runs through colonial literature of this period is the tendency toward the autobiographical. Most of the early examples, like Dei Gaslini, were about an Italian official in the colonies, communicating something the bureaucratic nature of colonial rule. She notes that later authors, like Gino Mitrano Sani were more successful in their communication of this aspect of colonialism. Tomasello notes that Dei Gaslini was influenced by the "decadent exoticism of Gabriele D'Annunzio, whose *Più che amore* of 1906 focuses on the sexual and exotic aspects of Africa. *Ibid.*, 70-73, 75-80.

were... drastically altering Western societies."⁶⁷ [Figure 1.b-16] Notably, these colonial artworks also participated in a literary discourse of travel and the experience of the exotic. The creation of colonial art by artists by Oprandi necessitated long and difficult periods of sojourn, something which created a direct parallel between the colonial reality of the artist and that of the writer.⁶⁸

The influence of this literary and artistic discourse on Rava's "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna" is evident in its general emphasis on visual experience and sensation. It is also possible to link his interest in the primitive qualities of the "play of geometric volumes" of the vernacular architecture of the southern regions of this colony with the exoticism of these representational conventions.⁶⁹ A more direct connection between these influences and Rava's writing can be found in his publication of *Viaggio a Tunin* in 1932. This book, which chronicles his own trip from Tripoli to the sub-Saharan settlements of Ghadames and Tunin in March of 1931, was undertaken at the same time as the publication of his writings on colonial architecture in the "Panorama del Razionalismo" in *Domus*. Written in the form of a travel diary, *Viaggio a Tunin*

⁶⁷ For a general discussion of colonial painting, see: Cristina Delvecchio, "Icane d'Africa. Note sulla pittura coloniale italiana," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 68-81. The artwork by Oprandi, which was painted during one of his stays in Eritrea, is presented in an article on two recent exhibitions of his work. See: Guido Marangoni, "Giorgio Oprandi e due sue mostre artistiche," *Emporium* LXI, 361 (January 1925): 37-45. Linda Nochlin discusses the Realism of Orientalist painting as the product of various absences within this art. The first absence is that of time, or rather of the impact of Western power on the East. The second, and far more serious absence is that within the art itself. She describes the realism of these paintings as masking the artifice of the painting and thus of its depiction of the East. She thus states: "the strategies of the "realist"... mystification to hand-in-hand with those of Orientalist mystification." See, Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient," *Art in America* LXXI, 5 (May 1983): 122.

⁶⁸ The connection between Oprandi's work and the theme of exoticism is presented in an article written by the critic Benso Becca, who notably also wrote on the theme of colonial literature. Becca, "Per una pittura esotica. La mostra di Oprandi," *L'Oltremare* II, 1 (January 1928): 40. A second article in the same issue of *L'Oltremare* is a literary description by Oprandi of his sojourn in Eritrea. Oprandi, "Il mio vagabondaggio eritreo," *ibid.*, 41-44.

⁶⁹ In discussing the primitivism of the Libyan vernacular, Rava stated: "this type of play of geometric volumes, that perfectly harmonizes with our most recent modern taste, has remained characteristic of the Libyan architecture, and always distinguishes itself as a very wise and exemplary composition of masses, imprinted with a severe monumentality, even in its most simple expressions." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna. Parte prima," 89.

expresses a fascination for travel and the experience of unfamiliar places and cultures – qualities that are typical to Italian colonial literature.⁷⁰ These literary preoccupations permeate the text, whose suggestive prose carries the reader from the "afternoons spent in the warm shade of the suq" in Tripoli, to the "enormous, impending, menacing" Qasr of Nalut, to the "extraordinary sense of immobility and silence" of the people and the settlement of Ghadames, and finally to the "primitive and savage aspect" of Tunin. Reflecting on this journey in the final passages of this book, Rava speaks of the "seduction of uncertain itineraries" and the "profound excitement of going toward the unknown" that characterizes travel in North Africa.⁷¹

There are a number of more immediate connections between Rava's writings about a modern colonial architecture in *Domus* and this hybrid of travel diary and colonial novel. The intense description of the vernacular architecture of the Libyan colonies found in "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna" is even more fully explored

⁷⁰ This book documents a trip that Rava took along with a group of at least five other people from Tripoli to Ghadames and back with a brief excursion to the town of Tunin, which was near the Algerian border in south-west Tripolitania. This trip is recorded in the monthly notices kept by the colonial authorities. See: *Notiziario d'informazioni*, April 7, 1931. ACS-PCM 1931-1933. 17.1.6267. The connection between this book and the "Panorama del Razionalismo" is evident in the timing of the writing of this book and its publication which was coincident with the publication of these articles. It is also worth noting that some of the photographs that were used in this article were taken during the course of this trip, which was Rava's second visit to Ghadames. See: Rava, *Viaggio a Tunin* (Bologna: Licinio Cappelli editore, 1932).

⁷¹ Rava speaks of the displacement of arrival in Africa: "Europe is forgotten, far away, lost, only my colonial life exists, that now begins again; the entire mornings on horseback, the afternoons spent in the warm shade of the suq of a thousand odors, searching for and negotiating at length for curious objects for my collections." *Ibid.*, 17-18. In speaking of the castle of Nalut, Rava refers to its dual aspect, the first being its "enormous, impending and menacing" appearance, the second being the sense of its impending collapse. *Ibid.*, 33-34. Of the silence of Ghadames, Rava states: "the first thing that strikes upon entering Ghadames, is an extraordinary sense of immobility and silence, that seems to also dominate the people: completely bathed in a dreamy atmosphere, and every gesture, every sound, is muffled." *Ibid.*, 96. Of Tunin, he states: "if the white Ghadames is the last heir of the architecture of the Niger, the red Tunin is a direct derivation of the Sudanese villages, and this particularity thus confers on it an intensely African aspect." *Ibid.*, 169. The larger context of this final statement is as follows: "Ah, once again the caravan, the seduction of uncertain itineraries, the profound excitement of going toward the unknown, the nights under the sky when the stars seem so close to us, above all that sense of adventure, from which every living minute receives such a value of fullness, so then in Europe everything appears, by comparison, empty and pale and gray." *Ibid.*, 219.

in *Viaggio a Tunin*, where Rava also deals with the contingent experience of these constructions. One passage describes the streets of Ghadames as being "wrapped in a submerged atmosphere, very cool and dense with deep black shadow, interrupted from time to time with a diagonal cut of a ray of light, that pours from the wells of light."⁷² Certain thematic parallels can be made between the description of vernacular architecture in *Viaggio a Tunin* and those of his writings on modern colonial architecture. In discussing a small villa on the periphery of Ghadames, Rava states: "the well-balanced proportions of the portico, whose arches... create a zone of deep shade in contrast with the airy loggia of the first floor, confers a vague Mediterranean intonation on this typically African architecture." This book also alludes to the Roman origins of the vernacular architecture of Libya. Using the same argument and wording as his essay "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna," Rava asserted that the vernacular architecture of Ghadames was a unique point of exchange between Latin or European culture and that of Africa.⁷³ The indigenous architecture of the Italian colonies in North Africa was constructed by Rava as a subject of theoretical meditation and an object of the vicarious experience of the

⁷² This description is of what was called the "Via Tescu" which was the principal artery of Ghadames. The experience of this street is described as follows: "at the first instant, after the extremely strong morning sun of the Sahara, I seemed to be almost in the darkness, but almost immediately I was accustomed, and in the strange aquarium light that bathes this mysterious gallery, I found again the witchcraft of this city where everything is unreal." Ibid., 97. These streets were later described as being identical: "dark galleries, the highest supported by a girder of trunks of palm trees, the lowest by a series of squat arches... and when close to a shaft of light, they give rise to the most strange and disquieting play of chiaroscuro." Ibid., 109.

⁷³ In relation to this villa, Rava also states: "this is the typical abode of a great Saharan signore and represents the extreme level of perfection here reached by the architecture of Ghadames." He then notes: "the thing that surprises me in it more than anything is its affinity with certain rustic constructions of the southern Riviera of Italy. Except for certain details, this house, which might, in fact, stand in Capri, Ischia or Amalfi, is typically created "for the South" as are those of our coast." Ibid., 133-34. This book uses identical wording to that used to characterize the vernacular architecture of Ghadames in "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna. Parte prima," stating that Ghadames: "which represented a great center of Tuaregh civilization and culture, as it was the greatest caravan junction through which the Mediterranean communicated with the basin of the Niger, has also been, in some small way, the place of transition and of exchange between the architectural forms of *latinità* and those of Saharan-Sudanese architecture." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna. Parte prima," 89. Rava, *Viaggio a Tunin*, 94-5.

exotic. These two forms of knowledge – that of the architect and that of the traveler – were fused into a single reality through these writings.

The theory of a modern colonial architecture elaborated by Rava was also infused with the politics of Italian colonialism. In contrast with the policy of association as practiced in the French colonies, the Italian approach was one of incorporation – attempting to both preserve the indigenous culture of North Africa and assert its metropolitan status. However, the relatively systematic effort by the Italians to preserve the indigenous culture of the Libyan colonies was not only a benevolent manifestation of colonial rule. It was also a strategic and subversive gesture aimed at extending colonial authority into the realm of religion, education and the home.⁷⁴ In a similar manner, Rava's interest in the Libyan vernacular was closely tied to the *ambientismo* that guided the development of the city of Tripoli beginning in the late 1920s – a policy that can be understood as a method of control of the city and its indigenous populations. It was the theoretical manifestation within architectural discourse of a Fascist politics which asserted that Libya "was Roman and returns to Rome."⁷⁵ That is, in asserting the fundamentally Roman basis for the indigenous architecture of this region, Rava was defining the identity of this vernacular as the inevitable product of this past colonialism. However, this

⁷⁴ Claudio Segrè argues that the Italians were well aware to the French attempts to assimilate the local populations and instead chose the path of religious tolerance and reinforcement of their customs and practices. Segrè, *Italo Balbo: A Fascist Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 324. There was considerable regulation of religious practices that were deemed to be against the teachings of Islam. Many of these "primitive" religious practices were related to sects, such as the Sanussi, that had been responsible for creating dissent among the Libyan populations. The Italian intervention in the realm of education was no less invasive, as they created numerous schools, some of which were for women. Although religious education was largely left alone, the Italians provided public education for the Libyans who did not attend Islamic schools. Wright speaks of this as the "Fascistization of Libya." Wright, *Libya*, 181-82.

⁷⁵ This statement comes from a speech made by Mussolini during his visit to Tripolitania in April of 1926. The following is the larger context: "It is not without significance that I draw my wish to this shore of the sea that was Roman and returns to Rome and it is particularly significant that I spread out all of the Italian people around me, a united people of soldiers, of colonists, of pioneers." Mussolini, "Speech at Municipio di Tripoli," April 11, 1926. *Scritti e discorsi di Benito Mussolini. Volume V. Scritti e discorsi dal 1925 al 1926* (Milano: Ulrico Hoepli Editore, 1934), 318-19.

mediterraneità of Rava was not only deploying the kind of imperialist rhetoric typical to fascist Italy, it was constituting an imperialist project, by claiming the indigenous identity of this architecture as Italian.⁷⁶ The identity of the vernacular architecture of Libya had thus already been rendered colonial – connecting its presumed historical past with its Fascist present.

This theoretical discourse for a modern colonial architecture initiated by Rava in his "Panorama del Razionalismo" was considerably transformed after the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in October of 1935 and Mussolini's declaration of an Italian Empire in May of the following year. The emphasis of the Fascist government shifted to the colonies in East Africa, which became an important part of domestic economic politics as Italy pursued a policy of autarchy, or economic self-sufficiency, in the aftermath of sanctions from the League of Nations. They were the most recent trophies of Italian imperialism, and as such they enjoyed a more substantial economic commitment from the Fascist government.⁷⁷ A major part of this investment was made in the rapid development of the urban infrastructure of these East African colonies. In order to facilitate this effort, the *Ministero delle Colonie* created the *Consulta centrale per l'edilizia e l'urbanistica* in November of 1936, a group whose primary task was the approval of regulatory plans for the new Fascist cities in

⁷⁶ Rava characterizes the appropriation of the Libyan vernacular as follows: "taking back, with a modernity of intention, the scheme of the classical house preserved through the Arab one, we will continue the work of Rome creating the new on its traces, not obtusely repeating what it did in distant centuries, and does not have any reason to live today. He then proceeds to argue that only through repeating and concluding "the eternal work of *latinità*" and "drawing from the analogy between the indigenous Libyan forms and those of current Rationalism," Italian architects will produce "the lasting sign of our present greatness, of our new civilization" in North Africa. Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, Parte seconda," 36.

⁷⁷ Martin Clark notes that Italian troops invaded Ethiopia on October 3, 1935, with the Italian Empire being declared by Mussolini on May 9, 1936. Shortly after the initial invasion, the League of Nations applied economic sanctions which, according to Clark, were largely ineffective. These sanctions did, however, result in the policy of "Autarchy" which meant that imported goods were replaced by their Italian equivalent. The colonies in East Africa thus became a substitute for the export markets which were lost. Although this preserved Italian industry and labor, its impact on the national economy was severe as a huge deficit arose from this investment in the colonies. Clark, *Modern Italy, 1871-1982*, 266, 281-82.

East Africa.⁷⁸ The attention of Italian architects and engineers was thus directed to the issue of colonial planning, an emphasis that is registered in the prominence of this theme at the first *Congresso nazionale di urbanistica*, held in Rome in April of 1937. The importance of this subject was noted in final declarations at the conclusion of this conference, which affirmed "the necessity and urgency of the integral and unitary urbanistic systemization of Italian East Africa." Immediately following this conference, the subject of colonial urbanism became a prominent feature in many architectural publications, such as *Architettura* where in an article entitled "Future città dell'Impero" of July 1937, Gherardo Bosio proposed his own strategy for planning these new cities.⁷⁹

The most prominent achievement of the planning initiative of the Fascist government was the regulatory plan for Addis Ababa, which was to become the capital of the Italian Empire in East Africa. Through the efforts of the *Governatore di Roma*, Giuseppe Bottai, who was initially charged with the civil administration of this new capital, this process moved rapidly, with the plan being given to the

⁷⁸ For a general examination of the planning of the new towns in East Africa, see Giuliano Gresleri, "La "nuova Roma dello Scioa" e l'improbabile architettura dell'Impero." *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 164-77. In this essay, Gresleri notes that almost immediately after the declaration of Empire, Marcello Piacentini wrote to Mussolini, who was also Ministero delle Colonie, in order to secure the position of author of regulatory plans for the new colonial cities. Although there was no precise result from this request, in November of 1936 the Ministero created the "Consulta centrale per l'edilizia e l'urbanistica." According to Gresleri, it was from these events that the debate over the regulatory plans for these towns emerged, including proposals by Le Corbusier for Addis Ababa. *Ibid.*, 165-66.

⁷⁹ The first *Congresso nazionale di urbanistica* was reported in the magazine *Urbanistica*. See: "Congresso nazionale," *Urbanistica* VI, 2 (March-April 1937): 79; Armando Melis, "Dopo il Congresso di Roma," *Urbanistica* VI, 3 (May-June 1937): 143-45. The proceedings of this conference were also published. See: *Atti del Primo Congresso Nazionale di Urbanistica. Volume I. Urbanistica coloniale* (Roma: Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica, 1937). The larger context of the statement is as follows: "the I Congresso Nazionale di Urbanistica affirms the necessity and urgency of the integral and unitary urbanistic systemization of Italian East Africa through the drawing up of a general schematic plan as a base for the further regional and urban plans." "I voti conclusivi del Congresso," *Urbanistica* VI, 3 (May-June 1937): 146-48. See: Bosio, "Future città dell'Impero," *Architettura* XVII, 7 (July 1937): 419-31. This lengthy article proposes a larger strategy of differing between the cities of the plateau in Ethiopia, "where the physical and climatic conditions are well adapted to the physiological construction of our race" and the lowlands. It is interesting to note that this article is, in part, illustrated with images of the vernacular architecture of each region.

architect Ignazio Guidi and the engineer Cesare Valle as consultants to the *Ufficio tecnico* of the *Governatorato di Roma*. The urgency of this plan was related to both the desire to quickly constitute an image of this capital and the fear of its unregulated growth.⁸⁰ The plan as proposed by Guidi and Valle called for the creation of a new monumental center organized along a north-south axis between the old residence of the Emperor Menelik II (1889-1913) on the south and the more recent palace of Emperor Haile Selassie of 1934. [Figure 1.b-17] The intention of this gesture was quite clearly expressed by Valle upon the publication of this plan in *Architettura*, where he stated: "the insertion of the new center between the buildings that already represent the major expression of dominion of the Abyssinian dynasty, reaffirms the total Italian superimposition on the ancient domination."⁸¹

The major features of the regulatory plan of Addis Ababa by Guidi and Valle reflect the emergence of a new direction in Italian colonial planning. It created a clear separation between the metropolitan districts and the areas designated for housing the indigenous populations based upon racial difference. While there was a great concern for the environmental context that links the plan for Addis Ababa with contemporary urban planning in Italy, its approach was far from the *ambientismo* that was practiced in the plan of Tripoli by Alpago-Novello, Cabiati and Ferrazza.⁸²

⁸⁰ For a comprehensive discussion of the design and planning of Addis Ababa, see: Marida Talamona, "Addis Abeba capitale dell'Impero," *Storia Contemporanea* XVI, 5-6 (December 1985): 1093-1132. In this essay, Talamona provides a detailed account of the efforts of Bottai, who was only head of the civil administration from May 6-19, 1936. During this time, he prepared a proposal to give the responsibility for the regulatory plan to the *Governatorato di Roma*, which was approved by Mussolini on June 13. One of the indications of the urgency of this process was that this plan was, from the beginning, an architectural proposal, an approach that allowed for a more direct implementation by architects.

⁸¹ See: Valle, "Programma urbanistico per Addis Abeba," *Architettura* XVIII, 12 (December 1937): 761. Valle notes that this regulatory plan is organized along a north-south axis that connects the old and new Ghebi, which were the residences of Emperors Menelik and Selassie. The intention to situate this new seat of power in relation to past ones was stated quite clearly in this presentation, thus contextualizing new monuments like the *Palazzo del Governo* and the *Torre della Littoria* in a relation of domination over the old.

⁸² The separation of the indigenous populations was described by Valle as follows: "the fundamental criterion of urban planning is the clear separation between the indigenous and Italian districts." The separate location of these districts was reinforced by natural features like

The plan of Guidi and Valle called for complete erasure of the area of the city where this new monumental center was to be located. This rather brutal response to the pre-existing context was due to what was described as the "squalid disorder" of the city and the questionable value of its buildings. It was also, unquestionably, a product of the desire to constitute a powerful image for the Italian Empire in Africa. After the Italian defeat at the hands of the Ethiopian troops of Menelik in 1896, the "fascistization" of the capital of Addis Ababa was no innocent gesture.⁸³ The superimposition of this new complex over an existing framework of indigenous monuments and the almost complete displacement of the local populations was nothing less than a willful expression of colonial power and a prelude to a politics of race.

An important counterpart to the discourse on urban planning in the East African colonies was the focus on the development of construction techniques and building typologies that would deal with the problem of housing. The presumed need of housing was to a great extent justified, given that by early 1938 there were

green space and an existing river bed. Ibid., 760. Marida Talamona disputes the fact that the separation of indigenous and metropolitan districts was related to the racial laws implemented in November of 1938, stating that by 1936 this policy "constituted a basic norm of colonial urbanism, having been codified in the first congress of colonial urbanism, held in Paris in 1931 on the occasion of the Exposition coloniale internationale." Talamona, "Addis Abeba capitale dell'Impero." 1098. Despite these assertions, these regulatory plans for East Africa can legitimately be viewed as an early manifestation of an emerging discourse related to racial difference in Fascist politics. With regard to the connection of the plan for Addis Ababa and contemporary planning in Italy, see: Mia Fuller, "Wherever You Go, There You Are: Fascist Plans for the Colonial City of Addis Ababa and the Colonizing Suburb of EUR '42," *Journal of Contemporary History* 31 (1996): 397-418.

⁸³ On the disorder of the existing city, in the "Programma urbanistico" Valle states: "Addis Ababa is a true Negro city, that is the unhappy result of the impossibility that Negroes in general and the Ethiopians in particular have to elevate themselves." He later notes: "to the sight of picturesque beauty offered by nature is contrasted a complete mushroom-bed of "tucul" that emerge from below the ground, between one trunk or the other of the immense eucalyptus in a squalid disorder, along the caravan routes and the streets of major importance." Valle, "Programma urbanistico per Addis Abeba," 755, 758. The most humiliating military defeat of Italy came at the hands of the Ethiopians under the Emperor Menelik II on March 1, 1896 at the battle of Adowa. This event, during which 5,000 Italians were killed and 2,000 held prisoner, was the final blow in a failed attempt by the Crispi government to claim this territory as an Italian colony. The fact that this was the only defeat of a European nation at the hands of an African army made the capture of this territory under Mussolini a form of retribution. Clark, *Modern Italy 1871-1982*, 99-101.

already nearly 40,000 Italians living in the major cities of the four newly established provinces of the former Ethiopia.⁸⁴ The various proposals by architects struggled with two related questions connected with building in the East African colonies – the utilization of local or imported materials and the availability of a skilled labor force. The most practical approach was the adoption of indigenous materials and practices – a method that was used with particular success by government sponsored housing agencies. However, due to the urgency of housing in East Africa, a number of proposals were developed that focused on standardized elements that theoretically required less skilled labor in the colony.⁸⁵ One variation on this approach was presented in *Casabella* in an article by Giuseppe Pagano, entitled "Una casa per la colonia." [Figure 1.b-18] Rejecting both traditional building methods and the use of large building elements prefabricated in Italy, Pagano presents a new system which was comprised of modest sized interlocking concrete panels that could be relatively easily assembled on site. In a second article, this

⁸⁴ Although there were no precise statistics on the amount of housing in the regulatory plan of Addis Ababa, its massive scale is evident in the fact that it was estimated that it would take twenty-five years to complete. The much more modest plan for the town of Gimma, by the architect Gherardo Bosio was designed to accommodate 12,000 Italians. See: Gresleri, "Architecture for the Towns of the Empire," *Rassegna* 51 (September 1992): 36-51. According to the *Guida dell'Africa Orientale Italiana* of the Consociazione Turistica Italiana, the Italian population of the following towns in the former Ethiopia are as follows (as of March 1938): Addis Ababa, 17,301 ; Gondar, 2,000; Dessie, 6,000; Dire Dawa, 3,000; Harar, 8,000; and Gimma, 2,500. This means a total of 38,801 Italians had settled in this colony in just over 18 months. See: Consociazione Turistica Italiana, *Guida dell'Africa Orientale Italiana* (Milano: Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1938), 350, 395, 432, 443, 479, 523. After the Italian conquest, Ethiopia was absorbed into the larger Africa Orientale Italiana, which was made of the provinces of the two ex colonies of Eritrea and Somalia, with Ethiopia becoming the provinces of Amara, Galla e Sidama, Harar, and Addis Ababa.

⁸⁵ A detailed discussion of the issue of housing in the East African colonies is provided by Stefano Zagnoni, who outlines these different solutions. He notes that the use of local materials was not only the "compulsory choice", it also led to some interesting results. In this regard he cites the activities of the *Istituto nazionale case impiegati dello Stato* (INCIS), which provided housing for state employees in Italy and the colonies. Zagnoni notes that INCIS commissioned outside professionals to provide housing proposals utilizing "native" construction systems. What he refers to as the "technological option" was the use of prefabricated and demountable systems, which gained limited use in situations where accommodations for Italians had to be built in a limited time. See: Zagnoni, "Abitare per l'altopiano. La casa coloniale per l'Africa Orientale," *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 214-229; and "L'attivit  dell'INCIS. Le case degli "uomini bianchi"." *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 230-41.

standardized system is presented alongside Pagano's own proposals for its application to minimum housing types for the East African colonies.⁸⁶

The problem of housing in the colonial context was the central focus of a series of three articles published by Luigi Piccinato in *Domus* magazine in 1936. As the designer for the Casa coloniale at the fifth Triennale in Milan of 1933 and collaborator with Alpagò-Novello and Cabiati on the INCIS neighborhood in Tripoli of 1931-34, this rationalist architect already had considerable direct experience with this issue.⁸⁷ The first of these articles, entitled "La casa in colonia. Il problema che si prospetta ai nostri architetti," provides a polemical statement about the problem of housing in the colonies. Noting that there were few lessons that could be learned from other colonizing nations, Piccinato asserts that "the house should organize itself in proportion to the climate, in proportion to the system of living, in proportion to the building materials." Given the task of designing a house for the North African context, he suggests that the "modest Arab house" with its characteristic courtyard, provided "a logical, economic and Mediterranean solution."⁸⁸ In the second article

⁸⁶ In this article, Pagano presents a new system, which was conceived and executed by Pietro Ferrero, a builder from Carrara. The intention is to produce these modular building elements that can be cheaply transported and assembled without the need of a skilled labor force. The concrete panels are designed with a vertical fin on both sides that is designed to interlock with a second panel to form a cavity wall construction. Pagano praises this system for its: "economy, solidity, rapidity of execution and great facility of obtaining elegant aesthetic solutions with it." See: Pagano, "Una casa per la colonia," *Casabella* 120 (December 1937): 32-33. This second presents the application of this system to a number of scales, from a series of house typologies, to the design of a village. See: A.M.M., "Arch. G. Pagano: Studi per l'applicazione razionale di una struttura a elementi di cemento," *Casabella* 123 (March 1938): 120-27.

⁸⁷ This series of articles was published as follows: Piccinato, "La casa in colonia. Il problema che si prospetta ai nostri architetti," *Domus* 101 & 102 (May & June 1936): 22-25, 12-17; and "Un problema per l'Italia d'oggi, costruire in colonia," *Domus* 105 (September 1936): 7-10. Piccinato's rationalist credentials were established through his participation in the first and second Rationalist exhibitions (1928 and 1931), and his membership in the MIAR at the time of the second exhibition. He was also the most prominent member of team of Roman architects (along with Eugenio Montuori, Gino Cancellotti and Alfredo Scalpelli) that won the national competition for the design of the town of Sabaudia in 1933. In addition to the colonial works mentioned, he worked with Marcello Piacentini on the *Teatro Berenice* in Benghazi of 1928 and was one of the main architects of the *Mostra triennale delle terre italiane d'oltremare*, held in Napoli in 1940.

⁸⁸ This first essay critiques the idea of an "Arab style", instead offering the three criterion of climate, colonial life and building materials, as determining of colonial architecture. He critiques the idea of using "European building types" even if they are "dressed up as Arab". Instead he

of this series, Piccinato continues this argument by examining the problem of building in East Africa, whose tropical and subtropical climate introduced different problems such as heat, humidity, violent rains, and infestation by insects and rodents. Analyzing the tropical house, which according to Piccinato was constructed on wooden piles, he argues for the creation of a new housing typology – a *villa tropicale* elevated on pilotis, with a large covered verandah and only service functions on the ground level. [Figure 1.b-19] The final article in this series augments these typological studies by dealing with questions of materials and building components, arguing that the best solution is a hybrid of local techniques and modern technologies.⁸⁹

This series of articles by Piccinato revisits the arguments of Rava of 1931, which proposed that the Libyan vernacular could be the basis for a modern colonial architecture proper to Fascist Italy. He provides a series of specific housing typologies, derived from "traditional" sources, that could be applied in different climatic conditions and suggests that their elements and techniques should also be derived from indigenous practices. However, Piccinato's analysis of these practices

offers the Arab house as a direct model, illustrating this with a series of photographs of the exterior and interior of these indigenous constructions. This article concludes with the following statement: "The modest Arab house, bringing us back to the concept of the Latin house with its life gathered around the courtyard, shows us a logical, economic and Mediterranean solution to the single dwelling house, very adapted to the climate of North Africa." Piccinato, "La casa in colonia. Il problema che si prospetta ai nostri architetti," *Domus* 101 (May 1936): 24.

⁸⁹ The second article begins with a proposal for urban housing in North Africa, which employs a generous loggia on the urban face derived from local constructions. It then offers two distinct typologies for East Africa, the first being a "bungalow" and the second a "villa tropicale." One of the basic elements of both of these typologies that responds to the extreme climatic problems of the tropical climate are the large overhangs which relate to both extreme heat and abundant rain. They both made use of verandahs to provide respite from the heat, a feature that Piccinato equated with the courtyard for North African houses. Although the living quarters of the "villa tropicale" were one level above the ground, the "bungalow" was designed with the main floor well above the ground. Piccinato, "La casa in colonia. Il problema che si prospetta ai nostri architetti," *Domus* 102 (June 1936): 12-17. This final essay examines a number of specific questions concerning building techniques and the design of elements like doors and windows. With both of these areas of concern, the principle adopted by Piccinato was to refine the use of local materials and vernacular elements through their knowledge of modern techniques, with the introduction of new materials and forms where necessary. Piccinato, "Un problema per l'Italia d'oggi, costruire in colonia," 7-10.

and building types lacks the depth and sophistication of Rava's rather detailed survey of the Libyan vernacular. Rava examined the local architecture of the Libyan colonies according to a historical scheme in which Roman, African and Mediterranean influences interacted. By contrast, Piccinato violates the geographic specificity of his vernacular examples by using them as "typical" solutions to specific problems confronted in the colonial context. The vernacular was generalized and classified according to rational criterion of climate and construction, and directed toward practical ends. It was by means of this transgression of geography that the "villa tropicale" was connected to an abstract climatic category that allowed indigenous constructions from other parts of Africa and East Asia to be the basis for housing in East Africa.⁹⁰ [Figure 1.b-20] In the *mediterraneità* of Rava, this violation was more narrowly inscribed within the politics of Italian architectural discourse. By theorizing an imperialism of Latin influences, this Mediterranean category was a rhetorical gesture meant to reconfigure Italian Rationalism and a symbol for the central and important place of Italian architects in the history of modern architecture.

The continuities and discontinuities of Rava's "Panorama del Razionalismo" with the architectural discourse related to the new Italian Empire in East Africa are quite evident. The politics of planning in these colonies afforded little value to pre-existing urban structures, while the technical and typological solution to the problem

⁹⁰ Although there were some buildings constructed using wooden piles in East Africa, these buildings made use of stone infill and were not raised above the ground. The only indigenous constructions in Africa that were raised above the ground were related to coastal regions or major river basins, like the Zaire. The majority of these were in West Africa, in countries like Senegal, Liberia, Ivory Coast, and Nigeria. In East Africa, some similar structures could be found on the lake shores of Tanzania. The distinctive roof shapes of these buildings suggest East Asian countries like New Guinea and Indonesia. See: Susan Denyer, *African Traditional Architecture*. London: Heinemann, 1978; and Enrico Guidoni, *Primitive Architecture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1978). Contemporary research on indigenous buildings in East Africa by Italian scholars show that the most common approach was the so-called "tucul" hut, a round structure of stamped earth with a conical roof. See: Rigotti, Giorgio. *L'edilizia nell'Africa orientale italiana. La zona di Addis Abeba*. Torino: Editrice libreria italiana, 1939; and Cipriani, Lidio. *Abitazioni indigene dell'Africa orientale italiana* (Napoli: Edizioni della Mostra d'oltremare, 1940).

of housing by architects like Piccinato shared some of the premises of these earlier polemics about the appropriation of vernacular references. The survival of these ideas in the colonies in North Africa during this same period was also mixed, but in a different way, as two distinct interpretations of this position emerged. The first was closely tied to the *politica indigena* of Governor Italo Balbo, who was appointed to this position in January of 1934. Through the creation of a *Commissione edilizia* in February of that year, all aesthetic and technical matters relative to building activities in the Libyan colonies were put under the control of a single body.⁹¹ It was through this group that a program of restoration of Roman and Islamic historical monuments and construction of new public institutions was undertaken. The key protagonist in this initiative was Florestano Di Fausto, an architect who was already well known for his work on the regulatory plan and public buildings of the colony of Rhodes in the late 1920s.⁹² The Mediterranean architecture of Di Fausto was a form of

⁹¹ Balbo succeeded Pietro Badoglio as Governor of the two colonies of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica on January 1, 1934. It was not until April of 1935 that these two colonies were unified into Libya. This law was called Regio Decreto Legge, 3 December 1934, n. 2012, and was passed into law on April 11, 1935. The official name of the *Commissione edilizia* was the *Commissione superiore di consulenza per la tutela dell'estetica cittadina e del paesaggio della Colonia*. It was created by a Governatorial decree on February 21, and comprised of members from the colonial administration, the municipality, the technical office, the *Soprintendente ai monumenti e scavi*, and two consultants, the architect Florestano Di Fausto and the engineer Stefano Gatti Casazza. It was the responsibility of this commission to preside over, among other things, the execution of regulatory plan for the city of Tripoli prepared by Alpago-Novello, Cabiati and Ferrazza of 1931-33. For more information on the building activities in Libya under Balbo, see: G. Bucciante, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia." *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 1-17.

⁹² Although the continuing restoration of the Roman archeological sites at Leptis Magna, Sabratha, Cirene and Apollonia was under the direction of the "Soprintendente ai monumenti e scavi", the "Commissione edilizia" did supervise the restoration of the Arch of Marcus Aurelius in Tripoli and the reorganization of the adjacent buildings. With regard to the program of restoration and construction of buildings for the local populations, see: *L'Italie pour les populations islamiques del l'afrique italienne* (Roma: Soc. Ed. "Novissima", 1940). For a more detailed discussion of this issue, see also Part 3, section B. Although Di Fausto executed few works in Italy, he was well known through his projects as part of the *Ufficio Tecnico* of the *Ministero degli Affari Esteri* between 1922 and 1932. In this period he executed public works in many cities abroad, including Belgrade, Cairo, Algiers, Ankara and Tunis. His work in Rhodes began in 1923 for Governatore Lago, where he prepared the regulatory plan and was responsible for numerous public buildings, including the *Palazzo del Governo* (1926). After Alessandro Limongelli's death in 1932, Di Fausto assumed the post as *Consulente* for the *Municipio di*

ambientismo that attempted to absorb the characteristic forms and incorporate the building traditions of the local architecture. Although the range of his work in Libya was wide, including a number of public buildings that adapted urban metropolitan forms to the colonial environment, his most representative projects were a distillation of the Libyan vernacular. In some of the most direct examples of the adoption of local forms, like his proposal for the restructuring of the Suq al-Mushir in Tripoli of 1932, Di Fausto enters into an ambiguous territory between restoration and new construction – an approach that was largely dictated by the demands of the tourist economy.⁹³ [Figure 1.b-21]

The second re-interpretation of Rava's "Panorama del Razionalismo" was provided by Giovanni Pellegrini, a Milanese architect who relocated in Libya in the late 1920s to join the *Ufficio Opere Pubbliche della Tripolitania*. He became one of the most active architects in Libya during the Balbo Era, constructing numerous private villas, some urban housing projects and several agricultural town centers.⁹⁴ His most important contribution to this theoretical discourse was the publication of his "Manifesto dell'architettura coloniale" in *Rassegna di Architettura* in October of

Tripoli. For examples of his work, see: Michele Biancale, *Florestano Di Fausto* (Genève: Editions "Les Archives Internationales", 1932).

⁹³ Di Fausto published an essay, entitled "Visione mediterranea della mia architettura," where he asserts that in all of his projects in the Mediterranean region: "no stone was placed by me without filling myself with the spirit of the place, making it mine." This approach certainly seems to characterize his work, which always appropriates the regional tendencies in each location. Di Fausto, "Visione mediterranea della mia architettura," *Libia* I, 9 (December 1937): 16-18. One of Di Fausto's best known urban works are the *Palazzo INA-INPS* in Tripoli of 1938, his "restoration" projects included the restructuring of the area around the Arch of Marcus Aurelius in Tripoli of 1937 and the Suq al-Mushir project in Tripoli of 1935. He was also the architect of tourism in Libya, realizing the following projects: *Albergo-casinò "Uaddan"* and the *Albergo "del Mehari"* in Tripoli of 1935; the *Albergo "Rumia"* in Jefren of 1934; the *Albergo Nalut* of 1935; and the *Albergo "Ain el-Fras"* in Ghadames of 1935. For a more comprehensive discussion of the full range of his work, see Part 3, Section B and C.

⁹⁴ For a general outline of Pellegrini's career in Libya, see: Gian Paolo Consoli, "The Protagonists," *Rassegna* 51 (September 1992): 58-59. His projects were also published extensively in contemporary journals. For a collection of his urban projects and villas, see: "Alcune opere recenti dell'architetto Giovanni Pellegrini a Tripoli," *Rassegna di Architettura* X, 10 (October 1938): 415-26. His projects and proposals for agricultural town centers are collected in: Plinio Marconi, "L'architettura nella colonizzazione della Libia. Opere dell'Arch. Giovanni Pellegrini," *Architettura* XVIII, 12 (December 1939): 711-26.

1936. This essay extended the principles developed by Rava to the consideration of the design of colonial cities in North Africa. Pellegrini suggests the utilization of indigenous elements, such as porticoes, pergolas and ample vegetation in the design of streets, in order to deal with the demands of the climate. He also argued that the urban aesthetic of colonial cities should be related to the local vernacular, recommending that buildings be "modeled plastically" in order to attain the "effect of mass and polychromy."⁹⁵ A second aspect of this manifesto which linked it with the writings of Rava was its use of the Arab house as the basis for housing in the colonial context. Not unlike the contemporary arguments of Piccinato, this "vernacular" was instrumentalized as the basis of typological models and the source practical solutions. For Pellegrini, the appropriateness of the Arab house to the North African climate was primarily related to its central courtyard, which was enhanced through elements like loggias, galleries and vegetation. The aesthetic of the exterior of these houses was linked to the concealment of their interior and the consequent austerity of family life.⁹⁶

Pellegrini's "Manifesto" proposes the use of indigenous sources as the basis for a contemporary colonial architecture. In so doing he rejects either a "folklorism"

⁹⁵ This essay begins with a list of general principles for the design of colonial cities, outlining the problems of climate and suggesting an approach for the design of elements of this city, such as primary and secondary streets, public buildings, and housing. After a section which discusses the Arab house in some detail, he concludes this discussion with a summary of the aspects of the indigenous architecture that could apply to the city and the house. The following are the practical means provided for the resolution of climatic factors: "streets protected by porticoes and by vegetation if they have traffic; narrow with pergolas if they are of minor traffic in the housing districts." The following are the aesthetic consequences: "modeled plastically, cubist not metallic, effect of mass and polychromy." Pellegrini, "Manifesto dell'architettura coloniale," *Rassegna di Architettura* VIII, 10 (October 1936): 349-50.

⁹⁶ Of the Arab house, Pellegrini states: "it shows us, in action, the best architectural expedients and the best solution for the adaptation of the life of man to the geographical and climatic conditions." He lists the aspects of this house that could apply to the colonial house as follows. The climatic factors were: "internal courtyard with loggia, glazed, hanging, roof garden, airy galleries (rather than corridors), filters for light and air." The aesthetic results were: "exaltation of the portal, concealment of the interior of the house, sense of austerity of the family life, terraces with loggias in the facade and over the covering like a double roof." Pellegrini, "Manifesto dell'architettura coloniale," 349-50.

or "false imitations," arguing that "returning to tradition means to evolve it." Identifying climate as the fundamental determinant of architecture, he proposes a fusion of the examples provided by indigenous constructions with modern technical and aesthetic practices.⁹⁷ Although on the surface this would appear to be same theoretical position that Rava had offered some five years earlier, there are some significant differences. In the latter's "Panorama del Razionalismo" the Libyan vernacular was subjected to a historical scheme that theorized its Latin and Mediterranean identity. In the "Manifesto dell'architettura coloniale" of Pellegrini, which was accompanied by an extensive series of photographs, this vernacular was not subordinated to scholarly categorization. These constructions were "selected", according to a modern technical and visual sensibility, as solutions to the problem of climate and the basis for a contemporary aesthetic.⁹⁸ [Figure 1.b-22 & 23] This approach is evidenced in projects like Pellegrini's *Villa Salvi* in Tripoli of 1934, which he designed and executed with the engineer Vittorio Agujari. In this project, the massing of the indigenous constructions in the oasis of Tripoli and their characteristic shading devices were fundamentally transformed into an explicitly modern work. This modernity was later recognized in the publication of this project

⁹⁷ The larger context of this first statement is as follows: "it seems unnecessary to me to specify that returning to tradition means to evolve it and that from what was said is absolutely excluded the so-called folklorism and the false imitations believed traditional." With regard to the relationship between the modern and the indigenous, Pellegrini notes: "all of the solutions that the practice of the indigenous constructions demonstrate as effective (houses with a central courtyard, solid walls, narrow streets) should be utilized, resolutely fusing them with everything that modern technique teaches, and the modern aesthetic shows." *Ibid.*, 349.

⁹⁸ The "Manifesto" was followed by a series of fifty-one photographs, twenty-nine of which were taken by Pellegrini. The remaining photos were the kind produced by local studios for tourist consumption. Each image was accompanied by both a title and brief commentary. This text provided a literal identification or a general geographic location, along with a description of its particular applicability to the task of creating a contemporary architecture. The title for image 1.b-20 is: "A street in Zliten, a covered stretch. The practical and aesthetic result is notable." The title for image 1.b-21 is: "An isolated house, with complex plan, with low entrance building (on first floor). Private courtyard with loggia overlooking it, like in a modern villa." *Ibid.*, 355, 357.

in Alberto Sartoris' *Gli elementi dell'architettura funzionale*, a book which provided a panorama of modern architecture throughout the world.⁹⁹ [Figure 1.b-24]

The *mediterraneità* of Rava had thus given way to two separate tendencies within colonial architectural discourse. The first of these was the "Visione mediterranea" of Florestano Di Fausto, which called for a direct incorporation of indigenous sources and led to an architecture that re-enacted these historical forms. The second, theorized by Pellegrini and Piccinato, instrumentalized this vernacular in relation to an already existing vocabulary of modern forms, creating an architecture determined almost exclusively by technical and climatic demands. The dialectical and contradictory nature of the Libyan vernacular as proposed by these original writings, in which various indigenous, Mediterranean and Latin influences interacted, was lost in favor of these two distinct and more singular readings. The theoretical trajectory that had been initiated by the *mediterraneità* of Rava had dissipated – a transformation that can be attributed to, among other things, the politics of Empire. Moreover, Rava's own position throughout this period also modified according to his changing relationship to the colonial context. In July of 1931, Maurizio Rava was appointed the Governatore of Somalia, and naturally his son's interests turned towards this East African colony.¹⁰⁰ Carlo Enrico Rava's most significant project

⁹⁹ The *Villa Salvi* was one of four projects of Pellegrini published in this book, the other three being the *Casa a Mare Zard* near Tripoli of 1933, the *Villa Putaggio* near Tripoli of 1938, and the *Casa per impiegati* at Homs of 1936. These projects appeared in the third edition of this book, which was published in 1941 under the subtitle "Sintesi panoramica dell'architettura moderna." This was a completely revised edition of this book, of some 950 pages, represented modern architecture in fifty-eight different countries. The countries represented were from Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Africa, North America and South America and Asia. Sartoris, *Gli elementi dell'architettura funzionale. Sintesi panoramica dell'architettura moderna. Terza edizione* (Milano: Ulrico Hoepli Editore, 1941).

¹⁰⁰ In July of 1935, Maurizio Rava left his post as *Vice-Governatore* of Tripolitania under Pietro Badoglio to take up the position as *Governatore* of Somalia, which he held until March of 1935. Savinio, *La Nazione Operante*, 90. It was through this post, and his father's connections to the Fiera di Tripoli that Carlo Enrico obtained the commission to do the *Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia* of 1934. He also made several proposals, including *Casa del Fascio a Vittorio d'Africa* and *Villino a Vittorio d'Africa*, both in Somalia, and constructed two works in this colony, the *Arco di Trionfo* for the visit of the King of Italy to Mogadishu and the *Albergo "Croce del Sud"* in Mogadishu, both of 1934.

was the *Albergo "Croce del Sud"* in Mogadishu of 1934, a design which extended his premises about a modern colonial architecture for the Libyan colonies, to encompass East Africa. [Figure 1.b-25] In its publication in *Architettura* magazine, this project was presented as: "a building of a clearly equatorial type, in which, from the very accentuation of the most often repeated colonial characteristics... the architect Rava gained completely modern effects."¹⁰¹

The transformation of this earlier architectural discourse by Rava can also be mapped out through his continuing intellectual production, much of which took place after the declaration of an Italian Empire in May of 1936. He was one of the few experts on colonial architecture and urbanism, and as such he continued to publish articles on this subject in numerous architectural and colonial journals. Rava also participated in a conference on colonial architecture within the *Congresso nazionale degli architetti italiani* held in Napoli in October of 1936 and presented a paper at the first *Congresso nazionale di urbanistica* in Rome in April of 1937.¹⁰² The most comprehensive of these efforts was a series of three essays that appeared in

¹⁰¹ See: Mario Paniconi, "Due lavori dell'arch. Rava a Mogadiscio." *Architettura* XIV, 1 (January 1934): 26-30. This article presents the *Albergo "Croce del Sud"* and the *Arco di Trionfo* for the visit of the King of Italy to Mogadishu. The larger context of this statement is as follows: "This hotel is a building of a clearly equatorial type, in which, from the very accentuation of the most often repeated colonial characteristics (continual verandah, running for almost all the perimeter of the construction, internal loggia completely developed around the whole patio, etc.) the architect Rava gained completely modern effects. This modernity is rendered most vivid by the white strip... of the parapet of the very verandah that forms a green band; and furthermore from various other elements of current sensibility." *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁰² The essays by Rava which address the question of a colonial architecture published after the founding of Empire were: Rava, "Problemi di architettura coloniale," *Rassegna Italiana* XIX, 216 (May 1936): 398-402; Rava, "Architettura coloniale. Una lettera di C.E. Rava," *Rassegna Italiana* XIX, 219-20 (August-September 1936): 680-82; Rava, "Costruire in Colonia I, II and III," *Domus* 104, 106, 109 (August, October 1936, January 1937): 8-9, 28-30, 23-27; Rava, "Architettura coloniale," *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana* I, 3-4 (December 1938): 1293-1300; Rava, "Attrezzatura coloniale," *Domus* 138 (June 1939): n.p.; and Rava, "Abitare e vivere in colonia," *Domus* 145 (January 1940): 21-23. With regard to the presentations made by Rava at these two conferences, see: Rava, "Politica edilizia coloniale," in *Problemi di architettura coloniale. In occasione del Congresso Nazionale degli Architetti Italiani - Napoli, ottobre 1936-XIV* (Napoli: Assoc. Cultori di Architettura del S.I.F.A della Lombardia, 1936), 24-30. Rava, "Alcuni punti di urbanistica coloniale," *Atti del primo congresso nazionale di urbanistica, Volume 1. Urbanistica coloniale*, 90-93.

Domus magazine beginning in August of 1936 under the title "Costruire in colonia." These articles were published in conjunction with those of Piccinato, with the intention of identifying the Italian colonies as a central issue within Italian architecture.¹⁰³ In these writings, Rava argues for the development of a "building politics" proper to the task of constructing in the Italian colonies in Africa. He also provides a comprehensive assessment of the recent building activity in these territories, and its representation and criticism in contemporary journals. He singles out for particular scorn the widely held opinion that the colonies in East Africa had no building traditions deserving of reinterpretation. Citing his own experiences in Somalia, Rava argued that not only did a "local artistic-decorative theme" exist, but there was an ancient architecture worthy of study. Affirming the principles of his earlier "Panorama," Rava called upon Italian architects to visit the colonies in order to better understand the demands of living in Africa, and ultimately "to deduce from the local constructions those lessons of adaptation to the climate that may then apply themselves, with the *italianità* of view and *modernità* of means, to the houses destined for the Europeans."¹⁰⁴

These essays also represent a rather large step toward embracing a politics of Empire. In attempting to deal with the rather immediate problem of constructing in

¹⁰³ The editors at *Domus* published a short note along with the first essay of Rava, stating: "*Domus* presented this problem again with the articles of Piccinato (May and June of this year). In them the theme of colonial housing was conceptually and technically posed. But a work of architectonic collaboration, active in those building directives that the Governo has assumed in the colonies, is incumbent on Italian architects. With this article of Rava, *Domus* intends to give a contribution to this general problem that may be defined as colonial "architectonic politics"." "Costruire in colonia, I," 8.

¹⁰⁴ In speaking about Somalia in the third essay, Rava states: "I assert and sustain that in Mogadishu, in Chisimaio, in Brava, and in a particular way in Merca, in fact jewels of Arab-Somali architecture, there exists not only a "local artistic decorative theme", but a very interesting ancient architecture, going back in some cases... reaching a refined and evolved aspect, and creating an environmental atmosphere, which... the very modern building of the new Somalia must take into account." Rava, "Costruire in colonia, III," 23. In the first article, Rava argues that: "the task is to a great extent new, virgin: it is a question of creating, on the basis of colonial demands, a modern and Italian architecture." He then proceeds to argue for the need for Italian architects to visit the colonies in order to learn from the local constructions. Rava, "Costruire in colonia, I," 8-9.

East Africa and the poor quality of projects coming from the local *Uffici tecnici*, Rava asserted that there was a need for greater control of the building process from Italy. This new "politica edilizia" could be accomplished through the creation of a *Consulente coloniale per l'architettura* – an advisory committee composed of architects experienced in the colonial context that would deliberate over all of the major problems of architecture and urbanism in the colonies. Rava argued that "only a unitary organization that frames each building activity of the colonies in a single total program... can guarantee those results that are legitimate to ask to be in all worthy of the glorious work of conquest."¹⁰⁵ This idea of a more unitary structure supervising the building process in Italy was not only aimed at creating more capable administrative structures. It was intended to lead to the formation of what was referred to as a "totalitarian concept of building in the colonies." This concept was "a truly Imperial affirmation" that, according to Rava, "will no longer only be a fusion of art and science, but the highest expression of the "Arte di Governo."¹⁰⁶

It would seem that in these essays of 1936, the *modernità* of the Mediterranean spirit of 1931, had finally given way to the political exigencies that Persico had detected beneath the surface of Italian Rationalism. Despite certain

¹⁰⁵ In the first article in this series, Rava criticized the work of the *Uffici tecnici*, which he felt were responsible for the majority of problems in the building process. These problems stemmed from the lack of ability of these individuals, who were often engineers or general contractors instead of architects. In order to resolve this situation he suggests the use of young Italian architects who could temporarily relocate in the colonies and more experienced "colonial" architects. This work would in turn be supervised by *Uffici Tecnici*. He also suggests the creation of a new hierarchy of supervision, a *Consulente Coloniale per l'architettura*, which would act to control this work and act as an intermediary between official *Sindacati* and the *Ministero delle Colonie*. *Ibid.*, p. 9. This idea is discussed in relation to specific situations in the colonies in the second essay, where this "unitary organization is described in relation to major public buildings and urban plans. Rava, "Costruire in colonia, II," 29-30.

¹⁰⁶ In beginning the third essay in this series, Rava speaks about his earlier writing "Politica edilizia coloniale", from the *Congresso nazionale degli architetti italiani* held in Napoli in October 1936. In this essay he notes: "that totalitarian concept of building in the colonies, that will only permit the realization a truly Imperial affirmation, considering an urbanism that will no longer only be a fusion of art and science, but the highest expression of the *Arte di Governo*, as the greatest factor of expansion of the conquering and healing civilization." Rava, "Costruire in colonia, III," 23.

continuities with the "Panorama del Razionalismo," such as a continued interest in a close reading of the local architecture, these essays represent their own "Svolta pericolosa." The final step in this descent can be found in the discussion of the public image of the Italian authorities in the colonies in Africa, which Rava felt to be inadequate to the stature of the new Empire. He argued that "the question of the dignity and prestige of the race" was of the highest order, "and each building aspect must carry its imprint." The colonial context had thus become the pretext for themes that would only fully emerge some two years later in "Architettura di razza italiana," where the racial purity of Italian architecture became a symbol for the campaign for the "difesa della razza italiana."¹⁰⁷ What in 1931 had been an assertion of the independence of Italian Rationalism in the face of European tendencies, by 1936 had become a call, not unlike that of Bardi, for a more uniform architecture as an *Arte di Stato*. However, this uniformity was neither the product of "the perfect correspondence between the structure of the building and the purposes it serves" nor the Latin spirit of the Libyan vernacular.¹⁰⁸ The *mediterraneità* of Italian colonial architecture was no longer a form of architectural imperialism aimed at claiming a national identity for Italian Rationalism. It was an intellectual justification for the creation of an Imperial identity that was merely the initial seed for the development of a politics of race.

¹⁰⁷ In discussing the issue of the public face of Italian authority in the colonies, Rava stated: "I repeat (as I also said about the housing for civil and military functionaries and employees, in which it seems may have begun in a few areas of the Empire) that in this branch of architecture more than in any other, the question of the dignity and prestige of the race is placed above all others, and each building aspect must carry its imprint." *Ibid.*, 27. As noted in the previous section, the "provvedimenti per la difesa della razza italiana" were proposed on November 17, 1938 and passed on the 25th. Rava's essay of January 1939 was a clear attempt to situate himself in relation to this racial discourse. It is interesting to note that the Italian colonies in general and the declaration of Empire in 1936 in specific provided the pretext for the development of a politics of race.

¹⁰⁸ Gruppo 7, "Architettura," 852.

Part 2. Italian Colonial Architecture and Representation

The representation of the Italian colonies in North Africa in exhibitions and fairs in Italy and abroad in the 1920s and 30s was merely one part of a broader propaganda effort by the Italian government – an endeavor that was aimed at both creating a greater knowledge of these possessions within Italy and asserting its image as a major colonial power on the world stage. These other activities – often undertaken with the participation of groups of colonial enthusiasts like the *Istituto Coloniale Italiano* – included the support of scientific, statistical and historical research, the organization of academic conferences, and the publication of numerous books and periodicals reporting on the Italian colonies.¹ Seen in this more general context, these exhibitions – which put the accomplishments of Italian colonization on display – were a carefully measured political gesture that responded to the lack of knowledge and interest of Italian society in its colonies in Africa. The intention of the Italian authorities was to create support for its activities in these territories by constructing a more profound colonial consciousness – an understanding that would effectively disarm preconceptions that Italy's Libyan colonies were merely a

¹ Although Italy's history as a modern colonizing nation began with the claiming of Eritrea in 1890 and Somalia in 1905, it was not until a year after the initial conquest of the North African colonies of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in 1911 that the Italian government created the Ministero delle Colonie (1912) and that Italy's participation in colonial exhibitions and its propaganda efforts related to its colonies was coordinated by a centralized authority. Three major academic conferences – the *Congressi di Studi Coloniali* – were sponsored by the *Ministero* in Florence (1931), Naples (1934), and Florence and Rome (1937). See: *Atti del Primo Congresso di studi coloniali. Firenze, 8-12 April 1931. Vol III*; *Atti del Secondo Congresso di studi coloniali. Napoli, 1-5 October 1934. Vol IV*; and *Atti del Terzo Congresso di studi coloniali. Firenze-Roma, 12-17 April 1937. Vol. VI*. The publishing activities of the *Ministero*, which will be discussed in further detail later in this section, included the publication of the scientific research which they sponsored, like Emilio Scarin's *L'Insediamento umano nella Libia occidentale* of 1940, the editing of colonial journals like *Rivista delle Colonie* (1927-42) and *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana* (1938-43) and even weekly newspapers like *L'Azione Coloniale*. For a more comprehensive discussion of the research and publication activities of the Ministero delle Colonie, see: "La ricognizione scientifica," *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana* II, 1 (March 1940): 931-76.

"scatolone di sabbia."² However, the political dimension of these exhibitions was not solely intended to create popular support within Italy, as these presentations were also aimed at other colonizing nations like Britain and France. In this broader European context, these exhibitions can be understood as both a metaphorical compensation for the sense of inferiority which Italy, as the most recent colonizing nation, carried into the colonial enterprise and a rhetorical expression of the expansionist political propaganda concerning Italy's colonial destiny in Africa articulated by the Fascist authorities.³

The Italian participation in fairs and exhibitions was also closely tied to the process of modernization of its colonial possessions – a development that was viewed as an extension of the economic system of metropolitan society into the colonial context and, in the case of Italy's Libyan colonies, part of a broader strategy for improving Italy's relationship with the Muslim world.⁴ The Italian colonies were thus represented through displays that illustrated the accomplishments of private and government sponsored companies that were active in the utilization of natural resources and the organization of local industries. Although the true viability of

² Claudio Segrè notes that it was the lament of groups of colonial enthusiasts like the Istituto Coloniale Italiano that "the nation had never developed a genuine *coscienza coloniale*" (colonial consciousness). Segrè, *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya*, 3. With regard to the criticism of Italy's colonial activities, John Wright states that many in Italy were critical of the attempts to reconquer Libya under Conte Giuseppe Volpi (1921-25), referring to this territory as a "scatolone di sabbia" or a big sandbox. Wright, *Libya*, 169.

³ Wright notes that with the loss of Tunisia to France in 1881, Italy joined in the "scramble" for Africa of the 1880s as a latecomer, most of this continent having already been claimed by Britain, France, Belgium, Germany and Spain. The result of this process was the claiming of Eritrea and Somalia as strategic outposts in Africa and the subsequent conquest of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. in 1911. Wright, *Libya*, 120-21.

⁴ Roberto Cantalupo, a former Nationalist and *Sottosegretario alle Colonie* from 1925-26, argues: "I believe in Libia as our most important political and economic colony. Thus, I believe in that which it will become and that which it will be able to produce – as the basis for the diffusion of the Italian prestige in the great lines of African communication, as tangible point of contact with the Muslim world, with which Italy still must maintain many and profound relations, and as terrain of important agricultural-industrial resources." Cantalupo, *L'Italia musulmana* (Roma: La Voce Anonima Editrice, 1928), 160. Although this represents merely one view of the Italian strategy of economic penetration of its colonies, like most colonial powers their efforts to create a viable economy were seen as a benevolent gesture that was to be gratefully embraced by the local populations.

these industries – and the colonial economy in general – can be questioned, these exhibitions conveyed the image of fecund territories that were being systematically developed according to metropolitan standards.⁵ Alongside these exhibits were presented the results of the substantial financial investment by the Italian government in the public works projects of these colonial possessions – projects that included the creation of new road networks, the improvement of water and sanitary systems and the construction of public institutions. While the political dimension of these exhibitions cannot be discounted – nor their role as propaganda for Italy's colonization efforts – they were more than just visual presentations intended to encourage further economic development. They were a literal marketplace in which the products of Italy's colonial possessions were both put on display and sold.⁶

One of the most significant aspects of the Italian involvement in fairs and exhibitions in Italy and abroad was that they were an important vehicle through which the indigenous culture of its colonial territories was presented to a metropolitan audience. This culture was conveyed in both the content of these exhibits – which included ethnographic studies of the local populations and the display of their indigenous craft productions – and their means of presentation – which comprised the design of the exterior of these pavilions and their internal organization and composition. The image of the indigenous populations was thus

⁵ The economy of Tripolitania was completely dependent upon the financial support of the central authorities in Rome, as is poignantly illustrated by Angelo Del Boca's discussion of the Governorship of Emilio De Bono (1925-28). Not only were any and all improvements to the public works of this colony paid for by the Italian government, this colony's industrial and agricultural development relied heavily on government subsidies. Del Boca describes this situation as one of De Bono being at the mercy of the Italian authorities. Del Boca, "Un quadrumviro in Africa," in *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*. 77-133.

⁶ Although a significant amount of the representation of the Italian colonies in exhibitions and fairs was dedicated to displays that were solely aimed at the political dimension of these territories, the economic and commercial aspect was equally important. Moreover, virtually all of these exhibitions contained some form of direct sale of goods – something that often literally took on the form of the characteristic market places found in these colonies. For a good general description of these exhibitions and their content, see: Salvatore Bono, "Esposizioni coloniali italiane. Ipotesi e contributo per un censimento," in *L'Africa in Vetrina. Storie di musei e di esposizioni coloniali in Italia*, ed. Nicola Labanca (Paese: Pagus Edizioni, 1992), 17-35.

presented according to the scientific discourses that studied these regions and in relation to the institutional practices established by the contemporary colonial museum.⁷ From a stylistic point of view these pavilions were hybrids of the indigenous architecture found in Italy's colonies and the constructional conventions of exhibition design – invoking a complex negotiation between the indigenous and the metropolitan. The representation of local culture in these exhibitions was not merely an artful organization of a pre-existing content according to an oppressive political program. The identity of the indigenous Libyan populations was simultaneously being constructed by the norms of anthropology and ethnography and the politics of Italian colonialism, just as their indigenous craft production was being subjected to a substantial redefinition by the Fascist authorities.⁸ These exhibitions can thus be understood as more than a means of representation. They were also a manifestation of the direct manipulation and control of "the native."

The complex interaction between the political, economic and representational discourses will be studied through a historical examination of the Italian participation in colonial exhibitions in Italy and abroad from the 1910s to the 1930s – an activity

⁷ In reporting on the *Mostra coloniale* in Turin of 1928, Umberto Giglio, who was then curator of the *Museo Coloniale* in Rome, stated that this exhibition was "a reconstruction and a representation of architectonic, ethnographic, naturalistic, economic and geographic elements which one would only be able to obtain through a substantial research through many and diverse publications." Giglio, "La Mostra coloniale di Torino," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* III, 1 (January 1929): 81. This statement underscores the close connection between these exhibitions and contemporary anthropological and ethnographic research into the local populations.

⁸ These exhibitions took place at the same time as researchers in the fields of anthropology and ethnography were determining the normative understanding of the local populations. The content of any ethnographic display was pre-determined according to a scientific discipline that was obliged to reinforce the politics of Italian colonial rule – which asserted the relative level of progress of the various populations as an important foundation of its policies. See Vinigi Grottanelli, "La ricerca etnologica nel periodo coloniale. Una testimonianza e una riflessione," *Storia contemporanea* XVI, 5-6 (December 1985): 1133-52. For a comparative example, see: Zeynep Çelik and Leila Kinney, "Ethnography and Exhibitionism at the Expositions Universelles," *Assemblage* 13 (December 1990): 35-59. With regard to the indigenous craft production in Italy's Libyan colonies, the local authorities created a *Scuola musulmana di mestieri ed arti indigene* in which the local populations were trained according to the determination of Italian experts of which crafts were more "authentic." See Guglielmo Quadrotta, "Appunti sull'Artigianato Libico," *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*. 6-8, 16-24.

that was primarily directed by the *Ufficio Studi* of the *Ministero delle Colonie*.⁹ From the *Mostra coloniale* at the *Esposizione internazionale* in Turin of 1911 to the Italian participation at the International fair in Vienna of 1938, these exhibitions trace the changing relationship between aesthetic practices and colonial politics. One of the most important illustrations for this discussion is the *Padiglione dell'Italia* by Armando Brasini at the *Exposition coloniale internationale* in Paris of 1931 – a project that contextualizes the efforts of Italy in relation to those of the other colonizing nations. In addition to this specific context – which is both international and colonial – the depiction of the Italian colonies in regional trade fairs will also be studied. The *Padiglione delle colonie* at the *Fiera di Milano* of 1928 by Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava will be a crucial example. It will allow for the examination of colonial displays in relation to those found within metropolitan Italy – a discussion that will situate colonial representation within modern aesthetic and technical practices.

Throughout this investigation, the representation of indigenous culture will be of particular interest – a discussion that will focus upon the question of how it was appropriated and reconfigured under the aegis of Italian colonial politics. These arguments will interrogate the imbrication of representational conventions within these exhibitions and the broader discourses within the fields of art and architecture, and those established by the scientific study of this region and the institutional practices of the colonial museum. Equally crucial will be the issue of the audience for

⁹ This *Ministero delle Colonie*, through its various transformations and developments, was directly responsible for Italy's participation in colonial fairs and exhibitions, these activities beginning with the *Mostra Coloniale* in Genoa in 1914 and continued through the 1920s and 30s in the *Mostra Coloniale* in Turin (1928) and various annual fairs in cities like Milan and Naples and international colonial exhibitions in Lausanne (1925), Antwerp (1930) and Paris (1931). The *Ufficio Studi* of the *Ministero*, instituted in 1926, was also involved in supporting scientific and historical research and collecting statistical information on Italy's colonies. For a general outline of the activities of the *Ufficio Studi*, see Francesco Valori, "L'attività dell'Ufficio studi del Ministero dell'Africa Italiana," *Africa Italiana* III, 6 (April 1941): 5-6. For a more detailed discussion, see: "La ricognizione scientifica," *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana* II, 1 (March 1940): 932-72.

these colonial displays – a concern that will be of particular importance when examining the *Fiera di Tripoli*, an annual trade fair that was held in this colonial city from 1927-1939. The displays of the Fiera were part of a complex chain of interaction between colonizer and colonized in a context that was both regional and international. The discussion of this exhibition – which will take up the final section of this discussion – will focus on the changing rhetoric of the politics of colonial representation. This relationship will be traced through two important projects from the *Fiera di Tripoli*, the *Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia* of 1934 by Rava and Larco and the *Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale* by Pietro Lombardi of 1936. This examination will highlight the unique aspects of the Italian approach to colonial fairs and exhibitions. In comparison to what has been described as a clear hierarchy between metropolitan and colonial representations in the Paris Exposition of 1931, the *Fiera di Tripoli* offers a more complex appropriation of indigenous forms.¹⁰ In this annual exhibition, the modern and the indigenous, the metropolitan and the colonial were free floating signs that were strategically deployed in the service of a politics of incorporation.

¹⁰ In her Ph.D. dissertation on the Paris Exposition of 1931, Patricia Morton argues that a strict segregation was maintained between the metropolitan pavilions – which employed a contemporary, Art Deco vocabulary – and the colonial pavilions – which were designed using primitive and native forms. See Morton, *The civilizing mission of architecture: the 1931 International Colonial Exposition in Paris* (Ph. D Thesis, Princeton University, 1994). See also Morton, "National and Colonial: The Musée des Colonies at the Colonial Exposition, Paris, 1931," *The Art Bulletin* LXXX, 2 (June 1998): 357-77. See also her recent book: Morton, *Hybrid Modernities. Architecture and Representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000).

A. Italian Colonial Exhibitions and the Representation of Local Culture

From the soft dim light of the evocative Florentine marbles, and of the suggestive terra-cotta of Signa in harmonious rhythm of calm and equal beauty like a slow resurrection from centuries of lines and forms, lessened by distance, softened and veiled by time, a little worn-out, a little wilted in the contents of their soul from keeping watch for eternity – the sudden crowd of things and colors in the pavilions of the Mostra Coloniale strikes like an uproar, an unexpected unrestrained claim of annual life, a little savage, of manifold reality, without the refined deception of an old equalizing civilization that molds but does not create.

Paulo Revelli. "La Mostra coloniale di Genova," *Emporium* 1914.¹¹

The main Italian pavilion is first of all surprising: it appears not very colonial... Then, when one takes into account that it is one of the most beautiful Italian colonial monuments, it stands out immediately. It is, in fact, the reproduction of the basilica of Leptis Magna, that the emperor Septimius Severus, in the second century, erected within the walls of his palace, in the center of the African city where he was born. So, the monument is inspired by the architectural thought of Rome, just as the glory of the Empire shone with the greatest splendor on the African continent. It is necessary to believe, moreover, that this continent was, at the time, more green than today and that the very Sahara had pastures and springs, about which there remains but the memory in the old Arab authors.

A. Demaison, *Exposition coloniale internationale. Guide officiel*, 1931.¹²

¹¹ The original quotation is as follows: "Dalla penombra delicata dei marmi fiorentini evocatori, delle terrecotte suggestive di Signa in armonioso ritmo di bellezza pacato e uguale come una lenta resurrezione dai secoli di linee e forme, rimpicciolite dalla lontananza, ammorbidite e velate dal tempo, un po' consunte, un po' intristite dal loro contenuto d'anima da vigilare per l'eternità - percuote come un frastuono l'affollarsi improvviso di cose e di colori nei padiglioni della Mostra Coloniale, inaspettata rivendicazione prorompente di vita attuale, di realtà multiforme un po' selvaggia, senza i raffinati inganni di una vecchia civiltà uguagliatrice che modella ma non crea." Revelli, "La Mostra coloniale di Genova," *Emporium* XL, 235 (July 1914): 39.

¹² The original quotation is as follows: "Le pavilion principal de l'Italie surprend tout d'abord: il paraît si peu colonial... Puis, il s'impose tout de suite, quand on se rend compte qu'il est un des plus beaux monuments coloniaux italiens. Il est, en effet, la reproduction de la basilique de Leptis Magna, que l'empereur Septime-Sévère, au II^e siècle, avait fait ériger dans l'encinte de son palais, au centre de cette ville d'Afrique où il était né. Le monument s'inspire donc de la pensée architecturale de Rome, au moment où la gloire de l'Empire brillait avec le plus d'éclat sur le continent africain. Il faut croire, d'ailleurs, que ce continent était, à l'époque, plus verdoyant qu'aujourd'hui, et que le Sahara même avait des pâturages et des sources, dont il ne reste que le souvenir dans les vieux auteurs arabes. Demaison, *Exposition coloniale internationale. Guide officiel* (Paris: Editions Mayeux, 1931), 129.

The first exhibitions that represented the Italian colonies in Africa began soon after the conquest of Eritrea in 1890, and were organized by the *Direzione Centrale degli Affari Coloniali* of the *Ministero degli Affari Esteri*. A series of five such events were arranged by this department of the Italian government until the creation of the *Ministero delle Colonie* in 1912 – which then took over these activities.¹³ The first major event in this stage of development of colonial exhibitions was the participation of the Italian colonies of Eritrea and Somalia at the *Esposizione internazionale* in Turin of 1911. This exhibition was organized to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Risorgimento, and attempted to display the industrial and artistic progress that had been attained since 1861 – representing Italy against the backdrop of other European powers like England, France and Germany.¹⁴ Located in a complex of elaborately decorated neo-classical buildings that contained the industrial and agricultural products of the modern Italian state, the colonies in Africa were presented as one of the most significant accomplishments of unification through an extensive display of the economic, political and cultural dimensions of the colonization efforts. [Figure 2.a-1]

In a manner that was typical to the early Italian colonial exhibitions, the *Mostra coloniale* at the *Esposizione* in Turin freely combined a variety of displays within a neutral spatial container. The photographs of this exhibition show an eclectic collection of objects – including photographs, maps, animal hides, books,

¹³ The first colonial exhibitions were held in Milan and Genoa in 1895 and then in Ravenna in 1904 and Florence in 1906. All of these exhibitions were organized by the *Ministero degli Affari Esteri* and although Somalia became a colony in 1905, they only presented the colony of Eritrea. For a fairly complete listing of these exhibitions, see: "Sommario. L'Azione culturale esplicate mediante mostre, esposizioni, musei." ASMAE-MAI.3-40. Fascicolo 1.

¹⁴ In the guide book to this exhibition, published by the Touring Club Italiano, this event was called "a solemn review of everything that the study and work of these fifty years has produced in the field of art, industry and social economy." There were total of twenty different nations represented, which were as follows: Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, England, France and its colonies, Germany, Hungary, Latin America (Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela), the Netherlands, Persia, Russia, Serbia, Siam, Switzerland, Turkey, United States. See Commissione esecutiva dell'Esposizione di Torino 1911, Touring Club Italiano, *Torino Esposizione 1911* (Milano: Capriolo & Massimo, 1911).

indigenous weaponry and the products of local agricultural and artisanal industries – all of which seem randomly arranged on the wall surfaces and within the space of a minimally decorated industrial warehouse. Not only does this chaotic *mélange* reflect the aesthetic of excess and clutter that characterized many museums and exhibitions around the turn of the century, it proffers a heterogeneous space in which the various display conventions that were prevalent in exhibitions and museums could be strategically deployed. One example that demonstrates this approach to display is the *Mostra bibliografica* – a small reading room lined with books and photographs that was intended to resemble the library of a private collector.¹⁵ This intimate space was located directly adjacent to the main exhibition area in which cabinets like those found in natural history museums were combined with displays of local industries and ethnographic material presented like the spoils of battle.

The mingling of patriotism, commerce, private connoisseurship and scientific curiosity in these displays is further enhanced by the presence of *ascari*– or indigenous Eritrean troops – in their characteristic dress, standing as sentinels at the entrance to the *Mostra bibliografica*. [Figure 2.a-2] This display of indigenous people as trophies – reinforced by their status as military officers – creates a palpable sense of the subjugation of these territories under Italian colonial rule.¹⁶ This

¹⁵ Conceived as a means to educate the visitor on these colonies, the mission of the *Mostra bibliografica* was described as follows: "...to collect all of the publications that discussed colonial questions and our colonies of direct rule in a single and organic body, and to illustrate the collection with a bibliographic-biographic index." Ministero delle Colonie, *Le Mostre coloniali all'Esposizione internazionale di Torino del 1911. Relazione generale* (Roma: Tipografia nazionale di G. Bertero e C., 1913), 7-11. The photographs in this space included ethnographic descriptions of "Eritrean types" and documentary photographs of the current state of this colony. A second exhibit contained cartographic representations.

¹⁶ In his book *The Anthropology of World's Fairs*, Burton Benedict speaks about the display of people on colonial exhibitions, classifying them in the following categories: people as technicians, people as craftsmen, people as curiosities and freaks, people as trophies and people as specimens or scientific objects. In the discussion of people as trophies, the author states: "This appears to be the most ancient and possibly the most emotionally powerful use of the display of people... The conqueror displays the conquered... The powerlessness of the captive enhances the power and prestige of the captor." Benedict, *The Anthropology of World's Fairs. San Francisco's Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (London and Berkeley: Scolar Press, 1983), 43-5.

relationship of complete domination over the native body was more poignantly expressed in the so-called *Villaggio eritreo*, which was located just outside this pavilion along the banks of the Po river. [Figure 2.a-3] Through the construction of six round *tucul* huts and a Coptic church, the organizers of this exhibition created a setting in which the characteristic craft production of Eritrea could be demonstrated in an authentic environment.¹⁷ The indigenous populations of Italy's colonies were thus both the subject of ethnographic description within a conventional museological environment and objects of curiosity within a space of pure representation.

The *Mostra coloniale* in Turin created a space that was both private and public, and in which the museum, the marketplace, the library and the indigenous village mingled freely. This approach to colonial exhibitions eschewed any attempts at synthesis in favor of a heterogeneous play of signs. However, this quality was to some extent the product of the unresolved nature of these early exhibitions rather than forming what would later become a carefully conceived representational strategy. After 1912 these exhibitions were sponsored and organized by the newly formed *Ministero delle Colonie*. The autonomy of this government office from the more general consideration of Italy's foreign relations allowed for the development of a more coherent colonial politics – a transformation that was further facilitated by the rise to power of the Mussolini in 1922.¹⁸ The enhanced status of the colonies within

¹⁷ As was stated in the official guide of the *Mostra coloniale*, the *Villaggio eritreo* was intended to give an impression of the indigenous crafts of this colony that the inhabitants would carry out in the presence of the public. The inhabitants of the village were described as "the most strange mixture of different people." In fact there were only three men from Eritrea, three men from Abyssinia and a man and woman from the English Sudan. Ministero delle Colonie, *Le Mostre coloniali*, 46-7.

¹⁸ In an article "Storia e l'avvenire di un Ministero," Giuseppe Bottai – who would later become the *Ministro dell'Educazione Nazionale* and a key member of Mussolini's *Gran Consiglio del Fascismo* – argues that the creation of a coherent "politica coloniale" came with the Fascist regime. This colonial politics is one in which the colonies play a central and important role in the formation of the identity of the country. Bottai states: "Our principal field of action is the Mediterranean, where the Libyan coasts have for us a preeminent importance. We believe that

the political system of the Italian government and their more crucial symbolic role in a Mediterranean politics facilitated a greater commitment to propaganda efforts such as exhibitions. While the transformation of these activities according to a more coherent colonial politics was not immediate, the origins of this change can be traced to what was essentially a bureaucratic restructuring of the governing of the colonies within the national government.

The first exhibition undertaken by the *Ministero delle Colonie* was the *Mostra coloniale* at the *Esposizione di marina ed igiene marinara*, held in Genoa in 1914. As the final event of this kind prior to World War I, it was the culmination of the first phase of development of colonial exhibition in Italy – establishing a discourse that would continue to evolve during the interwar period. Organized to commemorate the thirteenth to sixteenth century colonial empire of this Ligurian city, this event made a parallel presentation of the contemporary activities in Italy's African colonies – a gesture that provided historical validation for the possession of these new territories and re-invigorated the memory of Genoa's importance as a Mediterranean power.¹⁹ The intention behind this exhibition, as stated in the published literature, was propagandistic – to "represent the current state of the economic and social conditions of our colonies to the Italian public, with particular regard for the civic progress completed by the Italian state in these same colonies."²⁰

Libya must constitute an element of active power of the Motherland and truly form its fourth shore." Bottai, "Storia e l'avvenire di un Ministero," *Gerarchia* II, 2 (February 1932): 769-77.

¹⁹ The general mission of this larger exhibition is noted in the journal *Rivista Coloniale*, in which it is stated that it would contain a presentation of the ancient Genoan colonies in the eastern seas and a display of Italy's colonies, including their initial exploration, their natural resources and agricultural products and current colonization efforts. See "La mostra coloniale a Genova nel 1914," *Rivista Coloniale* VIII, 1, 3 (15 February 1913): 99. As noted in an article published on the *Mostra coloniale*, this exhibition took place in a separate location from the other two main parts of this larger exhibition – the *Mostra della Marina* and the *Mostra delle antiche colonie genovesi*. The second of these exhibitions was located in the palazzo of the *Museo di storia naturale*. Revelli, "La Mostra coloniale genovese," 62.

²⁰ Ministero delle Colonie, *La Mostra coloniale di Genova, 1914* (Roma: Tipografia Nazionale di G. Bertero e C., 1914), 5. This publication of more than 500 pages provides both a general description of the organization of this exhibition and a detailed inventory (including photographs and a floor plan) of the various sections. A series of other books were also published by the

In other words, the purpose of the *Mostra coloniale* was to objectively communicate the value of these colonies to a metropolitan audience – a task whose importance was unquestionably linked to Italy's recent acquisition of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica and the uncertain political climate in the days preceding World War I. This event was also viewed as an economic vehicle through which Italy's African possessions could be linked in a more concrete way with the *madrepatria* – something that is quite evident in its content, which placed a great emphasis on the economic and commercial dimensions of these colonies.²¹

The *Mostra coloniale* in Genoa was located in a two story building whose exterior was an amalgam of a medieval castle and a Muslim religious monument – something that suggested Genoa's historical legacy and Italy's colonial present.²²

[Figure 2.a-4] Within this hybrid exhibition structure that gave a general suggestion of its contents, the colonial authorities of Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, Eritrea and Somalia created their individual displays. The organization of the exhibition within the

Ministero delle Colonie on topics related to commercial interests, public works projects and scientific research, including: *Gli Abitanti della Cirenaica: Studio etnico-antropologico*, *La Cirenaica ed i suoi servizi civili*, *Lavori del Genio Militare in Cirenaica*, *I Lavori del Genio Militare in Tripolitania*, *Notizie sui commerci della Somalia italiana e movimento commerciale*, *Le Opere pubbliche della Tripolitania e della Cirenaica*, *Rilievi in Libia ed in Somalia*, a cura dell'Istituto Geografico Militare, *Le Scuole italiane in Tripoli*, *I Servizi sanitari del municipio di Tripoli*, and *Le Truppe coloniali della Tripolitania*. All of these books were published in 1914 to coincide with the *Mostra coloniale*.

²¹ Salvatore Bono argues that there were two distinct affirmations in this exhibition, the first being of its propagandistic character and the second being its exhibition value – that is, its ability to affirm economic and commercial interests. Bono, "Esposizioni coloniali italiane. Ipotesi e contributo per un censimento," 19-20. This dimension is affirmed in the outline of the section on Tripolitania in the publication on this exhibition, which states that the program of this event is to "highlight the articles of major consumption for the indigenous populations and particularly those in which our national industries have still not been able to beat the foreign competition; not to mention to signal the products of the colonies that could possibly interest our industries or make them rise again, with the principal aim of activating and intensifying the currents of exchange between the Madre patria and the colonies." Ministero delle Colonie, *La Mostra coloniale di Genova*, 8.

²² Revelli refers to the building of the *Mostra coloniale* as the "turreted castle of the Knights of Rhodes." Revelli, "La Mostra coloniale genovese," 62. Although Genoa was never linked with this eastern Mediterranean island, the image of a medieval castle relates this building to the period of Genoa's naval empire. It is also quite apparent that the section of the building to the left of this main block in the photograph – containing the *Mostra militare coloniale* – was a loose re-enactment of a mosque, complete with minaret.

building allowed for the formulation of an identity for each colonial territory through the manipulation of a restricted vocabulary of elements. This effect can be seen in the plan of the exhibition where a rectangular arrangement of columns, walls and free-standing displays support a variety of spatial arrangements that afforded each colony an individual presence. The spaces within the highly articulated inner core of the plan are, in turn, linked up through a continuous display space that follows the perimeter of the building. This exterior wall is also an important part of this exhibition, as it was through the variable nature of this membrane that the exterior expression of the building was made manifest and the entrance and special display spaces were introduced. [Figure 2.a-5]

Within this general exhibition structure, the representation of each colonial territory was comprised of a combination of geographical, historical and ethnographic descriptions, the documentation of public works initiatives, and demonstrations of the agricultural and industrial potential of these territories.²³ While the range of material compiled for each colony was wide – including maps, photographs, industrial products, artisanal objects and ethnographic collections – the approach to their presentation was systematic – a combination of wall displays and a series of large vertical cabinets whose significance varied according to their content and arrangement. One example of this effect is the presentation of jewelry in the *Sezione agricoltura, industria e commercio* of the *Mostra della Tripolitania*, in which these museum cabinets take on the appearance of a series of commercial shopfronts. [Figure 2.a-6] These regional displays were supplemented by three

²³ The organization of the exhibition on Tripolitania was in three major sections, the first being Charity, Health and Education, the second Agriculture, Industry and Commerce and the third Ethnography. Two supplementary displays presented Public Works Projects and Archeological Research. These topics underscore the general emphasis of these exhibitions on the current conditions of these colonies, their economic and commercial promise and the customs and practices of the indigenous populations. Ministero delle Colonie, *La Mostra coloniale di Genova*, 8-9.

special exhibitions – one on the colonial military, a second on contemporary research on the colonies, and a third on the commercial activities of private companies.²⁴ It was in these special exhibitions that the most independent expression of the demands of the individual display were achieved – something that is particularly evident in the *Mostra militare coloniale*.

Although the remainder of the *Mostra coloniale* in Genoa represented the Italian colonies in Africa through the manipulation of a limited vocabulary of elements, these special exhibitions were more radical in their reconfiguration of these display systems.²⁵ The *Mostra militare coloniale* was located at the far end of the exhibition hall in a space that has the exterior appearance of a Muslim religious monument. The interior of this space refers more ambiguously to the indigenous architecture of Italy's colonies. The exotic vegetal motifs and geometric patterning on the white surfaces of this domed space set within a liberally glazed rectangular volume suggests a hybrid of an Orientalist interior and an industrial warehouse.²⁶ [Figure 2.a-7] In terms of content, the exhibition was comprised of a combination of graphic materials which lined the walls of this space – like photographs, drawings and paintings on the military operations in Libya – and free standing installations –

²⁴ The first of these exhibitions – the *Mostra militare coloniale* – concerned the military activities in Italy's colonies, with a particular focus on the recent operations in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica and the continuing occupation of these territories. The second special exhibition was the *Sezione studi coloniali* which – in a manner similar to the *Mostra bibliografica* in the exhibition in Turin – collected the products of recent research on Italy's colonies. The final exhibition was the *Sezione colonizzazione*, which represented the private companies active in trade with Italy's colonial possessions. Ibid., 425-509.

²⁵ The *Sezione studi coloniali* – which was located on the second storey of the main exhibition hall - had the appearance of a private reading room, with free standing partitions supporting glass cabinets lined with books and other publications. This exhibition also included maps and other cartographic representations of Italy's four colonies. The *Sezione colonizzazione* – also located on the second floor – was a series of individual displays of private companies, each of which had their independent expression. Ibid., 452-509.

²⁶ The exterior structure and its glazing give the space the ambiance of a warehouse, while the inner dome and supporting columns speak of an Orientalist interpretation of Islamic architecture. These observations are also applicable to the columns in this exhibition space, which combine exotic decorative motifs that suggest palm fronds with the appearance of prefabrication.

including mannequins of officers in full uniform.²⁷ The form and interior spatial arrangement of this exhibit had a specific symbolic meaning related to the vernacular architecture of the Italian colonies. The fact that this meaning seems to have little relationship to the material on display is an indication that a synthesis of the content of these exhibitions with their display was yet to be fully realized.

An equally significant aspect of the larger exhibition was its representation of indigenous culture – each colony having its individual *Sezione etnografica* containing a diverse array of material, including documentation of indigenous settlements, illustrations of local customs and practices, collections of artifacts and weaponry, and mannequins of "natives" in characteristic costume.²⁸ This material was organized according to the regions of each colony – an approach would have allowed the viewer of the exhibition to assemble a more synthetic impression of the character of each region out of an assortment of documentary material. This effect was enhanced by the means of presentation of this material within the exhibition – which employed a combination of large display cabinets and a variety of free-standing installations – and their spatial disposition – which allowed these disparate representations to interact. One such example is the *Sezione etnografica* of the *Mostra della Tripolitania* where a mannequin of an Arab soldier on horseback, models of indigenous constructions and the surrounding display cabinets openly

²⁷ The material exhibited in the *Mostra militare coloniale* included graphic material (including sketches, diagrams, photographs and paintings) describing the military operations during the conquest of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in 1911; panoramas and photographs of the current military installations in these colonies; drawings and photographs of the public works efforts of the *Genio militare*; and mannequins demonstrating the uniforms and weapons of the various military units in North Africa. Ibid., 425-51.

²⁸ In the publication on the *Mostra coloniale*, the *Sezione etnografica* for the *Mostra della Tripolitania* is described as follows: "This special Exhibition reproduces with various means, according to each case, the indigenous life of the colony through its most important manifestations, that is having regard for; a) the locality and indigenous constructions; b) the customs and practices; c) the types and figures; d) the weapons." The material presented under category a) included photographs and models; under category b) films, books and objects; under c) photographs and mannequins; and under d) objects. Ibid., 45-7.

converse with each other within the exhibition space.²⁹ [Figure 2.a-8] An even more comprehensive presentation of indigenous culture was provided in the *Sezione etnografica* of the *Mostra della Somalia italiana*, which among other things had a diorama of a Somalian village. [Figure 2.a-9]

The presentation of indigenous culture in the *Mostra coloniale* in Genoa sought to provide a synthetic experience for the viewer of the exhibition. Although a variety of techniques were used to re-enact the local culture of Italy's African colonies these diverse conceptual models were kept in balance through the claims of objectivity that permeate such colonial exhibitions. The extent to which the representation of this context was bound up with such assertions of neutrality is particularly evident in the publication of this event in the art magazine *Emporium*, where images and text referring to the exhibition only periodically interrupt an otherwise continuous description of the history, geography and culture of these territories.³⁰ Rather than objectivity, the architecture of this exhibition employs mimesis – a quality that is found in naive attempts to re-enact vernacular buildings and create new decorative patterns based on indigenous forms. The columns in the

²⁹ The *Sezione etnografica* of the *Mostra della Tripolitania* was organized into a series of display cases for eighteen different regions of this colony. These cabinets contained items of clothing, household objects and small handicrafts. Two other display cabinets contained jewelry and necklaces from each region. There were also a series of five mannequins reproducing both Arab and Jewish men and women in their characteristic dress, each of which were displayed as free-standing exhibits. A series of six models, constructed in wood and plaster, depicted characteristic building types like the *funduq* and the so-called *casa trogloditica*. Collections of indigenous weapons were also put on display. In addition to these materials, photographs and paintings depicted Roman and Arab historical monuments and scenes of characteristic local color. *Ibid.*, 45-116. It is interesting to note that a more artistic interpretation of these ethnographic studies was provided by a room of lithographs by Edoardo Ximenes.

³⁰ The text of this article – which reports on the *Mostra coloniale* – begins with an introduction to the exhibition through the author's direct experience and an encounter with an *ascari* from Eritrea and concludes with a brief description of the location of the other parts of the larger exhibition. In between this short introduction and conclusion is a detailed discussion of the history and culture of each of Italy's colonies. The only references to the exhibition were the photographs, which only periodically vary from images of the colony to show a space or display in the *Mostra coloniale*. Of the thirty-two photographs in this article, only seven show the actual exhibition or an individual display. Revelli, "La Mostra coloniale genovese," 39-62.

main exhibition space are a fusion of western conceptions of the column as a body with an abstract vegetal patterning that alludes to the form of a palm tree.³¹

The apparent neutrality of the representation of indigenous culture in the *Mostra coloniale* in Genoa is not merely a product of the relatively systematic nature of its display systems. This development is closely tied to an emerging relationship between the representation of Italian colonies in exhibitions and fairs during this period and the colonial museum – a connection that is quite literal, as the material collected for the 1911 and 1914 colonial exhibitions was the basis for the founding of the first colonial museum in Rome in 1923.³² The stated intentions behind the *Museo coloniale* – "to interest Italians in the colonies in order to bring them to a more reasoned and honest conception of them" – offers a comparable valuation of the objective presentation of colonies seen as a means to disarm preconceptions about their lack of economic value and cultural interest. The ordering of the material collected in this museum and that of the *Mostra coloniale* in Genoa was also quite similar. Both presented a variety of material that was organized according to each region.³³ [Figure 2.a-10] This connection can be extended to the means of

³¹ The base of the columns in the main exhibition space have a zigzag patterning that appears to be an abstraction of the trunks of palm trees, while the capital is a "native" head surrounded by palm fronds. In its references to vernacular buildings – such as in the exterior of the *Mostra militare coloniale* – the imitation of these forms seems to be in the tradition of Romanticism (or Orientalism) typical to world expositions, rather than that of either modern architecture or historic preservation.

³² The relation between the founding of the first *Museo coloniale* and the material collected in the exhibitions in Turin and Genoa is cited in numerous sources. The material collected for these events, which primarily came directly from the colonies, was retained by the *Ministero delle Colonie* in order to constitute the primary nucleus of a *Museo coloniale* in Rome. This was done despite requests from different municipalities and groups for some of this material. Between 1914 and 1923 this collection was in storage in various locations due to the outbreak of World War I and indecisiveness about the location of a permanent home. After an initial proposal to use the Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Via Nazionale and the Palazzo Chigi (location of the *Ministero delle Colonie*), it was transferred to the Palazzo della Consulta with the *Ministero* in 1923. See Guido Guida, "Il Museo dell'Impero d'Italia," *Rivista delle Colonie* XV, 9-10 (September-October 1941): 2221-38. See also Carlo Rossetti, "Origini del Museo dell'Africa Italiana," *Africa Italiana* III, 6 (April 1941): 13-16.

³³ For a good general discussion of the aims of the *Museo coloniale*, see Umberto Giglio, "Un centro di vita. Il Museo coloniale," *Rassegna Italiana del Mediterraneo* IV, 40 (May 1924): 179-83. This article contains a speech given by Luigi Federzoni, *Ministro delle Colonie*, at the

presentation within the *Museo coloniale*, which in a manner comparable to the Genoan exhibition, employed a combination of permanent glass cabinets, wall displays and free-standing exhibits to order a diverse array of material.

The relationship between the representation of the indigenous culture of Italy's colonies in exhibitions and fairs and the emerging institution of the colonial museum is one of the most important aspects of the exhibitions prior to World War I. The colonial exhibition and the museum of the colonies were concurrent developments that emerged out of the period following Italy's initial conquest of its African territories. Although the first colonial exhibitions preceded the founding of the *Museo coloniale*, the presentation techniques used in these exhibitions were already invested with the influence of contemporary museum practices.³⁴ They arose from similar motivations to educate the Italian public on the value of these colonies and were both influenced by a pre-existing academic and institutional framework that was increasingly responsible for the systematic study of these regions. The colonial exhibition and museum were preceded by the creation of the *Società Geografica Italiana* in 1867, the first Department of Anthropology and *Museo*

inauguration of this museum. A more lengthy excerpt of the statement quoted above is as follows: "The Colonial Museum represents a new attempt to interest Italians in the colonies in order to bring them to a more reasoned and honest conception of them, that will be equally far from childish illusions of sudden facile enrichments and from the senseless denigrations." (p. 180). See also "L'inaugurazione del Museo coloniale a Roma," *L'Illustrazione Italiana* L, 46 (18 November 1923): 640-41. This brief presentation affirms that this museum was intended to "make known the current production of our colonies". It also states quite clearly that it "as much as possible follows a regional criterion."

³⁴ Although the first colonial museum created as a separate institution was founded by the *Ministero delle Colonie* in Rome in 1923, there was a substantial collection of material by private societies and African sections were created in regional and national museums. These were the original repositories of material from Africa and preceded the initial conquest of Italy's colonies, as they were generated out of the period of exploration of Africa. Both the *Società Geografica Italiana* of Florence (1867) and *Società Africana d'Italia* of Naples (1880) had substantial collections of colonial material. With regard to museums, the following represents a preliminary list of the collections: *Sezione coloniale del Museo nazionale di antropologia ed etnologia*, Florence (1869), *Museo preistorico ed etnografico*, Rome (1875), *Museo zoologico eritreo Vittorio Bottego*, Parma (1892), *Erbario e museo coloniale dell'Istituto ed orto botanico*, Rome (1903), *Sezione della fauna delle colonie italiane al Museo civico di storia naturale "G. Doria"*, Genoa. See, Castelli, "Dal collezionismo etnografico al museo di propaganda. La parabola del Museo Coloniale in Italia," in *L'Africa in Vetrina*, 107-21. See also: "Sommaro: L'Azione culturale esplicata mediante mostre, esposizioni, musei." ASMAE-MAI.3-40. Fascicolo 1.

nazionale di antropologia ed etnologia of Florence in 1869, the *Museo preistorico ed etnografico* of Rome in 1875 and the *Società Africana d'Italia* of Naples in 1880.³⁵ These private societies, which were founded during the period of Italian exploration of Africa, provided the exhibition and the museum with a source for an almost spiritual devotion, just as the emerging academic fields of anthropology and ethnography and their related institutions gave them their allegedly scientific basis.³⁶

The relationship between the *Museo coloniale* and the *Mostra coloniale* was also material. The items collected for the colonial exhibitions in Turin and Genoa became the nucleus for the *Museo coloniale*. These new institutions were thus imbued with the same collector's urge that permeated Italy's relationship with Africa in the late 19th century and which led to an emphasis on the object.³⁷ Moreover, the techniques of presentation employed in these two institutions were closely related. They both purported to communicate the colonies to a metropolitan audience through a collection of photographs, geological samples, agricultural products, animal pelts, cultural artifacts, artisanry and weaponry – placing these objects on display using comparable representational conventions. The connection between the colonial exhibition and museum was also a conceptual one. According to the practices of anthropology and ethnography, they interpreted the object as a

³⁵ Castelli discusses the prior developments of the fields of anthropology and ethnography before the creation of the *Museo coloniale* – which began with the creation of a Department of Anthropology within the University in Florence and the contemporary creation of the *Museo nazionale di antropologia ed etnologia*. Castelli argues that these institutions emerged due to contemporary developments in other European nations and the activities of groups like the *Società geografica italiana*, which sponsored explorations of and research on Africa. These societies provided the material that filled most ethnographic museums, just as these more general museums were the precursor to the *Museo coloniale*. *Ibid.*, 108-12.

³⁶ For a general discussion of the intersection of anthropology and museum culture, see: James Clifford, "On collecting and culture," in *The Predicament of Culture. Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 215-51.

³⁷ Castelli describes the relationship between the collection of ethnographic material and the creation of institutions presenting and studying this material as follows: "The twenty year period between 1850 and 1870 is that of the success of geographic explorers. The accumulation of material from outside of Europe imposed the foundation of new museums and the expansion of pre-existing ones. Contemporaneously anthropological studies underwent a determined impulse and new Departments of Anthropology were created in the various European capitals." *Ibid.*, 109.

repository of cultural value through which an accurate understanding of a given culture could be attained.³⁸ These scientific disciplines can also be seen in the tendency for objective modes of representation – like the documentary photograph and the glass display cabinet – which kept the viewer of the exhibition at arm's length.

The *Museo coloniale* and its related representational discourse was not the only reference point for the appropriation of the indigenous culture of Italy's colonies in exhibitions and fairs prior to World War I. While the colonial museum and its related practices were closely linked to the material exhibited and their means of presentation, it had scant influence on the architecture of these exhibition buildings. It was through the national representation in foreign pavilions at World Expositions – an approach that began as early as 1867 in the Universal Exposition in Paris – that the architecture of the pavilion had become a demonstration of cultural difference.³⁹ These events – as virtual encyclopedias of world culture – were an important testing ground for the expression of national identity through architecture. They were also a benign setting through which a knowledge of foreign cultures was communicated. The presumed organic relationship between these pavilions and the cultures they contained made them an exhibit in themselves – an effect that has been

³⁸ Castelli notes that there is a distinction between the attitude toward the collection of objects from non-European countries developing in the 19th century and that practiced in collections from the 18th century. In this 19th century context, the object "assumes the character of scientific testimony." Castelli goes on to argue "there was an insistence on the part of the Museum curators, of the necessity of documenting the function and provenance of the objects. They were no longer a pure source of wonder, tangible illustration of men connected with an unknown region of the world, but products of a human society remaining at a primitive level of development and for many comparable to pre-historic societies." *Ibid.*, 108-9.

³⁹ In an article on the architecture of World's Fairs, Edward Kaufman argues that although the 1867 exhibition was not the first to represent architecture, it was the first to have a large number of foreign pavilions, including Austria, Egypt, Great Britain, Holland, Morocco and Tunisia. He goes on to argue that it was the pavilions of third world countries that held the greatest fascination due to the fact that they "maintained traditional cultures untouched by modern Europe's inexorable march of progress." As such, he states "the architecture of the pavilions articulated this cultural difference quite clearly; they represented foreignness, ethnicity, difference." Kaufman, "The Architectural Museum from the World's Fair to Restoration Village," *Assemblage* 9 (June 1989): 21-39.

described by Timothy Mitchell as rendering "the world as exhibition."⁴⁰ The precise nature of these representations varied widely in these events – from literal re-enactments of indigenous forms often found in "native" villages and non-western pavilions, to more synthetic appropriations of these local references in the self-representations of colonial powers – like the Tunisian palace of the *Exposition universelle* in Paris of 1889.⁴¹ [Figure 2.a-11]

The contemporary dialogue on the appropriation of indigenous culture by architects building in Italy's colonies was also influential on the architecture of colonial pavilions in exhibitions and fairs. The projects constructed in Italy's colonies prior to World War I struggled with similar demands to relate to their geographic and cultural context while continuing to assert their colonial status.⁴² The connection between this architectural discourse and the design of colonial exhibitions was

⁴⁰ In an article entitled "The World as Exhibition," Timothy Mitchell speaks of the developments within World Expositions in relation to a larger phenomenon of display and spectatorship in the 19th century. The more general tendency to order the world as objects that communicate a specific message to a viewing subject were thus seen as a system of signification that had been developed in exhibitions. Mitchell argues that this was particularly true for the relationship difference in "objective" form." With regard to exhibitions, Mitchell speaks of the "reality-effect" of exhibitions, which he describes as "a world rendered up to the individual, according to the way in which, and to the extent to which, it could be set up before him or her as an exhibit: as mere objects recalling a meaning or reality beyond." It is this reality effect which was, for Mitchell, the basis of understanding the world as exhibition. Mitchell, "The World as Exhibition," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31 (April 1989): 217-36. See also: Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

⁴¹ In her book *Displaying the Orient*, Zeynep Çelik refers to these two approaches as follows: "The architects of exposition pavilions based their designs on one of two theoretical positions: rationalist and intuitionist. Although contradictory, both were deemed Islamic in essence. Rationalists looked for scientific rules of composition... intuitionists relied on feelings and fantasy as sources of inspiration." Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*. 137. With regard to the Tunisian palace in the 1889 exhibition, Çelik notes that this project follows what had already been established as a tradition in such colonial representations - "the incorporation of various motifs from various monuments of Tunis." *Ibid.*, 131.

⁴² Giuliano Gresleri, in speaking about the approach to architecture in Italy's colonies, argues: "the formal choices, the use of languages opportunely restated for various occasions, the research of a specific locale, often even a certain will to adhere to the 'spirit of the place', were all linked with intentions that pursued meanings and values of an architecture that in any case obeyed the improbable program of being "Italian," "Mediterranean," "classical," when not "imperial" and "autarchic" at the same time." Gresleri, "L'architettura dell'Italia d'oltremare: Realtà, finzione, immaginario," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 23.

particularly direct in the late 1920s and early 1930s, when architects active in the colonies, like Armando Brasini and Carlo Enrico Rava, were also responsible for the design of colonial pavilions.⁴³ In early colonial exhibitions, this relationship was rather more distant. The pavilion that contained the *Mostra coloniale* in Turin in 1911 was clothed in a contemporary neo-classicism with no reference to the colonial context. A more conscious effort to relate to the vernacular architecture of the colonies was made with the *Mostra militare coloniale* at the *Mostra coloniale* in Genoa. The highly processed reinterpretation of these "native" forms found in this project is strikingly similar to that used in a design for a mosque in Cyrene from 1911. [Figure 2.a-12] The indigenous forms of Italy's colonies were, in this case, being viewed through the same orientalizing and medievalizing lens that characterized the architecture of this early period of colonization in North Africa.

The colonial pavilions in fairs and exhibitions after World War I were distinguished by similar attempts to represent the vernacular forms of Italy's colonial territories. This discourse took place during a period of intense activity on the part of the *Ministero delle Colonie* which – particularly after the rise of the Fascist regime – benefited from a number of government regulations that encouraged the organization of fairs and exhibitions.⁴⁴ In part due to these initiatives, the Italian colonies were represented in many such events – the most prominent of those held in Italy being the *Mostra coloniale* in Turin in 1928 and the *Mostra triennale delle*

⁴³ Brasini was responsible for the design of the *Padiglione dell'Italia* at the *Exposition coloniale internationale* in Paris in 1931, while Rava and Larco designed the colonial pavilion at the *Fiera di Milano* of 1928 and the *Padiglione Eritrea-Somalia* from the *Fiera di Tripoli* of 1934. These architects works in Libya were also significant in defining the discourse on a colonial architecture during this period.

⁴⁴ Regio decreto-Legge, 16 December 1923, n. 2740, converted into Legge, 17 April 1925, n. 473, provided for the facilitation of railway travel and customs for fairs and exhibitions. These initiatives gave reduced fares on railways within Italy for travel to these exhibitions on the part of both exhibitors and visitors. They also eased customs regulations for the transportation of goods to and from Italy for such events.

terre italiane d'oltremare in Naples in 1940.⁴⁵ These exhibitions – which were solely dedicated to the presentation of the colonies – continued the developments of the early exhibitions in Turin and Genoa through an approach to colonial display that attempted to educate the Italian public on the political and economic value of these possessions. The attendant architectural expression of these exhibitions – like the *Villaggio tripolino* at the *Mostra coloniale* in Turin – sought an aesthetic that was more congruent with the indigenous forms of Italy's colonies in Africa. [Figure 2a-13]

In addition to these strictly colonial exhibitions, the *Ministero delle Colonie* organized displays in regional trade fairs and exhibitions in Italy, including annual representations in Milan, Naples, Padua and Bari. The nature of this participation was largely economic – that is, it was gauged at encouraging trade with Italy's colonies in the area of natural resources, agricultural products and indigenous handicrafts.⁴⁶ The architecture of the colonial representation at these regional fairs in the early 1920s often emphasized the exoticism of Italy's colonies. This quality can

⁴⁵ The activities of the *Ministero delle Colonie* in exhibitions in Italy and abroad was extensive. They participated in the following regional trade fairs on an annual basis: Milan (1922-41), Naples (1922-40), Padua (1922-39), and Bari (Fiera del Levante, 1930-40). After the *Mostra coloniale* in Genova of 1914, the *Ministero* also participated in the following regional fairs and colonial exhibitions in Italy: Florence (1918), Turin (1921), Fiume (1922), Monza (1925), Caltanissetta (1926), Turin (*Esposizione coloniale*, 1928), Rome (*Mostra internazionale d'arte coloniale*, 1931), Florence (1931), Verona (1932), Bologna (1933), Florence (1934), Naples (second *Mostra internazionale d'arte coloniale*, 1934-5), Rome (*Mostra del libro coloniale*, 1936, *Mostra del minerale*, 1938), and Naples (*Mostra triennale delle terre italiane d'oltremare*, 1940). Their participation at exhibitions abroad was equally extensive, including: Marseilles (1922), Lausanne (1925 and 1933), Antwerp (1930), Paris (Exposition coloniale internationale, 1931), Angola, Bremen, Budapest and Vienna (1938), New York and Tokyo (1939), and Leipzig (1940). See, "Sommario: L'Azione culturale esplicata mediante mostre, esposizioni, musei." ASMAE-MAI.3-40. Fascicolo 1.

⁴⁶ For a complete list of the participation of the *Ministero delle Colonie* in trade fairs in Italy, see previous footnote. In speaking of the *Mostra delle colonie* at the *Fiera campionaria* in Napoli in 1920, Salvatore Bono notes that in addition to independent representation of Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, Eritrea and Somalia, there was a separate exhibition of industrialists and businessmen from Tripolitania. In discussing the *Mostra tripolina* at the *Fiera di Milano* of 1923, he notes that the intention of this exhibit was to make a realistic presentation of the present state and future economic possibilities of this region – particularly in the area of agriculture. Bono, "Esposizioni coloniali italiane. Ipotesi e contributo per un censimento," 30-31.

be seen in the *Padiglione delle colonie italiane* at the *Fiera campionaria di Milano* of 1922, where the industrial shed that enclosed the display space was given the "primitive" appearance of the native architecture of East Africa. [Figure 2.a-14] A slightly more synthetic approach was taken in the *Mostra coloniale* at the *Mostra internazionale delle arte decorative* held in Monza in 1925. In the context of this bi-annual exhibition of decorative arts – what would later become the Triennale in Milan – the Italian colonies were represented through an intimate interior setting that displayed the products of indigenous artisanry.⁴⁷ [Figure 2.a-15] In an exhibition that represented Italian decorative arts according to regional tendencies, the colonies were merely another region in the representation of the larger Italy.

A third area of activity of the *Ministero delle Colonie* was related to the Italian representation at international colonial exhibitions, such as those held in Marseilles (1922) Lausanne (1925 and 1933), Antwerp (1930) and Paris (1931). In this case the basis for this participation was both economic and political. These events represented an opportunity for Italy to assert its strength as a colonizing power through a demonstration of the economic potential of its colonial territories in Africa.⁴⁸ The early Italian participation at these international events – like the

⁴⁷ The *Mostra internazionale delle arte decorative*, held in Monza in 1925 was the second such exhibition in this city, the first being held in 1923. The final Biennale in Monza took place in 1927, this event being transferred to Milan in 1930 at which time it became the Triennale – which has continued to our present day. The organization of these early exhibitions in Monza, which were intended to promote the Italian decorative arts, was regional. These events also had exhibits for foreign countries like Austria, Belgium, England, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Poland, Russia, and Switzerland. See Anty Pansera, "La gestione e l'organizzazione delle biennali monzesi: 1923-27, in *Storia e cronaca della Triennale* (Milano: Longanesi & C., 1978), 26-33.

⁴⁸ An article in *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* reporting on the Italian participation in the *Exposition internationale coloniale maritime et d'art Flamand* in Antwerp in 1930 makes the following statement: "All of the possible efforts have been made by Italy to confirm its colonies and to make up for the deficiencies of natural resources and land for colonial settlement. The international exhibitions, and among the most notable that in Antwerp, have known precisely to explain this truth, that the unsympathetic note of the insufficient colonizing capacity of the Italians would be lost forever from foreign political criticism. This fundamental scope of great value, that the international exhibition of Italian colonies proposed, cannot be separated from that of an economic nature that wants to present to the world productions and works deserving of consideration also in front of the most harsh comparisons. Thus the political purpose merges

Mostra della Tripolitania at the Colonial exhibition in Lausanne of 1925 – show the same rhetoric of abundance mingled with patriotism that characterized these exhibits in Italy. In this case, the Italian flag and images of military conquest were piled up with the bric-a-brac of agricultural products and indigenous artisanry to give the appearance of fecundity. [Figure 2.a-16] These representations of excess eventually gave way to more restrained and synthetic gestures of imperial power – such as in the *romanità* of the *Padiglione delle colonie italiane* at the *Exposition internationale coloniale maritime ed d'art flamand* in Antwerp in 1930. This quality of understatement is true both of the refined neo-classicism of its facade – which bears a close resemblance to the trabeated porch of San Pancrazio in Florence by Alberti of 1458. It is also evident in its interior spaces, where reproductions of Roman statuary from Leptis Magna and Cyrene combine with bucolic images of the colonial landscape.⁴⁹ [Figure 2.a-17]

In each of these distinct contexts the approach to colonial display continued to be influenced by the conceptual model provided by the colonial museum. This was in part due to the fact that with the founding of the *Museo coloniale* in Rome in 1923, the *Ministero delle Colonie* was overseeing two overlapping activities

with the economic one, and in the shadow of these two components of power...the resources of life are developed in environments that remained lacking in them for long centuries of indolence." "La Mostra coloniale italiana alla Esposizione internazionale di Anversa," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* IV, 11 (November 1930): 1002.

⁴⁹ The exterior of this building is a relatively direct derivation of the Alberti project, employing the combination of arched openings and classical columns that were common in his work. For a more detailed discussion of Alberti's work, see: Franco Borsi, *Leon Battista Alberti: The Complete Works* (London : Faber, 1989). The interior was described as being "of a purely Italian character," a quality that is particularly evident in the domed *Sala della Mostra coloniale*. This domed space – which was frescoed with a maritime scene of a Roman galley – acted as the anteroom to the main display spaces – which were organized according to each colony. As such, it gave a polemical introduction to Italy's colonies through reproductions of statues of Apollo and Mars, two dioramas of the colonial landscape – one of East Africa and one of North Africa - decorative panels of indigenous women and four display cabinets of jewelry and other products of indigenous artisanry. This introductory space was flanked by the exhibition of archeology – including a reconstruction of the Arch of Marcus Aurelius in Tripoli – and the regional exhibits of Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, Eritrea and Somalia. For a detailed description of the Italian participation in this exhibition, see: "L'Italia all'Esposizione internazionale di Anversa," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* IV, 6 (June 1930): 516-19.

involved in the representation of the Italian colonies. The consequence of this dual role was that the precise limits between this permanent institution and these temporary events were blurred through their unification into a broader representational discourse. Materials from the museum were used in these exhibitions and new collections and exhibits created for these events became part of the permanent collection of the *Museo coloniale* in Rome. The fusion of these two activities can be seen in a very direct way in the display of the *Ministero delle Colonie* at the *Fiera campionaria di Padova* in 1930, where the exhibition was rendered more scientific through presenting the contents of the *Museo coloniale*. [Figure 2.a-18] Was this a case of the exhibition appropriating the authority of the museum, or rather had the museum itself become nothing more than a series of traveling displays in regional exhibitions? The presentation techniques of the museum had been profoundly influenced by the colonial exhibition – something that is evident in the polemical nature of displays like the *Sala Zammarano* in the *Museo coloniale* in Rome, which conveyed an image of the political and territorial domination of the Italians in Somalia.⁵⁰ [Figure 2.a-19] The most pertinent question is whether the politics of representation of the colonial exhibition had been so deeply inscribed in museum practices so as to obviate their scientific basis.⁵¹ It can

⁵⁰ Vittorio Tedesco Zammarano was commander of a battalion of indigenous troops in Somalia and led an expedition in this colony through which a collection of animal pelts and heads (giraffe, gazelle, rhinoceros, elephant, buffalo) eventually became a part of the *Museo coloniale*. "L'inaugurazione del Museo coloniale a Roma." 640. In 1934 Zammarano published a novel, *Azanagò non pianse*, which in the style of reportage typical to colonial literature, chronicled his exploits.

⁵¹ In discussing the relationship between the *Museo coloniale* and the colonial exhibition, Castelli observes: "While the scientific museums acquired, after the closing of exhibitions, the material exhibited there, by selecting them and including them in their rooms in completion of their collections, the colonial museums had inherited their spectacular aspect, the heterogeneity of the collections and the propagandistic intent that characterized them." Commenting on the influence of the exhibition on the practices of the museum, he goes on to assert: "The propagandistic orientation that characterized the colonial museums resolves itself, on the museological plane, in the abandonment of the scientific method laboriously restated in the environment of the ethnographic museum." Castelli, "Dal collezionismo etnografico al museo di propaganda," 116.

be argued that the museum had become an exhibition – a common ground where colonial politics, ethnographic representations and commercial ambitions converged.

The first comprehensive representation of Italy's colonies after World War I was the *Mostra coloniale* at the *Esposizione di Torino* of 1928 – an event that commemorated the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Emanuele Filiberto, the second Duca di Savoia, and the tenth anniversary of the victory in Europe. This exhibition was the first national representation of Italy after the rise of the Fascist regime – something that imparted a more strident political tone to this event and afforded the colonies a significant role in defining the progress that had been attained since 1922.⁵² Located in the Parco Valentino along the banks of the Po River, the main exhibition site was comprised of a casual arrangement of temporary pavilions that were linked through a system of small irregular pathways, curvilinear roadways and landscaped open spaces. [Figure 2.a-20] These pavilions put a wide range of material on display – from industrial and agricultural products, to artworks and artisanry, to military equipment.⁵³ The *Mostra coloniale* – which was located in a separate area across the river and to the south – consisted of a central *Padiglione*

⁵² A heightened political rhetoric is evident in the various articles which presented this exhibition. For example, in reporting the *Mostra coloniale*, the journal *L'Italia Coloniale* states: "Celebrating the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Emanuele Filiberto in Turin, an Exhibition will be inaugurated this spring that will be a great display of the national energy that fascism has ordered with new discipline, and therefore has started steadily toward major conquests in the field of civic progress. In this Exhibit our colonial activities – which justifiably the Government of Mussolini gives great importance – could not help to find their place as an expression of necessity relative to our demographic expansion and demonstration of the Italian capacity to reach the goal indicated by our unfailing destiny." "Le Colonie all'Esposizione di Torino," *L'Italia Coloniale* V, 2 (February 1928): 26.

⁵³ On the same site as the Exhibition in Turin of 1911, it included pavilions dedicated to chemistry, mining and ceramics, and glass making, as well as to individual companies like Montecatini and the *Società italo-americana pel petrolio*. In addition to a general pavilion of agriculture, there were others related to hunting, fishing and forestry, silk products and feed. In the arts, there were pavilions of fine arts, modern and ancient artisanry, small industry and a Futurist exhibition. In the area of the Italian military, there were representations of the Air Force and Navy as well as an exhibition dedicated to victory in World War I and one for the *Opera Nazionale Combattenti* – a group responsible for initiatives related to war veterans. This exhibition also had an aquarium, numerous restaurants and an entertainment pavilion. Armando Melis, "L'Esposizione di Torino del 1928," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* VII, 8 (April 1928): 372-81.

d'onore set within a circular arcaded space that in turn linked four separate "villages" representing each of the colonies. An even more diverse array of material was exhibited in the *Mostra coloniale*, from natural resources and agricultural products, to ethnographic objects, to reconstructions of vernacular buildings inhabited by characteristic "natives."⁵⁴

The architecture of the *Esposizione di Torino*, although a product of a number of different architects, was widely regarded as expressing a uniformity of style often associated with the newly founded movement of Italian Rationalism. One account in the weekly magazine *L'Illustrazione Italiana* refers to the "rigid lines" and "cubic forms" of these pavilions, suggesting that in "abandoning any superfluousness and superstructure", they were "more inspired by mechanical demands than decorative effects."⁵⁵ The connection between this exhibition and the architecture of Italian Rationalism was in part due to the publicity generated by the recent *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale*, held in Rome in March of 1928. It was also based on the fact that the Rationalist exhibition displayed the designs of three of the pavilions from the *Esposizione di Torino* – including the *Edificio delle comunità artigiane* by Alberto Sartoris.⁵⁶ [Figure 2.a-21] The Turin

⁵⁴ For a detailed description of the *Mostra coloniale*, including information on its organization and exhibitors and general presentation of each section of the exhibit, including the respective colonial villages, see *L'Italia Coloniale* V, 11 (November 1928): 215-30. See also Umberto Giglio, "L'Esposizione coloniale di Torino," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* II (Special Issue, 1928): 153-62.

⁵⁵ A more complete quotation of the context of this statement is as follows: "The constructions of the white ephemeral city is largely inspired by that rational architecture of which we have seen some examples in the recent Exhibition in Rome and of the *Gruppo 7* of Milan. An architecture, according to us, of transition between the old forms and those that will be the definitive ones in the near future. Rigid lines, cubic forms, all right angles, more inspired by mechanical demands than decorative effects; abandoning any superfluousness and superstructure; ingenious, daring and sometimes arrogant expression of a young art that will be debated, but that in any case merits being taken in the highest consideration." Giovanni Biadene, "Le celebrazioni torinesi: L'inaugurazione dell'Esposizione," *L'Illustrazione Italiana* LV, 19 (6 May 1928): 346.

⁵⁶ The publicity surrounding the first Rationalist exhibition was primarily in newspapers, including the following: C. E. Oppo, "La Prima Mostra di Architettura Razionale," *La Tribuna*, 29 March 1928; Michele Biancale, "Il Disordine artistico: Esposizione di Architettura Razionale," *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 31 March 1928; and Roberto Papini, "Architettura Razionale," *La Rivista Illustrata del Popolo d'Italia*, 4 April 1928. The three pavilions from the *Esposizione di Torino*

exhibition was thus a significant event within the architectural discourse of the 1920s. It has also become an important reference point in the history of modern architecture in Italy, as it is regarded as the first exhibition linked directly with Italian Rationalism.

The expression of a uniform style in the architecture of the *Esposizione di Torino* was largely due to the participation of Giuseppe Pagano – who was both the director of the technical office of the exhibition and designer of some of its most important pavilions.⁵⁷ As a recent graduate of the *Politecnico di Torino*, he was responsible for the involvement of a number of prominent young architects in this exhibition, including Sartoris, Gino Levi Montalcini, Enrico Prampolini, Paolo Perona, Gigi Chessa, Umberto Cuzzi and Giuseppe Gyra.⁵⁸ The significance of this participation was noted at the time by Plinio Marconi in an article in *Architettura e Arti Decorative*, who asserted that the "homogeneity of the architectonic inspiration" in the exhibition was a product of the "concordant sympathy of tastes and tendencies" that was present in the architectural culture of Torino.⁵⁹ While there

that were shown in the Rationalist exhibition were the *Padiglione delle comunità artigiane*, by Albergo Sartoris; the *Padiglione della comunità dei fotografi*, by Gigi Chessa; and the *Padiglione orafi*, by Umberto Cuzzi and Giuseppe Gyra. See *Prima Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale. Roma VI. Catalogo*.

⁵⁷ For a detailed discussion of Pagano's role in the *Esposizione di Torino*, see Alberto Bassi and Laura Castagno, "La formazione e gli anni torinesi." *Giuseppe Pagano* (Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 1994), 5-36. See also: Cesare De Seta, "Introduzione," *Pagano. Architettura e città durante il fascismo* (Roma-Bari: Biblioteca Universale Laterza, 1990), xxiii-xxv.

⁵⁸ In addition to the already mentioned projects of Sartoris, Chessa and Cuzzi and Gyra, the major pavilions of this exhibition were credited as follows: *Padiglione della Chimica*, *Padiglione della Caccia e della Pesca* and *Padiglione Gancia* by Giuseppe Pagano; *Padiglione dei Festeggiamenti e della Moda* by Pagano and Levi-Montalcini; *Padiglione delle Miniere e delle Ceramiche* by Pagano and Perona; *Padiglione per la Marina e l'Aeronautica* by Pagano, Ettore Pittini and Levi Montalcini; *Mostra Coloniale* by Pagano and Pittini; *Padiglione degli Architetti e dell'Industria del Freddo*, by Perona; *Padiglione Futurista* by Enrico Prampolini; *Padiglione dell'Agricoltura* and *Padiglione dell'Alimentazione* by Pittini, *Padiglione della Cooperazione, Mutualità e Previdenza* and *Padiglione dei Sindacati Fascisti* by Armando Melis; and the *Padiglione di Roma* by Raffaele Da Vico.

⁵⁹ A more complete quotation of the context of this statement is as follows: "...in Turin there has been for some time a group of young architects who are able to work together: meaning that in the uncertainty of the directives of national and local art, a concordant sympathy of tastes and tendencies among numerous artists was also able to be produced there. In fact, the first thing that strikes the visitor of the Exhibition, and that differentiates it from the preceding ones – apart from

was a considerable affinity between the various pavilions that linked them with the contemporary architectural discourse of Italian Rationalism, these projects also reflect the complex and often unformed qualities of such aesthetic tendencies. Many of the projects, like the *Padiglione della chimica* by Pagano, show the influence of Northern and Eastern European tendencies in modern architecture. The fusion of a classicized industrial warehouse and a basilica form give this pavilion a strong resemblance to the work of Peter Behrens for the *Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft* (AEG).⁶⁰ [Figure 2.a-22] A second project by Pagano, the *Padiglione della caccia e della pesca*, has the appearance of an alpine vernacular building – an approach to design that attempts to define a regional identity through architecture. [Figure 2.a-23]

The architecture of the *Esposizione di Torino* was thus a product of the tension between the language of Italian Rationalism, various foreign sources and the regional forms of expression that were typical to such exhibitions. The *Mostra coloniale*, designed by Pagano and Ettore Pittini, expresses a similar exchange of influences. The site planning of this project reveals a basic dichotomy between the main exhibition building – a simple cubic volume containing a central courtyard space and framed by a circular colonnade – and the surrounding colonial villages – which were intended to suggest the characteristic landscape of each of the Italian colonies. [Figure 2.a-24] A parallel interaction can be found within the *Padiglione d'onore*, which was described by Armando Melis in *Architettura e Arti Decorative*,

and perhaps in contrast with the intrinsic value of the individual buildings, is the homogeneity of the architectonic inspiration." Marconi, "Commenti all'Esposizione di Torino 1928," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* VIII, 4 (December 1928): 155-81.

⁶⁰ A number of the buildings, including the *Padiglione dei Festeggiamenti e della Moda* by Pagano and Levi-Montalcini show the influence of Vienna and the Wagnerschule. With regard to the *Padiglione della Chimica*, it has a close affinity with the classicism of Behrens various warehouse projects for the AEG. A more direct precedent would be his AEG Pavilion for the German Shipbuilding Exhibition in Berlin of 1908, which shares the use of a centralized octagonal form as a main display space – although in this case the domed space contained almost all of the exhibition. See Henning Rogge, "Architecture," in *Industriekultur. Peter Behrens and the AEG, 1907-1914*, trans. Ian Boyd White (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1984), 264-5.

as having "successfully recalled motifs of evocative Libyan constructions enriched with the still surviving Roman imperial character."⁶¹ [Figure 2.a-25] These observations would seem to apply to the white stuccoed surfaces and battered wall construction used in this project, which suggest vernacular buildings in North Africa. The classical references of the *Padiglione d'onore* are evident in the use of marble columns surmounted by large *fascies* to frame the entrance and the structuring of its interior spaces around a courtyard.

In representing Italian colonialism, the use of indigenous North African forms and fascist symbols in the *Padiglione d'onore* is a reflection of the political rhetoric that is typical of such colonial displays – in which commerce was an instrument of propaganda.⁶² In this case, colonial politics were even more important than in past exhibitions. The *Esposizione di Torino* took place just over two years after Mussolini's first visit to Tripolitania in April of 1926 and on the occasion of the third annual *Giornata Coloniale* – a celebration that was intended to bring national attention to Italy's colonies. This exhibition was an important part of the propaganda campaign initiated by the *Ministero delle Colonie* in the aftermath of this visit – an initiative which included the creation of a number of new publications on colonial matters.⁶³ This heightened political tone of this exhibition is also quite apparent in

⁶¹ This article, published a month before the opening of the *Esposizione di Torino*, provides a general analysis of the architecture and planning of the exhibition, while also providing images and descriptions for the most prominent pavilions. Not unlike the later article by Marconi, Melis – who designed the *Padiglione della cooperazione, mutualità e previdenza* and the *Padiglione dei sindacati fascisti* with the engineer Giovanni Bernocco – argues that "the most striking characteristic of this exhibition will be its modern, fresh, youthful and joyful appearance." Melis, "L'Esposizione di Torino del 1928," 372, 381.

⁶² This point was made quite succinctly by Umberto Giglio – the director of the *Museo coloniale* – when referring to the *Mostra coloniale* of Turin, he stated: "if the immediate purpose of such an exhibition is that of an economic order, in the dual aspect of industrial and agricultural activities, the ultimate aim and most important above all others is that of propaganda, intended to promote and strengthen the consciousness in the Italian people of the relentless necessity of expansion beyond the borders of the Fatherland." Giglio, "La Mostra coloniale di Torino," 80.

⁶³ Mussolini visited Tripolitania from April 11 to 15th 1926. For a detailed discussion of this visit, see "La visita del Duce in Tripolitania nel 1926 e lo "Scossone" coloniale," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione delle Litoranea*, 1-11. The *Giornata Coloniale* began in 1926 due to the efforts of the *Istituto Coloniale Italiano*. With the sponsorship of the Fascist

the representation of this event, such as in a special issue of *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* which combines articles on the culture of Italy's colonies with a detailed presentation of the exhibits. In the introduction to these articles, the editors of the magazine stated "a grand colonial exhibition shows to Italians and foreigners what our race has done in a few years and what progress has been completed in each of our foreign lands, on which flutters the glorious tricolor."⁶⁴

Such patriotic assertions extend beyond the pages of contemporary magazines, as they also characterized the politics of display in this exhibition – from the traditional approach to display in the *Padiglione d'onore* to the scientific reconstructions of indigenous forms found in the colonial villages. The main building was given the spatial organization of a museum, with a large central gallery and adjacent courtyard containing material from the Libyan colonies, surrounded by a sequence of linear exhibit rooms which presented the colonies of Eritrea and Somalia. Following from this regional organization, each colony was represented through an amalgam of material assembled in a manner that resembled contemporary museum practices.⁶⁵ This quality is readily apparent in the central gallery space,

government, this event was held in major cities throughout Italy in April of that year. The date of this celebration shifted in 1927 to May 24 to coincide with the date of Italy's entrance into World War I. For a detailed report on the celebrations of 1928, see: "Celebrazione della Giornata Coloniale, 1928." ACS PCM 1928-30 14.2.2144. In a report prepared for Benito Mussolini on the current state of the Italian colonies in November of 1926, Luigi Federzoni, the *Ministro delle Colonie*, stated that the visit to Tripolitania was a great provocation for Italians to consider colonial matters, but that still there was a lack of knowledge of the colonies in the press. See ACS-SPD-CR, Busta 23. Fascicolo 224 R - S.E. Federzoni, On. Dr. Luigi. For a general discussion of the research and propaganda efforts of the *Ministero* until 1932, see: Piccioli, "La ricognizione scientifica e la propaganda," *La nuova Italia d'oltremare*, 1717-57. The *Ministero* initiated the journal *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* in November of 1927 and sponsored the publication of no fewer than twenty-two books on historical, scientific and archeological research related to the colonies between 1926 and 1932.

⁶⁴ *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane*, "Per l'Esposizione coloniale," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* (Special Issue, 1928): 3-4.

⁶⁵ This quality was largely due to the fact that Umberto Giglio of the *Museo coloniale* in Rome was responsible for organizing and executing the interior displays. This participation also included providing a good deal of the material presented in the *Padiglione d'onore*. For a detailed discussion of this participation and the more general significance of the *Mostra coloniale*, see: Giglio, "La Mostra coloniale di Torino," 80-90.

where paintings and photographs adorned the wall surfaces, and various free-standing exhibits – like glass cabinets containing ethnographic objects – floated freely within this space. Although there was a considerable variety of material on display, the main gallery in the *Padiglione d'onore* eschews the clutter of earlier exhibitions for a more restrained and "objective" presentation. [Figure 2.a-26] There was a substantial presence of art works in this exhibition – something which lent this space the appearance of high culture.⁶⁶ This quality is even more obvious when comparing the presentation of material in the *Padiglione d'onore* to that in the *Mostra "Snia Viscosa"* in the *Padiglione della chimica*, where the textile industry is given the image of an almost religious purity.⁶⁷ [Figure 2.a-27]

The representation of the indigenous culture of Italy's colonies in the *Padiglione d'Onore*, by adopting the spatial form and display conventions of the museum, favored a set of institutional practices over direct experience. A seemingly opposing approach was taken in the four separate colonial villages, where each colony was re-enacted through a combination of built forms, cultural demonstrations and natural landscape. The East African colonies were presented through separate groupings of round *tukul* huts inhabited by "natives" involved in various domestic and artisanal activities.⁶⁸ The Eritreans and Somalians, who produced handmade

⁶⁶ Among the artworks on display were a number of paintings of the colonial landscape of Libya by the artist Fritz B. Neuhaus – a German painter who was active in Tripolitania in the 1920s. Included in these were a series of paintings by Neuhaus of the streets of Ghadames. These paintings were widely exhibited during these years and are still in the collection of the *Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente* (the ex-*Museo dell'Africa Italiana*) where they are presently hanging in the Director's office.

⁶⁷ The *Mostra "Snia Viscosa"* was located on the main floor of the *Padiglione della chimica* by Pagano. As a company involved in the manufacturing of synthetic fabrics, they were represented with a combination of functioning machinery and display cabinets showing the final product of this process. For a detailed presentation of this exhibit, see: "La "Snia Viscosa" all'Esposizione internazionale delle industrie chimiche di Torino," *L'Illustrazione Italiana* LV, 22 (27 May 1928): 424-8.

⁶⁸ The presentation of these two colonies in the *Padiglione d'onore* included maps, drawings, models, photographs, agricultural products and cultural artifacts. This exhibit was supplemented by the presence of Eritrean and Somali industries in the *Mercato coloniale* – which was located in the circular arcaded space in front of the main exhibition hall. The two indigenous villages, constructed as grass huts, contained Eritrean and Somalians who produced various handicrafts –

goods, were treated like the objects they created— their labor transformed into a representation of their domination. Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were presented through simulated urban settings that were created using representative indigenous buildings like the mosque, the *suq* and the Arab house.⁶⁹ In the case of Tripolitania, these Islamic forms were combined with fragments of Roman antiquity – including a reproduction of the Arch of Marcus Aurelius in Tripoli. Of particular note with regard to the indigenous culture of this region was the *Mercato del suk tripolino* – a literal re-enactment of a fragment of the old city of Tripoli, complete with vendors and their typical wares. [Figure 2.a-28]

Organized by Professor Renato Bartocchini, the *Sovrintendente dei monumenti e scavi* of Tripolitania, the *Villaggio tripolino* was conceived as both a demonstration of the culture of this region and a reconstruction of its indigenous forms.⁷⁰ Although this representation was devised by the same scientific thought that lay behind the creation of the colonial museum, its experience was much more immediate and its implications far more serious. If the museum represents the description and ordering of "the native" according to the practices of anthropology and ethnography, the indigenous village was the apogee of these same processes. It is the application of rigorously scientific techniques in the creation of a total environment that allowed for the immediate and visceral experience of the indigenous – a space in which the oppressive politics of colonization were reified. In

such as jewelry, paintings, baskets, shoes and copper pots – and performed "typical" domestic activities. "Le Mostre dell'Eritrea e della Somalia," *L'Italia Coloniale* V, 11 (November 1928): 220.

⁶⁹ See "La Mostra delle Cirenaica," *L'Italia Coloniale* V, 11 (November 1928): 224-5; and "La Mostra delle Tripolitania," *L'Italia Coloniale* V, 11 (November 1928): 226-7. A *suq* is a form of covered marketplace found in larger North African towns.

⁷⁰ In reporting on the *Mostra delle Tripolitania*, *L'Italia Coloniale* stated: "...also notable in the *Villaggio tripolino* is a *Mostra del costume* and a *Mostra etnografica*, prepared by Cav. Prof. Renato Bartocchini, the *Sovrintendente dei Monumenti e Scavi of Tripolitania*, as also a faithful reproduction of the Arab house and Jewish temple." "La Mostra della Tripolitania," 226. In addition to these pavilions, the *Mostra della Tripolitania* also included the *Mercato del suq tripolino* and a *Caffé arabo* which served tea and pastries characteristic of that region of North Africa.

an exhibition in which modern Italian culture was put on display, the *Mostra coloniale* offered two other facets of this same modernity. While the first chose to describe the culture of Italy's African colonies through the distance created by the practices of the museum as a cultural institution, the second offered a simulation of its direct experience. The reconciliation of these two realities remained an open question for future exhibitions.

Only a few weeks before the opening of the *Esposizione di Torino*, the ninth annual *Fiera di Milano* was inaugurated in the newly refurbished fairgrounds just west of the Parco Sempione area of Milan.⁷¹ This *Fiera campionaria* was among the largest of such regional events that were intended to enhance industrial and commercial development. In contrast with the Turin exhibition, this was an annual event of relatively short duration whose focus was more narrowly on economic matters. It was a space of exchange which – as noted in the announcement of the 1928 Fiera – was "prepared in a manner to present samples of all of the products that creative genius and effective energy are able to launch on the market in the brief passing of twelve months."⁷² Despite the fact that these events were derived from local agricultural exhibitions – and at this time retained a strong sense of their regional identity – they were also understood to have both national and international implications. The organizers of the *Fiera di Milano* saw its appeal to the international public as one of "initiating or intensifying a profitable activity with

⁷¹ For a general description of the *Fiera di Milano* of 1928, with particular attention to the issue of its urban status and importance as an event, see: Il viandante, "Un primo sguardo alla Fiera-Esposizione di Milano," *L'Illustrazione Italiana* LV, 18 (29 April 1928): 335-6.

⁷² The *Fiera di Milano* of 1928 lasted just over two months, from April 12 to June 19 – a duration that was relatively typical to such *Fiere campionarie*. The term "campionaria" means sample. These exhibitions were thus like a large scale trade fair that gathered the products of all areas of the Italian economy. Although a similar structure of organization by trades or industries was practiced in Exhibitions like that in Turin, the *Fiera* was more narrow in its function as an extension of commercial activities. Indeed, it was through such events that companies would secure contracts from businessmen who used it as a means to search for the best product or price. See: *Fiera Esposizione di Milano. Campionaria internazionale. 12 aprile - 19 giugno 1928 (VI). IX Manifestazione. Notizie per gli aderenti pei compratori e pel pubblico* (Milano: Ente Autonomo della Fiera di Milano, 1928), 8.

the Italian market" in such a manner that this market would "establish... new contacts and new exchanges."⁷³ This international dimension was also manifested at the level of representation, as not only did this exhibition have foreign pavilions and put foreign goods on display alongside Italian ones, the Italian colonies had been represented annually since 1922.⁷⁴ In 1928, this representation took the form of the *Padiglione delle colonie* designed by Carlo Enrico Rava and Sebastiano Larco – a project that resulted from a competition sponsored by the *Istituto Coloniale Italiano* in 1927. The attempted synthesis of indigenous forms and a modern aesthetic in this project make it one of the most significant examples through which to discuss the discourse on colonial representation in exhibitions.⁷⁵

The *Fiera di Milano* was organized according to twenty-one separate categories of similar industries – such as chemistry, electronic technologies, art and applied arts, and agriculture.⁷⁶ These larger groupings – which resemble the

⁷³ Ibid., 8.

⁷⁴ The foreign participation at the *Fiera di Milano* of 1928 was comprised of thirteen separate pavilions and the participation of around thirty nations. At the level of individual companies, this foreign presence totaled 30%. The thirteen nations that participated with pavilions were: Argentina, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, England, France, Germany, Holland, Japan, Poland, Romania, Spain, Switzerland and the U.S.S.R. It is in relation to this international dimension that in 1928 it was called the *Fiera esposizione di Milano* – esposizione intentionally referring to the tradition of the international exhibition. Ibid., 7-10. With regard to the representation of the Italian colonies, this participation was continuous from 1922 to 1941.

⁷⁵ The *Padiglione delle Colonie* at the *Fiera di Milano* was run as a competition by the *Istituto Coloniale Italiano*, with the participation of the *Ministero delle Colonie* and the *Sindacato Nazionale Fascista degli Architetti*. Although forty different projects were submitted only eleven were selected for further review. The report of the jury stated that they were disappointed with the number and quality of submissions. The first prize and the commission was given to Larco and Rava, with second prize going to the engineer Antonino Mazzoni. The jury for the competition was Cipriano E. Oppo, Enrico Del Debbio and Marcello Piacentini. See: "Concorso per il Padiglione delle Colonie alla Fiera Campionaria di Milano," *Rivista Coloniale* XXII, 3 (May-June 1927): 177-80.

⁷⁶ The grouping of these industries was as follows: 1. Jewelry, silverware, clocks and related; 2. Household items and machinery; 3. Agriculture, agricultural machinery and agricultural technologies; 4. Food, liquor, restaurants and related; 5. Art and applied arts; 6. Textiles; 7. Fashion, clothing, perfume and related; 8. Home furnishings; 9. Leather and related; 10. Automobiles, motorcycles and related; 11. Music and instruments; 12. Paper and graphic, publishing; 13. Foreign and regional pavilions; 14. Colonies and related products; 15. Chemical industry and pharmaceuticals; 16. Building industry; 17. Scientific instruments; 18. Light industries; 19. Electronic technologies; 20. Metals and heavy industries; 21. Various events, competitions, diversions. Ibid., 11-13.

corporativist structure that the Fascist government was just beginning to institute – often shared a large exhibition building, which allowed for a more imposing representation on the part of smaller industries.⁷⁷ This organizational structure was overlaid with a series of pavilions that represented each region of Italy, the official representation of foreign countries, and the occasional isolated company. This amalgam of vast exhibition buildings, urban scaled structures and small pavilions was, in turn, given the appearance a small city. Unlike the park setting of the *Esposizione di Torino*, the *Fiera di Milano* was an urban quarter that, despite the necessity of controlled access, had a network of streets and piazzas that were continuous with that of the residential district that developed around this site.⁷⁸ [Figure 2.a-29] This urban strategy made the *Fiera* both a city of commerce created for the display of goods and an urban center around which this district of Milan was developed.

The urban qualities of the *Fiera di Milano* can also be attributed to the fact that, as an annual event, many of the buildings had been built as permanent structures. This building program resulted in the construction of a series of pavilions in 1928 by some of the most prominent architects of the Milanese Novecento – including Alberto Alpago Novello and Ottavio Cabiati, Giuseppe De Finetti, Piero

⁷⁷ Although Mussolini's speeches on the corporatist state began in November of 1933, references to this concept can be found as early as his "Discorso dell'Ascensione" of May 26 1927. In this much earlier context the corporatist state was offered as an alternative to parliamentary democracy, something which allowed for direct intervention of the government in the private economy. See Mussolini, "Discorso dell'Ascensione," *Opera Omnia di Benito Mussolini. XXII* (Firenze: La Fenice, 1957), 360-90. References to corporatism can be found in some of the literature produced by the *Ente Autonomo della Fiera di Milano*. In this context the references are to the impact of the Fascist state on private industry and its organization. See *Fiera Esposizione di Milano. IX Manifestazione. Notizie per gli aderenti pei compratori e pel pubblico*, 5.

⁷⁸ The urban emphasis of the *Fiera di Milano* can be understood in a number of ways. The location of this exhibition in this area was part of an urban planning strategy that was linked to the development of this quarter of the city. The various publications on this event make a number of references to the city of Milan, emphasizing the fact that a visit to the *Fiera* was also a visit to the city. This connection is both pragmatic – using the sights of the city as an enticement to see the *Fiera* – and more metaphorical. Many of the representations of the *Fiera* in these publications are street views and aerial panoramas – both of which are conventions used to represent cities. See *Fiera Esposizione di Milano. IX Manifestazione. Notizie per gli aderenti pei compratori e pel pubblico*.

Portaluppi and Giovanni Muzio.⁷⁹ As a contemporary movement whose origins were in both nineteenth century Lombard neoclassicism and the metaphysical aesthetic of Giorgio De Chirico and Carlo Carrà, this "return to order" in post World War I Milanese architecture was inextricably linked to the context of the city. The impact of the work of these architects was to lend this exhibition a contemporary urban image that fulfilled its promise as the center of a new urban quarter.⁸⁰ One such contribution was the *Padiglione delle industrie casalinghe* by Alvaro Novello and Cabiati. The horizontal lines of the brick and travertine exterior of this building were punctuated by a series of porticoed entrances and a glazed cupola that gave this project a restrained urban presence that belied its function as an exhibition building. [Figure 2.a-30]

The series of pavilions that were constructed to present the products of the different areas of Italy offered a more expressive and eclectic appearance. It was recognized that these displays "assumed the various styles and the diverse traditions of these regions" – for example, Lazio being represented by a neo-classical building of Roman derivation, and Piemonte by a domed pavilion that borrowed heavily from the baroque of Juvarra.⁸¹ [Figure 2.a-31] In a similar manner, the *Padiglione delle*

⁷⁹ In addition to the previously mentioned *Padiglione delle Colonie* by Rava and Larco, the projects constructed for the *Fiera* in 1928 included the *Padiglione delle industrie casalinghe* by Alvaro Novello and Cabiati, the *Padiglione degli alimentari* by De Finetti, the *Padiglione della Confederazione Nazionale Fascista degli Agricoltori* by Giulio Ulisse Arata, the *Padiglione delle applicazioni elettriche* by Adolfo and Aldo Zacchi, the *Padiglione della Pirelli* by Portaluppi and the *Padiglione del "Popolo d'Italia"* by Muzio. For a detailed presentation of these projects see: F.R., "Padiglioni nuovi alla Fiera di Milano," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* VII, 11 (July 1928): 509-24.

⁸⁰ Fulvio Irace, in an article on Milanese architecture of the 1920-30s, speaks about the city as a bridge between the post-World War I reaction of architects like Muzio "against the weak, enervated manifestations of late classicism" and the metaphysical aesthetic of De Chirico and Carrà. This so-called "return to order" in architecture searched for stability in reinterpretations of the 19th century neo-classicism typical to this region, while painters sought images in the "urban stage sets" provided by this same architecture. Irace, "The Skin and the Bone: From the Files of the Milanese Novecento," in *Precursors of Post-Modernism* (New York: The Architectural League, 1982), 5-7.

⁸¹ The intention of these pavilions was "in the minimum space and with the greatest decorum of typical lines, to be the center of collection and irradiation of the organizing and directing activities of each district." This would entail the presentation of characteristic products of each

colonie of Larco and Rava was praised by Ferdinando Reggiori in *Architettura e Arti Decorative* as a "modern construction of African flavor."⁸² This project represents the Italian colonies through a conscious distillation of the salient qualities of their indigenous architecture. This approach is evident in the use of unadorned stucco surfaces and simple cubic volumes on the exterior of the building, and its allusion to the kind of buttressed wall construction that was believed to be typical to the Arab architecture of these territories. [Figure 2.a-32] The arrangement of the interior of this pavilion into two linear display rooms which flank a small domed exhibition space links these visual references to planning principles derived from these same vernacular constructions.⁸³

The *Padiglione delle colonie* by Larco and Rava was also a fundamentally modern project. This building was closely tied to the discourse of Italian Rationalism taking place at the time of the *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* of 1928. Although it was not exhibited at this event, it can be understood as a built demonstration of the *europismo* of Rava, which, instead of calling for a strict uniformity in the architecture of all European nations, argued for "the conservation of each country's own character."⁸⁴ The means of this appropriation of the Libyan

region. The areas represented in the *Fiera di Milano* in 1928 were: Abruzzi, Friuli, Lazio, Lombardia, Marche, Molise, Piemonte, Puglie, Romagna, Salento, Sannio, Sardegna, Sicilia, Toscana, Trentino, Umbria and Valtellina. See *Fiera Esposizione di Milano. IX Manifestazione. Notizie per gli aderenti pei compratori e pel pubblico*, 17.

⁸² The following statement was made about the *Padiglione delle colonie* in *Architettura e Arti Decorative*: "Two extremely young architects, Larco and Rava have prepared a pavilion for the Istituto Coloniale Fascista, where the linear simplicity of the modern construction of African flavor, with white cubes, battered wall and apse, is already interrupted, on the side of the portal, by certain extremely large fluted pilasters, in beautiful marble." F.R., "Padiglioni nuovi alla Fiera di Milano," 522.

⁸³ This project uses these wings of display space – which are arranged in an L-shape – as a buffer for the domed exhibition hall, not unlike the role played by spaces surrounding the courtyard in the "Arab-Turkish" house that Rava later discusses in "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna." These planning principles, like the references to formal and stylistic elements of the Libyan vernacular, are highly processed by Larco and Rava in this project.

⁸⁴ Two articles were published by members of the *Gruppo 7* at the time of the exhibition, the first by Rava and the second by Adalberto Libera. The article by Rava, entitled "Dell'europismo in architettura" asserted that the concept of a Europeanism was in fact an ultra nationalism. That is, Rava argued that recognizing that there was a common European influence on modern

vernacular by Rava was through a process of abstraction, rather than direct imitation. The *Padiglione delle colonie* shows a fusion of these local forms with allusions to both Roman classicism and certain modernist works, like Le Corbusier's *Esprit Nouveau* pavilion of 1925. [Figure 1.b-4] The synthetic nature of this appropriation extends to the interior spaces, where a simple spatial container was elaborated upon through evocative wall and ceiling treatments that refer to Islamic traditions. The most complicated of these developments is the central display space, where an abstract web of *muqarnas* create a transition between the walls and the glazed dome overhead.⁸⁵ [Figure 2.a-33] The design of the wall surfaces includes a relief pattern of pointed arches in the main display space and a series of frescoed panels that depict the colonial landscape in the flanking galleries. The approach to the presentation of objects in this project is also notable, as it is an amalgam of museum practices and the indigenous marketplace. [Figure 2.a-34] The combination of photographs, agricultural and natural products and ethnographic material are presented using wall displays that have the didactic tone of the colonial museum, while the casual presentation of carpets and other items of indigenous craft gives this space the chaotic appearance of a *sug*.⁸⁶

architecture did not preclude the development, in each country, of an architecture proper to their culture and race. Rava, Carlo Enrico. "Dell'europismo in architettura." See also Libera. "Arte e razionalismo."

⁸⁵ Similar pattern of *muqarnas*, or pendentives, existed in the *marabout* (shrines of religious hermits) of Tripolitania. This pattern was described as follows: "the interior of this *marabout* in Tripoli... is interesting for the four contiguous cupolas, supported at the center with a single column, and for its Byzantine pendentives, inserted between the arches and the cupola." Fabrizio Maria Apollonj, "L'Architettura araba della Libia," *Rassegna di Architettura* IX, 12 (December 1937): 460. With regard to Rava's knowledge of such structures, his first documented visit to Tripolitania was from 24 December 1927 to 9 February 1928 – two months prior to the completion of this project.

⁸⁶ The status of this pavilion as a market is even more evident in a photograph of the interior of the main display space from 1935 when it had become the *Padiglione Cirenaica ed Isole Egee*. In this image the walls are literally lined with carpets, which are also piled up on the floor along with other indigenous handicrafts – something which gives the space the appearance of a stand in the *suk* tripolino. ASMAE-MAI.3-40. Milano 1922 e 1935 - Fiera Campionaria.

Designed to put the accomplishments of Fascist colonization on display, the *Padiglione delle colonie* of Larco and Rava offered a fusion of the museum and the marketplace, of modernity and indigenous forms. This project is neither a scientific re-enactment of the vernacular architecture of Italy's colonies, nor a sterile reflection of contemporary architectural discourses. It is a complex synthesis of references to the architecture of Italy's colonies and the continuing development of the architecture of Italian Rationalism. The approach to the display taken in this pavilion reflects a balance between the "objectivity" of museum practices and the "subjective" experience of the East. Through the consistent oscillation between these two realities, this project provided a formal reconciliation between the indigenous and the modern, between the pavilion as mere container and its contents as virtual demonstrations of "the native." The implications of this project for the architecture of exhibitions are significant, as the *Padiglione delle colonie* was an important precedent for future exhibitions. Through consciously combining the modern and the native, this project was a demonstration of the politics of control – an analog to the imposition of metropolitan culture on the colonial context. However, due to the importance of this project as a symbol of Italian Rationalism, its implications can be taken to be the opposite. The *Padiglione delle colonie* also represents the mutation of the modern by the colonial.

The next major development in the representation of the Italian colonies in fairs and exhibitions was at the *Exposition coloniale internationale*, held in Paris in 1931. This exhibition was the final in a series of international colonial exhibitions – an event that enjoyed the participation of nearly all of the major colonizing nations.⁸⁷ According to Maréchal Lyautey, the General commissioner of the

⁸⁷ For a general presentation of this exhibition, see: Jean-Claude Vigato, "The Architecture of the Colonial Exhibitions in France," *Diados* 19 (March 1986): 24-37. Although the *Exposition coloniale internationale* was primarily an assertion of French colonizing power, the following countries also participated: Belgium, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United

exhibition and former Governor of Morocco, this exhibition was "permeated with the truth that it is with colonial action that one can... realize a notion of human solidarity."⁸⁸ The benevolence of these words belies the fact that this event was largely a nationalist gesture intended to communicate an image of a greater France to an international audience.⁸⁹ This exhibition was the culmination of a period of intensive activity related to France's colonies – an activity that resulted in the organization of academic conferences directly linked with the *Exposition coloniale* and the publication of numerous books on the accomplishments of French colonization.⁹⁰ The repercussions of this exhibition were also felt within Italy as, despite their direct participation in these events in France, a series of parallel activities were organized to compete with the image of French colonial power. The most

States. The only major colonial power that was missing was Great Britain, which had held the British Empire Exhibition in Wembley in 1924-25. Morton, "National and Colonial: The Musée des Colonies and the Colonial Exhibition, Paris, 1931," *The Art Bulletin* LXXX, 2 (June 1998): 357.

⁸⁸ In his introduction to a special issue of *L'Illustration*, Lyautey argues that the *Exposition coloniale internationale* of Paris marked a new stage in the evolution of the colonial enterprise – a stage of peace. This stage was defined by a knowledge of the benevolence of the colonial enterprise, which had surpassed the time of armed struggle and conflict. While the "immense labor already accomplished by the colonizing nations" was evident in the exhibition, it also illustrated that there remained much to accomplish. Lyautey, "Le sens d'un grand effort," *L'Illustration* (Special edition, July 1931): 1-2. For a critical assessment of the "modern" assumptions underlying the French colonial project, see: Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989).

⁸⁹ A. Demaison, in an introduction to the *Guide Officiel* asserts the didactic potential in this exhibition in communicating an image of the larger France. He argues that this event would "enlarge the moral and material horizon that your fathers were content with." However, more than mere material advantage, Demaison argues that French colonization brought improvements to the health and morality of the indigenous populations. Demaison, *Exposition Coloniale Internationale. Guide Officiel*, 17-21.

⁹⁰ During the course of the *Exposition coloniale internationale*, there were upwards of one hundred different conferences that were held in conjunction with this exhibition. These included the sixth International Conference of Tropical Agriculture, the Congress of the Indigenous Society and the International Congress of Transportation. See: Ministère des Colonies, *Exposition Coloniale Internationale de Paris 1931. Rapport Général présenté par Le Gouverneur Général Olivier. Tome IV. Vie de l'Exposition* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1933), 182-95, 325. With regard to publications, in addition to numerous publications on this exhibition, there were many on the French Colonies published around the time of this event, including: Henri Descamps, *L'architecture moderne au Maroc* (1930); Roland Lebel, *Histoire de la littérature coloniale en France* (1931); Robert Montagne, *Villages et kasbas berbères: tableau de la vie sociale des Berbères* (1930); Albert Sarraut, *Grandeur et Servitude Coloniales* (1931); and Léandre Vaillat, *Le Visage Français du Maroc* (1931).

prominent of these events were the *Congressi di studi coloniali*, held in Florence in April 1931 and the *Mostra internazionale d'arte coloniale*, held in Rome from October 1931 to January 1932 – both of which attempted to establish Italy's unique position as a colonizing nation.

The intentions behind the *Exposition coloniale internationale* were largely didactic – to communicate the extent and value of France's colonial possessions to a national and international audience. As Patricia Morton has noted, this agenda pertained to both the present state of these colonies and their future commercial potential.⁹¹ The message being communicated in all of these representations was of the enlightened nature of France's civilizing mission in its colonies – an effort that sought historical legitimacy in past colonizing activities. The assertion was that colonization was "a duty and a common interest" of modern Western societies that called upon them to share the fruits of their progress with less fortunate and "less evolved" cultures.⁹² The layout of the exhibition – which was located in the park setting of the Bois de Vincennes on the south-west edge of the city limits – followed quite directly from this call to educate the public. It was organized in two distinct zones, the first of which being the *Section métropolitain* which provided a transition from the city through pavilions like the *Cité des informations* and the *Musée permanent*. The concept of this area was to create "the spectacle of the forms

⁹¹ In her article "National and Colonial," Morton states: "The 1931 Colonial Exposition, in contrast to the colonial displays of previous exhibitions, was planned to convey the potential future as well as current reality of international colonization through pedagogical and accurate displays.. As envisaged by Marshall Lyautey, the exposition had two educational goals: first, to stimulate French business to invest in the colonies, and second, to overcome the apathy and even hostility that the French public felt toward its colonial empire." Morton, "National and Colonial: The Musée des Colonies at the Colonial Exposition, Paris, 1931," 357.

⁹² One example of this is an article by Pierre Deloncle in the special issue of *L'Illustration* on the *Exposition coloniale internationale*, where France's colonizing efforts were traced back to the European explorers of the 16th century, the colonization of North America in the 17th and the exploration and conquest of Africa by France in the 18th century. The colonial enterprise is described as follows: "it is in effect a duty and a common interest, that of bringing to less evolved people the benefits of all of the knowledge that the West has accumulated over the centuries." Deloncle, "La continuité de l'action coloniale française," *L'Illustration* (Special edition, July 1931): 9-13.

through which the metropole intends to persuade us of the colonies", while also communicating the rational basis for France's colonizing efforts.⁹³ The second zone was that of the park surrounding Lac Daumesnil, where the pavilions representing the colonial possessions of France, Belgium, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United States were set within a rambling "natural" landscape. [Figure 2.a-35]

The organization of the site and the design of pavilions were intended to reinforce the same dichotomy between the colonizer and the colonized that was the basis for the French colonial policy of association. The use of native forms in the exhibition was thus a materialization of colonial politics, presented under the guise of a faithful depiction of the indigenous cultures of each colonial territory. As Patricia Morton has recognized, these representations did not come without the kind of hybridity that was considered dangerous between the French and the local populations – a hybridity which, in architecture, brought the indigenous and the modern together.⁹⁴ One such example is the Moroccan pavilion, which was designed by Robert Fournes and Albert Laprade – a project which by all accounts

⁹³ The following argument is made by Léandre Vaillat about the *Section métropolitaines*: "If the Exposition coloniale presents the sum of regional architecture of our colonies, it offers before our eyes... the spectacle of forms through which the metropole intends to persuade us of the colonies. This precedence can be explained for many reasons: the first is that the different palaces, monuments and buildings with which the metropolitan works are manifest in the colonies, found before the main entrance, serves as a transition from the Parisian architecture to that of the colonies... The second, is that without colonization one cannot understand the colonies. The third, is that the colonial idea should reinforce the notion that the man in the street has of French imperialism, that it is not incompatible with their democratic and pacifist preferences." Vaillat, "Les Oeuvres Métropolitaines," *L'illustration* (Special edition, July 1931): 32-39. Patricia Morton's discussion of the *Musée des colonies* is particularly enlightening about how scientific research was used to validate France's colonial activities. Morton, "National and Colonial: The Musée des Colonies at the Colonial Exposition, Paris, 1931."

⁹⁴ In her Ph.D dissertation, Morton discusses the collection, the collage and the hybrid as the critical means through which the colonies were represented, although it is the hybrid that is most pertinent to the present discussion. She connects the problem hybrid in architecture with the fear of race mixing of the French with the local populations, noting that the representations of this exhibition attempt to place these pavilions in their colonial context, rather than in the Bois de Vincennes. According to Morton, the hybrid condition of these buildings came from their negotiation between Beaux-Arts planning and the simulation of the colonial context. Morton, *The civilizing mission of architecture: The 1931 International Colonial Exposition in Paris*, 150-54.

was a faithful reproduction of vernacular forms. [Figure 2.a-36] The synthetic quality of this project can be attributed to the research of Laprade and Jean Gallotti into the Arab houses of Morocco and Laprade's contemporary building activity in this colony – which included his collaboration on a project for a new medina in Casablanca from 1916-30.⁹⁵ In fact, this project was a collection of examples from the book of Laprade and Gallotti, synthesized into a new form – such as the hexagonal pavilion which was derived from the reception building at Dar-El-Beida in Marrakech.⁹⁶ This synthetic approach was similar to that taken in the French architecture in Morocco, which Léandre Vaillat argued "derives its beauty from the perfect adaptation to the climate and the local customs."⁹⁷ While the other pavilions in the *Exposition coloniale internationale* are more obviously a composite of modern materials and content and indigenous representations, the Moroccan pavilion offers a different condition of hybridity. This project reflects the disjuncture between an image of synthetic representation of "the native" and the serial assimilation of this culture through the expertise of the modern technician.

The Italian participation in the *Exposition coloniale internationale* consisted of the construction of three separate pavilions and the structuring of their surrounding landscape on the north-east bank of Lac Daumesnil. The first of these

⁹⁵ Laprade and the writer Gallotti published a book, *Le Jardin et la maison arabes au Maroc* (Paris: Albert Levy, 1924), which was a compilation of examples of Moroccan domestic architecture. It also proposed to be a guide to the design of houses in the traditional manner. Ibid., p. 160. The project for a new medina in Casablanca was a joint work of Laprade, Auguste Cadet and Edmond Brion. For a description of this project, see: Léandre Vaillat, *Le Visage français du Maroc* (Paris: Horizons de France, 1931), 14-15.

⁹⁶ Morton carefully enumerates a series of different connections between this pavilion and the book, including the building at Dar-el-Beida, the wooden ceilings in the interiors – which are related to a certain residential type – and the tile patterning and fountain within the main building which are related to other precedents. Morton, *The civilizing mission of architecture: The 1931 International Colonial Exposition in Paris*, 161.

⁹⁷ In a book published the same year as the Exposition Coloniale, Vaillat, argues that there was an evolution in the approach to architecture in this colony that went beyond "Louis XIV pastries" and "rented boxes". Architects were then practicing a neo-Arab style that reflected a new stage in the political climate of this colony. Vaillat, *Le visage français du Maroc*, 11-12.

was the main exhibition space designed by Armando Brasini, the second by Pietro Lombardi represented the *Isole italiane dell'Egeo*, and the third by Guido Fiorini accommodated a restaurant, bar and concert hall. Although each of these buildings were distinct in their stylistic approach, the heterogeneity of this presentation was lost in the various reports on this event, which placed the greatest emphasis on the main pavilion.⁹⁸ [Figure 2.a-37] To a great extent, the rhetorical prominence of this project was due to the correspondence between the architecture of this pavilion and the politics of Italian colonization projected by the Fascist authorities at this exhibition. The project by Brasini was a partial reconstruction, of the Basilica of Septimius Severus in Leptis Magna – a Roman monument whose excavation had only begun in 1929. The reasons given for this selection in the *Guide officiel de la section Italienne* were two-fold – the first being "the absence of characteristic monuments from the epochs more close to us" and the second "the desire to not repeat the traditional motifs of indigenous architecture, already exploited in the other sections of the Exhibition."⁹⁹ This evocation of classical Rome were echoed in the words of Prince Pietro Lanza di Scalea, who stated at the inauguration of this pavilion that "the civilization of Rome always protects its great influence, it is always alive... and also today the first flashes of a new social order come from the

⁹⁸ The pavilion by Lombardi was described as "a re-evocation... of the military and civic constructions of the historic rule of the Knights of Rhodes." Although it made reference to this architecture, the connections made were abstract rather than archeological. *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane*, "L'Italia all'Esposizione coloniale internazionale di Parigi," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* V, 6 (June 1931): 421-4. The project by Fiorini was an even more modern construction, which with a candid use of reinforced concrete resembled a work of Italian Rationalism.

⁹⁹ The following explanation is given by Brasini for his design: "The absence of characteristic monuments of the epochs more close to us and the desire to not repeat the traditional motifs of indigenous architecture already exploited in the other sections of the Exposition Coloniale of Paris, has led to the choice of one of the most majestic and rich edifices of the best period of Roman colonization of Africa as the principal motif of the Italian pavilion. In this manner, the actual work of Italy is linked to that of our ancestors." See "Description Générale des différents pavillons composant la section Italienne: La Basilique," *Guide Officiel de la section Italienne a l'Exposition Coloniale* (Paris: La Publicité De Rosa, 1931), 14-28.

Campidoglio under the Roman sign of Fascism."¹⁰⁰ The architecture of this pavilion was thus part of the broader political project of Italian Fascism, which attempted to elevate the status of the Italian colonization efforts in Africa by connecting them with those of classical Rome. [Figure 2.a-38]

The *Padiglione dell'Italia* by Brasini was, at one level, an archeological project involved in the reconstruction of an existing Roman monument from Italy's colonial possessions. This re-evocation of classical Rome is most strikingly evident in the interior of this pavilion, which is an accurate reproduction of the Basilica based on current archeological research. The extent to which this project was faithful to the original can be measured by the fact that plaster reproductions of the decoration of this Roman monument were brought from Leptis Magna to Paris during its construction.¹⁰¹ The pavilion by Brasini was also an eclectic assembly of references to Roman architecture brought together to form a new synthetic expression proper to the Fascist colonial project. The exterior of the pavilion had to be invented, as the original building in Leptis Magna was merely a monumental interior space imbedded in a continuous built fabric. This basilica was thus wrapped in a rhetorical skin

¹⁰⁰ Di Scalea was the President of the organizing committee of the Italian section of the Exposition, *ex-Ministro delle Colonie* and present Senator and *Ministro di Stato*. The more complete context of his statement is as follows: "The civilization of Rome always protects its great influence and is always alive; prevented through the centuries from becoming outdated. The Phoenicians and the Carthaginians established commerce, however without ever becoming colonizers. Rome appeared suddenly, and with the Imperial glory of its legions and its wisdom. Everything that concerns Rome stirs within us all, and its ruins are not and will never be a gigantic cemetery. It always renews itself, after the splendors of the pagan Empire until the light of Christianity; from the Renaissance of art to the Risorgimento of the Nation, and also today the first flashes of a new social order come from the Campidoglio under the Roman sign of Fascism." "Inauguration du magnifique Palais italien à l'Exposition Coloniale. Discours du Prince Di Scalea," *La Chronique des Expositions et des Foires XXIV* (May 1931): 3-5.

¹⁰¹ With regard to the accuracy of Brasini's work, it is important to note that Rodolfo Micacchi, Director of the *Ispettorato Scuole e Servizi Archeologici*, was on the organizing committee. An article on the *Exposition coloniale* in the journal *L'Italia Coloniale* notes the following: "We have seen the architect Ferruccio Brasini, brother of Armando, after just getting off the airplane that had taken him to Paris from Tripolitania, where he was expressly brought to take the plaster casts of the decorations of the Basilica of Septimius Severus of Leptis Magna. Therefore these will be faithfully reproduced in every detail." *Il viandante*, "L'Esposizione Coloniale Internazionale di Parigi, 1931," *L'Italia Coloniale VII*, 10 (October 1930): 188.

which responded to both the site conditions and the necessity of entry. The facade facing Lac Daumesnil – which was the back of the pavilion – presented a monumental face to this prominent setting. This solidity was only slightly mitigated by twenty-six classical columns that were attached to its surface. At the rear of the site, the building expressed its entry condition through a triumphal arch motif. This element projected from the body of the basilica interior in order to also create a space for the Military and Naval sections of the exhibition. Even the plan of the basilica was transformed by Brasini to suit its new status. It was cut in half by a large corridor that both linked the interior spaces with the rear facade and allowed for the creation of an exterior courtyard containing classical statuary in the northern end.

The rhetorical nature of the exterior of this project was largely a product of its status as a confirmation of Italian colonization efforts. In contrast with the Moroccan Pavilion of Fournez and Laprade, this compilation of scientific knowledge of North African architecture was based on a colonizing tradition, rather than a vernacular one. The emphasis on *romanità* also extended to the development of its interior spaces and the choice and arrangement of the material on display. Not only was the main exhibit space a reproduction of the Basilica of Septimius Severus – using both its materials and construction methods – all of the display spaces had the resemblance of a Roman building. Naturally, a great emphasis was placed on classical statuary and other references to the period of Roman colonization of North Africa, with the material related to the current state of Italy's four colonies in a lesser proportion and in the least prominent locations. This choice, it was argued, was in order to "not disturb the solemnity of the environment" with commercial displays, as this pavilion and its Roman contents were "sacred to all of the people of Europe."¹⁰²

¹⁰² P. D'Agostino Orsini di Camerota, in an article on the Colonial Exposition of Paris makes the following statement about the Brasini project: "It is Rome that speaks in the pavilion that the genius of Brasini know how to create, because the Basilica of Septimius Severus can speak to all people, white and colored, the language that only Rome knows and can speak to the world. As

The documentation of Italy's colonies was thus relegated to the two galleries flanking the main entry and the long gallery space between the basilica and the facade facing Lac Daumesnil. The main space of the basilica – including the central corridor and exterior courtyard – was reserved for a combination of classical statuary, busts and bas-reliefs – all of which were plaster reproductions from Roman archeological sites in North Africa.¹⁰³ [Figure 2.a-39] The approach taken to the display of these "original" materials was similar to that employed in the new archeological museum in Leptis Magna, also from 1931, where classical fragments are placed within an architectural frame that is suggestive of their Roman origins, and supplemented by drawings, models and other related representations. [Figure 2.a-40]

The Italian participation in the *Exposition coloniale internationale* of Paris represents a new stage in the politics of representation of the indigenous culture of Italy's African colonies. Set within the context of a display of French colonial power, the *Padiglione dell'Italia* literally marginalized these cultures. Summoning its Roman legacy in Africa was a means for the Fascist authorities to assert the superiority of their nation and legitimize their colonial activities. The pavilion by Brasini also represents of the most direct applications of the scientific practices in a colonial exhibition– a discipline that, in this case, was provided by the field of

solemn in the exterior as the interior, it has in this collection of plaster casts of the principal Libyan statues, Roman and Greek masterworks, something that distinguishes it from the commercial interior of the other pavilions; commercial interior that also we have, but that opportunely was relegated in the adjacent areas and limited as much as possible, to not disturb the solemnity of the environment, sacred to all of the people of Europe." D'Agostino Orsini di Camerota, "Che cosa è stata e che cosa ha significato l'Esposizione di Parigi," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* V, 12 (December 1931): 940-50.

¹⁰³ For a detailed summary of the material on display in the main basilica space, corridor and courtyard, See: "Description Générale des différents pavillons composant la section Italienne: La Basilique." *Guide Officiel de la section Italienne a l'Exposition Coloniale*, 15-23. The statues on display included the Venus of Cirene, Apollo of Delphi, Aphrodite, Mercury and Eros. The most prominent bas-reliefs in the main space were taken from the triumphal arch of Septimius Severus at Leptis Magna. The extent of scientific interest can be measured by the fact that a limited number of the reproductions on display in the exhibition were published (in French) in a book by Rodolfo Micacchi, entitled: *Sculptures antiques en Libye* (Bergamo: Istituto Italiano d'arti grafiche, 1931).

archeology. However, the displays in *Padiglione dell'Italia* were not only scientific reconstructions of Roman precedents. They can also be understood as scenographic projections of colonial ambition. The implications of this project within architectural discourse are no less significant. Carlo Enrico Rava argued that the use of an archeological model to represent the Italian colonies was a sign of "impotence and ignorance" – revealing the inability of Italy to create a contemporary colonial architecture and illustrating a false belief that Roman architecture could or should be realized in 1931.¹⁰⁴ However, rather than attempt to connect the project of Brasini with the development of a modern colonial architecture, it may be more accurate to link it with the modernity of the indigenous village. Under the aegis of modern research, the *Padiglione dell'Italia* offered the direct experience of past imperial glory as a representation of present colonial power.

Although there were numerous colonial displays within Italy following the *Exposition coloniale internationale* in Paris, this exhibition marked the last significant international event related to colonial representation.¹⁰⁵ The next major reference point in this discourse was the inauguration of the permanent home of the *Museo coloniale* by Benito Mussolini on October 21, 1935 – a mere eighteen days

¹⁰⁴ In discussing the lack of consideration for the problem of a colonial architecture, Rava states: "...we should not be very surprised, when we learn from the newspapers that the Italian pavilion at the great Exposition Coloniale of Paris – that opens in these days and will be the most important of those that have been organized up to now – will be constituted by a reproduction in small of the so-called "Basilica of Septimius Severus" at Leptis Magna, reproduction with which contemporary Italian architecture will give, before the world, a double proof, of impotence and of ignorance, truly unworthy of a civilized people: impotence, because the Italian pavilion, repeating once more an archaeological model, will make one suppose, wrongfully, that Italy of today, imperial and fascist, may not be able to find in itself the strength to create its own contemporary colonial architecture; ignorance, because they imagine that they are able to reproduce in a reduced scale a building conceived in greater proportions and that solely in this could realize its beauty – equivalent to ignoring the very significance of the word architecture." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna. Parte prima," 39-40.

¹⁰⁵ Following the Paris *Exposition coloniale*, the only similar international event was the *Mostra del Sahara*, held in Paris in 1934. All other colonial representations by Italy consisted in participation in international fairs and exhibitions whose overall themes were not colonial. These were the International Fairs in Lausanne (1933), Angola, Bremen, Budapest and Vienna (all 1938), and Leipzig (1940), and International exhibitions in New York and Tokyo (1939).

after Italy's invasion of Ethiopia. This "Imperial" museum had an obvious propagandistic mission that was aimed at validating Italy's actions in Ethiopia, something that was not lost on the various commentators that discussed this institution. One such account from the journal *Rivista delle Colonie* argued that this museum had the task of explaining the true value of conquest in both "the history of possession" and the "description of possession." That is, it was understood as a "demonstration that also authenticates the Empire in the face of moral and civic laws."¹⁰⁶ The need for the *Museo coloniale* to provide justification for Italy's war in Ethiopia is evident in its organization in three distinct categories – historic, military and ethnographic. The displays of the economic potential of the colonies were thus relegated to the modest galleries on the second floor.¹⁰⁷ This propagandistic drive was also evident in exhibits like the *Sala delle arme abissine*, whose bellicose appearance demonstrated Italy's aggressive actions in Ethiopia. [Figure 2.a-41] Moreover, conspicuously absent from such presentations are the clutter and variety of earlier displays. The museum had thus become both more scientific – reducing its exhibits to dry and deftly controlled presentations – and more political – the organization and content of these exhibits acting as a documentation of a will to Empire.

¹⁰⁶ In this article about the *Museo dell'Impero d'Italia* written in 1941, Guido Guida states: "... arms, thrones and crowns, flags and necklaces, the signs of plunder of war are not enough, it needs to explain to you the value of things conquered, in territories, in habits, in religion, in customs, in products. It is not that folklore should prevail, not that the abundance of the promised land should already be explained to you. One must not forget alongside the history of possession, the description of possession – the limit between what is acquired and what is introduced, between what is found and what grows – it is the demonstration that also authenticates the Empire in the face of moral and civic laws." Guida, "Il Museo dell'Impero d'Italia," *Rivista delle Colonie* XV, 9-10 (September-October 1941): 2221-38.

¹⁰⁷ For a general description of the organization and content of the *Museo coloniale* in 1937, see: R.S., "Il Museo Coloniale: Gioiello dell'urbe," *L'Italia Coloniale* XIV, 9 (September 1937): 139. A second and more detailed source is a guide book of the Museo Coloniale produced after the war. See: *Piccolo Guida del Museo dell'Africa Italiana* (Roma: Tip. Tusculum, 1950). Although the *Museo* had been transformed to eliminate the *Sezione militare*, this book is a good reference to the history of this institution and its transition to its present status as the *Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente*.

After the conquest in Ethiopia and the declaration of Empire by Mussolini on May 9, 1936, the purpose of the *Museo coloniale* changed from that of justifying Italy's war in Africa to one of documenting it. The *Ufficio Studi* of the newly renamed *Ministero dell'Africa Italiana* initiated a propaganda campaign in favor of Italy's colonies in Africa that included a series of exhibits at foreign fairs and international exhibitions beginning in 1938.¹⁰⁸ These displays are notable for a number of reasons, not the least of which being their uncanny resemblance to similar exhibits in the *Museo coloniale*. Their mission would thus seem to have become fused with that of the museum – to both explicate and justify a politics of Empire. In fact, these exhibits had literally become the museum – which had been closed in 1937 and did not open again until after World War II.¹⁰⁹ It is also notable that the components of these exhibitions, like the *Mostra del Ministero dell'Africa Italiana* at the International Fair in Budapest in 1938, were standardized elements arranged to suit the minor differences of each situation. [Figure 2.a-42] Through an austere museum aesthetic, photographs of Italy's colonies, glass cabinets containing ethnographic objects and wall mounted groupings of indigenous weaponry became mere signs to communicate a political message. The museum had given way to the traveling display, ordered according to an inexorably modern logic.

The final colonial representation to take place during the period of this study was the *Mostra triennale delle terre italiane d'oltremare*, which was inaugurated in

¹⁰⁸ For a detailed description of the activities of the Ufficio Studi, see: "L'Opera dell'Ufficio Studi del Ministero dell'Africa Italiana", in "La Ricognizione Scientifica," *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana* II, 1 (March 1939): 968-72. The activity of this office in the area of publication is particularly notable, including the journal *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana* (from 1939) and a series of books published under the larger title "Collezione scientifica e documentaria sull'Africa Orientale Italiana." One such publication was Emilio Scarin's *L'Insediamento umano della Libia occidentale* of 1940.

¹⁰⁹ Castelli, "Dal collezionismo etnografico al Museo di propaganda. La parabola del Museo Coloniale in Italia," 119. The author explains that despite the intense interest in the museum after the conflict in Ethiopia, it was closed in 1937 and remained so until 1947.

Naples on May 19, 1940.¹¹⁰ Organized in the months following the conquest in Ethiopia, this exhibition was presented as "the largest and most complete survey of the force of Italian expansion overseas, from Caesar to Mussolini" – the intention being to contextualize Italy's present colonial expansion in relation to the historical legacy of conquest and dominance in this region.¹¹¹ This goal was to a great extent a product of the current political crisis in Europe, which saw Germany invade Poland in September of 1939 to begin World War II, and Italy attempt to position itself as a major power in the Mediterranean – their annexation of Albania taking place in March of 1939.¹¹² This exhibition was organized into three different sections, presenting the historical, geographical and economic dimensions of Italy's overseas activities. The first of these were pavilions which documented the history of Italian conquest, organized according to their period – from Rome, to the Marine Republics, to explorers, missionaries and pioneers, to colonial wars, to the creation of an Empire in Africa under Fascism. The geographical group of pavilions provided a contemporary survey of the political, social, economic and religious activities in each Italy's overseas territories – including Albania, East Africa, Libya, and the Italian Aegean Islands. The final series of pavilions involved the presentation of production and work related to all of these possessions, organized thematically according to

¹¹⁰ In the strictest sense, this was the last Italian colonial exhibition. Italy had lost all of its colonial possessions through the course of World War II, East Africa falling in 1941 and Libya in the spring of 1943. Although there were exhibitions by the Ministero dell'Africa Italiana after the war – including exhibitions in Bari from 1947-54, in Rome in 1949, in Milano in 1951-59, in Taranto in 1951-52, in Napoli in 1952-53 and in New York in 1951 – these were all held under the more vague heading of "Lavori italiani in Africa."

¹¹¹ The more complete context of this quotation is as follows: "The prima Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare, inaugurated in Napoli the 19th of May by His Majesty the King, Emperor, represents the largest and most complete survey of the force of Italian expansion overseas, from Caesar to Mussolini. It is an assembly of powerful works, rising in a short span of time, that form, in their assembly, a new, great, beautiful and interesting city." Anna Dal Pozzo Gaggiotti, "La prima Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare a Napoli - Anno XVIII," *Emporium* XLVI, 8 (August 1940): 57.

¹¹² The most important dates of these events are as follows: Germany annexes Austria, March 1939; Germany annexes Czechoslovakia and Mussolini Albania, March 1939; Hitler invades Poland and World War II begins, September 3, 1939. Martin Clark, *Modern Italy. 1871-1982* (London and New York: Longman, 1984), 280-85.

activities or materials – including race, culture and propaganda, fishing, grains, electrical technologies and the building industry.¹¹³

The exhibition was located in the Campi Flegrei area north-west of Naples – a flat plain surrounded by hills with its own links to classical Rome.¹¹⁴ The urban dimension of the *Mostra d'oltremare* can be seen in the arrangement of the various pavilions, which were linked through a generous structure of streets, fountains and landscape that lent a lush quality to the site. [Figure 2.a-43] The planning of this project is somewhat in contrast with a contemporary project, the *Esposizione Universale di Roma* (EUR) – an "Olympics of civilization" that was to take place in 1942 but never completed due to the outbreak of World War II.¹¹⁵ [Figure 2.a-44]

¹¹³ The following is a list of the various pavilions and displays according to their sections: A. Historical section: 1. Expansion of Rome in the Mediterranean, Africa and Asia; 2. Marine republics and Italian Navy in the 19th century; 3. Pioneers and explorers in Africa; 4. Colonial conquests; 5. Armed forces: Army, Navy, Air Force; 6. Tower of the Partito Nazionale Fascista. B. Geographical section: 1. East Africa with Villaggio indigeno; 2. Libia; 3. Italian islands in the Aegean; 4. Italian expansion in the East; 5. Catholic civilization in Africa; 6. Albania in Mediterranean civilization. C. Section of work and production: 1. Race; 2. Culture and propaganda; 3. Books and journals; 4. Health (Medicine, hygiene, veterinary medicine); 5. Hunting and zoology; 6. Fishing; 7. Colonization; 8. Fruits and vegetables; 9. Grains; 10. Colonial produce (tobacco, tea, cocoa, sugar, coffee); 11. Agricultural machinery; 12. Publicity tower; 13. Forestry and wood; 14. Technique; 15. Electrical technologies; 16. Textiles; 17. Furnishings; 18. Clothing; 19. Food products; 20. Motors; 21. Railways; 22. Trucking; 23. Radio connections and cables; 24. Building industry; 25. Mining; 26. Post, telegraph and telephone; 27. Ports and lighthouses; 28. Seamen; 29. Air service; 30. Marine service; 31. Commerce; 32. Credit. These three major sections were supplemented by two smaller groups of facilities the first being Art, archeology and various entertainment related attractions and the second being Services. Marconi, "La prima Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare," *Architettura XX*, 1-2 (January-February 1941): 4.

¹¹⁴ The following description of the site and its history comes from a tourist brochure on the *Mostra d'Oltremare*: "The Exhibition will rise in one of the most beautiful zones of Napoli, rich with historic memories: the Flegrea zone, the place where – in Cuma – Aeneas heard the prophecy of the greatness of Rome, where the cave of the Sibyl and the lake of Avernus still exist, port of the dead; where amphitheatres, ruins of temples, villas, baths and military works, say how much Imperial Rome might have preferred this locality." See: *Triennale d'Oltremare-Napoli 1940-XVIII*. ASMAE-MAI Archivio Segreto-61. Sottofascicolo 4-II.

¹¹⁵ Not unlike the *Mostra d'Oltremare*, the serious planning for the *Esposizione Universale di Roma* began after the conquest in Ethiopia in May of 1936. This event was to be an official World's Fair, the approval for which was secured in June of 1936 (the original application was, in fact made in November 1935). Billed as an Olympics of civilization, this event was intended to stake Italy's claim as a peaceful and culturally rich nation. No less than with the *Mostra d'Oltremare*, this exhibition was also linked to an urban strategy – in this case the creation of a new "axis" which was to link modern Rome to the Mediterranean Sea as it had been during ancient Rome. Although EUR did not represent the colonies, it was inspired by the same idea of a Mediterranean Empire that was presented in the *Mostra d'Oltremare*. For a concise presentation

The regulatory plan of EUR shows a much more rigid hierarchy of streets and open spaces that were all linked through the singular gesture of a central avenue. In the case of the *Mostra d'oltremare*, no such unifying element exists. Rather, the various structuring spaces are developed as a variable pattern which is constantly being shifted and deferred.¹¹⁶ This basic difference between these projects also extends into their architectural development. While EUR represents Italian civilization through a relatively uniform language of modern classicism, the buildings in the *Mostra d'oltremare* – due to the necessity of depicting the overseas territories – developed a more heterogeneous language related to modern, classical and vernacular sources.

The vernacular references in the *Mostra d'oltremare* reflect the mutation of the discourse of colonial representation under the most extreme historical conditions. The first of these transformations is more specifically architectural, and is best expressed the *Padiglione della Libia* by Florestano Di Fausto – an architect of eclectic tendencies who had become the most significant figure in the public architecture of Libya under the Governorship of Italo Balbo.¹¹⁷ In this building, Di

of EUR, see: Giorgio Ciucci, "The Classicism of E 42: Between Modernity and Tradition," *Assemblage* 8 (February 1989): 79-87.

¹¹⁶ For a detailed description of the design of landscape in the *Mostra d'Oltremare*, which was designed by Luigi Piccinato and Carlo Cocchia, see: Piccinato, "L'Architettura del verde e delle fontane alla Mostra Triennale delle Terre d'Oltremare a Napoli," in *Scritti Vari, 1925-1974, 1975-1977. Part 2. S. 1* (Roma: Luigi Piccinato, 1977), 693-705. In this article, Piccinato argues: "the architecture of landscape should be aimed at highlighting that of the buildings, of forming for it an indispensable environment composing an indissoluble block in which the limits of what is built and what is planted is uncertain." He goes on to say that rather than thinking of this project as a garden being placed within a pre-existing regulatory plan for buildings, the task was to make it a garden in which the exhibition could be located.

¹¹⁷ Di Fausto was trained in the *Accademia di belli arti* in Rome, graduating in 1922. He was then the director of the *Ufficio Tecnico* of the *Ministero degli Affari Esteri*, constructing numerous buildings for this ministry in Eastern Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. He was also the main architect of the Aegean Island of Rhodes, where he worked from 1923-28 on the regulatory plan and many public buildings. He became *Consulente per l'architettura del Municipio di Tripoli* in 1932 after the death of Alessandro Limongelli and was responsible for the most important public buildings under Italo Balbo (1934-40). See: Giuseppe Miano, "Florestano di Fausto," in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani. Vol. 40* (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1991), 1-5.

Fausto created an abstract synthesis of vernacular constructions which seem to be almost literal re-enactments of their original forms. This quality is particularly evident in the central courtyard space which captures the atmosphere of North Africa through a subtle combination of arcades, simple vertical masses and landscape.¹¹⁸ [Figure 2.a-45] This approach to design was outlined by Di Fausto in an article entitled "Visione mediterranea della mia architettura," where he underscored the necessity to respect the building traditions of each region in any modern construction.¹¹⁹ This work thus represents the development of the premises explored in the *Padiglione delle colonie* of Larco and Rava. In this case, however, Di Fausto appropriated indigenous forms in a much more direct way – an approach that essentially prepared the ground for the critique of modern architecture implicit in the regionalist architecture after World War II.

The second of these mutations is best expressed in the *Villaggio indigeno* of the *Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale* – a display which represents the complete annihilation of indigenous culture through the intersection of scientific practices and racist politics. This village was conceived as an extension of the ethnographic and anthropological exhibit within the pavilion, and contained over fifty men, women and children from Eritrea, Somalia and Ethiopia.¹²⁰ It was comprised of a series of *tukul* huts, nomad tents, a small mosque and a Coptic church, all of which were located in a carefully designed exotic landscape of a small lake, palm and tamarind

¹¹⁸ For a general description of the *Padiglione della Libia*, see: Uberto Siola, *La Mostra d'Oltremare e Fuorigrotta* (Electa: Napoli, 1990), 128-9. See also A.S. "La Libia alla Mostra delle Terre d'Oltremare," *L'Azione Coloniale* (24 August 1939); and "Mostra della Libia. Arch. F. Di Fausto," *Architettura* XX, 1-2 (January-February 1941): 46-8.

¹¹⁹ In this article, Di Fausto states: "Working on the coast or in the Mediterranean islands, I felt these traditions revive in me and give to my constructions the necessity of respecting them – that necessity which, without creating any impediment to the sensations of the new, is also and above all liberty." Di Fausto, "Visione mediterranea della mia architettura," 16-18.

¹²⁰ For a general description of this exhibit and the *Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale*, see: *La Mostra d'Oltremare e Fuorigrotta*, 126-7. See also Armando Cepollaro, "La prima Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare a Napoli. Africa Orientale Italiana," *Emporium* XLVI, 8 (August 1940): 65-6.

trees and gently meandering pathways. In contrast with previous indigenous villages, this one was conceived with "meticulous accuracy in all of its minor details" – something that was in part due to the fact that the various buildings were constructed by the inhabitants. [Figure 2.a-46] To make this exhibition even more realistic, the villagers performed various craft related activities for the benefit of the visitors to the exhibition. It was an ethnographic exhibit that allowed the visitor to vicariously experience the living conditions of the indigenous populations in East Africa, but without ever leaving the space of the exhibition.¹²¹

The *Villaggio indigeno* at the *Mostra d'oltremare* was conceived and executed according to the highest standards of scientific accuracy. Rather than a representation of the indigenous culture of Italy's East African colonies, it offered itself as its more accurate replacement. In presenting this "reality," the backwardness of these African peoples was contrasted with the history of Italy's cultural dominance in the Mediterranean. This argument is echoed in contemporary articles published in journals like *Difesa della Razza*, where anthropologist Lidio Cipriani launched a racist campaign of justifying Italy's colonial policies in East Africa based on the genetic inferiority of this region's populations.¹²² If the *Padiglione della Libia*

¹²¹ The following is the caption of a series of images published in *L'Illustrazione Italiana*: "One of the corners of the *Triennale d'Oltremare* where the interests and the curiosity of the public converge in great measure is without a doubt the *Villaggio dell'Africa Orientale*, reconstructed with meticulous accuracy in all of its minor details. To populate it, natives from every race and every locality that live according to their customs and attend to their normal work were called from the lands of the Empire. In this way not only was a picturesque aspect created in the Exhibition but it has put the visitor in the position to directly give account of the conditions of life of the indigenous populations in our territories of the Empire." *L'Illustrazione Italiana* LXVII, 22 (2 June 1940): 841.

¹²² In an article entitled "Razzismo e possessi coloniali," Cipriani – who was the Director of the *Museo Nazionale di Antropologia e di Etnologia* of Florence – argues that the European exploitation of Africa's resources was justified based on a racial difference. That is, black Africans were biologically and genetically incapable of activities other than agriculture and satisfying their immediate needs. They were also deemed to be unable to assimilate European culture and thus progress. In one of the choicest statements he argues: "The racist doctrine allows one to say the truth [about the colonizing action] without hypocrisy; the Europeans dominate Africa because they have the duty and the right to do so." Cipriani, "Razzismo e possessi coloniali," *Difesa della Razza* I, 3 (5 September 1938): 16-17.

represents a transition to a new kind of representation of the vernacular – one that is grounded in the concept of regionalism – the *Villaggio indigeno* represents the end of such representations. This demise is both literal and metaphorical. On the 10th of June 1940, less than one month after the opening of the *Mostra d'Oltremare*, Italy reluctantly joined Germany in World War II – something that resulted in the premature closing of this exhibition. In one of the saddest chapters of Italian colonialism, due to the conflict in the Mediterranean, the inhabitants spent the better part of three years in a virtual concentration camp that they had made for themselves.¹²³ This was the last indigenous village created by any colonial power.

¹²³ For a detailed written documentation of this series of events, see: ASMAE-MAI.AP-93. Fascicolo 314, 318. This group of indigenous populations from East Africa remained at the exhibition site until April 8, 1943 when they were moved to the site of an abandoned villa in Treia (Macerata). On the date of the final correspondence – November 16, 1943 - of the 53 original members of this group, two had been killed, one had died, and seven had escaped. Four children were born in 1943. There was no record in these files of the ultimate fate of the remaining people.

B. The *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* and the Politics of Representation

Since, for too long in Italy there were still many skeptics concerning the interest that Tripolitania could offer... I have thought that a distinctive appeal that, in some way, would compel a respectable number of visitors to go, precisely, to Tripolitania, would serve, without a doubt, to carry along many others. Though various initiatives came to mind, I convinced myself... that the best was one that, *a priori*, combining the useful and the enjoyable, would attract the indigenous person to examine Italian products, giving them a precise vision of that which, for us, is business and industry, and demonstrate to our fellow countrymen how much the Colony reaps what it is and promises to become from the soil and the labor.

Emilio De Bono, "La prima *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli*," 1926.¹

For ten years, the *Fiera* has kept the attention of Italian producers awake for Italian Africa, succeeding in interesting them and forming the necessary mental address, on the basis of which the great interest that today many hold for our colonies has emerged. It was truly a difficult struggle, fighting against the incredulity and the skepticism of men... Ten years were enough to pass the test, so that the tenth Manifestation, last year, already constituted the certain sign of Victory; by then the *Fiera di Tripoli* was heard and ineluctably affirmed. Then the Empire came, and on the level of the Empire, the *Fiera* has found its great position and its great economic function.

Alessandro Melchiori, "Premessa," *XI Fiera di Tripoli. XI Manifestazione internazionale intercoloniale*, 1937.²

¹ The original quote is as follows: "E siccome, purtroppo, in Italia si era molto scettici ancora circa l'interesse che la Tripolitania poteva offrire, così ho pensato che un'attrazione particolare - la quale obbligasse in certo modo un numero rispettabile di visitatori a recarsi appunto in Tripolitania - avrebbe servito senza dubbio di romorchio a parecchi altri. Affacciatemisi alla mente varie iniziative, ho finito col convincermi... che la migliore era a priori quella, la quale, accoppiando l'utile al dilettevole, richiamasse gli indigeni ad osservare intanti i prodotti del lavoro italiano, desse loro una visione esatta di ciò che sono il commercio e l'industria e mostrasse ai connazionali quanto raccoglie la Colonia dalla terra e dal lavoro, che cosa è e che cosa promette di diventare." Emilio De Bono, "La prima Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli sarà una grande affermazione coloniale (Nostra intervista con il generale De Bono)," *La Tribuna* (19 September 1926): 2. Interview by Giuseppe Cavaciocchi.

² The original quote is as follows: "Per dieci anni, la Fiera ha tenuto desta l'attenzione dei produttori italiani sull'Africa italiana, riuscendo ad interessarli e a formare quell'indirizzo mentale necessario, sulla base del quale ha divampato il grande interesse che oggi tutti nutrono per le nostre colonie. È stata veramente una lotta improba, combattuta contro l'incredulità e lo scetticismo degli uomini... Dieci anni erano bastati a superare la prova, talchè la X Manifestazione costituì di già, lo scorso anno, il segno certo della Vittoria; ormai la Fiera di Tripoli era sentita e si era ineluttabilmente affermata. È venuta poi l'Impero, e sul piano dell'Impero la Fiera ha trovato il suo grande posto e la sua grande funzione economica." Alessandro Melchiori, "Premessa," *XI*

The most significant colonial exhibition to be organized in the Italian colonies was the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* – a display of metropolitan and colonial goods held in this North African city on an annual basis between 1927 and 1939.³ This event was parallel to and closely linked with the representation of Italy's colonies in exhibitions and fairs in Italy and Europe in the 1920s and 30s – which combined the need to communicate the value of Italy's colonial possessions to a wider audience with the desire to establish stronger economic and commercial ties between the metropolitan and colonial contexts. There are also a number of substantial differences between these two types of colonial representations – distinctions that are due, at least in part, to the fact that the *Fiera di Tripoli* was held in the colonial context. This exhibition was a crucial medium through which an image of Italian metropolitan society was disseminated to the indigenous populations – something that created a more complex relationship between the didactic intentions of this event and its various audiences. However, the *Fiera di Tripoli* was more than a mere representation of the metropolitan in the colonial context. It was a significant attraction in the tourist calendar of Tripolitania – an event that drew Italian and European visitors to experience this region of North Africa. In this sense, this exhibition was a literal mechanism for the exchange between the metropolitan and the colonial.

The potential of the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* as a vehicle of economic and cultural exchange between Italy and North Africa was recognized from its

Fiera di Tripoli. XI Manifestazione internazionale intercoloniale. Prima mostra coloniale dell'Impero fascista (Roma: Arti Grafiche Fratelli Palombi, 1937), 24.

³ There were some minor colonial exhibitions held in the colonies including the *Mostra dell'Eritrea*, held in Asmara in 1932; the *Mostra di pitture e sculture*, held in Gimma in 1937; the *Mostra di prodotti autarchici*, held in Gimma in 1940; and the *Mostra dei prodotti eritrei*, held in Asmara in 1943. The only permanent exhibition other than the *Fiera di Tripoli* was the *Mostra dei prodotti coloniali* held in Benghazi from 1930. This exhibition was, in reality, more like a museum, being a small collection of the products of industry and indigenous artisanry. See: ASMAE-MAI.3-40, fascicolo 1; ASMAE-MAI.3-44, fascicolo 1; ASMAE-MAI.3-47, fascicolo 2.

inception – something that is quite clearly conveyed in an interview with then Governor of Tripolitania Emilio De Bono in the Roman newspaper *La Tribuna* in September of 1926. After outlining a conversation he had with Benito Mussolini during his visit to this colony in April of that year – a discussion that he suggested was the impetus for this exhibition – De Bono proceeds to outline the mechanics of the upcoming *Fiera di Tripoli* and its general intentions.⁴ Conceived as a presentation of Italian goods similar to that found in the various "Fiere campionarie" throughout Italy, this event was intended to "generally promote commerce and trade between the Colony and the Mother country."⁵ In fact, the term, *Fiera campionaria*, can be translated as "trade fair" – or more precisely "exhibition of samples" – a definition which communicates the economic and commercial intentions of these events. The *Fiera di Tripoli* was also viewed by De Bono as an act of patriotism – a dimension that was linked to its function as an instrument of colonial propaganda. This exhibition was intended to foster a colonial consciousness in Italy through "cultivating the sense, the sentiment and the colonial passion in a people who... still do not have it, or... do not have enough of it."⁶

⁴ In this interview, De Bono communicates the following exchange with Mussolini during his visit to Tripolitania: "...among the topics of the conversations held, His Excellency Mussolini also dwelled on that of exhibitions and fairs, pointing out the great flowering of them in recent years... and without going into examples, recognizing the utility and opportunity. "Good – then, I exclaimed – I was intending to hold one in Tripoli!" - "In Tripoli, yes, I understand – the Duce responded right away – and I will help you!" - "Very well – I responded – Thank you and I ask you in advance to accept the high patronage." - "I will accept." Thus, resolutely, according to his habit, closed the brief dialogue of the Head of Government." De Bono, "La prima Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli sarà una grande affermazione coloniale," 2. This conversation, though likely fictitious, became a kind of myth of origin of this exhibition that was referred to in numerous other publications.

⁵ The larger context of this statement is as follows: "...I have great faith in the benefits that will come from this Exhibition, which – equal with the aim to generally promote commerce and trade between the Colony and the Mother country – will give importance to a fact of highly patriotic interest, because the activity of cultivating the sense, the sentiment and the colonial passion in a people that, frankly speaking, still do not possess it or, at least, do not have enough of it, is to some degree patriotism." *Ibid.*, 2.

⁶ De Bono goes on to assert: "The only memory of the negligence with which the previous governments treated all of the colonial questions; the aversion... for the word colony, roused and inoculated by that which is the recent past of our Country, they must awaken that reactive spirit in every fascist so as to place colonial problems in the foreground of Italian politics." *Ibid.*, 2.

This propagandistic dimension of the *Fiera* was understood by De Bono as relating to both metropolitan and colonial audiences – something that lent this exhibition a distinctly hybrid quality. This exhibition was conceived as a demonstration to Italians and foreigners of the present accomplishments and future potential of this colony. These sentiments are well expressed in the inaugural address to the first *Fiera campionaria* in 1927, where in referring to the agricultural potential of this colony De Bono stated: "it now falls on the Italians to persuade themselves that on this fourth shore of our sea there are not arid lands, nor seas of sand, but fecund lands that eagerly await the arms of our great farmers."⁷ The *Fiera* was thus intended to be an affirmation of Italy's promise as a colonizing nation that would serve to encourage the continuing development of this region. This exhibition was also expected to convince the Libyans of the technical advancement and political strength of modern Fascist Italy in a manner that would justify their colonial politics.⁸ It is in this regard that De Bono expressed a deep and abiding concern for the response of the local populations of Tripolitania to this exhibition – an exhibition that was to illustrate that Italy would provide them with "everything that is necessary to increase [their] well-being and [their] civilization."⁹ However, the

⁷ This statement follows a discussion of the indigenous populations, whose "consciousness.... has been completely remade" under the rule of Fascism. This almost spiritual remaking is in contrast with the "scientific" and economic basis for the support of Italians of the colonial enterprise, which was being assisted by "scientists, industrialists, practitioners, merchants and producers." See "L'inaugurazione della Fiera," *L'Italia Coloniale* IV, 3 (March 1928): 44.

⁸ In most of the discussions of the *Fiera*, an equal emphasis is placed on its economic and its propagandistic or rhetorical value. In the first *Fiera* many of the products of industry were related to agriculture – a focus that was linked to the agricultural development of the North African colonies. With regard to the role of the local populations, De Bono notes in this interview that their displays were being handled by the same people who organized the exhibition of colonial products at the yearly Fairs in Milan. De Bono, "La prima Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli sarà una grande affermazione coloniale." 2.

⁹ In the inaugural address to the first *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli*, De Bono spoke directly to the local populations, stating: "The Exhibition that is inaugurated today is proof of how the hearts and the minds of Italians are towards you. In entering in this enclosure you will be able to see that Italy is a Power second to none for what reflects production, for everything that represents the most modern progress. Convince yourselves that in Italy you may find everything that is necessary to increase your well-being and your civilization. You can find here the most effective

Libyans were deemed to be more than grateful recipients of the benign leadership of the Italians in North Africa. They were "pervaded by the spirit of Fascism" – their relationship to the Italian authorities being one of incorporation, rather than mere association.¹⁰

The dual nature of the *Fiera di Tripoli* – that is, as a colonial representation for a metropolitan audience and a metropolitan representation for a colonial one – was closely tied to the politics of Italian colonialism, where the image of Italy as a modern nation coincided with its status as a colonizing power. These political views had already been articulated by Benito Mussolini during his visit to Tripolitania in April of 1926, where gestures aimed at asserting Italy's historical claim to colonizing this region combined with projections of its future development under Fascism.¹¹ Perhaps the best example of this fusion of colonialism with Fascist rhetoric can be seen in a speech given by Mussolini to the Primo Convegno Agricolo Nazionale Coloniale at the Teatro Miramare in Tripoli. In recognizing the creation of a "new generation" of individuals "shaped by Fascism," Mussolini asserts that their fundamental virtues of "tenacity, perseverance and method... must shine above all in the Colonies."¹² In other words, the attributes that Fascism was espousing – such as

and real expression of what Italy knows to do and wants to do." "L'inaugurazione della Fiera," 44.

¹⁰ In discussing the influence of a more intransigent approach in the recent politics related to the local populations, De Bono stated: "...the consciousness of the Arabs and Berbers is being completely remade. They know what Italy wants, and that it can have what it wants. They feel the renewed spirit of our nation. They are also pervaded by the spirit of Fascism. They have complete and absolute faith in the magnificent Duce, from whom they have learned tenacity and desire." *Ibid.*, 44. As previously noted, the approach of the Italians to the colonization of North Africa was one of incorporating this region into the larger Italy, while the French maintained a more strict policy of association, whereby the metropolitan and colonial were maintained as separate realities.

¹¹ This combination of colonialism and Fascism was well expressed in a speech given at the seat of the Fascist party in Tripoli, Mussolini stated: "It is not without significance that draw my omen on the shore of this sea that was Roman and returns to Rome, and it is particularly significant that I feel the Italian people around me – a united people of soldiers, of colonists of pioneers." Mussolini, "Speech given at the sede del Fascio, April 11 1926," in *Scritti e discorsi di Benito Mussolini. Volume V. Dal 1925 al 1926* (Milano: Ulrico Hoepli Editore, 1934), 318.

¹² The larger context of these statements is as follows: "A new generation is rising in Italy, the generation shaped by Fascism: few worlds and many deeds. Tenacity, perseverance and method,

unselfish sacrifice for one's Nation – were exemplified in the pioneers of agricultural colonization in Tripolitania. The modern Fascist individual was essentially a colonist. There is a second important link between the visit of Mussolini and the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* – that is, through their status as a work of propaganda. Not only was this visit intended to direct the attention of the Italians towards their colonies through a "violent shake," it was conceived as a rhetorical means of incorporating the local populations during a time when Tripolitania was in the process of being pacified by the Italian military authorities. Mussolini's visit included speeches given by local authorities, military exercises that incorporated indigenous troops and the performance of public ceremonies.¹³

The *Fiera di Tripoli* should thus be understood in relation to the historical context of the aftermath of Mussolini's visit to Tripolitania, which saw a greater focus on colonial matters within metropolitan Italy. This interest is evident in the publication of a number of books documenting the process of modernization of Italy's colonies. Prominent among these publications were *La Rinascità della Tripolitania*, which chronicled the economic and cultural "rebirth" of this region

all virtues which seemed denied, tomorrow will become... fundamental virtues of the Italian character. These virtues must shine above all in the Colonies, here one must above all be systematic and persistent." Mussolini, "Speech to Primo Convegno Agricolo Nazionale Coloniale, April 15, 1926," in *Scritti e discorsi di Benito Mussolini. Volume V. Dal 1925 al 1926*, 321.

¹³ In the speech given to the at the seat of the Fascist party in Tripoli, Mussolini stated: "When a few months ago the Governor of Tripoli, His Excellency De Bono... invited me to visit Tripoli, I responded affirmatively because I wanted to concentrate the attention of the Italians on the overseas colonies with a violent shake." Mussolini, "Speech given at the sede del Fascio, April 11 1926," in *Scritti e discorsi di Benito Mussolini. Volume V. Dal 1925 al 1926*, 318-19. Mussolini arrived in Tripolitania on the 11th of April and departed on the 15th. During this visit he participated in numerous ceremonies in the city of Tripoli, in addition to traveling west to Sabrata, east to Leptis Magna and south to the plains of the Jefara. Particular emphasis was placed on the inclusion of the Libyan populations, such as a speech given by Hassun Pasha Qarahmanli, military exercises with indigenous troops and a *fantasia* performed in Janzur. For a more detailed discussion of this visit see "La visita del Duce in Tripolitania nel 1926 e lo «Scossone» coloniale." *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della Litoranea*, 1-11. The complete re-conquest of Tripolitania began in January of 1922 under the Governorship of Giuseppe Volpi and concluded in 1930 during the Governorship of Pietro Badoglio with the capturing of the Fezzan by General Rodolfo Graziani. Sergio Romano, *Giuseppe Volpi. Industria e finanza tra Giolitti e Mussolini* (Milano: Bompiani, 1979) 102-12; and Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 88-120, 134-66.

under Conte Giuseppe Volpi di Misurata (1921-25), and a series of books entitled *Vigor di vita in Tripolitania*, which presented the accomplishments of the Governorship of Emilio De Bono (1925-28).¹⁴ A number of political and cultural commentators specializing on colonial questions also emerged during this period, many of whom sought to disseminate issues related to Italy's colonies to a wide audience. One of the most prominent of these was Roberto Cantalupo, who was Sottosegretario alle Colonie from 1926 to 1929 and director of the journal *L'Oltremare* from its inception in November of 1927.¹⁵ In his book *L'Italia musulmana* of 1928, Cantalupo outlined the central and important status of Italy's colonies in fashioning a political strategy in relation to the larger Muslim world. In this publication he also examined the *Fiera di Tripoli* which – as an important part of the creation of a modern commercial network in the Mediterranean – he argued, would help to overcome the ignorance that the indigenous populations had concerning the strength of Italian industries.¹⁶

¹⁴ The book *La Rinascità della Tripolitania*, published in 1926, was presented to Mussolini on his arrival to Tripolitania in April of that year. This 586 page volume was a collection of essays which presented the political, economic and moral reconquest of Tripolitania under Volpi. See *La Rinascità della Tripolitania. Memorie e studi sui quattro anni di governo di Conte Giuseppe Volpi di Misurata*. The publications *Vigor di vita in Tripolitania* were published between 1926 and 1928 through the Ufficio Studi e Propaganda of De Bono and presented the progress of this colony on an annual basis. *Vigor di vita in Tripolitania* (Tripoli: Ufficio Studi e propaganda del Governo della Tripolitania, 1926-28).

¹⁵ Cantalupo was a journalist and former Nationalist party member who participated in the journal *Idea Nazionale* beginning in 1917, acting as its editor from 1922-24. His writings focused primarily on political questions, his articles appearing in journals like *Popolo d'Italia*, *Mezzogiorno*, *Corriere della Sera* and *Gerarchia*. He was also both the initiator and collaborator on the *Giornata Coloniale*. Following his participation in the *Ministero delle Colonie*, he became *Ministro plenipotenziario* in Egypt until 1932, after which he was Ambassador to Rio de Janeiro. Savinio, *La Nazione Operante*, 123.

¹⁶ As a commentator whose interests were largely political and economic, *L'Italia musulmana* examines the historical and contemporary role of Italy in relation to the Muslim world. While the major focus is on the Italian colonies in North and East Africa, some attention is also paid to the other colonial powers in Islamic countries and countries like Syria which were under a mandate. In discussing the *Fiera di Tripoli*, Cantalupo argues that a key aspect of developing the economy of this colony was to develop a program of exchange with the local populations. In this regard he states that "the ignorance of the natives toward the true extent of our... producers, has until now constituted a serious obstacle to our economic penetration in this colony." He argues that the *Fiera* should have a strictly national character so that "our commercial world can take a

The *Fiera di Tripoli* – as an event which intended to foster economic and cultural exchange between Italy and their North African colonies – emerged during a period of time when a series of broader cultural activities in Italy had made colonial issues more prominent in the public consciousness. The creation of new public celebrations, the organization of art exhibitions, the flowering of a specifically colonial literature and the publication of historical, cultural and political commentary on colonial matters had themselves been generated in the climate of optimism about Italy's colonies that existed in the aftermath of Mussolini's visit to Tripolitania. However, it would be misleading to assume that this exhibition was the natural outgrowth of a period of substantial economic expansion in this region. In fact, it was quite the opposite. The *Fiera* was created as vehicle for the improvement of the colonial economy at a time when that economy was struggling for its survival. Although Governor De Bono understood that the problems of Tripolitania were "nothing other than a problem of money," the Fascist authorities in Rome were reluctant to make a substantial financial commitment to its future development. This was particularly true in the area of agriculture, which De Bono argued was a sector of the economy that held the most promise for the future of this colony and was in the greatest need of direct government intervention.¹⁷

position in an organic way on the shores of the Libyan sea to represent Italian production to all of the inhabitants of Mediterranean Africa." Cantalupo, "Conoscenza che gli indigeni hanno dell'Italia e creazione di una rete commerciale," in *L'Italia musulmana*, 188-96.

¹⁷ As Angelo Del Boca has noted, after assuming the Governorship of Tripolitania in July of 1925, De Bono was painfully aware of the financial problems of this colony. Although his desire was to launch an aggressive campaign of state sponsored agricultural colonization, he was left with only minor progress in this area. Del Boca argues that it was, in fact, Volpi who was the former Governor and present Finance Minister who thwarted De Bono's efforts. In reference to the arrival of 100 million lire in funds promised by Mussolini during his visit in 1926, Del Boca states: "but the expectations of De Bono would be in part frustrated. The money would arrive, but with an eyedropper. It would be only with Balbo that the State would take upon themselves in full the costs of [agricultural] colonization in Libya." Del Boca, "Un quadrumviro in Africa. La visita del Duce," in *Gli Italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 77-87. For a more detailed discussion of the agricultural valorization of Libya under De Bono, see: Segré, "The De Bono and Badoglio Eras: Colonization in Crisis," *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya*, 57-81.

The first *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* was thus a gesture which projected an optimistic image of the economic and political possibilities of Italy's North African colonies to a metropolitan and colonial audience. It was inaugurated on February 15, 1927, in the presence of numerous Italian government officials – including Piero Bolzon the *Sottosegretario alle Colonie* and Governor Emilio De Bono.¹⁸ The composite nature of this exhibition, as both metropolitan and colonial representation, is quite apparent in the formation of the organizing committee that presided over this event – which combined an honorary committee of high ranking Italian government officials with an executive committee of the most significant figures in the Italian colonial administration and the local business community.¹⁹ The participation of the national government was also manifested in the symbolic gesture of the *Alto Patronato* of the Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini and the substantial effort made to solicit the participation of Italian industries. In the second instance, the *Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri* – which was part of the executive branch of the Italian government – encouraged this participation through a series of telegrams

¹⁸ In addition to Bolzon, the Italian government officials included President of the Senate Tittoni and representative of the House Antonio Casertano, Governor of Rome Depretis, and Vice Secretary General of the Fascist party Alessandro Melchiori. The King of Italy was represented by the Duke of Puglia. The local dignitaries included De Bono, and the mayor of Tripoli, Hassun Pasha Qarahmanli. For a detailed discussion of the inauguration of the first *Fiera*, including the inaugural speeches, see: "L'inaugurazione della Fiera," *L'Italia Coloniale* IV, 3 (March 1927): 43-6.

¹⁹ The president of the Comitato d'Onore was Principe Pietro Lanza di Scalea, *Ministro delle Colonie*, and the members of this committee included Ministers of Finance (Volpi), Communications (Ciano), and National Economy (Belluzzo), and undersecretaries of the Colonies (Cantalupo), Finance (D'Alessio), Post and Telegraph (Carusi), the State Railway (Panunzio), National Economy (Balbo and Peglion), and Merchant Marine (Celesia). The President of the Executive Committee was Governor De Bono, with representation by the Mayor's Office (Hassun Pasha Qarahmanli), Directors of the Municipality, Economic Affairs and Civil Affairs, Commander of the Troops in Tripolitania. Representation from the business community included the Presidents of the Chamber of Commerce, the Savings Bank, the *Banca d'Italia* and the Agricultural Consortium, the Director of the Applied Arts and numerous prominent businessmen. See, *Prima Esposizione Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli. Catalogo Ufficiale* (Spoleto: Arti grafiche Panetto & Petrelli, 1927), 7-9.

dispatched to the prefects of each Province of Italy.²⁰ These and other materials used to promote the involvement of each region of Italy in the *Fiera di Tripoli* – such as a letter and program from the President of the Executive Committee – make evident the complex representational issues related to the content of this exhibition and its intended audiences. This exhibition was intended to have a "strictly national character" – being comprised of the products of Italian and colonial industries – with the intention of increasing the level of trade between Tripolitania and Italy.²¹ This "national" representation was also aimed at educating the local populations as potential consumers – "to introduce national products to the natives" – and indoctrinating them as colonial subjects – "to give [them]... a broad and concrete understanding of the power and greatness of Italy."²²

The metropolitan and colonial status of the first *Fiera di Tripoli* is reflected in both its location and its organization. This exhibition was comprised of a series of temporary buildings and "stands" that were located in the park-like setting of the Piazza Quattro Novembre area along the east seafront – a gesture which connected

²⁰ The *Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri* oversaw the development of legislation and the activities of the various Ministries. In this case, the *Presidenza* forwarded several rounds of telegrams to the prefects of each province of Italy. The first of these telegrams solicited participation, while later ones asked for confirmation of this participation. See ACS-PCM 1927 - 14.1.316. Sottofascicolo 11. Questione propaganda presso industrie e comuni.

²¹ The following statement was made in the program that was sent to prospective participants: "The Exhibition will have a strictly national character because only products of Italian labor will be exhibited – whether from any part of the world where people of our nation live and work." *Prima Esposizione Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli. Programma* (Spoleto: Arti Grafiche Panetto & Petrelli, 1927), 6.

²² This quotation comes from the letter which accompanied this program, whose larger context is as follows: "The exhibition, which will remain open for two months, not only proposes to introduce national products to the natives and intensify that exchange and traffic which... that are today renewed and revived; but it also wants to give to the populations of the Colony, who have already acquired sound faith in our Government, a broad and concrete understanding of the power and greatness of Italy." Letter from Il Presidente del Comitato Esecutivo, *Prima Esposizione Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli*, Tripoli, June 1926. ACS-PCM 1927-14.1.316. Sottofascicolo 1. Decreto di autorizzazione della Fiera Campionaria. The didactic dimension of the *Fiera* is also evident in the program that accompanied this letter, and activity in the mind of the natives, who will be able to admire the most varied machinery in use and study their use and production... thus becoming the natural buyers of machines, whose existence they had previously ignored." See *Prima Esposizione Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli. Programma*, 7.

this event quite directly with the colonial identity of the new Tripoli. This site faced onto the Lungomare Conte Volpi, a seafront boulevard that communicated an image of a modern engineering work that had been fully integrated with the colonial landscape. This artery linked up the most important public buildings and tourist related facilities that had been constructed by the Italians in the past several years. [Figure 2.b-1] These new projects included the *Municipio*, the *Poste e Telegrafe*, the *Palazzo della Giustizia*, the *Grand Hôtel* and the *Teatro Miramare*.²³ The *Fiera* also responded to this dual status through its ordering of the various materials into what are two distinct modes of representation. The first of these is the organization of products according to their respective industry – such as agriculture, mechanical and metallurgic, transportation and sport, scientific and chemical, and hygiene products.²⁴ The resulting displays were largely housed in neutral frameworks that gave this segment of the *Fiera* the appearance of a marketplace. [Figure 2.b-2] The second means of ordering this exhibition was in collective displays that presented this material according to their geographical location. This part of the exhibition included the displays of the Chambers of Commerce of individual provinces and cities in Italy, like Calabria, Genoa and Rome. It also included those of the Italian colonies – like the *Padiglione della Tripolitania*, which presented the products of

²³ The Lungomare Conte Volpi was the most significant contribution of Governor Volpi to the planning of Tripoli. This seafront artery linked a sequence of important institutions like the *Municipio*, the *Poste e Telegrafe* and the *Palazzo di Giustizia* and tourist related structures like the *Teatro Miramare* and the *Grand Hôtel* to the developing urban center surrounding Piazza d'Italia at the base of the ancient Castle and entrance to the Old City. For a general discussion of the urban planning of Tripoli during this period, see: Marida Talamona, "Città europea e città araba in Tripolitania," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare, 1870-1940*, 256-77.

²⁴ The list of sections of the first *Fiera di Tripoli* is as follows: 1. Agriculture; 2. Metallic and Metallurgic industry and Electronic technologies; 3. Building industry and the home; 4. Food industry; 5. Transportation and sport; 6. Tourism; 7. Clothing industry; 8. Scientific and chemical industry and hygiene products; 9. Miscellaneous; 10. Collective exhibitions. *Prima Esposizione Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli. Catalogo Ufficiale*, 113-14.

local industries. These exhibits were housed in "representative" pavilions that attempted convey the identity of their respective point of origin.²⁵

The organization of the *Fiera di Tripoli* is partially based on the precedent provided by the various *Fiere campionaria* held throughout Italy. The annual exhibition in Milan was ordered according to separate categories based upon individual industries – including chemistry, electric technologies, art and applied arts, and agriculture.²⁶ This organization was given physical form through a series of large permanent pavilions which gave the site a refined urban character. In the *Fiera di Tripoli*, the approach to these general exhibits was influenced by the more modest scale of this event – which was only one eighth of the size of the *Fiera di Milano* – and the impermanence of these structures.²⁷ The ordering of material according to their respective industry thus did not result in a series of pavilions which gave a specific identity to these larger groupings. Rather, the individual exhibits express themselves within a relatively neutral framework – displays like the *Padiglione delle apparati motori* appearing like commercial shopfronts installed in an anonymous industrial structure. [Figure 2.b-3]

²⁵ The *Camere di Commercio* which participated in this exhibition were as follows: Abruzzi, Ancona, Arezzo, Ascoli Piceno, Bari, Bergamo, Brescia, Carrara, Como, Cremona, Firenze, Foggia, Foligno, Grosseto, Jonio, La Spezia, Lecce and Brindisi, Livorno, Lucca, Macerata, Mantova, Napoli, Pavia, Pesaro, Piacenza, Reggio Emilia, Savona, and Varese. Other regions that were represented with collective exhibits include, Calabria, Empoli, Genova, Lombardia, Mugellana, Pistoia, Prato and Rome. Ibid., 177-215.

²⁶ As discussed in Part 2, Section A, in 1928 the *Fiera di Milano* was organized according to twenty-one larger groupings. For a listing of these see footnote 76 in the previous section. Although a number of significant buildings were constructed in 1928, the same categories of organization of the material exhibited were used in 1927. See: *Ente Autonomo Fiera di Milano. VII Fiera di Milano. 12-27 aprile 1927* (Milano: Arti grafiche Pizzi e Pizio, 1927), 5-6.

²⁷ As noted by Angelo Piccioli in his extensive article on the *Fiera di Tripoli*, the total area of display space in the first *Fiera* was 9,834 square meters (sq.m). By comparison, the *Fiera di Milano* of 1927 had 75,521 sq.m. of display space, nearly eight times that of the exhibition in Tripoli. Similar comparisons could be made of the number of visitors to each of these events, the *Fiera di Tripoli* having 81,000 and the *Fiera di Milano* almost 3 million. For information on the *Fiera di Tripoli*, see: Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli," *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana* I, 2 (August 1938): 503. Statistics on the *Fiera di Milano* were found in: "Gestione Fiera 1929 - Dati statistici." ACS-PCM 1928-30-14.1.241. Sottofascicolo 1. Decreto di autorizzazione della Fiera Campionaria.

These metropolitan *Fiere campionaria* also provided a precedent for the regional representation at the *Fiera di Tripoli*. In the case of the Milan fair, this predominant structure of large pavilions containing related industries was overlaid by a series of rather modest exhibits which presented the typical products of the provinces of Italy, thereby giving them an identity. In the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli*, this secondary structure of pavilions was the sole architectural counterpoint to an otherwise undistinguished fabric of decorated industrial sheds. One such example is the *Padiglione della Calabria* which employs the decorative motifs and window treatments of the vernacular architecture of this province. [Figure 2.b-4] However, by presenting the products of different regions of Italy in a series of pavilions that express their distinctive architectural traditions, the *Fiera di Tripoli*, as one contemporary commentator stated: "represented the multiform attitude of "Italy, a nation of many peoples."²⁸ The identity of this national representation of Italian industries was formed from an accumulation of regional representations. Seen in relation to this metropolitan precedent, the presentation of Italy's North African colonies and their indigenous culture in the *Fiera di Tripoli* had the status of one of these regional displays.

There was, however, a more analogous model for the *Fiera di Tripoli* than the various *Fiere campionaria* held in Italy. The *Exposition Franco-Marocaine*, held in Casablanca in September of 1915 provided a similar fusion of metropolitan and indigenous representation in the colonial context.²⁹ This prior event was referred to

²⁸ The larger context of this statement is as follows: "Rome was not alone in representing the Italian people at the first exhibition. Not inferior to the pavilion of the capitol, even if more minor in size and architectonic inspiration, were – for the value and significance of the material exhibited – those of the other regions of the peninsula, which in Tripoli represented the multiform attitude of "Italy, a nation of many peoples." Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli," 505.

²⁹ Virtually every account of the history of the *Fiera* claimed that there were no other attempts to hold a Fair or Exhibition on colonial soil before. The most extensive explanation was provided by Angelo Piccioli, who stated: "The first *Fiera di Tripoli* was a work of daring and beauty together. A work of daring, because nobody had ever attempted a Fair-Exhibition on colonial soil before – not the old imperial nations draped in mercantile democracy, nor the

by Résident Générale Lyautey during his inaugural address as an "exposition of battle" – a statement that had both international and local implications. The Exposition Franco-Marocaine was certainly an assertion of the French economic and political control of this protectorate set within the context of both the World War I hostilities with Germany and the remnants of this country's economic penetration of this region. It is in this regard that Lyautey spoke of this exhibition as an economic response to Germany that would "affirm our will to live and to prosper on our own, and to not be enslaved."³⁰ This exhibition can also be seen in relation to the continuing military struggle with the indigenous populations in Morocco – a situation which Lyautey attempted to rhetorically diffuse by stating: "the indigenous elite walk with me in this enterprise, a complete union of heart, of mind, and of action." This local aspect of the Moroccan exhibition was parallel to that of the first *Fiera di Tripoli*, which was clearly a propagandistic gesture aimed at the local populations of Tripolitania at a time when this region was still being threatened by insurgent groups.³¹

prosperous and peaceful countries of industry and commerce, rich in vast overseas possessions. A work of beauty, since, more than consecrating a new order of interests and mercantile functions, it was a meeting of forces and proposals, and, as such, affirmed the renewed Imperial will of our people in an ideal way." Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli," 497. For a detailed examination of the Exposition Franco-Marocaine, see: *Le Livre d'Or de l'Exposition Franco-Marocaine* (Paris: Librairie Générale et Internationale G. Ficker, 1916). See also: Exposition Franco-Marocaine de Casablanca, *Rapport Général et Rapports des Sections* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1918).

³⁰ France bartered with Germany over Morocco in 1911, having to concede part of the Congo in order to claim this colony. Despite the establishment of a protectorate in 1912, the German presence continued through trade and economic matters. The larger context of this statement by Lyautey is as follows: "You have just read the recent declarations where our adversary openly and cynically proclaimed their program, a program of not only military and political domination, but of economic enslavement, and it is to this program that we respond here, in Morocco, which was one of the first stakes of this struggle, to affirm our will to live and to prosper on our own, and to not be enslaved. So saying this quite loudly, what we are presenting today is an exposition of battle." Lyautey, "Inaugural address of Exposition Franco-Marocaine," In *Le Livre d'Or de l'Exposition Franco-Marocaine*, 81-3.

³¹ Lyautey, "Inaugural address of Exposition Franco-Marocaine," 81. Although the protectorate was declared in Morocco in 1912 and the majority of territory was pacified by the beginning of 1919, this process continued throughout this period, with selective military campaigns in 1923, 1925 and 1927. This pacification was similar to that practiced in Tripolitania and Cirenaica,

The primary intention of the *Exposition Franco-Marocaine* was quite similar to that of the *Fiera di Tripoli* – to encourage the creation of more substantial economic and cultural exchange between the colony and the metropole. The means of accomplishing of that objective through this event was substantially different, as the Moroccan exhibition suppressed any expression of a French identity in favor of a colonial one. This quality is evident in the organization and layout of this exhibition, which was largely comprised of pavilions representing various districts within this colony and France's other colonial possessions in Africa. [Figure 2.b-5] The principal exception to this tendency is the *Pavilion de l'Importation*, whose presentation of French products was discreetly clothed in the kind of arabized exterior that became common in the public architecture of Morocco.³² [Figure 2.b-6] The colonial status of this exhibition is reinforced in the design of the various pavilions, which employ references to the indigenous architecture that had been processed through the representational conventions of world exhibitions. The eclecticism which Zeynep Çelik describes as being the tradition of colonial exhibitions in the nineteenth century – and which she associates with the Tunisian palace at the 1889 Paris Exposition – is the same eclecticism that informs the design of the *Exposition Franco-Marocaine*.³³ One example of this approach is the

which were not free of rebels until the completion of the military exercises of General Rodolfo Graziani in January of 1932. Del Boca, "La riconquista del Fezzan," in *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 134-67.

³² A careful look at the plan of the Exhibition shows that not only were there few pavilions dedicated to the metropole, the zones presenting horticulture, automobiles, and agricultural and industrial products and machinery were located in two separate walled zones that were linked by only an overhead walkway. In addition to the *Pavilion de l'Importation*, the only other representation of France was the Paris-Maroc pavilion. The regional representation of Morocco included pavilions of the Chouïa, Fèz, Marakech, Meknès, Rabat, Safi and the *Fondouk des Régions*. Significantly, other French colonies were represented, including Algeria, Tunisia, and French Africa. With regard to the appearance of the *Pavilion de l'Importation*, it is not at all dissimilar from the Central Post Office in Casablanca by Adrien Laforgue of 1920.

³³ In the section of her book *Displaying the Orient* on the representation of Algeria and Tunisia under French Rule, Çelik examines the various tendencies employed in these pavilions in the Paris Expositions in 1867, 1878, 1889 and 1900. Of the 1889 Exhibition she states: "Tunisia... was summarized in 1889 by an elaborate and ambitious pavilion. Following what could now be

Pavilion de la Chouïa whose main portal is a synthetic appropriation of decorative motifs and building elements taken from diverse indigenous sources. [Figure 2.b-7]

The most direct Italian precedent for the display of native culture in the *Fiera di Tripoli* is the *Mostra Coloniale* in Genova of 1914, which was influenced by these same World Expositions. The major example of the presentation of this culture at the *Fiera* is the *Villaggio Coloniale*, which was an eclectic collection of different pavilions which presented the characteristic products from the different regions of this colony. This walled precinct was located on the far eastern end of the exhibition site, and was intended to "offer a summarizing but extremely faithful vision of the Tripolitanian landscape" through a collection of buildings that included display spaces, artisanal workshops, a *suq*, and an Arab house.³⁴ [Figure 2.b-8] The primary focus of this village was the indigenous artisanal industries of Tripolitania, which had been under considerable re-organization by the Italians after the creation of the *Ufficio d'Arte Applicata* in 1925. One example of the formal presentation of these materials is the *Padiglione di Zliten*, which put the products of local craftsmen on display in a manner that reflects the influence of the contemporary colonial museum.³⁵ [Figure 2.b-9] This pavilion was not the only means of presentation of

called a tradition in colonial representations, the young architect Henri-Jules Saladin incorporated architectural motifs from various monuments of Tunis into the facades of this 'sober and elegant' building." Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*, 131.

³⁴ For a general description of the composition of the *Villaggio Coloniale* at the upcoming *Fiera di Tripoli*, see: M.M. "L'Esposizione di Tripoli," *L'Italia Coloniale* III, 12 (December 1926): 232. In this article this Villaggio is described as follows: "the Villaggio covers a surface of 3000 square meters and offers a summarizing but extremely faithful vision of the Tripolitanian landscape. Palm foliage, smells of Arab essence, populated with natives who distribute themselves according to the different activities in the vast department, will be at the same time a diversion for the eyes and an education for all of the visitors."

³⁵ As noted in the presentation on the *Fiera* and the artisanal industries in Tripolitania, the *Ufficio d'Arte Applicata* was created in 1925 to "improve the artistic sense" of these industries and "develop [them] economically." Among the initiatives was a systematic program of exhibition of these goods in regional *Fiere campionaria* in Italy. There were also significant measures introduced within this sector of the economy, such as research and education of artisans, with particular attention to both artistic and economic issues. This structure was intended to be a parallel to that of the *Ente Nazionale per le Piccole Industrie* in Italy. F.M. Rossi, "La Fiera e le piccole industrie tripolitane," *L'Italia Coloniale* IV, 4 (April 1927): 67-70.

these industries, as the *Villaggio coloniale* also employed the colonial exhibition conventions of the workshop and the marketplace – both of which were offered as an authentic experience of the native culture of this region. While this scientific creation of a colonial environment is consistent with those of previous exhibitions, in this case there is a very important difference. This indigenous village was located within the very context which it purported to represent. The *Villaggio coloniale* at the *Fiera di Tripoli* was thus a heterotopic enclave of authentic native culture, screening out all aspects of this culture that were contradictory to the colonial order.

The most important metropolitan representation at the first *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* was also the most prominent structure in this exhibition – the pavilion of the *Governatorato di Roma* designed by the architect Felice Nori.³⁶ The *Padiglione di Roma* was the ceremonial entrance to the *Fiera* and the symbolic presentation of the municipal activities of the city of Rome. It was comprised of two rectangular wings of display space which flanked a sequence of two courtyard spaces that carried the visitors into the exhibition grounds and was marked in its center by a monumental fragment referred to antique sources. [Figure 2.b-10 & 11] Located along the Lungomare Conte Volpi facing the Mediterranean, this pavilion was described as a "solemn affirmation of the return of Italian possession on the way to Rome."³⁷ This *romanità* was affirmed in a number of ways, the first of these being through the use of classical precedents. One such example are the reclining figures

³⁶ The *Governatorato di Roma* was essentially the municipal government of the Italian capital. As such, this project had the task of representing the activities of this municipality. Although Nori was the architect for this project, the construction was supervised by Alessandro Limongelli, who would later become the official architect of the Municipality of Tripoli in 1929. For a detailed description of this pavilion and its contents, see: N. Ciampi, "Roma alla prima *Fiera* coloniale. Tripoli - Febbraio-Marzo 1927," *Capitolium* X (January 1927): 569-78.

³⁷ The more complete context of this statement is as follows: "The Padiglione di Roma, in respectful homage to the City [of Rome] on the part of the organizing committee, was made the triumphal entrance to the enclosure of the *Fiera*, so that this same pavilion offers to the visitor before any other, solemn affirmation of the return of Italian possession on the way to Rome." *Ibid.*, 571.

that adorn its front facade, which are based upon the 1st Century AD statues of the Nile and the Tiber that adorn the staircase of the Palazzo Senatorio on the Campidoglio in Rome. This historical representation of Rome was reinforced by the displays of the *Padiglione di Roma*, which contained information on contemporary activities in this city – including public works projects, archeological research and artisanal industries.³⁸

Although the selective use of references to classical Rome in this pavilion are consistent with the approach to colonial exhibitions at this time, this project can also be linked with contemporary architectural discourse in this colony. Armando Brasini, who was the most important architect working in Libya during the Governorship of Giuseppe Volpi, practiced a similar kind of eclecticism inspired by antique sources. Brasini was one of a group of influential academic architects working in Rome, his projects in the colonial context, according to one commentator, expressing these Roman interests through a "scenographic union of great monumental architecture."³⁹ One such project is his *Monumento ai Caduti e alla Vittoria* in Tripoli of 1923-25, which has been connected with the fifth century Mausoleum of Theodoric in

³⁸ In addition to these sculptures, other references include the pair of Canephora that flank the entrance, which are reproductions of ones in the garden of the museum of the Villa Borghese and a small fountain located in the second cortile, which is copy of the fountain of the greyhounds in the *Palazzo dei Conservatori* at the Campidoglio. The exhibition spaces are divided into four rooms, the first of which contains displays of contemporary public works projects; the second presents current archeological research; the third is dedicated to the activities of artisanal industries in Rome; and the fourth presents the projects of the *Istituto per le Case Popolari*, the public housing agency. *Ibid.*, 572-76.

³⁹ The larger context for this statement is as follows: "Brasini was the architectural arm of Volpi, who wished to transform the Berberesque Tripoli into an active "Oltremare" metropolis where the mark of Italian domination would be evident. Though he claimed to have drawn a master plan for the city, Brasini was in reality only interested in monuments; the towns imagined by Brasini are formed by the scenographic union of great monumental architecture." Consoli, "The Protagonists," *Rassegna* 51 (September 1992): 54. With regard to Brasini's background, he was trained as an artist and craftsman in the *Istituto di Belle Arte* in Rome and the *Museo Artistico Industriale* before apprenticing as an architect. In his work in Rome, as well as completing a number of significant projects, he was part of the commission that produced the master plan of Rome of 1931. This project was completed with, among others, architects Alberto Calza Bini, Gustavo Giovannoni and Marcello Piacentini, and archeologist Roberto Paribeni. Mario Pisani, *Architetture di Armando Brasini* (Roma: Officina Edizioni, 1996).

Ravenna – a project that is widely regarded as a point of connection between West and East. [Figure 2.b-12] Notably, Brasini's relationship to this monument is more than incidental, as he designed the costumes and stage sets for the film, *Teodoro*, in 1919.⁴⁰ The Padiglione di Roma, like the work of Brasini, was the product of an approach to colonial architecture that asserted a specifically Roman identity in the colonial context. However, as a pavilion designed to represent the metropole in the colony, this project can itself be understood as a gesture of aesthetic and cultural colonization. It was a reification of Fascist colonial politics, which viewed the present activities of Italy in North Africa as being a continuation of ancient practices.

Another important dimension to the first *Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli* that bears examination is its status as an object of colonial propaganda. Although it was primarily conceived as a national representation set in the colonial context, this exhibition was ultimately aimed at creating an image of Tripolitania that could be made available to a metropolitan audience. The two major vehicles for the dissemination of this image were periodicals, newspapers and other publications, and through the tourist experience of this colony. The *Fiera di Tripoli* was represented through coverage that ranged from straight news stories, to political commentary, to romantic travelogues.⁴¹ One particularly interesting example is the report on the first

⁴⁰ In discussing the *Monumento ai Caduti*, Pisani notes that "the image returns to the "Martyrion" of the paleo-Christian tradition, that is to the first tombs of martyrs that subsequently are transformed into churches, like Santa Costanza in Rome, that guard the relics of the Saints, but also to the Mausoleum of Theodoric in Ravenna read as a moment of joining between East and West, in tune with what was proposed by the Roman architect on the occasion of the film *Teodoro* (1919) for which he realized the scenography and costume." Ibid., 47. This project is also remarkably similar to the Bismarckhalle in Stetten of 1914 by the German architect Wilhelm Kries. See Hans Stephan, *Wilhelm Kries* (Oldenberg: G. Stalling, 1944), 14-15.

⁴¹ The magazine articles included a series that appeared in the journal *L'Italia Coloniale* in December 1926, February and March of 1927. An entire special issue of this magazine was dedicated in April of 1927. Other journal coverage included Angelo Piccioli, "Dopo la Fiera di Tripoli: La Nuova Italia d'Oltremare," *Rassegna Italiana* XIX, CIX (June 1927): 609-12; and Enrico Niccoli, "Le Materia prime alla Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* I, 1 (November 1927): 25-52. The newspaper *Corriere della Sera* ran the following articles on the first *Fiera*: Filippo Tajani, "Alla vigilia della solennità di Tripoli per l'inaugurazione della Fiera-Esposizione," *Corriere della Sera* (15 February 1927): 6; Roberto Cantalupo and Filippo Tajani. "L'affermazione dell'Italia coloniale a Tripoli. Il Duca delle Puglie

Fiera in the magazine *Esotica*, in February of 1927, where this event was referred to as a "virile Mediterranean affirmation of national labor."⁴² This presentation was connected by association to the larger issue of Italian emigration through an editorial in this same issue by the director of the magazine Mario dei Gaslini. The *Fiera* was thus a demonstration of a broader demographic issue, in which these overseas activities were a reflection of the "capacity", "daring" and "preeminence" of the Italian people.⁴³ The nationalist dimensions of this argument were given visual form in the cover of this magazine, where an Eritrean *ascari* riding an Arabian horse is carrying an Italian flag emblazoned with a *fascio* and the words "Tripoli - 1 *Fiera* Campionaria." [Figure 2.b-13]

There is a second and far more subtle aspect of the representation of the *Fiera di Tripoli* in this magazine – one that is connected with its capacity to convey the direct experience of this colony. As a journal that was responsible for popularizing literary depictions of the colonial context, *Esotica* constructed an image of the Italian colonies that emphasized their qualities of difference. This same issue of the magazine contained articles on the language and culture of Tripolitania and an excerpt from a colonial novel by Dei Gaslini being published in serial form entitled *Le*

inaugura la Fiera campionaria," *Corriere della Sera* (16 February 1927): 1; and "I discorsi inaugurali alla Fiera di Tripoli," *Corriere della Sera* (16 February 1927): 5.

⁴² The larger context of this statement is as follows: "The first Fiera campionaria di Tripoli, will be inaugurated February 15 1927 and from the news that comes out on this exposition – certainly flattering, results in a truly laudable way, like the thoughts and will of the National Government and the Governor, who want this virile Mediterranean affirmation of national labor – was admirably interpreted by all of the principal Italian and Tripolitanian industries, so to render the first Exhibition of Tripoli one of the most important national industrial exhibitions, that will certainly know to demonstrate to the world its capacity and the necessity to return to tenaciously fight the way of the sea." Emmepi, "La Fiera di Tripoli. Battesimo di Vittoria," *Esotica* II, 2 (February 1927): 19-20.

⁴³ In this article, Dei Gaslini discusses the emigration of Italians abroad, viewing this activity as an "Italian affirmation in the world." He goes on to argue that this emigration is a way of giving Italian culture to the world. In concluding this discussion, he suggests that this phenomenon is part of a larger struggle: "If you have as much faith as we, you will win with us the other great war; that which is kindled in the threshold of the armistice – to put origins and will to the test in order to award the conquest, the real victory of capacity, of daring, of preeminence." Dei Gaslini, "Commentario: Di là dalla propria terra. Elogio dell'emigrante," *Esotica* II, 2 (February 1927): 3-5.

Ombre dell'Harem. Seen in the context of this more general image of the exotic, a visit to the *Fiera* was one part of a broader experience of this colony – an experience that would be remembered by the visitor as of "that Africa of a thousand mysteries."⁴⁴ This literary image of the fascination and charm of the colonial context was an important reference point in the promotion of tourism for this colony – a development in which the *Fiera di Tripoli* was one of the most significant attractions. The tourist dimension of this exhibition was made evident in many of the publications on this event, such as the official catalog, which provided information on transportation, passports, hotels and suggested travel itineraries. The *Fiera* was also prominent in tourist literature on this colony, including the guide book to Tripoli published by the *Ente Nazionale per le Industrie Turistiche*, which referred to this exhibition as "an object of interest and admiration for visitors."⁴⁵ The first *Fiera di Tripoli* provided the tourist experience par excellence. Through exhibits like the *Villaggio indigeno*, the tourist had the ability to experience the exoticism of the colonial context without any of the problems associated with experiencing an unfamiliar and even dangerous culture. Such problems of confronting reality were

⁴⁴ These articles included: Filippo Lo Bello, "La leggenda degli Abeidat," *ibid.*, 29-31; Guido Mantovani, "Linguaggio arabo. Curiosità coloniali," *ibid.*, 41; and De Gaslini, "Le Ombre dell'Harem. Romanzo coloniale," *ibid.*, 63-5. In the article on the *Fiera di Tripoli*, in discussing the experience of past visitors to this colony, the author states that "many left with disenchantment in their hearts" due to the gloomy political climate. He proceeds to ask that those that have not seen it should come and visit. According to this author, this travel "will extinguish any doubt" or any false images of the colonial context so that "in returning to the Fatherland the memory of that Africa of a thousand mysteries will follow you as if by a magic spell." Emmepi, "La Fiera di Tripoli. Battesimo di Vittoria," 20.

⁴⁵ The guide book to the first *Fiera* has fourteen pages of information on tourism in Tripolitania. This material included information on fares and schedules for steamships – including government sponsored fare reductions – a listing of hotels in Tripoli with prices, and a weekly schedule of suggested travel itineraries with their costs listed. La Direzione Generale dell'ENIT, "Notizie e norme per l'avviamento di correnti turistiche a Tripoli durante la Ia Esposizione Fiera Campionaria," in *Prima Esposizione Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli. Catalogo Ufficiale*, 23-36. The larger context of the statement quoted is as follows: "The complex of the monumental edifices constructed in Corso Sicilia, many of which truly notable – like the *Padiglione di Roma* and of the Governo of the colony – confer an impression of seriousness and beauty of the *Fiera di Tripoli* that, independently from the commercial and industrial interest of the manifestation, can be... an object of interest and admiration for visitors." Ente Nazionale Industrie Turistiche and Ferrovie dello Stato, *Tripoli* (Roma: Novissima, 1929), 17.

averted with this event, where the native culture of Tripolitania was presented as "a diversion for the eyes and an education for all of the visitors."⁴⁶

The first *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* was, by all accounts, viewed as an organizational and economic success – one measure of this achievement being its ability to attract some 5,000 visitors to Tripolitania over the two month span of this event.⁴⁷ Although the repetition of this exhibition was far from certain, the accomplishments of this first year went a long way toward assuring its continuity. In fact, just over six months after the closing of the first Fiera, its future was greatly solidified through the creation of the *Ente Autonomo Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli* – a para-state organization that would preside over all activities connected with this exhibition until its final demise in 1939. Due to the annual nature of this event and the broad range of these related activities – including the sponsorship of other tourist oriented attractions like the Gran premio automobilistico – the *Fiera di Tripoli* made a substantial impact on the economic and political life of this colony.⁴⁸ It was also an

⁴⁶ M.M., "L'Esposizione di Tripoli," 232. In this article, in discussing the *Villaggio coloniale*, a great emphasis is made upon both its status as a visual relief and a didactic instrument. In the first case, this author offers an image of exoticism: "Outside, among the constructions, camels and their riders will integrate the decorative part of the image on a background of palm trees, the play of water and the smile of flower beds flowering richly in full winter." The educational aspect of this *Villaggio* was through constructions like the *casa araba* which was considered "a revelation for the great majority of visitors."

⁴⁷ Although Angelo Piccioli in his article on the *Fiera di Tripoli* claims that over 10,000 foreigners visited Tripolitania during the *Fiera*, these numbers should be treated with some skepticism. According to a separate source, only 6,532 visited this colony during the entire year. Given this information, it is more likely that the number of visitors was around 5,000 people. See "Movimenti negli alberghi di Tripoli." ASMAE-MAI.3-44. Fascicolo 10.

⁴⁸ The *Ente Autonomo Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli* was created with Regio Decreto Legge, 27 October 1927 N. 2118. As a self regulating organization, it had the status of a private corporation. It was also closely tied to local and national government agencies, from which it derived a good part of its original financing. For a copy of the statute, see: Ente Autonomo Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli, *Statuto*, 1928. ASMAE-MAI. Archivio Segreto, C. 208 - Tripolitania III. Ente Autonomo Fiera di Tripoli. The activities carried out by this *Ente Autonomo* included publicity and promotion related to the *Fiera*, overseeing the facilitation of travel to Tripolitania, and the organization of related events. The most prominent of these was the *Gran premio automobilistico*, which was a road race that eventually became among the richest of such competitions in the world. See Piccioli, "Fiera di Tripoli," 497-566. With regard to the demise of the *Fiera*, the last one was held in 1939. This was due to the fact that although formal entry into World War II was on June 10, 1940, the war had begun in September of 1939 when Germany invaded Poland.

important reference point in the constantly shifting discourse of colonial representation at Fairs and Exhibitions in the 1920s and 30s. This significance was due, at least in part, to the survival of the *Fiera* through a period of considerable change in the politics of Italian colonization. It can also be linked with parallel transformations in the discourse for a modern colonial architecture – transformations that were themselves closely tied to these same political circumstances.

The first important modification to the practices established by the initial *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* were a consequence of its movement to a site along the newly created Corso Sicilia in 1929. This location became the permanent home of the *Fiera* – reflecting a conceptual shift in the status of this exhibition and, as a result, its relationship to the city of Tripoli.⁴⁹ In its first two years the *Fiera* was a temporary construction in an existing park along the Lungomare Conte Volpi on the east seafront. This sequence of public institutions and tourist related activities – including the *Fiera* – would have conveyed an image of a modern, civilized colony to the many visitors who arrived by steamship.⁵⁰ The second and permanent home of this exhibition was located in a newly established residential and commercial quarter to the west of the old city. This siting connected it quite directly with the regulatory plan of Tripoli as proposed in 1933 by the architects Alberto Alpago Novello, Ottavio Cabiati and Guido Ferrazza. The triangular site of the *Fiera* was bounded by Corso Sicilia and Via Petrarca, which were both crucial arteries in the

⁴⁹ Angelo Piccioli states that the Piazza Quattro Novembre site was abandoned in part due to the demands of the city, which wanted this site to return permanently to its original function. This was seen to coincide for the need for a larger and more worthy site. Having surpassed the initial experiments, this exhibition could seek a permanent home that would correspond to its permanent economic and political function in this colony. Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli," 510.

⁵⁰ Marida Talamona notes: "From the first months after his arrival in Tripoli, Volpi put major emphasis on projects that would remodel the front of the city on the sea with a sequence of monumental architecture. For the traveler who arrived from far away, it would have been the physical image of the renewed prestige of Italy on the coast of Africa. For the Governor, the architectonic celebration of his politics of "civilization." Talamona, "Città europea e città araba in Tripolitania," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare, 1870-1940*, 266.

pattern of radial and transverse connections instituted in this plan to structure the growth of Tripoli.⁵¹ [Figure 2.b-14] This new location thus reflects a new stage in the development of the city, which was no longer solely defined by its seafront facade. The new Tripoli was a fusion of metropolitan urbanity with the environmental qualities suggested by the colonial landscape. The plan of the *Fiera* was a microcosm for this larger urban development through combining a regularized grid system with unstructured open spaces. [Figure 2.b-15]

Coincident with the founding of a new site for the *Fiera di Tripoli*, a more consistent program of construction of permanent pavilions was instituted by its organizers. This new policy resulted in a change in approach in the architecture of this event, which moved away from a focus on scenographic effects and towards a more serious consideration of tectonic issues. The first and most significant contribution to this change in attitude was made by Alessandro Limongelli, who was an important figure within architectural circles in Tripolitania, having succeeded Armando Brasini as the main architect for the Municipality of Tripoli.⁵² The project which marks the beginning of this new direction is his design for the *Padiglione di Roma*, which was completed in April of 1929, just in time for the inauguration of the third *Fiera campionaria*. Located along the Corso Sicilia, this project both

⁵¹ Talamona notes that Alpago Novello, Cabiati and Ferrazza were hired by the Municipality of Tripoli in February of 1931 to direct the new Regulatory plan of Tripoli – which was approved by the Municipal Commission in November of 1933. She states that the basic interest of this plan was in developing the area of the new city to the west of the old city, the intention being to direct this growth toward the sea and preserve the oasis which was in the southern district of the city. *Ibid.*, 274. It should be noted that although this Regulatory plan was adopted in May of 1934, a number of significant changes were made to it over the next three years. See: ACS-MAI. 114.

⁵² Limongelli, not unlike Brasini, was trained in the academic context of Rome, one of his teachers having been Gustavo Giovannoni. His initial works in Tripolitania began in 1927 with his collaboration on the *Padiglione di Roma* for the first *Fiera Campionaria*. In 1928 he designed a triumphal arch to commemorate the visit of the King to Tripoli. His relationship with the municipality was formalized in 1929 when he was appointed *Consulente per l'architettura del Municipio di Tripoli* or architectural consultant with the Municipality – a position that allowed him to deliberate over all major public projects in this colony. This position was short lived, however, as he died in Tripoli in 1932, with his two most important works – the "*Grande Albergo agli Scavi*" in Cyrene (1932) and the Banco di Roma (completed by Alpago Novello and Cabiati in 1932) being completed after his death. Consoli, "The Protagonists," 56-7.

represented the *Governatorato di Roma* and acted as the monumental entrance to this exhibition site.⁵³ [Figure 2.b-16] Its exterior was a horizontal block articulated with an abstract pattern of pilasters and niches, that was in turn surmounted by a monumental mass designed to suggest a triumphal arch. The formal references for this project are from classical Rome, including the central bronze statue of "Dea Roma" and the flanking pair of sculptures on freestanding pilasters – which were "l'Acquila e il Fascio Littorio" and "Lupa capitolina." This tripartite volume housed a central vaulted space, complete with a marble fountain, that acted as the ceremonial entrance, and two flanking galleries, which contained material documenting the current activities of the Municipality of Rome.⁵⁴ There is a strong contrast between the exterior, whose abstract lines were complimented by the use of a light-colored local stone, and the rich and more elaborate spatial effects of the interior, which employed a variety of polished marbles. [Figure 2.b-17]

The *Padiglione di Roma* by Limongelli was the product of an evolving discourse on the nature of a modern colonial architecture, which in this case was directly linked to Roman sources. However, this project was viewed by contemporary commentators on this exhibition as a synthetic application of references to antiquity. In *Architettura e Arti Decorative*, it was described as conveying "the sense of the monumental and of Rome", while the use of these

⁵³ For a good general description of the Padiglione di Roma and its contents, see: Virgilio Testa, "Il Padiglione di Roma alla Fiera di Tripoli," *Capitolium* V, 5 (March 1929): 225-8. This article notes that this pavilion is a replacement for that constructed for the first *Fiera*, with a commitment to see this as a permanent representation of the City of Rome.

⁵⁴ The pair of columns framing a monumental entrance bear a close resemblance to the work of Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach, including his proposal for Schloss Schönbrunn, near Vienna of 1690. The allusion to empire in this project of Fischer von Erlach would seem an appropriate starting point for this colonial representation. See Hans Aurenhammer, *J.B. Fischer von Erlach* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 50-57. The statue of "Dea Roma" was designed and executed by the sculptor Amleto Cataldi, while the two flanking ones were done by Attilio Torresini. The central space, which was covered with a coffered vaulted ceiling, was decorated with a marble fountain. The flanking galleries contained materials provided by the *Ufficio Propaganda* of the *Governatorato di Roma*, which included a combination of models and perspectives of current projects. Testa, "Il Padiglione di Roma alla Fiera di Tripoli," 226-7.

precedents was "always managed with a power of synthesis and of simplification that gives a sense of original force to the construction."⁵⁵ This approach to the utilization of classical references is in strong contrast with the theatrical staging of these influences in the first *Padiglione di Roma* of 1927. The *romanità* of Limongelli, is also quite distinct from that of his predecessor Armando Brasini, whose work shows a propensity for an eclectic and monumentalized use of the classical. The *Padiglione di Roma* of Limongelli offers a vision of classicism viewed through the lens of a modern aesthetic sensibility. Through the simplicity of its exterior volume and use of local materials, this project was a tentative first step toward a more serious attempt to harmonize with the colonial environment. This approach to colonial architecture – one which called for a more careful consideration of its North African context – would become more pronounced in this architect's later works, eventually emerging as the dominant paradigm in the architecture of this colony in the 1930s.⁵⁶

The *Padiglione di Roma* was also an important factor in the creation of a specifically urban image for this exhibition. This project established a formal face to the city of Tripoli through its frontage along Corso Sicilia, and attended to the necessary issues related to its urban scale through the careful articulation of its

⁵⁵ The editors of the magazine make the following comments: "This work of Limongelli seems one of his most successful; the sense of the monumental and of Rome, ingrained with the sensibility of this artist, emerges more from the overall composition of masses, that is, by the intrinsic quality of this architecture, than from the direct reminiscences of form. Indeed, in this work of his, such reminiscences are contained in very broad terms, and is always managed with a power of synthesis and of simplification that give a sense of original force to the construction." N.D.R., "Corriere architettonico. Il Padiglione del Governatorato di Roma alla Fiera di Tripoli dell'Arch. Alessandro Limongelli," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* VIII, 11 (July 1929): 515-20.

⁵⁶ Gian Paolo Consoli makes the following comments about Limongelli's importance to architectural discourse in this colony: "...he evolved his language in search of an architecture that was both classical and Mediterranean, reinterpreting Romanity in light of the version given to it by the local architecture: horizontality of line, simplicity and clarity of volumes, the elimination of decoration, neatness and whiteness of the surfaces..." He goes on to assert that "Limongelli is definitely the first architect to face the problem of colonial architecture as a question of modernity and innovation, abandoning the temptations of false Moorishness on the one hand and style architecture on the other, which had been followed by Tripoli's previous architects." Consoli, "The Progenitors," 57.

surfaces. It was a crucial element in the urban strategy employed within the site, acting as the formal transition point from the city into the streets and open spaces of this exhibition. However, in 1929, the *Padiglione di Roma* was the only truly "urban" building in the Fiera. The character of the spaces of this exhibition were quite heterogeneous – the two main parallel streets being defined as much out of their infrastructure as they were by the variable nature of the surrounding pavilions.⁵⁷ [Figure 2.b-18] The open space at the far end of the site was also extremely contingent, appearing like a fragment of an oasis landscape transplanted into an urban context. By the final *Fiera campionaria* in 1939, the scale of the buildings – which were of a relatively similar height – and their arrangement within the site created a more consistent urban quality. Although there was still a great variation in the character of these pavilions – from some following metropolitan precedents to others taking on a more clearly exotic appearance – the resulting open spaces were formed by a more careful balance between these buildings and the supporting landscape of sidewalks, fountains and palm trees. [Figure 2.b-19]

The specific character and quality of these spaces is also important to recognize, as it bears discussion in relation to contemporary concepts of colonial urbanism being applied in the city of Tripoli. A close examination of the plan of the *Fiera* of 1939 shows the primary system of two parallel streets linking the two ends of the site at which larger open spaces were structured. [Figure 2.b-20] The first of these was an irregular zone by the main entrance along Corso Sicilia that accommodated the triangular shape of the site, while the second was a formal piazza space, formed by the surrounding buildings, which marked the end of the site. A

⁵⁷ Angelo Piccioli notes the substantial nature of the infrastructure created for the new site of the *Fiera* in 1929, which included a street network, sewer and water systems and gardens and related landscape. This program of construction was studied with all of the seriousness of the design of the adjacent city. Due to this effort, the site area doubled, from an estimated 25,000 square meters (sq.m) to 52,000 sq.m. The covered area for display also grew from around 10,000 sq.m to 14,000 sq.m. Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli," 511-13.

series of secondary open spaces were overlaid on this general pattern, introducing some visual and spatial relief. One such space is the *Laghetto e mostra delle imbarcazioni* – a large reflecting pool used to exhibit boats that suggests the environmental qualities of an oasis.⁵⁸ [Figure 2.b-21] The space of the *Fiera* had thus become a hybrid urban space – a combination of the regularity of a metropolitan street and the variable qualities of the landscape found in the colonial context. This condition of hybridity was further enhanced by the complete lack of any systematic pattern of separation between metropolitan and colonial pavilions – a division that Patricia Morton has argued was unequivocally asserted in the planing of the *Exposition Coloniale Internationale* in Paris in 1931.⁵⁹ In the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli*, the pavilion of the *Governo di Africa Orientale Italiana* was directly opposite that of the *Consiglio Provinciale delle Corporazioni* of Puglia, Calabria and Naples. This heterogeneous quality is consistent with the urban design strategies employed the regulatory plan of Tripoli of 1933, where no clear separation was maintained between metropolitan and indigenous populations.⁶⁰ This approach

⁵⁸ There are several other similar zones of spatial and environmental relief. These include the so-called *Corte dell'Artigianato*, located to the far right of the main entrance; the small courtyard in front of the *Padiglione delle industrie*, half way along the right hand main artery; and the courtyard within the *Mostra Zootecnica*. See Pianta del Quartiere della XIII Fiera Internazionale di Tripoli, In Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli," 535.

⁵⁹ In her Ph.D. dissertation, Patricia Morton states: "The plan of the [French] Colonial Exposition was the embodiment of colonial urbanism's segregation principle. The metropolitan, colonial, and foreign sections were carefully separated from Paris within the wooded grounds. The Section Métropolitane, which housed the exhibits of products made in or destined for the colonies, and the Cité des Informations, in which all participating countries displayed colonial propaganda, formed a barrier between colonies and the actual Métropole... The Avenue des Colonies Françaises collected the French colonial pavilions in the southern part of the site. The foreign participants clustered at the eastern end of the grounds, on the north and south of Lac Daumesnil. Finally, the Parc Zoologique terminated the progression from Métropole to Bois, the culmination of the voyage from civilization to savage territories." Morton, *The civilizing mission of architecture*, 96.

⁶⁰ The Regulatory Plan of 1933 by Alpago Novello, Cabiati and Ferrazza divided the city of Tripoli into six major districts which contained a combination of metropolitan and indigenous housing areas. This principle is described as follows: "The external quarters each consist of an internal zone of intensive building which will contain the services of the quarter and a surrounding zone of sparse building. To these quarters are aggregated the zones reserved for the

to urban design has a visual corollary in the proposal of Alessandro Limongelli for the restructuring of Piazza Italia in Tripoli from 1931. [Figure 2.b-22] This project exemplifies a condition of hybridity where the urban image of the metropole meets the historic architecture and the characteristic landscape of the colonial context.

The second significant change in the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* was its transformation from what had been, in the first three years of its existence, a relatively modest national presentation similar to the regional trade fairs in Italy like the *Fiera di Milano*. In 1930, the Fourth *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* opened under the designation "Prima rassegna interafricana." What this involved was the participation of African free states, colonies, protectorates and mandates desiring to present their products to an international audience – such as Algeria, the Belgian Congo and Morocco – along with that of several European nations who were interested in trade with Africa. This international representation resulted in the construction of pavilions for Belgium, France and South Africa – presentations which, in the first two cases, involved the display of both metropolitan and colonial goods.⁶¹ There is a certain degree of irony to the ambitious nature of this initiative, as it was only in November of 1928 that Mussolini had proclaimed the *Fiera di Tripoli* to be a "frame without a painting", suggesting that it be reduced to being a tri-annual event.⁶²

natives collected around nuclei of folkloristic interest inhabited by them." De Rege, "Il nuovo piano regolatore di Tripoli," *Urbanistica* III, 3 (May-June 1934): 121-8.

⁶¹ This international representation involved the official participation of the Governments of Belgium, France, Spain and South Africa. In the case of Belgium, this involved a combination of metropolitan organizations involved in the colonies and the colonial display of the Belgian Congo. The French contribution included similar metropolitan groups, with a more extensive colonial representation with Algeria, French West Africa and French East Africa, Morocco, and Madagascar. Although Spain was also supposed to participate with a pavilion, internal problems led to a more minimal presence at the *Fiera*. South Africa presented its raw materials and manufactured products as in independent nation. Ente Autonomo Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli. *IV. Manifestazione. Prima rassegna internazionale in Africa. XX Febbraio - XX Aprile MCMXXX-VII. Catalogo* (Roma: Arti grafiche Fratelli Palombi, 1930), 125-50. See also: "La IV Fiera di Tripoli," *L'Italia Coloniale* VII, 4 (April 1930): 66-9.

⁶² In an article discussing the general status of *Fiere campionarie* published in *Il Giornale Economico*, Mario Bevilacqua notes the precarious status of the *Fiera di Tripoli*. Quoting Mussolini from a letter published in November 1928 in the journal *L'Oltremare*, he states: "The Duce, in his admirable power of instruction, and in only considering the rosy official statistics of

These critical comments, made during a time of economic crisis in Italy, were in response to what was widely regarded as the large financial commitment made to the *Fiera* – investments that had resulted in relatively negligible returns. In response to this threat, a considerable effort was made on behalf of the Governor Badoglio and Emilio De Bono of the Ministero delle Colonie, to not only maintain its status but to enhance it.⁶³

The answer to why the *Fiera di Tripoli* was expanding at a time when it was in considerable jeopardy, is unquestionably related to political factors rather than economic ones. The gesture of internationalizing this exhibition was a means of asserting Italy's status in relation to other colonizing powers. This kind of rhetoric is quite evident in the speeches given to inaugurate the fourth *Fiera di Tripoli* by Governor Badoglio and Alessandro Lessona, Sottosegretario alle Colonie. While Badoglio recognized the common "civilizing mission" among colonial nations in Africa, Lessona spoke in more nationalist tones about Italy's intention to occupy "those lands which the international accords recognize."⁶⁴ The emergence of these

the first two manifestations, defined this Fair "A frame without a painting." The author also cites the statistics of the third *Fiera*, noting that over 700,000 lire were invested in new buildings, including the *Padiglione di Roma*, while there were only 100,000 lire of sales, 2,300 Italian tourists traveling to Tripolitania and 35,000 total visitors to the *Fiera*. Bevilacqua, "A proposito di Fiere campionarie." *Il Giornale Economico* 8 (August 1929).

⁶³ The *Fiera*, in its initial years, was vigorously defended by the colonial Government – its precariousness having to do with the economic crisis of the late 1920's and early 1930s. A series of letters between Pietro Badoglio as Governor of Tripolitania, Emilio De Bono, Minister of the Colonies, and the *Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri*, or the Cabinet of the central government, show the extent of this defense. In a letter to De Bono, dated 12 October 1930, Badoglio states that "the reduction of the *Fiera campionaria of Tripoli* to a triennial cycle may constitute a true disaster for the city that from this manifestation receives each year great benefit." Citing both economic benefit, some six to ten million lire annually, and the need to make the colony known to Italians, he asks De Bono to convince Mussolini of its importance. See ACS-PCM, 1937-39, 14-1-161.1.

⁶⁴ In speaking to the representatives of the Governments of Belgium, France, Spain and South Africa, Badoglio expressed Italy's solidarity, stating: "The civilizing mission that we all perform in this continent tends to the same goal, and our work will result in being greatly facilitated if we always proceed together, hand in hand." Speaking in more nationalist tones about the formation of a colonial consciousness in Italy, Lessona argues that "this spirit ineluctably pushes Italy toward the integral conquest of those lands that the international accords recognize and that Fascism intends to occupy." See "Cronache coloniali. L'inaugurazione della IV Fiera di Tripoli," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* IV, 4 (April 1930): 323-6.

kinds of arguments at this particular moment was the product of an increasing interest on the part of European nations in asserting their colonial status through international exhibitions – an interest that was, to a great extent, linked with the sequence of colonial exhibitions in Marseilles (1922) Lausanne (1925), Antwerp (1930) and Paris (1931). This was also a period in which such representation was under considerable review by various international bodies which were trying to regulate such events.⁶⁵ The response of the *Ente Autonomo Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* was to make its annual exhibition international in scope to compete with these larger exhibitions. This sense of antagonism was even more evident in 1931 – the year of the *Exposition Coloniale Internationale* in Paris – when this group organized the first *Mostra internazionale d'arte coloniale*, which opened in Rome in October of this same year. Moreover, this event was preceded by the first *Congresso di studi coloniali* held in Florence, which provided a scientific corollary to the artistic project of this exhibition.

Inaugurated in the presence of Benito Mussolini, the *Mostra internazionale d'arte coloniale* displayed the contemporary activities of Italian and foreign artists representing their colonies, including official participation of Belgium, Denmark and France.⁶⁶ The intentions of this event were clearly stated by Emilio De Bono in the

⁶⁵ As early as 1928 the *Bureau International des Expositions*, which regulated international exhibitions, held a conference in which an agreement was signed by all major European states. This pact called for restrictions on the number of such international exhibitions, and also defined the difference between Exhibitions and Fairs, which were regulated by a separate body called the International Union of Fairs. For more detailed information on this conference and the various debates surrounding fairs and exhibitions see: ACS-PCM 1934-36 - 3.3.9-2042; ACS-PCM 1937-39 - 3.3.9-2422; ACS-PCM 1937-39 - 14.3.2300.

⁶⁶ For more specific information on the first *Congresso di studi coloniali*, which was held in April of 1931, see: S.G., "Il primo congresso di studi coloniali," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* V, 4 (April 1931): 243-8. In addition to the official participation of Belgium, Denmark and France, the *Mostra internazionale d'arte coloniale* displayed of independent artists from seven different nations; Egypt, England, Germany, Hungary, Romania, the United States and Yugoslavia. The French contribution included almost 400 works of art from Algeria, Indochina, Madagascar, Morocco and Tunisia. The Belgian exhibit contained almost 300 works from the Belgian Congo. Denmark participated with over 150 works from Greenland. Letter from La Presidenza del Comitato Esecutivo, *Prima Mostra internazionale d'arte coloniale* to Benito Mussolini, dated October 13, 1931. ACS-PCM 1934-36 - 14.1.1612. Sottofascicolo 1.

inaugural address, where he argued that "with their interventions, the foreigners have shown which concept Italy has followed as a colonizing power and how it has the right to make a colonial politics."⁶⁷ Through this international dimension, the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* became a projection of contemporary Fascist colonial politics. By incorporating other colonial powers with a clearly secondary status, it was favorably positioning its efforts in relation to these other nations. This gesture of inclusion, like that of the French organization of the colonial exhibition of 1931, was as much aimed at a national audience as it was an international one. This national aspect of the *Fiera di Tripoli* is particularly evident in its focus on certain themes linked to colonial policy like agricultural colonization, which was represented through the *Mostra della Zootecnica* and the *Mostra degli aeromotori e dei sistemi di irrigazione*.⁶⁸

The trajectory of the discourse on internationalism at the *Fiera di Tripoli* is also a crucial part of understanding the ongoing relationship between this exhibition and colonial politics. Following the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in October of 1935, the dealings between Italy and other European nations changed dramatically. In part due to the sanctions imposed by the League of Nations in Geneva, the foreign presence at the *Fiera di Tripoli* decreased considerably – Luxembourg and Belgium

⁶⁷ The larger context of the quotation above is as follows: "I thank France, Belgium and Denmark for the honor they have given us for officially intervening at the exhibition; thanks to all of the foreign artists, countrymen and natives of the colonies. With their intervention they have that the colonial idea and consciousness in Italy is always growing. With their intervention, the foreigners have shown which concept Italy has followed as a colonizing power and how it has the right to make a colonial politics." "La I Mostra d'Arte Coloniale inaugurata dal Duce," *L'Oltremare* V, 10 (October 1931): 400.

⁶⁸ The *Mostra della Zootecnica*, or livestock exhibition began in 1935 and displayed the current developments in livestock farming through a presentation of the various species along with related scientific and technical information. The *Mostra degli aeromotori e dei sistemi di irrigazione*, which was located near this first exhibition, dealt with the important problem of water and irrigation related to agriculture. Agricultural machinery was also presented in the *Mostra della meccanica*, which showed machinery produced by metropolitan companies for the colonial context. Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli." 559.

being the only official participants in 1936.⁶⁹ In reaction to this international disapproval, this exhibition was widely viewed as a vehicle through which the Fascist authorities could affirm Italy's new imperial status. This affirmation was manifested in the eleventh *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* in 1937, which was presented as the "Prima mostra coloniale dell'Impero Fascista." This imperial dimension of the *Fiera* was greatly reinforced by Mussolini's voyage to Libya in March of that year – a visit which, notably, included his appearance at the inauguration of this exhibition. This edition of the *Fiera* also marked the first official representation of Hitler's Germany – a representation which, over the next two years, would include well publicized visits of German military and political figures.⁷⁰ The *Fiera di Tripoli* thus traversed the distance from a national exhibition affirming a politics of colonial expansion and development to an imperial one espousing a politics of war.

Fascist colonial politics were also deeply inscribed in the representation of the metropolitan and indigenous in the *Fiera di Tripoli* over the thirteen year period of its existence. In general terms, the relationship between these constitutive elements was one of seemingly unrestricted exchange. Although this proposition suggests the condition of the hybrid as defined by Patricia Morton in her discussion of the Paris

⁶⁹ The official participation in 1935 was Portugal, Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia, with individual representation by France, Germany, Hungary, Switzerland and Tunisia. In 1936 the official participation was only Belgium and Luxembourg, with individual representation by South Africa, Switzerland and Germany. Ente Autonomo Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli, *XI Manifestazione internazionale intercoloniale. Prima mostra coloniale dell'Impero fascista* (Roma: Arti grafiche Fratelli Palombi, 1937), 54. Not only was there an absence of participation in the *Fiera* of some European nations due to the sanctions of the League of Nations, these sanctions created problems for trade with Italy – something that was met in Italy with the policy of autarchy. This was hardly the image that Italy had cultivated of the *Fiera* generating international and inter-African trade.

⁷⁰ The representation of the Germans at the *Fiera* was primarily agricultural machinery, tools, chemical products, and textiles and was characterized as being "powerful for the number of exhibitors, for the variety of material exhibited and the value of the goods." Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli," 561. The two most prominent visits by German officials to Libya during the *Fiera* was the visit of General Von Epp in February of 1938, during the 12th *Fiera* and by Field Marshall Herman Goering in April of 1939 during the 13th and final *Fiera*. See *Governo della Libia*. Notiziario. ACS-PCM 1937-39 - 17.1.1215.

exposition in 1931, certain differences need to be recognized for the Italian case. Citing Homi Bhabha's "Signs Taken for Wonders," among other sources, Morton gives a particularly negative cast to the status of the hybrid in Western colonialism, stating: "the final consequences of hybridization are the erasure and blurring of the boundaries between races and the dissolution of the codes of difference established by colonialism."⁷¹ She connects the desire for such separations with the fear of race mixing imbedded in the French colonial policy of association – a policy that maintained the strictest separation between the metropolitan and indigenous populations in its colonies. The hybrid within the Paris exhibition was, according to Morton, a threat to the hierarchies of separation between the representation of "the native" and the civilized West – one that "had to be contained, neutralized, or at least countered by a distracting reference back to the purely (cleanly) divided colonial world."⁷²

In the Italian colonies, the fusion of the metropolitan and the indigenous into a single identity was a deliberate political strategy rather than a threat to colonial order. The *politica indigena* practiced by the Italian authorities in Libya was a two-fold tactic – one of embracing the cultural traditions of the local populations while at the same time redefining them according to the standards of modern Italian society.

⁷¹ Morton quotes Bhabha as follows: "For Homi Bhabha, the hybrid 'terrorizes authority with the ruse of recognition, its mimicry, its mockery.'" From Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree Outside Delhi, May 1817," in *Race, Writing and Difference*, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., ed. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1986): 176. Her own statements about the hybrid are as follows: "The hybrid is another one of colonialism's illegitimate offspring, the product of cross-breeding between the metropolitan and the colonial. It was the horror of colonialist fantasies: the mixture of superior populations with inferior ones that produced entities neither French nor indigenous." Morton, *The civilizing mission of architecture*, 12-13.

⁷² The larger context for this statement is as follows: "The architecture produced at the Colonial Exposition blended indigenous styles with metropolitan grandeur, "savage" vocabularies with "civilized" monumentality, to generate an architectural representation of French authority. The colonial pavilions placed emphasis on the indigenous half of this formula, but in a dangerously ambiguous manner that skirted the boundary between the exotic and the civilized. The danger inherent in this operation had to be contained, neutralized, or at least countered by a distracting reference back to the purely (cleanly) divided colonial world." *Ibid.*, 188.

This approach to governing the Libyans was most clearly expressed by Governor Italo Balbo in his speech at the Convegno Volta in 1938, where he called for "a politics of justice, of religious respect, of social elevation, of economic well-being."⁷³ With regard to the issue of race, the Italians did carry out a similar practice of discouraging any form of racial mixing with the local populations in Libya – a policy which was formalized as a national regulation with the passing of the "Provvedimenti per la difesa della razza italiana" in November of 1938.⁷⁴ This prohibition did not directly translate into architectural discourse, where theorists like Carlo Enrico Rava argued that in appropriating Arab vernacular architecture they were doing nothing other than re-claiming their own Roman past.⁷⁵ In the context of the representation of the metropolitan and the indigenous in the *Fiera di Tripoli*, the conjunction of these two identities was a tactical gesture gauged at depicting a reciprocal relationship between modern Italian society and local traditions. The hybrid was

⁷³ In this speech, Balbo elucidated the various policies of his government toward the Arab populations of Libya. While recognizing the ability of the Libyans of the coastal region to adjust to modern Italian society, it was to come with a price. For example, he called for the abandonment of what were regarded as "deviations of religious fanaticism" – in effect, defining morality for the Muslim population. These policies involved the outlawing of the Sanussi religious sect and the prohibition of the practice of fakirism. The benefits extended to the Libyans included education, participation in government (in a limited role), and the creation of the *Gioventù araba del Littorio*. Balbo, "La politica sociale fascista verso gli arabi della Libia," in *Convegno di scienze morali e storiche. 4-11 ottobre 1938-XVI. Tema: L'Africa. Volume 1*, 733-49.

⁷⁴ No systematic study of the issue of race in the Italian colonies has been written, and thus no precise documentation of the laws regarding inter-marriage in the colonies exists. While it is clear from all of the literature from this period that this practice was discouraged, it was not outlawed until the advent of the so-called racial laws. It should be noted that these laws were primarily aimed at Jewish populations in Italy, but also applied to the colonies. These were passed into law on November 25, 1938 were preceded by a draft provision, entitled Regio decreto-legge 17 novembre 1938-XVII, n. 1728. The original statute for Tripolitania of 1919, though not strictly enforced, allowed for Italian citizenship for children with only one Italian parent. See: "Lo "statuto" concesso alle Tripolitania nel 1919." In Giorgio Rochat, *Il colonialismo italiano*, (Torino: Loescher Editore, 1973), 106-11.

⁷⁵ In his article "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte seconda," Rava argues that: "the Arab house... is nothing other than the ancient Roman house faithfully reproduced." He goes on to more emphatically state: "we are not at all inspired... by an Arab architecture, but we recover through it the undying traces of the Latin-ness of an architecture that is, first of all, profoundly Mediterranean." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte seconda," 36.

thus not an undermining of the Italian colonial authority, but rather the reification of its politics of incorporation of the native into the modern.

The synthesis of the metropolitan and indigenous aspects of the *Fiera di Tripoli* is particularly evident in its various representations – from published reports, to promotional material put out by its *Ente autonomo*. Many of these commentaries emphasize the value of this exhibition as an economic vehicle for this colony. One such example is an article written by Mario Pozzi, entitled "Sul cammino della Fiera di Tripoli," which examines the commercial progress of this exhibition from its initial years as a national representation, to an event which addressed the "great international horizon." In so doing, Pozzo argues that "our businessmen are now convinced not only of the utility of the Fiera, but of the great possibility that Africa offers to our productive currents."⁷⁶ Other articles deal with the representation of local culture of the *Fiera* and its distinctively "native" dimensions, such as the documentation of Italy's colonies within this exhibition. Francesco Corò, in an article on the *Servizio Studi* of Libia at the eighth *Fiera* examines just such a presentation, through a detailed discussion of the activities in the area of scientific research on and documentation of Libya – a presentation which he describes as having "the value of true exploration."⁷⁷ The *Fiera di Tripoli*, in this case, was viewed as a didactic vehicle which would provide a scientific experience of the colonial context.

⁷⁶ After an initial introduction to the past history of the *Fiera*, this article examines the full range of potential of this exhibition for trade for Italy and its colonies. Focusing initially on the metropolitan representation, he proceeds to examine the possibilities for trade between Italy's various colonial possessions and in turn with the *Madrepatria*. The more complete context of these comments is as follows: "In the first case we believe that our businessmen are now convinced not only of the utility of the *Fiera*, but of the great possibility that Africa offers to our productive currents, and that they listen once in a while to the example of the foreign nations from which we must defend our markets... in the disguised disinterest of all of our explorers." Pozzi, "Sul cammino della Fiera di Tripoli," *L'Oltremare* VI, 4 (April 1932): 142-4.

⁷⁷ Corò provides a comprehensive discussion of the presence of the *Servizio Studi* at the *Fiera di Tripoli*, which comprised both cartographic representations of the colonies and scientific research pertaining to these territories. In the last case, this material included ethnographic and historical research on the local populations and their customs and practices. Corò, "Il Servizio Studi della Libia alla VIII Fiera di Tripoli," *L'Oltremare* VIII, 5 (May 1934): 184-5.

The publicity activities of the *Ente Autonomo Fiera Campionaria* provided a more complete representation of this exhibition. This group organized a rather substantial propaganda effort through materials which included exhibition catalogs, promotional brochures, posters, postcards and even postage stamps.⁷⁸ A particularly compelling example of one of these publicity efforts is a tourist brochure from the ninth *Fiera di Tripoli*, whose representation of this exhibition is preceded by a romanticized narrative of the experience of the city of Tripoli and environs resplendent with images of local color. This exotic travelogue passes through the *suqs* of the old city, which were described as a "picturesque alignment of boutiques" where "life is so animated."⁷⁹ This literary representation was accompanied by a pair of images documenting the characteristic activities of this area and its indigenous artisans. [Figure 2.b-23 & 24] The subsequent presentation of the *Fiera campionaria* is constituted as an image of metropolitan commerce. The accompanying text is more prosaic, emphasizing the role of this exhibition in "attracting people and products from every part of the world interested in trade with Africa."⁸⁰ The images provide views of the crowded avenues of this exhibition and

⁷⁸ From its inception, the *Fiera di Tripoli* undertook a substantial publicity campaign. This involved the production of a rather substantial exhibition catalog containing introductory comments, thematic essays on general issues related to the colonies and information on the various exhibitors. The format of these catalogs expanded in 1937 to include tourist information for the traveler from Italy. Beginning in 1931 every year a promotional brochure was also produced, often with the cooperation of tourist related organizations. The postcards, posters and postage stamps were produced on a yearly basis and formed the most general means of dissemination of the *Fiera di Tripoli* within Italy and Europe.

⁷⁹ The larger context of this quotation is as follows: "In the *Suqs* of the old Arab city, the medina, which remains intact, life is so animated: the picturesque alignment of boutiques piled one upon the other, the colorful booths of cloth dealers, the coppersmiths, the sellers of gold objects and knick-knacks." Ente Autonomo Fiera di Tripoli, *Tripoli. IX. Manifestazione. VI. Rassegna coloniale internazionale in Africa*, text by Temi Agostini. (Milano: S. A. Arti Grafiche Bertarelli, 1934), 2.

⁸⁰ The rather short textual description of the *Fiera* is as follows. "The buildings which welcome the exhibitors of the Fiera di Tripoli every year constitute a quarter in themselves, original and attractive. Constructed with simplicity, longing and variety, they reflect and appeal to the taste of all. They seem to have been made to attract people and products from every part of the world interested in Trade with Africa." *Ibid.*, 25.

its various pavilions, which are combined with interiors that depict its characteristic contents.

A final example of the representation of the metropolitan and the indigenous in this promotional material is a postcard designed as advertisement for the Banco di Roma. [Figure 2.b-25] This "photographic" representation superimposes the statue of Roman emperor Julius Caesar over an abstract background created by this bank's pavilion. This depiction is further enriched through the presence of the Italian flag over the shoulder of the statue and the inhabitation of the architectural frame by local populations in native dress. Despite the apparent conflict between these diverse symbols of the colonial context, they are communicated as a unified image. Through this postcard, the *Fiera* is represented as an analog for the colonial environment – as a subtle *mélange* of modernity, indigenous culture and Imperial politics. These publicity materials reflect the fact that within Italian colonial politics there was no perceived contradiction between modern metropolitan society and the local culture of Libya. Where the hybrid in French colonialism has been theorized by Patricia Morton as an oppositional influence – as a threat to the hierarchies of colonial order – in the Italian case the hybrid *was* the colonial order.⁸¹

The first of these realities of the *Fiera di Tripoli* is its metropolitan representation which, as previously discussed, was primarily comprised of the presentation of Italian goods from the various regions of Italy. By 1936 this participation was organized under the banner of the *Consigli provinciali*

⁸¹ The oppositional nature of Morton's discussion is evident not only in her discussion of the hybrid, but also in her use of the term collage. In this case she is dependent upon the writings of James Clifford and his use of the term "ethnographic surrealism." She characterizes his use of the term as follows: "Clifford advances collage as a practice that acknowledges the inconsistencies produced by ethnographic juxtapositions, in museums as well as in monographs, and that resists easy integration of discrepant data into a unified whole. He believes that ethnography's practice of taking cultures out of their contexts and placing them in new epistemological and/or phenomenological contexts is always an act of ethnographic surrealism, but an unacknowledged one." Morton, *The civilizing mission of architecture*, 7-8.

dell'economia corporativa (CPEC) – a provincial organization which was part of the corporativist system instituted by the Fascist government during this time. Presented by Mussolini as an alternative to both capitalism and socialism, corporativism offered a union of industry, labor and the state that allowed for "the complete organic and totalitarian regulation of production."⁸² The initial participation of these groups in the metropolitan displays of the *Fiera di Tripoli* was an affirmation of the corporativist system, aimed at its propagation in the colonial context. By 1937 a series of parallel organizations had been created in Libya for the restructuring of the major industries in this colony, including agriculture and artisanal production.⁸³ The representation of metropolitan industries at the *Fiera di Tripoli* thus primarily constituted the exhibits of these various *Consigli provinciali*, which comprised over one third of the pavilions. These exhibits were ordered according to region and primarily contained products from the mechanical industries related to agricultural and industrial products.⁸⁴ Although the appearance of these pavilions

⁸² The larger context of this statement relates to Benito Mussolini's definition of the corporativist state. In a speech given in November of 1933 he argues that corporations were defined as: "instruments which, under the aegis of the state, carry out the complete organic and totalitarian regulation of production, with a view to the expansion of the wealth, political power and well-being of the Italian people." Mussolini, "Discorso per lo stato corporativo," November 14, 1933, in *Opera Omnia di Benito Mussolini, Vol. XVI*, 85-96. Although the corporativist state was declared by Mussolini on this date, his theories came out slowly over the next few years. The final stage was with the creation of these *Consigli provinciali*, which replaced the *Camere di Commercio* which were the prior provincial organizations of commerce. These were formed between 1934 and 1936. Although this system allowed for the shifting of power from the center to the periphery, in the context of the Fascist state, it was also an efficient way of making the power of this state manifest in the farthest regions of the country.

⁸³ In an article on the XI *Fiera di Tripoli* in 1937, Guglielmo Quadrotta argues that "the corporative economy has had an advancing application in the associated work of the State, of the capital, of the technique of work, both in the field of agricultural colonization, as in that of industry, commerce and artisanry. These economic activities ... would not be able to assume their function without the aid of the State, which is not limited to providing legislative, fiscal and financial facilitations, but has also contributed to their development through its technical and administrative bodies, directing production toward the objectives derived from the study and praxis of colonization." Quadrotta, "La XI Fiera di Tripoli," *Rassegna Economica delle Colonie* 25, 4 (April 1937): 522-8.

⁸⁴ In 1937 seventeen of the forty-eight pavilions were for *Consigli provinciali*. These exhibits represented the following regions of Italy: Agrigento, Bergamo, Brescia, Calabria, Catania, Genova, Littoria, Messina, Milano, Napoli, Palermo, Puglia, Roma, Salerno, Siracusa, and Veneto.

varied considerably, they tended largely toward a modern aesthetic tempered by the colonial context. One such example is the pavilion designed by Florestano di Fausto for collective exhibitions in 1935, which eventually housed the *Consiglio provinciale* of Milan. [Figure 2.b-26] This building was comprised of a simple undecorated wall, suggesting the modest exteriors of indigenous rural constructions. Superimposed over this continuous wall are two large glazed elements which have the appearance of a metropolitan shopfront. The lofty and austere interior of this pavilion is defined through its structural frame and a limited use of interior walls. The display of materials within this space by the *Consiglio provinciale* of Milan had a stark quality, appearing more like a museum of technology than a bustling marketplace. Not unlike the scientific approach to the display of ethnographic objects in the Museo coloniale from this period, this display of Milanese industrial products acted as an objective affirmation of the cultural advancement of the metropole. [Figure 2.b-27]

The colonial representation at the *Fiera di Tripoli* existed in a number of guises, the first of which were the pavilions dedicated to the various colonial authorities in Libya. The earliest permanent building of this type is the *Padiglione della Tripolitania*, which was constructed for the third *Fiera di Tripoli* in 1929.⁸⁵ This building was joined in 1932 by the *Padiglione della Cirenaica*, the two of

Two of these pavilions contained general exhibits of the CPEC, with some more modest displays of smaller regions. Ente Autonomo Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli, *XI Manifestazione internazionale intercoloniale*, 60. The major industries represented at the *Fiera campionaria* were mechanical, automotive and transportation, household furnishings, food, textiles and chemical. Separate pavilions existed for some of these industries, particularly automotive with Fiat having its own display. The pavilions of the *Consigli provinciali* tended to focus on mechanical industries, but also concentrated on artisanal industries, household furnishings, food, pharmaceuticals and various consumer products. Quadrotta, "La XII Fiera di Tripoli," *Rassegna Economica dell'Africa Italiana* 26, 3 (March 1938): 402-13.

⁸⁵ Although there was representation of the colonial government of Tripolitania from the first *Fiera*, I am noting the construction of permanent pavilions. As previously stated, in 1927 the *Villaggio coloniale* represented the *Governo* of Tripolitania and the various commercial interests of this colony, including indigenous artisanal production. F.M. Rossi, "La Fiera e le piccole industrie tripolitane," 67-70.

these buildings becoming the permanent representation of the colonial government throughout the *Fiera di Tripoli*. The participation of the government of Tripolitania and Cirenaica during this initial period was characterized by exhibits that presented the wide range of Italy's activities in these two territories. [Figure 2.b-28] These displays included information on agricultural colonization and related industries, public works projects, schools, the military and indigenous craft production, taking the form typical to the representation of these colonies at contemporary exhibitions in Italy.⁸⁶ They were a composite of the museum and the marketplace – a product of both the "objective" practices of the Museo coloniale and the proclivity for excess found in commercial displays of Italy's colonies. The exterior of the Padiglione della Tripolitania was a perfect match for this approach to exhibiting material, in that it was an abstract representation of the vernacular architecture of this region. These references included its simple cubic massing and unadorned exterior volumes, as well as certain details – such as the use of traditional door and window treatments and its allusions to battered wall construction. [Figure 2.b-29]

At the eleventh *Fiera campionaria* in 1937, the presentation sponsored by the *Governo della Libia* had expanded considerably, encompassing five separate pavilions. In addition to the two original buildings, the *Artigianato della Libia* had constructed a new pavilion in 1936 and the *Monopolia della Libia* and *Industrie della Libia* in 1937. These new pavilions signified the dispersal of the commercial

⁸⁶ The material presented by the *Governo della Tripolitania* in the sixth *Fiera di Tripoli* in 1932 included exhibitions of the *Direzione della Colonizzazione*, presenting agricultural colonization; the *Municipio* of Tripoli, which displayed information on public works and the current regulatory plan; the *R. Soprintendenza Scolastica*; the *Comando R. Corpo Truppe Coloniale*; the *Direzione dei Monopoli*, which presented information on the tobacco industry; the *Direzione del Servizio Fari e dei Segnalamenti Marittimi*; and the *Camera di Commercio Industria e Agricoltura* for Tripolitania. The *Governo della Cirenaica* primarily focused on an exhibit of *Artigianato Indigeno*, with other displays including a photographic exhibit documenting this colony; the *Servizio Genio Militare*, presenting the public works projects done by the Military engineers office; and the *R. Soprintendenza delle antichità*. Ente autonomo Fiera campionaria di Tripoli, VI. *Manifestazione. Terza rassegna internazionale in Africa. 8 marzo - 8 maggio. MCMXXXII-X. Catalogo* (Roma: Arte grafiche Fratelli Palombi, 1932), 259-76.

aspects of colonial display into the larger exhibition. This transformation reflects the application of the Fascist corporatist structure to the colonial context, where each major industry gained its own identity. The consequence of this change for the representation of the *Governo della Libia* was that their own pavilions were able to focus more specifically on political and scientific concerns. In 1937, this involved the organization of a *Mostra della Colonizzazione*, a *Mostra Etnografica*, a *Mostra Archeologica* and a *Mostra dell'Ufficio Studi*.⁸⁷ These exhibits represent both the most objective and highly politicized aspects of the activities of the *Governo della Libia* – something that is unquestionably linked to the particular political climate following the declaration of an Italian Empire in Africa in May 1936 and Mussolini's visit to this region during the Fiera. This first exhibition, the *Mostra della Colonizzazione*, was comprised of a series of panels that documented the accomplishments of the government sponsored agricultural colonization efforts of the previous year.⁸⁸ [Figure 2.b-30] This installation took on the appearance of a Fascist propaganda display – its monumentalized use of visual symbols, text and statistics creating an experiential demonstration of the agricultural colonization efforts in Libya.

The *Padiglione dell'Artigianato libico* of 1936, designed by the architect Pietro Lombardi provides a second example of the representation of the *Governo*

⁸⁷ The *Mostra Etnografica* was linked with the *Museo Libico di Storia Naturale* created by Prof. Ardito Desio, Director of the *Istituto di Geologia* at the *R. Università di Milano*. This exhibit was curated by Guglielmo Narducci of the *Governo della Libia* and was comprised of a collection of ethnographic objects, medicinal plants, documentary photographs and small statues of different ethnic and racial "types" among the local populations. The *Mostra Archeologica* was curated by Prof. Giacomo Caputo, the *R. Sovrintendente ai Monumenti e Scavi* of Libya, and included photographs of recent excavations, some statues and mosaics and model reconstructions of the various archeological sites. The *Mostra dell'Ufficio Studi* of the *Governo della Libia* was comprised of a collection of publications of this propaganda arm of the *Governo*. Ente Autonomo Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli, *XI Manifestazione internazionale intercoloniale*, 207-8.

⁸⁸ This exhibition documented the colonization effort through the various agencies of the *Governo della Libia*, such as the *Ufficio Centrale per i Servizi Agrari* and the *Ufficio delle Opere Pubbliche*, and related organizations in Italy like the *Ente per la Colonizzazione delle Libia* and the *Istituto Fascista per la Previdenza Sociale*. The exhibition was also curated by Guglielmo Narducci of the *Governo* and designed by Rinaldo Bonati of the *Ufficio Studi*. *Ibid.*, 207.

della Libia at the *Fiera campionaria*. This project contained the exhibits related to the indigenous artisanal production of this colony – a production which had undergone considerable restructuring under the Fascist authorities.⁸⁹ These efforts increased substantially under the Governorship of Italo Balbo, under whose direction these industries were incorporated into the corporativist structuring of the Libyan economy. The new status of these industries was formalized with the creation of the *Istituto Fascista degli Artigiani della Libia* in March of 1936 – an organization that provided both artistic and technical assistance.⁹⁰ The exhibition of Libyan artisanry at the *Fiera di Tripoli* was a showcase for the latest development of this industry – "a broad panorama of the economic-artistic activities of Libya." The displays included drawings and photography of various artisanal works as well as the exhibition of the best products of these various trades from all regions of this colony – including furnishings, jewelry, metalwork, ceramics, and carpets. The showcase exhibit was the display of the *Campionati di Mestiere*, which were the winners of a competition in twelve different artisanal trades.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Governor Giuseppe Volpi created the *Ufficio Governativo delle Arti Applicate Indigene* with D.G. n. 13180 Serie A n. 1475 dated December 28, 1924, and which came into effect on January 1, 1925. The intention behind this law was to "return the indigenous arts to their ancient splendor, and impart to it a new economic rhythm, in a way to cause a notable contribution to the rapid valorization of Tripolitania." Francesco M. Rossi, "Le Piccole industrie indigene," *La rinascità della Tripolitania*, 513-19.

⁹⁰ The goals of the *Istituto Fascista degli Artigiani della Libia* were to promote the economic activities of indigenous artisanry while also providing technical and artistic assistance. Although this assistance applied to both indigenous and Italian artisanal industries, particular attention was focused on the Libyan artisanry. An equally significant part of the activities of this organization was their organized participation at Italian and international exhibitions and trade fairs. They also provided economic assistance for the import and export of these products. Guglielmo Quadrotta, "Appunti sull'artigianato libico." *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della Litoranea*, 13-14. See also: "Artigianato della Libia," in Ente Autonomo Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli, *XI Manifestazione internazionale intercoloniale*, 209-11.

⁹¹ In the catalog to the eleventh *Fiera*, the exhibition of Libyan artisanry is presented as follows: "the exhibition offers an attractive vision, a broad panorama of the economic-artistic activities of Libya, and will not only be appreciated by the specialists and connoisseurs, but also by the larger public." The different trades in the *Campionati di Mestiere* were furnishings; jeweller's art; metals; marble and stone; ceramics and terra cotta; silk, wool and cotton fabrics; carpets; leather; embroidery and lace; ivory; bookbinding; and palm and reed weaving. All of the competitors in these categories were exhibited in the Padiglione dell'Artigianato Libico during the *Fiera*. *Ibid.*, 210.

The design of this pavilion reflects the vision of artisanal production as a modern industry that was based upon corporativist models of organization – its blank surfaces and large-scaled regularized openings alluding to Italian industrial architecture. [Figure 2.b-31] In the interior displays, the distinctive arts of each region were represented in the manner of an ethnographic display in a museum, with a combination of wall displays and cabinets creating an "objective" representation of their artisanal traditions. [Figure 2.b-32] This approach is not surprising, as these traditions had themselves been constructed through the means of scholarly research and education initiatives undertaken by the Italian authorities.⁹² Both this artisanal production and its means of representation were as modern as the radios and scooters presented by the *Consiglio provinciale* of Milan. The representation of the indigenous culture of Libya in the *Fiera campionaria* was thus inextricably connected with metropolitan society. However, in the same way that the Italian presence in this colony was given the appearance of a vernacular construction in the Padiglione della Tripolitania in order to lend it suitably benign identity, the indigenous culture of this colony was being "modernized" to incorporate it into the political and economic structures of Italian society.

A second category of colonial representation at the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* was the participation of Italy's East African colonies. The appearance of Eritrea in this exhibition began as early as 1928, with the involvement of the *Governatorato*, its *Ufficio Agrario* and several public and private companies from

⁹² Quadrotta notes that there was a great interest in improving the techniques among the indigenous artisans. For the most part this effort was directed toward the restoration of past techniques and traditions that were deemed to be more authentic. This initiative was supported by two research efforts, the first being undertaken for Governor Volpi by Prof. P. Ricard, the Director of Indigenous Arts in Morocco, and completed in 1925. The second was a project undertaken by Mario Scaparro in 1931-32 to study the indigenous arts of Tripolitania. This research was in turn directed toward educational programs, the primary one being the *Scuola di Arti e Mestieri di Tripoli*, which was designed by the architect Florestano Di Fausto and completed in 1935. Quadrotta, "Appunti sull'artigianato libico," 9-12, 16-20.

this colony seeking to establish trade with Tripolitania and Italy.⁹³ Although the presence of both of these colonies at this event was solidified with the realization of a permanent pavilion for the *Fiera* in 1931, it was not until the construction of a second building that these colonies gained a greater prominence within this exhibition. This building was designed by the architects Larco and Rava and was a further development of the ideas they had explored in their *Padiglione delle Colonie* from the *Fiera di Milano* of 1928. Like this first project, their *Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia* of 1934 was closely tied to theoretical discourses within contemporary architectural culture in Italy. However, in this case these references had shifted according to Rava's own trajectory within Italian Rationalism.⁹⁴ The *Padiglione delle Colonie* was one of the first built works of this architectural movement, combining European modernism with references to indigenous North African construction. This project acted as an impetus for the development of his theoretical speculations – a process that culminated with the publication of his "Panorama del Razionalismo" of 1931. The *Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia* came

⁹³ The *Governatorato dell'Eritrea* was represented by its own displays of raw materials and propaganda on the public works in this colony. Also participating were two agriculturally oriented organizations – the *Ufficio Agrario* and the *Società Eritrea Prodotti Tabacchi Orientali*. Private companies focused on raw materials like sugar, and artisanal products in terra cotta and straw. Ente Autonomo *Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli, Seconda Esposizione Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli. Catalogo ufficiale. Febbraio - marzo 1928* (Spoleto: Arti grafiche Panetto & Petrelli, 1928), 222.

⁹⁴ As noted in Part 1, Rava had split with his colleagues from the *Gruppo 7* in May of 1929 as part of his struggle to establish himself as one of two "official" representatives of Italy – along with Alberto Sartoris – with CIAM. Then beginning in January of 1931, Rava published a series of eight articles in *Domus* magazine that clearly repositioned himself in relation to his former colleagues. This gesture took on a particularly negative cast due to the timing of these articles before, during and after the second *Esposizione di architettura razionale* held in Rome in March of that year. This exhibition, in which Rava did not participate, caused great difficulties for the participants within professional architectural circles – something which made Rava's criticism seem all the more negative. For a general discussion of the context of this exhibition, see: Ciucci, *Gli architetti e il fascismo*, 98-107.

after these writings, reflecting a more careful and studied understanding of the means of integration of the indigenous and the modern.⁹⁵

The *Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia* was a built confirmation of his theorization of a more "independent" direction for Italian Rationalism, where modern, North African and Roman references could be fused into a single expression. The project was a simple two story block with a central open courtyard that responded to its site conditions by locating its formal entrance along the main avenue and creating a covered verandah on the second floor facing a small open space. [Figure 2.b-33 & 34] This verandah acted as both a filter through which the courtyard opened to this adjacent space and a means of exterior connection between the two levels of gallery spaces. The relationship between this project and the indigenous architecture of Africa was alluded to in its publication in *Domus* magazine, which noted that the entrance portal was of Somalian derivation, and the *masharabbia* and tile floor patterns of the patio were of Eritrean inspiration. It was argued that the courtyard space was a point of connection between these vernacular references and Roman sources, being referred to as "the classic scheme, both Latin and African, of the house of the south."⁹⁶ This project was also seen to relate to the Libyan context through its "Mediterranean intonation" – a characteristic that was linked to both its general

⁹⁵ Rava published two writings on a modern colonial architecture, which were the fifth and sixth articles of the series published in *Domus* in 1931. In summarizing the ideas of these two articles Rava stated: "...the native architecture of our Mediterranean colonies present,.. all the necessary requirements from which to draw a perfect modern colonial architecture; rational planning, simplicity of form in their exterior appearance, perfect adherence to the necessities of the African climate, perfect harmony with the Libyan nature. Then when, to these qualities, are added the frequent examples that they propose to us, the vivid polychromes applied to affect and revive the nudity of the cubic masses and smooth walls, one will see that the native architecture of Libia offers us all of the desirable elements to create our colonial architecture of today." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte seconda," 36.

⁹⁶ The larger context of these statements is as follows: "apart from the two inevitable recalls to the colonies – Somalia and Eritrea – ... recalls consisting in the large portal of Somalian derivation, and in the *masharabbia* and tile floor patterns of the patio of Eritrean derivation... the building largely develops, completely airy and punched with ample openings, around the central patio, recovering the classic scheme, both Latin and African, of the house of the south." "Per la moderna architettura coloniale italiana," *Domus* VII, 6 (June 1934): 11-13. *Masharabbia* are the wooden screening devices found in Islamic architecture.

appearance and the contextual qualities of its covered verandah and courtyard. This latter environmental dimension was something that, for Rava, was a fundamental constant to which all Mediterranean architecture responded and that connected indigenous constructions, ancient precedents and modern rational architecture.⁹⁷ The complete fascination with this dimension of this project is particularly well expressed in the photographs that Rava took of this pavilion after its construction – photographs that primarily depicted the ambiance of its exterior spaces. [Figure 2.b-35] Through taking a series of closely cropped views that effectively decontextualize this project, he also communicates the abstract means through which its indigenous references were given physical form.⁹⁸ This project of Larco and Rava was thus clearly situated within the contemporary discourse about the use of indigenous references in the creation of a modern colonial architecture.

The *Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia* also represents an important development in the representation of indigenous culture in fairs and exhibitions. This significance is in part due to the organization and content of its exhibits, which were far more extensive than previous years. The exhibition of Somalia contained displays of both natural and agricultural products – including cotton, bananas and salt – and manufactured and hand made items, like incense and leather goods. These presentations included both the objects themselves, and photographic

⁹⁷ In its publication in *Domus* it was stated that "one thing that will strike the reader will be the "Mediterranean" intonation that pervades it, intonation that... seems to have reached an excellent level of expression." The element to which this Mediterranean quality was linked was the large verandah, which was seen to provide an intense play of light and shade. *Ibid.*, 11-12. In "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna," Rava argues that the "general Mediterranean characteristic" of Libyan vernacular architecture links it with that of the Italian coastal regions of Capri. Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte prima," 89. In the second article in this series, he states that with this vernacular "the conditions of nature and of climate are the same generators of architectonic form, and therefore they still appear perfectly, insuperably rational today." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte seconda," 32.

⁹⁸ A group of thirteen negatives and prints taken by Rava of this project are kept in the Centro Studi ed Archivio della Comunicazione (CSAC) in Parma. Only four of these photos depict the front and rear facades, while the remainder concentrate on the verandah (seven) and courtyard (two). All of these images are taken as details and almost consistently crop out references to the ground plane. CSAC-Rava. C.E. Rava. *Viaggio in Africa* (43 foto e 49).

documentation of the processes involved in their production. A similar range of material was collected for the exhibition of Eritrea, including coffee, canned meat, flax seed, and artisanal products like wood carvings and silverware. In this case, this presentation was accompanied by a propaganda display of the colonization efforts in Eritrea.⁹⁹ A second and equally important part of the Eritrean and Somalian exhibit was a presentation of colonial fauna and a collection of ethnographic objects. The exhibition catalog to the eighth *Fiera di Tripoli* states that this ethnographic material "represents that form of art through which the natives express their inventive capacity and which gives the sensation of the progress achieved in the mentality of this population during the Italian occupation."¹⁰⁰ The approach to the display of all of these materials was according to the most objective standards – something that is particularly evident in their representation in the catalog to the tenth *Fiera di Tripoli* in 1936. [Figure 2.b-36] This exhibit of native chairs, furnishings, pottery and weapons has a restrained quality – quite different from the clutter of earlier colonial representations – that links them with contemporary museum practices, such as the *Sala delle arme abissine* from the *Museo Coloniale*. The highly politicized nature of this presentation is also highlighted in this image, which superimposes a group of Eritrean *ascari* soldiers over an exterior view of the pavilion.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ The presentation of agricultural products of Somalia was in part facilitated by government and private agencies and included the presentation of products, diagrams and photographs. Other commercial products on display for the colony of Eritrea included incense, buttons, tanned leather and hides, tomatoes, marmalade, mother of pearl and shells. The Ufficio Agrario and Ufficio Economico of this colony assembled a propaganda display of diagrams, statistics, and publications. Ente autonomo Fiera campionaria di Tripoli, *VIII. Manifestazione. Quarta rassegna internazionale intercoloniale in Africa. 11 marzo - 11 maggio. MCMXXXIV-XII. Catalogo* (Roma: Arte grafiche Fratelli Palombi, 1934), 255-7.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 26. The presentation of the fauna of Eritrea and Somalia in this exhibit was comprised of the display of the pelts of various animals, including lions, leopards and gazelles and the tusks of elephants.

¹⁰¹ The caption to this page layout is as follows: "The elegant pavilion of Africa Orientale Italiana constitutes a notable attraction of the *Fiera di Tripoli*. The rich artisanal production that,

The representational task of the *Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia* of Larco and Rava was to communicate Italy's East African colonies to a metropolitan and colonial audience. As a "permanent pavilion and ethnographic museum," it purported to present this material in its interior displays according to the most rigorous scientific practices. This approach can also be extended to the design of this project, which was a demonstration of the vernacular influences and characteristic building materials of these colonies. However, if the *Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia* can be regarded as an ethnographic object not unlike those that it put on display, what culture does it represent? As a evocation of the East African colonies in Libya, this project combines these vernacular influences with a general Mediterranean character that derives from its North African context. It addresses the issue of the Italian representation of Eritrea and Somalia in Libya by creating a hybrid of all of these references, expressed through a contemporary metropolitan language.¹⁰² It was a reification on the cultural plane of the complex exchange of metropolitan and colonial identities found in the politics of Italian colonization – an architecture where the modern and the indigenous were made to perfectly coincide.

The third and final permanent pavilion constructed to represent Italy's East African colonies was the *Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale Italiana*. Designed by the architect Pietro Lombardi, this project was completed for the eleventh *Fiera campionaria* in 1937 – an exhibition that was enthusiastically described by

among other things, was presented, demonstrates in an unequivocal way the high level of civilization and well-being that those populations have reached under Italian rule." *Ente autonomo Fiera campionaria di Tripoli, X. Fiera di Tripoli* (Milano-Roma: S.A. Arti Grafiche Bertarelli, 1935), 8.

¹⁰² In the publication of the *Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia* in *Domus*, it was argued – as Rava did in his own writings – that the general Mediterranean character of this project lent it a distinctly modern quality. In concluding this presentation it was stated that "with its large pergola, its loggias, its shaded patio... it was an exemplary type of colonial house, both Italian and modern." "Per la moderna architettura coloniale italiana," 12.

Alessandro Melchiori, the President of the *Consiglio Generale dell'Ente Fiera*, as "an integral part of the work of empowering our Empire."¹⁰³ These comments should not be surprising, as this was the first edition of the *Fiera* to be held after Mussolini's declaration of an Italian empire in Africa. It was also organized in anticipation of a propaganda trip to Libya by il Duce in March of that year. However, not only did Mussolini make a well publicized visit to inaugurate this exhibition, he also articulated his most lengthy and important public statement at the *Fiera campionaria*. This speech, given to his "Comrades of Tripoli," was a carefully measured affirmation of Empire aimed at stirring Italian nationalism while extinguishing what was described as "the continual neurotic alarmism" of other European powers. In seeking to dismiss these fears, he stated: "we arm ourselves on the sea, in the sky and on the ground, because this is our irresistible duty in the face of the armament of others, but the Italian people demand to be left alone, because they are intent on a long and difficult labor."¹⁰⁴ The polemical nature of this speech was matched by the itinerary of Mussolini's visit to the Fiera, which included carefully choreographed stops at the pavilions of Germany, France and Italy's colonial possessions in North and East Africa.¹⁰⁵ These imperial politics were given

¹⁰³ The larger context of this statement is as follows: "Like all of the institutions of the Regime – always created on a solid base, on profound reasons and for real demands – the Fiera di Tripoli has completed its duty, has won its battles, has put forward its contribution to the formation of an Italian colonial consciousness; and today is a concrete reality, an integral part of the work of empowering our Empire." Alessandro Melchiori, "Premessa," *XI Fiera di Tripoli. XI Manifestazione internazionale intercoloniale*, 25.

¹⁰⁴ This speech begins with a reference back to his original visit to this colony in 1926, asserting that "today Libya is completely occupied, and the tri-color of the fatherland flutters solemnly and respected." He proceeds to recognize the work accomplished by Fascism in Libya, including the recently completed *strada litoranea*. He also argued that the Muslim populations shared the same enthusiasm for Fascist rule as Italians. The final part of this speech deals with the skepticism of other nations about the nature of Fascism, forcefully asserting Italian autonomy and benevolence. Mussolini, "Ai camerati di Tripoli." (March 17, 1937), in *Opera Omnia di Benito Mussolini. Volume XXVIII* (Firenze: La Fenice, 1959), 143-5.

¹⁰⁵ This itinerary began with an initial ceremony recognizing the arrival of Mussolini at the *Fiera*, which was marked by the peal of 200 canons. Mussolini, accompanied by his entourage of officials and reporters, proceeded almost immediately to the pavilion of Germany where he "attentively and minutely visited the material exhibited." His next stop was the *Consiglio*

graphic expression in the cover of the catalog to the eleventh *Fiera*, in which the winged Roman goddess of Victory cautiously offers an olive branch in an outstretched hand while being poised with a sword in the other. [Figure 2.b.37]

The Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale Italiana was an important means of asserting the politics of Mussolini's newly founded colonial empire in Africa. In so doing, its first task was to validate Italy's claims in East Africa by documenting what Angelo Piccioli described as the "laborious and glorious historical process through which Italy conquered its "place in the sun" in Africa."¹⁰⁶ This pavilion also had a specifically economic mission, which was tied to the role of the *Fiera di Tripoli* as a vehicle for facilitating trade between the metropolitan and colonial contexts. It was intended to "present to the Italian and foreign visitor a complete picture of what the territories of the Empire could offer to the Mediterranean markets."¹⁰⁷ However, these declarations should be regarded as largely rhetorical, since in reaction to the sanctions of the League of Nations after the invasion of Ethiopia, Italy sought self-sufficiency in trade and economic matters rather than open markets.¹⁰⁸ The project

dell'Economia Corporativa, followed quickly by the *Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale* where he "delayed even longer." After a visit to the *Mostra Zootechnica*, he then gave his "Discorso ai camerati di Tripoli." This speech was followed by visits to the *Salone d'automobile*, the French pavilion, the *Padiglione dei Lavori Pubblici*, the *Padiglione della Libia* and finally the *Padiglione dell'Artigianato Libico*. "La Duce inaugura a Tripoli la grande rassegna del lavoro in un quadro di imperiale potenza." *Corriere della Sera* (18 March 1937): 1.

¹⁰⁶ In speaking about the XI *Fiera*, Piccioli states: "Great works were undertaken in the quarter of the *Fiera*, for making it suitable to receive the Duce: at the center of this, along the principal route, was erected the large pavilion of Italian East Africa, intended to illustrate all of the activities and possibilities of our Empire, in addition to documenting the history of our colonial conquests. Those who visit will thus be able to ideally recall the laborious and glorious historical process through which Italy conquered its "place in the sun" in Africa." Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli," 558.

¹⁰⁷ The catalog of the eleventh *Fiera* makes the following statement about the exhibition of East Africa: "the raw and manufactured products of the lands of the Empire... exhibited in the pavilion of Italian East Africa, present to the Italian and foreign visitor a complete picture of what the territories of the Empire could offer to the Mediterranean markets and, at the same time, of the possibilities of absorption and utilization of capital, energy and products that the incredibly vast territory of Ethiopia possesses." "La prima mostra Coloniale dell'Impero," *XI Fiera di Tripoli. XI Manifestazione internazionale intercoloniale*, 53.

¹⁰⁸ Martin Clark notes that the League of Nations imposed economic sanctions on Italy following the Ethiopian invasion. Although he notes that they were limited, he remarks "they boosted the government's drive for self-sufficiency. *Autarchy* became the slogan. Imports would

of Lombardi reacted to the political task of representing Italy's East African colonies through the creation of a somber exterior volume, that was only slightly articulated with alternating bands of rough and smooth marble and a continuous strip window at the eaves. [Figure 2.b-38] The most prominent statement of the exterior was the entrance, which was marked by two large monoliths commemorating Mussolini's founding of the Empire in 1936. Avoiding any synthesis of the indigenous architecture of the East African colonies, this project suggests an archaic religious monument. This quality is born out in the plan of the project, in which four rectangular galleries are linked through a central cruciform shaped space. [Figure 2.b-39] The Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale Italiana thus offers an image of the political will to Empire as an almost religious force that transcends specific regions or cultures.

The interior exhibits of this pavilion provide depth to this vision of Empire through displays that present both the Italian victory in Ethiopia and the contemporary colonization efforts throughout the East African territories. In so doing, the image of conquest was fused with that of economic and public life. This intersection of war and secular society is alluded to in the catalog of the twelfth *Fiera*, where it was asserted that: "the re-evocation of the glorious military conquest is perfectly harmonized with that, no less glorious and always heroic, of the civil conquest."¹⁰⁹ [Figure 2.b-40] However, the depiction of the recent military victory in East Africa and this region's future economic potential was not limited to the space of exhibitions, as a number of celebratory volumes on the Empire came out, including *L'Impero Coloniale Fascista*, published by the *Istituto Coloniale Fascista* in

be replaced by *ersatz* goods... Exports henceforth would go to the Empire – Africa alone took over 25 per cent of Italian exports after 1936, a huge shift of Italian resources overseas." Clark, *Modern Italy, 1871-1982*, 266.

¹⁰⁹ Ente autonomo Fiera campionaria di Tripoli, "La 2^a Mostra dell'Impero," *XII Manifestazione Internazionale-Intercoloniale. 20 febbraio - 5 aprile 1938-XVI. Seconda Mostra dell'Impero* (Roma: Società anonima tipografica Luzzatti, 1938), 139. As noted in this article, the *Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale* contained a documentation of the Italian conquest in Ethiopia side by side with that of the economic and social valorization of this colony.

1937.¹¹⁰ In the *Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale Italiana*, the Italian conquest in Ethiopia was presented through a combination of maps, drawings and photographs which documented this historical event. The Italian accomplishments in East Africa was evidenced in an equally objective manner, through the display of products for export to Italy and the presentation of colonization efforts – such as public works projects and agricultural development – and ethnographic objects.¹¹¹ This combination of photographs, maps, raw materials, cultural artifacts and models was presented according to their place of origin, with the larger exhibition space being subdivided into separate areas. [Figure 2.b-41] These spaces were visually unified by a continuous shelf designed to accommodate a variety of objects, and which allowed for the upper portion of the room to be dedicated to two-dimensional representations. Among these visual representations was a series of large murals that gave a thematic pictorial identity to each of the Italian colonies in East Africa.

This approach to the presentation of this material in the *Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale* was based upon the most exacting contemporary practices of institutions like the *Museo Coloniale* in Rome. According to the catalog of this exhibition, the artifacts and images were displayed "in an organized and convincing form with the evidence and immediacy of facts, without any artifice or rhetorical

¹¹⁰ This large format book of almost 600 pages was broken into two distinct sections. The first of these, entitled "Mussolini fondatore dell'Impero" contains a series of essays by prominent political commentators like Maurizio Rava, Angelo Piccioli and Giuseppe Bottai. These essays discuss topics related to the foundation of the Empire in Africa, including a detailed documentation of the conquest of Ethiopia. The second section presents each of Italy's colonial possessions through essays on topics including geography, ethnography, religion, archeology, economy and agriculture. Istituto Coloniale Fascista, *L'Impero Coloniale Fascista* (Novara: Istituto Geografico De Agostini, 1937).

¹¹¹ The presentation of products for export to Italy included cotton from Somalia, Eritrea, Harrar and Galla Sidama; coffee from Harar and Gimma; textile fibers from Agave; bamboo; palm and sesame oil; flax seed; wood; stone for cement; incense; leather goods; otter and snake pelts; natural rubber; and minerals. As noted in the catalog, the agricultural, livestock, mining, industrial and commercial possibilities of East Africa were presented through this collection of products. Ente autonomo Fiera campionaria di Tripoli. "La 2^a Mostra dell'Impero," *XII Manifestazione Internazionale-Intercoloniale*, 139.

pandering."¹¹² However, the seeming objectivity of these institutions had already been completely compromised by the same Imperial politics that this exhibition was purporting to represent. The *Museo Coloniale* had mounted an exhibition related to the Italian military activities in Ethiopia in 1935 – a display where the museum practices had themselves been put in service of Fascism's imperial politics.¹¹³

The *Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale Italiana* at the *Fiera di Tripoli* represents a decisive shift in direction in the representation of indigenous culture and, a consequence, in the concept of modernity. Instead of conveying these cultures through a synthesis of their vernacular traditions as had been done with the *Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia* of Larco and Rava, this project offers a monumental statement of the political force of the Italian Empire. Despite the scientific documentation of the native culture of Italy's East African colonies within this pavilion – this "science" has every appearance of being predetermined by political demands. The identities of these colonies in this exhibition were closely tied to their defeat by the Italian authorities, as is compellingly conveyed in the large murals in the main exhibition space where images of the colonial landscape are combined with images of military power. In the *Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale Italiana*, a politics of incorporation had been replaced by a politics of Empire. As a consequence, the representation of indigenous culture had been completely permeated with images of conquest, and the modernity of the hybrid had been replaced by a more singular aesthetic of war and subjugation.

¹¹² The larger context of this statement is as follows: "All of the powerful force of organization and construction that Fascist Italy completed in all fields in the lands of the Empire, is here illustrated in an organized and convincing form with the evidence and immediacy of facts, without any artifice or rhetorical pandering." *Ibid.*, 139.

¹¹³ As noted in Part 2, Section A., the new home of the *Museo Coloniale* opened on October 21, 1935, less than three weeks after Italy's invasion of Ethiopia. Both in its organization and in its content, this *Museo imperiale* placed great emphasis on the military dimension of the Italian colonial enterprise – an emphasis that perfectly coincided with the current activities in Ethiopia.

Part 3. Colonial Architecture and Tourism

The interest on the part of Italians in tourism to their colonies and the early developments of colonial travel after World War I, was intricately linked to the prior Italian experiences in Africa. The activities of Italian explorers and bourgeois adventurers in Africa in the late nineteenth century, and the publications, conferences and activities of groups like the *Società Geografica Italiana*, contributed to the cultivation of a desire to explore these lands – a desire tinged with no small amount of romanticism.¹ These early experiences were also crucial in constructing the image of colonial travel as a visceral and often dangerous experience of unfamiliar territories and cultures. Moreover, the fascination for travel in Africa was related to some of the same sentiments that led to Italy's colonization of Eritrea, Somalia and the Libyan territories between 1890 and 1911. It was clearly tied to the nationalist views that propelled Italy to assert itself in relation to other European colonial nations and thus take part, though somewhat belatedly, in the dividing up of Africa.² Colonial tourism can thus be interpreted as a political gesture – as a form of imperialism in which the traveler incorporates overseas territories, both

¹ For a detailed account of the Italian exploration in Africa during this period, see Claudio Ceretti, "Teneo te, Africa." *L'immaginario, l'esplorazione, la rappresentazione*, in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare*, 51-67. As Ceretti states "the diaries of the first travelers had an important role in opening the overseas territories to popular fantasy." *Ibid.*, 57. See also Angelo Del Boca, "L'Italia e la spartizione dell'Africa. 1. In nome della scienza," in *L'Africa nella coscienza degli Italiani. Miti, memorie, errori, sconfitte* (Bari-Roma: Laterza, 1992), 7-22. Del Boca also speaks of "the passion for the voyages of exploration in Africa infected not only the more progressive classes, but also the great popular masses. Sustaining these interests in Italy were above all the Geographic Societies, of which numerous were born in the second half of the 19th century, and the great many publications, lay and religious, scientific or popularizing, that dealt with travel and exploration, most of which were supportive of an Italian intervention in the dividing up of Africa." *Ibid.*, 7-8.

² For a detailed discussion of the various contemporary arguments advanced for the Italian colonization of Libya see Segrè, "Emigration and Empire in Liberal Italy," in *Fourth Shore: The Italian Colonization of Libya*, 3-19.

literally and metaphorically, into the larger metropolitan consciousness.³ It should be noted, however, that in the Italian case the relationship between colonial tourism and politics had a two-fold significance. On the one hand, travel in the colonies was understood as a form of propaganda. It was recognized as a crucial vehicle for the propagation of a "colonial consciousness" in Italy – a term that was both a rallying cry and source of lament (for the lack thereof) for many colonial enthusiasts until the mid 1930s.⁴ On the other, colonial tourism was an important means for Italy to affirm the political order of its overseas possessions. It was an extension of a politics whose explicit aim was the control of the colonial landscape and the complete submission of its local populations.

Colonial tourism was an integral part of the process of modernization undertaken by the Italian authorities in North Africa. It was directly tied to, and dependent upon, the building and enhancement of ports, the regularization of a network of roads and related modes of transportation, and the creation of a system of modern public institutions. It is in this sense that, following military conquest and the creation of a viable infrastructure of transportation and public services, tourism can be considered as the third wave of colonization. Organized travel in the Italian colonies was widely regarded as an important economic force that could facilitate this process of modernization. During the Governorship of Giuseppe Volpi (1921-25), it was argued that the presence of Italian and foreign travelers in Tripolitania would not only introduce money into the local economy, but had the potential to be

³ Although not dealing with colonial tourism, Dennison Nash uses the term imperialism in reference to a situation in which the benefits of a tourist system are going to an external power. It is significant that his analysis of contemporary tourism uses a "colonialist" model, something which underscores the more generally political nature of the tourist enterprise. Nash, "Tourism as a Form of Imperialism," in *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*, 2nd Edition, ed. Valene L. Smith. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), 37-54.

⁴ Claudio Segrè, in his book *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya*, asserts that with some exceptions - during the Libyan war of 1911 and the Ethiopian war of 1935 - Italy did not develop a great interest in her colonies, much to the dismay of so-called colonial enthusiasts. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

the most important factor in the industrial development of this region.⁵ The modernization of these overseas territories was an important backdrop to the creation of a positive image for colonial tourism. There was a considerable effort made by contemporary critics and commentators to represent the tourist system in these lands as modern – possessing the most perfect means of transportation, the most up-to-date facilities, and the most efficient organization.⁶ This emphasis on the modernity of this system was due, at least in part, to the fact that the tourist experience of the Libyan colonies was a medium for the communication of Italy's status as a modern colonizing nation. The tourist system thus had the task of constructing an image of a modern and efficiently organized colony, thereby putting the contemporary accomplishments of Fascist colonization on display.⁷

Tourism was also an important vehicle for the direct experience of the indigenous culture of the Libyan colonies. It brought Italian and foreign visitors to the remotest regions of these colonies for the purpose of encountering their most characteristic aspects. This experience of difference was largely communicated through two seemingly opposite modes of cultural expression, the first being colonial

⁵ In the book, *La rinascità della Tripolitania*, which commemorated the four years of the Governorship of Giuseppe Volpi (1921-25), the "tourist industry" was discussed under the general category of the problem of the industrial development of Tripolitania. Tourism is also discussed under the "politica delle comunicazione", where it is seen as a "new source of prosperity and movement for the Colony." *La rinascità della Tripolitania. Memorie e studi sui quattro anni di governo del Conte Giuseppe Volpi di Misurata*, 260, 511-12.

⁶ Numerous articles in Colonial journals during the early 1930s were concerned with both the modernity of the tourist infrastructure – that it would have similar amenities to metropolitan travel – and the efficiency of its organization. Many went to great lengths both applauding efforts to organize travel calling for further organization, even making comparisons to the tourist activities in the French colonies in North Africa.

⁷ Although the early literature on colonial tourism made only subtle references to Fascism, after Mussolini's visit to Tripolitania in 1926, the representation of the progress in this colony was consistently attributed to the commitment and efforts of the fascist leadership to colonial matters. That commitment was more rhetorical than actual until at least around 1932, after which substantial funds were made available for the colonies. For the lack of funding during the De Bono period, see Del Boca, "Un quadrumviro in Africa," in *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo al Gheddafi*, 77-133.

literature, and the second, research in the fields of anthropology and ethnography.⁸ These two means of dissemination reflect the distinct conceptual models through which this "culture" was both communicated and understood. The indigenous culture of Libya was represented as an exotic and erotic projection of literary fantasy and an important subject for serious scientific inquiry. It should be pointed out, however, that the idea of presenting "native" culture is itself modern, the product of scientific disciplines that framed and contained these cultures in specific ways. Moreover, the western experience of so-called primitive regions has often attempted to maintain and even supplement these cultures in a naturalized setting, in what has been described by Griselda Pollock as a "spectacle of difference."⁹ The interest in the exoticism of this context, found in colonial literature, like the scientific study of its culture, was motivated by the desire to experience the culture of these regions outside of the passage of time. The self-conscious attempts by the Italian authorities in the Libyan colonies to preserve the foreign qualities of the indigenous culture, were reflected in the means by which the architecture of tourism attempted to appropriate its pre-modern opposite.

⁸ For a brief discussion of the contribution of colonial literature to the knowledge of Libya, see Angelo Del Boca, "La riconquista del Fezzan. Tra esotismo ed erotismo," in *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 167-73. A far more detailed discussion of colonial literature is provided by Tomasello, *La letteratura coloniale italiana dalle avanguardie al fascismo*. This book provides the more general context of the debate surrounding the question of colonial literature in addition to giving a historical survey of its developments. A similar presentation is made on scientific research in Libya during the Governorship of Italo Balbo. Del Boca, "L'era di Balbo. La ricerca scientifica," in *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 271-8. A more detailed survey of this phenomenon can be found in Francesco Surdich, "Le spedizioni scientifiche italiane in Africa Orientale e in Libia durante il periodo fascista," in *Le guerre coloniali del fascismo*, ed. Angelo Del Boca. (Bari-Roma: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1991), 443-68.

⁹ Griselda Pollock, based on her reading of the book of anthropologist Dean MacCannell, entitled *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (1976), argues that tourism has a compensatory role, relative to the destructive forces of modernization and the alienation of the modern subject from the past. Her use of the term spectacle of difference relates to the assertion that this culture is maintained in an integral way in its "primitive" or "pre-modern" state in deliberate opposition to modern society. She states: "the structures and practices of tourism constitute a unifying consciousness by which the fragmented and complex forms of modern society can be reassembled, but in a displaced form, as spectacle." Pollock, *Avant-Garde Gambits 1888-1893: Gender and the Color of Art History*, (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1992), 62.

The impact of these literary and scientific models on the field of tourism will be examined through a discussion of the development of an effective system for travel in the Libyan colonies during the Fascist period. This investigation traces the trajectory of the constantly shifting nature of the tourist politics in the colonial context – which began with modest assertions of the adequacy of the tourist system in the North African colonies, and concluded with strident affirmations of its connection to a politics of empire. This transformation can also be described as a movement from an interest in the "exoticism" of the local vernacular, to the projection of a racially motivated "science" onto this culture. This process will be studied through the representation of travel in the Libyan colonies in printed materials like guide books, commentaries and other published works. Following this survey of tourist related literature, the relationship of colonial tourism to the travel of foreigners in Italy will be examined. The themes and initiatives that were shared between the metropolitan and colonial context will be explored, with a particular focus on the politics of tourism as conceived by the Fascist authorities. The analysis of the broader context for colonial tourism will conclude with a discussion of the appropriation of local culture in the tourist system in relation to its representation in the literature of exoticism and its examination in scientific fields of research like anthropology and ethnography.¹⁰

The general analysis of the characteristic aspects of colonial tourism will be followed by a more detailed discussion of the creation of a tourist system in Libya under the Governorship of Italo Balbo (1934-40). This system included the construction of a series of new hotels and the creation of a number of tourist related services in this colony. These activities eventually came under the direct supervision

¹⁰ For a general discussion of ethnographic research on the Italian colonies during this period, see: Grottanelli, "La ricerca etnologica nel periodo coloniale. Una testimonianza e una riflessione," 1133-52.

of the *Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia* (ETAL) – which was a para-state organization created by Balbo in 1935.¹¹ The development of a Libyan tourist network will be discussed in connection with the indigenous politics practiced by the Italian colonial authorities during this period – which combined a systematic effort to incorporate this region into metropolitan Italy with a strategic defense of the customs and practices of the Libyan populations. This part concludes with a more direct examination of the appropriation of indigenous references in the architecture of tourism in the Libyan colonies – a tendency that was a relatively direct product of the "indigenous politics" of Balbo. The important theoretical reference points in this discussion are the rationalist arguments for a modern colonial architecture of Carlo Enrico Rava and the contextualist approach of Florestano Di Fausto. In this discussion, Larco and Rava's *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* of 1931 provides the pretext for examining the more predominant approach to the tourist architecture in this colony found in the work of Di Fausto. His *Albergo "Ain-el-Fras"* in Ghadames of 1935 underscores the more general imbrication of tourist architecture in Libya with the scientific interest in the preservation of the local culture.

¹¹ For a comprehensive discussion of the *Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia* (ETAL) and its various services – which included travel agencies in Italy and Libya, transportation services within the colonies, entertainment facilities, and publicity activities – see: Eros Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia (E.T.A.L.)," *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana* V, 4 (December 1942): 955-75.

A. Tourism and Colonization

The Arab woman is a silent prisoner who does not have weapons for her love. She can be abducted by the first man, she can be won by the first dream, but she withdraws in her silence and thus hides, wretchedly, as in a large cloak or in a great sorrow. What importance is reality for those who have a life all to themselves in their soul? To sorrow the women also say yes, submissively, because their destiny is also that of imprisoned queen; to be a small soul who timidly obeys, nothing else.

Mario dei Gaslini, *Piccolo amore Beduino*, 1926.¹²

Libia has conserved its Oriental fascination more than any other region of North Africa, being less profoundly penetrated by the cosmopolitanism that radiates from the cities of Egypt, from Tunisia, from Algeria and from Morocco. Here the Arab, devoted to traditions, lives in his psychological and social climate, with lesser mystifications and contaminations. The faith that the Italians inspire in the natives permits us to come closer to their life...

L.V. Bertarelli. *Guida d'Italia del Touring Club Italiano. Libia*, 1937.¹³

The earliest tourist expedition to the Libyan colonies was organized by the Touring Club Italiano, which held a "National excursion" in Tripolitania in May of 1914, less than four years after the initial invasion of this region by the Italian military authorities. However, the initial development of a tourist system in these territories did not take place until the "rebirth" of Tripolitania under Count Giuseppe Volpi,

¹² The original quotation is as follows: "La donna araba è una prigioniera silenziosa che non ha armi per i suoi amori: può essere rapita dal primo uomo: può essere vinta dal primo sogno: ma sa chiudersi nel suo silenzio e nascondersi così, poveramente, come in un gran mantello o in un gran dolore: che importa la realtà che nell'anima ha una vita tutta per sè? anche al dolore la donna dice sommessamente di sì, perchè il suo destino di regina imprigionata è ancora questo: essere un'anima piccola che obbedisce timidamente: null'altro." Dei Gaslini, *Piccolo amore Beduino*, 12.

¹³ The original quotation is as follows: "La Libia ha conservato il suo fascino orientale più che ogni altra regione dell'Africa mediterranea, essendo in essa penetrato meno profondamente il cosmopolitismo che s'irradia dalle città dell'Egitto, della Tunisia, dell'Algeria e del Marocco. Qui l'Arabo, ligio alle tradizioni, vive nel suo clima psicologico e sociale, con minori mistificazioni e contaminazioni. La fiducia che gl'Italiani ispirano agli indigeni ci permette di avvicinarci alla loro vita..." L.V. Bertarelli, "Turismo e Comunicazioni," in *Guida d'Italia del Touring Club Italiano. Libia* (Milano: Touring Club Italiano, 1937), 135.

who became Governor of that region in August of 1921. It was under his direction that the coastal regions of this colony were recaptured along with several important locations in the Libyan interior. By the end of his Governorship in July of 1925 these conquered territories became the backbone for the further development of a viable tourist infrastructure in this region.¹⁴ Despite the reliance of colonial tourism on the military domination of the territory, its development did not lag far behind that taking place in Italy. The earliest travel agencies in Italy date from just before the beginning of the 20th century – something that marks the first stages of a shift from a tourism of "pleasure trips" to mass tourism.¹⁵ This transformation was not fully underway in Italy until after the end of World War I, when both economic and political factors led to a more substantial development of the infrastructure and organization related to tourism. The *Ente Nazionale per le Industrie Turistiche* (ENIT) – a state sponsored organization for the coordination, control and promotion of the tourist industry in Italy – was not founded until 1919.¹⁶ Moreover, given

¹⁴ The first National excursion in Tripolitania was held by the Touring Club Italiano (TCI) in May 1914. For information on the activities of the TCI, see *I sessant'anni del Touring Club Italiano, 1894-1954*, ed. Giuseppe Vota (Milano: Touring Club Italiano, 1954); Giovanni Rosselli, "Turismo e colonie. Il Touring Club Italiano," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare*, 100-07. ; and Boggetti, Giovanni. "L'opera del "Touring" per la conoscenza delle colonie italiane," in *Atti del Primo Congresso di studi coloniali, Vol. III*, 110-16. With regard to the reconquest of coastal areas of Tripolitania, this was done through a series of military campaigns between January 1922 and November 1924. See Romano, *Giuseppe Volpi. Industria e finanza tra Giolitti e Mussolini*, 102-12. For a more detailed account see Angelo Del Boca, "La svolta con il fascismo," *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 5-76.

¹⁵ The existence of travel agencies is one of the important signs in the development of modern tourism, as distinct from the tradition of the "Grand Tour" of the 18th and 19th centuries. For a brief outline of this transformation, see Franco Paloscia, *Storia del turismo nell'economia italiana*, (Città di Castello: Editore Petrucci, 1994), 12-17. Paloscia states that the first Italian travel agency, Piana Parucca in Rome, was founded in 1897. The earliest organized group excursion in Italy, by Thomas Cook, was in July of 1864.

¹⁶ For a comprehensive examination of the state organization of tourist propaganda during this period see Taina Syrjämaa, *Visitez l'Italie. Italian State Tourist Propaganda abroad 1919-1943*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of General History, University of Turku, 1977, in *Turun Yliopiston Julkaisuja. Annales Universitatis Turkuensis*. Ser. B, Tom 217 (1977). Syrjämaa argues that the period after WW1 represented a shift due to poor economic conditions and the willingness of certain countries, including Italy, to develop tourism as a way to improve this situation. *Ibid.*, 346. She also links the stabilization of this system under Fascism to the gradual improvement in the economy between 1922 and 1925. *Ibid.*, 57. For a contemporary

Italy's late economic development in relation to countries like Britain, Germany and France, the post-World War I period was the first time when a substantial class of individuals existed with the necessary leisure time and disposable income for tourism. The initial stage of development of tourism in Tripolitania during the Governorship of Volpi was thus at precisely the same moment when modern tourism in Italy was beginning to see its first manifestations as a national, state organized system.¹⁷

The initial stage in the development of a tourist system in Tripolitania under Volpi was largely communicated through its tourist related literature. The earliest of these publications were primarily concerned with asserting their own legitimacy to an audience that was assumed to be indifferent to or misinformed about colonial matters. One of the first guide books, *Guida di Tripoli e dintorni* published in 1925, made this quite clear in its preface, stating: "in ignoring [Tripolitania], Italians do not know how to do anything else but cover it with the usual deforming prejudices."¹⁸ Making use of the examples of the French colonies of Algeria and Tunisia, this book implores the traveler to visit the colony, asserting: "Tripolitania is neither more nor less a colony than the others in North Africa." Though certainly not evoking great confidence in either colonial travel or the particular status of Tripolitania relative to these other colonies, this statement recognizes the modest means available at that time, hoping that increased knowledge and contact with the colony would foster a

description of ENIT, see Luigi Rava. "Che cosa e l'ENIT," *Rassegna Italiana del Mediterraneo* V, 59 (December 1925): 397-400.

¹⁷ For a detailed account of the activities of Volpi in Tripolitania, see *La rinascità della Tripolitania*. Although written in the form of a series of testimonials to Volpi, and presented to Mussolini during his first visit to Tripolitania in 1926, it nevertheless traces the important themes that characterized Volpi's tenure as governor. For more recent historical accounts see Sergio Romano, *Giuseppe Volpi. Industria e finanza tra Giolitti e Mussolini*, 102-26. ; and Segrè, *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya*, 35-56.

¹⁸ *Guida di Tripoli e dintorni* (Milano: Fratelli Treves Editori, 1925), v. This guide book was published in 1925, at the end of the Giuseppe Volpi's Governorship. The dedication of this volume to Volpi is evident in the fact that the first image is a portrait of the Governor at work in his office in Tripoli.

greater understanding of its importance.¹⁹ This guide book seeks to represent the colonies in a favorable light to a potential tourist audience. However, in so doing it does not provide guidance for the tourist experience of Tripoli so much as it chronicles the public improvements carried out in this region under Governor Giuseppe Volpi. After a brief itinerary of the major monuments and tourist facilities of Tripoli, this guide book offers a comprehensive presentation of the contemporary city and its municipal government, public works, schools, archeological research, agricultural development and economy.²⁰ Not surprisingly, these same areas of concern were the structure under which another book, *La rinascità della Tripolitania*, was organized. This celebratory volume, which was published in 1926, documents the achievements of Volpi during the four years of his Governorship.²¹

The earlier *Guida di Tripoli e dintorni* provides the reader with a detailed account of the state of development of this colony from a metropolitan point of view, its major concern being to illustrate what was described as "the civic function of the capital of Tripolitania." This focus on the current accomplishments and the western standards of civic organization, public services and hygiene at the expense of the

¹⁹ The larger context of this statement is : "...if you would have made only one trip to Tripoli... you would have immediately formed a precise idea: one namely, that Tripolitania is neither more nor less a colony than the others in North Africa, to wit susceptible to the same forms of civic activity as Algeria and Tunisia, not to mention the same agricultural exploitation." At this time there was only one ship per week, of the *Società "Italia"* – which was primarily used for postal service and the transfer of government officials. *Ibid.*, v-vi.

²⁰ It is worth noting that the tourist itinerary, a mere eight pages, are numbered as a preface to the real guide book, which presents the present state of the colony. The chapters of this book are as follows: 1. La città nuova; II. La Beladìa (Il Municipio); III. Un decennio di opere pubbliche in Tripolitania; IV. Le scuole nella Tripolitania; V. Le ricerche archeologiche; VI. L'Istituto Agrario; VII. Le ferrovie della Tripolitania; VIII. Il bilancio civile, 1921-22; IX. Qualche dato economico sulla Tripolitania; X. La "Dante Alighieri"; and XI. La chiesa cattolica a Tripoli. *Ibid.*

²¹ This book, subtitled "Memorie e studi sui quattro anni di governo del Conte Giuseppe Volpi di Misurata," was presented to Benito Mussolini on his arrival in Tripolitania on April 11 1926. The overall organization of this book was in four parts - I. Il paese; II. La conquista della Tripolitania; III. La rinascità della Tripolitania; and IV. Le basi dell'avvenire. The structure of the third section – I. La politica della colonizzazione; II. La politica finanziaria; III. La politica delle comunicazione; IV. La conquista morale (Schools, justice, archeological research, public works, sanitary works) – are almost exactly those of this guide book. *La rinascità della Tripolitania*.

presentation of local industries and craft production is quite striking.²² This tendency is followed by the illustrations to the guide book, whose only references to local architecture, beyond that of Roman origin, are a panorama of the rooftops of Tripoli and a view of the *Castello*. [Figure 3.a-1] The dominant image of the architecture of the buildings featured – like the *Palazzina del Governatore* and the *Stazione ferroviaria* – is a neo-classical style more typical to the Italian metropolitan context than to the vernacular architecture of Tripolitania.²³ [Figures 3.a-2 & 3] This guide book thus attempts to propagandize the achievements of colonial rule – projecting an image of permanence and stability that would make this colony seem a desirable destination for a metropolitan traveler. Not unlike *La rinascità della Tripolitania*, this tourist publication focuses on concrete accomplishments of Italian rule in this region and a detailed presentation of its economic and political viability.²⁴ The political dimensions of this discourse is quite clear in the presentation of the "new city" in *Guida di Tripoli e dintorni*, which asserts that "Tripolitania... has validly resumed the path that should lead it to reach a development proportional to its function as a colony of a great power – as an instrument for the demographic

²² This focus is clearly articulated in the section on "La città nuova", where it is asserted that "this Guide book, proposing to accompany the visitor through the streets of Tripoli and initiate them into the life of the colony, must necessarily follow the traces of the activities of Italy that took place over the last decade." Ibid., 2. With regard to the emphasis on public works, Ch. II. La Beladia (Il Municipio) provides a listing of the civic government activities, from taxes, to public hygiene, to police, to public markets, to hospitals - each of which with a detailed entry specifying the services available and their standards. This approach is repeated on the following sections, the sum of which present a specific picture of the current state of the colony and Volpi's contribution to this. More detailed information also included are the population figures, recent budgets, information on trade with Tripolitania, etc.

²³ Of the twenty-eight photographs in this guide book, only the two mentioned views – a panorama of Tripoli and view of the *Castello* – show the local architecture. Nine of the photographs show Roman sculpture and ruins. It should be noted, however, that by no means was neo-classicism the only, or even the preferred style of the Volpi Era. Many buildings were constructed in what was considered a false Moorish style with vaguely orientalisising motifs.

²⁴ The relation between these two volumes and the intent of their presentation cannot be underestimated. Particularly notable is the focus on financial and economic data in *Guida di Tripoli e dintorni*, in no small part due to the economic focus of Volpi's Governorship. This relationship is due to the fact that it was the Volpi administration that provided the information, and perhaps the guidelines, for this guide book.

expansion of the Mother Country and for the defense of its inescapable Mediterranean interests."²⁵

The belief that tourism was a projection of the accomplishments of colonial rule continued in the second phase in the development of a tourist system in the Libyan colonies, which took place during the Governorships of Emilio De Bono (1925-28) and Pietro Badoglio (1929-33). It was during this time that the farthest reaches of the colonies of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were definitively "pacified" – a process that symbolically concluded with Badoglio's declaration of an end to the rebellion in January of 1932.²⁶ As a consequence of these successful military operations, a more far-reaching public works program was undertaken – an initiative whose infrastructural improvements were of great importance to the viability of tourism. Under these relatively favorable conditions, the tourist network in these colonies was expanded and improved to include not only the archeological sites of Leptis Magna, Sabrata and Cyrene along the coastal regions, but also towns like Nalut and Ghadames in the interior of Tripolitania.²⁷ These tourist activities were greatly facilitated by the gradual improvement of marine connections to Tripoli and the creation of new transportation systems within the colonies, such as rail and auto service. The early 1930s also witnessed some of the initial efforts by the colonial

²⁵ Ibid., 10.

²⁶ Emilio De Bono immediately succeeded Volpi in Tripolitania in July of 1925, a position which he held until the end of December of 1928. For a general discussion of De Bono's Governorship, see: Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo al Gheddafi*, 77-133. This presentation includes a discussion of the military operations undertaken during this period with General Rodolfo Graziani. Maresciallo Badoglio was appointed in January of 1929 as the Governor of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica and left this post at the end of December in 1933. For an examination of the Badoglio era, see also: Ibid., 134-232. This includes a detailed discussion of the final military operations, also under Graziani, which included the use of mustard gas and the creation of concentration camps.

²⁷ For a description of the improvements to the tourist system in Tripolitania during this period, see Piccioli, "La valorizzazione turistica," in *La nuova Italia d'oltremare*, 1558-67. In this discussion he notes the dramatic changes in the tourist experience of this colony between 1922 and 1932, observing that during this earlier period there were few means of transportation, few hotels, and little security.

authorities to make Tripoli a frequent stop for the Mediterranean cruises of Italian and foreign steamship companies.²⁸

There was also a decisive shift in the rhetoric of written commentary on colonial tourism during this period. The relatively modest projections of the role of tourism in the North African colonies during the Volpi era were gradually replaced by a more confident assertions of the viability of this industry. This optimism was, to a great extent, the product of an increased interest in colonial matters in Italy following Mussolini's well publicized visit to Tripolitania in April of 1926.²⁹ One such example is an article by Gennaro E. Pistolese from 1929, entitled "Turismo Coloniale," in which the author states that the tourist system had to "unveil the colony to the visitor, not only by means of Roman monuments and minarets,... but above all by our new works." This article reflects the sense that tourism was believed to be a "potent and suitable instrument" of colonial propaganda, and as such could overcome negative impressions of this colony.³⁰ Critical of the perceptions of the colonies as an "arid expanse of sand," this article asserts that Tripolitania "is not lacking for railways,

²⁸ The marine connections to Tripoli shifted from weekly service in 1924 to twice-weekly service in 1929. See L.V. Bertarelli, *Guida d'Italia del Touring Club Italiano. Possedimenti e colonie*, 272, 437. Twice-monthly car service from Tripoli to Ghadames began in January of 1929. For more information see: "Alle porte del Sahara in autobus," *L'Italia Coloniale* VI, 3 (March 1929): 46. One of the primary examples of the visit of cruise ships to Tripoli was the Genovese company "Italia" of the Cosulich Lloyd Sabauda Line which, in 1931, began twice yearly cruises that used Tripoli as a one day stopping point. For a letter from this company to the *Ministero delle Colonie* confirming this service, see: ASMAE-MAI.2-150/29. Fascicolo 134.

²⁹ This visit had a profound effect on the public interest and understanding of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. Largely due to the efforts of the *Ministero delle Colonie*, this interest continued to develop in the years following this event, which saw the creation of new colonial journals, the publication of numerous books documenting the colonies, and a heightened interest in colonial art and literature. See, "La visita del Duce in Tripolitania nel 1926 e lo "Scossone" coloniale," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della Litoranea*, 1-11.

³⁰ Pistolese, "Turismo d'Oltremare," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* III, 6-7 (June-July 1929): 552-3. The author states that these new works in the colonies "signify worthy continuation of the past, but above all our will for conquest of the future." In discussing colonial propaganda, he states: "In the formation of the desired colonial consciousness, tourism can be considered one of the most potent and suitable instruments." *Ibid.*, 552. In remarking on the recent Mediterranean cruises held by the *Opera Nazionale Balilla* (ONB) and the *Istituto Coloniale Fascista* (ICF), he argues that "such visitors to our colonies...will return to Italy as proponents of the beauty and value of those lands."

streets, and is well advanced with the building of its urban centers, its ports, its churches, its aqueducts." While lamenting that Italy had forgotten her colonies, Pistolese argues that due to the policies initiated by the Fascist government, the field of tourism had been revived and reinvigorated. The consequence of this effort was that Tripoli itself was "becoming one of the most important centers in the African Mediterranean."³¹

The sentiments expressed in this and other articles written during the Governorships of De Bono and Badoglio reflect the fact that the tourist discourse was closely tied to more general concerns about Italy's relative stature as a colonizing nation. Consequently, a great attention was paid to the need for a substantial propaganda effort – an effort that, it was believed, would overcome many of the misconceptions about Italy's colonies and their tourist infrastructure. However, not only was there was a perceived lack of popular publications, such as illustrated journals, guide books and brochures, communicating the "natural beauty and folkloristic attractions" of the Libyan colonies, the Italian efforts were seen to be deficient in relation to other colonial powers like Britain and France.³² The desire to see colonial tourism in this broader European context would seem natural, given

³¹ The larger context of this quotation is as follows: "For a long time our Africa appeared as an arid expanse of sand or an inexhaustible series of stepped plateaus and lowlands...". With regard to the contemporary status of the colony, the author states that "...Tripolitania and Cyrenaica are population colonies, that is, very capable of receiving our demographic exuberance..." Ibid., 552-3. The tone of this articles, like many similar ones from this period, conveys its own propagandizing intentions. The article goes on to outline the current activities in the colonies by various groups like the *Ente Nazionale per le Industrie Turistiche* (ENIT), the TCI, and the *Istituto Coloniale Fascista*. Following this discussion is a brief outlining of the tourist attractions of each of the Italian colonies.

³² Throughout this period, both colonial tourism and colonial propaganda (which to some extent are the same thing), were understood to have two audiences – Italian and European. Of particular concern were Italian efforts in relation to other colonizing nations like Britain, and especially France. Giuseppe Borghetti, in his article "Turismo Coloniale" states "...the *ubi consistam* of Tourism in all fields, and particularly that in the Colonies, is propaganda." Borghetti, "Turismo Coloniale," *L'Italia Coloniale* VIII, 9 (September 1931): 141-2. Borghetti proceeds to remark on the deficiency of this tourist propaganda effort, and in particular popular publications, in relation to Britain, France and even Germany, suggesting that they recognize the great importance of this effort. As he stated "The publications of this type [by these nations] count in the dozens every year." Ibid., 142.

Italy's late acquisition of these African territories. There was a tendency to measure extent and organization of their tourist system against the accomplishments of neighboring colonies - such as the French colonies of Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. One article in particular, published in 1933, while recognizing that "all of the conditions exist in Tripolitania for making a higher tourist yield", looked at the tourist infrastructure of the Compagnia "Transatlantique" in the French Colonies of Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco as a model for a tourist system in Libya.³³ In another case, this interest in the broader North African context manifested itself in a call to coordinate and integrate these infrastructures into the more general system of travel within the Mediterranean region.³⁴

These attempts to understand the tourist infrastructure of Italy's North African colonies in relation to a North African and even Mediterranean context underscore the Italian ambitions for tourism in this region. While there was a recognition of the natural, historical, archeological, and folkloristic attractions that were the necessary preconditions for a viable tourist network, one of the constants in the early commentary on colonial tourism was the need for a modern and efficiently organized system. The focus was on the enhancement of the tourist resources like hotels and transportation methods, that were intended to bring a metropolitan level of comfort

³³ In discussing the French North African Colonies, the author states "In these countries, with the exception of rail development... compare the no less exceptional network of "tourist" hotels organized directly by the Society of rail and maritime transportation. Forty five are the "tourist" hotels of the "Transatlantique" Company, which – its passengers disembarking in Africa – has organized for them some twenty-five automobile itineraries with "motor coaches," with a total route of 27,000 kilometers." Careful to offer these examples as "facts" and models of the tourist industry, this author is clear that these are not criticisms for a lack of will to act. XXX, "Turismo coloniale. Possibilità di sviluppo e necessità di un "comando unico." *L'Italia Coloniale* X, 10 (October 1933): 182. This system is presented in the following publications: Paris, Lyons & Mediterranean Railway and Compagnie Generale Transatlantique, *Algeria and Tunisia, Touring centres, Circular tickets, Time tables* (1913); and Compagnie Generale Transatlantique, *North African Motor Tours of the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique* (1928-29). See also Ricard Prosper, *Le Maroc. Les guides bleus* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1930).

³⁴ Giuseppe Borghetti stated, in his article "Turismo Coloniale": "To obtain a substantial development of Tourism in relation to our colonies, we must above all provide for the necessity of organization: that is, to graft the Libyan itineraries into the network of Mediterranean tourist crossings." Borghetti, "Turismo Coloniale," 141.

to the colonial context.³⁵ There was also a perceived need to coordinate these facilities and services through a singular and more powerful organization. The necessity for a more firm management of colonial tourism was expressed with almost militaristic zeal in one article, where the author characterized this "single command" as "a person of authority and faith... to whom is given... the management of the "battle for colonial tourism."³⁶

These commentaries provide a general insight into the discourse on colonial tourism in the early 1930s, which was largely preoccupied with conveying an image of a modern and well ordered system that reflected Italy's gradually improving position as a colonial power in North Africa. In contrast with the Volpi era, this projection of modernity was balanced by a carefully measured presentation of the value of its indigenous culture. This dialogue between modernity and local culture is evident in two publications – a special issue of the magazine *Ospitalità Italiana* from January 1928, which was dedicated to tourism in Tripolitania, and a small guide book entitled *Tripoli*, published by the *Ente Nazionale per le Industrie Turistiche* (ENIT) and the *Ferrovie dello Stato*, from 1929.³⁷ The first example puts a substantial effort into communicating the contemporary works in the colony, from

³⁵ For example, in the article "Turismo coloniale," the author states "Adapting the facilities and means to the new conceptions and demands of who travels; favoring the construction of new, small, but comfortable hotels, developing more intensively the tourist automobile connections on the already existing beautiful Tripolitanian roads, and on those that will come; imparting more extensions and frequency to colonial air service... we may, in a few years, boast of complete and original colonial tourist facilities." XXX. "Turismo coloniale," 182.

³⁶ Ibid., 182. In reference to the creation of a new modern tourist infrastructure and set of services, the author states "For all of this the necessity for a great coordination of the various initiatives in the field of colonial tourism is evident..." In so doing he supports both the general efforts of the *Ente turistico coloniale centrale*, a para-state organization created for the coordination of tourism in the colonies, and the creation of a "comando unico" who would be within the *Commissariato per il Turismo* of the *Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri* (Fascist Council of Ministers).

³⁷ *Ospitalità Italiana* was a bi-monthly journal that began publication in 1926 and reviewed issues related to tourism and hotels. The guide book *Tripoli* was published contemporaneously and in a similar format to other ENIT publications that promoted various regions within Italy to a foreign tourist audience, and as such published in separate French, English and German editions. This publication, however, was only in Italian.

the *Fiera di Tripoli* to the various public works projects that had contributed to the making of the new Tripoli under then Governor Emilio De Bono.³⁸ [Figure 3.a-4] These latter projects included the new Lungomare Conte Volpi, the *Stazione Ferroviaria* and the *Palazzo del Governatore* (1925-31). A good deal of attention is also spent on the tourist infrastructure and its organization – a system that was said to "have reached the best conditions for a place of stay in which the mildness of its climate is added to the fascination of cities in Africa."³⁹ These articles on the modern improvements in Tripolitania are combined with a considerable focus on the local culture. This presentation includes information on itineraries and specific travel destinations and the detailed description of the characteristic customs and craft productions of this region.⁴⁰

The importance of local culture to the tourist interest in the colonies is strikingly conveyed on the cover of the guide book *Tripoli*, which presents a characteristic vernacular scene, complete with palm trees, a camel and Arab "natives." [Figure 3.a-5] The "realism" of this image and its use of a strongly contrasting tones

³⁸ If *Tripoli e dintorni* derived its rhetoric from publications like *La rinascità della Tripolitania*, there is a similar parallel here to a publication *Vigor di Vita di Tripolitania* (1926-28), which chronicled the accomplishments of De Bono. This special issue begins with a one page testimony to his Governorship, which puts special emphasis on his efforts in the agricultural valorization of Tripolitania. This presentation is followed by four pages on "La nuova Tripoli", which concentrates on the public works projects including housing, the improvements of streets and water supply, and the construction of various public institutions. After this section, follows a detailed presentation of the *Fiera di Tripoli*, which takes up five pages. Further articles include features on the general rebirth of Tripolitania, the Italian schools, the new Cathedral and industries in the colony.

³⁹ Dante Interlandi, "La Tripolitania e il suo sviluppo turistico," *Ospitalità Italiana*. III, 1 (January 1928): 86-87. This articles outlines the new tourist facilities, like the Grand Hôtel, infrastructure, like the rail line and road constructions, and activities like the "Fiera di Tripoli." Naturally, it projects a great future for tourism in Tripolitania. A second article, in this case on the organization of tourism was written by Ezio Maria Gray, president of the *Compagnia Italiana del Turismo* (CIT), and entitled, "L'opera del CIT in Tripolitania," *Ospitalità Italiana*. III, 1 (January 1928): 55-6. In this case the focus is on the efforts of this state run tourist agency, which at that time had a branch office in Tripoli, and the excursions available for travel in Tripolitania.

⁴⁰ The presentation of local tourist destinations includes an article entitled "Itinerario tripolino" which offers a general itinerary of tourist sites, both Roman and Muslim. Specific sites that were featured include Leptis Magna and Ghadames. The local culture presented includes the Mosques of Tripoli, Arab poetry and art and a feature on Libyan women.

and colors, borrows from the artistic techniques found in colonial art and in popular representations of Italy's Mediterranean tourist destinations like Amalfi and Capri.⁴¹ The emphasis on vernacular culture also continues within the text of this publication, which argues that the city of Tripoli – through the combination of its "picturesque and suggestive local color" and the archeological excavations in Leptis Magna and Sabrata – offers something unique to the "thirst for novelty of the modern tourist." In addition to the focus on the indigenous culture of Tripoli, the contemporary accomplishments of colonization are recognized – an effort that is attributed to "the will and faith resolutely impressed by the new Regime on all forms of activity."⁴² This duality is also evident in the format and presentation of the guide book, whose text details the history of Tripoli and its tourist attractions, while the images make more consistent reference to the Italian presence in Tripolitania.⁴³ [Figure 3.a-6] Projecting an optimistic tone, both of these publications reflect the fact that a more substantial tourist infrastructure had begun to be put in place by 1929. Though still preoccupied with projecting the strength and accomplishments of colonial rule, and clearly concerned with conveying an image of metropolitan comfort in the colonial

⁴¹ For a detailed discussion of the tendencies in Italian colonial art, see: Cristina Delvecchio, "Icône d'Africa: Note sulla pittura coloniale italiana," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 68-81. The style and approach to these paintings, with the notable exception of several Futurist forays into colonial art by painters like Fortunato Depero, Tato and Enrico Prampolini, was within a 19th century French Orientalist tradition. With regard to the paintings of Capri, see *Il Mito e l'immagine: Capri, Ischia e Procida nella pittura dal '600 ai primi del '900* (Torino: Nuova ERI Edizioni Rai, 1988).

⁴² Ente Nazionale Industrie Turistiche and Ferrovie dello Stato, *Tripoli*, (Roma: Novissima, 1929), 1. In addition to noting these qualities of Tripoli, and mentioning its favorable climate, the introductory page of this guide book also suggests visiting the Agricultural concessions - undoubtedly a gesture of recognition of the accomplishments of Fascist colonization. It should be noted, however, that this guide book was published without explicit reference to Pietro Badoglio, Governor of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica (1928-33).

⁴³ After a one page introduction to the city, this guide book proceeds through an examination of the history of Tripoli from the ancient Roman period through to the Italian occupation – a presentation that is notably accompanied by images of Roman ruins and contemporary architecture. Following this a tourist introduction of means of travel to the city and then a detailed presentation of the city itself are made. In this presentation the *Castello*, the *Museo archeologico* and the *Fiera di Tripoli* are featured. The final section covers travel itineraries outside of Tripoli to the archeological sites of Leptis Magna and Sabrata and the agricultural concessions of the Gharyan region.

context, these representations are kept in balance with attempts to reveal the characteristic attractions of the local culture.

These same qualities are evident in the first major guide book that was published on the Italian colonies, the *Guida d'Italia del TCI. Possedimenti e Colonie* of 1929. This volume of over 800 pages profiles the tourist facilities in all of the colonies in a format and presentation that was identical to their guidebooks for Italy – something that emphasizes the desire to see this tourist system from a metropolitan viewpoint.⁴⁴ In the section on Tripolitania, a series of practical notes that pertain to travel are followed by a comprehensive overview of topics from the climate, flora, fauna and geology of this region, to the historical, artistic, linguistic and cultural practices of its people, to the recent Italian administrative and economic developments. This information – which resembles a series of entries in the *Enciclopedia Italiana* – is followed by a detailed accounting of the tourist facilities and itineraries in this region which at this time include locations as far west as the Tunisian border, as far south as Ghadames and the not-yet conquered areas of the Fezzan and as far east as Misratah and Sirt.⁴⁵ As politically neutral as this

⁴⁴ L.V. Bertarelli, *Guida d'Italia del TCI. Possedimenti e Colonie*. It should be noted that there was an earlier guide book published on Tripolitania and Cyrenaica by the TCI in 1923. Touring Club Italiano, *Guida della Libia* (Milano: the Club, 1923). In addition to Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, this volume presents the colonies of the so-called Isole Italiane d'Egeo, Eritrea and Somalia. In total 400,000 copies of first edition of this guidebook were printed, with a free copy given to all TCI members, which at that time numbered over 200,000. The companion editions in this series the rest of Italy began publication in 1914 with *Piemonte, Lombardia, Canton Ticino* and continued to release editions each year for a new region. This colonial edition followed the *Italia meridionale, Vol. III*, which was published in 1928. All of these volumes were given out free to members on their initial publication.

⁴⁵ In addition to a map of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, the initial section offers practical notes for travelers, such as information on "safe-conduct permits", customs, hotels, banking, telephone services, transportation, language and even hygiene. This "Sguardo d'insieme, of nearly 100 pages, presents the following sections of information: 1. Naming of the colony; 2. Physical characteristics; 3. Climate; 4. Geology and Morphology; 5. Fauna; 6. Flora; 7. History; 8. Geographical knowledge and exploration; 9. Artistic history; 10. History of excavations; 11. Demographic information; 12. Languages; 13. Islamic religion in Tripolitania; 14. Customs and manners of Muslims and Jews; 15. Economic information; 16. Political and administrative regulations; 17. Sanitary conditions; 18. The Rebirth of Tripolitania; 19. Tourism. Bertarelli, *Guida d'Italia del TCI. Possedimenti e Colonie*, 169-271. That this introduction is like a series of

presentation appears, it is interesting to note that one of the final sections of this general introduction, entitled "La rinascità delle Tripolitania," is a grafting of an abbreviated form of this earlier publication into this guide book – something that underscores the literal intersection between Fascist colonization efforts and tourism.⁴⁶ The polemical nature of this gesture is particularly evident in the concluding comments, presented under the title "The work of tomorrow." With regard to the future relations with the local populations, it was argued that the recent submission of rebels signified that "the natives are *coming to us*, adopting our ways, according to our intentions." Proclaiming that "our colony is not, in fact, the 'gnawed bone' it was believed to be," the author calls for the next generation to complete the modernization of Tripolitania – an accomplishment that would naturally be a celebration of Italian colonial rule.⁴⁷

The full realization of this potential for tourism as an instrument of colonization took place during the third and final stage in its development, which coincided with the Governorship of Italo Balbo (1934-1940). Given that the pacification of this colony had already been accomplished, the colonial administration under Balbo was able to more vigorously pursue an indigenous

encyclopedia entries is confirmed by the list of contributors to this section that, like the *Enciclopedia Italiana*, boasts the participation of well known academics and political figures.

⁴⁶ In this context, the title "La Rinascità della Tripolitania" is more than a reference to Volpi, whose Governorship (1921-25) pre-dated Fascism's rise to power in 1922. Indeed, the fact that the author was Angelo Piccioli, whose own volume *La nuova Italia d'oltremare* was published in 1933, makes this, like his book, a commemoration of Fascism. In this regard it is claimed that "the Fascist Regime has completed a work without precedence" in Tripolitania. *Ibid.*, 250. The sub-topics of this section bear striking resemblance to the earlier publication on the Governorship of Volpi. They include: Public works ; Building renovations; Politics of communication; Telephone and telegraph service; Railways; Air and maritime travel; Politics of agricultural colonization; Water reclamation; Provisions for livestock. The final section, called the Moral conquest, is a literal reference to this earlier volume, comprising sub-topics of Justice, Schools, Sanitary works, Archeological research, Propaganda, the *Fiera di Tripoli*, Tourist valorization, and the Work of tomorrow. *Ibid.*, 250-69.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 268. These comments are made in reference to the ongoing battle to pacify the rebellion in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica and thus have the entire territory under Italian control, a process that was not completed until January of 1932 under Governor Badoglio. *Ibid.*, 269. This publication reveals that what had been a sense of inferiority in earlier representations of the colonies, had begun to take on a tone of arrogant defiance.

politics that called for both the modernization of this region according to metropolitan standards and the preservation of its indigenous culture.⁴⁸ These initiatives included a series of administrative and political reforms that eventually led to the unified Libyan colonies becoming the nineteenth region of Italy in January of 1939. The Municipality of Tripoli also pursued a collaborative program of restoring Muslim religious buildings – an initiative that reveals that the strategic intention of these policies was to diffuse any dissent among the local populations. This dual strategy also extended to the development of the tourist infrastructure during this period. The Balbo administration undertook an extensive program of constructing new hotels, the improvement of transportation services and the creation of entertainment facilities. This system was consolidated under the direction of the *Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia* (ETAL), which presided over all aspects of tourism in this colony. Although this network of tourist facilities responded to the demand for a modern and efficient organization, its image was largely determined by the desire to reinforce and even enhance the indigenous culture of each region.⁴⁹

The eventual integration of tourism with the politics of colonization during the Balbo era was foreshadowed by Giuseppe Vedovato's *Colonizzazione e turismo in Libia*, which was published in the first year of his Governorship⁵⁰ In this book,

⁴⁸ Balbo became Governor of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in January of 1934, a position which he held until his tragic death in the skies over Tobruk on June 28 1940, less than a month after the official entry of Italy into World War II. For a detailed description of the Governorship of Balbo, see: Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo al Gheddafi*, 233-91. The indigenous politics of Balbo were presented in a speech given to the Convegno Volta in October of 1938. See, Balbo, "La politica sociale fascista verso gli arabi della Libia," in *Convegno di scienze morali e storiche. 4-11 ottobre 1938. Tema: L'Africa*, 733-49.

⁴⁹ A comprehensive examination of the connection between the *politica indigena* of Balbo and the development of a tourist system in Libya is provided in Section B. The program undertaken by the Balbo administration for the construction of hotels is outlined in: G. Bucciante, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 1-17. As previously noted, the activities of the *Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia* is discussed in Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia (E.T.A.L.)," 955-75.

⁵⁰ It is worth noting that this book was a selected work from one of the students of the *Centro di Studi Coloniali* of the *R. Istituto Superiore di Scienze Sociali e Politiche "Cesare Alfieri"* of Florence, published in conjunction with the *Gruppo Universitari Fascista* (GUF). The work of Vedovato, as one of the students, was undertaken as part of an annual "viaggio di istruzione" of

the author traces the relation between the Fascist attempts to populate the colonies in North Africa for the purposes of agriculture, and the improvement of the tourist system in these same territories. While no literal connections were seen to exist between these two systems – such as attempts in the late 1930s to encourage tourist excursions to the recently settled agricultural towns – their interests were asserted to be coincident at both an economic and political level.⁵¹ The book argues that the conditions necessary for a viable tourist system in Libya, such as the opening of lines of communication, and the creation of population centers along these itineraries, would prepare this system for the movement of goods and the settlement of people for the purposes of agriculture. It is in this regard that tourism is referred to as the "catalyzing agent for the economic process."⁵² Tourism was also viewed as a civilizing and modernizing force. Not only did Vedovato argue that the exposure of the products of these agricultural activities to a tourist audience would potentially create new markets for these products back in Italy, he also asserted that "more frequent contact with interests and ideals carried by foreign and national tourist caravans" would create "a more elevated civil and economic level" in the colonies.⁵³ The key element in asserting the value of this modernity was an effective propaganda effort that would be gauged at demystifying the experience of the colonies – an experience that according to Vedovato was communicated in literature

the *R. Istituto Superiore*. Vedovato, *Colonizzazione e turismo in Libia*. Salerno: Prem. Stamperia Raffaello Beraglia, 1934.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 6-7. In this part of the book, Vedovato argues that it is not so much that Agriculture or Industry would create landscapes of touristic interest, nor that tourism is for agriculturalists a call to visit the colonies, as it is that the relationship between them at an economic level is, in reality, integrated and complementary.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵³ Vedovato states: "The abundance of tourists, metropolitan and foreign, determining a strong consumption and an exportation 'in loco' of such products, provides in the best way to make them an effective form of propaganda, notably facilitating and quickening the affirmation in national and foreign markets." *Ibid.*, 9. These civilizing, and one could argue, modernizing forces are seen to be necessary to counteract the problems of disquiet among agricultural workers, making them aware of the civilization they have and what they left behind in Italy. *Ibid.*, 11-12.

as "polluted with gloomy rites, with lures without end and dangerous mysteries."⁵⁴ The desire for travel would thus be based on truth, not the distortion of reality.

The assertive tone of Vedovato's book – which fuses the politics of Fascist colonization with a program for the development of tourism – largely anticipates the transformation of the tourist discourse after the conquest of Ethiopia in 1935. Although writings on colonial tourism in the 1920s were concerned with the creation of a "colonial consciousness" on the part of Italians, after Mussolini's declaration of an Italian empire in Africa there was an increased recognition in this literature of the foreign audience for colonial tourism.⁵⁵ This change can be seen in the revised guide book to Libya, published in 1937 by the Touring Club Italiano, which offers a strident endorsement of the achievements of the colonial authorities. The introduction argues that Balbo had "transformed the face and the spirit" of Libya so that it was "the most tangible and indisputable documentation of [Italy's] colonizing capacity." Making reference to the cities in the interior of Libya, which "today offer to the tourist incredibly modern and comfortable hotels", this guide book remarks that new roads had been opened to the tourist to areas that, until recently, had been almost completely isolated.⁵⁶ A second example of the transformation of the tourist

⁵⁴ Ibid., 13. In listing the efforts that had to be made to clarify the great assets of Libya from a tourist point of view, the emphasis was on the most rational criterion such as climate, transportation, distribution of facilities, etc. In fact, even the historic patrimony of the region was regarded in scientific terms - as a historian or scholar in these fields would look at these subjects.

⁵⁵ As is fairly clear in the tourist material and commentary discussed previously, the preoccupation of early tourist literature, and the view of colonial tourism itself, was that Italians knew little about their colonies and assumed them to be backward and underdeveloped. While there were always foreign travelers to Libya, their presence in the colonies after 1935 took on a heightened political significance. Colonial tourism was thus to do more than illustrate the legitimacy of Italy's colonial lands to its own people, but to demonstrate the strength of the Fascist Empire in Africa to an international audience.

⁵⁶ The TCI published its other colonies in the following volumes, *Guida dell'Africa Orientale Italiana*, 1938 (comprising Italy's empire in East Africa - Eritrea, Somalia and Ethiopia) and *Albania*, 1940. A volume on the Isole dell'Egeo was projected for publication in 1937, but never appeared. It should be noted that this volume on Libya reflects the administrative unification of the country under Italo Balbo in 1935. This discussion of the opening of areas on the interior of Libya to tourism follows closely after mention of the military conquest of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica from 1930-32 and the renegotiation of the Egyptian border with Libya in 1934. Ibid., 6.

discourse in this publication was a shift from a general presentation of the accomplishments of Italian colonization to the more specific focus on the agricultural development of this region. This change was evident in the removal of the section from the previous edition entitled "La rinascità della Tripolitania" in favor of a new section called "Valorizzazione della Libia."⁵⁷ The accomplishments presented in the earlier guide book were done at a time when these were few in number, and as such their presentation was aimed at creating some legitimacy for Italian presence in Tripolitania. In 1937, when Italy's rule was firmly in place, this guide book offers a more confident recognition of the significant progress made in Libya's colonization efforts and a more aggressive assertion of their present and future value.⁵⁸

This publication reveals a emphatic shift in the tourist discourse during the Governorship of Balbo. The *politica indigena* of the colonization efforts in Libya, which called for the integration of this region into metropolitan Italy, were coincident with, and dependent upon, the modernization of the tourist network. However, the policies of Balbo also called for the careful preservation of the local culture – a subject to which the Touring Club guide book to Libya also pays considerable attention. After being almost completely absent in the earliest tourist literature, by 1937 this "culture" had become a major focus of tourist and scholarly interest. In the section entitled "Turismo e comunicazioni" the local populations were naturalized. That is, they were presented to the tourist audience as natives in their natural habitat

⁵⁷ While these two editions have some similar content the 1929 edition more prominently features public works and infrastructures. In the 1937 edition, agricultural colonization – both its practical and political dimensions – figure more greatly. I would also suggest that the shift in title from "rebirth" or "renaissance" to "valorization" implies a more confident and active process more closely allied with the intransigence of Fascism under Balbo.

⁵⁸ In summarizing the accomplishments in agricultural colonization, the author states: "In total, the work pursued until now represents one of the most conclusive and concrete activities of Italian colonization in this land: in fact, it has been able to create, *from absolutely nothing*, beyond an extension of approximately *sixty thousand hectares* of steppe, a complex of agricultural real-estate works *of which not the slightest trace existed in the past and that today represents a conspicuous patrimony of indisputable economic and political value.*" *Ibid.*, 127.

whose traditions had remained unchanged for centuries. The Libyans were also the subjects of ethnographic inquiry in this guide book, their racial identities and their customs and practices being presented to the traveler as factual knowledge.⁵⁹ While this representation reflects the fact that by this time the "native" had become both an object of scientific study and a fixture within the tourist panorama, the full implications of this relationship would not become apparent until some time later. The logical consequences of this mode of representation of the local culture in the colonies were only reached in November 1938 when the racial laws were enacted in Italy and journals like *Difesa della Razza* began to publish articles that mobilized these same scientific disciplines to justify a politics of racism and exclusion.⁶⁰

The evolution of the tourist discourse in the Libyan colonies was influenced by the analogous development of a *politica turistica* in metropolitan Italy. The tourist network in Italy was largely created for a foreign audience, and as such it was viewed by the Fascist government as an important instrument of propaganda for the Italian state – a rhetorical dimension that was equally applicable in the colonial context. Tourism in Italy and the North African colonies were also linked at a more practical level. This connection was primarily due to the fact that not only were the issues crucial to the organization and development of tourism in these two contexts very similar, many of the measures that were implemented by the Fascist state control

⁵⁹ As related in the opening quotation in this section, this guide book suggests that "the Arab, devoted to traditions, lives in his psychological and social climate," a naturalism that is not available in the other colonies in North Africa. *Ibid.*, 135. This naturalization of the "native" is, in fact, no less a product of science than the Ethnographic study of these peoples. While the general introduction of both the 1929 and 1937 editions contains entries on the "Usi e costumi" of the local populations, only the 1937 edition provides a section on Ethnography. Here the various racial groups, Arabs, Berbers, Jews and Africans are analyzed from both a racial and demographic perspective. In the 1929 edition only demographic information is provided. *Ibid.*, 84-8.

⁶⁰ Most of the articles in *Difesa della Razza* related to issues of race in the colonies were authored by noted anthropologist Lidio Cipriani, who was a professor at the *R. Università di Firenze* and Director of the *Museo nazionale di antropologia e di etnologia* of Florence. One such article, entitled, "Razzismo Coloniale," *Difesa della Razza* I, 2 (20 August 1938); 18-20, deals with the dangers of racial mixing of groups that are geographically distant from each other.

and regulate this industry were shared. One of the most common arguments that was advanced about the importance of tourism in Italy was its contribution to the process of modernization. This discussion dates back as far the turn of the twentieth century, when politicians and critics pointed out the economic importance of tourism and its potential role in improving local infrastructure.⁶¹ There was a sense among proponents of tourism that without a more developed system, this economic benefit would go to neighboring countries like France that were perceived to be better organized. These viewpoints continued into the inter-war period when, it was asserted: "tourism has become an intense mass movement between countries....that concerns the entire life of these Nations."⁶²

Tourism was thus believed to benefit the various businesses that were directly connected with the movement of foreigners, such as travel agencies, hotels and transportation companies. They were also understood to have a secondary impact on heavy industries related to the construction and agricultural sectors of the economy.⁶³ Fulvio Suvich of the *Ente Nazionale per le Industrie Turistiche* (ENIT) asserted that tourism made a significant contribution to the economy of the state – providing what he called "the most important invisible export." This economic

⁶¹ Taina Syrjämaa, in her Ph.D. dissertation on Italian state tourist propaganda, notes that Senator Luigi Bodio, Director of the State Statistics Bureau, published an article in *Gazzetta di Venezia* in 1899 that argued that foreigners spent around 300 million lire in Italy in 1897. In this article, Bodio not only noted that money was being brought into Italy, but the tourist areas saw significant improvements in their infrastructure. See *Visitez l'Italie. Italian State Tourist Propaganda abroad 1919-1943. Administrative structure and practical realization*, 32-4.

⁶² Touring Club Italiano, *Manuale del Turismo* (Milano: TCI, 1934), 16. It is interesting to note that in this publication, the economic importance is placed before the cultural and social importance of tourism, something that serves to further underscore the perception that Tourism was understood as a major economic force.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 17. In the section entitled "Contributo diretto alle industrie turistiche," it was argued that a true tourist industry did not exist on its own, but rather there was a composite of businesses for which tourism is one part of their economic activity. One notable foreign example was the Canadian Pacific Railway, which provided all tourist related services from transportation to hotels, to restaurants, to entertainment. With regard to travel arrangements, they note the high level of service provided by Cook and Wagon Lits. In the section entitled "Contributo indiretto alle altre industrie e all'agricoltura," it was suggested that "there is not an industry that may not be called to produce in small or large measure to feed the needs of the tourist industry."

miracle was accomplished because tourism created a positive flow of foreign capital that counteracted the chronically high negative trade balance that Italy had with other European countries.⁶⁴ In the colonial context, tourism was believed to have had an equally significant economic role. In addition to being recognized as one of the major industries in Libya, it was seen by some commentators to contribute to quickening the modernization process of the colony and, in particular, the essential public infrastructures.⁶⁵ It should be recognized, however, that these assertions about the economic role of colonial tourism should be understood as rhetorical projections of the metropolitan situation. Not only was the colonial economy only viable due to substantial government subsidies, in 1938 the annual flow of tourists to Libya was less than 50,000, while the number who visited Italy that same year was almost 4 million.⁶⁶

One of the most telling indications of the importance of tourist system within the Italian economy was the considerable attention that was paid to its continued

⁶⁴ In the introduction to a report to Mussolini on the problems of tourism, Fulvio Suvich of ENIT stated: "Tourism was rightly defined the most important Italian industry after agriculture; in recent years having brought to Italy more than 2.5 billion foreign exchange annually, which demonstrates its value not only from the economic point of view, but also from the financial point of view, for the payment of the balance of payments and for the consequent defense of our currency; and therefore the phenomenon that gives rise to the most important invisible export." Suvich, *Relazione a S.E. il Capo del Governo sui problemi del turismo* (Roma: Soc. Tip. Castaldi, December 1930). ACS-PCM 1928-30 - 3.2.1-10326. Syrjämaa observes that as a country that was late in industrializing, Italy was a net importer of goods during this period. As such, so-called "invisible" revenues like tourism, (that is, revenues that cannot be attributed directly to Italian industrial or agricultural products) were a great benefit and thus highly valued. Syrjämaa, *Visitez l'Italie. Italian State Tourist Propaganda abroad 1919-1943*, 33-4.

⁶⁵ In his book *Colonizzazione e turismo in Libia*, Giuseppe Vedovato states: "The main condition and consequence of the development of tourism is a rich network of communication, which, favoring the deep penetration of civilization for the movement of foreigners, opens traffic to goods and allows for the development of zones which, otherwise never or much later would advance themselves." *Ibid.*, 8.

⁶⁶ According to the *Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia* the tourist movement in Libya was as follows: 1933 - 28,304 visitors; 1936 - 36,804 visitors; 1938 - 48,674 visitors. This represents eight times the traffic of 1927. Eros Vicari. "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia (E.T.A.L.)," 958. In an appendix to her dissertation, Syrjämaa lists the following statistics for Italy for the same years. 1933 - 2,528,300 visitors; 1936 - 3,418,700 visitors; 1938 - 3,982,900 visitors. Appendix II, Table 1. Syrjämaa, *Visitez l'Italie. Italian State Tourist Propaganda abroad 1919-1943*, 392. This means that there was approximately 80 times the tourist flow in Italy from that in Libya.

improvement. Prior to World War I, the projections of the potential role of tourism in the Italian economy were relatively modest, most commentators arguing that it merely needed to evolve as any other modern industry.⁶⁷ In the inter-war period, these preoccupations shifted to encompass the nature of its organization and the coordination and improvement of particular aspects of the tourist experience – like the regulation of hotels and the improvement of roads, railways and other forms of transportation. Tourism in Italy was moving toward a highly centralized state organized industry – the first step in this development being the creation of the ENIT in 1919.⁶⁸ Although the primary mission of this para-state organization was to coordinate and promote the Italian tourist industry, it was also active in the more general regulation of this industry, including providing technical assistance to regional tourist organizations, collaborating with various ministries for the improvement of tourism, promoting and overseeing the hotel industry and working with schools that specialized in tourist related education.⁶⁹ The next step in the state

⁶⁷ In an article discussing the development of tourism in Italy before World War One, Aldo Oberdorfer argues that few Italians were aware of the importance of the organization and promotion of tourism. He goes on to explain the activities of ENIT in bringing the tourist industry in Italy up to date with those in other European nations. Oberdorfer, "L'Ente Nazionale per le Industrie Turistiche," *Rassegna Italiana del Mediterraneo* IV, 40 (May 1924): 138-44.

⁶⁸ For a detailed history of the public organization of tourism during the inter-war period see Franco Paloscia, "L'Ordinamento pubblico del turismo," in *Storia del turismo nell'economia italiana.*, 38-62. Paloscia lists the more specific responsibilities of ENIT as specified in its original statute as: 1. develop with any means cultural or publicity propaganda, in Italy and abroad, to favor the movement of foreigners; 2. Collect and publish tourist statistics; 3. Run information, ticket and tourist offices; 4. Defend and promote the tourist and hotel industry, providing also for the diffusion and improvement of the technical culture inherent to them. *Ibid.*, 41.

⁶⁹ For a detailed presentation of the activities of ENIT during this period, see: ENIT, *Relazione sull'attività svolta nell'anno 1927*. ACS-PCM 1928-30 - 3.2.1-8501. Their publicity activities also included radio broadcasts, photographic material and film. Their publication office both collected published material and facilitated publications - particularly in conjunction with *Le Vie d'Italia*, the journal of the TCI. Their participation in exhibitions was extensive, including yearly fairs in Paris, Vienna, Frankfurt, Budapest, Buenos Aires, Luxembourg, Tripoli, Milano and Bologna. Their collaborations with government agencies were particularly numerous with the *Ministero delle Comunicazioni and Lavori Pubblici*. Along with the *Ferrovie dello Stato*, they had ticket agencies and information centers in major Italian railway stations. The activities with the hotel industry included producing a yearly publication entitled *Gli alberghi in Italia*, which included information on facilities and prices for every region in Italy, including the colonies.

intervention in the tourist industry was the creation of the *Compagnia Italiana per il Turismo* (CIT) in 1927, which was intended to take over the commercial aspects that ENIT had begun to assume several years earlier. Although considerable friction existed between these two organizations, the creation of CIT separated commercial aspects of tourism from the publicity activities of ENIT and allowed for an expansion of the state intervention in the tourist system.⁷⁰ The subsequent stage in this progression was reached with the creation of the *Commissariato per il Turismo* in 1931, which – under the direct dependence of the *Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri* – assumed responsibility for the political dimensions of the tourist industry.⁷¹

The direction of tourism by the Fascist authorities expanded over the next decade with the creation of *Comitati Provinciali per il Turismo* in 1932. With the inception of these provincial associations, and their eventual supervision by the *Consigli Provinciali dell'Economia Corporativa* after Mussolini's declaration of the corporatist state in November 1933, the final stage of evolution of tourism between

⁷⁰ As was explained in a letter from the *Ministro dell'Economia Nazionale* in 1928, just after the creation of CIT: "While ENIT... should develop activities of valorization of the attractions of the country, in the general interest of all of the tourist industry, CIT... has purely commercial and contingent ends, limited to running tourist and travel agencies." letter from *Ministro dell'Economia Nazionale* to S.E. il Cav. Benito Mussolini, dated 5 January 1928 - ACS-PCM 1928-30 - 3.2.1-8501. The following files in the *Archivio Centrale dello Stato* contain much of the material on the debate between ENIT and CIT: Ente Nazionale per le Industrie Turistiche, ACS-PCM 1928-30 - 3.2.1-8501 and *Compagnia Italiana per il Turismo*, ACS-PCM 1934-36 - 3.2.1-950.

⁷¹ The presence of the *Commissariato per il Turismo* under the *Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri* meant that it was effectively under the direct supervision and control of Mussolini. This also represented the complete specialization of the activities within the tourist industry, with ENIT responsible for questions of publicity and propaganda, CIT involved in the commercial aspects of tourism and the *Commissariato* the political ones. As was explained in the *Manuale del Turismo*, the responsibilities of the *Commissariato per il Turismo* were: 1. Impart directives related to tourism to be performed by State administrations and agencies, institutions and organizations; 2. Coordination of activities of administrations and public and private agencies; 3. Surveillance and control of all of the national, regional, provincial and local organizations and committees; 4. Studying, elaborating and promoting necessary measures for the realization of their role as overseeing the tourist industry. *Manuale del turismo*, 28.

the wars had been reached.⁷² The organization of the tourist system had been remade according to the Fascist government's corporativist model, with a strong central organization, reinforced by the diffusion of this authority in each region of the country. This process of increasing state control of tourism resulted in considerable amount of activity at a legislative level, where a series of regulations were drafted and passed that applied to this industry. These measures were primarily related to either concretizing the structure of the tourist system or regulating its practices accordingly. In the first category was a provision, passed in 1935 that created a standard structure for the *Enti provinciali per il turismo*, specifying both its composition and responsibilities. The regulation of the tourist industry included a law that made the publication of prices of hotels mandatory and another that was aimed at coordinating tourist activities.⁷³

With the increasing focus on the part of the Italian state on questions of tourism in the 1930s, colonial tourism naturally came under a similar level of scrutiny from these same central authorities. One such example is a report by ENIT written for Benito Mussolini on tourism in Italy, which had an attachment entitled "Appunti sul turismo a Tripoli." In his discussion, the author Fulvio Suvich both outlines the nature of colonial travel for wealthy and more modest travelers and identifies specific

⁷² The supervision of tourism passed to the *Sottosegretariato per la Stampa e la Propaganda* in 1934, then the *Ministero per la Stampa e la Propaganda* in 1935 and finally the *Ministero della Cultura Popolare* in 1937. Paloscia, *Storia del turismo*, 42. These mandate of these provincial associations, which were eventually called *Enti provinciali per il turismo*, was to study, coordinate, promote and discipline tourism within their respective regions Ibid., p. 46. For a general understanding Mussolini's conception of Corporativist State, see: "Dichiarazione per le costituenti corporazioni," and "Discorso per lo stato corporativo," November 14, 1933. In *Opera Omnia di Benito Mussolini*, Vol. XXVI. 85-96.

⁷³ This first legislation was "R.D. Legge 20 giugno 1935 n. 1425, concernente il nuovo ordinamento degli organi provinciali per il turismo." For a detailed outline of this legislation and its passage see "Organi provinciali per il turismo." ACS-PCM 1934-36 - 3.2.1-4409. The regulation of prices was considerably contentious, as it meant that the prices had to be reported to ENIT and could be changed only once per year. See "Pubblicità di prezzi degli alberghi, delle pensioni e delle locande." ACS-PCM 1931-33 - 3.2.1-3402. The final piece of legislation noted here, on the coordination of tourist manifestations, was a reaction to the fact that each region was creating special days for tourist purposes. See "Coordinamento e disciplina delle manifestazioni turistiche." ACS-PCM 1937-39 - 3.3.9-2413.

areas for improvement.⁷⁴ While some of these recommendations have to do with changes to tourist facilities, many are related to more general questions, such as creating a local authority for promoting and coordinating tourist activities.⁷⁵ As a consequence of such examinations, colonial tourism was gradually subjected to the same Fascist corporativist structure that was employed in Italy. This process was evident through the succession of associations that were created to promote and organize tourism, from the *Ente turistico tripolitano* (1929), to the *Commissariato per il Turismo in Libia* (1933), to the *Ente Turistico ed Alberghiero della Libia* (1935). It can also be traced in the legislation that pertained to the regulation of the tourist industry in Italy, that was, in many cases, eventually applied in modified form to the colonial context – including the regulation and inspection of hotels.⁷⁶ This inclusion of Libya within the Italian tourist system is most poignantly expressed in its inclusion as one of the "Provincie Metropolitane" in the *Guida Breve d'Italia* of the

⁷⁴ In this report, Suvich outlines what he observes were the three main categories of tourists in the colonies: "1. The luxury tourist, who stays for a long period (particularly anglo-saxons that visit Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria); 2. The transient tourist (with special regard for cruises); 3. The economical tourist, particularly Italian, but also foreign (for example, German) who have a brief stay." Suvich, "Allegato I. Appunti sul turismo a Tripoli," *Relazione a S.E. il Capo del Governo sui problemi del turismo*, 43-8.

⁷⁵ Remarking that the luxury tourist accommodations in Tripoli were well developed, Suvich suggested that more modest hotels were needed for the more economically minded traveler. In addition to this, he recommends the creation of places of meeting and amusement for tourists, particularly of a folkloric character, and the improvement of transportation to and within the colony. One of the major recommendations of this report is to take care of the local tourist organization, and in particular the task of coordinating between travel agencies, steamship lines and hotels. In addition, a considerable propaganda effort was deemed necessary, including publishing a guide book for Tripoli, and publicity materials like posters, postcards, etc. *Ibid.*, 44-45.

⁷⁶ As with the situation in Italy, each of these steps represents a further stage in the penetration of the tourist system by the Fascist authorities. It is interesting to note that the *Commissariato per il Turismo* in Libya was the equivalent structure to that introduced in Italy, in this case being under the direction of the *Ministero delle Colonie*. See *Manuale del Turismo*, op.cit., 30. In 1938, the *Direzione Generale per il Turismo* of the *Ministero della Cultura Popolare* began to initiate the extension of laws that existed in Italy (R.D.L., 26 marzo 1936, n. 2049 and R.D.L. 23 novembre 1936, n. 2469) for the inspection and regulation of hotels, and the publication of their prices. ASMAE-MAI.Dir.Gen.AA.EE.e FF. - Cartone E/2 - Fascicolo 41.

Consociazione Turistica Italiana in 1940, just one year after the four northern Libyan provinces had been incorporated into metropolitan Italy.⁷⁷

The increasing preoccupation with the organization and coordination of tourist efforts, and the direct participation of the Italian state in this sector, are a reflection of the fact that the discourse on tourism and travel had become a political discourse. This dimension of tourism is what the *Manuale del Turismo* benignly referred to as the cultural and social importance of tourism – that is, that tourist experience had a didactic role that would contribute to "elevating the level of culture of the traveler."⁷⁸ Given the fact that this cultural education was primarily aimed at a foreign audience, such statements suggest that tourism could be a political gesture. Although this dimension of tourism was implicit from its earliest developments in Italy, it was not until the late 1920s that the concept of a *politica turistica* emerged. In a report written by the *Federazione Nazionale Fascista Alberghi e Turismo* in 1928, the politics of tourism was primarily related to creating the most efficient and productive tourist system possible and, in so doing, "defending and developing the general and higher interests of the Nation."⁷⁹ This report focuses on recommendations for improvement of all aspects of the tourist experience, from travel agencies and propaganda, to transportation, to hotels and other tourist facilities. However, even if these interests were largely economic, there was a clear recognition

⁷⁷ With a declaration of January 9, 1939, the provinces of Tripoli, Misratah, Benghazi and Derna had become an integral part of Italy.

⁷⁸ *Manuale del Turismo*, 19. Citing the situation of the traveler in front of a great work that strikes their imagination, the author asserts that this would create a certain curiosity about historical, artistic and technical questions that they would need to satisfy. It is in this sense that tourism could enhance the desire in the visitor to broaden the horizon of their consciousness and thus have a didactic role. However, statements that tourism "can contribute forcefully to the moral and artistic education of the people" have a more strident tone that suggests a more polemical assertion of the value of Italian culture.

⁷⁹ *Federazione Nazionale Fascista Alberghi e Turismo, Politica Turistica*, 3. This report was found in a sub-file entitled "Politica turistica e questione d'indole generale," found in the following file in the Central State Archive. "Turismo, Industria alberghiera e questione relative." ACS-PCM 1928-30 - 3.2.1-10326.

of the indirect benefits of tourism – benefits that arose from the idea that, with a well ordered tourist system, foreign travelers could become "propagandists" for the Italian nation.⁸⁰

The full significance of a politics of tourism was more precisely outlined in an interview given by Ezio M. Gray, the President of CIT, to the Belgian paper *Neptune* in December 1928. In discussing the support of the Fascist government for tourism, he states that there were two aspects of what he described as the "tourist politics of the Nation." The first of these was the effort to "control, check and orient the tourist masses" so that Italy could obtain the maximum financial gain. The second, stated in a similarly candid way, was "without ignoring the splendors of the past, obliging the foreigner to see and understand the new Italy." In more concrete terms he suggests that cities like Ferrara, Turin and Termi which represent "modern Italy, the Italy of work" should be added to the traditional tourist itineraries to cities like Venice, Naples and Capri.⁸¹ This dual dimension of foreign travel – that it could provide a financial benefit to Italy and enhance the knowledge of its present accomplishments – is strikingly similar to the perceived propagandistic role of travel to the colonies. Not unlike the colonial situation, tourism in Italy was seen as a

⁸⁰ This report presents a series of topics, under which recommendations are made for the improvement of these tourist related amenities. These include maritime transportation, customs and passport regulations, rail services, air travel, a series of topics related to hotels and their administration and regulation, propaganda (ENIT), travel agencies, and museums and tourist related amusements. Two major themes emerge in this presentation, the first being a focus on questions of efficiency, organization and even hygiene, the second being a preoccupation with the "politics" of the tourist bureaucracy itself. This report suggests that through the means of the tourist experience, foreigners can become clients of industry and consumers of agricultural and wine products. These comments reflect a narrow interpretation of propaganda as being aimed at facilitating the larger economic benefit of the nation, rather than fostering a more precise identity of Italy from a cultural point of view. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁸¹ Rob L. "D'intéressantes constatations touristiques. Au Conseil Central du Tourisme International. Le président de la délégation italienne, le député Ezio M. Gray, nous parle de la nouvelle politique touristique de son pays," *Neptune. Belgian Daily News*. 25, 139 (16 December 1928): 1. Perhaps in order to address the obvious question of why foreign tourists would want to visit such cities, he suggested the organization of what he called specialized trips for groups of agriculturalists, industrialists, explorers and merchants to Piemonte and the Veneto to see "factories and large schools for wine production."

medium for communicating the present level of development of the country. This effort was intended to counteract the perception that Fascist Italy was an authoritarian state. In commenting on this in 1930, Fulvio Suvich asserted that tourism "undoubtedly constitutes the best propaganda and the most effective denial against the absurd and slanderous voices to be diffused about our country abroad."⁸²

The implication of this statement is that, not only were there political dimensions to travel in the 1930s, but travel itself had been politicized – that is, it was understood as a political act.⁸³ One example of the fusion of politics and tourism is the first meeting of the *Corporazione dell'Ospitalità*, which convened in palazzo Venezia on January 25 1936. Presided over by Alberto Fassini, the Vice president of the *Corporazione*, and inaugurated by a speech by Benito Mussolini, this one day event was one of several that were organized during this period – the general intention being to gather officials from federations and government departments

⁸² Suvich, *Relazione a S.E. il Capo del Governo sui problemi del turismo*, 3. This statement is made in the context of underscoring the political importance of the movement of tourists in Italy after having spoken about its economic importance to the Nation.

⁸³ One particular example of this phenomenon during this period is the problem of border security and customs, which was a constant subject of concern on the part of proponents of tourism. See Suvich, *Relazione a S.E. il Capo del Governo sui problemi del turismo*, 13-15; and Allegato extra. He outlines the problems of the border security as being that of "harmonizing the severe dispositions for the necessity of the political and customs defense with the unavoidable tourist interests." In more specific terms he cites the following problems: 1. Lack of clarity in the arrangement and signs; 2. Duplication of inspection; 3. Slowness in the operations; 4. Lack of coordination of services (i.e. too many different police and security groups present); 5. Behavior of the surveillance groups; 6. Excessive control of magazines, record players and cameras. 7. Inconvenience of specific situation at various crossing points. This problem was no less pronounced in the colonial context, where the movement of travelers was completely undermined by excessive customs practices that were driven by administrative paranoia over unsavory elements reaching the colonies from Italy. For example, Pietro Badoglio sent a letter to Emilio De Bono, then *Ministro delle Colonie*, in July of 1929 on the subject of a special "Tessera" that was used by people to visit the *Fiera di Tripoli*. Citing an example of a communist party member who used one of these tickets to get to the colony, he suggests that the *Ministero* change the practice of issuing these tickets so that they are verified by the *Questura* of the traveler. Not doing so, he argues "may encourage politically and morally dangerous elements to clandestinely emigrate through this colony", something that he said should be of concern to the National Government. Letter from Governo della Tripolitania to Ministero delle Colonie, 16 July 1929 - ASMAE-MAI - Dir.Gen.AA.PP., Cartella 93, Fascicolo 317.

related to all sectors of the tourist economy.⁸⁴ Held while the international crisis from the Ethiopian war was taking place, and just over three months before the declaration of the Italian Empire, the presentations by these groups were filled with a combination of concern for the repercussions of these events and defiance concerning "the true reality of Fascist Italy."⁸⁵ This specific event, and its intersection with the historical circumstances of the Ethiopian conflict, reflects the coincidence of tourism with politics during this period. Not only had tourism become a subject of a high level of political consideration by the Fascist authorities in Rome through the convening of this meeting, it had also become an unwitting victim and a useful tool for these same authorities.

The dilemmas posed by this politicization of tourism are clearly revealed in a separate speech given by Mussolini to the presidents of the *Enti provinciali per il turismo* in December of 1936. Tourism during a period of military tension had itself become a site of intense conflict – a conflict in which the demands for creating a pleasurable tourist experience are set against the political significance of the

⁸⁴ The other meetings from around this period was the meeting of the *Corporazione dello Spettacolo*, held on January 4 and the *Corporazione per le Costruzione Edili*, held on February 1. In the case of the *Corporazione dell'Ospitalità*, the representation was by the following associations: the *Confederazione Fascista degli Industriali*, the *Confederazione Fascista dei Lavoratori del Commercio*, the *Confederazione Fascista dei Lavoratori dell'Industria*, the *Confederazione Fascista dei Professionisti e degli Artisti*, the *Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche*, the *Federazione Nazionale Fascista Alberghi e Turismo*, and the *Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro*; and the following ministries: the *Ministero delle Corporazioni*, the *Ministero dell'Educazione Nazionale*, the *Ministero dell'Interno*, the *Ministero per la Stampa e la Propaganda*. For a detailed report on the presentations at this meeting see: "Riunione delle varie Corporazioni: Corporazione dell'Ospitalità." ACS-PCM 1934-36 - 18.2-3427. Sottofascicolo 18. A summary of the speech of Mussolini and of the events of this meeting can be found in: "Alla prima riunione delle Corporazione dell'Ospitalità." *Opera Omnia di Benito Mussolini. Vol. XXVII.* 214-15.

⁸⁵ The Italian Empire was declared on May 9 1936. With regard to this conference, the presentations were made in the following topics: 1. The situation of hotels and the tourist flow at the present moment; 2. The development of medical culture in the field of therapeutic hydrology; 3. Classification of hotels; 4. Problem of guides and their selection as well as the relative fees; 5. Protection of the categories of travel agencies; 6. Coordination of professional instruction and regulation of apprenticeship for hotel workers. The quotation is taken from a presentation of the *Confederazione Fascista dei Lavoratori dell'Industria* on the question of travel agencies. N. 5 dell'O.d.g., Tutela della categoria Uffici Viaggi, "Riunione delle varie Corporazioni: Corporazione dell'Ospitalità."

presence of these foreigners in Italy.⁸⁶ While, on the one hand, stating "nothing should be neglected in preparing a hospitable and peaceful environment for foreigners that will render their stay in Italy agreeable," Mussolini goes on to encourage the intensification of their numbers for political reasons, such that "against the falsehoods and lies, they will give testimony to the real situation in Italy."⁸⁷ Tourism in Italy was thus acting as both an agent and an instrument of Fascist politics. This was no less true for the colonial context, where tourist policy was profoundly influenced by both the central government in Italy and the political reality of the colonial situation itself. The Italian colonial tourist had become more than a casual traveler who was bringing the benefits of metropolitan civilization and money to the colonies. The tourist project had become fused with the patriotic sentiments attached to the colonies and the military dimension of colonization. It had become a metaphor for the present possession of territory and a vehicle for future conquests.⁸⁸

Colonial tourism was also a medium through which the indigenous culture of North Africa was made available to a metropolitan audience. While the presentation of local culture was no less important for the creation of a successful tourist system in Italy, there was a simple but significant difference in the colonies – that is, the culture

⁸⁶ This meeting, held in the *Sala delle Battaglie* of the Palazzo Venezia on December 14 1936 brought together the presidents of the *Enti provinciali per il turismo*, the *Presidenti provinciali dei Sindacati alberghieri* and representatives of the Travel agencies and hospitality workers. The meeting was presided over by Mussolini, with interventions by Dino Alfieri, *Ministro per la Stampa e la Propaganda* and Oreste Bonomi, *Direttore generale per il turismo*. In his presentation of Mussolini to the conference, Alfieri stated that "the Italian directors of tourism are proud of the task given to them by the regime and of the importance such activity had assumed in the general political, economic and social life of the nation." See "Le direttive agli esponenti del turismo." *Opera Omnia di Benito Mussolini, Vol. XXVIII.* 92-3.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 92-3.

⁸⁸ In *Colonizzazione e turismo in Libia*, Vedovato states: "The function of tourism is not exhausted in the immediate utility that the foreigner, or even better the metropolitan, can bring to the colony. Other forms of activity are determined by them, and are resolved in an affirmation of our race with rapidity and proportions not otherwise attainable, in a great secure future of possession, in the creation of a reserve of colonial energy and experience that in synthesis forms the sole patrimony on which one can rely for subsequent actions of conquest." 7-8.

being presented was not Italian. One trajectory of this discourse, based on the influence of contemporary colonial literature, suggests that the tourist would encounter the Libyan culture through a mysterious, exotic and even dangerous adventure. A second, and seemingly opposite, vehicle for the appropriation of local culture was through its scientific research and representation. The knowledge of the indigenous culture by the tourist thus became an analog to its objective study – viewing "the natives" and their culture as in an ethnographic museum. It is along the lines of difference between these two modes of transmission that attitudes toward North African culture and ultimately the means of re-enacting it for a tourist audience were determined.

The first of these mechanisms was a form of writing that emerged in conjunction with the increased attention given to the colonies after Mussolini's first visit to Tripolitania in 1926. There was a flurry of activity related to colonial matters at that time, including the celebration of the first *Giornata coloniale* in April of that year and the founding of a number of new publications. The rise of colonial literature also responded to the concerns of organizations like the *Istituto Coloniale Italiano* regarding the lack of knowledge on the part of Italians of their North African colonies.⁸⁹ Equally important for a better understanding of colonial literature are the precedents for its formal and stylistic tendencies. One such group of references are the travel accounts of Italian and foreign explorers that traveled to Africa in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This vast body of literature –

⁸⁹ Mussolini visited Tripolitania between the 11th and 15th of April 1926. As Giovanna Tomasello observes, colonial writers like Mario dei Gaslini saw this visit as a significant impetus for the propagandistic aspects of their literary and publishing efforts. Tomasello, *La letteratura coloniale italiana dalle avanguardie al fascismo*, 73. The *Giornata Coloniale* was celebrated for the first time as a national event in Italy on April 21, 1926. See: "Giornata coloniale sotto l'alto patronato di S.A.R. Luigi di Savoia, Presidente d'onore a S.E. Mussolini." ACS-PCM 1926-17.1.934. *L'Oltremare* began publication in November of 1927, and is particularly notable for its general concern for colonial propaganda and, more specifically, colonial literature. The Istituto Coloniale Italiano was one of the most important organizations in the struggle to create a "colonial consciousness" in Italy. See: Federzoni, "La nuova vita dell'Istituto Coloniale Fascista dell'Africa Italiana," 3-12.

from news reports, to journal articles, to published travel diaries – contributed to a number of tendencies in colonial literature.⁹⁰ These influences include the preoccupation with themes of heroism and discovery, and an interest in the descriptive realism of these earlier writings. Just as formative to the Italian colonial literature of the mid 1920s was the work of two important literary figures, Gabriele D'Annunzio and Filippo Tommaso Marinetti. The impact of the former was two-fold, the first of these being his distinctive writing style – which captures the intellectual turmoil and restlessness of the Italy of Giovanni Giolitti. The novels of D'Annunzio also influenced the content of colonial literature, his *Più che l'amore* of 1906 being an important reference point for both the reinterpretation of classical literary devices and the exploration of themes of beauty, heroism and transgression.⁹¹ The works of Marinetti, like *Mafarka le futuriste* of 1909, were less important to writers of colonial literature for their literary style than they were for their representation of Africa – which was depicted as an atavistic land, uncontaminated by the decadence of Western society.⁹²

⁹⁰ For a general discussion of this research and the literature it produced, see Angelo Del Boca, "L'Italia e la spartizione dell'Africa. In nome della scienza," *L'Africa nella coscienza degli Italiani*, 7-22. Del Boca notes that around the time of the loss of Tunisia to France in 1881, attention of Italian explorers turned to Libya. These travels were published in popular journals in the 1880s, like Manfredo Camperio's *L'Esploratore*, *Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana* and *Nuova Antologia*. There were also separate volumes published, including a later compilation of travels of various explorers in Libya, notably published just after the initial Italian conquest and occupation of Tripolitania. See Società italiana di esplorazioni geografiche e commerciali, Milan, *Pionieri italiani in Libia. Relazioni dei delegati, 1880-1896* (Milano: F. Vallardi, 1912).

⁹¹ For a general discussion of the figure of D'Annunzio in the context of artistic and literary production around the turn of the 20th century, see *Gabriele D'Annunzio e la promozione delle Arti* (Milano: Arnaldo Mondadori Editore, 1988). For a detailed analysis of this work and its implications for colonial literature see Tomasello, *La letteratura coloniale italiana*, 25-38. Tomasello observes that this work can be considered a modern tragedy, with the typically D'Annunzian "superman" protagonist violating the social rules to tragic ends. With regard to its representation of colonial themes, while it focuses on the sensual and exotic aspects of Africa, she also asserts that there is an "imperialist" dimension to the work, as the themes of occupation of Africa are, in fact, played out as ones of re-appropriation – legitimizing its conquest by asserting its Italianità.

⁹² See Tomasello, *La letteratura coloniale italiana*, 39-50. While recognizing that Marinetti is influenced by the themes of breaking moral codes in D'Annunzio, Tomasello asserts that the idea of Africa as a recuperation of Italian origins is gone. Instead, she asserts, "Africa is understood as

The most important episode in the evolution of colonial literature was the competition for a *romanzo coloniale* held in 1926. This event established the winner, Mario dei Gaslini, as an important literary figure in colonial circles – something that allowed him to expand his activities to include founding his own publishing house and editing a new literary journal, entitled *Esotica*.⁹³ Moreover, despite the contemporary criticism of his work, his first novel, *Piccolo amore beduino* – an autobiographical story of his own experiences as an official in the North African colonies – became a model for many subsequent works on colonial themes by other authors.⁹⁴ [Figure 3.a-7] One influential aspect of this novel was its basic structure, which chronicles a tragic love relationship between the protagonist (and author) and a young Bedouin woman Nica. This novel recounts the misdeeds of the hero, who violates the moral boundaries of his society by having this relationship, and his eventual redemption by forsaking his love to follow his orders to return to fight for his country.⁹⁵ This story also conveys the tragic circumstances of the young woman Nica who, disgraced to her own people, was destined to suffer in

a ground uncontaminated and separated from decadent western logic, as projection of the primitive, as recuperation of the intuitive, as virgin ground in which the birth of the futurist man was realized."

⁹³ Tomasello argues that Dei Gaslini "did not prove to be as much an author who was significant for the innovative content of his work... as rather for the emblematic figure that the author himself could represent at this precise moment." In other words, his importance was as a recognizable figure of colonial literature. Ibid., 70. It is also worth recognizing that following the publication of this novel, he was able to start his own publishing house and magazine, both under the same name, *Esotica*. While this journal was short lived, beginning in October of 1926 and ceasing publication some time early in 1928, it represents a certain idea of colonial propaganda, linked to a D'Annunzian inspired literature of exoticism.

⁹⁴ As Tomasello notes, and as will be discussed later, the work of Dei Gaslini was the subject of considerable criticism by commentators on colonial literature, many of whom found it to be lacking in both originality and substance. She argues that some of this had to do with the lack of congruity of his work to the critical conceptions of a Fascist colonial literature. Ibid., 68.

⁹⁵ While recognizing the links between the work of Dei Gaslini and the prior writings of D'Annunzio, Tomasello draws a sharp distinction about their relationship to the local culture. Where D'Annunzio can be seen to be attempting to recuperate a roman legacy in Africa, Dei Gaslini is more interested in seeing the relationship as one of confrontation with a different culture. Ibid., 70-1. With regard to the values of the protagonist, very early on he signals his eventual actions by stating that the realities of life are "God, family, Country and man." As the "son of the first three", man is above all dedicated to "his Country and collectivity." Dei Gaslini, *Piccolo amore beduino*, 34.

relative solitude. The essential lines of this relationship sets a western man and his culture against that of Islam and the East as symbolized by Nica. His rationality and sense of duty are constantly at odds with his emotions, although it remains clear throughout that he regards this as an impossible love.⁹⁶ The experiences of the protagonist provide the reader with a vicarious exploration of the mysteries of the East – from the confusion of a crowded *suq*, to the sensuous eroticism of the young Nica. However, the terms of this association are always unequal in this novel as the young Bedouin woman is consistently depicted as an "imprisoned queen" of her Italian officer whose love represents a civilizing force.⁹⁷ It is in this regard that this relationship is itself one of colonization and domination over what is represented as a more passive and culturally backward society.

The depiction of a strong cultural contrast between East and West in *Piccolo amore beduino* and its fetishistic representation of this other culture are reinforced through the literary style of this work. Heavily indebted to the "decadent exoticism" of D'Annunzio, Dei Gaslini's book relies on intense description and a disruptive syntax to convey the protagonist's fascination and unease with this context.⁹⁸ One

⁹⁶ Tomasello describes this relationship as follows: "in the text emerges on the one hand the passion that the author nurtures for Nica, the Islamic woman, that conveys all of the characteristics of passion and soft sweetness that are attributed to it peculiar to exotic clichés, and on the other emerges the demand to understand the ethnic psychology of the Bedouin." Tomasello, *La letteratura coloniale italiana*, 71. As the narrator himself states: "...this love is based on clay, on clouds, on impossible reality. A white official cannot love a black woman." Dei Gaslini, *Piccolo amore beduino*, 166.

⁹⁷ The atmosphere of the *suq* is described as follows: "Some light, people who were returning from prayer, reflections of glass, stubborn people framed by turbans, great clamor around obese bodies, the fleeing of women and children from one semi-darkness to another, few words, some cries of admonition..." Ibid., 37. During the few days in which their relationship is culminated, the young Nica spends her entire day waiting for her officer to return. It is also interesting to note that she always refers to him as "il mio signore" or "signore cristiano." Tomasello attributes the end of the relationship between Nica and the author to the "incompatibility of his civilizing destiny with that of the woman conquered by love and by 'civilization'." Tomasello, *La letteratura coloniale italiana*, 71.

⁹⁸ Tomasello states that Dei Gaslini's work "inserts itself perfectly in the literary line that can be called decadent exoticism... taking up some D'Annunzian stylisms, changing their perspective from the point of view of content." Tomasello, *La letteratura coloniale italiana*, 70. It is in this regard that the work of Dei Gaslini can also be related to that of Marinetti, who regards Africa not as a "promised land" but as a primitive alterior land untouched by the west.

such example is his description of his meeting with the local tribal leader, Sheik Abd el Kefi, which "breathes a dizzying atmosphere in which everything that is seen is adulterated by hallucination and assumes a clandestine aspect of love, of intrigue, of tenderness." [Figure 3.a-8] The exoticism of this literary style is intensified by the illustrations to the text, whose dark and primitivist imagery draws on the work of colonial artists like Edoardo del Neri.⁹⁹ A final and equally influential aspect of this novel is its relationship to the documentary form of travel accounts and diaries. Despite its fascination with the exotic, this work of Dei Gaslini offers itself as an autobiography of a rather ordinary military official in the colonies – representing the "reality" of that experience during the period just prior to Italy's entry into World War I.¹⁰⁰

Piccolo amore beduino was among the first of a wave of colonial literature that would emerge in the mid 1920s. It formed the basis for future writings in its particular fusion of a number of disparate journalistic and literary influences. One example of the evolution of this literature is the work of Gino Mitrano Sani – a former commander of a cavalry unit in the colonies.¹⁰¹ While his novels, like *la reclusa di Giarabub* of 1931, borrow their basic premises of a love relationship between an Italian official and an indigenous woman, their literary style rejects the

⁹⁹ Dei Gaslini, *Piccolo amore beduino*, 82. These images are quite similar to the black and white "xilografia" of the prominent colonial artist Edoardo del Neri. Several of his prints were published in the book *La rinascita della Tripolitania* in 1926 and he had a personal exhibition as part of the first *Mostra Internazionale d'Arte Coloniale* in Rome in 1926. In addition to their basic technique, the "primitivism" of depiction and an intense preoccupation with the description of surface and texture as opposed to depth are borrowed from these works. *I. Mostra internazionale d'arte coloniale. Catalogo*, 321-3.

¹⁰⁰ In discussing the difference between Dei Gaslini and D'Annunzio in their depiction of the colonial situation, Tomasello asserts that where D'Annunzio is preoccupied with themes of recuperation and Imperialism – in short, the heroism of colonialism – Dei Gaslini presents its ordinary and bureaucratic reality. Instead of D'Annunzio's protagonists, which are always the "superuomo", Dei Gaslini offers the "uomo qualunque." Tomasello, *La letteratura coloniale italiana*, 71.

¹⁰¹ The works of Mitrano Sani include: *E per i solchi millenari delle carovaniere. Romanzo di uno spahis* (Tripoli: editore Plinio Maggi, 1926); *Malati di Sud* (Napoli: Edizioni Trinchera, 1928); *La reclusa di Giarabub*, with preface by F.T. Marinetti (Milano: Alpes, 1931); and *Femina somala* (Napoli: Edizioni Dekten e Rocholi, 1933).

exoticism of Dei Gaslini in favor of a more documentary approach. The contrast between cultures is presented as a much more strident assertion of the superiority of the West over the East – which is presented as "a kind of fanaticism that is to be contested and combated."¹⁰² The publication of Dei Gaslini's work also signaled the beginning of a debate over the nature of a colonial literature proper to the Fascist state. Beginning in 1926 numerous articles appeared in colonial journals like *L'Idea coloniale*, and later in *l'Oltremare* and *L'Azione Coloniale*, calling for greater attention to this question.¹⁰³ Two distinct lines of criticism about the nature of colonial literature emerged in this discourse. The first of these, advanced by the critic Osvaldo Guida in his article "Questa letteratura coloniale" from 1929, was concerned with qualitative questions. For Guida, the literary production on the colonies – which were filled with "stereotyped impressions of exotic nomadism and arbitrary descriptions of epic battles, painted in flashy colonial color" – was in need of a more serious approach that was tied to the reality of the colonial situation.¹⁰⁴ Similarly

¹⁰² Tomasello connects Mitrano Sani's rejection of exoticism to a more heated ideological climate under the influence of Fascism. She notes numerous times that the regime was not positively inclined by the turn of the century literary style of exoticism. Rather, she suggests it was the idea of a "universalist" perspective that was sought after by critics like Giuseppe Bottai, a perspective that demanded both a more strident political tone and a more contemporary literary style. With regard to the relation between East and West, she states that "the formulation of Mitrano Sani tends to demonstrate the superiority of the western model in relation to Islam, therefore definitively dismissing the exoticizing perspective that had put the "civilized" man in a relationship of inferiority in front of the fascination expressed by the unknown and the far-away place." Tomasello, *La letteratura coloniale italiana*, 84.

¹⁰³ The first of these articles, entitled "Inizio di letteratura coloniale" was published in *L'Idea Coloniale* in March of 1926. Recognizing the positive nature of the recent competition for colonial literature, this article calls for young authors to approach the problem without preconceptions in a search for a way of expressing new sentiments and new sensations. In this regard the work of Dei Gaslini was seen as being emblematic of a lack of such originality. Another notable example of this debate was a survey posed by the journal *L'Azione Coloniale* in 1931, which posed a series of questions about the existence and the character of colonial literature. The responses to these questions, which included famous literary figures like Marinetti, Corrado Pavolini and Massimo Bontempelli, appeared in this journal from January to March of that year under the title "Referendum sulla letteratura coloniale italiana."

¹⁰⁴ Observing that colonial literature was primarily the work of young authors, Guida asserts that this subject was yet to be taken up by more accomplished writers. On the quality of the present production, his assertion was that these works "were far from masterpieces." He suggests that colonial literature "must attract the new generations toward this work of dignity and of the future,

appalled by these novels, which were felt to convey a "false romanticism that describes unreal worlds and traces nonexistent horizons", Mario Pozzo called for a more strict adherence to the role of colonial literature as propaganda for the Fascist regime. For him, in order for the Italian public to learn from this literature, it was necessary for writers to have a "sharp vision, clear and faithful to our mission as forgers of the spirit and the mentality with which, above all, they will look at our overseas colonies."¹⁰⁵

Despite the refutation of the literature of exoticism within intellectual circles and by the Fascist authorities, this form of writing continued to be an influential paradigm for the representation of the Italian colonies. The work of writers like Dei Gaslini expanded this approach – his later writings taking on the guise of ethnographic research.¹⁰⁶ This body of literature also had a direct influence on writings more directly related to tourism, providing a well-known and accessible literary style that could satisfy the demands of the tourist audience. One example of this is an article in *Ospitalità Italiana* from 1928 by G. B. Costa entitled "Gadames, metropoli sahariana" from 1928 – an article that purports to introduce this location to a tourism oriented audience. On closer scrutiny this tourist presentation is actually a narrative description of a trip to Ghadames by the author with General Rodolfo Graziani, who later presided over the military exercises in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.

not with the sauce of fatalism, of perfumes and of sin, of orientalism and the eternally feminine, but with the real beauty of the mission here fulfilled and of the goals that we must reach." Guida, "Questa letteratura coloniale," *L'Oltremare* III, 8 (August 1929): 358-60.

¹⁰⁵ See Pozzi, "Arte e propaganda nella letteratura coloniale," *L'Oltremare* III, 5 (May 1929): 210-12. After a discussion of the works of both Dei Gaslini and Mitrano Sani, Pozzi puts a great emphasis on the idea of colonial literature as propaganda, a task for which the perceived romanticism of much of the recent production was unsuitable. In reference to the tendency to represent "metropolitan fantasy" he states, "these worthless clichés for tourists in search of emotions are absolutely put aside in the new Italy."

¹⁰⁶ While his work never really left behind its style of prose, Dei Gaslini did move into more clearly documentary subjects, such as *Col Generale Cantore alla caccia del gran senusso*. (Milano: Anonima editoriale Esotica, 1927), and even eventually taking on more direct documentation of African culture as in the following: *Paradiso nell'inferno. Uso e costumi abissini* (Milano: Zacchi ambrosiana, 1937); *L'Italia su mar rosso* (Milano: La prora S.A.S.T.E., 1938); and *Le ricchezze dei Galla-Sidama* (Milano: Popolo d'Italia, 1940).

Through its intense description of the experience of travel and its detailed insights into the people and the city of Ghadames, this article provides a direct analog to the presentation of indigenous culture in colonial novels.¹⁰⁷

The literature of exoticism had an equally substantial effect on the iconography of the publicity material related to tourism in the Libyan colonies. This printed matter shared a common fascination with the exotic aspects of the culture of this region – providing a visual corollary to the prose of authors like Dei Gaslini. This preoccupation certainly applies to the large volume of postcards that were produced during this period. These images are often set in "characteristic" areas, along narrow streets or in crowded markets or suqs. By employing complex staging and strong contrasts of light and dark, they present the indigenous quarters as an image of chaos and confusion. [Figure 3.a-9] The tourist publications from this period also emphasized the exotic qualities of the Libyan culture, such as a leaflet issued by the *Commissariato per il turismo in Libia* in 1935 called *Libia itinerari*. [Figure 3.a-10] In a manner analogous to colonial literature, this brochure creates a narrative sequence of constantly unfolding visual panoramas that emphasize the experience of these locations and their distinctive local culture.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Costa, "Gadames, metropoli sahariana," 50-3. This article was published in the previously discussed special issue of this magazine which was on tourism in the colony of Tripolitania. This article employs the same literary techniques as the literature of colonialism. These include a constantly shifting series of personal reflections, intense descriptions of places and events and conversations. As we follow the author on his trip to Ghadames in automobile this article gives travel a sense of heroism and excitement. "I do not know what portent or what taste of glory that at the bottom of the soul gives free reign to the impetus of a heroic hymn, impetuous and pugnacious, that spurs the courage, that kindles the spirit, that exalts the origins, that announces the future..." Ibid., 50. His initial description of the rooftop landscape of Gadames is equally agitated. "A singular town, this one! Completely within the enclosing walls is a snarling run of sharp and sword-like teeth: sepulchral stones that from a distance seem gridded. It is perhaps, yet, also – in the absence of barbed wire or something better – a way of defending itself from invaders to whom the besieged may say: "If courage is enough for you, cross over the majesty of Death!" Ibid., 51.

¹⁰⁸ *Commissariato per il turismo in Libia, Libia itinerari*. Milano: S.A. Arti Grafiche Bertarelli, 1935. In the initial section of this brochure, entitled "Due parole al turista." the author presents the intentions of this publication as follows. "[The *Commissariato per il turismo in Libia*] wanted that, both from the variety of colors of a propaganda brochure, and from a complete publication of itineraries and additional directions, the tourist could deduce the elements that will induce them

A much less direct, though potentially more significant, influence of colonial literature on tourism was its contribution to the development of the tourist system itself. That is, it can be asserted that "the exotic" became an aesthetic category by which specific tourist sites were valued and even eventually developed. As is clearly evident in numerous sources, the local culture of Libya was understood by the government authorities as being of great importance to tourism in this region, and substantial efforts were made to both preserve and accentuate this patrimony.¹⁰⁹ This policy was certainly applied to the city of Ghadames which, in part due to the complete unfamiliarity of its culture and the remoteness of its location, became one of the most desirable destinations for travel within the interior of Libya. During the 1920s and 30s this city was the beneficiary of a considerable preservation effort that was aimed at intensifying its characteristic qualities.¹¹⁰ Moreover, the design of its only hotel, the "*Ain el-Fras*", appears to be a conscious effort to reinforce and even enhance the exoticism of its oasis setting. [Figure 3.a-11]

The second mechanism through which the indigenous culture of North Africa was appropriated and disseminated, was under the aegis of scientific research and

to visit Libya. Seducing words are not useful here to conquer the tourist for our cause. Here more than the words of the modest compiler, they will value the photographic documentation and the factual references, the facilitations for travel and the itineraries of the excursions, the certainty of every comfort and the attraction of very important folkloric, cultural and sports manifestations." *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁰⁹ In a report from Fulvio Suvich of ENIT to Benito Mussolini, the author, who had just attended the XII Conference of Travel Agencies, held in Tripoli from February 10-14 1931, outlines the urgent problems with tourism in this region. In addition to his general concern for the preservation of the local culture of the "Arab city", it is interesting to note that the third recommendation of this report was to "institute some attractions of local culture of the kind done in Algeria, in Morocco, in Tunisia, in Egypt (music, dance, fantasia, etc.)." Fulvio Suvich, memorandum to Benito Mussolini, 18 November 1931. ASMAE-MAI - Archivio Segreto - 200. Fascicolo Libia - turismo.

¹¹⁰ The *Notiziario coloniali* of this period show that a concerted effort was made by the Governorship of Balbo to restore numerous sites in towns like Ghadames and Nalut, whose tourist activities were their primary economic value. See "Tripolitania e Cirenaica - Notiziario d'Informazioni economico-agrario, politico, militare ecc., di dette Colonie." ACS-PCM 1931-33 - 17.1.6267. This policy is confirmed in Balbo's own statements about the indigenous politics of his government, see: Balbo, "La politica sociale fascista verso gli arabi della Libia," in *Convegno di scienze morali e storiche. 4-11 ottobre 1938. Tema: L'Africa.* 733-49.

study – an activity that both motivated and benefited from the colonization process itself. These activities took place during two separate historical periods, the first of these being the travels of Italian explorers around the time of the loss of Tunisia to France in 1881. Although the scientific basis of these early expeditions is questionable, their contribution to the more general knowledge of Africa was significant.¹¹¹ The second period of major scientific research was during the Fascist era, and in particular after the pacification of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in 1932. Prior to this time these efforts had been limited to the coastal regions of these two colonies.¹¹² The scope of this research was more substantial than that conducted in the nineteenth century, encompassing disciplinary areas as diverse as anthropology, archeology, agriculture, ethnography, folklore studies, geography, geology and medicine. Although the early period of research had a considerable impact on the desire to travel to the colonies and on the nature of this experience, it was the exploration conducted during the Fascist period that provided the conceptual model for travel in the colonies that eventually rendered the tourist experience more scientific.

Not surprisingly this scientific research often acted as a validation of the indigenous politics of Italian colonial rule. This is largely due to the fact that the organizations involved had either been long supporters of Italy's colonies, like the *Reale Società Geografica Italiana* of Florence (1879), or the missions were

¹¹¹ For a general discussion of this research see Angelo Del Boca, "L'Italia e la spartizione dell'Africa. In nome della scienza," *L'Africa nella coscienza degli Italiani*, 7-22. In this article, as well as alluding to the alluding to the importance of the publications that arose from these efforts, Del Boca outlines the major participants in this research, most of which was in the 1880s. These included Manfredo Camperio (Cyrenaica), Pietro Mamoli (Benghazi to Derna) and Emilio Bencetti (Benghazi).

¹¹² Angelo del Boca, in a general discussion of the scientific research in Libya, notes that while there was some activity from around 1912, this work was limited to regions under Italian control. Due to this situation, he asserts that at the beginning of the 1930s three quarters of Libya was still unexplored. Del Boca, "L'era di Balbo. La ricerca scientifica," in *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 271.

themselves directly sponsored by the *Ministero delle Colonie*, like the ethnographic research of Raffaele Corso in Ghat in 1935.¹¹³ Much of this research can thus be seen as a literal extension of the Italian control over these local populations. One particularly striking example of this is the representation of the colonies in the *Enciclopedia italiana*, which was published in 1934.¹¹⁴ In recounting the ancient ethnography of Libya, Francesco Beguinot, director of the *R. Istituto Orientale* of Naples, clearly seems to be attempting to find a scholarly justification for Italy's colonization of this region. In this encyclopedia entry, Beguinot both dismissed the Berber culture, which he criticized for its "inability to progress beyond the initial levels of civil life," and suggested that the most important civilizing influences on Libyan culture were from outside of North Africa.¹¹⁵ A second example is the series

¹¹³ Francesco Surdich, in an article on Italian scientific expeditions in East Africa and Libya, outlines the activities of the *Reale Società Geografica Italiana*, which sponsored expeditions by Ardito Desio in Al-Jaghbub (1926-27) and the Fezzan (1932), where a sequence of seven expeditions were held between 1932-35. Desio was also responsible for a permanent expedition under the sponsorship of Italo Balbo, which was looking for both water and petroleum in the Jefara region. Other expeditions included the Jabal (1932) and Massauda (one of four expeditions held by various groups in 1933). The other regions explored included Jufra, Murzuq, Ghat and the Libyan Sahara. As well as the work of Corsi, the government sponsored research included Colonel Enrico de Agostini in Cyrenaica (1922-23), Nello Puccioni in Cyrenaica (1928-29) and a large expedition to Jufra sponsored by the vice-Governor of Libya, Rodolfo Graziani (1933). Other expeditions were in Ghadames (1933), Fezzan (1935) and Jadu (1937). See Surdich, "Le spedizioni scientifiche italiane in Africa Orientale e in Libia durante il periodo fascista." 449-51, 460-1.

¹¹⁴ In an examination of the presentation of the colonies in the *Enciclopedia italiana*, Marco Mozzati underscores the fact that the idea of this project was in part initiated by Luigi Federzoni, who was *Ministero delle Colonie* from 1922-24 and 1926-28. With regard to the political dimension of this project, while recognizing all Encyclopedias from this period are affirmations of the dominant culture, the Italian case is enhanced by the presence of individuals like Fascist philosopher Giovanni Gentile on the editorial board. Mozzati, "Gli intellettuali e la propaganda coloniale del regime." *Le guerre coloniali del fascismo*. 99-111.

¹¹⁵ The broader context of both of these assertions are as follows. On the progress of Berber culture: "From a long series of similar facts... is revealed the fundamental characteristic of the Libyan-Berber people from the social point of view, that is their inability to progress beyond the initial levels of civil life, yet while framed in a civilization full development they can absorb it completely, if not definitively, and give splendid contributions to its maintenance and its subsequent development, no less than that of the family that created it." On the foreign influences on this same culture: "...it appears clear from North African history that in the periods in which indigenous states of a certain importance were forming and artistic and literary currents of a certain splendor were being determined, always corresponded to an engagement with some other civilization imported into North Africa and that constitutes a leavening of a superior form of life." The civilizations mentioned in this case are Punic and Roman. Beguinot, "Libia.

of *Congressi di Studi Coloniali*, which were held in Florence (1931 and 1937), Naples (1934 and 1940) and Asmara (1940). Organized by the *Centro di Studi Coloniali*, with substantial representation by the Fascist government, these conferences brought together the most current research of scholars on a full range of topics related to the Italian colonies.¹¹⁶ The rhetorical nature of this effort is evidenced both in the broader representation of its intentions – which were clearly aimed at creating a scientific pretext for Italian colonization – and in the scheduling of these events – the first of which was timed to precede a similar gathering related to the Paris Colonial Exhibition in 1931.¹¹⁷ Though not aimed at a broad audience, the publication of the proceedings of these conferences comprise an important record of the varied research interests of this period and the ongoing relationship between this research and Fascist colonial politics.¹¹⁸

An extremely crucial aspect of the relation of scientific research and colonial politics is the specifically racial connotations of these investigative projects. Although it has been argued that the fields of anthropology and ethnography were politicized in Fascist Italy, the opposite also appears to be true. Under the aegis of the "Provvedimenti per la difesa della razza italiana" of November 1938, it was

Etnografia antica," *Enciclopedia italiana. Vol. XXI* (Roma: Istituto della enciclopedia italiana fondata da Giovanni Treccani, 1934), 59-62.

¹¹⁶ These events were organized by the *Centro di Studi Coloniali* of the *R. Istituto Superiore di Scienze Sociali e Politiche "Cesare Alfieri"* in Florence, an academic institution that was well known for its involvement in research on the colonies. The conferences all took place with the patronage of King Vittorio Emanuele III and the Fascist government. In addition to representation from local officials, the honorary committee included the *Ministro delle Colonie* and the *Ministro dell'Educazione Nazionale*.

¹¹⁷ With regard to the political motives of these conferences, this connection is explicitly stated by Guido Valensi, who notes: "it is nevertheless true that the great colonizing nations find in research a spiritual preparation for their colonial expansion, and they hear the need then to support these on a robust scientific basis." Guido Valensin, "Primo congresso di studi coloniali," *L'Oltremare* V, 2 (February 1931): 75. The first conference was held on April 8-12 1931, a few months before a similar conference at the Paris Colonial Exhibition.

¹¹⁸ These publications, which were a record of the presentations made at the conference, were organized in the same categories as the conference. These publications are as follows: *Atti del Primo Congresso di Studi Coloniali. Firenze, 8-12 April 1931*; *Atti del Secondo Congresso di studi coloniali. Napoli, 1-5 October 1934*; *Atti del Terzo Congresso di studi coloniali. Firenze-Roma, 12-17 April 1937*.

political discourse that was becoming more "scientific."¹¹⁹ The Italian colonial authorities deployed a number of pre-existing scientific arguments about the primitive state of cultural advancement of the local populations in Africa in order to justify a racist politics. Such research was advanced in books like Raffaele Corso's *Africa Italiana. Genti e costumi* of 1940, which suggests that in relation to the problem of the contact between white and black cultures in the colonies, "racist ethnography" was part of the "fundamental task that interest the life, the administration and the politics of colonial domains."¹²⁰ A number of these researchers also participated in the journal *Difesa della Razza*, which began publishing in August 1938. These writings, like "Razzismo coloniale" written by the anthropologist Lidio Cipriani, provide written and visual arguments about the dangerous consequences of mixing between "racial elements that are too disparate and distant."¹²¹ In Edoardo Zavattari's "Italia e islam di fronte al problema razzista," the author asserted that while Muslims are anti-racist, they are Islamists in that they only accept those that adhere to Islam in their community. According to Zavattari,

¹¹⁹ This provision, which was called the Regio decreto-legge 17 novembre 1938-XVII, n. 1728, recante provvedimenti per la difesa della razza italiana, was presented at the *Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri* for passage into law on November 25, 1938.

¹²⁰ A more complete quotation is as follows: "...another problem that presents itself on the horizon of fascist ethnography, that of the "contact of cultures" between white and black, barbarous and civil, between indigenous and metropolitan, following from demographic colonization, for which a considerable mass of Italian population were transported with their families in wide areas of Libia and East Africa. Racist ethnography will not be left out of this fundamental task that interest the life, the administration and the politics of colonial domains." Corso, *Africa Italiana. Genti e costumi* (Napoli: Casa Editrice Raffaele Pironti, 1940).

¹²¹ Cipriani was a visiting professor of Anthropology at the *R. Università di Firenze* and director of the *Museo nazionale di antropologia e di etnologia* of Florence. He was active in expeditions Uadi Zigza and Masauda in 1932, later participating on Italy's behalf in the *Exposition du Sahara* in Paris in 1934. He published a substantial amount of material on racial matters, including presenting a paper entitled "Razze africane e civiltà dell'Europa" at the *Convegno di Scienze morali e storiche* in Rome in October of 1938. His participation in *Difesa della razza* was as an expert on colonial matters, publishing articles like "Razzismo coloniale," in August 1938, only one among seven that he would publish that year on this topic. Cipriani, "Razzismo coloniale," *Difesa della razza* I, 2 (20 August 1938): 18-20.

the Italian desire to create a separation of the races was seen to coincide with the desire of the Muslim populations to segregate themselves based on religion.¹²²

The importance of this political and racial discourse to a tourist audience is due to the fact that the knowledge of the colonies was, at least in part, transmitted through these documentary sources. Moreover, the objects of attention of this research – the human and material culture of the North African colonies – was the same culture that the tourist audience was seeking to experience. Accordingly, the activities that these fields of research undertook were often directly grafted into tourist related representations – such as the identification, classification and localization of different racial groups within the local populations.¹²³ The assumptions underlying these disciplines – the presumed organic relationship between so-called primitive societies and their cultural artifacts – and even their scientific method – that these cultures should be viewed in a manner that is undisturbed by modern influences – also became operative metaphors for the determination of the tourist experience.

One quite direct example of the penetration of these scientific disciplines into tourism is the *Guida d'Italia del TCI. Libia* of 1937.¹²⁴ This guide book contains an

¹²² Edoardo Zavattari was the Director of the *Istituto di Zoologia* of the *R. Università di Roma*. In this article he states: "there doesn't seem to be any antinomy between an Italian racist politics and an Italian filo-Islamic politics... the defense of the Italian race from any mixing with races outside of Europe, particularly Asian and African, does not, in fact, imply a concept of lessening the Islamic populations, who want above all the recognition of the full liberty to follow their religion." Zavattari, "Italia e Islam di fronte al problema razzista," *Difesa della Razza* I, 2 (20 August 1938): 14-15.

¹²³ It is interesting to note how these disciplines understood themselves during the Fascist period, something that is most clearly evident in their definitions in the *Enciclopedia Italiana* See: "Antropologia," Vol. III, 580-97; "Etnologia," Vol. XIV, 495-504; Folklore, Vol. XV, 606-9. In the case of Anthropology, one of the most significant aspects is a quite large section on "Criminal anthropology." In the case of Ethnography, the following is a summary of its activities: "Ethnography comprises a preliminary part, that consists in the identification of ethnic groups, that is to say the classification and localization of populations, and a principal part, that is the study of their activity, that is, their culture."

¹²⁴ L.V. Bertarelli, *Guida d'Italia del Touring Club Italiano. Libia*. It is important to recognize that the earlier edition of the guidebook to the colonies, *Guida d'Italia del TCI. Possedimenti e Colonie* of 1929 contained some of the same sections of material. It is with the 1937 edition that the category of "Etnografia e demografia" was introduced.

overview of topics related to the history and the culture of Libya and its local populations, all presented under the guise of objective knowledge. This material includes a section entitled "Etnografia e demografia," which profiles the major ethnic groups of Berbers, Arabs, Jews and Africans and their relative representation in the population of Libya.¹²⁵ A subsequent section, entitled "Usi e costumi," further elaborates on the cultural practices of these groups including their tribal organization and social categories, the prevalence of nomadism and agriculture, and customs related to birth, marriage and death. Written by Martino Mario Moreno of the *Ministero delle Colonie*, this entry is a literal insertion of ethnographic discourse into a tourist presentation.¹²⁶ In some cases, tourism so thoroughly assumed the procedures of anthropology and ethnography that it became a form of analogous research. An example of this can be found in the "National Excursion" to the Fezzan area of Libya held by the *Touring Club Italiano* in April of 1935 – one of several such trips which the TCI organized for its members in Libya during this period.¹²⁷ One of the interesting aspects of this excursion is that it followed an itinerary that was almost identical to that of an anthropological and ethnographic mission led by Lidio Cipriani and Antonio Mordini that visited this area in 1933 – an expedition whose research was published in the official TCI magazine, *Le Vie d'Italia*. Not only

¹²⁵ Ibid., 84-88. This presentation of racial groups includes not only their origins and basic constitution but also their historical relationship to one another in the context of Libya's own history. In so doing it is attempting to not only present these groups but also their greater historical significance and contributions to the culture of the colony.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 93-106. This section presents an exceedingly detailed examination of the social aspects of the Berber, Arab and Jewish segments of the population, which include aspects of their social organization and customs. Of particular note are the marriage customs which are presented in great detail. Martino Mario Moreno, then *Capo dell'Ufficio III* of the *Direzione Generale del Ministero delle Colonie*, was also a well known scholar later publishing articles on questions of indigenous politics, such as: "Politica di razza e politica coloniale italiana," *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana* II, 2 (June 1939): 453-67; and "Chronache dell'Africa Italiana. Noi e gli indigeni." *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana* IV, 1 (May 1941): 344-47.

¹²⁷ For a more general presentation of the activities of the TCI, including its various "National Excursions" in the colonies, see *I sessant'anni del Touring Club Italiano, 1894-1954*, ed. Giuseppe Vota (Milano: Touring Club Italiano, 1954).

was this tourist itinerary inspired by and following the route of a scientific one, it was clearly organized according to the same logic – showing the same "systematic and patient inquiry."¹²⁸

The broad dissemination of these research efforts in tourist related literature contributed to a restructuring and reconception of the tourist experience of the colonies according to this scientific logic. In relation to other colonies in North Africa like Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, Libya was presented as a place where the Arab lived "in their psychological and social climate, with lesser mystifications and contaminations."¹²⁹ Even conventional forms of tourist representation like postcards participated in this discourse, appearing like documentary images intended to support a scientific research project, or like illustrations of racial and cultural degeneration. [Figure 3.a-12] The eye of the tourist was thus becoming the eye of the ethnographer. This sensibility also influenced the development of the tourist panorama, which was under increasing pressure to present the indigenous culture of North Africa in an authentic way. To maintain this illusion of authenticity, the effort was made to create a seamless experience of the local culture in relation to the more general context. According to these demands, substantial efforts were made to preserve and even enhance the historical patrimony of selected tourist destinations,

¹²⁸ Although the mission of Cipriani and Mordini was more extensive, and their itineraries were in reverse directions, they followed the same path. The itinerary of the TCI "Escursione" began in Tripoli and made the following stops Bu Ngem, Hun, Socna, Sabha, Murzuq, Brak, Al-Qaryah and back to Tripoli, an itinerary that traveled 750 km. south of Tripoli, deep into the Fezzan territory. See Cipriani. "Una missione scientifica italiana nel Fezzan." *Le Vie d'Italia* XXXIX, 9 (September 1933): 679-91; and Carlo Bonardi, "Col touring nel Fezzan." *Le Vie d'Italia* XLV, 7 (July 1935): 485-96. In this article on this excursion, the author states; "certainly a systematic and patient inquiry, accomplished following the counsel, the news, the weary itineraries of the officials in the long explorations in the desert, will bear important fruit." *Ibid.*, 495.

¹²⁹ L.V. Bertarelli, *Guida d'Italia del Touring Club Italiano. Libia*, 135. In this introduction to tourism, the claim is made that the Arab culture in Libya remains uncontaminated by western culture, in contrast to the countries of Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. The author goes on to claim that as a tourist in Libya you can enter mosques, where in Tunisia this is forbidden. The suks in Tunisia and Egypt are also criticized as being like "enormous European bazaars," while those in Tripoli display the genuine local handicrafts.

and modern architecture was viewed as an intrusion into this context.¹³⁰ While the literature of exoticism had been instrumental in fueling the desire to visit the colonies and creating a thirst for new experiences, it was the discourse of scientific research that was increasingly responsible for structuring the means of that experience – transforming the tourist setting into an ethnographic exhibit.

¹³⁰ In the previously mentioned report from Fulvio Suvich of ENIT to Benito Mussolini, the author makes the following comment: "One question that worries me very much is the danger of seeing the local culture disappear a little at a time. The day that the Arab city of Tripoli will be lost to give space to the ugly constructions of a European character that may be made within it, one of the main attractions for tourism will be lost." Fulvio Suvich, memorandum to Benito Mussolini, 18 November 1931. The substantial efforts at restoration of the local architecture in tourist oriented destinations will be discussed in Section B.

B. Italo Balbo and the "Valorization" of Tourism in Libya

Today Libya is completely occupied, and the tricolor of the native land waves to you solemn and respected, from the shores of the Mediterranean to the desert depths of Cufra. But what is of more value, today Libya is completely pacified. And the spontaneous, enthusiastic demonstrations bestowed on fascist Italy by the Muslim populations in these days constitutes the irrefutable, definitive proof of it... The Muslim populations know that, with the Italian tricolor, they will have peace and well being and that their customs, and above all their religious beliefs, will be scrupulously respected.

Benito Mussolini, Discorso ai Camerati di Tripoli, 1937.¹

The Muslim religion, in as much as it is inspired by sound ethical and moral principles of indisputably high human value, has been to that end an extremely useful *instrumentum regni*. But the Fascist Government could not ignore certain harmful deviations, that in this religion do not represent anything other than an immoral deformation, adulterating the spirit, creating open contrasts with the nature of European civilization.

Italo Balbo, "La politica sociale fascista verso gli arabi della Libia, 1938."²

The enhancement and expansion of the tourist organization in the Libyan colonies under Italo Balbo was closely linked to the *politica indigena* practiced in this region – a development that was intended to incorporate Libya, as a single and

¹ The original quotation is as follows: "Oggi la Libia è completamente occupata e il tricolore della patria vi sventola solenne e rispettato, dalle sponde del Mediterraneo alle profondità desertiche di Cufra. Ma quello che più conta, la Libia è oggi completamente pacificata. E le spontanee, entusiastiche dimostrazioni tributate all'Italia fascista dalle popolazioni musulmane in questi giorni, ne costituiscono la irrefutabile, definitiva prova... Le popolazioni musulmane sanno che, col tricolore italiano, avranno pace e benessere e che le loro usanze e, soprattutto, le loro religiose credenze, saranno scrupolosamente rispettate." Mussolini, "Ai camerati di Tripoli," 17 March 1937, in *Opera omnia di Benito Mussolini. Vol. XXVIII*, 143-4.

² The original quotation is as follows: "La religione musulmana in quanto si ispira a sani principi etici e morali di indiscutibile alto valore umano, è stata a tale fine utilissimo *instrumentum regni*. Ma il Governo Fascista non poteva ignorare certe dannose deviazioni, che della religione non rappresentavano altro che una immorale deformazione, alterandone lo spirito, creando aperti contrasti con la natura della civiltà europea." Balbo, "La politica sociale fascista verso gli arabi della Libia," in *Convegno di scienze morali e storiche. 4-11 ottobre 1938-XVI. Tema: L'Africa. Vol. 1*, 746.

unified colony, into the greater Italy. This integration was attempted through every possible means, from administrative and legislative restructuring, to extensive programs for the improvement of public works and infrastructure, to a systematic campaign of demographic colonization. This was, however, only one part of the political program of Balbo in this region. The other significant objective of his Governorship was the preservation and protection of the customs, practices and environment of the Libyans – an effort that was clearly understood as an alternative to the failed attempts at assimilation on the part of the French colonial authorities in North Africa.³ The timing of these developments during the Governorship of Balbo was greatly impacted by the efforts of his predecessors. When he arrived in Tripoli on January 15, 1934, Balbo found a colony that had been free of internal rebellion for some two years and whose public works and agricultural infrastructure had already undergone substantial growth.

The first step in the process of incorporation of the Libyan colonies into metropolitan Italy was a series of administrative reforms that called for the unification of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica into the single colony of Libya.⁴ These changes represent a consolidation of Balbo's powers in governing the colony and the creation of a system of government analogous to that found in Italy. While such adjustments had been proposed before, it was argued at that time that the conditions were right for paralleling the development of the colony with its administrative

³ Claudio Segrè argues that Balbo was well aware of the French attempts to assimilate their local populations in their North African colonies, and of the relative lack of success of these efforts. Rather he asserts that Balbo followed the path of religious tolerance and even strengthening of traditional beliefs, a policy that was generally linked to Italian policy abroad and Mussolini's self-fashioning as an ally of the Islamic world. Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 324.

⁴ This law was called the Regio Decreto Legge, 3 December 1934, n. 2012, which was converted into law on April 11, 1935, n. 675. For a detailed contemporary analysis of its significance in relation to the previous colonial legislation, written under the direction of Balbo's administration see Giuseppe Bruni, "Il nuovo assetto politico-amministrativo della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 1-14.

redefinition along metropolitan lines. These proposals were initially met with a considerable amount of resistance on the part of both *Ministro delle Colonie* Emilio De Bono – who saw this as an effort to avoid being under his supervision – and Mussolini – who was reluctant to concede any substantial powers to Balbo.⁵ This legislation aimed to centralize the authority of Balbo and disseminate his power through a newly conceived regional structure. In order to accomplish this goal, the government of Cyrenaica was suppressed in favor of a central authority in Tripoli. Balbo thus became *Governatore Generale* of Libya, which was a position of absolute authority over all matters – from political and administrative, to legislative, military, and financial.⁶ The main administrative bodies of colonial government continued to be the *Consulta generale* and the *Consiglio di governo*. This legislation substantially transformed the role and constitution of this first group, which became an investigative body whose members were chosen by the administration to represent "each living and operative economic force in the colony." The advisory function of the *Consiglio di governo* did not change, while its membership was limited to individuals from within the administration.⁷

⁵ Segrè provides a concise and very useful summary of these initial negotiations, where he argues that Balbo "wanted to test his authority as governor against that of the minister of the colonies in Rome." Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*, 294-5. For a more detailed examination of this process in the form of drafts of this legislation and the various negotiations between Balbo and Alessandro Lessona and Emilio De Bono at the *Ministero delle Colonie*, see ASMAE-MAI - Dir.Gen.AA.PP. Cartella 54 and 56.

⁶ The political and administrative powers of the *Governatore Generale* included the general direction of the internal functioning of the colonial government; the ability to propose a repartitioning of the colony to the *Ministero delle Colonie*; the nomination of regional government heads; preside over the *Consulta generale* and *Consiglio di Governo*. His legislative responsibilities largely comprised the ability to create legislation and regulations for their execution. As a military figure, the *Governatore Generale* was the head of all of the armed forces in the territory. His financial powers involved supervising the budgetary matters, including decisions regarding the financial dimensions of legislation. Bruni, "Il nuovo assetto politico-amministrativo della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 7.

⁷ The composition of the *Consulta generale* was to include the most senior functionaries of the colonial administration and various categories of workers with the representation of *Associazioni sindacali* and *Enti corporativi*, banking and insurance institutes, and other public organizations. Their role was no longer to preside over the most important aspects of the colonial administration,

The dissemination of Balbo's power was related to the division of Libya into two distinct regions, the first of these being comprised of four provinces along the coast – Tripoli, Misratah, Benghazi and Derna. Due to the fact that these areas were believed to be more linked "with the Mediterranean world than to the African one" their governing was intended to "approach that of the regulation of the Mother country" – the goal being their eventual incorporation into Italy.⁸ The areas south of the 29th parallel – which included the remote oases of Jufra, al-Kufra and Ghat in the desert regions of Libya – were considered African territories whose populations and state of civilization were believed to be inferior. As such, they would always remain as colonies, their government coming under the direct supervision of the "Comando militare del Sud."⁹ The administrative structure of these four new provinces – which were called *Commissariati generale provinciale* – created an intermediate level of government that more directly extended the powers of Balbo and his administration in Tripoli into these four regions of the colony.¹⁰ This division of power was understood to be a parallel political and administrative subdivision to the *prefettura*

but rather to "collaborate in the study of problems reflecting above all the general economy of the colony." In the case of the *Consiglio di Governo*, it was to become "a true internal organ called to give approval on all of the administrative acts of major importance", for which reason "elements extraneous to the Administration" were no longer included. Ibid., 10.

⁸ The argument was made that this coastal area was linked to the Mediterranean at both a geographical level and historically through its domination by groups from the north "but never from the south." With regard to its Mediterranean status, this meant that it was "susceptible to an social and judicial arrangement opportune to carry it, in a more or less immediate future, to the same level as the most advanced regions of North Africa, assimilatable and in some cases already assimilated into the Mother country from the administrative point of view (Algeria)." Ibid., 5.

⁹ In the case of the southern desert regions the following was stated: "their populations, for their traditions, state of civilization, origin, conditions of life and environment, are profoundly different from those that inhabit the first zone." With regard to their future development "it is difficult to think that it will be possible to carry, even a long time from now, this region and the people that inhabit it to the same social and economic level which legitimately it is possible to draw the coastal region and its inhabitants." Ibid., 6.

¹⁰ In a letter dated December 7 1934, Balbo describes the idea of decentralization as follows: "...the position of the Commissario generale provinciale in the administrative regulation of Libya effectively represents...the central colonial government in all of its interests and the complexities of its powers and attributions." Letter from Governo della Tripolitania to Ministero delle Colonie. Tripoli, 7 December 1934. ASMAE-MAI - Dir.Gen.AA.PP. Cartella 54, Fascicolo 30.

that existed within Italy – something that would facilitate "the extension into Libya of the whole metropolitan legislative complex inherent for the protection and discipline of work and of its syndicalist organization." Although this process of administrative restructuring did not end with the approval of this legislation, the changes that it instituted not only allowed Balbo to consolidate his position in Libya, it facilitated his creation of a governmental structure parallel to that found within metropolitan society.¹¹

In conjunction with these administrative and legislative changes that were aimed at bringing metropolitan standards to Libya, Balbo made a substantial effort to apply this same measure to the public works and infrastructure of this colony. The seriousness of this commitment is evidenced by the significant increase in expenditures on these projects, which almost doubled from that of the Governorship of Badoglio. These improvements involved the consolidation and expansion of public services and government institutions like post offices, schools, hospitals, government offices, prisons and military barracks.¹² These projects responded to the

¹¹ As was argued in the presentation of this legislation, "the numerous old *Commissariati regionali* that subdivide the territory too much cannot remain, to the complete damage of the coordination of the interests of the districts; as a branch of the government of the colony higher directive offices of local administration will be instituted that for importance, for attribution and for sphere of influence are similar to the Italian *prefetture*." Bruni, "Il nuovo assetto politico-amministrativo della Libia," 8. The passage of this regulation into law in April of 1935 did not end the debate over this law, as a process of drafting a revised law began almost immediately. This process did not end until the passage of Decreto Legge of January 9, 1939 n. 70, which incorporated the four provinces of Libya into metropolitan Italy. See: ASMAE-MAI - Dir.Gen.AA.PP. Cartella 54-56. One important example of the increasingly close relationship between Libya and Italy was the passage of the laws pertaining to the organization of labor, which effectively extended the Italian corporatist structure into the colonial context. See Mario Scaparro. "Origini e sviluppi dell'ordinamento corporativo libico," *Rassegna Economica dell'Africa Italiana* XXV, 3 (March 1937): 359-67; and Alberto Giaccardi, "L'ordinamento corporativo nelle colonie libiche," *La Vita Italiana* XX, CCXXXIII (August 1932): 182-94.

¹² There had already been a significant increase during the Governorship of Badoglio (28.5 million lire/year) from that of De Bono (13.5 million lire/year). With regard to the first two years of Balbo's Governorship, the average expenditure was around 54 million lire/year (all of these figures are for Tripolitania alone). See Ministero dell'Africa Italiana. Dir.Gen.AA.EE. e FF. Riassunto delle spese per opere pubbliche o di pubblica utilità. 1913/14-1936/37. ASMAE-MAI. 3-56. Fascicolo-OO.PP. Servizi. For a general description of the public works efforts under Balbo see Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*. 305-7. For a more detailed presentation of the

new administrative structure of *Commissariati* and their subdivision into smaller districts – something that led to the creation of new regional centers in Misratah and Derna and the foundation of a network of district offices in towns like Nalut, Gharyan, Homs, Ghadames and Sabrata.¹³ The reorganization of the bureaucracy in Libya also necessitated a substantial commitment to the construction of housing for officials, functionaries and military personnel in these new regional and district centers. The *Istituto Nazionale per le Case degli Impiegati dello Stato* (INCIS), worked in conjunction with the colonial administration to construct a substantial number of housing units in Libya's two eastern provinces between 1934 and 1940, including a 63 unit project for city employees in Tripoli.¹⁴ [Figure 3.b-1] These efforts were reinforced by an equal commitment to improve the infrastructure of Libya. In larger centers like Tripoli and Benghazi, this included the extension and enhancement of the sewer and water systems, the paving of streets, the introduction of lighting, the creation of parks as well as the more general development of the natural landscape.¹⁵ Of particular importance in more remote locations, like Nalut

public works in Libya, see: *Le Opere Pubbliche in Libia* [Opere stradali, edilizie, idrauliche ed igieniche con sommarie], 1938. ASMAE-MAI.3-56. Fascicolo-OO.PP. Servizi.

¹³ In addition to the creation of two new "provincial" centers of Misratah and Derna, the law of April 1935 provided for the subdivision of Libya into *Circondari* (districts), *Residenze* (residences) and *Distretti* (precincts). The subdivision of Libya under this legislation is outlined in the following source: *Suddivisione politico-amministrativo del territorio della Libia*. Tripoli: Plinio Maggi, 1935. ASMAE-AP - Libia - Busta 13 (1935), Fascicolo 8.

¹⁴ In reference to lodging for government employees, between 1934 and 1940 housing and barracks related to this new administrative structure was constructed in Tripoli, Misratah, Bani Walid, Ben Ghashir, Gharyan, Jadu, Homs, Jefren, Nalut, Sorman, Tarhunah, Zaviyah and Zliten. See *Le Opere Pubbliche in Libia*, ASMAE-MAI.3-56 - Fascicolo OO.PP.-Servizi. These projects were constructed for both military officers and civic employees. The INCIS project in Tripoli was by the architects Alberto Alpago Novello, Ottavio Cabiati, Guido Ferrazza and Luigi Piccinato and completed in 1934. Ibid. For a general analysis of the activities of INCIS in the colonies, see Stefano Zagnoni, "L'Attività dell'INCIS. Le case degli "uomini bianchi," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare, 1870-1940*, 230-41.

¹⁵ As Giovannangeli notes, in the city of Tripoli, particular attention was given to improvements in the sewer and water systems, including the digging of wells and piping of water from the aqueduct at Porta Fornaci and Bu Meliana. The sewage and drainage systems were improved both in the oldest parts of the Italian city and in the old city of Tripoli. The creation of landscape was perceived to be one of the most important parts of the improvements to Tripoli, both for their aesthetic and climatic benefits. As this author notes, in 1937 the amount of park in the city had

and Ghadames, were enhancements in the water supply – which included the organization of geological expeditions to discover underground sources of water. Another area of considerable development was the road network, which continued the improvements begun in 1929 under Pietro Badoglio – an initiative that eventually created a road system in Libya that met the standards of metropolitan Italy.¹⁶

In addition to these general improvements, the Balbo administration undertook two notable projects that were conceived and executed at a monumental scale; the construction of the *strada litoranea* or coastal highway and the *ventimila* – a mass emigration of 20,000 agricultural colonists from Italy to this colony in October 1938. Exhibiting Balbo's organizational ability and his keen sense of the value of propaganda, these projects have come to symbolize the idea of a Libya as Italy's "fourth shore" and define the Fascist sense of monumentality and spectacle. The *strada litoranea* involved the completion of the remaining portion of just over 800 kilometers of the coastal highway that stretched from Tunisia to Egypt. Construction began in October 1935 and was completed in February of 1937, just a few weeks before Mussolini's Visit to Libya. At a general level this project was the logical outcome of the political reforms that had unified Libya into a single administrative, military and civic entity – providing an artery that gave physical and

increased over 3 times from that existing in 1926. Giovannangeli, "Cenni sull'attività municipale di Tripoli," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 1-13.

¹⁶ As Del Boca notes, the noted geologist Ardito Desio was employed by Balbo to do research on the natural resources in Libya. His work with underground water was particularly successful, as between 1937 and 1940 over 55 new artesian wells had been created in the areas of the Jafara, Ghadames, Hun and Misratah. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 271-2. For a description of this process of improvement of the road system, see A.V. Pellegrineschi, "Le nuove strade della Libia," *Gerarchia* XV, 10 (October 1935): 866-71. Although the annual investment in these projects was similar to that of the Badoglio period (10 million lire/year), a huge additional investment of 30 million lire was made in 1934. "Riassunto delle spese per opere pubbliche o di pubblica utilità. 1913/14-1936/37," ASMAE-MAI.3-56 - Fascicolo OO.PP. Servizi.

metaphoric form to this new reality.¹⁷ It was also intended to facilitate commercial and tourist development of this colony and respond to military demands. This road was not only built according to the most modern standards, it also contained amenities like the *case cantoniere* and *case di ristoro* that would assist the traveler.¹⁸ Viewed within the context of the ongoing military campaign in Ethiopia, the *strada litoranea* was believed to be of great importance to the "security of the Mediterranean" by making possible the rapid movement of Italian troops for surveying the territory.¹⁹ This project was also presented as a feat of engineering that underscored the ability of the Fascist regime to recapture the spirit and accomplishments of ancient Rome. The completion of this coastal artery was an undertaking that required a considerable amount of organization and expertise – an effort of significant scope that required work in extremely difficult conditions, like the desert terrain of the gulf of Sirte.²⁰

¹⁷ While the entire length of this highway was listed at 1822 kilometers, by their own admission this project involved only 813 kilometers of new construction. See *La strada litoranea della Libia*. (Verona: Officine Grafiche A. Mondadori, 1937), 33. Balbo notes a clear connection between the "strada litoranea" and the recent political unification of Libya, stating: "Any distinction between Tripolitania and Cyrenaica being abolished... the civic, commercial, military and touristic relations between the two major regions will inevitably intensify themselves. To assure the traffic and shorten the distances between the two major regions, it was indispensable to create a modern street of communication that challenges the weather and the adversity of the climate." Balbo. "La litoranea libica," *Nuova Antologia* 72, 1559 (March 1, 1937): 7.

¹⁸ The design of this road included sixty-five *case cantoniere* or maintenance facilities. Each of these buildings, designed by Di Fausto, would contain two families who would be responsible for maintaining the road and responding to any emergencies. The *case di ristoro* were located in the most desolate regions around the Gulf of Sirte. These projects, also by Di Fausto, were virtual roadside gas stations and hotels, providing for emergency services and lodging for travelers. *La strada litoranea della Libia*, 127-34.

¹⁹ In the context of the Ethiopian conflict (October 1935 - May 1936) and the sanctions of the League of Nations it was believed this road would be useful for the transportation of troops from one end to the other of the colony. It was also argued that the presence of this artery would allow for the elimination of some military outposts. *La strada litoranea della Libia*, 16-17.

²⁰ Balbo argues: "this road is a monument that will remain over the centuries to immortalize and consecrate the Empire of Rome, recalled and resurrected by the inflexible will and politico-military genius of Mussolini." Balbo, "La strada litoranea," 5. This project was, by all accounts, both on time and on budget. This work was accomplished through a well organized process that divided the road into segments and called for competitive bids. Although the engineering task was not easy, the labor problem was more acute. This was due both to the harshness of the

The *strada litoranea* was also the product of colonial discourse – a fusion of modern exigencies with the fascist rhetoric of the Roman origins of this region. This particular combination of influences is poignantly expressed in the *Arae Philenorum* – a 31 meter high travertine clad arch designed by the architect Florestano Di Fausto.[Figure 3.b-2] Located in the gulf of Sirte, this project marks the mid-point of this new coastal highway. It was also intended to commemorate a legend from the 4th century BC of the Fileni brothers who, as representatives of Carthage, agreed to be buried alive by the Cyrenians in order that a territorial dispute be settled. According to this legend, their tombs – the ruins of which were purported to be only a few meters from the location of this new arch – were to mark the new border between Carthage and Cyrene.²¹ The project illustrates the synthesis of a number of regional sources, combining the monolithic and severe qualities of Egyptian monuments with more specific references to Roman triumphal arches and Libyan vernacular forms. Its iconography is also notable, as this arch includes two colossal bronze statues of the Fileni brothers and two travertine bas-reliefs that document the construction of this road and the founding of the Fascist Empire.²² The *Arae Philenorum* was an affirmation of the Italian control and domination over this segment of the African Mediterranean. The inauguration of the *strada litoranea*

climate in the Gulf of Sirte region and the potential problem of wage inflation. Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*, 296-8.

²¹ Noting that this story was recounted in Salustio in *De Bello Jugurtino* (among several authors), Balbo points out its relationship to the ongoing struggle between Carthage (near Tunis) and Cyrene (east of Benghazi) in the 4th century BC. The story is that two sides created an accord whereby the border between them would be set at place of meeting between two people sent on the same day from Carthage and two from Cyrene. Due to the strength of the Fileni brothers and some problems encountered by the Cyrenians this place ended up in the gulf of Sirte, a location more favorable to Carthage. Believing that the Fileni had cheated, they finally agree to the location but given that these representatives agree to be buried alive which, as legend has it, they do. Balbo, "La strada litoranea," 11-12.

²² The project of Di Fausto is presented in some detail in *La strada litoranea della Libia*, 134-48. This presentation relates details of the construction of the arch, from its materials and building technique to its design and iconographic program. The two bronze statues were executed by the sculptor Ulderico Conti. The travertine bas-reliefs, located over the archway with one facing each direction, were by the artists Quirino Ruggeri (foundation of the road) and Ercole Drei (foundation of the Italian Empire).

coincided with Benito Mussolini's second visit to this region in March of 1937 – a visit that, following the itinerary of the *litoranea* itself, began at Libya's eastern border and traversed the length of the colony.²³ Various events were staged for Italian and foreign journalists, one example being the stop made at the *Arae Philenorum*. Given that Mussolini was arriving at dusk, Balbo arranged for the arch to be illuminated with searchlights which created columns of light in the darkness. A space was also created in front of the arch with a series of torches, a battalion of Libyan soldiers and a group of *zaptie* on camels.²⁴ As a stage set in this remote desert location, the *Arae Philenorum* thus became a mere backdrop to an event that created an image of Fascist colonialism for an international audience.

The *ventimila* was the culmination of a series of policies developed by the Balbo regime to create a systematic state sponsored program of demographic colonization. While there had been some success during the previous Governorships with government subsidies of private companies, by 1934 this system of land development had not fostered a substantial influx of colonist families. Balbo moved quickly to work with the organizations that facilitated the resettlement of families, such as the *Ente per la Colonizzazione della Libia* (ECL) and the *Istituto*

²³ Mussolini visited Libya from March 12-21 1937, just following the completion of the *strada litoranea*. This visit began on the 12th in Derna with his first ceremony after arrival being the inauguration of this road near Solum at its eastern border with Egypt. After returning to Derna on the 13th he traveled to Cyrene where he spent the morning of the 14th. His next stop was Benghazi he spent the afternoon of that day and morning of the 15th. On that day he visited Agedabia then reaching the *Arae Philenorum* by 8:00 p.m. On the 16th he traveled to Sirt, Misratah and Tripoli. Using Tripoli as his base, he then made trips to Sabrata on the 19th, Leptis Magna on the 20th. On the 21st he returned to Italy. See "Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della Litoranea - Programma Sommario." Tripoli, 18 February 1937. ACS-MCP, Busta 105, Sottofascicolo 4.

²⁴ The general setting of this event is described in a book on Mussolini's visit to Libya, put out by the Italian news organization "Agenzia Stefani", entitled: *Il Duce in Libia*. Milano: S.A. Stab. arti grafiche Alfieri & Lacroix, 1937. A more complete description of this event is described in Segrè. *Italo Balbo: A Fascist Life*, 309. After Mussolini's arrival and the usual pomp and ceremony, the entire entourage were served a seven course meal, afterward retiring to a village of tents that were set up for their overnight stay.

Nazionale Fascista per la Previdenza Sociale (INFPS).²⁵ He also put a substantial investment in agricultural research and development, including programs to reclaim desert areas. After achieving only modest results in his first three years as Governor, Balbo embarked on an ambitious project to systematically populate this region. Conceived with the cooperation of Alessandro Lessona of the *Ministero delle Colonie*, this program was to settle 20,000 colonists annually for five years beginning in 1938 – the long term goal being to create a population of 500,000 Italians in Libya by 1950.²⁶ After the approval of the necessary legislation in May of 1938, the preparations for arrival of the first group of colonists in October of that same year were fully underway. This was no small task, as it required both an extensive process of review and selection of applicant families and a substantial effort to prepare suitable facilities for their settlement in Libya. A joint committee of ECL, INFPS and government representatives was formed to undertake the difficult task of selecting 1,800 suitable families from a pool of approximately 6,000 applicants.²⁷ The preparations in Libya included the creation of roads, the subdivision and clearing of land, the digging of wells, the creation of drainage systems and the construction of colonial villages, houses and associated farm buildings. The design of these villages and farm houses are also notable. The

²⁵ For a detailed discussion of the programs of demographic colonization under Balbo, see Segrè, *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya*, 82-111. The ECL was a para-state organization that was specifically created to resettle unemployed farm workers in this colony, while the INFPS was a social welfare organization that was involved in land reclamation projects in Italy.

²⁶ The census of 1937 showed that the agricultural population was only 2,711 families, with a total of 12,488 people. Given the recent discoveries of water in Libya, it was estimated by Lessona that an organized program could resettle considerably more than their original prediction of 100,000 families. Toward the end of 1937 Balbo proposed this five year plan to Mussolini. This plan was formalized with Regio Decreto Legge n. 701 of May 17 1938. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 260.

²⁷ The criterion for selection of families were less political than they were related to their size, health and composition. This approach is in strong contrast with some of the early colonist families, which in some cases were malcontent elements that were chosen for "exile." Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*, 311-12.

product of well known architects like Di Fausto, Pellegrini and Di Segni, their simple cubic massing and Libyan vernacular references place them squarely within the contemporary discourse on architecture in the Italian colonies.²⁸ [Figure 3.b-3]

The *ventimila* was also a potent symbol for the incorporation of Libya into metropolitan Italy. It was a propaganda event which transformed the political policy of Balbo into a spectacle conceived on a monumental scale. This aspect was largely attributable to the conspicuous nature in which this mass migration took place. Beginning in Genoa on October 27 1937 – the day before the annual celebration of the March on Rome – a flotilla of nine ships carried the colonist families to Naples, where they were joined by six others vessels. The crowning moment of the departure was Mussolini's "inspection" of these ships aboard a navy cruiser that traveled their full length. The arrival of the colonists in Tripoli and their transportation to their villages was no less orchestrated, as they were eventually loaded into convoys of army trucks that took them to their new homes.²⁹ There was also a well orchestrated publicity campaign that represented the *ventimila* to an Italian and European audience. The foreign press were given room aboard one of the vessels, allowing them to travel along with the colonists and report the entire

²⁸ Wright notes that 30,000 Italian and Libyan laborers were used in the preparation of land and construction of villages. Four such villages were constructed in Cyrenaica for the 1938 mass colonization project; Baracca, Battisti, D'Annunzio and Oberdan. Wright, *Libya*. 172-3. With regard to the villages in Tripolitania, Segrè states that six were constructed in Tripolitania in 1938: Bianchi, Giordani, Oliveti, Breviglieri, Crispi and Gioda. Segrè, *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya*, 117. For a concise examination of the architecture of the agricultural towns and their organization, see Federico Cresti, "Edilizia ed urbanistica nella colonizzazione agraria della Libia (1922-1940)," *Storia Urbana* XI, 40 (July-September 1987): 189-231. See also: Von Henneberg, *The Construction of Fascist Libya: Modern Colonial Architecture and Urban Planning in Italian North Africa (1922-1943)*, 359-412.

²⁹ For a detailed discussion of the event of the *ventimila*, see Segrè, *Italo Balbo: A Fascist Life*. 313-16. The entire process of departure was organized with military precision. Not only was each family identified and given clear directions at every step in this process, but the various celebrations relating to their departure were meticulously planned. See "Trasferimento in Libia di famiglie coloniche." ACS-PCM 1937-39 - 17.4.6001 After a brief ceremony upon their arrival in Tripoli, the colonists were allowed to wander throughout the city. Their transportation to their homes was carefully organized, as each truck was given a number and a name that identified the town of destination. Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*, 315-17.

event.³⁰ The propaganda in Italy was symbolically initiated by Balbo, who in an article *Nuova Antologia* from November 1938, described these colonists as "an army of rural infantry, who take stable possession of the land, already conquered by our armies and destined to be made fertile with our work."³¹ An equally compelling example of this publicity campaign is a special issue of *Libia* magazine from 1938, whose graphic presentation gives visual form to the political policies of Balbo for the consolidation of Libya as Italy's fourth shore. [Figure 3.b-4]

In addition to the incorporation of Libya into metropolitan Italy, the Balbo administration pursued a seemingly contrary strategy of preserving and reinforcing the indigenous culture of this region. This *politica indigena* was intended to improve the relationship of the Italian authorities to the local populations and thus incorporate them into the Fascist colonial project.³² This policy was a calculated attempt to counteract the negative impression, still lingering the international community, of the reconquest of the Libyan colonies during the Governorship of Pietro Badoglio. Although the more benevolent approach of Balbo was made possible by General Graziani's campaigns in Cyrenaica, the imprisonment of some 90,000 *sottomessi* in concentration camps and the death of approximately one third

³⁰ Segrè notes that Balbo made himself available to news reporters throughout this event. Correspondents from Germany, England, the United States, France, Poland, Switzerland and Spain were aboard. *Ibid.*, p. 317. Of the material published on this event by the foreign press, of particular note are Martin Moore, *Fourth Shore: Italy's Mass Colonization of Libya* (London, 1940); and Herbert Bailey, "The Colonization of Libya," *Fortnightly Review* 145 (February 1939): 197-204. The manipulative aspects of this event was not lost on Bailey, who stated "from the time that we left Genoa until the colonists entered their new homes, we lived in an unreal world of propaganda."

³¹ Balbo. "Coloni in Libia," *Nuova Antologia* (November 1, 1938): 3-13. In addition to presenting the dimension of the "ventimila" as imperial politics, this article outlines in very specific terms both the history of colonization in Libya and the specific policy that supported this particular effort.

³² The term *politica indigena*, although it existed before the Governorship of Balbo, did not come into common use until that time, and particularly after the Italian conquest of Ethiopia in May 1936 when it was commonly used in colonial journals. For example, in *Rivista delle Colonie*, put out by the Ministero delle Colonie, it only appears in September of 1936 as a regular feature in the summary portion of the magazine. In this regard it is a term that carries with it some of the racial connotations that go with the Italian colonization process in East Africa.

of these refugees was something that caused irreparable harm to the reputation of the Italians in the larger Islamic world.³³ The escape of some important members of the Sanussi rebels to Egypt, Tunisia and other surrounding countries allowed the visibility of this resistance against the Fascist government in Libya to continue in the foreign press – an activity which the Italian authorities paid a considerable amount of attention.³⁴

Beginning as early as 1931 the *Ministero degli Affari Esteri* began to monitor the Islamic press through the Italian Consulates in locations like Damascus, Jerusalem and Cairo. These activities were undertaken in response to the concerns expressed by the *Ministero delle Colonie* during final stages of the Italian campaign to pacify Cyrenaica.³⁵ These practices continued throughout this period, and were conducted in conjunction with efforts by the Fascist government to create its own favorable propaganda and silence these negative reports. This counter-propaganda effort was intended to undermine what were seen as false accounts of the arrogance and injustice of the Italian government, and the poor economic and living conditions of the local populations.³⁶ Despite these efforts, reports critical of the Italian colonial

³³ Del Boca gives a detailed account of the concentration camps in Cyrenaica, during which he estimates that around 100,000 were rounded up in the Jabal region, only around 90,000 making it to the camps. At the end of this period of imprisonment (the last camp closing in September of 1933) only around 60,000 people returned to their land. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo al Gheddafi*, 179-89.

³⁴ In an article on the question of the Libyan resistance, Habib Wadaa Al-Hesnawi states: "an vital part of these people were able to save themselves from the Italian concentration camps, from the prisons and from the hangings, emigrated from the country and continued the struggle against the fascist arrogance, by means of associations formed by Libyans in exile and the publication of books and pamphlets that continued to be published, even after the end of the second world war." Al-Hesnawi, "Note sulla politica coloniale italiana verso gli arabi libici (1911-1943)," in *Le guerre coloniali del fascismo*, 31-48.

³⁵ The files that pertain to what was called the "Campagna islamica antitaliana" can be found in the ASMAE, Affari Politici. See also: "Tripolitania - Voti di protesta dell'Associazione Syrienne Arabe contro l'eccessivo rigore del Governo contro le donne, i fanciulli, i vecchi, ecc." ACS-PCM 1931-33 - 17.4.985. An avalanche of protests were received by the *Ministero degli Affari Esteri* after the death of el-Mukhtar in September of 1931. A general presentation of this campaign is provided in Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 222-32.

³⁶ In the case of one of prince Shekib Arslan – a Arab nationalist with considerable financial resources – various attempts were made to persuade him to stop his efforts. He eventually

authorities continued to appear throughout the Middle East well into the Governorship of Italo Balbo. One such example is an article entitled "News of Tripolitania that interests the Arab world," published in *Alif-Ba* of Damascus in June of 1934, where the author does not fail to remark that "the politics followed by Italy in Tripoli is the politics of submission and oppression."³⁷ These reports began to change in early 1935 in response to a program of clemency by the Balbo administration, who freed 130 political prisoners in Cyrenaica in January of that year. This shift in opinion is also due to the systematic effort by the Italian Consulates throughout the Middle East, to disseminate the news of such gestures of leniency.³⁸ Thus began a strategy of diffusing past problems with the local populations through a combination of direct engagement with these groups and attentiveness to the issue of propaganda.

The *politica indigena* of Balbo evolved into a combination of firm rule and carefully conceived gestures of reconciliation. In order to create a climate of mutual respect, Balbo met with leaders of various indigenous groups on matters of education, public assistance and religion. He also attempted to appease former dissidents through a program in 1936 for the restitution of personal goods and

became an important tool of the Italian side during the Ethiopian campaign. Ibid., p. 224-7. See also: ASMAE-AP. Libia, 8 (1933), fascicolo 8; and *Il Giamia as Islamia di Giaffa* (September 1933) ASMAE-MAI-2. 150/25. Fascicolo 116.

³⁷ Yasir el-Azm, "News of Tripolitania that interests the Arab world," *Alif-Ba* (Damascus), 6 & 7 June 1934. In speaking of the results of this approach, the author states "this politics has resulted in the disbanding of the active and strong tribes, so much so that today the oases are deserted." With regard to the cultural situation of the local populations the author remarks that "the Arab inhabitants have lost their nationality and their language in Tripoli; they do nothing but blindly imitate the foreigners."

³⁸ In January of 1935, Balbo freed 130 of 170 political prisoners in Cyrenaica – most of which had sentences of 20 to 30 years. In October of the same year the final 11 prisoners in Tripolitania were also freed. Del Boca. *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 237-8. A telegram from the *Consolato d'Italia* in Damascus to the *Ministero degli Affari Esteri*, dated February 9, 1935 states: "In conformity with the instructions sent by Your Excellency, this Office has not forgotten to give to the provisions of clemency recently prepared by S.E. Balbo, Governatore della Tripolitania, the greatest diffusion, both by way of the press, and with any other opportune means at its disposition." ASMAE-AP. Libia - 13 (1935). Fascicolo 2, Sottofascicolo 1.

property confiscated during the period of the concentration camps.³⁹ Balbo still maintained strict control of these populations, which he did not hesitate to punish for infractions that he regarded as either undermining the respect for Italian rule or morally dangerous. Moreover, these conciliatory gestures were not always effective, the program of demographic colonization being widely regarded in the Arab world as a threat to the economic and cultural survival of the local populations.⁴⁰ These political tactics were reinforced by a systematic propaganda effort – a campaign that reached new heights during the Balbo era. Not only was there an extensive reporting of the policies in favor of the Islamic populations, many of these gestures were themselves conceived of as a form of propaganda. With regard to publications, it is interesting to note that some were aimed at non-Italian speaking audiences, including the Arab populations in the Middle East and North Africa. Italy was equally attentive to other European colonial powers, publishing books like the French language *L'Italie pour les populations islamiques de l'Afrique italienne* in

³⁹ The approach of Balbo was largely due to the influence of Giuseppe Daodice, who was a colonial bureaucrat with experience in Cyrenaica prior to Balbo's arrival. Daodice's approach to colonial rule was based on a sense of justice and the intent to quicken the evolution and improvement of the local populations. Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*, 322. A meeting between Balbo and forty prominent leaders among the local populations was held in the Palazzo del Governo on September 13, 1935. As reported in *Agence d'Égypte et d'Orient*, this meeting was to "study important problems in favor of the Arab population." The decree of Balbo that allowed for the return of this property, from October 10, 1936, was published in *La Voix Indigène* (Constantine) on December 17. This policy was continued into 1937, in part due to Mussolini's visit to Libya in March of 1937. See: ASMAE-AP. Libia 17 (1937). Fascicolo 2.

⁴⁰ Segrè notes that despite the general policy of clemency, Balbo called for the execution of three Tuaregh soldiers who murdered their Italian commander – an punishment that was carried out in his presence and in that of indigenous chiefs and Italian military officers. Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*, 321. With regard to the economic impact of demographic colonization, in an article, entitled "A colloquium on the combat zone. The war of the Arabs for their liberty," that appeared in the journal *Al Ayam* on December 7, 1934, the author states: "The Italian government sends thousands of colonists each year, to whom they give the fertile terrain sequestered from their owners. Every day all of the economic, commercial, agricultural and industrial life is found in the hands of the colonists, and the indigenous population has no income with which to live." ASMAE-AP. Libia 13 (1935). Fascicolo 2.

1940, which presented the religious, educational, sanitary, economic and political initiatives for the Libyan populations.⁴¹

The most important propaganda event aimed at the Libyan populations was the voyage of Mussolini to Libya in March of 1937. This visit was a political gesture that was intended to convey the image of Mussolini as a protector of Islam. This objective was communicated in the numerous ceremonies that incorporated the local populations, such as the entrusting to Mussolini of the so-called "sword of Islam." This attempt to appease the Libyans was also evident in the speeches given by Mussolini during this visit, which spoke of "a new epoch in the history of Libya" which assures "peace, justice, well-being, and respect for the laws of the Prophet."⁴² This relationship was conveyed in the publicity material related to this voyage, which asserted that "the international politics of Fascist Italy in relation to the Muslim East has always been, without any deviation, a politics of friendship."⁴³ Not only was the visit of Mussolini in 1937 the most prominent event to give symbolic expression to the incorporation of the Libyan populations into the Fascist colonial project, it was also the clearest expression of the dilemma posed by the Italian approach to

⁴¹ An example of a publication aimed at the Arab populations is a brochure entitled "What Italy has done for Islam in its Colonies." Published through the direction of the Legazione d'Italia in Egypt, 5,000 copies of this brochure were produced for sale to a local audience. ASMAE - AP - Libia 17 (1937). Fascicolo 1, Sottofascicolo 1. See: *L'Italie pour les populations islamiques de l'Afrique italienne* (Roma: Società Editrice "Novissima," 1940).

⁴² The Visit of Mussolini to Libya also included numerous ceremonies that involved the Libyan populations. The ceremony of giving the "sword of Islam" to Mussolini, carried out in the plain of Bugara near Tripoli, comprised some 2,000 Libyan soldiers on horseback from all of the provinces of Libya. This speech is a recognition of the efforts on Italy's behalf during the war in Ethiopia: "After this proof, Fascist Italy intends to assure the Muslim populations of Libya and Ethiopia peace, justice, well-being, respect for the laws of the Prophet, and in addition want to demonstrate its sympathy to Islam and to Muslims of the entire world." "Speech by Mussolini to the Muslims of Tripoli," March 18, 1937. *Il Duce in Libia*, 47.

⁴³ "La politica islamica dell'Italia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 4. This article, which was given out to foreign and Italian journalists, outlines the history of Italy's relation to Islam beginning with the original Italian defeat at Massaua in 1886. Its interest was thus more with the relation of Italy to the larger Islamic world. Explaining the repression of rebellion in Libya as pertaining to a small segment of the local populations, this article claims that Libya was "the only authentic oasis of tranquillity and peace of Islamic population in all the Mediterranean basin."

indigenous politics. While the intention was to preserve the local culture, this effort was framed within the limits and according to the perspective of the Italians. This problem was expressed in more general terms by Aldobrandino Malvezzi in his book *La politica indigena nelle Colonie* of 1933, as the resolution between European civilization and indigenous culture. Rejecting the idea that either of these had to be dominant, Malvezzi offers a hybrid solution – "creating for these people a condition that permits the evolution of a new civilization, resulting from an adequate combination of living and dynamic elements of both their traditions and ours."⁴⁴

The problem of the relationship between the local traditions and European civilization is expressed in a presentation made by Italo Balbo to the *Convegno Volta* in October 1938. Entitled "La politica sociale verso gli Arabi della Libia," it was one of the most important and prominent statements on this question made during this period. Although recognizing the need for a "vigilant defense of the manners" of the Libyans, Balbo does not hesitate to speak of the eradication of "those old retrograde customs that oppose themselves to the social evolution of these same populations."⁴⁵ This was particularly true for religious practices, which were tolerated "as much as they are vital and derive from the laws of the Prophet", and prohibited if they were understood as "deviations of religious fanaticism." Included in this second category was the Sanussi sect, which was regarded as a religious order that operated under a political motivation, and the practice of fakirism

⁴⁴ This book is one of the first publications in which the term 'indigenous politics' is used, providing an overview of this question from a European perspective. This author identifies the problem as the "divergence of the aspirations of the natives and the application of the European political system." Malvezzi, *La politica indigena nelle Colonie* (Padova: Casa Editrice Dott. A. Milani, 1933), 343-47, 375. This view is considerably more liberal than that practiced by Balbo in Libya.

⁴⁵ This conference – which had 400 delegates – was one of two major events held in Tripoli in 1938, the other being a conference on Tropical and Sub-tropical agriculture, which had 100 visitors. Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*, 302. This conference was held by the *Reale Accademia d'Italia*, the most prestigious academic body in Italy, and was on a theme of Africa. Balbo, "La politica sociale fascista verso gli arabi della Libia," in *Convegno di scienze morali e storiche. 4-11 ottobre 1938-XVI. Tema: l'Africa. Vol. 1*, 746.

– both of which were outlawed by the Italian administration in Libya.⁴⁶ The *politica indigena* of Balbo was thus a double movement – it allowed the Libyans to maintain their customs and religious practices while "transforming the social structure of the population" to conform to a modern, western viewpoint.⁴⁷ This meant that while the Libyans were allowed, within certain limits and within the confines of religion and the family, to practice according to their traditions, all larger forms of social and political organization were conceived according to the dictates of the colonial administration. Moreover, even explicitly private religious institutions that were allowed to continue, like the Sharia tribunals, were subject to considerable supervision and control.⁴⁸

The incorporation of the Libyan populations into metropolitan Italy proposed in the *politica indigena* of Balbo was to be undertaken in a selective manner. The Governor argued that there was a considerable difference between the Arab-Berber populations of the coastal regions – who "possessed undeniable characteristics of

⁴⁶ Ibid., 738-9. The support of the Italians of the religion of Islam is a perfect example of their approach to indigenous politics. These practices were supported in so far as they conformed to the Italian interpretation of what was correct and proper. As such, any so-called "primitive" practice like fakirism that was "condemned as contrary to the religion" by the Islamic religious leaders, was prohibited. With similar arguments, the Italians asserted that the Sanussi "transported a conflict of a political nature onto religious terrain", and as such their sect was outlawed. These restrictions had to do with both maintaining control of the local populations, and eliminating the possibility of Arab nationalist movements making any progress in Libya. For the legislation pertaining to the outlaw of these practices, see "Decreto che vieta in Libia cerimonie biasimevoli di alcune confraternite religiose musulmane." Benghazi, 16 June 1935. ASMAE-MAI-2. Posizione 150/39. Fascicolo 174.

⁴⁷ The exact statement is as follows: "The work pursued by the Fascist Government in favor of the Arabs is therefore of that political and moral importance to transform the social structure of the population; of creating the necessary conditions for a more direct participation of this population in our civilian life." Balbo, "La politica sociale fascista verso gli arabi della Libia," in *Convegno di scienze morali e storiche. 4-11 ottobre 1938-XVI. Tema: l'Africa. Vol. 1*, 735.

⁴⁸ Although the Libyans were allowed to practice their religion, as previously noted this was only those religious practices that were deemed by the Italians to conform to Islamic tradition. The Libyans under Balbo were subject to Islamic Law in so far as this applied to personal matters such as family law, inheritance, religious ritual. For these questions the Sharia tribunals presided. With regard to the Italian control of the Sharia tribunals Balbo notes that a Decreto Governatoriale of December 4, 1937 regulated the nomination of the "Cadi" and the scope of these tribunals. Ibid., 739.

nobility, of intelligence and of moral breadth" – and the "Negroid" races of the southern military zone – who "need nothing other than material well-being and assistance." It was on the basis of this distinction that the administration of this colony was divided into two regions – one metropolitan, the other "distinctly colonial."⁴⁹ This difference was extended to the legal status of these groups. While both would enjoy the benefit of the same laws "in the field of justice and discipline," only the Muslim populations of the coastal region were deemed capable of expressing their "spiritual and intellectual demands" in "the ethical, political and social realm." As such, only the Libyans of Arab and Berber descent would benefit from the creation of laws for their "moral elevation and civilian evolution", and thus enjoy limited participation in the sphere of civic life and politics.⁵⁰ The discourse of *politica indigena* in Libya during the Balbo era thus represents a modern racial discourse. These policies apply scientific thought to politics by mobilizing ideas about the categorization of cultural advancement along racial lines from fields like anthropology and ethnography. Balbo was not alone in this tendency, as the question of indigenous politics in the later 1930s was increasingly linked to the question of race. After the conquest of Ethiopia in 1936 there was heightened pressure, particularly in East Africa, to "avoid any hybridism that may underscore...

⁴⁹ Balbo describes the populations of the coastal region as "of superior race, influenced by Mediterranean civilization, capable of assimilating the spirit of our laws and evolving on a more elevated plane of social life." Much less is said of the populations in the desert regions of Libya, other than their inability to assimilate into metropolitan society. Ibid., 734. This division is between the four coastal provinces of Tripoli, Misratah, Benghazi and Derna and the "Zona militare del Sud" – which would always have a colonial status.

⁵⁰ Balbo states that on the basis of this racial, geographical and cultural difference of these regions their rule would be different. With regard to the common rule of "justice and discipline", this was seen to relate more strictly to "economic well-being and protective assistance." The response of the populations to the "paternalistic care of the Government" was, according to Balbo, "the most absolute submission, the most complete faith." With regard to this second category of rights, reserved for the Arab-Berber populations, he states that "their race and tradition cannot remain statically relegated to the colonial stage." Ibid., 734-5. The participation of Libyans in politics primarily consisted in working in the colonial administration. After the citizenship laws of January 1939, they could be a mayor of an Arab community. Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*, 329-30.

the gray area between the function of command and the function of execution" – an approach that is based on a distinct separation of the metropolitan and indigenous peoples.⁵¹

Although the *politica indigena* of Balbo did not explicitly offer itself as a political theory which called for a separation of the races, its implementation in many cases resulted in just such a separation being made. These policies were part of a conscious program by the Balbo administration to create a set of parallel organizations and practices for the local populations. In the case of religious institutions, this policy is evident in the creation of the *Consiglio provinciale per l'amministrazione dei beni Aquaf* – a charitable organization directed by the local populations that was responsible for the construction and administration of all Muslim religious facilities like mosques, libraries and schools. Due to the collaboration of this organization and the Italian municipal authorities, twenty-nine different mosques and religious buildings were restored, reorganized or newly constructed in the city of Tripoli alone.⁵² One such restoration project carried out under the direction of the *R. Soprintendenza dei Monumenti* of Tripolitania is the Mosque of Ahmed Pasha Qarahmanli in Tripoli – the largest and most well known religious monument in the city. Completed in 1934, this project was conducted

⁵¹ Renzo Sertoli Salis, "Problemi indigeni sul piano dell'Impero," in *Atti del Terzo Congresso di Studi Coloniali. Vol. II*, 112. The author makes the source of this attempt to "avoid confusions of race" quite clear, stating: "with the conquest of Empire, Fascism has negated a fundamental premise of the colonial politics of the past... that of the inevitability of the crossing of races, and has overcome... the problem through those provisions that are known to everyone."

⁵² The *Beni Aquaf* are essentially donations given by individuals to the larger Muslim community for religious institutions and activities. While this organization had already been legally recognized by the Italians in 1917, it was under the Balbo administration that this group was reorganized and given more support. For a detailed description of this institution, see "Institutions musulmanes," in *L'Italie pour les populations islamiques*, 29-32. While many of the projects were a collaboration between the Italian administration and the "Amministrazione Aquaf", only nineteen had some involvement by this group. In addition to these projects, twelve others were undertaken in the province of Tripoli, fifteen in the province of Misratah, fifteen in the province of Benghazi, sixteen in the province of Derna and eight in the "Zona militare del Sud." See "L'oeuvre de l'Italie dans le domaine religieux," in *L'Italie pour les populations islamiques*, 16-28.

according to the most advanced standards available at that time, the aim of the project being to remove layers of recent additions so as to return this building to its "original" state. [Figure 3.b-5] This project in particular, and the restoration effort in general, is coincident with an intense tourist interest in Muslim architecture – something that is underscored by the fact that most of these buildings were classified as a national monuments.⁵³ This historical interest was also manifested in new constructions, like the Mosque of Sciara Bu-Harida, which was completed by the municipality of Tripoli in 1937. As an abstract re-interpretation of traditional mosques, this project raises the problem of the relationship between historical preservation and modern innovations. [Figure 3.b-6]

A second series of programs in favor of the local populations was in the area of education. As much as these initiatives represent progress from previous Governorships, the educational opportunities were in four narrowly delimited domains – religion, family life, craft production and agriculture. In this regard, this system would seem to concretize stereotypes about the religious devotion of Muslims, their patient dedication to menial forms of labor, and the domestic role of their women. The tactics employed in these educational programs were multiple, as they included reinforcing existing institutions and creating new ones.⁵⁴ New

⁵³ For a detailed discussion of the restoration of this building see Luigi Turba, "La Moschea dei Caramanli a Tripoli," *Le Vie d'Italia* XL, 8 (August 1934): 583-91. The author notes that the restoration of the building included the domes, walls and floors, involving repairs and restoration of stucco, marble metal, wood and ceramic tile. The materials for the ceramic tile work was executed by the *R. Scuole di Ceramica* of Faenza according to models derived from the site. Some of the restoration work was involved in removing layers of varnish and other materials that were added over the original surfaces. This author notes that all of the mosques in Tripoli were classified as national monuments. See also: Mario Corsi, "Le moschee di Tripoli," 96-113; and Salvatore Aurigemma, *Tripoli e le sue opere d'arte*. Milano-Roma: Luigi Alfieri & Co., 1927.

⁵⁴ With regard to the role of Muslim women as understood by the Italian authorities, this is not significantly different from that determined by Fascist government in Italy for its own women. With overt campaigns to encourage large families women the role of women in Italy was seen as nothing other than domestic. See Victoria de Grazia, *How fascism ruled women: Italy, 1922-1945* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1992). For a general outline of the Italian strategies to education, see "L'oeuvre italienne dans le domaine scolaire," in *L'Italie pour les populations islamiques*, 44-8. The existing institutions that were supported by Balbo were the Koranic schools – which was the traditional form of religious education.

schools were almost exclusively in the area of primary education – something which unquestionably limited the educational opportunities for the Libyans. One of the few exceptions to this emphasis was the *Scuola Superiori di cultura islamica*, which was located in Tripoli. Instituted by legislation passed by Balbo in 1935, this school provided education in judicial and religious doctrine of Islam so as to produce the next generation of Libyan functionaries for the Italian colonial administration.⁵⁵ The design of this school, by Florestano di Fausto, is a literal reenactment of the vernacular religious constructions found in the city of Tripoli. [Figure 3.b-7]

The other exceptions to the predominance of primary education for the local populations were within the area of work and domestic related instruction. These were the *Scuola musulmana di mestieri ed arti indigene* – which provided education related to artisanry and agriculture – and the *Regia Scuola Femminile di istruzione e di lavoro* – which dealt with the delicate issue of the education of Muslim women.⁵⁶ Located in a new facility designed by Di Fausto at the Suq al-Mushir in Tripoli, the first of these schools was a reorganization of an existing institution, providing training in a diverse array of indigenous arts – from goldsmiths and silversmiths, to ceramics and weaving. Instruction and training in agriculture was conducted at an affiliated institution, the *Ricovero-orfanotrofito Hassun Pascià*

⁵⁵ According to the *Ministero dell'Africa Italiana*, primary schools in 1940 had just over 43,000 students, out of which approximately 14,000 were Italian and foreigners. In public primary education in the four provinces, there were 89 Italian schools, 107 Muslim schools and 32 Jewish schools. There were also 629 Koranic schools, with a total of just under 13,500 students and 72 private religious schools for the Jewish population. In "Relazione sulla politica svolta dall'Italia in favore delle popolazioni indigene dei suoi territori africani." ASMAE-MAI-5. Pacco 12. Fascicolo 172. For an outline of the purpose of the *Scuole superiori di cultura islamica*, see Balbo, "La politica sociale fascista verso gli arabi della Libia." in *Convegno di scienze morali e storiche. 4-11 ottobre 1938-XVI. Tema: l'Africa. Vol. 1*, 742-3. For the legislative deliberations and presentation see ASMAE-CSC-19 (1935). N. 30. April 15, 1935 - "Istituzione in Tripoli di una Medresa."

⁵⁶ Balbo outlines these programs in general terms, stating that these two initiatives provide opportunities beyond the base level of education. The education of women was somewhat controversial among religious leaders. It was explained as part of the elevation of the civic life of the family. Balbo, "La politica sociale fascista verso gli arabi della Libia." in *Convegno di scienze morali e storiche. 4-11 ottobre 1938-XVI. Tema: l'Africa. Vol. 1*, 741-2.

Caramanli – whose programs were related to the broader support of the agricultural development of Libya by the Italian colonial authorities.⁵⁷ The program of education of Muslim women was comprised of a series of separate institutions located in major towns, such as Tripoli, Homs, Misratah, Benghazi and Derna – the intention being to prepare them for their role in family life. The courses of study included general instruction in subjects such as languages, religion, domestic economy and hygiene, and specific training in domestic skills such as cooking, sewing and weaving. This program is a formalization of the traditional roles of Muslim women as they were understood by the Italians, with some gestures made to introduce a measure of progress into the traditional family.⁵⁸

The educational programs in the *Scuola musulmana di mestieri ed arti indigene* were important to the organization of labor in the colonies, given the close connection of this institution to the industry of craft production. Along with agriculture, the indigenous arts were one of the two major sectors of the economy in which the colonial administration under Balbo attempted to encourage the participation of the local populations.⁵⁹ The measures enacted had to do with

⁵⁷ For a detailed examination of the issue of artisanry in Libya in general and its professional instruction in particular, see Guglielmo Quadrotta, "Appunti sull'Artigianato Libico," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*. 9-12. The intention was to strengthen the instruction within specific trades. The women were integrated into this institution in a section on weaving. Overseen by Italian instructors, this school provided education in history, design, materials and techniques and financial and commercial questions. The emphasis was on the commercial dimension of this work, with links to the annual *Fiera di Tripoli* and the sponsorship of design competitions. This agricultural school was the educational component of the program to extend provisions to the local populations in the field of agriculture. See Balbo, "La politica sociale fascista verso gli Arabi della Libia." 741-2.

⁵⁸ Segrè notes that there were fourteen such schools for women in Libya by 1940, with almost 1,200 students. Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*, 328. For a more detailed outline of the curriculum of this school and the general perception of Muslim women by the Italians, see "L'Evoluzione delle condizioni della donna musulmana in Libia." 1-8. ASMAE-MAI-5. Pacco 14. Fascicolo 182. With regard to the instruction of women in this school, this education was seen to represent a "breath of civilization" that could influence the evolution of this institution. In this regard the "modern" sciences of hygiene and economy were key elements in rendering traditional ways more contemporary. It is worth noting that language instruction was in Arabic and Italian.

⁵⁹ Upon taking office in 1934, Balbo was aware of the importance the artisanal industries to the colonial economy and the "necessity for its artistic and economic discipline." As for the broader

organizing this industry according to the Fascist corporatist model. Although this effort began as early as 1934, it was with the creation of the *Istituto Fascista degli Artigiani della Libia* in 1935 that the indigenous sector of this industry came under this structure – providing technical, economic, commercial and social assistance to its members. As with other corporatist structures introduced into the colonial economy, this organization controlled the labor force by instituting a system of permits for each company and licenses for each member.⁶⁰ Although the *Istituto Fascista degli Artigiani della Libia* was intended for both Italian and indigenous artisanry, a clear distinction was made in the potential contribution of these two groups. In the case of Italian artisanry in Libya, it was naturally seen as an extension of these industries in Italy, with a greater capacity for artistic innovation, technical developments and economic output.⁶¹ The exact opposite was the case for the indigenous part of this industry, as the call to improve techniques was in the interest of recuperating past traditions that had been lost or abandoned. This emphasis was related to two areas of concern in the indigenous arts; the impact of mass produced

social value, it was argued that: "Governatore Balbo considered the rebirth of Libyan artisanry one of the ways of education and betterment of the populations of the colony, because these categories, both National and indigenous, can feel in their trade that nobility of artisanal creation that is unknown to many." Quadrotta, "Appunti sull'Artigianato Libico," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 6.

⁶⁰ The organization of all sectors of the colonial economy according to this model began as early as April 1934 and was formalized by April of 1935 with legislation passed by the Italian government. The *Istituto Fascista degli Artigiani della Libia* was formed in March of 1936 with legislation being passed in November 1938. Its goal was to "promote and develop the economic activity and technical and artistic improvement of Libyan artisanry, both National and indigenous, also providing for the selection, collection and trade of the products of Libyan artisanry." *Ibid.*, 13-14. For a copy of this legislation, see: "Costituzione dell'Istituto Fascista dell'Artigianato della Libia," 25 November 1938. ASMAE-CSC-27 (1938) n. 135. A permit of practice was required to be filed with this group, as was a trade license – which was an attestation of the qualifications of an individual artisan in specific fields. *Ibid.*, 27-9.

⁶¹ In an article published in *Rassegna Economica dell'Africa Italiana*, Quadrotta argues: "The National artisanry can contribute to the creation of that autonomous, organic Libyan industry, coordinated with the National one, that corresponds to the realizations of the Regime on the Mediterranean coast, with facilities that do not transform the artisanal character of the work, but perfect it, and form active, efficient small companies which... assure in Libya a perfect economic equilibrium in the independence of its work." See Quadrotta, "Sviluppo e realizzazioni dell'artigianato in Libia," *Rassegna Economica dell'Africa Italiana* XXV, 7 (July 1937): 952-67.

goods and the potential loss of traditional techniques – something for which a considerable research effort was made in all regions of this colony.⁶² The dilemma was that, while there was a desire to improve the indigenous industries according to modern and Fascist exigencies, this could not be conducted at the expense of the perceived function that these industries performed by being a register for the authentic traditions of each region.

Although a much later development, the Balbo administration was also active in the stimulation of the indigenous agricultural economy. These programs were largely compensatory for the efforts made on behalf of the Italian agricultural colonists – a process that had effectively claimed all of the best farmland and disrupted any existing patterns of indigenous farming.⁶³ While these initiatives were initially in the form of subsidies for Libyan entrepreneurs, by 1939 they were expanded to include the creation of a series of agricultural centers that more directly paralleled the mechanisms made available to the Italian colonists. One such example is the town of Fiorita in eastern Libya which consisted of a modest series of buildings that included public services and a mosque, designed according to an abstract

⁶² Quadrotta asserts that: "the indigenous artisanry must ever more perfect its work, abandoning the latest forms of bad taste and must better equip itself for exportation and the creation those products... that, responding to the requests of the public and the traditional indigenous practice, integrate the Libyan production in the branches of activity that were abandoned by the absence of good artisans and economic reasons." Ibid., 952. The effort to improve indigenous crafts was supported by a survey by the *Istituto Fascista degli Artigiani della Libia* of the techniques and traditions in all regions of Libya. The implication is that the artisans themselves were not capable of judging which techniques were an authentic part of their traditions. Mass production, this was both rejected and deemed to be dangerous in relation to the more costly products of hand production. Quadrotta, "Appunti sull'Artigianato Libico," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 6-8, 16-24.

⁶³ While the Italian farms did well, this had a negative effect on the agricultural practices of the local populations, such as the loss of their traditional grazing areas. In Tripolitania a combination of oasis gardening, dry farming and pastoral use of land was disrupted. This led to the local populations taking the alternative of wage labor and living in urban settings. Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*, 325. Balbo explains the idea behind this program as: "this provision will help to fasten nuclei of populations to the earth before now semi-nomad, and will allow for the introduction of new concepts in the Arab agricultural production." Balbo, "La politica sociale verso gli arabi della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 737-8.

vernacular vocabulary. [Figure 3.b-8] However, projects such as these were more of a gesture of propaganda than a genuine economic proposition. Given their status as a mirror image of the Italian demographic villages, they conformed to neither the patterns of settlement nor the farming practices of the indigenous peoples and, as such, failed to achieve any significant results.⁶⁴

The *politica indigena* of Balbo also included the creation of youth organizations for the Libyan populations. The foundation of the *Gioventù Araba del Littorio* (GAL) in August of 1935 provided for the education of young Arabs in a structure that was analogous to that of the *Gioventù Italiana del Littorio* (GIL) – the intention being to better integrate the local populations into the Fascist colonial project.⁶⁵ The GAL was a voluntary organization for Arab youths of twelve to eighteen years old who had been educated in Italian schools. It provided cultural instruction and pre-military training under the direction of Fascist militia officers. Although the success of this organization has been questioned by some historians, there were already over 5,300 members by September 1936. According a letter written by Balbo to Mussolini on the creation of the GAL, its aims would seem to be purely that of indoctrination and propaganda – "to accomplish *a work of penetration of the indigenous masses*, obtaining disciplined subjects from its new

⁶⁴ See: Federico Cresti. "Edilizia ed urbanistica nella colonizzazione agraria della Libia (1922-1940)," 220-25. These towns were supported by the legislation of February 13, 1939, which called for the creation of Muslim agricultural centers in support of the agricultural efforts of these people. They were in operation for too short a time to really determine their success. The few indications that exist suggest that they were not regarded as a serious proposition by either the Libyans or the Italians. Segrè, *Fourth Shore. The Italian Colonization of Libya*, 144-57.

⁶⁵ An interesting relation of the idea of this group is presented in an article by V. Branzoli-Zappi in *Il Lavoro Fascista*. The author states: "military instruction is not the only scope of this new institution, in which in which particular care will be taken for cultural propaganda intended to provoke a mentality more adherent to the latest demands of Italian and Fascist life in this young generation, already educated by us." Branzoli-Zappi, "La "Gioventù araba del Littorio" nuova ardita realizzazione coloniale del Fascismo." *Il Lavoro Fascista* (11 August 1935):1.

generations, that are more interested in us, proud of belonging to a nation that returns to dominate with the sign of the Fascist party."⁶⁶

The most important and ambitious policy initiative undertaken by the Balbo administration in favor of the indigenous populations was the attempt to make full Italian citizenship available to the Libyans. This policy is a poignant example of the impossibility of resolving the relationship between the incorporation of this colony into a modern Western nation and the maintenance of its indigenous customs and practices. This initiative began in December of 1935 with an appeal by Balbo to Mussolini for the approval of a temporary measure for granting citizenship to the Libyans and some foreign nationals in conjunction with the administrative incorporation of this colony into Italy.⁶⁷ This proposition almost immediately met with considerable opposition from the *Ministero delle Colonie*, which noted "the irreconcilability on the part of Muslim religious law and the profession of Islamism with a European citizenship." Using the French colony of Tunisia as an example, it was argued that this concession could cause grave consequences within the Arab community in Libya, in addition to fueling protests within the larger Muslim world.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ The law which pertains to the constitution of this group was Decreto Governatoriale 29 giugno 1935, serie A. n. 282. See *Bollettino Ufficiale del Governo della Libia*. 16 September 1935 n. 26. Membership in this organization was limited to those educated in Italian schools and deemed to be loyal and faithful to the Italian presence in the colonies. The regular meetings of these groups included instruction in the fields of Italian culture, physical education and hygiene. They were also involved in special activities such as annual camps, sporting events and propaganda. With regard to membership, this document lists 1,338 in Tripoli province, 2,202 in Misratah, 915 in Benghazi and 863 in Derna - a total of 5,318 in 45 units. "Cenni sulla costituzione e sul funzionamento del G.A.L." ASMAE-MAI.AP-92. Fascicolo 302. With regard to the success of this effort, Segrè states "there is little evidence... that GAL succeeded in its chief aim: to transform its members into fervent young Fascists." Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*, 328. See letter from Balbo to Mussolini, dated June 3, 1935. ASMAE-MAI.AP-92. Fascicolo 302.

⁶⁷ Letter from Italo Balbo to Benito Mussolini, 11 December 1935 - ASMAE-AP-91. Fascicolo 291. The main outlines of this proposal are that it would only be temporary in nature (two years), and would be done after the annexation of Libya's four provinces in Italy.

⁶⁸ The argument against this provision was provided by Professor Alfonso Nallino, a member of the *Accademia d'Italia* and expert on Islamic law. In a report on behalf of *Ministro delle Colonie* dated January 1 1936, his two major points are: "1. The irreconcilability on the part of Muslim religious law and the profession of Islamism with a European citizenship; and 2. The impossibility, in our interest, of disregarding the reflections that our provision regarding the

Although these objections blocked the passage this proposal, it was revived immediately following the visit of Mussolini to Libya in 1937, at which time the *Ministero delle Colonie* suggested reexamining the issue. This process eventually led to the creation of a *cittadinanza italiana speciale* for the Libyan populations.⁶⁹

This new citizenship status for the Libyans came in to effect in January of 1939 in a provision that was part of the same legislation as the annexation of the four coastal provinces of this colony into the Kingdom of Italy.⁷⁰ The creation of a *cittadinanza italiana speciale* meant that the local populations could participate in fascist organizations, the military and, in a limited way, in politics. Although these new rights represented a greater recognition of the Libyans by the Italian government, this new status had validity only within the territorial limits of Libya. Moreover, in order to apply for this special status all rights to full citizenship were lost.⁷¹ While this law thus incorporated Libya into the "greater Italy," it meant that Libya now had a dual identity – a metropolitan one for Italians and a colonial one for

Muslim population has in the other Islamic countries, neighboring and distant." Nallino notes that in Tunisia, the French attempt to assimilate the Muslim populations caused a serious problems— these people being excluded from the Muslim community, even in death. He states that the personal statute of Muslim law could not be renounced, and was against Italian laws in areas of marriage, particularly in the practice of polygamy. See: ASMAE-AP-91. Fascicolo 291.

⁶⁹ In a letter dated May 3, 1937 and sent to the *Presidente del Consiglio di Stato*, Alessandro Lessona outlines the basic issues involved, asking for additional study of this question. In this letter, the need to re-open this question is clearly seen within the context of Mussolini's recent trip, during which he had made promises to reward the Libyans for their support of Italy during the war with Ethiopia. ASMAE-AP-91. Fascicolo 291.

⁷⁰ For a detailed examination of this piece of legislation and the issues involved see Ambrosini, "La condizione giuridica dei libici dall'occupazione all'avvento del Fascismo," 175-95. Regio Decreto Legge N. 70 declared that "the four provinces of Libya will become an integral part of the territory of the Kingdom of Italy, according to the judicial regulations responding to the special conditions of the region and to the diversity of religion of the inhabitants." Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 279-80.

⁷¹ This new citizenship was a modified version of the previous provision from 1934, which provided for: 1. Guarantee of individual liberty; 2. The inviolability of the home; 3. Inviolability of property; 4. Right to compete for civic jobs in the colonies; 5. Right to hold a profession in Libya. In addition to these, the law of 1939 added: 1. The right to bear arms in the military; 2. The right to belong to the "Associazione musulmana del Littorio; 3. The right to have a military career; 4. The right to take the job of a Podestà (mayor) of a Libyan community; 5. The right to exercise directive functions in a syndical organization. Ambrosini, "La condizione giuridica dei libici dall'occupazione all'avvento del Fascismo," 188.

the Libyans. In the end, few of the local populations availed themselves of this opportunity, the majority remaining resistant to their assimilation by the Italian authorities.⁷² This debate over the question of citizenship underscores the conflicted nature of Italy's relation to its colonial subjects. Even though Balbo achieved his goal of creating a "fourth shore" for his own people, and made efforts to integrate the Libyans into this new situation, they clearly had a secondary status. Despite Libya's metropolitan status, the "natives" remained carefully contained within the colonial frame of the Fascist authorities.

The *politica indigena* of Balbo, which called for the modernization of Libya and the preservation of its indigenous culture, was closely tied its tourist "valorization." The construction of a modern infrastructure of roads and public services undertaken during this period provided the necessary preconditions for the development of an efficient tourist system in this colony. In a similar manner, the restoration of historical sites that pertained to the local populations and the cultivation of "native" cultural events greatly enhanced the tourist experience. The intersection of the tourist discourse with the more general improvement of the colonial context was symbolically expressed in the Escursione Nazionale organized by the TCI in Libya in April of 1937 – an event that was reported in an article published in *Le Vie d'Italia*. As a measure of the significance of the newly opened *strada litoranea*, one group of participants began in Tripoli heading east to Benghazi while a second took an equal and opposite itinerary, visiting virtually all of the significant historical sites from the Tunisian border to that of Egypt.⁷³ A gesture

⁷² After much fanfare only 2,500 Libyans made the application for citizenship – this was of a total population of 500,000. Most of these people were government functionaries who went through the process as a sort of obligation to retain their job. Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*, 331.

⁷³ Carlo Bonardi, "L'avvenire turistico della Libia," *Le Vie d'Italia* XLIII, 6 (June 1937): 434-7. This excursion was called the "visita della regione costiera della Libia." The first group (27 March to 11 April) traveled from Palermo to Tripoli returning via Benghazi to Siracusa. The second (1 - 16 April) arrived in Benghazi from Siracusa and returned to Siracusa via Tripoli.

of propaganda not unlike the recent inauguration of this coastal artery by Mussolini, this "Escursione" was meant to assert that with this new road, Libya was being organized for its future tourist demands. Similar arguments were made in *Le Vie d'Italia* for the arteries in the interior of Libya constructed during this period. One such example is an article entitled "L'autostrada del deserto libico," which states that "the highway from Tripoli to Ghadames represents the most beautiful way of tourist penetration of our Mediterranean colony."⁷⁴

The considerable financial investment made in the improvement of the road network by the Balbo administration was not an isolated gesture. The creation of a paved system of highways designed according to the most modern standards was undertaken in conjunction with a substantial program for the construction of new tourist facilities that was initiated in the first days of Balbo's Governorship. In 1934 four new hotels began construction and two others were renovated, all under the direction of the colonial administration. These projects included the luxurious *Albergo "Uaddan"* and the more modest *"Mehari"* in Tripoli, the *"Rumia"* in Jefren, the *Albergo "Nalut"* and the renovation of the *"Ain el-Fras"* in Ghadames.⁷⁵ It was during this same period that the project for the *strada litoranea* was being planned

The first group comprised approximately thirty members of the TCI, with similar numbers for the second. The voyage on land, which was over 2,400 kilometers, was using the so-called Saharan motor coaches. Other than the cities of Benghazi and Tripoli, this excursion visited the following towns and archeological sites, from west to east: Zliten, Zuwarah, Sabrata, Leptis Magna, Misratah, Sirt, Tolmeita, Cyrene, Apollonia, Derna and Tobruk. In addition some agricultural settlements were visited in Cyrenaica (Luigi Razza, Beda Littoria, Luigi di Savoia, Giovanni Berta), as were the regions of the Gharyan (Tripolitania) and the Jabal (Cyrenaica). *I sessant'anni del Touring Club Italiano*. 315.

⁷⁴ M.A. Loschi, "L'autostrada del deserto libico," *Le Vie d'Italia* XLII, 8 (August 1936): 529-37. The author argues that while with this new artery "the romantic aspect and the adventurous side are maybe lost" in compensation for this "the commercial and touristic possibilities of this area are multiplied."

⁷⁵ The new hotels constructed during the Balbo era were eight in total; the *Albergo Berenice*, Benghazi (1935); the *Albergo* in Al-Qusbat (1936); the *Albergo* in Derna (1937); the *Albergo "Rumia"* in Jefren (1934); the *Albergo* in Nalut (1934-5); the *Albergo* in Tobruk (1937); and the *Albergo-casinò "Uaddan"* (1934-5) and the *Albergo del "Mehari"* (1934-5) in Tripoli. The renovation projects were the *Albergo "Ain el-Fras"* in Ghadames (1934-5); the *Albergo* in Sirt (1934-7); and the *Albergo "alle Gazzelle"* in Zliten (1935).

and a series of improvements in the road network in the Libyan interior were undertaken. These two initiatives resulted in the creation of a coordinated system of modern roads and hotels that described two basic itineraries that soon became the most desirable tourist experiences in this colony. The first of these followed the *strada litoranea* from Zuwarah on the west to Tobruk on the east, linking Libya's largest cities of Tripoli and Benghazi and the major archeological sites of Sabrata, Leptis Magna, Cyrene and Apollonia. The second route went south from Tripoli deep into the Libyan interior, passing through Jefren and Nalut and ending in the oasis settlement of Ghadames.⁷⁶ [Figure 3.b-9]

This coordinated tourist network was reinforced by a systematic campaign by the Balbo administration for the restoration of historical sites and the implementation of tourism-related civic improvements. In addition to the program undertaken with the *l'amministrazione dei beni Aquaf* involving Muslim religious buildings in Libya, historical sites like the Berber castle in Nalut were restored for the benefit of a tourist audience. Equally important to the preservation of the existing character of tourist destinations were improvements to the local streets and, in some cases, the enhancement of the existing landscape – all of which were intended to reinforce the character of these locations.⁷⁷ The interest in restoration also included Libya's

⁷⁶ During the construction of the hotels in Jefren, Nalut and Ghadames, all of which took place in 1934-35, a considerable effort was made to improve the road systems in that region, which included no fewer than seven separate projects executed by private contractors and the *Genio militare*. See "Tripolitania e Cirenaica - Notiziario d'informazioni economico-agrario, politico, militare ecc., di dette Colonie." ACS-PCM 1934-36 - 17.1.498. In combination with existing hotels, this system created an itinerary that followed the *strada litoranea*: Zuwarah, Sabrata, Tripoli, Homs, Zliten, Misratah, Sirt, Ajdabiyah, Benghazi, Cyrene, Derna, Tobruk. The itinerary to the Libyan interior, similarly furnished with hotels was: Tripoli, Gharyan, Jefren, Nalut, Ghadames.

⁷⁷ The Berber castle in Nalut, which was constructed to protect the provisions of the Berbers at the time of the Arab incursions into this region, was in a semi-ruined state. Its restoration was completed in March of 1935, just two months after the completion of the *Albergo Nalut*. During this same time the municipal roads were improved in both Nalut and Ghadames. In Ghadames during the construction of the *Albergo "Ain el-Fras,"* approximately 150 palm trees were brought in from Algeria. Some 40 of these were used directly in relation of the hotel, while the remainder were used for a the general enhancement of the oasis landscape – which was said to

Roman archeological heritage which, after several years of reduced activity, underwent a substantial excavation program. This initiative involved the continuing process of recovery of the sites at Leptis Magna, Sabrata, Cyrene and Apollonia and the improvement of their related archeological museums. Balbo's approach to this restoration process was informed by a fusion of the "scientific" aspects of archeological research with tourist demands. The theater at Sabrata was used for a drama festival less than a year after the completion of its restoration in 1936.⁷⁸

The emphasis of the Balbo administration on the development of the tourist system also manifested a series of improvements related to transportation to and within this colony. These changes included increasing both the number and frequency of marine connections to Libya – which went from five lines and twice weekly service in 1929 to seven lines and four times weekly service in 1937.⁷⁹ Air travel to and within Libya, which had only begun in 1929, was also improved during this period, with the construction of seven new airports, the addition of three new lines and a substantial increase in the frequency of travel and the number of passengers.⁸⁰ No less substantial were the attempts to improve automobile and bus

possess over 15,000 such palm trees. See "Tripolitania e Cirenaica - Notiziario d'informazioni economico-agrario, politico, militare ecc., di dette Colonie." ACS-PCM 1934-36 - 17.1.498.

⁷⁸ Giacomo Caputo underscores the commitment of Balbo to archeological research stating: "the work was increased until reaching five times that which were made preceding the last three years." Caputo, "L'archeologia in Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 26. See also: Caputo, "I grandi monumenti della romanità riusciti da Balbo," *Libia IV*, 5-8 (May-August 1940): 44-7. The restoration project of the theater at Sabrata was completed in May of 1936. The theater was then used for a dramatic performance during the visit to Mussolini to Libya on March 19, 1937. Pio Gardenghi, "Il risorto teatro romano di Sabrata," *Libia I*, 1 (March 1937): 17-18.

⁷⁹ In 1929 there was weekly service from Siracusa to Tripoli and Siracusa to Benghazi, with every second week being Napoli, Siracusa, Tripoli and Napoli, Siracusa, Benghazi. A fifth route was from Tunisia to Tripoli. According to the TCI guide book to Libya from 1937, in addition to these five lines, each of which ran every week, was joined two new routes - one being Genova-Cagliari-Tunisi-Tripoli and the second being Napoli-Palermo-Tripoli. Bertarelli. *Guida d'Italia del Touring Club Italiano. Libia*, 144.

⁸⁰ In 1929 air service to Libya was once weekly, with the route being Roma-Siracusa-Tripoli. By 1937 to this route was added Roma-Napoli-Siracusa-Malta-Tripoli; Roma-Siracusa-Benghazi; and Tripoli-Benghazi. Each of these four routes had three departures per week. *Ibid*, 147-9. For a detailed analysis of the improvements introduced by Balbo in this area, including the new airport

transportation within Libya. In this case, three new motor coach lines were created to link centers of major tourist interest like Jefren, Nalut and Ghadames, and two new automobile lines introduced serving the archeological sites at Leptis Magna and Sabrata during the period of the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli*.⁸¹ The Balbo administration was also active in encouraging cruise operators to visit Libya – an initiative that resulted in over 30,000 tourists visited this colony during the first six months of his Governorship.⁸² The Italian groups involved in these activities included the *Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro* (OND) – which organized eleven different cruises for *dopolavoristi* from different provinces of Italy that year – and the *Istituto Coloniale Fascista* (ICF) – which arranged no fewer than four trips to Libya in 1934. Private cruise operators were also involved, with some providing passage to specific events like the *Fiera* and others offering Mediterranean cruises that included Libya on their itinerary.⁸³

The creation of a coordinated tourist network in Libya was supported through the organization of tourist-related attractions. The most important of these

facilities and routes, see Corso Fougier, "Attrezzatura aeronautica della Libia dal punto di vista del traffico e del turismo aereo," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 1-11.

⁸¹ The three new itineraries were: Tripoli, Gharyan, Tigrinnah, Jefren, Jadu, Giosc, Tiji, Nalut, Sinouen, Ghadames; Tripoli, Gharyan, Mizdah, El-Nesura, Ghizza, Bani Walid, Zliten, Homs, Tripoli; Tripoli, Gharyan, Nalut, Hergi, Daraj, Adri, Brak, Hun, Misratah, Homs, Tripoli. Francesco Geraci, "Cronache di politica coloniale," *Gerarchia* XIV, 4 (April 1934): 353. The special service during the *Fiera* for the archeological sites at Leptis Magna and Sabrata are also outlined.

⁸² The idea of this initiative is described in "Letter from Ministro delle Colonie to Governo della Libia." ASMAE-MAI. Archivio Segreto-200. Fascicolo - Libia, turismo. This document lays out the plans of Balbo for the 1934 tourist season including the improvements in travel and creation of special events. For information on the results of this program, see: "Oltre 30,000 turisti in Libia nei primi mesi del 1934," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* VIII, 9 (September 1934): 772-3.

⁸³ The number of OND cruises that visited Libya in 1934 was taken from "Tripolitania e Cirenaica - Notiziario d'informazioni." ACS-PCM 1934-36 - 17.1.498. The number of ICF cruises in 1934 is listed in "Letter from Ministro delle Colonie to Governo della Libia." MAI-Archivio Segreto-200. Fascicolo - Libia, turismo. The company "Lloyd Triestino" operated an eight day cruise to visit Tripoli and the *Fiera* in March 1934. ASMAE-MAI.2-150/28. Fascicolo 130. "Italia Cosulich" offered a fourteen day Mediterranean cruise from August 1-14 1934. See: "Estate sul Mare. Crociere 1934-XII." WFG - TRA5 GL1993.2.234.

continued to be the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli*, which was both expanded and substantially rebuilt between 1934 and 1936. These changes included the expansion of the *Mostra della zootecnica* to include indigenous livestock and the construction of the new *Casa dell'artigianato della Libia*.⁸⁴ A great effort was made to enhance other events during the period of the *Fiera*, such as the annual *Gran premio automobilistico*, and create new ones that would extend the tourist season, such as the *Avioraduna sahariana* and *Torneo internazionale di schermo*. Balbo was successful in attracting conventions and conferences to Libya – occasions which, although of scant tourist interest, succeeded in bringing people to this region and thus reinforcing its identity as a tourist destination.⁸⁵ Another series of initiatives were undertaken by the colonial administration in 1934 in conjunction with the newly formed *Commissariato per il turismo in Libia*. This program involved carefully staging a series of what were referred to as "manifestations typical to the local populations and of ancient traditions." These events included a Jewish engagement festival, a *fantasia* of Arab horsemen to be performed on the arrival of cruises in Tripoli, and a performance of Sudanese singers and musicians. These indigenous ceremonies were carried out within the strictest interpretation of public

⁸⁴ The replacement of the semi-permanent pavilions with permanent ones began in 1934. This process increased substantially for the tenth *Fiera* in 1936, when more than eight new pavilions were constructed and landscape of the entire grounds was improved, including the restructuring of a major central street and central piazza. The *Mostra della zootecnica* or livestock exhibition was expanded and its facilities reconstructed in 1935. Although indigenous artisanry was always present at the *Fiera*, the *Casa dell'artigianato della Libia* (1936), was the first pavilion exclusively dedicated to this material. Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli." 541-66.

⁸⁵ The *Gran premio automobilistico* was greatly enhanced during the Balbo era with both an improvement of its facilities and expansion of its scope. An annual lottery associated with the race provided funding for these improvements. Segrè, *Italo Balbo. A Fascist Life*, 304-5. The *avioraduna sahariana*, which began in 1935, was a three day international air rally using private airplanes, which began in Tripoli and headed for Ghadames. The *torneo internazionale di schermo* was one of several sporting events sponsored by Balbo beginning in 1934. See "Tripolitania e Cirenaica - Notiziario d'informazioni." ACS-PCM 1934-36 - 17.1.498. See also "Letter from Ministro delle Colonie to Governo della Libia." ASMAE-MAI-Archivio Segreto-200. Fascicolo - Libia, turismo. These conferences include the *Conferenza Internazionale Autoservizi di Gran Turismo* held in Tripoli in mid-January 1938 and the eighth *Congresso di Agricoltura Tropicale e Subtropicale*, held in Tripoli during the *Fiera* on March 13-17 1939 with participation by twenty-eight different nations.

morality, revealing the conflict that existed between the tourist demands for the most exotic forms of local culture and the need for the colonial administration to control all cultural manifestations.⁸⁶

The most important initiative undertaken by the Balbo administration for the creation of an organized tourist system was the foundation of a centralized authority for the direction of all tourist related activities. Some of these responsibilities had been assumed by the newly created *Commissariato per il turismo in Libia* (1933) which, under the direction of Alessandro Melchiori, was largely involved in coordinating the activities of other tourist related companies. It was with the assistance of this organization that the programs for the promotion of tourism proposed by Balbo in 1934 were undertaken. This structure was modified later in 1934 with the constitution of the *Consiglio del Commissariato del turismo* – a group comprised of members of all of the major organization involved in tourism in Libya whose role was to advise and direct the activities of the *Commissariato*.⁸⁷ The last stage in this development was reached with the creation of the *Ente Turistico ed Alberghiero della Libia* (ETAL) in May of 1935 – a para-state organization which exercised complete control of all aspects of the tourist system in

⁸⁶ This program is outlined in a telegram from the *Governo della Libia* to the *Ministero delle Colonie* and the *Agenzia Stefani* dated March 19, 1934. ASMAE-MAI-Archivio Segreto-200. Fascicolo - Libia, turismo. These events were eventually announced in the April 1934 issue of *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane*. Regarding these ceremonies, a declaration made by the Colonial administration in 1935 stated: "We believe it is opportune to abolish any pseudo-religious manifestation, residue of customs that offend the morality and for the form of exaltation, here given rise to, can constitute a danger for public order." See "Decreto che vieta in Libia cerimonie biasimevoli di alcune confraternite religiose musulmane." Benghazi, 16 June 1935. ASMAE-MAI-2. Posizione 150/39. Fascicolo 174.

⁸⁷ Instituted with Regio Decreto Legge N. 1485, dated November 2 1933, the responsibilities of the *Commissariato* were: a) to direct and coordinate all activities concerning tourism within Tripolitania and Cyrenaica; b) to promote the development and control all of the organizations, institutions or committees existing in the two colonies and that there develop actions in the tourist field. *Manuale del turismo*, 30. The *Consiglio del Commissariato del turismo* was an advisory council. Its members included government organizations and all groups who were involved in tourism in Libya. See: "Il Consiglio del Commissariato del turismo," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* VIII, 7 (July 1934): 594-5.

Libya.⁸⁸ Unlike the *Ente Nazionale per le Industrie Turistiche* in Italy, this group went beyond the promotional and propaganda activities generally undertaken by such organizations. Under the direction of a longtime friend of Balbo, Claudio Brunelli, this group provided the services of a travel agency – organizing tourist itineraries involving all forms of travel – and acted as tour operator – providing car and motor coach transportation throughout this region.⁸⁹ The ETAL was also responsible for the management of the eighteen hotels that belonged to the *Governo della Libia* and the municipality – including the most prominent hotels in Tripoli, Benghazi and the Libyan interior.⁹⁰ This combination of activities and resources allowed this Ente to provide an inclusive package of services for the tourist audience – something that was unprecedented even in the metropolitan context.

The image projected by the ETAL system was closely tied to the *politica indigena* of Balbo, mediating between the modernization of this colony and the preservation of its indigenous culture. Not only were the network of tourist facilities and activities of the ETAL directly linked to the process of modernization of this

⁸⁸ The *Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia* was instituted with Regio Decreto Legge N. 1410, dated May 31 1935. Their statute stated that this group "has the purpose to promote and increase the tourist movement in Libya; to direct and coordinate the actions that institutes, organizations, societies, committees and private companies pursue in this field; not to mention to operate hotels and pursue any other activity related to the aforementioned scope." L.M. "Un potente strumento per lo sviluppo turistico della Libia," *L'Italia Coloniale* XII, 9 (September 1935): 135.

⁸⁹ The administrative structure of the ETAL provided for the division of its activities into the following separate departments: *Servizio Alberghi*, *Servizio Trasporti*, *Servizio Teatri e Spettacoli*, *Servizio Turismo*, and *Servizio Propaganda*. See: ETAL, "Realizzazioni fasciste. Gli sviluppi del Turismo Libico." ASMAE-MAI.5-5. Fascicolo 18. For a detailed presentation of the activities of this group, see Vicari, "L'Ente Turistico ed Alberghiero della Libia (E.T.A.L.)," 955-75.

⁹⁰ According to Decreto Governatoriale N. 16454, dated November 15 1935 all of the hotels owned by the Governo and the municipality were given over to ETAL. These were the following hotels; in Tripoli, the "Uaddan," the *Grande Albergo*, the "Mehari" and the *Tripolitania*; the *Albergo Gebel* in Gharyan; the *Albergo "Rumia"* in Jefren; the *Albergo Nalut*; the *Albergo "Ain el-Fras"* in Ghadames; the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* in Homs; the *Albergo "delle Gazzelle"* in Zliten; the *Albergo Misurata*; the *Albergo Sirte*; the *Albergo Zuara*; the *Albergo Agedabia*; the *Albergo Berenice* in Benghazi; the "*Grande Albergo agli Scavi*" in Cyrene; the *Albergo Derna* and the *Albergo Tobruk*. In addition to these properties a number of other theaters, restaurants and cafés were managed by ETAL. *Ibid.*, 955-75.

colony, this system fostered an experience of the colonial context that was fundamentally modern. Through supervision by a centralized authority whose point of reference was metropolitan, a certain standard of services and amenities were available throughout this system – which stretched the full length of this colony and deep into the Libyan interior.⁹¹ The importance of this universality as an enticement to the colonial traveler was certainly not lost on the ETAL, who in a news release stated: "to find a bathroom for each room and hot and cold running water 750 kilometers from the heart of Africa is undoubtedly a very pleasurable surprise."⁹² The publicity photographs of this organization reflect the desire to convey an image of metropolitan comfort. One such example is an image of the dining room at the *Albergo "alle Gazzelle"* in Zliten, where the stark setting and contemporary furnishings and tableware communicate hospitality and service, but without substantial references to the colonial context. [Figure 3.b-10] This modernity was also evident in the supporting activities of the *Servizio Teatri e Spettacoli* of the ETAL, which were clearly intended to create a semblance of metropolitan culture. This is certainly true for the events related to the *Teatro "Uaddan"* in Tripoli, which brought in drama companies and orchestras from Italy to provide forms of entertainment that principally appealed to a highly cultured Western audience.⁹³

⁹¹ The ETAL had the obligation to uphold a metropolitan standard of amenities throughout its system. All of the hotels in Libya were published in *Annuario Alberghi d'Italia* (originally called *Gli Alberghi in Italia*), a guide book to hotels in Italy put out by ENIT on a yearly basis. Each amenity provided is listed with the hotel, including bathroom facilities, hot and cold running water, telephones and parking. Ente Nazionale Industrie Turistiche, *Annuario Alberghi in d'Italia, 1939* (Milano: Turati Lombardi E.C., 1939).

⁹² In presenting the merits of their system of hotels the ETAL stated: "particularly the itineraries in the interior, are exceedingly suggestive and interesting. The hotels constructed along the Tripoli-Gadames route, are true jewels of so-called Saharan colonial architecture. To find a bathroom for each room and hot and cold running water 750 kilometers from the heart of Africa is undoubtedly a very pleasurable surprise. And this has been confirmed by infinite testimony of Italian and foreign travelers." ETAL, "Realizzazioni fasciste. Gli sviluppi del turismo libico." 2.

⁹³ During the 1938-39 tourist season the *Teatro "Uaddan"* brought in nine drama companies and sponsored four different orchestral concerts. While most of these events were from one to three days, and thus this certainly does not represent an active and thriving business, all of these

These ambitions are equally evident in the architectural expression of the interior of this theater. Designed by Di Fausto in conjunction with Stefano Gatti-Casazza, this space provided an opulent but conventionally appropriate context for these performances. [Figure 3.b-11]

While the experience of modernity was a crucial part of the tourist network of the ETAL, it was not so much an end in itself as it was a mechanism for encountering the Libyan environment and culture – an experience that was, after all, the motivation for travel in this region. The publicity material put out by the ETAL thus makes references to the "magnificent attraction of the numerous coastal oases" and "the always varying manifestations of the indigenous life" – representations that emphasize the confrontation of difference.⁹⁴ This tendency is also apparent in the visual representation of this material – such as the cover of the tourist brochure *La Libia* from 1936 – which presents the exotic qualities of this colonial setting as a means of enticement to travel. [Figure 3.b-12] Throughout the ETAL system a conscious effort was made to organize indigenous cultural manifestations that would enhance the tourist experience. One prominent example of such events is the Arab musical and dance performances at the *Caffè arabo* at the Suq al-Mushir, which were made in a setting that was intended to suggest the mysteries of the East.⁹⁵

performances were by Italian actors and musicians and as such it was clearly pitched to a metropolitan audience. Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia," 971.

⁹⁴ A full quotation of this statement is as follows: "Summarily interesting is a voyage in this incredibly vast Colony. The tourist has the magnificent attraction of the numerous coastal oases of superb palms, in a particular way those of Zanzur, Zauia, Tagiura, Zliten, Misurata; the superb greatness of the Greek and Roman civilizations enlivened visiting the great ruins of Leptis Magna, Sabratha, Ghirza, Cirene, Apollonia, Tolemaide; enraptured by the grandeur of the Tripolitanian and Cyrenaican Gebel; amazed by the luxuriant beauty of the great oases of the desert. To this is added the interest that awakens the always varying manifestations of the indigenous life that presents great diversity of customs, of practices and habits from place to place." ETAL, *La Libia*, 3-4.

⁹⁵ This *Caffè arabo* was intended to provide the experience of the local culture. The *Relazione Tecnica* of 1936/37 notes the great popularity and success of this business, and particularly for short term visitors to the colony. The authenticity of this local culture is even more questionable than one might suspect as the indigenous musicians were largely from Tunisia. ETAL, "Relazione tecnica del Direttore Generale al bilancio dell'esercizio 1936-37," 23. ASMAE-MAI.4-29. Fascicolo 210.

These performances even included the eroticism of "traditional" Oriental dance – an experience that the novelist Mario dei Gaslini recounted as "a scene of love which presupposes a man seduced by all the fascinations that God has given to women."⁹⁶ [Figure 3.b-13] These presentations were not casually organized, as the ETAL also created a *Scuola di musica araba* to train musicians for the *Caffè arabo* and other similar venues.

It would seem that in the ETAL system in Libya, "the native" was not presented so much as it was re-presented according to the demands of the modern tourist and the politics of Italian colonial rule. At the same time that certain indigenous practices were being outlawed by the Governo della Libia, a whole new set were being created for the benefit of the metropolitan traveler.⁹⁷ The incorporation of the indigenous was not limited to either manifestations of local culture or the colonial context, as this organization also had a tobacco shop and store which sold products of Libyan artisanry in Tripoli and Rome.⁹⁸ [Figure 3.b-14] In a setting that was suggestive of a dark and mysterious "Oriental" interior, the products of the indigenous artisans of Libya were reduced to mere commodities – an inducement to travel – displayed as objects in an ethnographic museum. While the appeal of the indigenous culture was in its exotic qualities – in its difference – it is also clear that this presentation had to conform to a contemporary scientific

⁹⁶ The larger context of this quotation is as follows: "These young Bedouins are fourteen or fifteen years old and are extremely sensual. Enough thinking of their movements and of this completely veiled intoxication and vitality for feeling enraptured. Their choreography expresses a scene of love which presupposes a man seduced by all the fascinations that God has given to women for her rule over man." Dei Gaslini, *Piccolo amore beduino*, 98.

⁹⁷ Religious practices like fakirism and their attendant ceremonies were outlawed according to a *Decreto Governatoriale* dated June 16, 1935. Only a year earlier these same ceremonies were performed for the benefit of a tourist audience. See "Decreto che vieta in Libia cerimonie biasimevoli di alcune confraternite religiose musulmane." op.cit.

⁹⁸ The *Ufficio-Negozio* in Rome is reported under the *Servizio Turismo* section of the *Relazione Tecnica*, where it is noted "the sales of artisanal objects are continually increasing, and the profits of this operation are fair, enough to cover the costs." This gives some indication of the fact that as a business its role was one that was more of propaganda than profit. "Relazione tecnica del Direttore Generale al bilancio dell'esercizio 1936-37," 17. ASMAE-MAI.4-29. Fascicolo 210.

understanding of its constitution. The ethnographic discourse related to these artisanal objects and the rational logic with which the indigenous events were planned and staged, underscores the fact that in the activities of the ETAL the apparent opposition between the modern and the indigenous has every appearance of being a false one. The preservation and presentation of local culture was itself modern – conceived according to the modern demands of tourism, and presented through means that, despite their appearance, were modern. In this sense it can be argued that in the context of the tourist system of ETAL in Libya, the indigenous was also the modern.

The creation of a tourist system in Libya during the Governorship of Balbo was thus under the increasing influence of a modern scientific discourse that was aimed at the preservation and maintenance of Libyan cultural traditions. This discourse also had a substantial impact on the architecture and planning in Libya during this period, which itself formed an important part of the tourist panorama. The interest of Balbo in the architecture and planning was evidenced in his creation of the *Commissione edilizia*, which was formed on February 21 1934 – just over one month after arriving in Libya. The task of this committee, which had representatives from the colonial administration, the municipality, the technical office and the *Soprintendente ai monumenti e scavi*, was to provide aesthetic control for the significant buildings constructed in the colonies.⁹⁹ In the first meeting of this group, which was presided over by Balbo himself, a series of eleven directives were formulated, most of which had to do with the regulation of the building process by the *Governo* and municipality. Several of these guidelines referred to specific

⁹⁹ The full name of the committee was the *Commissione superiore di consulenza per la tutela dell'estetica cittadina e del paesaggio della Colonia* and was created by Governatorial decree. The representation on the committee included the Segretario Generale della Colonia, the Podestà of Tripoli, the heads of the various technical offices in the Municipality, the Soprintendente and the architect Florestano Di Fausto and engineer Stefano Gatti-Casazza. See: G. Bucciante, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia," *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 4-5.

building proposals, four of which were directly related to the construction or renovation of tourist related facilities. Thus began an extensive program of restructuring the existing municipal buildings and proposing new constructions – an effort that was gauged at creating a more unified civic appearance in this colony.¹⁰⁰

The most complex task of the *Commissione edilizia* was the review and implementation of the recently completed regulatory plan for Tripoli, a proposal that was prepared by the architects Albergo Alpago Novello, Ottavio Cabiati and Guido Ferrazza between 1931 and 1933. The plan as proposed by these architects was eventually adopted by the Municipio di Tripoli in May of 1934 after an extensive period of review.¹⁰¹ The concept of the new proposal was to provide for the expansion of the city to approximately double its current size of 80,000 inhabitants, while maintaining the basic principles of the original regulatory plan – which called for the preservation of the old city and a radial patterning for the new settlements in the surrounding oasis.¹⁰² A series of transverse arteries were added to this radial system in order to provide better connections within the existing street network and divide the city into separate districts. [Figure 3.b-15] This structure was also

¹⁰⁰ The guidelines that pertain to tourism are as follows: Construction of hotels in the interior; Arrangement of the municipal *Grand Hôtel*; Construction of a large tourist hotel in Tripoli; and Construction of a new luxury hotel attached to the municipal casino. The following projects undertaken under the direction of Di Fausto: the modification of the fortified residence in Murzuq, the Carabinieri barracks in Brak, the Fort in Ghadames, the villa for the central sector command at Gharyan, the military club in Gharyan, the new barracks at Porta Benito in Tripoli, the catholic chapel in Ghadames, a new *lazzaretto* in the fort in Garagesc, modification of the minaret at Tarhunah, the market in Misratah, the construction of the Benito Mussolini school, and the revision of numerous other projects. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁰¹ This plan was adopted by the *Municipio di Tripoli* in a meeting on May 7, 1934.. See: Municipio di Tripoli - Ufficio Tecnico, "Relazione sul piano regolatore e d'ampliamento della città di Tripoli," 1934. 1-30. Over the next three years a series of variances were contemplated and approved, most of which had to do with particular problems that arose in the implementation of the plan. See: ACS-MAI.114.

¹⁰² Already authors of the regulatory plan of Benghazi from 1929, these architects were hired by the Municipality to deal with the problem of the connection between different parts of the city and the lack of control of its overall development. The approach was to leave the old city relatively untouched and organize the new developments around this nucleus, making use of the radial streets that originated at the Castello. Maurizio De Rege, "Il nuovo piano regolatore di Tripoli," 121-8.

intended to act as a separation between areas of greater density – such as the waterfront district – and those on the periphery of the city that were to have a more equitable balance between built form and landscape. It was argued that the combination of this new structure and the related restrictions on building height and density would to create a more orderly city and restrict the extent of new development so as to preserve the surrounding oasis landscape.¹⁰³

The approach taken in the regulatory plan of Tripoli was not unique to the Italian context, as this proposal bears a striking resemblance to that prepared by Henri Prost for the city of Casablanca in 1914. Both plans structure the metropolitan settlement as a network of radial and transverse streets that subdivides the city into separate districts.¹⁰⁴ [Figure 3.b-16] However, the French example should be regarded as merely a point of departure, as the much later plan of Tripoli lacks its monumentality, particularly with regard to its creation of boulevards and its arrangement of a complex of administrative institutions. The plan of Tripoli, while clearly expressing the presence of the Italian colonial administration, offers a much more intricate scale of planning through the creation of a series of separate districts that were intended to decentralize the city and provide a combination of local amenities. Moreover, even the approach to the proposed settlement of the

¹⁰³ This plan proposed three transverse streets, the first of which was on the edge of the existing zone of greatest development immediately east of the old city. The second connection began on the west waterfront just below the *Fiera* and passed in front of the Governor's palace on the east and reaching the waterfront just alongside the "Uaddan" hotel. The third was intended to mark the outer limit of the buildable area of the city and began at Porta Garagesc on the west, leading to the new *Ufficio Governo* on the east. The plan called for a zone of more intensive building – up to four stories – with the remaining area up to two stories. Within this general framework, particular zones were highlighted as industrial, indigenous and agricultural. *Ibid.*, 123-7.

¹⁰⁴ In Casablanca, a radial pattern was added to an existing ring pattern, however, the general approach is similar in using this network as a way of establishing a series of different districts in the city. In Casablanca, these districts are created relative to the central Place de France, with administrative and commerce in a central location, residential and recreational to the west and industry and a working-class European district to the east. The southern boundary of the city was marked by military and hospital complexes. Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 102.

indigenous populations follows this model, as these residential areas are distributed throughout the plan rather than located in a single district of the city.¹⁰⁵ This project thus lacks the application of the kind of "techno-cosmopolitanism" that Paul Rabinow has attributed to the French planning in Morocco under Lyautey where the city was conceived in terms of functional zones.¹⁰⁶

Although the new regulatory plan of Tripoli did not control the indigenous settlements based on the kind of zoning restrictions implemented in the case of Casablanca, it chose to do so with other means. It called for the preservation of the historic center of Tripoli, which was considered a "source of pleasure for artists and incentive to tourist traffic." Accordingly, no buildings of a "European type" would be allowed within the ancient walls, favoring instead "reconstruction... on the part of the natives, according to the traditional type."¹⁰⁷ The landscape of the oasis was also to be sustained until the limits of the outer military wall in order to respect its "aesthetic and touristic order" and its indigenous housing conserved for its "attractive folkloristic character." This attitude of preserving the existing settlements

¹⁰⁵ In Tripoli, the approach to the Casablanca plan was overlaid with an attempt to create distinct districts that would have their own center. The plan of Tripoli also lacks the Beaux-Arts planning principles of the plan of Prost which were out of date in the 1930s. In Tripoli six centers were identified. Each of these zones was to have both a more dense area of services and an area reserved for the local populations which was "of folkloric interest." De Rege, "Il nuovo piano regolatore di Tripoli," 127.

¹⁰⁶ Rabinow, describes the idea of techno-cosmopolitanism as follows: "It was technological in that its operations were scientifically arrived at and could be specified; it was cosmopolitan in that these operations were applied to specific customs, cultures and countries." The zoning of Casablanca according to functional zones is seen by Rabinow to be an application of this principle of control of the modern environment according to regimes of colonial power. This plan is thus the product of an attempt to invest the colonial context with social and moral correctives largely aimed at the metropolitan populations. Rabinow, "Colonialism, Modernity: The French in Morocco," in *Forms of Dominance: On the Architecture and Urbanism of the Colonial Experience*. (Brookfield: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1992), 167-82.

¹⁰⁷ The exact statement in this report is as follows: "Different from many other cities, in which the old historic center is hampered by the modern reorganization and expansion of the built-up area, Tripoli has the fortune of having all of it collected beside it, so as to be able to leave it intact without prejudice to the communication of the remaining city... In that part of the city (already delimited by the ancient walls) new buildings of the European type will not be built, but favor the reconstruction, when it occurs, on the part of the natives, according to the traditional type." Municipio di Tripoli, "Relazione sul piano regolatore," 4. ACS-MAI.114.

also applied to the planning of the new areas of housing for Italians, which had to accommodate the pre-existing conditions. In order to implement this conservation policy, the authors of this plan argued that: "the fundamental separation between indigenous and metropolitan quarters is not completely possible."¹⁰⁸ The process of modernization of the areas of settlement occupied by the Libyan populations was largely related to questions of order and hygiene. Due to these concerns, a program of *diradamento* or thinning out was carried out in the indigenous housing zones in the old city and in the surrounding territory.¹⁰⁹ These efforts involved giving order to the public infrastructure through the removal of some buildings and the introduction of modern amenities like new water and sewer lines. In some cases the demand for cleaning up these areas even superseded the calls for the preservation of local culture. One such example was an amendment to the regulatory plan that called for the destruction of an area of the indigenous settlement adjacent to the tourist district along the eastern waterfront – the concern being for the squalid nature of this area and the danger of "the irreconcilable promiscuity of metropolitans and natives."¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ The preservation of the indigenous housing in the periphery is discussed as follows: "In some quarters remain in addition aggregated parcels now only inhabited by natives, and only reserved for them. These sectors... are hygienically good, and allow certain advantages, such as avoiding excessive relocation of people, the other to leave indigenous labor available and in proximity to each of our quarters, and finally the conservation of their attractive folkloristic character." Ibid., 21. In the section discussing the general criterion of this plan, it is asserted that due to the mixing of buildings found in the initial area of Italian expansion, the separation of indigenous and metropolitan quarters would not be possible. Ibid., 5.

¹⁰⁹ This plan states: "Only for hygienic motives a prudent and courteous work of *diradamento* should proceed there where the excessive exploitation of area, especially in the Hara, has made for narrow streets, or filling the indispensable open spaces." Ibid., 5.

¹¹⁰ The proposed amendment was discussed as follows: "...in view of recent developments of the city that particularly burden the quarter of Zauiet ed Dhamani... has decided to modify the regulatory plan in the sense of eliminating from that important zone the old indigenous nucleus to give character of unity to the zone in which recently rose the most important building works of a tourist character." Verbal excerpt from meeting of Commissione Edilizia, August 8 1935. ACS-MAI - 114; and: "In place of the abolished indigenous quarter is provided for the expansion of the indigenous zone located south of the internal transverse avenue and south of the train station. Thus will be cut the unreconcilable promiscuity of metropolitans and natives that has been

The response to the indigenous settlements in this plan was thus aimed at the preservation and cleaning up of these areas of the city – an effort that was not without its contradictions. While there was an interest in the local culture and its conservation, even such a seemingly benevolent gesture represents a form of control. The determination of what would be preserved was in the hands of the municipal authorities, which used modern principles of hygiene and urban order to mask fears of racial promiscuity. Moreover, it can be argued that this "preservation" strategy led to the dispersal of the local populations – an approach was no less destructive to the social fabric of Libya than tearing down large areas of the city. This program of separating the local populations was also a subtle way of maintaining the public order of this colony. As with other facets of the Balbo administration, the indigenous culture and its folkloric attraction – while desirable from the viewpoint of the tourist valorization of the colony – was carefully framed by the demands of colonial politics.

The architecture of Libya during this period was also influenced by the modern "science" of preservation. The key figure in this discourse was Florestano Di Fausto, an architect trained at the *Accademia di belli arti* in Rome and who became *Consulente per l'architettura del Municipio di Tripoli*, in 1932 after the death of the previous consultant, the Roman architect Alessandro Limongelli.¹¹¹ Following the formation of the *Commissione edilizia* in 1934, Di Fausto began a period of productive building activity that resulted in the substantial remaking of the public image of this colony. Prior to arriving in Libya, this architect was well known for his efforts as director of the *Ufficio Tecnico* for the *Ministero degli Affari Esteri*

formed in the quarter of Zauiet ed Dahamani and improved the hygienic conditions of the zone definitively redeveloped." Report of Municipio di Tripoli, October 12 1935. ACS-MAI - 114.

¹¹¹ Di Fausto was educated entirely in Rome, receiving his degree in Civil Engineering from the Accademia di Belle Arte in 1922. With regard to his activities with the municipality of Tripoli, he arrived in Libya in 1932 to be appointed as the replacement to Limongelli who died in February of that year, an assignment that was largely due on his work as director of the Ufficio Tecnico of the Ministero degli Affari Esteri and his projects realized for Governatore Lago in Rhodes. Miano, "Florestano di Fausto," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*. Vol. 40, 1-5.

and the substantial body of work he realized in Rhodes beginning in the late 1920s.¹¹² It is with such projects as the *Palazzo del Governo* from 1926 that Di Fausto developed the ability to synthesize a complex set of references – an effort that ran parallel to the Italian authorities interests in fostering the peaceful coexistence of the different ethnic groups on this eastern Mediterranean island. [Figure 3.b-17] Di Fausto also realized the luxurious *Albergo delle Rose* in the following year – a project that underscores that his interest in synthesizing the local architecture of this Italian possession was closely tied to the tourist experience.¹¹³ [Figure 3.b-18]

In his position as *Consulente* for the municipality of Tripoli, Di Fausto prepared a series of studies in 1932 for the improvement of this city, including new proposals – such as the design for a Municipal Casino along the waterfront – and restoration projects – like the systemization of the access to the Suq al-Mushir and the area of the Arch of Marcus Aurelius.¹¹⁴ The most significant of the projects begun during this period was his unsuccessful proposal for the Piazza della Cattedrale competition from 1930. The project of Di Fausto, which had been discarded by the jury,

¹¹² As director of the *Ufficio Tecnico* between 1922 and 1932, Di Fausto was responsible for the construction or transformation of numerous embassies and cultural institutes in Europe and abroad, including: Belgrade (1924-26), Cairo (1928-30), Algiers (1931), Ankara and Tunis (1931-2). He also did work in Copenhagen, Stockholm, the Haig, Istanbul, Oslo, Salonica, Nice, Lisbon, Brussels, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro and London. In Rhodes he prepared the regulatory plan (1923) and proposed the *Palazzo del governo* (1926), the *Palazzo delle Poste* (1927), the cathedral of S. Giovanni dei Cavalieri (1924-5) and the *Albergo delle Rose* (1927). *Ibid.*, 1-2.

¹¹³ Di Fausto's works in Rhodes have been described as: "shrewdly adapted to various circumstances, manipulating sparse styles and making incursions into diverse times and artistic civilizations, sometimes extraneous to the culture and traditions of Rhodes, sometimes related, accomplishing a hybridization of more or less clandestine styles." Miano, "Florestano Di Fausto," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*. Vol. 40, 2. With regard to the *Albergo delle Rose* and the tourist dimension of this Island, see *Rodi: Guida del Turista* (Milano-Roma: Casa Editrice d'Arte Bestetti & Tumminelli, 1928).

¹¹⁴ The activities of Di Fausto from this period are reported in Piccioli, "Il vecchio e il nuovo piano regolatore di Tripoli," in *La nuova Italia d'oltremare*, 880-6. Piccioli describes Di Fausto as the interpreter of the regulatory plan of Tripoli. The focus of his efforts were understood to be the waterfront area of Tripoli, including the major streets infrastructure and open spaces, the *Castello*, the *Grand Hôtel* and the Piazza della Cattedrale.

proposed a monumental portico in the building opposite the existing Cathedral so as to induce a spatial movement that linked this piazza with the waterfront.¹¹⁵ [Figure 3.b-19] The Piazza della Cattedrale project is typical of one part of Di Fausto's architectural practice during the Governorship of Balbo. This intensive building activity was due to his appointment to the *Commissione edilizia*, and the subsequent task of implementing the desired aesthetic control over new public projects throughout this colony. The resulting built works were primarily urban in scope and were done for the municipality of Tripoli and *Governo della Libia* – including government offices, markets, churches, agricultural town centers and hotels in Tripoli and surrounding towns.¹¹⁶ While the architectural language of these projects varied, they tended toward a synthesis of references to local vernacular architecture and an abstract classical vocabulary.

The other area of activity in which Di Fausto actively participated was the renovation and restoration of historical buildings and sites – projects that were linked to preserving these areas and increasing their value as tourist attractions.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ The competition for the Piazza della Cattedrale was held in January and December of 1930. While the first stage of the competition was deemed to be inconclusive by the committee, the second stage selected a single winner – the *Pentagono Group* from Milan. Giuliano Gresleri observes that the project by Di Fausto had been discarded by the jury. Gresleri, "L'architettura dell'Italia d'oltremare: Realtà, finzione, immaginario," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 33. Marida Talamona argues that the death of Limongelli and his replacement by Di Fausto, and the unsuccessful result of this competition, marks an end of a certain period of experimentation by important protagonists of Italian architectural culture in the Libyan context. Talamona, "Libya, an architectural workshop," 78-9.

¹¹⁶ The projects completed by Di Fausto during this period in Tripoli included: the *Palazzo del Governo*, the *Sede del Comando militare*, the *Chiesa di San Francesco* (1936), the *Mercato rionale* and the *Scuola Superiori di cultura islamica* (1938). Projects outside of Tripoli included the Church in Sabrata (1936), *Villa governatoriale*, Busetta and the agricultural villages of Battisti (1938), D'Annunzio (1938), Luigi Razza (1933-4), Maddalena (1936), Mameli (1939), Oberdan (1939) and Oliveti (1938). The hotels designed by Di Fausto were the "*Uaddan*" and "*Mehari*" in Tripoli, both from 1935, and the *Albergo "Rumia"* in Jefren (1934), the *Albergo Nalut* (1935) and the renovation of the *Albergo "Ain el-Fras"* in Ghadames (1935).

¹¹⁷ These restoration works included a series of projects related to the *Castello* and adjacent piazza. These began with the restructuring of the piazza and related connections to the old city (1935), the relocation of the office of the *Governo* in the *Castello* and demolition of existing jail (1937) – a project that also involved the reorganization of the interior courtyard spaces – and finally the renovation of the existing *Museo archeologico* (1939). Other projects in Tripoli included the restructuring of the area around the Arch of Marcus Aurelius (1937) and the

One such example is Di Fausto's design for the restructuring of the area around the Arch of Marcus Aurelius in Tripoli – a project that attempted to accentuate the much earlier efforts of archeologists to preserve this 2nd century AD Roman monument by creating a linear space that would frame the arch and link it to the seafront promenade.¹¹⁸ [Figure 3.b-20] While various proposals had been made to reconfigure the surrounding context, it was not until 1936 that Di Fausto's project was implemented. This work of historic preservation actually created a considerable discontinuity in the adjacent fabric, requiring the demolition and restructuring of substantial portions of three of the city's most significant *funduqs*.¹¹⁹ A second restoration project undertaken by Di Fausto in Tripoli was his design for the *Quartiere artigianato* at the Suq al-Mushir of 1935. This project, which was located just inside the main gate into the old city beside the south side of the *Castello*, was the new home for an existing school that was reorganized by the Balbo administration to improve the quality of artisanal production in Libya through a rigorous educational program.¹²⁰ Making use of one of the 16th century bastions of

Quartiere artigianato at the Suq al-Mushir (1935). Outside of Tripoli Di Fausto was involved in the adaptation of fortified buildings from the Ottoman period for barracks and military outposts in places like Murzuq, Brak, Ghadames and Garagesc.

¹¹⁸ The project of recovering of this monument by archeologists began in the period 1914-18. At this point the Arch was liberated from buildings that had been directly attached. For a detailed description of the work of restoration involved in this project, see Giacomo Caputo, "Il consolidamento dell'arco di Marco Aurelio in Tripoli." *Africa Italiana* VII, 1-2 (April 1940): 46-66. This project was undertaken between November 1936 and March 1937 in preparation for the visit of Mussolini to Libya.

¹¹⁹ The projects that were partially demolished were the *Fonduk dei Maltesi* (restored in 1738), the *Fonduk Gheddara* (restored 1850) and the *Fonduk er-Raccah* (restored 1773). Some parts of most of these buildings date back to roughly the 16th century. Francesco Corò. "Alla scoperta dei vecchi "Fondugh" tripolini," *Le Vie d'Italia* XLV, 2 (February 1939): 201-10. Of the proposal by Di Fausto, Rodolfo Micacchi states: "The architect Di Fausto is thus a brave artist, that we want to believe has the intention of publishing a fantastical drawing, instead of proposing a thoughtful project of restructuring of the zone of the arch and that, when he looks at it carefully, will recognize the merits of the project of *Soprintendente* Marelli and the propriety of carrying it out." Micacchi, "L'Arco di Marco Aurelio in Tripoli e la sistemazione della zona adiacente," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* VIII, 10 (October 1934): 824-39.

¹²⁰ The Balbo administration reorganized the existing school as part of an effort to create a viable modern artisanal industry in Libya. As a trade school, it was also oriented to the production and selling of goods, something to which this new building was also oriented. See,

the *Castello*, this project transformed this part of the old city into an artisanal district associated with the adjacent Suq al-Mushir. The design for the school introduced a sequence of spaces that led through a formal entry hall to an exterior courtyard that was the center of this new institution.¹²¹ This courtyard, which was surrounded by the workshops and classrooms, contained a large reflecting pool and was decorated by ceramic tile produced by the students.

The aesthetic expression of this project, described as exhibiting a "modern sense of architecture associated with eastern Mediterranean motifs," shows a skillful assimilation of traditional courtyard spaces like the Qarahmanli courtyard in the nearby *Castello*.¹²² [Figure 3.b-21] The tendency toward an abstract reinterpretation of indigenous forms in this courtyard is even more evident in the interior classroom spaces which have a spatial quality that seems to derive, at least in part, from contemporary industrial architecture. [Figure 3.b-22] However, such a seamless relationship is created between the existing context and associated restoration work and the new intervention so as to make them impossible to separated.¹²³ [Figure 1.b-21] The new forms so closely follow precedent that it can

Quadrotta, "Appunti sull'artigianato libico," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 9-12.

¹²¹ This project is carefully inserted into the already existing Suq al-Mushir (19th C), one of the most important and characteristic market areas in the old city. The *Quartiere artigianato* is entered through a portal, flanked by a series of shops, just inside the gate to the old city. This portal leads to a domed entrance hall containing small shops and decorated by a Byzantine fragment found at the site at Sabrata. Much of the tile decoration was produced by the school. A second archway leads to the central courtyard, around which all of the activities of the school were focused. Bucciante, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*. 10-11.

¹²² Quadrotta discusses the project of Di Fausto as follows: "The new market-workshop inserts itself into the ancient suq with its own character that nevertheless draws on the artistic traditions and customs of the indigenous populations. It results in a magnificent construction for the harmony of its lines, the pleasing distribution of its spaces, the sober and luminous decorations, the modern sense of architecture associated with eastern Mediterranean motifs." Quadrotta, "Sviluppo e realizzazioni dell'artigianato in Libia." 955.

¹²³ This project was done in conjunction with the restructuring of this area of the old city, which had suffered from some demolition during the Italian period. The restoration work of Di Fausto included reorganizing the entrance into the old city alongside the *Castello* and restructuring the exterior face of the area inside the gate so as to link to the existing Suq al-Mushir to the west and

be argued that they are themselves part of a program of historical restoration. In this sense, the distinction between restoration and new construction is both literally and figuratively unclear in this project. In conjunction with the *Scuole musulmana di mestieri ed arti indigene*, Di Fausto's proposal for the *Quartiere artigianato* also included a *Caffé arabo* – a project that was owned and operated by the ETAL.¹²⁴ Decorated in tile produced by the ceramic workshops in the adjacent school, this project is a carefully studied reinterpretation of the local forms, expressed through a restrained and simplified architectural vocabulary. [Figure 3.b-23] The presence of this project in the same complex underscores both the close connection between indigenous artisanry and tourism in Libya and the intricate relationship between architecture and tourism in the work of Di Fausto. The ambiguous relationship between restoration and new construction is an indication of the gradual inscription of tourist demands for an "authentic" experience of local culture within the realm of architecture. That is, through the figure of Di Fausto and the large body of works that he produced in Libya during the Balbo era, a tourist discourse for the historic preservation of the indigenous culture was being applied to architecture.

provide continuity with the street leading to the Mosque of the Qarahmanli, to the north. Bucciante, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 4.

¹²⁴ The *Caffé arabo* at the Suq al-Mushir was one of several tourist attractions owned and operated by the ETAL to supplement their system of hotels. Vicari suggests that the *Caffé arabo* "reproduces in full the suggestive local environment, and where artists and an indigenous orchestra carry out their characteristic programs." Vicari, "L'Ente Turistico ed Alberghiero della Libia," 967-8, 971.

C. Florestano Di Fausto and the Architecture of Tourism

Architectonic forms vary in their relation to the peculiar conditions of the historical moment and the spiritual conditions of each population, but nothing takes away from the influence of the climate and the action that the sacred and fatal basin of the Mediterranean exercises, everywhere – cradle and crucible of the highest human civilization. Working on the coast or on the Mediterranean islands, I felt these traditions revive in me and passed on the necessity of respecting them to my buildings...

Florestano Di Fausto, "Visione mediterranea della mia architettura," 1937.¹

In a certain sense, the hotel in Ghadames, like that in Jefren and Nalut – constructed... according to the most modern rules of technique and of art – constitutes the synthesis of the essential characteristics of the landscape – an anticipation of the traveler who does not know the city and the oasis, its delights, its enchantment of colors, its profound effects on the spirit.

Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia, *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, 1938.²

In an article "Visione mediterranea della mia architettura," published in *Libia* magazine in 1937, architect Florestano Di Fausto speaks of his approach to an architecture for Italy's Mediterranean colonies – an architecture which he asserts had always been, and should continue to be, based upon a careful reading of the local architecture. In an impassioned discussion of the sizable body of works that he constructed throughout this region – in Italy, in Rhodes, in Coos, as well as in Libya

¹ The original quotation is as follows: "Forme achitettoniche si varie in rapporto alle condizioni peculiari del momento storico ed alle tendenze spirituali di ciascun popolo, ma nessuna sottratta all'influenza del clima ed all'azione che esercita, e da lungi e da presso, questo sacro e fatale bacino del Mediterraneo, culla e crogiuolo delle più alte civiltà umane. Lavorando sul litorale o nelle isole mediterranee, non potevo non sentir rivivere in me queste tradizioni e dare al mio costruire la necessità di rispettarle..." Di Fausto, "Visione mediterranea della mia architettura," 16.

² The original quotation is as follows: "In certo senso l'albergo di Gadames, come quello di Jefren e di Nalut, costruito... secondo le più moderne regole della tecnica e dell'arte, costituisce la sintesi dei caratteri essenziali del paese; è un'anticipazione, per il viaggiatore che non conosce la città e l'oasi, delle sue delizie, dei suoi incanti di colore, dei suoi profondi effetti sull'anima." Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia, *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames* (Milano: Tipo-Litografia Turati Lombardi, 1938), 56.

– he emphasizes the deliberate and studied process of design by which he developed a reciprocal relationship between these projects and their historical and environmental context.³ This "Visione mediterranea" is in strong contrast with the approach of Carlo Enrico Rava and other Rationalist architects working in the Italian colonies in North Africa during this period. While equally inspired by the vernacular architecture, these architects proposed a more abstract process of assimilation of these indigenous references. They suggested that the typological and technical approach to the Libyan environment found in these vernacular constructions provided the basis for a rational solution to the problem of a modern architecture in the colonial context.⁴ The difference between these two interpretations of a Mediterranean architecture reveals a split in architectural discourse during the Governorship of Italo Balbo. Although a more direct incorporation of historical forms was favored in public buildings, a rationalist vocabulary was tacitly accepted in the realm of housing and commercial buildings. More crucial to the discussion of the architecture of tourism is the fact that this distinction also reflects a decisive shift in the tourist discourse in the Libyan colonies during this period. The increasing influence of scientific practices on tourism contributed to a penchant for authenticity in the representation of the indigenous culture and thus a preference for the more direct use of vernacular forms in the tourist architecture.

³ Di Fausto was the Director of the *Ufficio Tecnico* of the *Ministero degli Affari Esteri* between 1922 and 1935, during which time he was responsible for numerous embassies and other projects which represented the Italian state abroad. In 1923 he began working for Governatore Lago in Rhodes, where he was responsible for the regulatory plan and numerous public buildings for this Italian Mediterranean possession. Miano, "Florestano Di Fausto," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*. Volume 40, 1-5.

⁴ The important protagonists within the Rationalist approach to architecture in the colonies were Rava, Giovanni Pellegrini and Luigi Piccinato. The theoretical positions of these architects were not monolithic. The argument of Rava, for example, is based on what has later been come to know as a typological argument. That is, he argued that the indigenous architecture of Libya was based on the Roman house and as such represented a Mediterranean architecture. For Pellegrini, who was inspired by the same source, it was less a question of the Roman origins as it was the "modernity" of climatic solutions posed by this house. Pellegrini, "Manifesto di architettura coloniale," 349.

The "Visione mediterranea" of Di Fausto was the end, rather than the beginning, of a theoretical trajectory which called for the appropriation of the local vernacular by architects working in the colonial context. It was preceded by the publication of Maurizio Rava's "Dobbiamo rispettare il carattere dell'edilizia tripolina," of 1929 and Carlo Enrico Rava's "Per un'architettura coloniale moderna," of 1931 – articles which clearly asserted that a modern colonial architecture should be based on a re-interpretation of indigenous Libyan constructions.⁵ Moreover, all of these writings can be linked to the much earlier projects and theoretical speculations of Gustavo Giovannoni and Marcello Piacentini. Through their participation in the journal *Architettura e Arti Decorative* in the early 1920s, these architects cultivated an interest in minor architecture and supported a policy of *ambientismo* in the modernization of the historic centers of cities.⁶ This connection is certainly evident in the first of these writings, which offers a vigorous defense for the preservation of the "environmental value" of the characteristic areas of the city of Tripoli. The elder Rava argued that despite the apparent modesty of its indigenous

⁵ There is some scholarly disagreement as to whether these two articles were, in fact, written by Carlo Enrico Rava. In the context of the present discussion, the authorship of these writings is less important than the theoretical terrain that they cover. The first article was part of a report submitted by Maurizio Rava to the *Municipio di Tripoli* in September 1929, which called for a careful resolution of the urban planning of this city. Eventually published in *L'Avvenire di Tripoli* under the title "Per una Tripoli più bella," and *l'Oltremare* under the title listed above, the influence would be largely among the local community and colonial enthusiasts. The writings by Carlo Enrico Rava were clearly linked to contemporary architectural discourse in Italy, their publication in *Domus* being at the same time as the second *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* in Rome. See, Maurizio Rava, "Dobbiamo rispettare il carattere dell'edilizia tripolina," and Carlo Enrico Rava, "Di un architettura coloniale moderna, parte prima e seconda."

⁶ For a general presentation of the activities of Giovannoni and Piacentini with *Architettura e Arti Decorative*, see Etlin, "Architettura e Arti Decorative: The Virtues of Rustic Architecture," in *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940*, 134-9. This journal was a product of the activities of the *Associazione artistica fra i cultori di architettura* in Rome, which began in 1890. This group was the testing ground for figures like Giovannoni and Piacentini, who rose to prominence in the early years of the 20th century. It also produced a series of three publications beginning in 1926 entitled *Architettura minore in Italia*, which documented this architecture and called for a social commitment to modern urban housing. See *Associazione artistica fra i cultori di architettura in Roma, Architettura minore in Italia*.

architecture, this city had "a great importance in the minor local architecture."⁷ The reasons given for this preservationist approach were largely touristic. At a time when the city was about to undergo substantial growth, Rava was concerned with insuring Tripoli's future viability as a tourist center of great importance in the North African context.⁸ This article also identifies this vernacular as the basis for contemporary constructions, arguing that "the Arab houses which are almost always balanced in their geometry and alternating play of volumes offer... innumerable models here to be inspired."⁹ The indigenous Libyan architecture was thus understood as being the subject of historic preservation efforts and the reference point for contemporary reinterpretations.

The second and most influential contribution to this discourse was made by Carlo Enrico Rava in two articles from 1931, both entitled "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna." These arguments for a contemporary architecture inspired by the Mediterranean vernacular of North Africa should be understood in the context of an ongoing debate concerning the appropriate expression for a modern architecture for the Fascist State. These two essays were published as part of a series of eight

⁷ Maurizio Rava, "Dobbiamo rispettare il carattere dell'edilizia tripolina," 459. This argument parallels almost exactly those made by Giovannoni, for whom the idea of local character was a key component in the modernization of the city. Thus, the concerns that Rava expresses here are almost precisely the same ones evident in the proposals of Giovannoni for the Via dei Coronari in Rome from 1913. For a general discussion of the theories of intervention into historic centers and a more specific examination of the proposal of Giovannoni for the Renaissance quarter, see Vanna Fraticelli, *Roma 1914-1929. La città e gli architetti tra la guerra e il fascismo*

⁸ With regard to the tourist value of this local architecture, Maurizio Rava argues: "apart from the comfort of the European city, [the foreign visitor] finds in the old indigenous or Jewish quarter the impression of Africa and the East, characteristic, typical, extremely interesting in each detail." He goes on to state that in Tripoli these qualities represent viable attractions for the tourist and thus a means of insuring the future status of this colony as a tourist center. Rava, "Dobbiamo rispettare il carattere dell'edilizia tripolina," 459.

⁹ That this article is an initial articulation of the later arguments of Carlo Enrico Rava from his writings in *Domus* in 1931 is particularly evident in its discussion of the Arab house. The assertion was that the Arab courtyard was "the ideal solution, the most logical," while arguing that it was also "intimately ours, since it dates back to the classic house of Ancient Rome." Not unlike his son's later writings, Maurizio Rava also makes a connection between the idea of colonial architecture and the influence of Mexican and South American architecture on that of Southern California. *Ibid.*, 458-9.

written by Rava that appeared in *Domus* under the general title "Panorama del razionalismo" – a collection of writings that were clearly intended to define a new trajectory for the architecture of Italian Rationalism in the face of contemporary political demands.¹⁰ These speculations were also deeply influenced by the younger Rava's direct experience of the colonial context of Libya. This knowledge is evident in the illustration of these two articles with his own photographs, and his later publication of a travel diary entitled *Viaggio a Tunin*.¹¹ In these essays Rava argued that the indigenous Libyan architecture, designed according to the nature and the climate of North Africa, was "born of the most elementary logic" and thus "harmonized like no others with the colonial landscape."¹² One of the principal qualities that made these buildings a suitable inspiration for modern colonial architecture was their Roman influence. This historical relationship was not due to their literal reference to Roman architecture, but rather to the "practical and organizing spirit" that, according to Rava, was still evident in the so-called Arab-

¹⁰ Eight articles were published by Carlo Enrico Rava in *Domus* beginning in January of 1931. They were largely a response to the second *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale*, which opened in Rome on March 30, 1931. These articles are the polemical and public expression of Rava's disillusionment with the narrowness of the Rationalist position that he had earlier helped to define, proposing instead an architecture that was linked to Italy's Mediterranean (and Latin) identity.

¹¹ For a more detailed discussion of the connection between Rava's writings and his travels in North Africa, see Part 1, Section B. Carlo Enrico Rava traveled to Libya no fewer than six times between 1927 and 1931. These visits are documented in two photographic albums kept in the private collection of Rava's family. These visits were due to the fact that, as previously noted, his father was appointed as *Segretario Generale* of Libya under Emilio De Bono on September 1st, 1927, a position he held until October 1930, when he was promoted to *Vice-Governatore* under Badoglio. He remained in this post until late in 1931, when he became *Governatore* of Somalia. Rava's visit of 1931, when he was present for the inauguration of the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* on March 3rd, also included his second trip south to Ghadames, a voyage that is recounted in *Viaggio a Tunin*.

¹² A more complete quotation is as follows: "The conditions of nature and of climate are here the same generators of architectonic form, and therefore these turn out to be perfectly, insuperably rational, therefore also their exterior look, in which no elements appear superfluous (because everything derives spontaneously from the solution of planimetric necessity) plainly satisfies our modern aesthetic, therefore finally, this architecture born from the most elementary logic, harmonizes like no others with the colonial landscape." Rava, "Di un architettura coloniale moderna, parte seconda," 32. In this discussion Rava states that this vernacular is a direct and logical product of the demands of the nature and climate of this region – creating an analogy between natural laws and rational thought.

Turkish house. The second characteristic of these buildings that made them amenable to their appropriation by contemporary architects was their primitivism – a quality that was based on their rapport with the Sahara and Sudan, and resulted in the use of simple cubic, spherical and conical forms. A final quality that defined their pertinence to this task was their Mediterranean character – an environmental quality that, for Rava, linked this vernacular with that of the Italian coastal regions.¹³

The indigenous architecture of Libya as interpreted in the arguments of Carlo Enrico Rava had been subjected to a process of simplification and abstraction – an operation that supported its use as a rational solution to the problem of the colonial environment. It is also quite evident he believed that it was the specifically Latin qualities of this vernacular that made it suitable to a modern colonial architecture proper to Fascist Italy – characteristics that were seen to derive from a common climatic, geographical and racial determinacy and that linked it to the architecture of other similar regions.¹⁴ Despite the genuine interest in the Libyan architecture that these arguments illustrate, the writings of Rava represent a fundamental erasure of the Arab identity of this architecture in favor of a broader Mediterranean category.

¹³ In the final section of the first article, Rava outlines what he calls the three principal characteristics that constitute the originality of the Libyan architecture. With regard to their Roman influence, he states that it was "the Roman influence... still extremely vital in the scheme of the Arab-Turkish house, whose rational plan is the exact reproduction of that of the ancient classical house, and constitutes.. also today the type of house best corresponding to the climate and the demands of colonial life." The primitivism of Libyan architecture was tied to both influences from past centuries and to "the very recent abstract creations of Russian constructivism." The "general Mediterranean characteristics" were seen "to tie the very Italian local architecture of our Libyan colonies to that of our other Mediterranean coasts, from Capri to Camogli." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte prima," 89.

¹⁴ At the very least the interpretation of Rava of the Libyan architecture – and particularly the "Arab" house and its courtyard space – is lacking in an understanding of its cultural and social significance. Offering a more narrow interpretation of these forms, he claims that the courtyard space in vernacular Libyan houses is the same space found in the Roman domus. It is in a similar light that the use of simple geometric forms can be simultaneously linked with tradition and exemplary of a contemporary aesthetic sensibility. These interpretations are greatly aided by a tendency to project a certain environmental determinacy that allowed, for example, the architecture of California to be considered "Latin", due to its southern location and its relation to Spanish influences coming from Mexico and Central America. Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte seconda," 34-5.

In deference to the political demands of the colonial context, Rava asserted that this gesture of incorporation was not aimed at adopting the "characteristic architecture of the conquered populations." Rather, in concluding his discussion, Rava states: "we are not at all inspired... by an Arab architecture, but we recover, through it, the undying traces of the *latinità* of an architecture that is, first of all, profoundly Mediterranean."¹⁵

Many of the themes advanced by Rava were, at least in part, echoed by Di Fausto in "Visione mediterranea della mia architettura." This essay offers a geographical and climatic argument about the characteristic qualities of architecture within the Mediterranean basin.¹⁶ In so doing, Di Fausto is making a cultural and historical assertion of the primacy of this region which "seems in its beat to almost be confused with the heartbeat of the world." In a rather surprising argument that would seem to rewrite the history of this region according to a western perspective, he states that the Mediterranean was the locus of three great civilizations – Greek, Roman and Christian. Di Fausto asserts that the other populations attracted to this region were of secondary importance, merely contributing to "a mitigation of customs" and "artistic industry."¹⁷ The imperialist overtones of this article are

¹⁵ In establishing the value of these constructions as models for Italian colonial architecture, Rava also had to provide an argument that it was not, in fact, their Arab identity that was being appropriated. In a typically Fascist argument, these buildings were deemed to be already Italian – having been based on Roman precedent. "Neither for this should it be believed or feared that instead of imposing the mark of our dominion, it may seem that servile inspiration is drawn from the characteristic architecture of the conquered populations: the Arab house... is nothing other than the Ancient house faithfully reproduced." Rava, "Di un architettura coloniale moderna, parte seconda," 36.

¹⁶ In a manner that is somewhat more specific to the Mediterranean region, Di Fausto argues, as noted in the introductory quote that "nothing takes away from the influence of the climate and the action that the sacred and fatal basin of the Mediterranean exercises." While related to the *latinità* of Rava, this argument is more narrowly delimited to this region, where Rava argues that there is a common bond between similar zones throughout the globe, including Mexico and southern California. Di Fausto, "Visione mediterranea della mia architettura," 16.

¹⁷ The larger context of this quotation is as follows: "No sea like this one – encircled by three continents – is similarly rich in history. It seems in its beat to almost be confused with the heartbeat of the world. Here were culminated the summit of three great civilizations; Greek, Roman and Christian. Coming from Nordic, Asiatic or African distances, the populations that

reinforced by its visual presentation, which offers images of public works projects executed by Di Fausto under the Balbo administration, including the *Arae Philenorum* along the *strada litoranea*. While both of these authors offer similar arguments about the Mediterranean status of Italian architecture in North Africa, they differ markedly in their mode of relating to the indigenous culture of this region.¹⁸ If for Rava the means of connection was with abstract typological references to the Arab house, for Di Fausto the point of contact was through a very direct and material relationship to these vernacular sources. In discussing his various projects in this region, Di Fausto speaks about a careful and studied process of design, wherein "not one stone was placed by me without filling myself with the spirit of the place."¹⁹ This is an approach to architecture, suggestive of the *ambientismo* of Giovannoni, in which a mutually reinforcing relationship is developed between a building and its context – a relationship in which Di Fausto suggested "even the most humble houses... now speak, and their words respond in harmony to the new edifices erected by me."²⁰

The distinctive qualities of Di Fausto's "Visione mediterranea" can be found in his assertion that a contemporary architecture could be grounded in its physical context and related to a set of historical building traditions without losing its sense of

were attracted there, immediately had the influence of a mitigation of customs and in an artistic industry that has had its own marks of beauty and enjoys the greatest radiant clarity." Ibid., 18.

¹⁸ Gian Paolo Consoli states that Di Fausto was "an eclectic architect equipped with traditional training and design instrumentation employed with great boldness and flexibility, capable of adapting himself to all situations and styles." Consoli, "The Protagonists," 55.

¹⁹ The larger context of this quote is as follows: "What my works brings to light – as regularization and incrementation of a poorly densified city, as new quarters and new buildings – on the coast of the eastern Mediterranean, and in the circle of the island of Rhodes, and in the rock of Coos and in Asia Minor and in the city of Tripoli, and within the Libyan platform, and in Tunisia and in Algeria – gave testimony that not a stone was placed by me without filling myself with the spirit of the place, making it mine – and it is only after this that the new work arose, similar to the flowering of a tree that needs first to deepen its underground roots." Ibid., 16.

²⁰ For a general discussion of the *ambientismo* of Giovannoni, see Etlin, "Contextualism and the Reasoned Picturesque," in *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940*, 101-28. In speaking of his response to the task of design in Rhodes, Di Fausto speaks of his approach to the planning of the city, stating "I gave air to it in reopening its eyes to the light of this sea". Using a biological analogy, he speaks of this having "revived its heart" and "stirred its members." Ibid., 17.

modernity. While the relationship to the vernacular was one of direct incorporation, he argued that in so doing the artist is ultimately interested in the "continuity between yesterday and tomorrow."²¹ Seen in this way, his architecture was a mediation between innovation and imitation, between modernity and tradition – an approach that he regarded as outside of the current tendencies in architectural discourse. Freely employing historical forms like the arch, Di Fausto argued that his projects were also based on "the fundamental character of clarity and structural organicity, of sobriety and simplicity of form, of perfect adhesion to function."²² This was a theoretical approach to colonial architecture that called for the direct incorporation and synthesis of local references into a contemporary architectural expression – a formulation that was related to the *politica indigena* of the Balbo era and accordingly was amenable to and determined by the tourist demands for the preservation of indigenous culture and the provision of modern amenities. The theoretical position of Di Fausto, which proposed a more direct and literal relationship to the vernacular, was no less problematic with respect to the Arab identity of this architecture than that offered by the architects of Italian Rationalism. By creating a more general Mediterranean category which subsumed all architecture of this region the Libyan identity of this architecture was removed by architects like Rava in favor of a more abstract idea of the *latinità* of a Mediterranean

²¹ A more complete version of this text is as follows: "What is necessary is that the artist returning to faith in the continuity between yesterday and tomorrow, fills their spiritual inquietude of today and finds again the line of tradition often escaping from their hands, even if taken fatally, like that of my age, from the necessity to not renounce it with a form of treason to the same youth, to the new and to the latest tendencies." Di Fausto, "Visione mediterranea della mia architettura," 17.

²² It is apparent in this article that Di Fausto viewed himself to be unbiased by current academic or intellectual inclinations. There is at least some truth to this claim, as due to his substantial periods of work overseas his work was to a great extent unrelated to contemporary architectural discourse in Italy. With regard to the use of the arch by Di Fausto, he claims that it was both an important architectural element that cannot be excluded from any architecture and was fundamentally Italian. A more complete context for the quotation is as follows: "A comprehensive look at my Mediterranean architecture, brings out the fundamental character of clarity and structural organicity of sobriety and simplicity of form, of perfect adhesion to function." Ibid., 17-18.

architecture.²³ For Di Fausto, whose assertions recognized a more localized and specific dimension to the architecture of this colony, the Arab identity of Libyan vernacular became merely one of a series of possible regional manifestations of a larger geographical concept. Through a direct incorporation of the traditional architecture of North Africa, this identity was re-enacted in his projects, through an eclectic architectural vocabulary, for the purposes of its harmonizing with the spirit of the place.²⁴

While the theoretical positions of Di Fausto and Rava are quite distinct, their projects did not always completely reflect these differences. Their respective proposals for competition for Piazza della Cattedrale in Tripoli from 1930 would appear to have responded in a similar way to the call in the competition brief to create a setting that was both "urban metropolitan" and colonial.²⁵ [Figures 1.b-5, 3.b-18] Both projects provide a symmetrical ordering of an urban space through the creation of large, regularized building volumes – a quality that was more

²³ It is through the idea of a Latin identity to the architecture of the Mediterranean that allows Rava to make connections between the contemporary architecture in Italy and that in the colonial context (not to mention that in southern California), the Arab house and the Roman domus, and modern architecture and Fascism. Through the fusion of all of these into one tendency – that is, that an architecture could be rational and vernacular – he is able to argue that appropriating the Libyan architecture is actually relating to their own past. For the general argument about the "latinità" of modern Italian architecture, see: Rava, "Spirito latino, parte prima e parte seconda."

²⁴ In a manner not dissimilar from the assertions of Rava, Di Fausto argues that the essential definition of this region is according to its great civilizations, with other populations being merely adding to this legacy. Even if he advanced an argument for the careful contextualization of contemporary architecture his words reveal an imperialist attitude: "Architecture was born in the Mediterranean and triumphed in Rome in the eternal monuments created from the genius of our birth: it must, therefore, remain Mediterranean and Italian." Di Fausto, "Visione mediterranea della mia architettura," 18. Seen in this light, his use of the vernacular is a way of connecting to the colonial environment, rather than an assertion of the importance of the Arab identity of this region and its culture.

²⁵ The proposal for Piazza della Cattedrale of Larco and Rava was from the first stage of this competition in January of 1930, while that of Di Fausto was from the second stage, which was due in December of the same year. The metropolitan quality of both of these projects is, at least in part, attributable to the demands of the competition, which called for a four story building framing the space in front of the existing cathedral. The first competition brief asked for projects which were "imprinted with the dignity of a large city." See "Notiziario," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* III, 11 (November 1929): 1214. While the second announcement specifically called for a colonial architecture, it also referred to the same demands for an urban building. "Nuovi Concorsi. Concorsi di edilizia in Tripoli," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* IX, XII (August 1930).

characteristic of the scale of design of contemporary public space in the Italian context. This urban colonialism also has much in common with the development of Casablanca under Lyautey, whose grand boulevards – like the Boulevard du IV^a Zouaves – were intended to give a more monumental scale to the redesign of this city.²⁶ [Figure 3.c-1] With these proposals for Piazza della Cattedrale, their means of addressing the colonial environment is most clearly expressed in their building volumes, whose large stucco surfaces are articulated to reflect the demands of the climate through terraces, arcades and balconies. The proposals of both Rava and Di Fausto thus offer a general Mediterranean character that was a translation of a metropolitan urban sensibility to the North African colonial environment.

Their response to this context diverges in the more precise definition of the "Mediterranean" character of these two projects. The massing of the project of Rava and Larco is articulated in separate sections, a development that reflects the planning of the upper floors of the project in which housing units are grouped around common stairs. It is for this reason that this project was praised in the pages of *Architettura e Arti Decorative* for its "extremely modern distributive criterion" – something that allowed for the complete elimination of all corridors on these upper levels.²⁷ Following from this arrangement of spaces, large sections of the urban

²⁶ With regard to the Italian context, the time of this competition coincided with a series of projects dealing with urban space and planning in Italy, including the *Progetto per la sistemazione del centro di Roma* of 1929 and *Progetto per la sistemazione di via Roma*, in Turin of 1931. The project for the Boulevard du IV^a Zouaves by Marcel Prost from 1914 was part of a new regulatory plan for Casablanca from this same year. As Gwendolyn Wright notes, this monumental boulevard was a key part of the Prost plan, which was intended to link the port to the commercial center of the city, the Place de France. With regard to the approach of Prost in the plan of Casablanca, Wright argues "trained to stress the Beaux-Arts principles of articulation and separation of function in a building plan, Prost could now apply these principles at the scale of a city." Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism*, 101-2.

²⁷ A more complete quotation of the context of this statement is as follows; "the calm and balanced dislocation of building masses that, though departing from homogeneous elements of planimetric solution, of a standard series, nevertheless results in volumes sufficiently dynamic and well handled. The utilization of the covered areas are logical and concise. The three buildings conceived around the piazza, three and four floors above the ground house apartments on the upper floors, stores and shops on the ground floor: four living quarters per floor are generally served by single stairs, and each one of them were thought of with extremely modern distributive

facades of this project contain covered terraces – acting as screening devices that respond to the need for both shade and ventilation. This articulation within the housing units is kept in balance with the larger context of the project through the design of the upper story of the building, which restores its urban scale and profile. This project is thus a mediation between the direct expression of modern functional planning criterion and its urban and colonial context. This relationship was clearly recognized by one critic who stated "the rationality of the forms is not cool or absolute, and appears also tempered by a fusion... with Tripolitanian and Mediterranean stylistic elements."²⁸

The proposal of Di Fausto for Piazza della Cattedrale, which was eventually realized in 1938 as the Palazzo INA-INPS has a more insistent monumentality than that of Larco and Rava – a quality that arises from the uniform and repetitive nature of its facades.²⁹ [Figure 3.c-2] The two elements that seem to refer to indigenous North African forms – the central portico and its flanking towers – serve to reinforce this effect by assuming the urban scale of the gesture of connecting this site to the waterfront. The visual and stylistic references of the building, though reminiscent of

criterion and resolved with extremely commendable intelligence in the elements of interdependence and disengagement between the single voids." N.d.r. "Un progetto per il Concorso della Piazza della Cattedrale di Tripoli," 571-2.

²⁸ It was also recognized that this project responded to the demands of the Libyan climate, this article stating "in function of the necessity of the demanding climate large ventilation and abundant zones of shade, the designers made great use of covered terraces and some of these are disposed transversally through the body of the building, for the complete depth, in a way to allow the formation of currents of air from one to the other side of the city block." Ibid., 575-6. A more complete context of the passage quoted is as follows: "Some crudity still exists in some of the excessively realistic elements not sufficiently dominated, left to themselves, but the rationality of the forms is not cool or absolute, and appears also tempered by a fusion – not so much objective as sensibly abstract – with Tripolitanian and Mediterranean stylistic elements." Ibid., 575.

²⁹ As a member of the *Commissione edilizia*, Di Fausto received the commission for this project, making use of his original scheme for the second competition of December 1930, which was rejected by the jury. Gresleri, "L'architettura dell'Italia d'oltremare: Realtà, finzione, immaginario," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 33. It is worth noting that the program in the case of the *Palazzo INA-INPS* is different from the provision for housing in the original competition. To some extent this explains the more generally urban character of the Di Fausto project.

contemporary Italian Novecento forms, can also be linked to the *arabisation* of French colonial architecture in Morocco – a quality expressed quite clearly in the "sobriety and homogeneity" of the simple undecorated volumes of the Post Office in Casablanca by Adrien Laforgue.³⁰ [Figure 3.c-3] The project for the Palazzo INA-INPS – like a number of Di Fausto's public buildings realized in the city of Tripoli – fuse an urban scaled neo-classicism and North African colonialism, expressing a general Mediterranean quality rather than deriving directly from vernacular constructions of this region. However, rather than condemning this project for a perceived lack of consistency with his written statements, it is also possible to argue that "metropolitan colonial" had itself become a regional style worthy of appropriation, with its own identity, its own historical development. These urban projects by Di Fausto would seem to have been consciously referring to an already established architectural language that was well known in North Africa – a language whose most palpable quality was its generality. As the style for a public architecture in Libya, it would rightly be recognized by the Italians and the Libyans as the architecture of colonialism.³¹

³⁰ The project of Laforgue was one of numerous public buildings constructed in Morocco that arose from the plan of Prost. As Gwendolyn Wright notes, under Lyautey (1912-25) the architecture in Morocco did not apply Moorish details to the buildings in the way that was practiced in Algeria under Jonnart (1903-11). Rather, she suggests their work is inspired by "the stark simplicity of volume and contour; the relation of blank facade to carefully placed concentrations of ornament." Wright, *The Politics of design in French Colonial Urbanism*, 108-9. François Béguin refers to the *arabisations* of Morocco as follows: "The Moroccan *arabisation*, which Prost and Laprade developed in close cooperation with Lyautey, stands out from earlier variants because of a sobriety and a homogeneity of inspiration that is immediately perceptible in the general aspect of all the public buildings." Béguin, *Arabisations. Decor architectural et tracé urbain en Afrique du Nord, 1830-1950* (Paris: Dunod, 1983), 61.

³¹ In choosing to refer to the language of the public architecture of French colonialism in these projects, Di Fausto it can be argued that Di Fausto was making a similar choice to that made by the British in India. Thomas Metcalf asserts that the development of "Indo-Saracenic" style in the late 19th century by architects like Robert Fellowes Chisholm, Major C. Mant and Samuel Swinton Jacob was a conscious effort to refer to a building tradition that would be understood by the local populations as that of a conqueror. Although the architecture of French colonialism was not a historical style, it was understood in North Africa as a colonial one. See Thomas R. Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

While the urban proposals of Larco and Rava and Di Fausto reveal the mediation between a modern content and references to the local vernacular, it was in the realm of tourism that this relationship achieved its most eloquent expression. To a great extent the primacy of these concerns to the tourist discourse can be attributed to the central nature of tourism to the development of Libya. It is also quite clear that this dialectical relationship between the metropolitan and the indigenous is intrinsic to the demands of tourism, in which local culture was an important asset and the desire for modernity a natural expectation of the traveler. One of the most important early tourist facilities designed under Italian colonial rule in North Africa, the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* by Larco and Rava (1928-31), was designed and constructed during a period when the architectural culture in this colony was open to contemporary developments in Italy. Through the figure of Alessandro Limongelli, who acted as the *Consulente* for the municipality from 1928 to 1932, a number of invited competitions were undertaken – such as that for the Piazza della Cattedrale. Due to prominent nature of these events within architectural culture in Italy, the approach to architecture in Libya took a distinct turn away from the arabising tendencies that had marked its early history. This shift is reflected both in Limongelli's own projects – like his *"Grande Albergo agli Scavi"* in Cyrene of 1932 – and the proposals and projects of a group of young architects like Rava, Adalberto Libera, Giovanni Pellegrini and Luigi Piccinato who brought the current architectural discourse in Italy to Libya.³² [Figure 3.c-4] The presence of

³² Marida Talamona noted that Limongelli was appointed as *Consulente* in 1928, a post he held until his death in February of 1932. In addition to the competition for Piazza della Cattedrale, which was held in January and December 1930, there were a number of other competitions including one sponsored by the *Fiera di Tripoli* in 1929 for the design of housing units (one for Italians and one for Libyans), and one for the design of a rural church for an agricultural village in 1930. Talamona also argues that the presence of Limongelli was responsible for the change in direction from the Moorish style prevalent during the period of Volpi and the eclecticism of Armando Brasini, the first *Consulente* for the municipality in Tripolitania. Talamona, "Città europea e città araba in Tripolitania," in *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 270. Due to these competitions and other related projects, young Italian architects like Rava, Libera and

Maurizio Rava as the Segretario Generale of Tripolitania from 1927 was another factor in creating a climate in this colony that was open to Rationalist architecture. Significantly, Rava was also a crucial figure in fostering an increasing concern for the local vernacular of Libya on the part of the Municipality of Tripoli – something which served to legitimize this indigenous heritage as an important part of the architectural patrimony of this region and thus influence the future planning of this city.³³

The project of Larco and Rava was a product of a particular moment in architectural culture in Italy – that of the emergence of Italian Rationalism. The drawings for the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* were exhibited at the first *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* held in Rome in March of 1928, less than a year after the *Gruppo 7* had published its final manifesto in *Rassegna Italiana*.³⁴ [Figure 1.b-3] However, not only was this project a significant part of the first major public exhibition of Rationalism in Italy, it was also embroiled in the ensuing debate over the validity of this approach to architecture in the Italian context. The project of Larco and Rava was one of several discussed in an article

Piccinato turned to the colonies for opportunities not available in Italy. Pellegrini, a recent graduate of the Politecnico of Milan, moved to Tripoli in the early 1930s to work for the municipality and ended up producing a significant body of rationalist inspired villas, several of which were published in Alberto Sartoris, *Gli elementi dell'architettura funzionale* of 1941.

³³ The submission of a report by Rava to the mayor of Tripoli in 1929 was an important contribution to architectural discourse in this colony. Reporting on the conditions in the city, this document called for the control of development of the city so as to preserve the characteristic qualities of the old city and the oasis and their indigenous constructions. *Ibid.*, 270-1. This report, which was published later in 1929 in *L'Avvenire di Tripoli* and *L'Oltremare*, was one of the contributing factors to the value placed on indigenous architecture in the master plan of Tripoli of 1931-33 by Alpagò Novello, Cabiati and Ferrazza.

³⁴ The *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* was one of seven projects by Larco and Rava in this exhibition, and significantly the only one among these that was ever built. *La Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale. Roma VI. Catalogo*. These four manifestos are as follows: *Il Gruppo 7*, "Architettura." (December 1926); "Architettura II: Gli Stranieri." (February 1927); "Architettura III: Impreparazione, Incomprensione, Pregiudizi." (March 1927); and "Architettura IV: Una nuova epoca arcaica." (May 1927). Notably, these manifestos were followed in *Rassegna Italiana* in 1928 by two writings by individual group members. Rava, "Dell'europeismo in architettura." (February 1928); and Libera, "Arte e razionalismo." (March 1928).

written by Marcello Piacentini entitled "Prima Internazionale architettonica" published *Architettura e Arti Decorative* reporting on this exhibition – an article in which the author referred to the renunciation of individuality called for by the manifestos of the *Gruppo 7* as form of "architectonic Franciscanism."³⁵ This project was similarly linked to the second *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* held in Rome in March of 1931 – an event which, for many historians, marked the end of the *periodo squadrista* of Italian Rationalism and represented the first attempts by these young architects to see architecture as an *Arte di Stato*.³⁶ Rava was at this same moment publishing his "Panorama del razionalismo" in *Domus* magazine – a series of articles that openly criticized the "intransigent" Rationalism of his former colleagues and called for an approach that recognized the "Latin spirit" of Italian architecture. Perhaps most significantly, Rava was in Libya during the period before and after the exhibition, attending the inauguration of the *Albergo "agli*

³⁵ In discussing the renunciation of individuality in Italian rationalism, Piacentini asks: "Why this sulking, this renunciation, this architectonic Franciscanism? One can live with just bread and water: one can build with just four straight poles and four transverse beams!" Critical of the borrowing of devices like the continuous glass wall, the absence of decoration and the use of flat roofs from other European tendencies, Piacentini calls these formal devices "the new international drugs of architecture." He goes on to question the ideas of pure structure, the supposed economic determinism of rationalism and ask that concerns for "ambientismo" and the expressive nature of materials should inform architecture. Ultimately, arguing that the "purely technical experiments" of rationalism were not architecture at all, he asserts that "architecture is art, and thus a work of the spirit." Piacentini, "Prima internazionale architettonica," 544-62.

³⁶ The second *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale* was held in the Galleria d'arte in Rome on the via Veneto. Inaugurated on March 27, 1931, it remained open in this location through the end of April, opening for a second time in Milan on June 5 of the same year. Visited by Mussolini on March 30, this exhibition caused a storm of controversy over its polemical criticism of the work of more established architects. See Cennamo, *Materiali per l'analisi dell'architettura moderna. Il M.I.A.R.*, 97-106. Giorgio Ciucci argues that due to the controversy that it caused and the resultant disagreements among its members, this exhibition was the last collective representation of the rationalist architects and thus this marked the end of the *periodo squadrista* or squadron period. Ciucci also notes that Bardi's call in the "Rapporto sull'architettura" to make architecture an *Arte di Stato* caused irreparable disagreements among these architects that resulted in their pursuing separate directions in their work. Ciucci states: "The second Rationalist exhibition represented the end, not the beginning of that period in which the rapport between the Rationalist architects seemed, apparently, very close." Ciucci, *Gli architetti e il fascismo. Architettura e città 1922-1944*, 98-107.

Scavi di Leptis Magna" on the 3rd of March and then participating in an excursion from Tripoli to Ghadames later that same month.³⁷

Seen in this larger context, this project was expressive of Rava's independent position within Italian Rationalism – a status that was recognized by the editors of *Architettura e Arti Decorative* upon its publication in September of 1931. This article argues that the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* was a direct derivation of the "the most sane and acceptable" principles of Italian Rationalism – that is, the "pure architectonic constructivity and functionality" evident in "the total and exclusive response of the external expression to the internal organism."³⁸ Other attributes of this project that this article associated with Rationalist architecture include a "unity, compactness and continuity of masses," a "cubicness of volumes, perpendicularity of planes, and longitudinality and rectilinearity of profiles" and "the abandonment of pleonastic and pseudo-constructive structuring elements."³⁹ Several of the photographs that accompanied this article emphasize these qualities through closely cropped images that bring out the abstract geometric qualities of this project. [Figure 3.c-5] The independence of the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* was understood as a deliberate attempt on the part of Larco and Rava to not follow what was considered the "new rhetoric" in architecture. The authors were

³⁷ As is reported in the "Notiziario d'informazioni" dated March 10, 1931, "The fifth of this month I inaugurated the new municipal hotel called "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna," intended, above all, to give a comfortable point of support to the tourist movement always more chosen in its elements and which merits to be conveniently facilitated. With the hotel, constructed in the clever and generous project of the architect Rava, the Italian and foreign visitor will now have a pleasant and extremely modern point of rest and refreshment after the visit of the ruins." ACS-PCM 1931-33 - 17.1.6267.

³⁸ The larger context of this quotation is as follows: "It is interesting to look at the realized project (looking at the plans of the previously cited article) that is certainly one of the most clear affirmations of Italian avant-garde architecture. In it, in fact, we can see pursued some of the so-called rationalist aesthetic postulations and, additionally, among the most sane and acceptable, particularly in constructions of this type. Above all the fundamental ones of pure architectonic constructivity and functionality, that is of the total and exclusive response of the external expression to the internal organism, that which was thought of and felt in its two-fold and contemporary technical-artistic and aesthetic representation." N.d.r. "Architetture libiche degli Arch. Carlo Enrico Rava e Sebastiano Larco," 682-7.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 682.

deemed to have "soundly avoided the application of some characteristic manners of modern international architecture in their hotel."⁴⁰ Rather, so this article argues, this project was "completely contextualized to a Mediterranean country" – having "conserved in the voids the sense of proportion typical to the houses of Libya."⁴¹ An article on this project in *Domus* magazine recognizes this same acclimatization to the Libyan environment – a quality which it associated, among other elements, with the large verandah that faced the Mediterranean.⁴² The visual presentation of both of these articles emphasize this environmental quality of this project through images that present its larger context and particular spaces – like the verandah – that were understood as being conceived according to the particularities of the Libyan climate and its seafront location.

The project of Larco and Rava was thus credited with the same selectivity that Rava himself had argued was necessary to create a more independent direction for Italian Rationalism.⁴³ The *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* designed in

⁴⁰ This article is clearly arguing that this project avoids the fashionable tendencies of the International style in architecture. Some of the manners that it attaches to this movement are as follows: "the adding of massing elements extraneous to the composition of useful volumes, or the systematic use of voids that are more long than high, or corner windows." *Ibid.*, 682.

⁴¹ A more complete context to these quotations is as follows: "The authors have instead conserved in the voids the sense of proportion typical to the houses of Libya: small windows, just a little higher than a square; doors of a long size, of a measure scarcely sufficient. It is curious and symptomatic to observe how from the objective and well-intended application of modern ideas an architecture completely contextualized to a Mediterranean country has resulted." *Ibid.*, 682.

⁴² This project was published in *Domus* in August of 1931, during the midst of the "Panorama del razionalismo" that Rava published in this same magazine that year and just 2 months after his second article on colonial architecture appeared. This article states: "The architectonic character of this building that, in the rationalist tendency is one of the most important constructed until now, has received, also in its general typically colonial intonation, a particular accentuation due to its position in front of the sea." The verandah element was described as follows, "the extremely large terrace facing the sea, which goes around three sides of the building, forms a large raised verandah that outlines all of the rooms on the ground floor and constitutes the natural outlet, particularly precious in the characteristic colonial climate in the region where the hotel rises." "L'Albergo agli Scavi di Leptis Magna," *Domus* 44 (August 1931): 21-3.

⁴³ In the third and fourth articles of this series, entitled "La necessità di selezione", Rava uses projects of "intransigent" Erich Mendelsohn to criticize both the facile application of mechanical forms and "snobbism of new materials." Rather, Rava asks for the public to distinguish, to discriminate, in a word to 'select' that which will be presented as ours." Rava, "Necessità di

1928, would thus seem to have had a direct influence on the theoretical position that Rava published in *Domus* in 1931. That is, this project was "rational but Italian, modern but colonial" – a fusion of the theoretical, formal and technical concerns typical to Italian Rationalism with abstract typological, climatic and aesthetic references to the vernacular architecture of the coastal regions of Libya.⁴⁴ A more close examination of the plan of this project would seem to support this double reading, as it illustrates a clear and logical organization of the program, and is indicative of a broader typological reference to Libyan vernacular architecture.

[Figure 3.c-6] Constructed to cater to the tourist interest in the archeological site at Leptis Magna, this project had to accommodate both larger groups of tourists who would be visiting the site on day trips and a smaller number of people who would remain overnight. The ground floor is organized around a central covered courtyard that links a series of large public rooms, with their own entrance facing the oasis of Homs and the archeological site. Diagonally opposite from this entrance is the area on the ground floor dedicated to the residents – its orientation being toward the Mediterranean – a space which then connects to a second level that contains all of the hotel rooms.⁴⁵ As well as providing the point of intersection between these two distinct audiences, the courtyard was intended to refer to the vernacular tradition of

selezione, parte seconda," 88. These two articles were published in *Domus* in March and April of 1931, at the same time as the second *Esposizione italiana di architettura razionale*.

⁴⁴ The larger context of this quotation is as follows: "while, in some ways we will thus resume and conclude the eternal work of *latinità* as, on the other hand, drawing from the analogy between the indigenous Libyan forms and those of current rationalism – starting point and reason for renewal and completion with all the most technical and practical improvements the still primitive local architecture of our colony – then and only then we will be able to consider to have imprinted the lasting sign of our present greatness, of our new civilization in the works – rational but Italian, modern but colonial – which we will build in our possessions of North Africa." *Ibid.*, 36.

⁴⁵ The publication of this project in *Domus* explains that it was intended for groups of fifty to sixty tourists who would be there just for the day and a smaller number of guests who would stay overnight. This programmatic demand helps to clarify the development of the sequence of rooms on the ground floor and the proportionally small number of guest rooms located on the upper floor (fourteen). A second aspect of the design of the project was the provision for expansion of the number of rooms up to twenty. This would have been accommodated through the construction of another wing of rooms over the lower half of the building, and the conversion of some of the original rooms into apartments. "L'Albergo agli Scavi di Leptis Magna," 21.

the "Arab house" of this region – a scheme which, for Rava, was both derived from Roman origins and reflects modern exigencies where "the conditions of nature and climate are... the generators of architectonic form."⁴⁶

The three dimensional development of this project follows directly from the logic of its plan – the diagonal relationship of the plan manifesting itself in the asymmetrical massing of the higher block related to the seafront. The frontality of the building to the Mediterranean is reinforced by the large covered verandah, which also acts as a terrace for the hotel rooms on the upper floor. The facades of the project largely reflect the influence of Rationalist architecture through their direct mapping of the function of the interior spaces onto the exterior surface, as is particularly evident in the spacing of the windows on the main facade. The relatively blank nature of the surfaces and the variable nature of its massing – which terraces down away from the seafront – seem intended to suggest vernacular constructions. [Figure 3.c-7] Other gestures – including the large verandah and a system of brightly colored canvas panels that allowed for various exterior spaces to be protected from the sun and the wind – integrate this project with its immediate context and the demands of the Libyan environment.⁴⁷ However, the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* was more closely tied to architectural discourse in Italy than it was to its

⁴⁶ "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte seconda," 32. Rava's acceptance of this reference is in great part due to the ability to understand this indigenous precedent as fundamentally Italian and modern. This connection is clearly stated in his first writing on colonial architecture, where he argued that the authentic Libyan architecture was based on three principal characteristics, the first of these being: "1. The Roman influence.... still viable in the scheme of the Arab-Turkish house, whose rational plan is the exact reproduction of that of the ancient classical house, as it continues, at the same time, even today the type of house which best corresponds to the climate and to the exigencies of colonial life, which is best suited to the African landscape." *Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte prima*," 89.

⁴⁷ In its publication in *Domus*, the environmental concerns of this project were well noted. Recognizing that Larco and Rava took advantage of its seafront location with a series of verandahs, terraces and loggias, this article remarks that this series of elements have "in their spirit some characteristics of a steamship." This comment shows the delicate balance between climatic concerns that grounds the project in its context and the modernist or rationalist references of the project. This article also notes the canvas panels that were white and orange striped on the side facing the sea and white and blue facing the oasis of Homs. "L'Albergo agli Scavi di Leptis Magna," 21, 23.

colonial context. It was designed and constructed during a period when that discourse was operative in the field of tourism, but the temporary nature of this relationship can be measured, at least in part, by the fact that it was among the first buildings to be renovated by Balbo due to the irrationality of its so-called "Nordic character."⁴⁸ This project participated in the tourist discourse through the experience of Rava himself as a traveler – through the process of abstraction through which he viewed and appropriated the indigenous architecture of Libya. While clearly attempting to contextualize his projects with the local environment and culture, the *mediterraneità* of Rava effectively erased the Arab content of the Libyan vernacular. The *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* was the product of an attempt to incorporate the local architecture into a broader, supra-regional expression – an expression that was, in its essence, already Italian.

The hotel projects of Di Fausto were designed and constructed during a period when the dominant architectural culture of Libya was moving in a different direction from that of the early 1930s. To a great extent this difference was the product of political demands – the Governorship of Balbo having a much stronger polemical direction and thus intervening more decisively in the realm of architecture and planning. The politics of Balbo both worked toward the incorporation of Libya into metropolitan Italy – something that was finally accomplished in January of 1939 – and consciously implemented a *politica indigena* that called for the preservation of Libyan culture.⁴⁹ The tourist architecture of Di Fausto should thus be seen

⁴⁸ In the article entitled "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia," the author notes that after the first meeting of the *Commissione edilizia*, "a few days later the systemization of the pre-existent Albergo di Homs was underway, that for its Nordic character, and therefore irrational in Africa, it was not responsive to its purpose." Bucciante, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 5.

⁴⁹ A more comprehensive discussion of the politics of Balbo is offered in the previous section. The incorporation of Libya into Italy took place in two distinct stages, the first step being a series of administrative reforms that came into effect on December 3, 1934 with R.D Legge N. 2012. These changes called for the reorganization of the colony of Libya into four provinces – Tripoli, Misratah, Benghazi and Derna – with the southern regions of this colony below the 29th parallel

against the backdrop of the politics of the Balbo administration, where the use of indigenous references was a tactical gesture aimed at appeasing the local populations. It also reflects the theoretical approach taken by Di Fausto in Libya and other Mediterranean countries, where he established a reciprocal relationship between these projects and their specific context. This quality is particularly evident in the difference between the *Albergo-casinò "Uaddan"* in Tripoli – whose variety of forms and white cubic massing suggest the architecture of the coastal region in Libya – and the *Albergo "Ain el-Fras"* in Ghadames – whose system of walls and courtyards was based upon its sub-Saharan context. These two projects, which seem to take on their own regional style, reflect two distinct tendencies in the tourist architecture of Di Fausto – the first being a lively eclecticism of forms within a general Mediterranean vocabulary and the second being a proclivity for a more sober or even scientific re-enactment of indigenous forms.

The first of these approaches is evident in the most elaborate project of Di Fausto in Tripoli, the *Albergo-casinò "Uaddan"* – what was referred to by contemporary commentators as the "jewel of modern African architecture."⁵⁰

becoming the "Comando militare del sud." See Bruni, "Il nuovo assetto politico-amministrativo della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*. The second stage was the passing of R.D. Legge N. 70 on January 9, 1939, which incorporated these provinces into Italy. See Ambrosini, "La condizione giuridica dei libici dall'occupazione all'avvento del Fascismo." The tactical nature of the *politica indigena* of Balbo is expressed in Balbo, "La politica sociale fascista verso gli arabi della Libia," in *Convegno di scienze morali e storiche. 4-11 ottobre 1938-XVI. Tema: L'Africa. Vol. 1, 733-49*.

⁵⁰ A more complete quotation is as follows: "The "Uaddan" is the jewel of modern African architecture concerning hotels and the heart of elegant tourist life. In a single building is gathered the hotel proper, the gaming casino, the restaurant, the bar, the theater and a tavern, in which patrons may pause especially in the evening hours after the performance." Brunelli, "L'organizzazione turistica della Libia," *Rassegna Economica delle Colonie XXV*, 3 (March 1937): 328. As the most luxurious hotel of the ETAL system it contained all of the amenities that would be desired by the most demanding traveler. While the complex of facilities are quite large, including a five-hundred seat theater, there were only fifty rooms in this hotel, less than double the thirty rooms of the "*Grande Albergo agli Scavi*" in Cyrene. Due to the special nature of this hotel, it was only held open during the high tourist season, closing in the summer. The price of staying at the "*Uaddan*" was almost three times that of the "*Mehari*," the first being fifty-five to seventy lire per day for single room with bath, the second being eighteen to twenty-five. Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia." 963, 965, 971.

Located along the eastern seafront, this project can, at one level, be understood as a direct expression of the contextualism suggested in the "Visione mediterranea" of Di Fausto – an approach that implies both a close reading of context and a synthesis of its indigenous forms. As a complex assembly of different building elements this project was a response to both its seafront location and the diverse architectural heritage of the city of Tripoli. Through the formation of a large terrace on which these elements were grounded, this project created a monumental balcony that linked the hotel to the waterfront, while also acting as a transition from the waterfront into the city. The relationship between the "*Uaddan*" and the old city of Tripoli is more by way of analogy than by any literal connection. The composite nature of its forms and stylistic references can be seen as comparable to those of the old city – which was marked by a combination of Roman, Arab and Ottoman interventions.⁵¹

However, the *Albergo-casinò "Uaddan"* was more than a contextual gesture or a synthesis of the local architecture. As a rich and luxurious interior world that was intended to satisfy the desires of the most discriminating traveler, it was also an expression of the exoticism often associated with colonial literature – a literature in which "the author experiences the fascination and charm of a foreign land" and "seeks a confrontation with a different culture."⁵² This quality was not lost on

⁵¹ For a general discussion of the historical development of the City of Tripoli and its architecture, see *Islamic Art and Architecture in Libya* (London: The Architectural Association, 1976). The introduction to this catalog provides a brief history of Tripoli. In addition to the Roman domination of the second century A.D., this book notes the Arab rule that began in the seventh Century, the Knights of Malta in the fourteenth, the Spanish in the sixteenth and the Ottoman – which lasted from the sixteenth to twentieth. Although this book states that most of the historic architecture was from the Ottoman period – and in particular the Qarahmanli dynasty which produced the mosque of 1736 and palace of the 1790s – it also notes the presence of one important mosque from the Arab period – the Al-Naqah (tenth Century). Other significant architectural elements from the Ottoman period include several baths and a number of funduqs. See also: Muhammed Warfelli, "The Old City of Tripoli," *Art and Archeology Research Papers* (Tripoli: Department of Antiquities, 1976).

⁵² In discussing the novels of Mario dei Gaslini, Giovanna Tomasello argues that they are "perfectly inserted into the literary vein that we can call decadent exoticism." She later notes that *Piccolo amore beduino* "presents itself as the typical expression of D'Annunzian literature... If on the one hand, in fact, the author undergoes a fascination and charm of a foreign land, on the

writers of tourist commentary, one of whom described this project as a "fantastical construction of a fabulous Eastern taste" that "in admiring it...one is moved by the fantasy to attempt to discover the key to it, as in a labyrinth."⁵³ The exoticism of this project is evident in the popular representations of this hotel – such as a vividly colored postcard which depicts the "*Uaddan*" in a somewhat fictive oasis setting that is considerably more spacious than its waterfront location actually provided. [Figure 3.c-8] Equally suggestive is a second piece of publicity material which presents this hotel as an abstract profile of building forms that have the appearance of indigenous constructions – an effect that is further enhanced by the fact that this image is viewed through an object of Libyan artisanry.⁵⁴ [Figure 3.c-9] Through these various promotional materials, the image of the "*Uaddan*" was constructed as a place of luxurious accommodation that offered the same opportunity to experience a different culture that was provided by colonial literature. Where the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* is clearly situated within the more specifically architectural discourse of the early 1930s, this project participates in a tourist discourse of the exotic in which the invitation to travel was provided by the hotel itself.

The complex assembly of exterior forms and interior spaces of the "*Uaddan*" was thus simultaneously a contextual response to the site and the city of Tripoli and

other he seeks a confrontation with a different culture." Tomasello, *La letteratura coloniale italiana dalle avanguardie al fascismo*, 70.

⁵³ The more complete context of these comments are as follows: "The "*Uaddan*" – the second hotel constructed in 1935 and inaugurated in May – for its luxurious attractions and splendor is destined to receive the aristocracy of the international tourist clientele. It is the only great hotel of its kind on all of the Mediterranean coast of North Africa. Also realized by the architect Di Fausto for the building and by the architect Gatti-Casazza for the interior furnishings, on Lungomare Badoglio, it appears as a fantastical construction of a fabulous Eastern taste, and in admiring it, in its complex mass, in its general disposition, one is moved with the fantasy to attempt to discover in it the key, as for a labyrinth. More than an work of men, it seems, in fact, the work of a young Minos." Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia," 965.

⁵⁴ Krystyna Von Henneberg argues that this object is a religious amulet in the shape of a hand that represents the five members of the prophet's family. For this reason, she suggests this image would be considered by the Libyans as a sacrilegious gesture. Von Henneberg, *The Construction of Fascist Libya: Modern Colonial Architecture and Urban Planning in Italian North Africa (1922-1943)*, 265.

a reflection of tourist demands to experience the unfamiliar. These qualities are to a great extent a product of the program of this project, which as luxury accommodation, combined the hotel proper with a restaurant, bar, theater, party rooms, tennis courts, Roman and Turkish baths and a gaming casino – several of which operated independently from the hotel.⁵⁵ The composite nature of this program was reinforced through the tactic of expressing each of these elements as a separate volume or space. This gesture is held together in two specific ways, the first being through the use of uniform materials on the exterior – something which gives the project a Mediterranean image that is in keeping with the character of the old city of Tripoli. These elements are further contextualized through the podium that acts as a base for the hotel wing, theater, restaurant and casino at the back of the site and is carved out to create a courtyard that links the baths at the far eastern end of the site with the remainder of the hotel complex.⁵⁶ [Figure 3.c-10] The exterior appearance of the project is that of an eclectic assembly of independent buildings that – while clearly linked to their immediate site – create their own self-contained context. The analogy between this approach and the indigenous architecture of this region is especially strong with regard to its monumental buildings, and in particular,

⁵⁵ This hotel was described by the Director of ETAL, Claudio Brunelli, as follows: "For its prerogative as a great hotel, for the magnificence with which it was carried out, for the richness of rooms and services, the *"Uaddan"* is the center of all of the tourist organization of the Colony, and at the same time a point of major attraction to stay in Libya. It has been endowed with a theater, where if need be the best Italian companies are called upon, and a gambling casino, decorated with particular luxury and propriety, here are permitted the same prerogatives as the casino of San Remo. It is the sole one of its type on all the Mediterranean coast of North Africa." Brunelli, "Ospitalità e turismo in Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 4. As previously noted in Section B, the theater of this project was operated by the *Servizio Teatro e Spettacoli*, which organized events involving Italian theatrical companies and orchestras throughout the tourist season. The casino, though also catering to hotels guests was also treated as a separate attraction and was, in fact, a replacement of an earlier municipal casino that was also located along the eastern waterfront.

⁵⁶ Bucciante notes that the terrace is raised above the existing street to allow for access to garage spaces and service rooms. More important however, is his assessment of the site relationship: "The whole structure has the virtue of being perfectly contextualized, that is, of almost blending with the attractive surrounding landscape." Bucciante, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 7.

its mosques and other religious structures. One contemporary commentator on Arab architecture, Fabrizio Maria Apollonj, argued that the monumental architecture of Tripolitania "appears induced by a thousand influences" – something that he asserted allowed it to "reach very picturesque effects and also sometimes of notable beauty."⁵⁷ While the preoccupation of Apollonj was with the Roman and Western sources of these influences, this article does shed some light on the Italian understanding of Arab religious architecture. Accordingly, it can be argued that the "*Uaddan*" makes a direct analogy with projects like the Mosque of Sidi Darghut, which – like most of the religious architecture of Tripoli – was a composite of independent elements that bore the marks of successive additions and restorations.⁵⁸ [Figure 3.c-11 & 12] Moreover, the carefully staged massing of the "*Uaddan*" seems to be directly derivative of the exterior profile of these buildings – which tend to be composed of a combination of minarets, domes and simple cubic masses.

The variable character of the exterior of the "*Uaddan*", which seems to have an analogous relationship to these religious complexes, is more radically expressed on the interior. Designed by Di Fausto in collaboration with Stefano Gatti-Casazza, each major component of the program was given an independent expression within

⁵⁷ Apollonj was one of several commentators on this subject, which included Salvatore Aurigemma, Francesco Corò, Mario Corsi and Pietro Romanelli. A more complete quotation of the statement of Apollonj is as follows: "This Tripolitanian monumental architecture, although naturally presenting a general structure that inserts itself in the great trunk of Arab art, appears induced by a thousand influences, prevalently of Roman and Western origin: nevertheless not missing heterogeneous influxes like, for example, Persian or Turkish. It reaches very picturesque effects and also sometimes of notable beauty, as in the principal mosques of Tripoli and in the mosque of Homs." Apollonj, "L'Architettura araba della Libia." *Rassegna di Architettura*, 455-62. It is interesting to note that this article appeared in a journal that prominently published contemporary projects constructed in the colonies like those of Giovanni Pellegrini and Alpago Novello, Cabiati and Ferrazza.

⁵⁸ The mosque of Sidi Darghut, named after a 16th century Governor, is one of the largest in Tripoli. It is formed by a T-shaped sanctuary, which is connected to a series of surrounding tomb-chambers and a bath that was built on the remains of Darghut's original palace. The mosque is flanked by several irregular courtyard spaces, one of which contains the minaret and several graves, and then an encircling wall that links it to the larger context. This building is both a composite of separate buildings and different historical periods, such as Roman and early and late Ottoman. Warfelli, "The old city of Tripoli," 8-9.

the overall composition of spaces.⁵⁹ This approach to the interior is evident in the contrast between the rich polished wooden interior of the theater – which appears to follow a metropolitan precedent – and the bright and more purely Mediterranean interior of the casino – which was advertised as offering the same prerogatives as the casino at San Remo.⁶⁰ [Figures 3.b-11, 3.c-13] The composite nature of the interior is even more apparent in the atrium of the bath complex, which, by containing both Roman and Turkish bath facilities, attempted to reconcile those two languages with a combination of Roman mosaic floor patterns and a spatial frame that is an abstract reinterpretation of Ottoman precedents.⁶¹ [Figure 3.c-14] Although consistent with Di Fausto's later writings on the nature of a Mediterranean architecture – which implied a synthetic process of assimilation of references to a particular context – the *Albergo-casinò "Uaddan"* pursued that eclecticism to its breaking point. It created an interior which – through a combination of diverse activities and unique settings – is a hybrid space where the tourist was able to comfortably explore a variety of sensations, but without ever leaving the hotel. This phenomenon is one that best

⁵⁹ The architect Stefano Gatti-Casazza, along with Di Fausto, was a member of the *Commissione edilizia*, and as such involved in numerous public projects. Though little is known about this architect, he is most notable for his association with Di Fausto on the hotel projects in Tripoli (both the *"Uaddan"* and *"Mehari"*), Jefren, Nalut and Ghadames. Bucciante, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 4-7.

⁶⁰ The interior of the *"Uaddan"* is described as follows in Vicari: "A sumptuous atrium, elegant but of a sober taste the restaurant hall, rich in furnishings the individual rooms, the *"Uaddan"* – that takes the name of the characteristic and rare Libyan *moufflon* – has party rooms, a large garden, tennis courts, and any service that a large hotel may be in need of. In addition, it is endowed with a theater, where the best Italian companies are called upon, a gaming Casino, decorated with particular luxury and propriety – here are permitted the same prerogatives as the Casino of San Remo – a marvelous Turkish bath establishment and ample and elegant roman baths." Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia," 965. Bucciante makes the following comments on the interior finishing: "The interior is luxuriously yet soberly finished with marble and stucco, and countless plays of light cause the structures to stand out. The small theater, with a seating capacity of about 500 spectators, is one of the most exquisite buildings of its type. Bucciante, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 7.

⁶¹ Although several sources including Vicari refer to the *"Uaddan"* as having both Roman and Turkish baths, their advertisement in *Libia* magazine show them as *Terme romane*. Krystyna Von Henneberg notes that this designation was changed for patriotic reasons. Von Henneberg, *The Construction of Fascist Libya*, 265.

simulates the space of colonial literature, where – in a search for the experience of the exotic – the reader engages with a constantly changing series of encounters with unfamiliar situations and cultures. However in the case of the "*Uaddan*", these lands and these cultures are largely outside of the purview of this colony. In providing luxury accommodation for a wealthy tourist audience, and creating appropriate settings to these various activities, this hotel had itself become the space of tourism – a self-contained interior world that allowed the traveler to escape the colonies for more distant times and locations.

If in the *Albergo-casinò "Uaddan"* Di Fausto pursued an eclecticism of exterior forms that were in harmony with its general Mediterranean setting and an exoticism of interior spaces that responded to the demands of luxury travel, the *Albergo del "Mehari"*, also completed in 1935, represents a more restrained and faithful exercise in the exploration of the local architecture.⁶² [Figure 3.c-15] To some extent this difference is attributable to the more modest program of this hotel, which was aimed at a more economically minded mass tourist audience. This status is reflected in the location of this building – which was along the east waterfront in Tripoli beyond the *Albergo-casinò "Uaddan"* – and the scale of the project – which, though not appearing of a monumental size, was by far the largest hotel in the ETAL system, housing over 250 visitors.⁶³ In response to a program for a tourist hotel that

⁶² Both of these hotels were, in fact, inaugurated on April 29, 1935 by the Principe di Piemonte – who was in Tripoli with his wife for an official visit that included seeing the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli*. Governo della Libia - Notiziario d'informazioni, 31 May 1935. ACS-PCM 1934-36 - 17.1.498.

⁶³ Vicari notes that: "the *Albergo del "Mehari"* – that takes its name from the characteristic racing camel – is the tourist hotel, with large capacity, and every convenience, but respecting the economy of space the most." The "*Mehari*" was officially rated as a second class hotel, the "*Uaddan*" being in the luxury category and the *Grand Hôtel* being a first class hotel. It had a total of 225 rooms, 25 of which were double rooms, and 150 bathrooms. This meant that every double room had a private bath and every single shared a bath with one other room. With regard to the size of this hotel, with a capacity of 250 visitors, it was over double the next closest hotels in the ETAL system, the *Grand Hôtel* in Tripoli and the *Albergo Berenice* in Benghazi, with 120. As previously noted, the prices of the "*Mehari*" were approximately one third of that of the "*Uaddan*". Notably, they were marginally cheaper than the hotels in Jefren, Nalut and Ghadames, which were all first class hotels. Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia,"

could provide modern accommodation at a reasonable price, the "*Mehari*" was a synthesis of local references that were part of the tradition of the minor architecture of this region. In so doing, this project, as one commentator noted, also responded to the demands to provide "everything that a large modern hotel offers of comfort, of hygiene and of rationality."⁶⁴

The relation between the *Albergo del "Mehari"* and the indigenous architecture of this region is grounded in a common approach to planning. [Figure 3.c-16] Located on a triangular piece of land on the Passeggiata Maresciallo Badoglio – the drive along the east seafront – Di Fausto developed the project as a two storey L-shaped block of rooms which was enlivened by five separate courtyard spaces and intersected at its midpoint by a large octagonal atrium space that formed the main entrance and contained the support facilities.⁶⁵ In looking at the aerial view of the hotel, there would seem to be a very direct relationship between this project and the pattern of continuous low-scale housing blocks directly behind the site – similar in their interior courtyards and their extreme modesty of means. [Figure 3.c-17] The positive qualities of these structures were well understood by contemporary historians like Apollonj who, in his discussion of the "minor architecture" of Tripolitania, observed that "nothing is more suggestive than the bare and taciturn

962-4. With regard to the location of this hotel, it is the furthest of all from the old city, the port and the majority of tourist attractions within the city of Tripoli.

⁶⁴ Vicari notes that while this project was modest, it provided all the necessities. In speaking about the amenities of this hotel he states: "Except for a few double rooms, that have a single bathroom, all the other rooms share a bathroom in pairs, that a clever system of closing make independent. It is also furnished with writing rooms, entertainment rooms, bar, telephone booths, mechanical laundry, barber, and everything that a large modern hotel offers of comfort, of hygiene and of rationality." *Ibid.*, 964. This combination of economy, rationality and references to minor architecture are ironically precisely the same complex of terms that Rava referred to in his writings. As will be seen, the difference here is the literalness of the appropriation, which follows quite directly from the original model.

⁶⁵ Vicari makes the following comments about the plan and arrangement of spaces in the "*Mehari*": "with a triangular plan, sober in style, more gracious than elegant, crowned in the front with a small cupola that corresponds to the atrium, ample and luminous, with five small cool and fascinating courtyards, low in construction, all in white, it presents itself brightly to the sea." Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia," 964.

appearance of an Arab house." He goes on remark "this minor architecture, precisely for the purity of its art flowing from the very intimacy of the land and the people, with inexpressible liveliness gives the sense of exoticism and of the picturesque that our avid occidental sensibility asks of Tripolitania."⁶⁶

By appropriating the vernacular domestic architecture of Tripolitania in the *Albergo del "Mehari,"* Di Fausto had found a historical precedent that was proper to the unpretentious program of this project and was thus re-enacting the local culture of this region for a mass tourist audience. A closer examination of the plan of the "*Mehari*" shows that these courtyards were not merely used for visual relief. While the perimeter rooms were served by a continuous corridor system, all of the rooms facing the courtyard were accessible from this space. Rather than the vernacular houses of this region, a more accurate reference in the local architecture for this project is the *funduq* – a form of temporary accommodation and workspace that had served the merchant populations of Tripoli for many centuries.⁶⁷ These buildings were among the most important works of minor architecture in the old city of Tripoli

⁶⁶ This article states: "indeed there remains on the coast a general influence of Roman origin, after all rather vague: but it is quite intimately amalgamated, infused like the romanità of the very Tripolitanian soil, that one cannot say the originality of the style is foolish, while certainly enriched with noble motifs, even if artlessly reproduced, and of echoes, even if distant, of superb harmonies." Speaking more specifically of the so-called Arab house, Apollonj, goes on to make an analogy between its urban and internal qualities: "the atmosphere of peace and mystery that reigns in these streets, emanates exactly from these very houses, composed on the exterior by a cube of stonework, decorated on its face at three quarters of its height by a horizontal pilaster, and perforated only by an entrance portal and by some rare small windows. It is a question of a simple architecture, if even it can be called architecture: nevertheless it corresponds perfectly to the closed and abstentionist mentality of the Arabs, that in their house seek a refuge against the external physical and world for themselves and their families." Though recognizing the attraction, he specifically rejects the idea that they should inspire a contemporary architecture, stating: "it may be absurd to attempt to resolve the problem of modern colonial architecture in Libia by means of a plain and simplistic utilization of local motifs." Apollonj, "L'architettura araba della Libia," 459, 461.

⁶⁷ In the catalog on Islamic art and architecture in Libya, the authors note that the *funduqs* were important to the commerce of the city, often directly associated with suqs (or markets). These buildings functioned both as hotels for merchants, in addition to providing storage and workshop space. *Islamic art and architecture in Libya*. 28. Warfelli notes that in general the *funduq* is a two storey building with an open courtyard that is surrounded by an arcade on each side. The lower storey of these buildings are generally used for storage, while the upper floor acts as a workshop for the resident. Warfelli, "The old city of Tripoli," 15.

– something that provoked historians like Francesco Corò to call for their preservation in the aftermath of the restoration of the Arch of Marcus Aurelius. [Figure 3.c-18 & 19] In discussing the value of these buildings, Corò referred to these two storey courtyard buildings as "curious hotels, that remember the caravansary, from which they certainly derive" and which accordingly "merit the major consideration of the tourist who visits the old streets of the Libyan capital."⁶⁸

As a careful and studied use of the courtyard typology whose most obvious referents are the indigenous houses and *funduqs* of Tripoli, the *Albergo del "Mehari"* was a direct and conscious appropriation of the minor architecture of this region. However, it is important to recognize that in employing such precedents this project did not sacrifice any of the efficiency and comfort that was expected of this kind of hotel – something that was recognized by contemporary commentators on tourism in Libya. In addition to ample general facilities – such as a bar, reading and writing rooms, a barber, laundry facilities and telephone booths – the individual rooms – described as being decorated like ship's cabins – were all furnished with private or shared baths.⁶⁹ A restaurant was also added in 1938, which – through an

⁶⁸ The restoration project of the arch of Marcus Aurelius undertaken by Di Fausto required the partial demolition and subsequent restructuring of substantial portions of three of the city's most important *funduqs*, parts of all of which dating back to roughly the 16th century. In one of two articles which Corò published on this subject, he notes that in the past there had been over fifty such buildings, while since the last years of the Ottoman domination these had been reduced to just over thirty. Remarking that these buildings were almost completely forgotten, on no tourist itinerary and in no guidebooks, this article – which was published in *Le Vie d'Italia*, the journal of members of the TCI – makes the following argument for their value: "Admiring the artistic beauty of many of them, the noisy and typically oriental life that is carried on in others, and in all the richness of local color, one wonders why they have escaped the attention of many people who visit Tripoli." The caravansary, which Corò links with the *funduq*, is an inn surrounding a courtyard where caravans rested at night. Corò, "Alla scoperta dei vecchi "fondugh" tripolini," 201-10.

⁶⁹ All of the commentary that speaks about this hotel stresses the wealth of facilities that it provided for such a modest level of accommodation. For example, Brunelli states: "The *Albergo del "Mehari"*, constructed in recent days to satisfy the ever greater demands of tourist traffic, presents its particular character, as while its rooms are styled by the most intelligent rationalism, at the same time it offers every convenience." Brunelli, "L'organizzazione turistica della Libia," 328. Bucciante projects a similar image of comfort: "The rooms, all of a cabin type, single or double, all have a bathroom and have been designed using all technical means for the comfort of the guests and are furnished with simple yet elegant lines. An ample hall, bar, writing and reading

underground passage and walkway – provided a direct connection to the seafront. It is also clear in the various discussions of this hotel that, despite its debt to Muslim vernacular architecture, the aesthetic of the exterior of the building was understood as modern – being described as "a sober Novecento style."⁷⁰ These qualities are particularly evident in the advertising images of this hotel, which prominently feature the nautical aesthetic of the restaurant and in depicting the main part of the hotel emphasize the strong play of light and shadow on its white surfaces.

The *Albergo del "Mehari"* thus provides a fusion of the indigenous architecture of Tripoli with a modern aesthetic that responded to the demand for comfort typical to colonial tourism. However, when considering the means of reinterpretation of those vernacular constructions, it is important to recognize that the approach of Di Fausto – who has almost literally recreated both the form and function of the courtyard space of the *funduq* – is fundamentally different from that of Larco and Rava in the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* – where the courtyard was merely an abstract point of reference that was eventually transformed to accommodate the program of this building.⁷¹ The *Albergo del "Mehari"* can be more closely related to the project at the Suq al-Mushir by Di Fausto – a building in which the direct employment of traditional forms causes it to reside in the ambiguous

rooms, barber's shop, all offer tourists a comfortable stay that the time spent on the terraces and in the inner cloisters renders delightful." Bucciantie, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 7.

⁷⁰ The octagonal entrance with its central atrium is at least somewhat reminiscent of the domed tombs of the Qarahmanli, which are located just a few yards from this hotel along the seafront. The comments quoted were provided by Brunelli, the Director of ETAL, who made the following comments about the aesthetic of this hotel: "A sober Novecento style, simple, restful, solid. Of harmonious decoration and adherent to the architecture made of agile and clear volumes, of light and of luminous courtyards. The problem of building is resolved in the agreement with the sun, with the sea and with the multi-formed play of shade and of color of this African land." Brunelli, "L'ospitalità e turismo in Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 2.

⁷¹ Not only did the courtyard in the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* not appear as a courtyard, given that it was covered with a glass roof, but its role within this complex is not as a courtyard. In fact, it has two different roles, on the ground floor, acting as one of a series of interconnected public rooms (and certainly the largest), and on the upper level acting as a light well for the corridor linking the guest rooms.

territory between historic restoration and new construction. However, in the former case – seen in the context of accommodation for a mass tourist audience – this gesture takes on a quite different significance. The *Albergo del "Mehari"*, by creating a living environment that was closely related to that of the indigenous Arab populations, became a vicarious way for the traveler to experience this aspect of the local culture of Libya in a modern and hygienic environment.

The *Albergo-casinò "Uaddan"* and the *Albergo del "Mehari"*, while exemplifying two distinct tendencies within the "Visione mediterranea" of Di Fausto – the first pursuing the exoticism typically found in colonial literature and the second more closely linked to contemporary discourse of historic preservation – do not express the full range of his work. These projects were greatly influenced by their location in the coastal regions of this colony, where tourist activities and related facilities often attempted to simulate those of the metropolitan context.⁷² A second group of hotels designed by Di Fausto followed a tourist itinerary deep into the Libyan interior – the *Albergo "Rumia"* in Jefren of 1934, the *Albergo Nalut* of 1935 and the *Albergo "Ain el-Fras"* in Ghadames of 1935. In contrast with the approach taken to the *"Uaddan"* and the *"Mehari"*, these projects explore the extreme cultural differences of the Jabal and sub-Saharan regions of Libya. As part of a coordinated route of travel and accommodation that was organized and run by the ETAL, these projects represent an unprecedented effort to create a continuous tourist experience in this colony. In discussing this itinerary, the role of architecture in creating this seamless tourist panorama is the central and most important question.

⁷² Many of the events and settings for tourist activities in the coastal region, and particularly in Tripoli and Benghazi, were specifically of a metropolitan appeal. These included the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli* which, despite its colonial content, was primarily a trade fair that presented Italian goods to a colonial audience. Its related events like the *Gran premio di Tripoli*, were similarly conceived along conventionally Italian lines. In addition to this, many of the facilities like the Arena at Sciarra Sciat – which was used for events like boxing matches – and the various cinema and theater buildings were metropolitan buildings transplanted in the colonial context.

The route from Tripoli to Ghadames had been understood, at least from the time of the Governorship of Volpi (1921-25), as one of the most desirable and characteristic tourist experiences in the Tripolitanian region.⁷³ To a great extent this interest was linked to the fact that Ghadames had been a crucial stopping point along the caravan routes that linked the Sudan to Tripoli and the Mediterranean. This fascination was then fueled by a combination of literary speculation and reportage that reached a mass audience, and scientific exploration and research that informed and influenced these various representations. In the first case, these more popular publications cultivated an image of places like Ghadames that is reminiscent of the exoticism that has come to be associated with the more romantic strains of colonial literature.⁷⁴ One such example is the book, *La Porta magica del Sahara*, published by Angelo Piccioli in 1931, which offers the following description of the experience of the oasis of Ghadames: "and upon all, around us and also within us, a marvelous silence, a silence as transparent as the water... The impression is of beauty and a fleeting ancient harmony."⁷⁵

⁷³ Other than isolated events like the *Escursione nazionale* of the Touring Club Italiano in Tripolitania in 1914, the tourist experience of Tripolitania only began with the pacification of this colony under Governor Volpi (1921-25). With regard to travel to Ghadames, before its definitive conquest by General Graziani in February of 1924, this town was only sporadically under the control of the Italians after the initial invasion of 1911. Bertarelli. *Guida d'Italia del Touring Club Italiano. Libia*, 221.

⁷⁴ The following is a small sample of articles on the town of Ghadames, which was the most prominently represented in such literature: G. B. Costa. "Gadames, metropoli sahariani," *L'Ospitalità Italiana*. III, 1 (January 1928): 50-3; Corrado Masi, "Gadames d'altri tempi," *L'Oltremare* IV, 10 (October 1930): 411-12; Enzo Cavallaro, "Gadames senza zmalà," *L'Italia Coloniale* IX, 5 (May 1932): 75-6; Domenico Siciliani, "Gadames, città dell'acqua," *Paesaggi libici. Tripolitania* (Tripoli: F. Cacopardo editore, 1934), 137-42; Angelo Piccioli, "Ricordo di Gadames," *Africa Italiana* II, 1 (January 1939): 12-18.

⁷⁵ Piccioli, *La Porta magica del Sahara* (Tripoli: Libreria Edit. Minerva, 1931). The book by Piccioli was one of the most important for the Italians on the city of Ghadames and the former caravan route. Vicari makes the following reference to it in his article on the ETAL: "In that region was written an infinity of pages, good and bad, heartfelt and ineffectual, and was avidly read above all *La Porta magica del Sahara*, the stupendous and elegant work of Angelo Piccioli, which, translated into German after its success in Italian, was also a resounding success in Germany, inducing the editors to undertake other translations. This is the great literature that brings many benefits to our enchanting Libya." Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia," 965.

The image of Ghadames, and of the interior of Libya, was thus constructed as that of a mysterious and timeless repository of the most primitive origins of Libyan culture. These more literary representations were parallel to and supported by a considerable body of research in the fields of anthropology and ethnography, which by concentrating on the historical traditions of this region and its people, ultimately created a scientific justification for the Italian colonization of this region.⁷⁶ Although most of the research on the Libyan interior took place after 1932, when Tripolitania and Cyrenaica had been entirely pacified, one notable exception is the book, *Da Leptis Magna a Gadames* by Raffaele Calzini from 1926. Commissioned by Giuseppe Volpi, this publication, written in the form of a travel diary, provides combination of poetic description and careful observation of the customs and practices of the local populations of this region.⁷⁷ The most significant study of this region was produced by Emilio Scarin, a professor from the *R. Università di degli studi* of Florence who published the book *L'Insediamento umano nella Libia occidentale* in 1940. A culmination of research that had been presented at the first *Congresso di Studi Coloniali* in 1931, this book provides detailed documentation of the patterns of living of western Libya.⁷⁸ What is interesting to note is that the

⁷⁶ Much of this research was either conducted under the support of the *Ministero delle Colonie* or by one of several colonial organizations whose interest it was to support Fascist government policy. For example, the distinction made between the relative advancement of the populations in the coastal region and those within the interior – which was the basis for the administrative restructuring of this colony under Balbo – was confirmed in the scientific research that was sponsored by Balbo. For a general discussion of scientific research during this period, see: Del Boca, "L'Era di Balbo. La ricerca scientifica," in *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi*, 271-8.

⁷⁷ Calzini, *Da Leptis Magna a Gadames*. On the poetic side, Calzini provides the following description of the streets of Ghadames: "From one passage, passing the first gate, we are in the reign of coolness and shade; like walking in a catacomb, every now and then a band of light, a golden fan, escaping from a skylight or from a crack in a wall, blinded with the lightning rapidity of an electric beacon." With regard to the scientific value of this book, noted ethnographer Esther Panetta, recognized the value of his observations on the local populations by including it in her summary of ethnographic research on Libya published after World War II. Panetta, *Studi italiani di etnografia e di folklore della Libia. Italia in Africa. Serie scientifico-culturale* (Roma: Istituto poligrafico dello Stato, 1963), 47-8.

objects of scientific interest of researchers like Scarin – such as the Berber castle in Nalut and the indigenous housing of Ghadames – were also important elements of the tourist itinerary of this region.

These literary representations and scientific activities related to the people and culture of the Libyan interior occurred parallel to the tourist valorization of this region, which began after the recapturing of this region in 1924 during the Governorship of Volpi. In May of the following year, just over one year after the decisive reconquest of this region, Volpi undertook a "raid automobilistico" with General Rodolfo Graziani, traveling from Tripoli to Ghadames and back in ten travel days. One of the first tourist excursions that followed this itinerary into the Libyan interior, it was a metaphorical affirmation of the conquest of these territories. [Figure 3.c-20] The spirit of adventure of this period of travel was well expressed by G.B. Costa who, having made a similar trip with Graziani in 1928, wrote about being "hurled in a small savage automobile towards the infinite burning... of the Sahara."⁷⁹ It was not until the improvement of the road network under the Governorships of De Bono and Badoglio, the initiation of regular transportation service in January of 1929 and the construction of the first hotel in Ghadames in November 1931, that travel in this region was available to a wider audience.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Scarin presented the following paper in 1931, which was a much reduced version of one part of his later publication. Scarin, "Tipi indigeni di insediamento umano e loro distribuzione nella Tripolitania settentrionale," *Atti del Primo congresso di studi coloniali. Vol. IV*, 24-39. His subsequent publication of 1940, was part of a series of books put out by the *Ministero dell'Africa Italiana* entitled "Collezione scientifica e documentario dell'Africa Italiana." This organization of the book follows a rigorously scientific approach, dividing itself into three major sections, I-II territorio; II-La popolazione; and III-L'Abitazione. Through these sections the geographic, climatic, racial and linguistic characteristics of this region and its populations become a pretext to the major part of the study, which is on the various forms of indigenous housing. Scarin. *L'Insediamento umano nella Libia occidentale* (Verona: A. Mondadori, 1940).

⁷⁹ Costa, "Gadames, metropoli sahariana," 50. In an almost futurist inspired piece of prose, Costa combines the emotions of fear, patriotism, nervous agitation and wonder in the experience of travel and even of the town of Ghadames itself. As noted in the text, this "raid" was undertaken with General Graziani, who had been the military leader responsible for the conquest of this region in January 1924.

⁸⁰ Constant improvements and maintenance were made on the roads that linked Tripoli to Ghadames beginning with the Governorship of De Bono. A twice-monthly transportation service

With the Governorship of Italo Balbo – which placed a major emphasis on the valorization of the tourist infrastructure in Libya – and the creation of the *Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia* (ETAL), this route took on the status of a coordinated tourist system. Under the direction of the *Commissione edilizia* of the Municipality of Tripoli in 1934, the construction of the hotels in Jefren and Nalut and the substantial renovation of the hotel in Ghadames were undertaken. By late 1935 not only had these hotels been completed, but the newly formed *Servizio Trasporti* of the ETAL had initiated weekly excursions to Ghadames using Saharan motor coaches – a service that was prominently featured in all of their publicity material.⁸¹ This travel itinerary combined a modern transportation system with a tourist infrastructure that was, in part, derived from the local architecture – something that was reported in an article entitled "L'autostrada del deserto libico," that appeared in *Le Vie d'Italia* in August of 1936. [Figure 3.c-20] Combining an intense interest in the technical aspects of the road system with a fascination for the local color, this article recounts the experience of travel that "satisfies the demands of the most refined tourist."⁸²

from Tripoli to Ghadames using buses began in 1929, with four days travel in each direction and three days in Ghadames. In addition to the hotel in Ghadames, the modest *Albergo Nefusa* was opened in Nalut in October 1928. Bertarelli, *Guida d'Italia del Touring Club Italiano. Possedimenti e Colonie*, 321, 336.

⁸¹ This service was outlined in their travel brochure of 1936 entitled *La Libia*, which states that there were weekly departures on Saturday, with two days travel, staying overnight in Nalut in each direction and with two nights in Ghadames. The cost for this was a rather steep 575 lire for transportation and 250 lire for food and accommodation per person. ETAL, *La Libia*, 16-17. The *Istituto Coloniale Fascista* offered nine day cruises to Tripoli for its members in 1934 for from 350 to 600 lire.

⁸² Loschi, "L'autostrada del deserto libico," 529. This article begins with a presentation of both the hotel network, which it remarks are "scrupulously harmonized to the suggestive characteristics of the local constructions", and the transportation service, which it asserts "satisfies the demands of the most refined tourist." Illustrated by a series of photographs taken by the author of the local color and the hotels, the article provides a condensed account of this itinerary and its various sights, while not failing to remark on various aspects of the road system – something that is related to a general interest in the road systems of many articles in *Le Vie d'Italia*. It is interesting to see this technical interest side by side with a scientific interest in the local culture of the Libyan interior.

The sub-Saharan hotels of Di Fausto in Jefren, Nalut and Ghadames were an integral part of a continuous tourist experience that was organized and run by the ETAL – a route that was documented in one of their postcard series and in a publication from 1938 entitled *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*. [Figure 3.c-21] By the means of these representations, this itinerary became a curious hybrid of a modern tourist excursion, a scientific expedition and a patriotic affirmation of colonial rule. This experience was characterized as providing an efficient and comfortable means of travel supported by hotels which, in addition to being carefully contextualized to their site and the local architecture, provided "the most comfortable hospitality."⁸³ It is also clear in the publicity material of the ETAL that this itinerary could provide insights into the traditional architecture of this region – such as the so-called "case trogloditiche" of the Gharyan and Jabal regions – and the history, customs and practices of its Arab and Berber populations – imparting views that were taken from contemporary scientific research.⁸⁴ [Figure 3.c-22] Finally, these representations did

⁸³ Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia, *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, 29. These hotels were consistently presented in the ETAL publicity literature as a blend of respect for local culture with the most modern facilities. The following comes from the publication *La Libia turistica*: "In Jefren, Nalut and Ghadames were constructed perfectly equipped hotels. Not very large houses, as allows the local necessities, were studied for the exterior and interior architecture and in every service with loving care studied by artists and technicians. The style of these hotels is harmonized perfectly with the environment, each room with its own attached bathroom, all of the most recent discoveries of the hotel industry are made available to the clients to render their stay peaceful and pleasant." Giovanni De Agostini, *La Libia turistica* (Milano: Prof. G. De Agostini, 1938), 69.

⁸⁴ These communal forms of housing were comprised of individual underground dwellings that were grouped around a shared space that was itself either excavated or pre-existing from natural means. This "primitive" form of dwelling held a particular fascination both for scientific researchers and tourists. In *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames* the experience of coming onto these dwellings are represented as follows: "some Negro maid drags a basket or a bucket towards a hut that seems to be made of mud: small donkeys with lowered ears, walking under the weight of things larger than them, hampers or bags in balance that touch the ground astride a packsaddle; groups of children with long shirts, torn like a spider web, are stopped on the edge of a crater on the surface of the ground: the first troglodyte houses." Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia, *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, 14. Emilio Scarin dedicates an entire chapter of his book to these dwellings. While dismissing the fact that these are primitive dwellings he still manages to essentialize their defensive purpose, stating that "the principal aim of the troglodyte house... consists in creating an efficient defense against the jump in temperature and the violent winds on the one hand, and probably from sudden attacks of raiding nomads on the other." Scarin, *L'insediamento umano nella Libia occidentale*, 144-59.

not fail to point out the various improvements brought by Italian colonization of this region – both through the development of agricultural areas, like the tobacco fields near Tigrinna, and the creation of new urban settlements in the historic centers of the various towns along this itinerary.⁸⁵

The first of these hotels, the *Albergo "Rumia"* – named for a legendary natural spring that existed in the adjacent valley – was located on the ruins of an existing fortress from the period of Ottoman rule. [Figure 3.c-23] As a simple horizontal block set in relation to the remains of this existing structure, it seems to have little in common with the forms of the adjacent settlements, which were a series of superimposed circular forms that ascended the sloping terrain. The *Albergo "Rumia"* is equally distinct from the Berber castle, which was called "a magniloquent mountain of gray limestone in ruin."⁸⁶ Rather, its form was more likely generated out of a careful reading of the surrounding natural landscape. Its battered walls and blank stucco surfaces establish a dialectical relationship to the remaining bastion and the horizontality of the plateau on which it was located. As noted in *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, this hotel was also designed in relation to the rugged landscape of which it provided a spectacular view – a landscape whose naturally eroded geological stratification was described as "a piece of Africa that comes apart in crude

⁸⁵ In *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames* there are numerous references to the accomplishments of Fascist colonization in the region of this trip. Speaking of the development of new water systems in the Gefara, this publication states: "this Gefara, until yesterday thirsty and wretched, can now give delicious products, luxuriant vegetables, strawberries year round." Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia, *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, 7. In discussing the town of Nalut, it states: "the real Nalut is the Italian one, bright and graceful: it presents itself immediately to the tourist, who arrives from the horrors of the lower valleys." *Ibid.*, 40.

⁸⁶ *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, states that the local settlements of Jefren are in a series of small separate nuclei, the closest one being inhabited by the cabila of Tagarbost. The following is a rather vivid description of this settlement: "their houses run high in superimposed circles of round walls overflowing; excretions, one could say, of the entrails of the same mountain." *Ibid.*, 26. This image of an organic and almost anthropomorphic settlement, while it does suggest something of the attitude of the hotel, it in no way is suggestive of its forms. The Berber castle is similarly described as a "mountain" of limestone. *Ibid.*, 27.

cuttings."⁸⁷ [Figure 3.c-24] Its horizontality can thus be understood as a response to similar qualities in the site and the surrounding landscape and as a physical manifestation of the view for which it became a self-conscious framing device.

Although the *Albergo "Rumia"* does not directly reflect the local forms of the Berber settlements of Jefren, it is a product of the same process that produced these kinds of indigenous constructions – which Apollonj characterized as having an "intimate response to the Tripolitanian landscape."⁸⁸ In this regard, Di Fausto was extremely attentive to the harsh climate of this region, to which he responded with a largely solid exterior wall, and the discreet use of loggias and arched recesses to protect the various entrances. Equally well considered in relation to climatic exigencies were the various window openings, which employed a combination of shutters and screening devices – both of which are based on those found in the local constructions. Like the *Albergo del "Mehari"* in Tripoli, there is a certain simplicity and modesty that links this project to the minor architecture of this region – something that is particularly evident in the tower and entrance pavilion which employs a tapered rectangular form found in minarets in the southern parts of Libya.⁸⁹ The interior of the project – also done in conjunction with the architect

⁸⁷ The relationship between this hotel and the surrounding landscape was described as follows: "On the place where the hotel was built, rose the old Turkish castle...whose shade was projected on the valley that falls in the unlimited Jefara, and blocking an incomparable panorama from view, among the most beautiful in Libya. Today this enjoyed from the terrace of the hotel and it is the most precious gift that Jefren offers to the visitor: an enchantment of land and sky, unvaried in magic colors from the dawn to sunset; a piece of Africa that comes apart in crude cuttings, in a effusive light of sidereal triumph, where the mountains, the trees, the houses, even the stones and the grass, are enunciated in incredibly definite contours, as they might be under the focus of a lens." *Ibid.*, 28.

⁸⁸ Although he is quite critical of the crudeness of what he calls the "minor architecture" - which he argues is not architecture at all, and thus not worthy of imitation - he does assert that its strongest qualities are in that it is autochthonous: "Another reason for the fascination provoked by the minor architecture is its intimate response to the Tripolitanian landscape. Rather, this response is thus complete and profound, constituting one of the most important characteristics of this architecture. What I am calling the telluricity of the Arab construction, manifests in the first case with the same material employed, which is generally battered earth." Apollonj, "L'architettura araba della Libia," 459.

⁸⁹ Gaspare Messina points out that one of the characteristic minaret forms, found in the mosque at Socna, is a tapered square, which he claims is found in the southern regions of the country.

Gatti-Casazza – employs rich materials and patterns to create a stark contrast with the stucco exterior – creating the sense of intimacy and repose often found in interior spaces in the Libyan architecture. [Figure 3.c-25] Finally, and perhaps most importantly for its status as tourist accommodation, the Albergo "Rumia" provided all of the conveniences that might be expected of a first class hotel. Although of an extremely modest size – with only fifteen rooms – it contained a restaurant and bar and provided private baths with each room.

In the design of the *Albergo Nalut* – the virtual twin of the project in Jefren – Di Fausto employed a similar site strategy, where a low horizontal building is located on the edge of a large plain, with the restaurant and guest rooms overlooking an immense valley. However, in this case this project faced both this surrounding landscape and the adjacent Berber town – a relationship that by proximity and view alone establishes a more direct connection between this new construction and the adjacent settlement.⁹⁰ This link is enhanced by an unmistakable similarity between the gently sloping walls of the indigenous constructions and those of the Albergo Nalut – something that is particularly well conveyed in the publicity photographs of this hotel – the strong horizontal profile of the hotel and its simple rectangular massing appearing superimposed with that of the abandoned Berber castle. [Figure 3.c-26] What this photograph also communicates is that this relationship is one of opposition – the white smooth surfaces of the *Albergo Nalut* acting as a dramatic counterpoint to the ruinous state of the adjacent settlement. This relationship was

Socna is an oasis, roughly parallel to Ghadames, located directly south of Misratah and Sirt. Messina, *Architettura Musulmana della Libia* (Castelfranco Veneto: Edizione del Grifone, 1972), 64. In the case of this hotel, the addition of the conical shape changes this form and also in some ways links this tower to that found in the "Uaddan", which would seem to also be referred to Muslim religious architecture.

⁹⁰ In *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames* this relationship is described as follows: "like the hotel in Jefren, the one in Nalut, enjoying a stupendous panorama not only towards the primitive Berber town, dominated by the arduous extravagant mass of the castle, but to the subordinate landscape, to that prodigious precipitate of cliffs between the crevices of valleys and the profound chasms of the *uadis*, that slope to the plain in a flooding outburst. This is the "gorge" of Nalut." Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia, *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, 41.

recognized by Claudio Brunelli in the publicity material for the ETAL, where he stated: "the candid and embattled mass appears in particular contrast with the indigenous inhabitations dug into the rock."⁹¹

This dialectical relationship is also conveyed in two postcards that were part of the series that ETAL issued that documented this travel itinerary – the first being of the town of Nalut and the second of the face of the hotel that confronted this landscape. These images suggest a strong connection between the buttressed base of the rear facade of this building and the tapered forms of the indigenous constructions of the Berber settlement. They also project an unqualified modernity – an effect that is the result of the strong horizontal line of the roof, which provided shade for a series of recessed spaces in front of the guest rooms. The detailed development of this facade – including the careful design of its openings – make it quite clear that this building was conceived according to the view of what was described as an "abysmal landscape, that seems to have existed and been uninhabited for millennia."⁹² [Figure 3.c-27 & 28] While, as with the *Albergo "Rumia"*, this project was unquestionably responding to the demands of the tourist audience – providing the most modern comforts in the harshest of climates – this was not its most important role within the tourist experience. Through the various relationships that it established with the town – from the conscious framing of views,

⁹¹ Brunelli, "L'ospitalità e turismo in Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 3.

⁹² The design of the rear facade of this building responds to both climatic concerns, thus the deep overhang, angled entrances, and minimal openings – all of which were either screened or shuttered – and the provision of the view, thus the terrace space, and the openings that were made were carefully selected to provide this. Brunelli makes the following comments about the building and adjacent landscape: "The windows of the hotel face the view of an abysmal landscape, that seems to have existed and been uninhabited for millennia. The crude enchantment of Nalut is destined to remain in the memory of who reaches this remote village in the interior, like a Dantesque apparition: mysterious and ghost-like, without the murmur of a fountain, without the repose of green." *Ibid.*, 3.

to direct references to its forms – the *Albergo Nalut* became an instrument through which the town could be presented and represented to the traveler.

A final relationship between the *Albergo Nalut* and the adjacent town can be found in its representation in *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, where the discussion of its facilities is accompanied by a historical and ethnographic description of its people. This publication is an indication of the intersection of the tourist discourse in the colonies with contemporary activities in various fields of scientific research – studies in which this region and the Berber people were important subjects.⁹³ It is also quite apparent that, in this presentation, an analogy is being made between the "heroic resistance" of these people and the rugged forms of their ancient castle – what was referred to as "a sort of petrified myth." Through re-enacting these local forms, this project of Di Fausto was thus participating in an contemporary ethnographic discourse – the stark and primitive qualities of this project suggesting the stern resistance of the Berber people and the perceived timeless quality of their culture.⁹⁴ The sub-Saharan hotels in Jefren and Nalut share a site specificity and a common reference to the vernacular architecture of this region that links them quite directly to the arguments of Di Fausto about a Mediterranean architecture. However, a critical

⁹³ Emilio Scarin published an important book on the settlements in this region, entitled *L'insediamento umano nella Libia occidentale* of 1940. In this important volume, considerable attention was paid to the various forms of Berber houses and towns. The Berber people are also referred to in numerous anthropological studies, such as Raphael Corso's book *Africa Italiana, Genti e costumi* of 1940.

⁹⁴ In *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames* an extensive discussion is provided of the Berber castle in Nalut, one of the most important and significant tourist sites in this region. Later used as a fortified granary, it was said to have functioned as military defense before the conquest of this region. The following is the myth recounted in this publication: "in the Castle the people of Nalut sustained a memorable siege at the time of the second conquest of the Ottomans: the Berbers resisted the harsh assault for months and months, without provisions, without water, almost without weapons. When their enemies got the best of their heroic resistance, in the narrow streets within the castle they found only piles of cadavers, the majority of which were in an advanced state of decay: true hawks of the Gebel, the Berbers preferred death over dishonor." *Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia, Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, 39. With regard to the primitivism of their culture, they were described as follows: "people from an originally incorruptible type, among whom may walk as revived the tribe of two thousand years ago: the hands of time and the wheel of history are stopped forever: a civilization of shepherds and warriors from the Old Testament." *Ibid.*, 41.

aspect of these two designs is that they are almost exactly identical – this repetition even extending beyond their forms to the relationships that each of them established with their respective contexts. Their use of local forms was general, not specific – the central tower form deriving from religious architecture in this region, but not necessarily referring to the town in which it was built. While the modernity of these hotels can certainly be found in the amenities that they provided to the tourist audience, it can also be argued that it was precisely their repetition – in the creation of a regional identity through the distillation of certain local references into a fixed vocabulary of forms that could be applied on any number of sites – that represents the most modern aspect of these two projects.

The final hotel along this itinerary was the *Albergo "Ain el-Fras"* in Ghadames from 1935 – a facility that was named after the celebrated natural spring which provided water to this oasis town on the edge of the Sahara. A renovation of the original hotel of 1931, this project by Di Fausto and Gatti-Casazza provided first class accommodation with a restaurant and bar and fifteen rooms, each with private bath.⁹⁵ As with the previous sub-Saharan hotels, this project is a mediation between its site context and references to the local architecture on the one hand and the modern demands of tourist accommodation in this region on the other – a dialectical relationship where "the technical perfection of the west merges effortlessly with a picture of pure oriental poetry."⁹⁶ This hotel responds to the formal language of the city of Ghadames – a complex labyrinth of narrow passages, covered courtyards and terraces shaped by dense walled structures – through a massive exterior wall behind

⁹⁵ According to the *Notiziari d'informazioni*, the original hotel was constructed between September 1930 and November 1931. The renovation of this project began in July of 1934 and was completed in March of 1935. "Notiziario d'informazioni." op.cit. While the authorship of this project is represented in several sources as being an engineer with the municipality named Agujari, Bucciante confirms that this project was executed by Di Fausto in conjunction with Gatti-Casazza. Bucciante, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 7.

⁹⁶ Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia, *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, 56.

which is a series of courtyard spaces. [Figure 3.c-29] The modernity of this project, while less apparent in its exterior appearance than the other hotel projects of Di Fausto, is in the technical aspects of what looks like an indigenous construction.⁹⁷ Forming one edge of a large piazza in front of one of the main gates of the old city – a space that is characterized by its luxuriant landscape – this project also establishes a metonymic relationship to this oasis setting – something that is particularly well expressed in the central *portichetto delle palme* where columns shaped like the trunks of palm trees mingle with those of its own verdant landscape.⁹⁸ [Figure 3.c-30]

This literal incorporation of an element of landscape into architecture is an indication of the fact that with the *Albergo "Ain el-Fras"*, the means of appropriation of local references was much more direct than the hotels in Jefren and Nalut – whose forms were a synthesis of a more general, regional expression. When looking more closely at the arcaded wings that flank the central body of this building, there is an unmistakable relationship between this element and the detailed articulation of openings in the *piazzetta del gelso grande* – which was described in the travel

⁹⁷ Vicari notes that to protect the building from its harsh environment the walls of the building had air spaces that were equipped with special heat refracting material. Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia," 966.

⁹⁸ In *Itinerario Tripoli Gadames* the relationship between the landscape and the hotel is established through an initial discussion of the experience of arrival in this oasis setting – something that is described as follows: "the roar of thunder, that thunders in your ears after the course across the desert, will mitigate in tone, ever more calm and sweet; the frayed nerves will relax, a cool relief will run through your limbs." Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia, *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, 55. The relationship between the building and its landscape is an analogous one to that of the oasis: "The building is literally covered by long boughs of palms; from every side their trunks encircle the building, they grow luxuriantly in the internal court and stretch out a thousand arms in front of the glass of the windows. You will be in the magic of green... Do you want to realize the vegetal transparency on which the sweet reflections pour into the main halls, in the rooms, in the corridors? You lead into the garden of the hotel. The palms plunging into the soft ground, are already three years old; if you stay in the date season, you could gather some, at the intersection of the branch and the trunk, the beautiful golden clusters that melt with sweetness: tawny mark among all of this green: the natives call them *deglat en nur*: fingers of light. Within every type of fruit bearing tree: orange, pomegranate, lemon, carob, pistachio. The ground has a fecund bosom, an impatient fertility, a little convulses: a true vegetal folly." Ibid., 56.

literature as an "intersection of gloomy caves, vaults, large niches that pierce the four white wall of the piazza with their shade."⁹⁹ [Figure 3.c-31 & 32] This mimetic relationship can also be seen in the interior spaces of this hotel, whose timber ceilings, rich wall coverings and minimal use of furnishings was intended to create the experience of the characteristic interiors of the houses in Ghadames – which were described as being like "jewel boxes", containing all of the family treasures.¹⁰⁰ [Figure 3.c-33 & 34] While at one level, Di Fausto's direct appropriation of the forms of the town of Ghadames in the *Albergo "Ain el-Fras"* can be understood as a more consistent manifestation of his "Visione mediterranea" – which calls for a careful and measured process of design in relation to the Mediterranean context and its various building traditions – this project should also be understood in relation to its function within the tourist panorama. Through the direct incorporation of vernacular forms, Di Fausto created a seamless relationship between this building and the local

⁹⁹ The arcades of this exterior edge of the hotel facing the flanking garden spaces are directly derived from the forms of Ghadames – these arcaded spaces repeating quite directly the experience of the town, if not the scale of its spaces. The piazza del gelso grande is described as follows in *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames* : "There are two piazze del gelso (mulberry); the large one is the old slave market. The mulberry still exists, planted in the middle and the space seems to be made from the intersection of gloomy caves, vaults, large niches, that pierce the four white walls of the piazza with their shade. Where the poor human flesh used to be put on sale, the walls are dirty and smooth: the thousands of slaves have left you an imprint, brought to Ghadames from all of the regions of the south and here offered to the best buyer." *Ibid.*, 66.

¹⁰⁰ Bucciante suggests the relationship between the *Albergo "Ain el Fras"* and the houses in Ghadames, stating that the hotel: "offers all of the conveniences of a modern tourist establishment, giving to the traveler the sense of finding themselves in an environment of semi-darkness, of coolness and of meditation that is characteristic of the houses of Ghadames." Bucciante, "Lo sviluppo edilizio della Libia," in *Viaggio del Duce in Libia per l'inaugurazione della litoranea*, 16. One of these houses, which was accessible to tourists and located near the "Ain el-Fras" was described as follows in *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames* : "On the outside it does not differ a lot from the others. Crossing the threshold, a steep stair, with delightful decorations sculpted or etched in the walls, leads to the main floor and flows into the central room, that one can say is representative. No furniture. On the floor mats and carpets. The richness is on the mantels of the walls where innumerable silver, pewter and brass vases are collected. This is the jewel box: this is the safe of the family. Until a little while ago you did not exchange money in the desert: these vases, according to their size and weight served as liquid money: many vases, much merchandise and vice versa. Then, are shining brass plates and an infinite variety of mirrors, large and small, plain or framed: then wicker trays or palm leaves, large and small baskets, leather cushions embroidered with silver and gold and other curious and shiny objects the old and new owners of the house were able to accumulate...." *Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia, Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, 72.

architecture – something which, for the tourist, would have served to blur the relationship between the hotel and its historical setting. Moreover, due to its siting just outside of one of the main gates of the town, it acted as an introduction to the experience of Ghadames. As was stated in *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, "it is an anticipation, for the traveler who does not know the city and the oasis, of its delights, of its enchantment of colors, of its profound effects on the spirit."¹⁰¹ In this sense, the use of local forms in this project were part of a self-conscious staging of the image and the patterns of living of Ghadames that a tourist could comfortably experience – something that was enhanced by the fact that the hotel staff were dressed in local costume.¹⁰² [Figure 3.c-35] In so closely replicating the culture of this town, the *Albergo "Ain el-Fras"* became its more perfect replacement. Indeed, to travel to Ghadames, it may have no longer been necessary to see the actual town.

The hotel in Ghadames by Di Fausto represents a certain crisis in the status of architecture, and in its relationship to its context. While the intention of this approach was one of creating a regional expression within a contemporary architecture – something that was particularly successful in the projects in Jefren and Nalut – its implications are quite different. If the *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* of Larco and Rava represents an erasure of the cultural identity of the vernacular architecture of Libya in a process of abstraction and reinterpretation, here

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 56. In this publication, it is stated "the hotel of Ghadames... constitutes the synthesis of the essential characteristics of the town."

¹⁰² The sense of orchestration of the building with its general environment is particularly well communicated by Vicari, who stated: "In Ghadames, the suggestive and enchanting pearl of the desert, at eight hundred kilometers from the coast, the not rare foreigners, attracted as from a spell towards the mysterious and fascinating interior, have the surprise of finding the most beautiful and well outfitted hotel: the "Ain el-Fras"... protected by large thick palm trees, and surrounded by gurgling brooks and gardens. A construction from fables, as we read in our sweet youth, realized by the hands of a man for whom nature was but a divine inspiration... The furnishings, executed by engineer Gatti-Casazza, similar specialist, fully harmonizes with the demands and the singular characteristics of the environment. Shaded patios, with colonnades of palm trunks, allows for a pleasant stay. Also the servants dressed in characteristic local costume, confers a singularly harmonious tone. And the abundance of the palm trees, tall and swaying in the limpid sky, where never a cloud lingers, cheer up the heart with the sweet enchantment of their Oriental poetry." Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia," 966.

we have a quite different sort of loss. Not unlike Di Fausto's project at the Suq al-Mushir, the *Albergo "Ain el-Fras"* so closely imitates the identity of the traditional forms of Ghadames that it both calls into question the line between restoration and innovation and challenges the identity of these historical forms. However, rather than consider this as a fundamentally atavistic and anti-modern approach, when looking at this project it is quite clear that it is the opposite. The *Albergo "Ain el-Fras"* is the logical outcome of the modern tourist demand for historical authenticity. It is related to and a product of contemporary scientific research into the form and the culture of the Berber people of this region – a so-called primitive culture which held a particular fascination for a tourist audience.¹⁰³ This project is also a result of a specifically political discourse that arose during the Balbo era, where the incorporation of indigenous culture was clearly a strategic way of diffusing potential dissent among these people. In so carefully re-enacting the forms of Ghadames, this project was both tourist facility and ethnographic museum, where these people and their culture could be experienced outside of the passage of time.

¹⁰³ The interest in the Berbers was for a number of reasons, the first of which being that they were the most ancient Libyan peoples, having pre-existed the Arab invasion of this region and – as the Italians were quick to point out – were reluctant converts to Islam, having first been converted to Christianity. The perceived primitivism of their culture was also of considerable interest, both to a tourist audience and for anthropological and ethnographic researchers.

Conclusion: Modernity, Colonialism and the Vernacular

The appropriation of the forms and typologies of the indigenous architecture of Italy's North African colonies by architects working in these territories was facilitated by certain developments in both architectural discourse and colonial politics. In the first case, it was inextricably linked with the polemical writings in *Domus* magazine of Carlo Enrico Rava who was attempting to forge what he asserted was a new direction for Italian Rationalist architecture – a direction in which colonial architecture played a central and important role. In the second, Italian colonial politics in the early 1930s were in the process of forming a more coherent policy toward the local populations – a policy which attempted to both incorporate them into metropolitan Italy, while selectively preserving their cultural traditions. This coincidence of a new theoretical approach to modern architecture and a more strategic *politica indigena* rendered the use of vernacular references not only acceptable but desirable. That is, the use of these forms was not a threat to colonial authority, but rather, represented an important part of its political strategy for controlling the local populations. It reflects a stage in evolution in colonial architecture and its related politics that François Béguin refers to in French colonialism as the shift from the style of the conqueror to the style of the protector.¹ However, in the case of the Libyan colonies, these developments were not the product of a completely new political structure created by the colonial authorities so

¹ In his book *Arabisances*, Béguin uses this terminology to refer to the difference between the approach to architecture and urbanism taken in the earliest stages of French colonization in Algeria and Tunisia – which saw large scale destruction of historic urban fabric, and the use of a French Neo-classical style – and that employed beginning in 1900 – and particularly in Morocco under Lyautey – which adopted more nuanced urban strategies and an Arabized appearance. Béguin connects this difference with a shift in French colonial politics to the protectorate model. See, Béguin, *Arabisances. Décor architectural et tracé urbain en Afrique du Nord, 1830-1950*, 11-28.

much as an evolution of an existing system in response to both increasing levels of military control of the territory and the gradual process of its modernization.

The full significance of this appropriation of indigenous forms by Italian architects working in the Libyan colonies was not uniform, however, as it took on different dimensions in each context in which this strategy was deployed. Although only three such conditions were studied in this project, there are numerous other areas in which the Libyan vernacular sources were used, including the design of rural centers for agricultural colonists. In the first of these "contexts," that is, in architectural discourse, the "Panorama del Razionalismo" of Rava offers the concept of *mediterraneità* as a broader climatic and geographical category whose architecture is defined by the Latin spirit of Italian culture. This Mediterranean designation of modern Italian architecture by Rava was a means to both claim a central position for Italy within the modern movement and address the political exigencies of the Fascist state. The question of a modern colonial architecture based on local forms was an extension of this intellectual imperialism, as these Arab forms were defined as being already Italian. The Libyan vernacular was thus merely a particularly apt illustration of an already existing argument about the Latin identity of Mediterranean architecture.

The appropriation of vernacular sources in the architecture of colonial exhibitions – which was the second area of investigation – was a natural outgrowth of the basic task of these events in representing the colonies. Projects like Larco and Rava's *Padiglione delle colonie* from the *Fiera di Milano* in 1928 were intended to be more than neutral containers – they were offered as synthetic representations of the local culture of the colonial context. [Figure 2.a-32] Moreover, as a carefully conceived hybrid of the modern and the colonial, such projects were also self-conscious demonstrations of the indigenous politics of Italian colonial rule. In this

instance, the vernacular architecture of the Italian North African colonies had the status of a cultural artifact through which the native culture of this region could be read. In the architecture of the tourist system in the Libyan colonies – which was the third topic of examination – the use of indigenous forms derives from the general demand of such facilities to accentuate the characteristic culture of each region. The hotel projects of Di Fausto, like the *Albergo-casinò "Uaddan"* in Tripoli, accentuate the exotic and erotic qualities of the experience of colonies – an experience that had already been constructed in the space of colonial literature. [Figure 3.c-10] These buildings also reflect contemporary scientific discourses related to research into and preservation of the local culture, a quality that is evident in their rather direct use of native forms. In this case, the indigenous architecture became a crucial element in the tourist panorama, which was experienced as a built ethnographic landscape.

Despite the diverse implications of the use of Libyan vernacular forms in each of these contexts, these topics are linked through a shared historical trajectory. Indeed, the interpretation of the indigenous culture of these colonies was subject to internal transformations that were evidenced in a different manner in each case. These mutations can largely be traced to the emergence of a racial discourse in Italian politics in the later 1930s – a discourse which led to the passing of the "Provvedimenti per la difesa della razza" in 1938. In architectural culture, when Rava argues in "Svolta pericolosa" of 1931 that "our race, our lineage, our ancient and modern civilization are Mediterranean", he is making a nationalist assertion about the Italian identity of modern architecture. However, in 1939, when he speaks of the "spirit of *nationality* and of *race*" that guided the evolution of Italian Rationalism, he is retroactively aligning this movement with a politics of racial purity.² A similar fault line can be detected in the architecture of tourism in the

² For the larger context of this first statement about the Mediterranean identity of Italian architecture, see: Rava, "Svolta pericolosa. Situazione dell'Italia di fronte al razionalismo

Libyan colonies. The re-enactment of traditional forms in these projects and the general interest in preservation of the historic architecture reflects the racially encoded attitudes of scientific disciplines like ethnography and anthropology, which argued that the Libyan culture was primitive and unchanging. The variable significance of appropriating vernacular forms in the Italian colonies was also a reaction to a specific historical event. After the conquest of Ethiopia and declaration of an Italian empire in Africa in May of 1936, architectural discourse related to the colonies became more preoccupied with technical questions – as in the writings of Pellegrini and Piccinato – and argued for a more coherent building politics – as in those of Rava. This event had an equally profound effect on the *Fiera campionaria di Tripoli*, whose colonial representations were increasingly dominated by militaristic imagery generated by a politics of Empire.

These topics were connected through the predominance of two distinct models for the appropriation of vernacular references by architects working in the Libyan colonies – the first being the *mediterraneità* of Rava and the second being the "Visione mediterranea" of Di Fausto. It should be noted, however, that these models are not fixed categories for the classification of Italian colonial architecture so much as distinct theoretical references which collectively define the larger field in which colonial projects can be located. The Rationalist position of Rava in "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna" proposed a technique of analysis of the Libyan vernacular which followed the practices of contemporary art history. He categorized indigenous works against a scheme of Latin, Mediterranean and African influences. The means of appropriation of these references into a contemporary architecture suggested in Rava's writings followed a similar path of simplification and abstraction. It proposed the embrace of a formal aesthetic of general Mediterranean origin and

europo." op.cit., p. 44. This second quotation is taken from the following essay: Rava, "Architettura di razza italiana," 42.

the adoption of typological references that were deemed to reflect Roman models. Larco and Rava's *Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna"* of 1928-31 is a perfect demonstration of this approach, alluding to the variable massing of vernacular constructions while also transforming their characteristic courtyard spaces into an interior volume. [Figure 1.b-3] This project was unequivocally modern, its "reality" being defined as much through its status as an early built work of Italian Rationalism as it was by its presence in the colonial context. A similar restatement of vernacular references through a Rationalist vocabulary is evident the Villa Salvi of Pellegrini and Agujari of 1936 – a project whose relationship to modern architectural discourse is evident in its publication in Alberto Sartoris' *Gli elementi dell'architettura funzionale* in 1941. [Figure 1.b-24]

The "Visione mediterranea" of Di Fausto proposes an entirely different modernity – one that is more closely related to the scientific practices of the historic preservation of architecture. Not unlike the *ambientismo* proposed by Gustavo Giovannoni in the pages of *Nuova Antologia*, he argues that contemporary architecture should be related to its physical context, establishing a relationship of mutual dependence.³ Moreover, he asserts that a complete understanding of the existing context is the necessary precondition to the proposition of any new project – an understanding that would also include attention to the regional building traditions and use of materials. In contrast with the *mediterraneità* of Rava, the means of appropriation of vernacular forms proposed by Di Fausto is quite direct, leading in some cases to his adoption of their characteristic forms and building techniques. One such project is his proposal for the restructuring of the Suq al-Mushir district in the old city of Tripoli of 1932, which calls for the reconfiguration of an existing gate and the creation of a new artisanal and tourist district. [Figure 1.b-

³ See Giovannoni, "Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova," 449-72; and "Il "diradamento" edilizio dei vecchi centri - il Quartiere della Rinascenza in Roma," 53-76.

21] Although successful as a restoration project, it carefully masks its presence as an introduction of a new activity into this pre-existing context. In some cases, like the *Villaggio indigeno dell'Africa Orientale Italiana* at the *Mostra d'oltremare* of 1940, this preservationist sensibility is carried into the realm of a different "scientific" discourse – that of the field of anthropological and ethnographic research. [Figure 2.a-46] Constructed by the same individuals that eventually inhabited it, this indigenous village was a carefully conceived demonstration of the extreme backwardness of the indigenous culture of Italy's East African colonies, and as such a tacit justification for an Imperial politics.

These two "modern" idioms had their own specific implications within Italian architectural discourse and in relation to the colonial context. The *mediterraneità* of Rava proposes a perfect coincidence between the modern and the vernacular. In employing this approach, his colonial projects were the product of an abstract assimilation of local references into a Rationalist architectural idiom. This encoding of the indigenous Libyan constructions as already modern reveals the fact these buildings were being experienced and processed by architects like Rava according to a modern aesthetic sensibility. Moreover, by overlaying this modernist discourse with claims to the Roman origins of these vernacular sources, any and all of their Arab identity was effectively being erased.⁴ The "Visione mediterranea" of Di Fausto proposes a contextualism in which these indigenous references are embraced, from the beginning, as the essential material of the project – an approach which effectively blurs the distinction between restoration and innovation. According to this completely different modern attitude, the Arab identity of the Libyan vernacular

⁴ Rava carefully and consistently insisted that in borrowing Arab forms, Italians were borrowing from themselves. He was careful to note that for using such forms they should not "believe or fear that instead of imposing the mark of our domination, it seems that we are slavishly drawing inspiration from the characteristic architecture of the subdued populations." Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna. parte seconda," 36.

is merely one of a series of possible stylistic designations within an eclectic architectural vocabulary. Despite these differences, both of these approaches were equally proficient means of representing the indigenous politics of Italian colonial rule. The *mediterraneità* of Rava expressed these politics through the extension of an image of modernization into the colonial context. With the projects of Di Fausto, the direct adoption of indigenous approaches reflects the interest of the colonial authorities in preserving the local culture. While the first of these approaches provides an identifiable image for the Italian presence in the colonies, the second proposes its opposite. The re-enactment of the Arab identity of the Libyan vernacular under the guise of contextualism was a subversive means of rendering colonial power invisible.

In concluding this discussion it is important to reflect on the broader implications of the recourse to "the vernacular" by Italian architects during the Fascist period. These ramifications are, to a great extent, linked to the potential function of such cultural formations within the broader social context – a subject that is discussed in great length by Antonio Gramsci in his *Quaderni del carcere*. He theorizes the concept of folklore as one of a series of what he calls spontaneous philosophies, thereby connecting it with other cultural manifestations like language, common sense and popular religion. For Gramsci, this folklore is spontaneous in that it has a direct correspondence with the members of a given social group at a specific moment in time. According to this view, folklore is not a cultural activity that is imposed on the people, but rather an entire complex of historically conditioned practices and beliefs that emanate directly from an individual within a certain society. Folklore is a philosophy because, according to Gramsci, it is a practical activity that guides human conduct, and as such implicitly contains within it a "conception of the world and of life." That is, it is a mode of thinking, proper to every person, through

which their attitudes and conditions of existence can be explicated.⁵ However, in relation to philosophy proper, which Gramsci describes as a "critical and coherent conception of the world," these spontaneous philosophies are a relatively disordered mode of thinking that only partially and imprecisely incorporate contemporary cultural and philosophical concepts. Their common characteristic is their regionalism, that is, just as a dialect is described as a vernacular manifestation of language, folklore is presented as a localized form of expression that contains many anachronistic elements.⁶

Despite the almost exclusively local significance of such spontaneous philosophies as folklore, language, common sense and popular religion, they play a central and important role in Gramsci's cultural writings. Although their weakness is an inability to have direct political implications, in part due to this regional quality, this characteristic also defines the potential for their resistance to the prevailing forces of society. In this sense, there is a potentially tactical dimension to folklore in Gramsci's writings. Given that it is a form of cultural expression that is linked with a

⁵ The following discussion pertaining to folklore appears in the *Quaderni del carcere* dedicated to philosophy: "It is important to destroy the widespread prejudice that philosophy is a strange and difficult thing just because it is the specific intellectual activity of a particular category of specialists or of professional and systematic philosophers. It must first be shown that all men are "philosophers," by defining the limits and characteristics of the "spontaneous philosophy" which is proper to everybody. This philosophy is contained in: 1. language itself, which is a totality of determined notions and concepts and not just of words grammatically devoid of content; 2. "common sense" and "good sense"; 3. popular religion and, therefore, also in the entire system of beliefs, superstitions, opinions, ways of seeing things and of acting, which are collectively bundled together under the name of "folklore." Gramsci, "Appunti per una introduzione e un avviamento allo studio della filosofia e della storia della cultura. I. Alcuni punti preliminari di riferimento," *Quaderno* 11, §12, 1932-33, in *Quaderni del Carcere. Volume secondo. Quaderni 6 (VIII) - 11 (XVIII)* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1975), 1375.

⁶ The larger context of this statement is as follows: "In the most immediate and relevant sense, one cannot be a philosopher, by which I mean have a critical and coherent conception of the world, without having a consciousness of its historicity, of the phase of development which it represents and the fact that it contradicts other conceptions or elements of other conceptions." *Ibid.*, 1376-77. Of the qualities of folklore, Gramsci states: "This conception of the world is not elaborated and systematic because, by definition, the people (the sum total of the instrumental and subaltern classes of every form of society that has so far existed) cannot possess conceptions which are elaborated, systematic and politically organized and centralized in their albeit contradictory development." Gramsci, "Osservazioni sul 'Folklore'," *Quaderno* 27, §1, 1935, in *Quaderni del Carcere. Volume terzo*, 2311-12.

specific social group, he argues that the elevation of its implications to a broader scale would lead to "the birth of a new culture among the broad popular masses." Not only would this contribute to the displacement of the dominant culture, Gramsci suggests it would result in the erasure of the difference between modern culture and popular culture.⁷ The term that he uses to describe such forms of cultural expression is "national-popular." This concept was largely applied to the discussion of contemporary Italian literature which, according to Gramsci, was completely lacking such a status. The crucial agent in the transformation of folklore into a broad collective expression were what he terms "organic intellectuals," who are the class of individuals on whom a given social group depends for an awareness of its social and political function. It is through such intellectuals that folklore has the potential to become a political force for overturning the hegemonic forces in society.⁸

The important place of folklore in Italian culture and its potential political role was very much understood by the Fascist regime, for whom this topic was the subject of considerable attention. The Italian government under Mussolini was active in organizing a national conference on folklore studies in 1929 and even launched a journal on this subject in 1930 entitled *Lares*. They also created a number of national and regional committees to oversee this specific segment of

⁷ In this discussion, Gramsci argues: "Folklore must not be considered an eccentricity, and oddity or a picturesque element, but as something which is very serious and is to be taken seriously. Only in this way will the teaching of folklore be more efficient and really bring about the birth of a new culture among the broad popular masses, so that the separation between modern culture and popular culture of folklore will disappear. An activity of this kind, thoroughly carried out, would correspond on the intellectual plane to what the Reformation was in Protestant countries." *Ibid*, 2314.

⁸ The idea of "national-popular" is described in the following section: Gramsci, "Concept of 'national-popular,'" *Quaderno* 21, §5, 1934-35, in *Quaderni del Carcere. Volume terzo*, 2113-20. In this discussion, Gramsci argues that one of the reasons that there was no "national-popular" literature in Italy was that it had no intellectuals who were organically linked to the people. The concept of "organic intellectuals" is described as follows: "every social group, coming into existence on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields." Gramsci, "Appunti e note sparse per un gruppo di saggi sulla storia degli intelletuali," *Quaderno* 12, §1, 1932, in *Quaderni del Carcere. Volume terzo*, 1513.

Fascist participation in the cultural sphere, and eventually opened a *Museo nazionale delle Arti e Tradizioni popolari* in Rome in 1941.⁹ The Fascist intervention in folklore studies was characterized by their considerable interest in its spiritual richness and diversity, and a grave suspicion for its potential to promote political disunity. Therefore, they employed a strategy of tapping into these long standing popular traditions, while strongly asserting their role in the constitution of a national spirit. The Fascist promotion of folklore was certainly not a "national-popular" movement, as it was intended to satisfy the desire for such regional manifestations while subverting their political potential. Moreover, the concept of national in Gramsci's writings, which implies the achievement of "a determinate world (or European) level of culture," is altogether different from that posed by Italian Fascism. In contrast with this Gramscian ideal – which is, in fact, an internationalism – the Fascist interest in regional culture was a form of what Gramsci referred to as "folkloristic provincialism." It was the imposition of regional cultural norms on the people.¹⁰

This concept of "folkloristic provincialism" would also seem to apply to the use of vernacular forms by Italian architects working in the Libyan colonies. The *mediterraneità* of Rava was not a "national-popular" movement intended to

⁹ For a detailed examination of the interest in Folklore during the Fascist period, see: William E. Simeone, "Fascists and Folklorists in Italy," *Journal of American Folklore* XCI, 359 (January-March 1978): 543-57. He notes that the Fascist government was responsible for the organization of a National conference on folklore studies in Florence in 1929 and sponsoring the journal *Lares*. The governmental committees pertaining to questions of folklore were the *Comitato Nazionale Italiano per le Tradizioni Popolari* – which beginning in 1932 was filled with party officials – and the *Comitati Provinciali*, which were instituted in 1933. One of the strangest interventions of the Fascist regime in this realm was the abolishment of the word folklore in 1933 due to its foreign origin. From that time it was replaced by the term *popolaresca*.

¹⁰ For a succinct definition of the difference between national and "folkloristic," see: Gramsci, "Passato e presente," *Quaderno* 14, §7, 1932-35, in *Quaderni del Carcere. Volume terzo*, 1660-61. In this discussion, Gramsci states: "the folkloristic is similar to the "provincial" in all senses, that is both in the "particularistic" sense, and the anachronistic sense, and in the sense proper to a class devoid of universal (or European) character." He later defines national as follows: "It can be said that a character is "national" when it is contemporary to a determinate world (or European) level of culture and (of course) has reached that level."

transform a regional cultural expression into an international politics, but rather a search for a national (and Fascist) identity to assert against a European reality. The assimilation of vernacular forms in the colonies was largely an affirmation of colonial politics, that saw this region as part of Italy's historic destiny. The "Visione mediterranea" of Di Fausto, while characterized by a more direct use of Arab forms, was no less of a political gesture. Indeed, their self-conscious use was not a threat to the order of colonial authority, but rather, its most poignant expression. Although this was an instance of the insertion of a non-Western culture into a Western tradition – an in this sense a mutation of modernity – it remained for the Italian architects working in the post-World War II period to more fully explore the material and existential potential of a modern architecture, destabilized by the political and cultural implications of vernacular traditions. It was at that specific historical moment – in the aftermath of the war – that architects like Ludovico Quaroni and Mario Ridolfi not only embraced the lack of refinement found in local building traditions, they also reconsidered the precise nature of the architect's intervention of the cultural and social fabric of Italian society.¹¹

¹¹ It is in light of what Manfredo Tafuri referred to as a "search for truth" that architects like Quaroni and Ridolfi executed projects like the INA-Casa project on via Tiburtino in Rome (1949-54). This project was described by Tafuri as follows: "Modeled after places of popular and rural "purity", the new complex was to reproduce the latter's vitality, "spontaneity" and humanity. No longer the rigorous grids or geometric terrorism of the *neue Sachlichkeit*: here one exalted the craftsmanship that constituted the necessary mode of production of the complex, welcoming it as an antidote for alienation." Tafuri, *History of Italian Architecture, 1944-1985*, trans. Jessica Levine (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989), 17. I would argue that it was the collaborative nature of this project and its debt to the building trades that constructed it that allowed the idea of "the vernacular" to be more than an aesthetic category.

Appendix A. Index to Archives and Libraries

Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome.

Archivio Ente Turistico ed Alberghiero della Libia (ACS-ETAL)

Archivio Fotografico Rodolfo Graziani (ACS-AFRG)

Archivio Gaetano Minucci (ACS-AGM)

Carteggi di Personalità (ACS-CP)

Ministero dell'Africa Italiana (ACS-MAI)

Ministero della Cultura Popolare (ACS-MCP)

Ministero dell'Interno, Divisione Polizia Politica (ACS-MI.Div. PP.PP.)

Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, Direzione Generale degli Antichi e Belle Arte
(ACS-MPI.Dir.Gen.AA.BB.AA.)

Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri (ACS-PCM)

Segreteria Particolare del Duce, Carteggi Ordinanti (ACS-SPD.CO)

Segreteria Particolare del Duce, Carteggi Riservati (ACS-SPD.CR)

Archivio Figini and Pollini, Milano. (AFP)

Archivio delle Pubblicazioni dello Stato, Rome. (APS)

Archivio Storico, Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome.

Affari Politici (ASMAE-AP)

Consiglio Superiore Coloniale (ASMAE-CSC)

Ministero dell'Africa Italiana, Archivio Segreto. (ASMAE-MAI.Archivio Segreto)

Ministero dell'Africa Italiana, Direzione Generale Affari Economici e Finanziari
(ASMAE-MAI.Dir.Gen.AA.EE.e FF.)

Ministero dell'Africa Italiana, Direzione Generale Affari Politici (ASMAE-
MAI.Dir.Gen.AA.PP.)

Ministero dell'Africa Italiana, Volume II (ASMAE-MAI.2)

Ministero dell'Africa Italiana, Volume III (ASMAE-MAI.3)

Ministero dell'Africa Italiana, Volume IV (ASMAE-MAI.4)

Ministero dell'Africa Italiana, Volume V (ASMAE-MAI.5)

Centro Studi e Archivio della Comunicazione

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Part 1. Modern Italian Architecture and Colonialism

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Part 3. Colonial Architecture and Tourism

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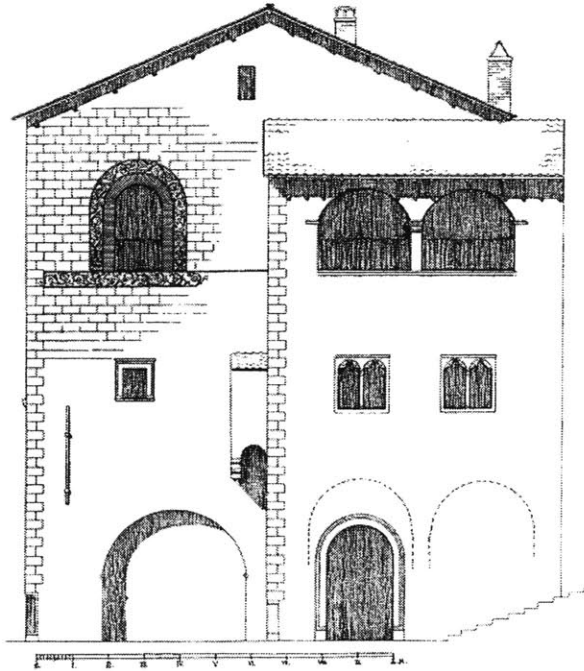
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1.a-1. Palazzo Mattei in Trastevere, Rome.



1.a-2. Gustavo Giovannoni, Via dei Coronari e piazza S. Salvatore in Lauro, Proposal, 1913.



1.a-3. Camillo Jona, Amalfi, 1922.



1.a-4. Marcello Piacentini, Villa in the Parioli quarter, Rome, 1916-18.



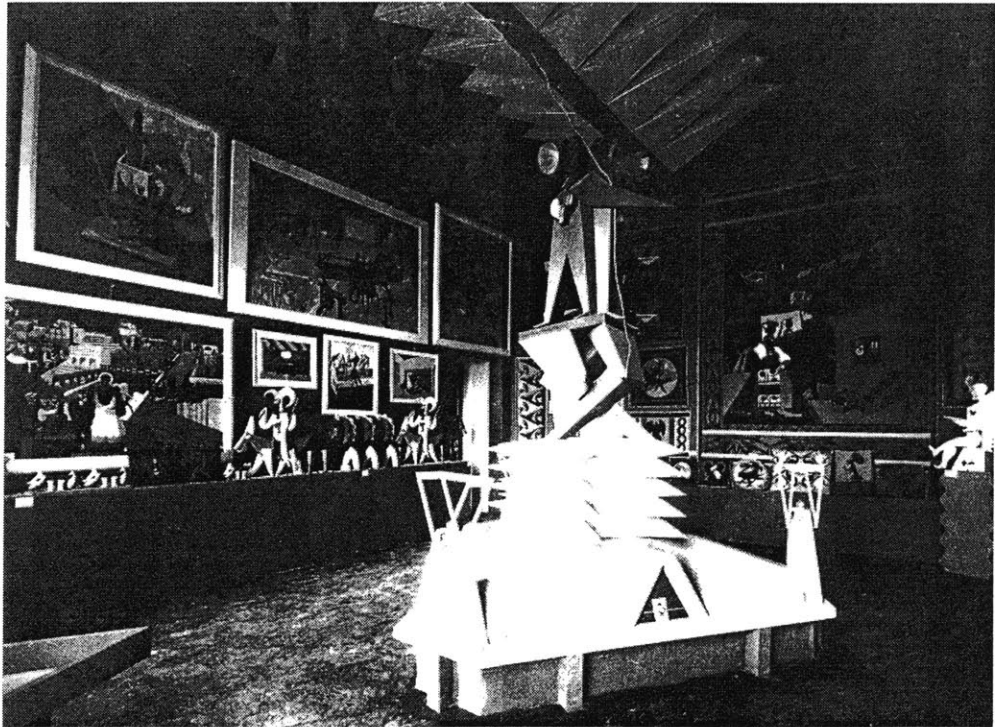
1.a-5. Rural house in Anacapri.



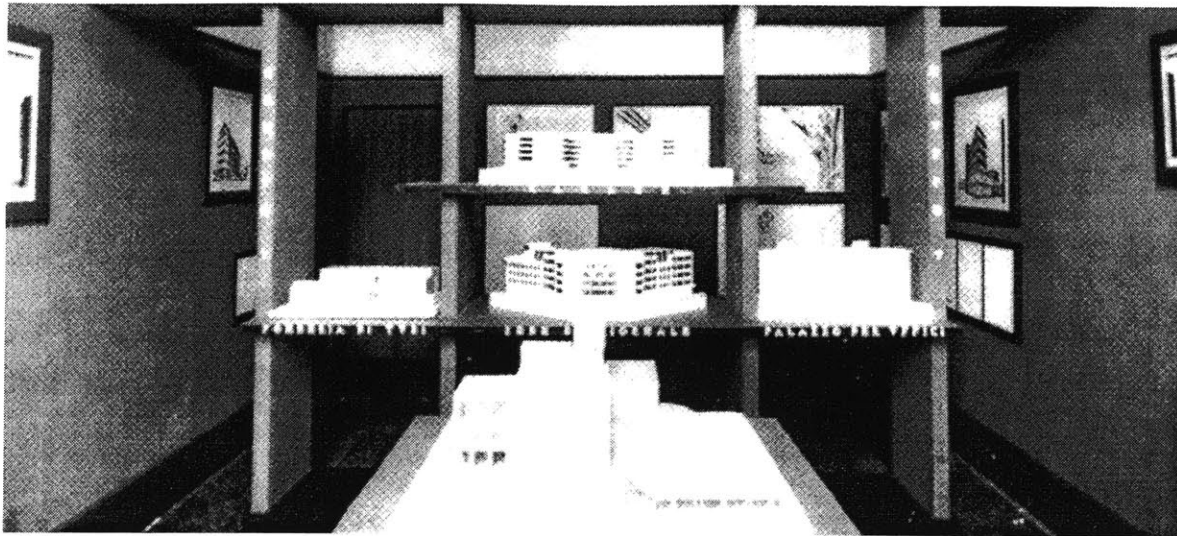
1.a-6. Giuseppe Capponi, Casa per un'artista a Capri, 1927.



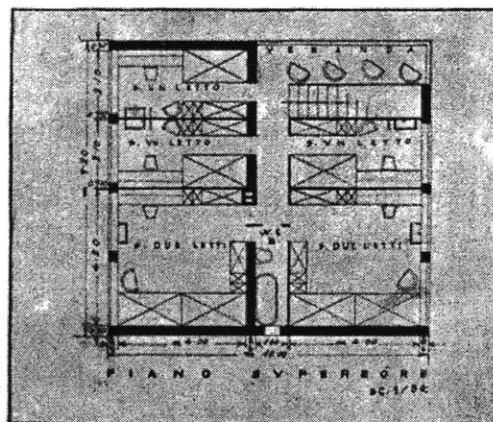
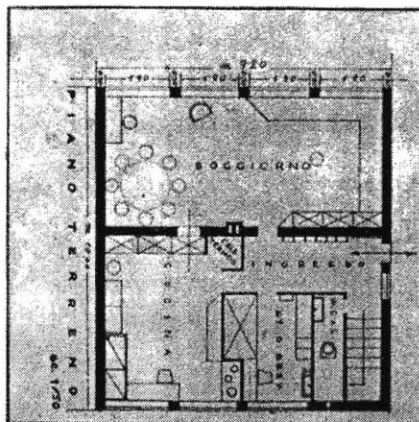
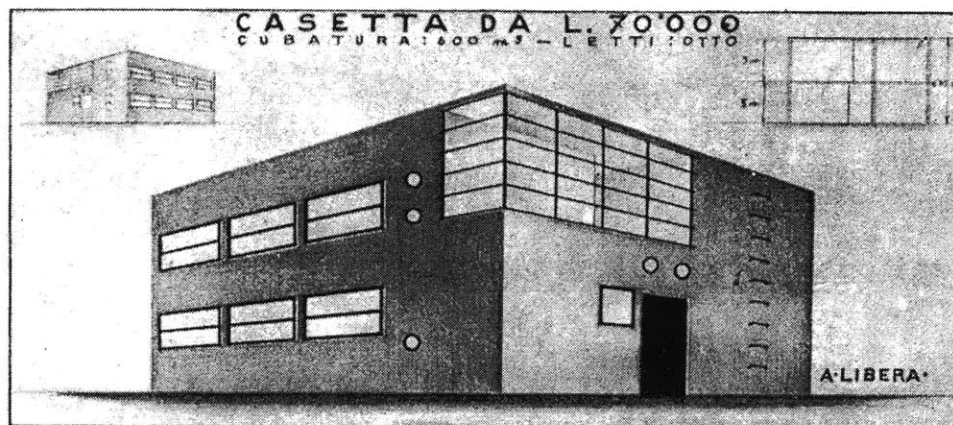
1.a-7. Salotto d'arte calabrese. First Biennale, Monza, 1923.



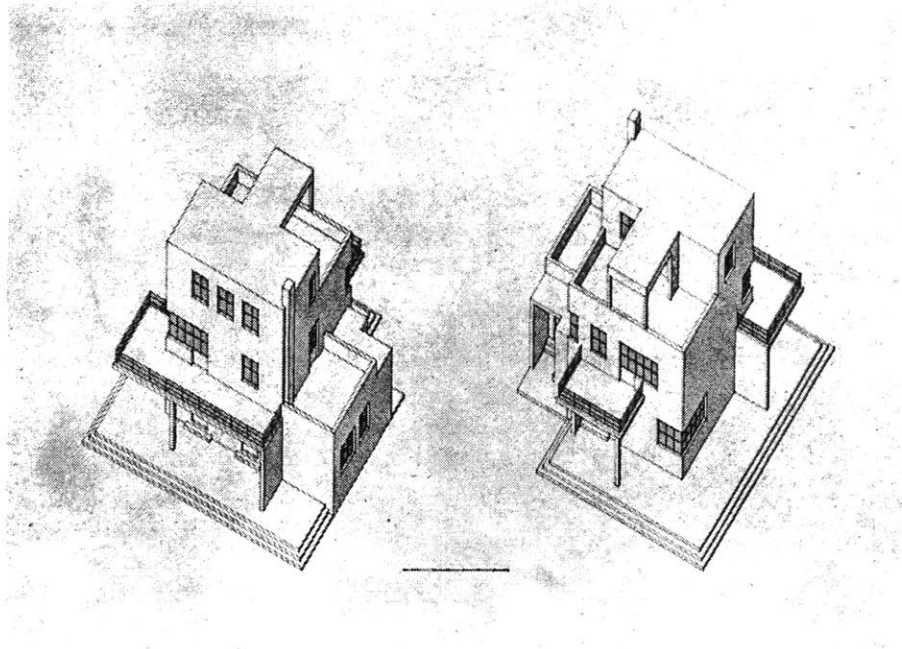
1.a-8. Fortunato Depero, Sala futurista italiana Depero. First Biennale, Monza, 1923.



1.a-9. Saletta del *Gruppo 7*. Third Biennale, Monza, 1927. View.



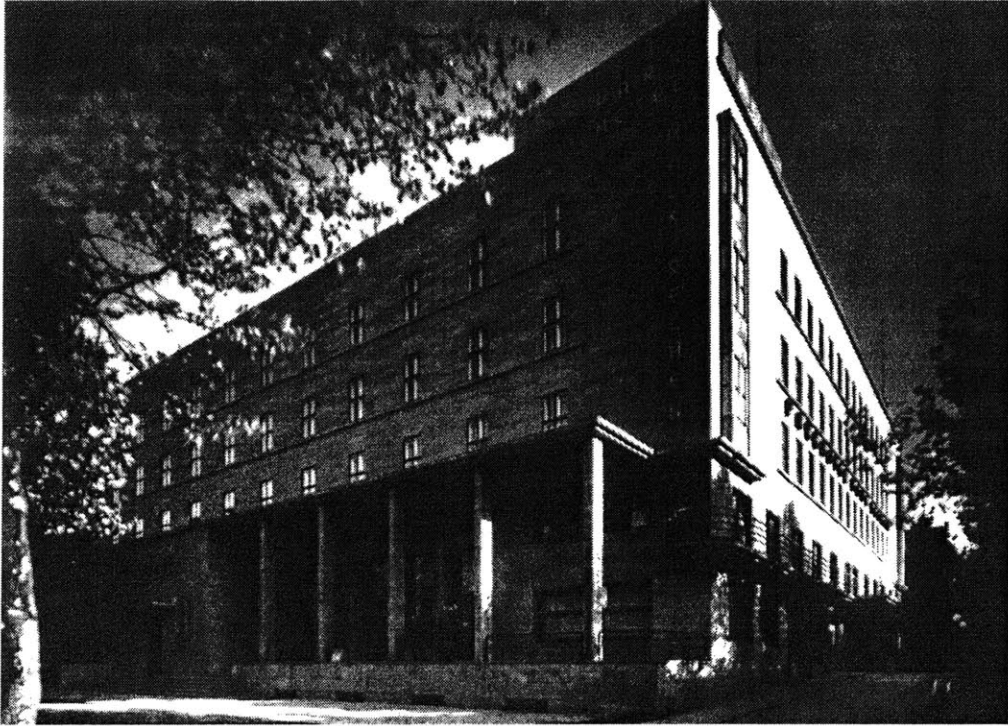
1.a-10. Adalberto Libera, *Casetta economica*. First Rationalist exhibition, Rome, 1928.



1.a-11. Sartoris, Progetto di casa in cemento armato, 1927. First Rationalist exhibition.



1.a-12. *Das Neue Frankfurt*, September 1930. Cover.



1.a-13. Emil Fahrenkamp. Parkhotel, Bochum, ca. 1930.



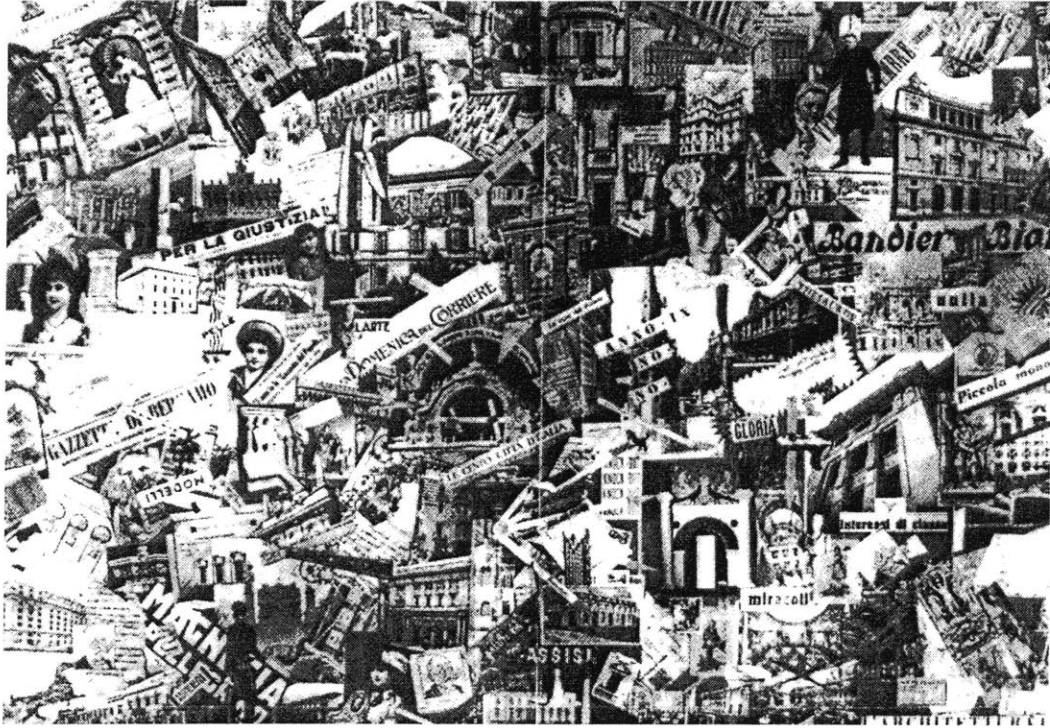
1.a-14. Irving Gill, Mary Banning House, Los Angeles, 1911.



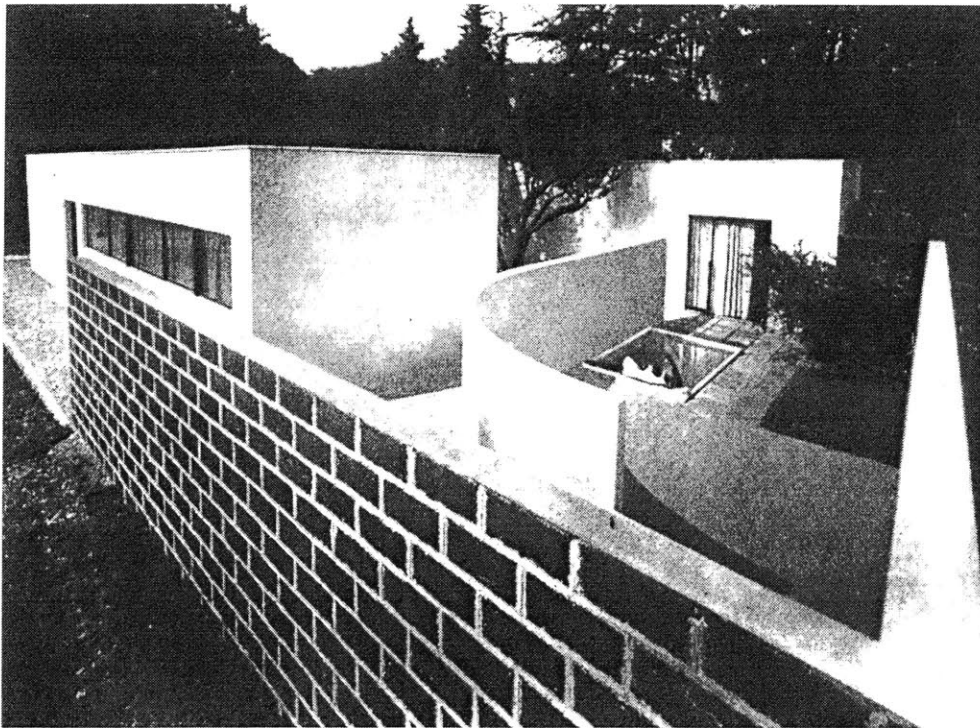
1.a-15. Erich Mendelsohn, Restaurant, Schocken Store, Stuttgart, 1926-28.



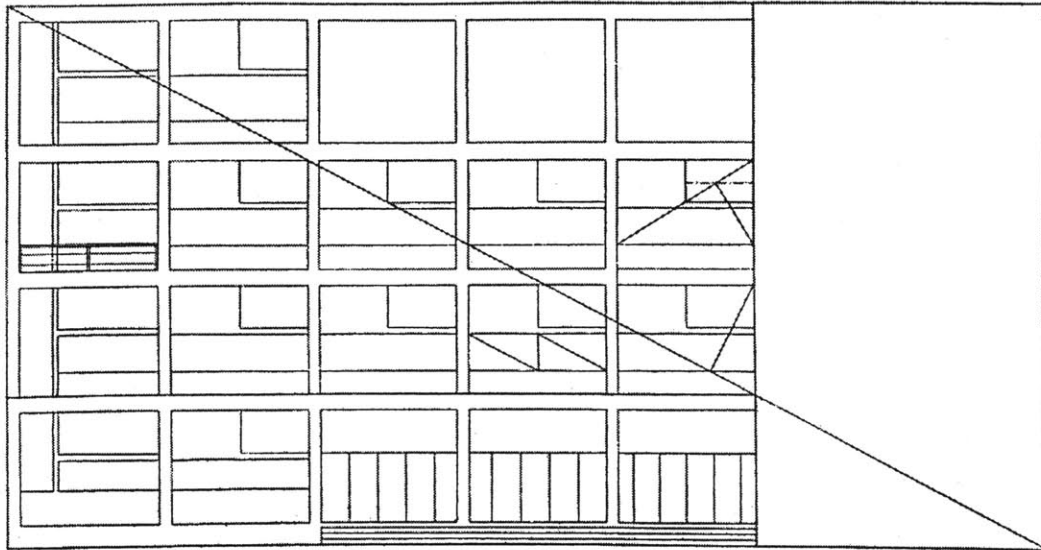
1.a-16. Emil Fahrenkamp, Restaurant, Michel Store, Wuppertal, ca. 1930.



1.a-17. Pier Maria Bardi, "Tavolo degli orrori." Second rationalist exhibition, Rome 1931.



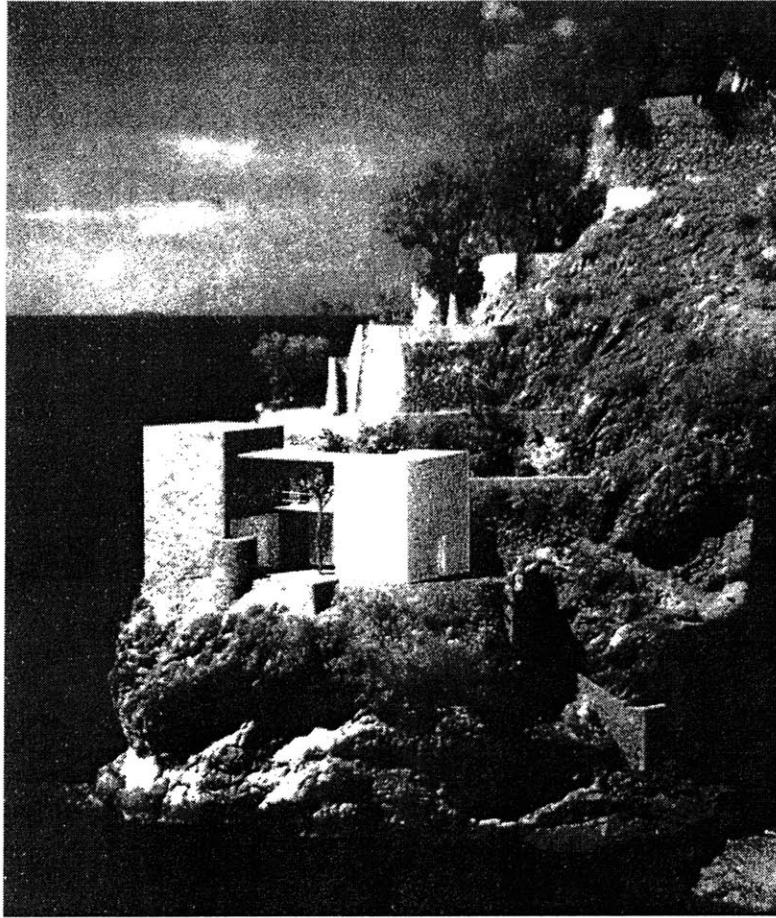
1.a-18. Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini, Villa-studio per un'artista. Fifth Triennale, Milan, 1933.



1.a-19. Giuseppe Terragni, Casa del Fascio, Como, 1932-36. Regulating lines.



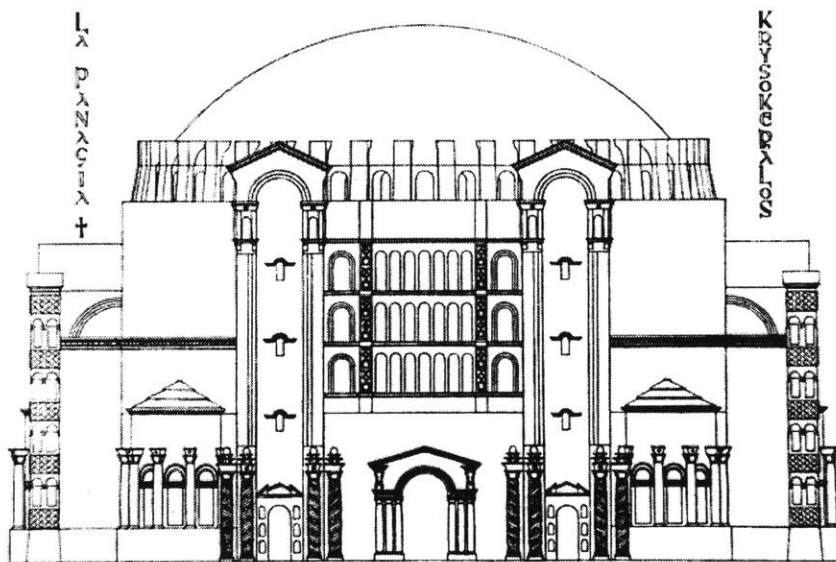
1.a-20. Una grande masseria nella regione di Taranto. *Architettura rurale italiana*, 1936.



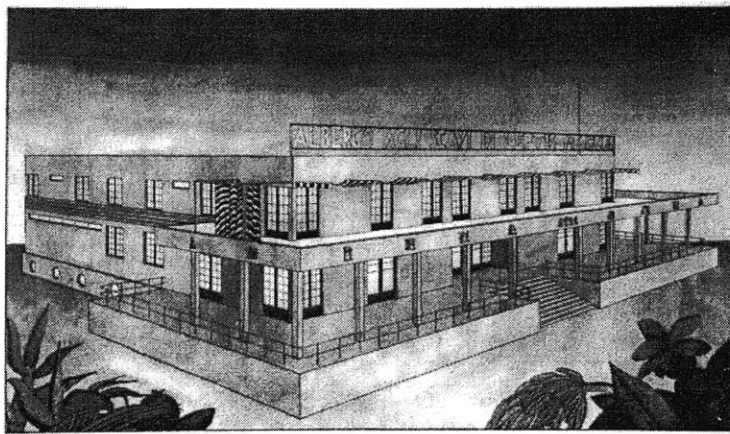
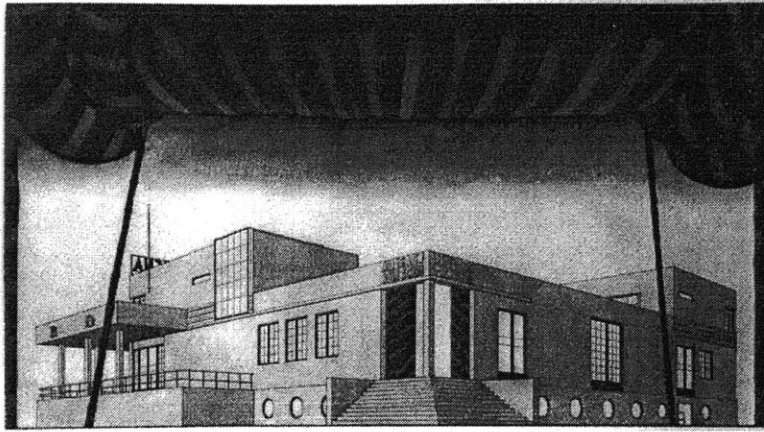
1.a-21. Luigi Cosenza and Bernard Rudofsky, Villa per Positano, 1937. View.



1.b-1. Dinanzi alla tenda con Hag Muchtar. Rava photograph, March 1930.



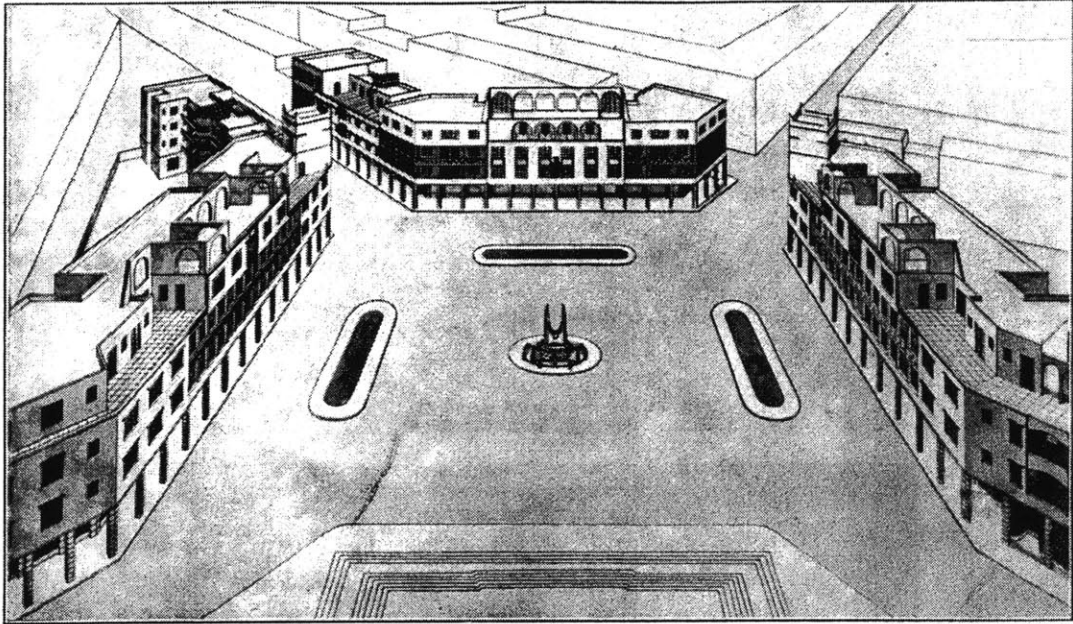
1.b-2. Carlo Enrico Rava, Chiesa in Oriente, 1924. Elevation.



1.b-3. Larco and Rava, Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna." Proposal, 1928.



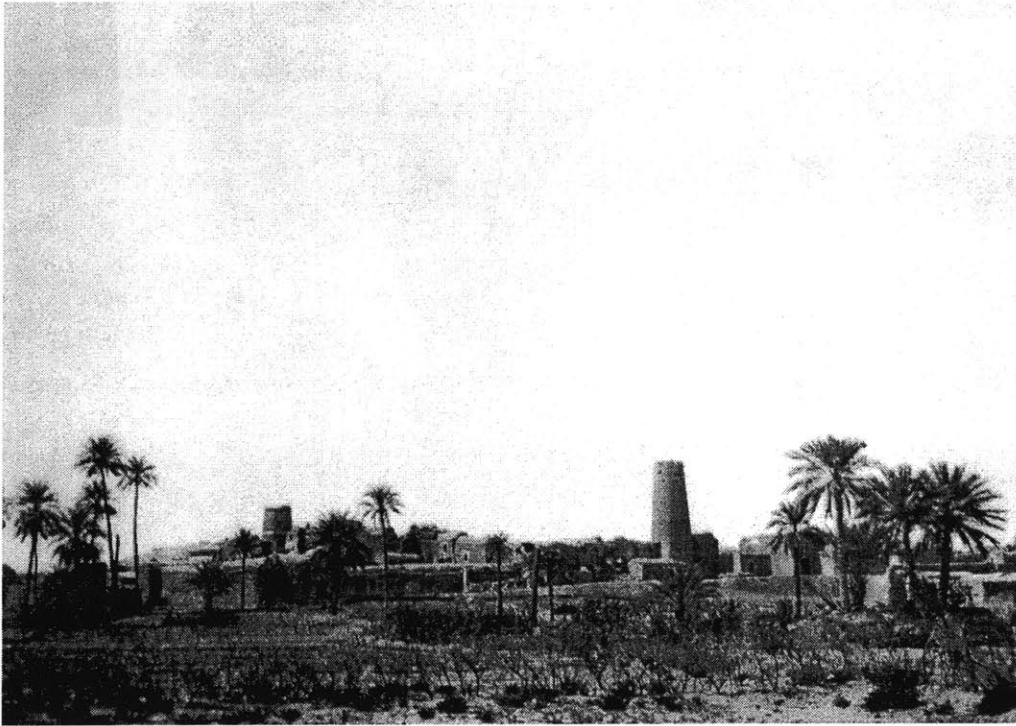
1.b-4. Larco and Rava, Padiglione delle colonie, Fiera di Milano, 1928. Rear view.



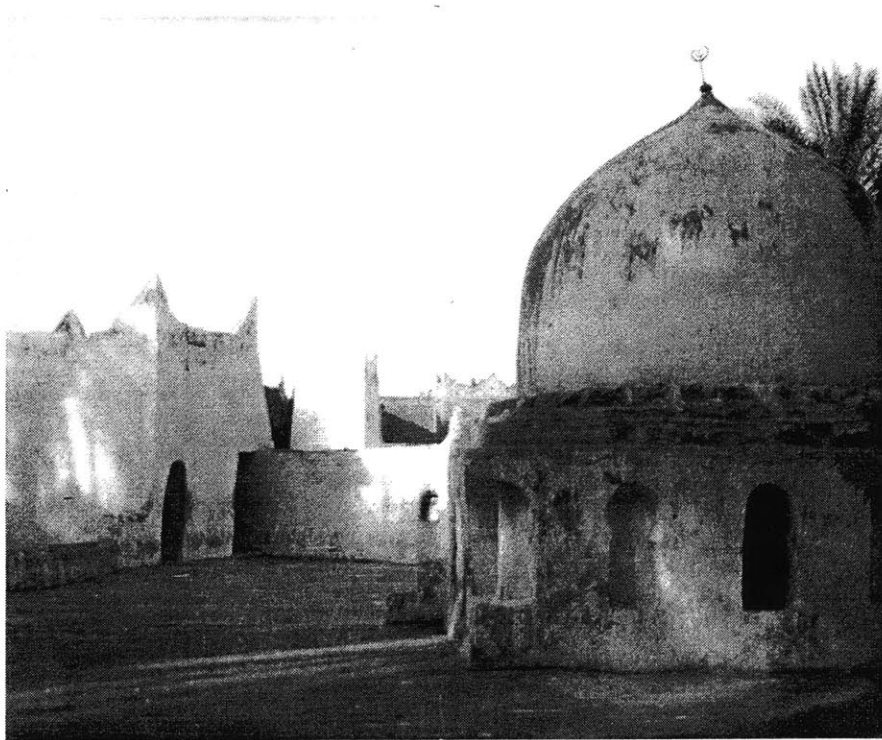
1.b-5. Larco and Rava, Competition for Piazza della Cattedrale, Tripoli, 1930. View.



1.b-6. Castello del Gasr-el-Hagg. Rava photograph, February 1930.



1.b-7. Mizda con due torri. Rava photograph, April 1929.



1.b-8. Casa-torre, Gadames. Rava photograph, March 1931.



1.b-9. Cortile della Moschea Maggiore, Gadames. Rava photograph, February 1929.



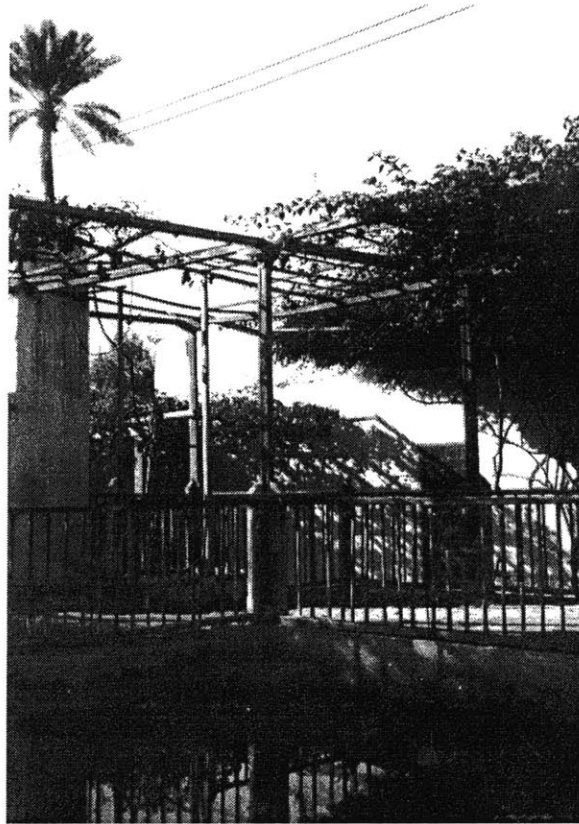
1.b-10. Moschea di Gasr-el-Hagg. Rava photograph, February 1930.



1.b-11. Casa araba nell'oasi di Tripoli. Rava photograph, December 1929.



1.b-12. Garvin Hodson, Cutting house, Los Angeles, ca. 1930.



1.b-13. Villa Hassuna Pascià presso Tripoli. Rava photograph, December 1929.

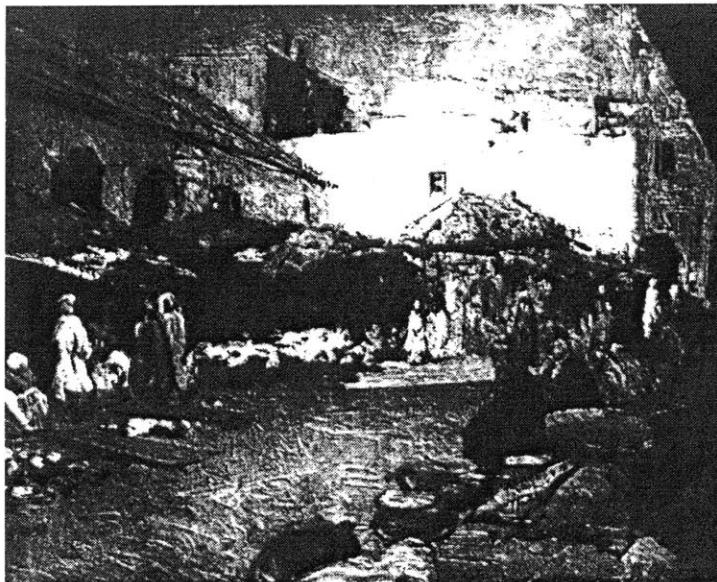


1.b-14. Casa dei Caramanli, Tripoli, ca. 1790.

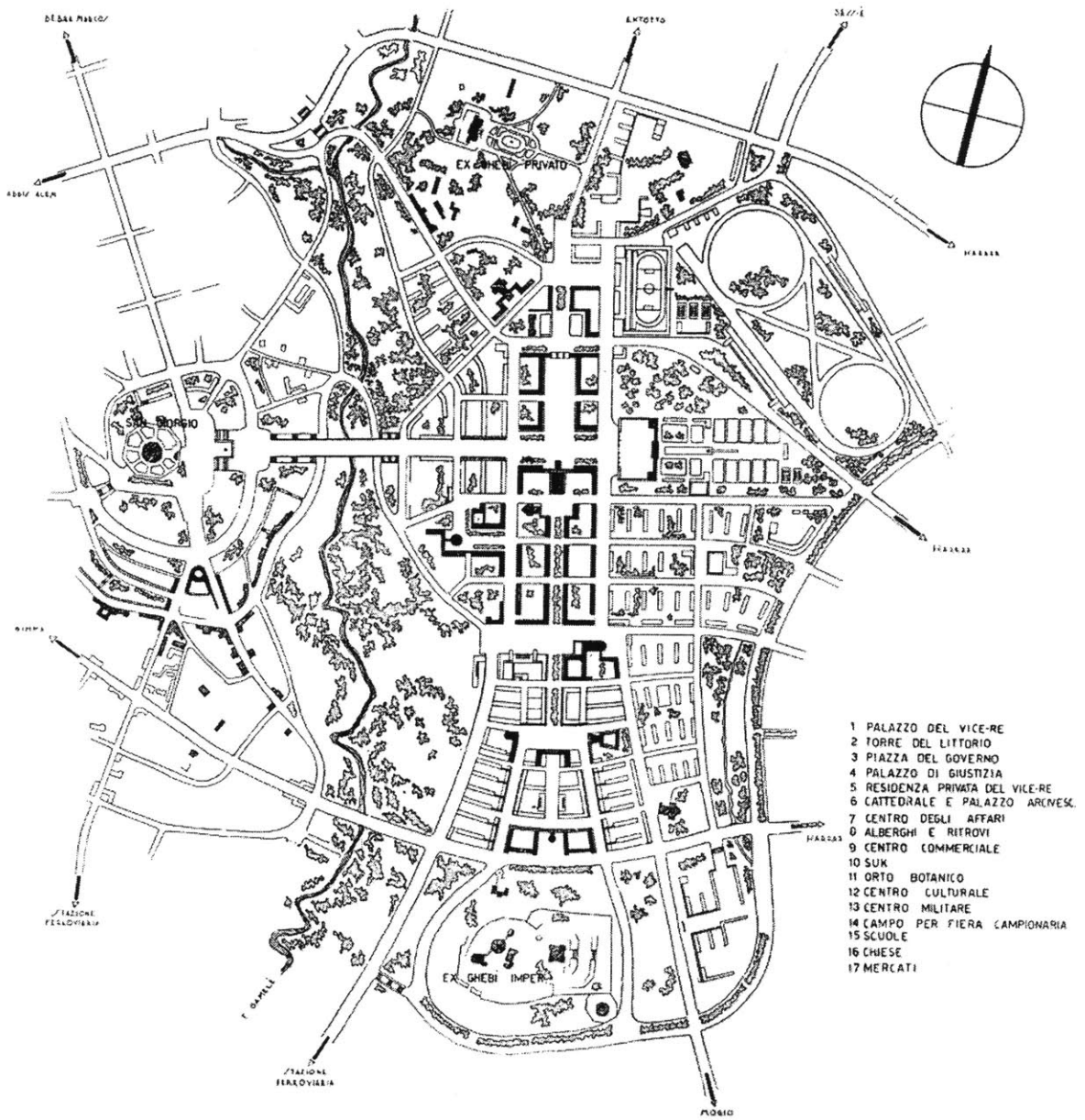


6 - Tripolitania - Gadames

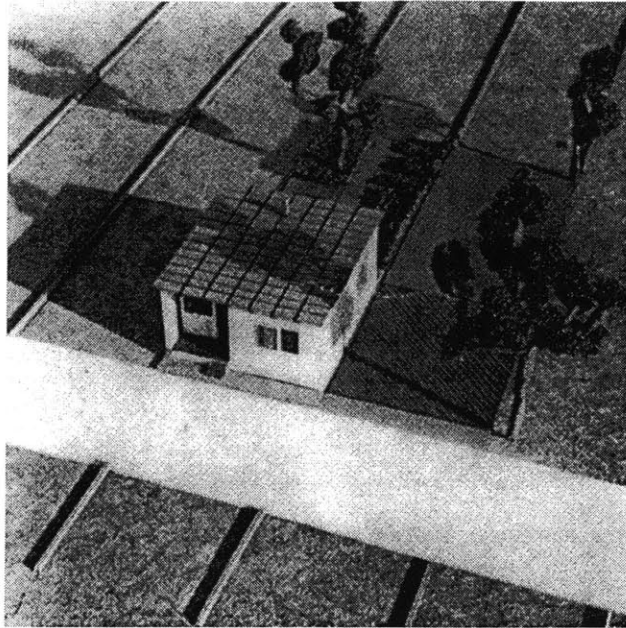
1.b-15. Tripolitania-Gadames. Postcard, ca. 1930.



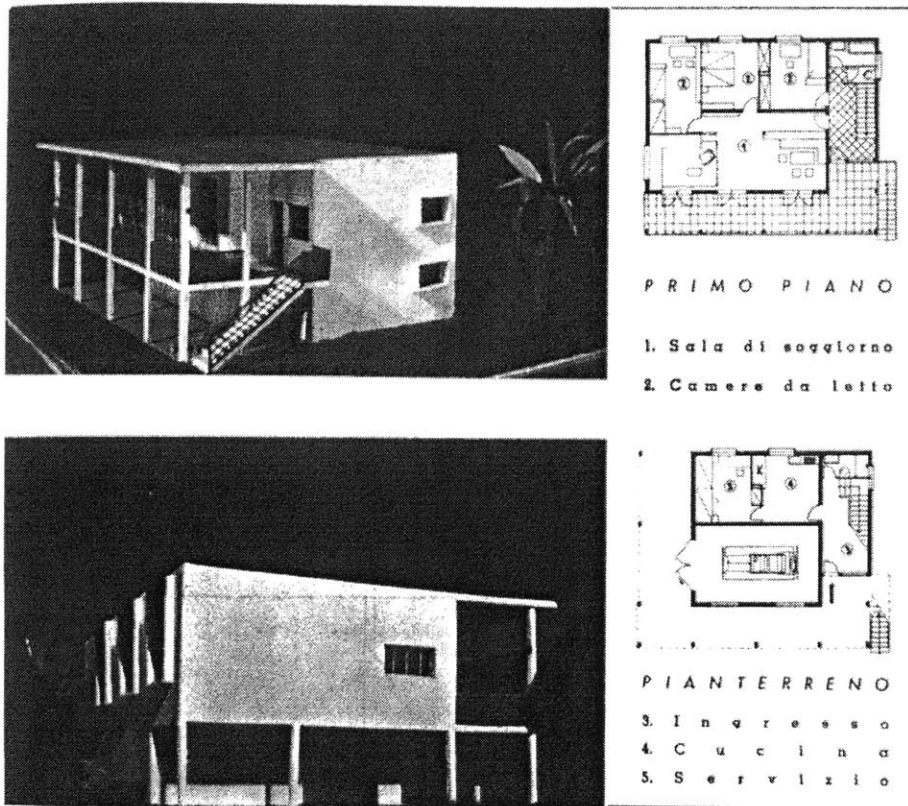
1.b-16. Giorgio Oprandi, Mercato arabo, ca. 1925.



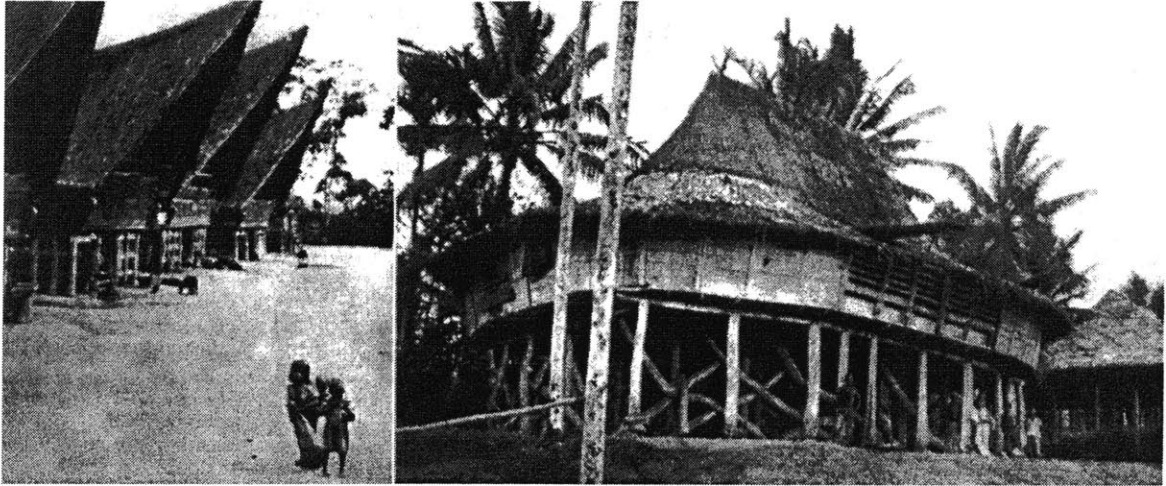
1.b-17. Ignazio Guidi and Cesare Valle, Urbanistic program for Addis Ababa, 1937.



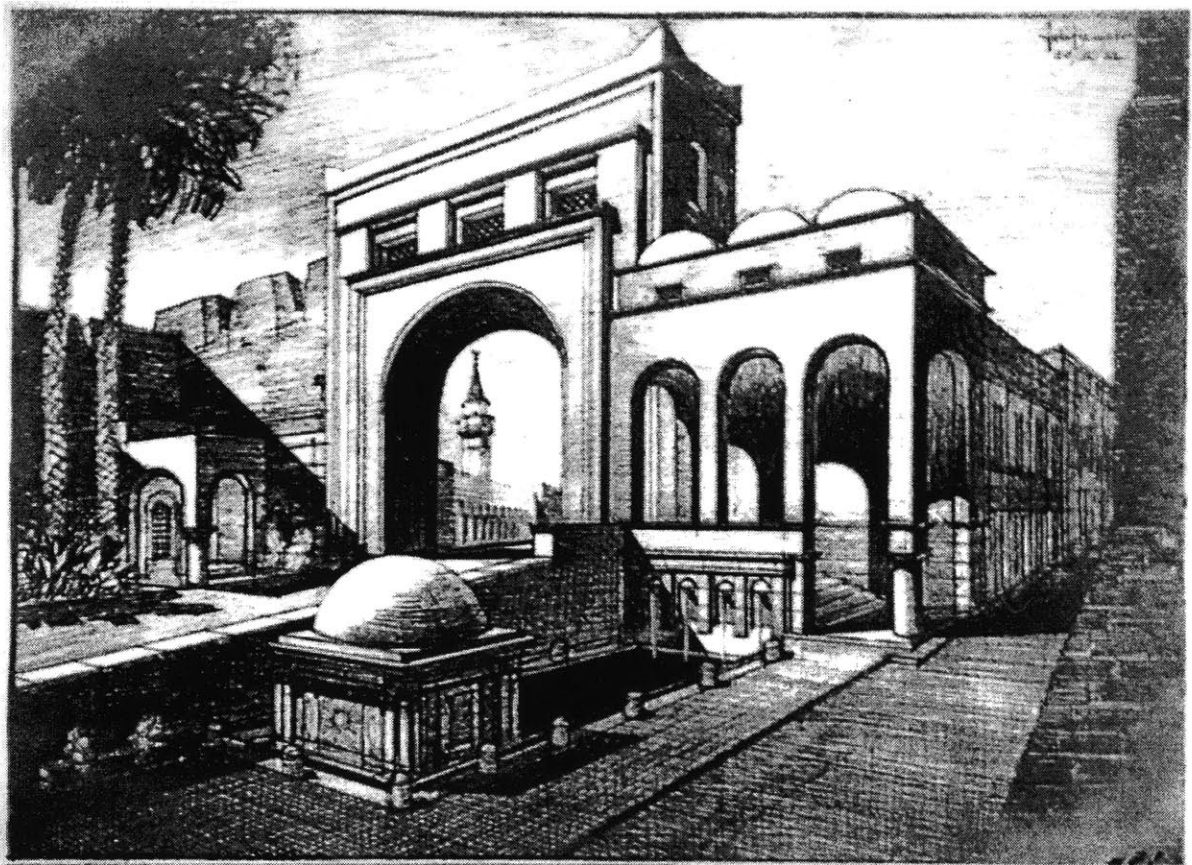
1.b-18. Giuseppe Pagano, Front view of "Casa tipo quattro," 1938.



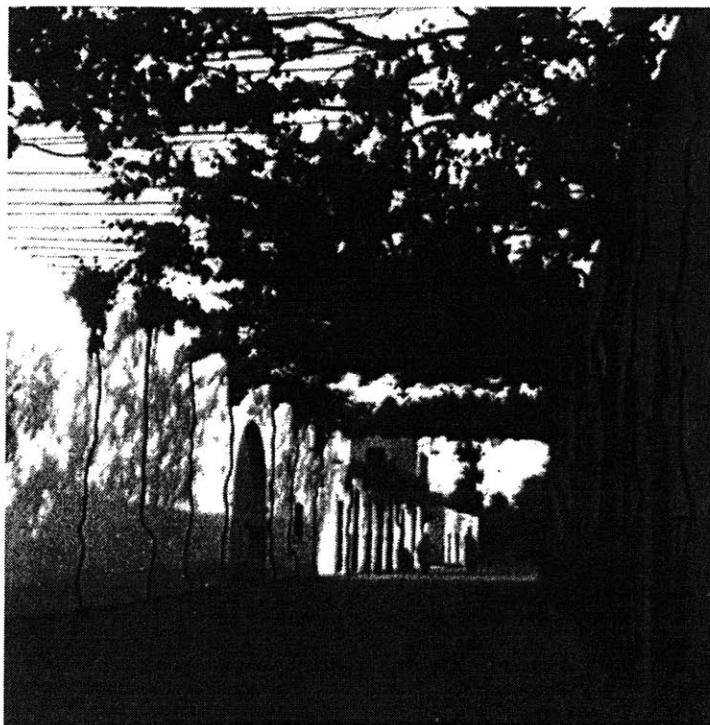
1.b-19. Luigi Piccinato, Villa tropicale su palafitte, 1936.



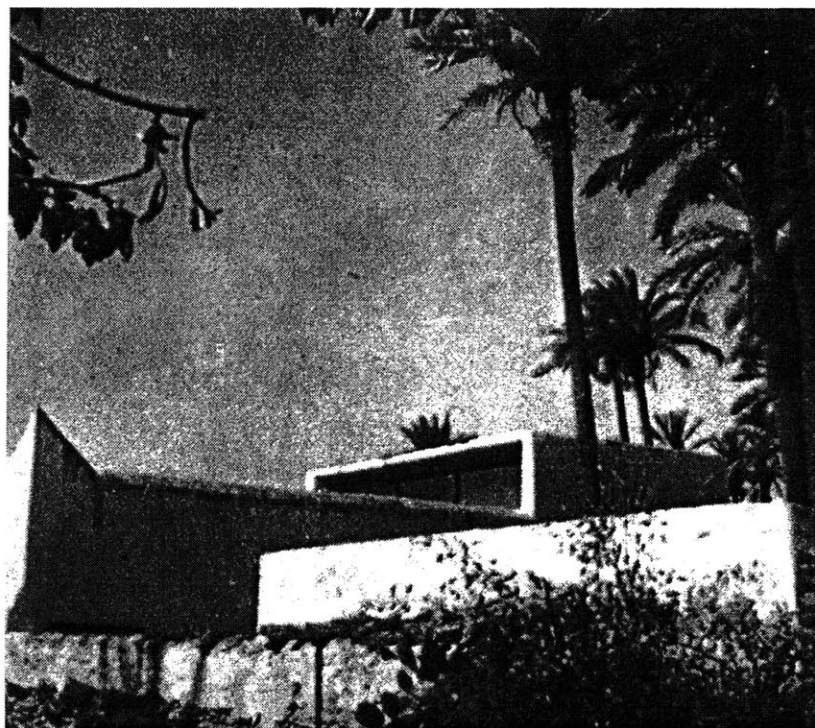
1.b-20. Casa tropicale, from Piccinato "La casa in colonia," 1936.



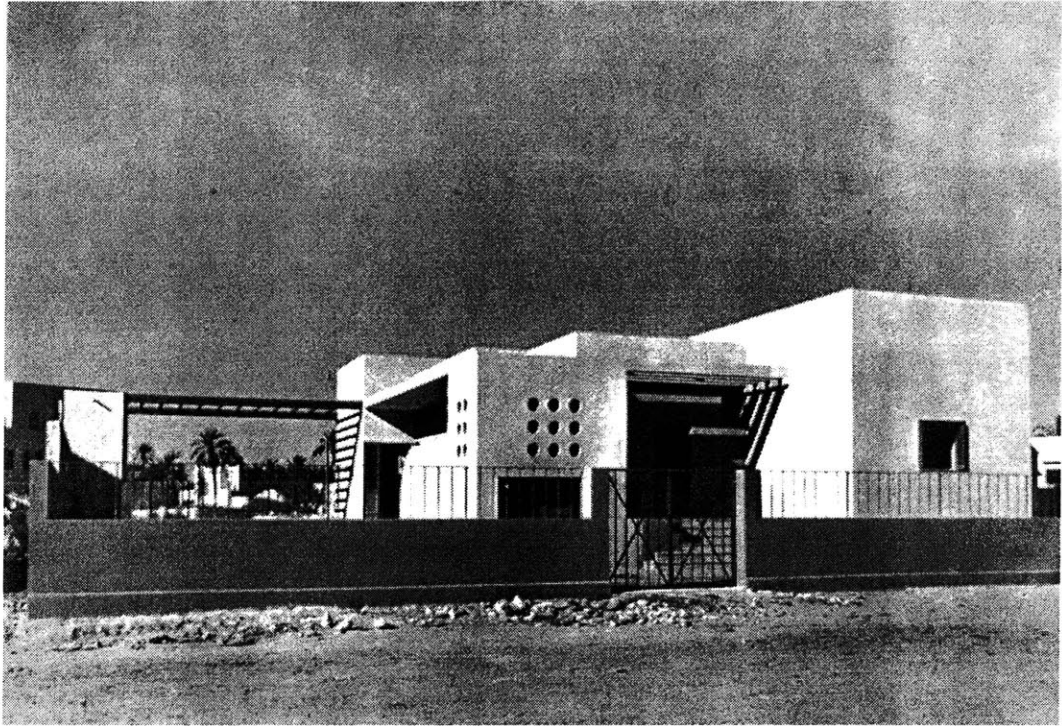
1.b-21. Florestano Di Fausto, Proposal for restructuring of the Suq al-Mushir, Tripoli, 1932.



1.b-22. Una via di Zliten. Pellegrini photograph, ca. 1936.



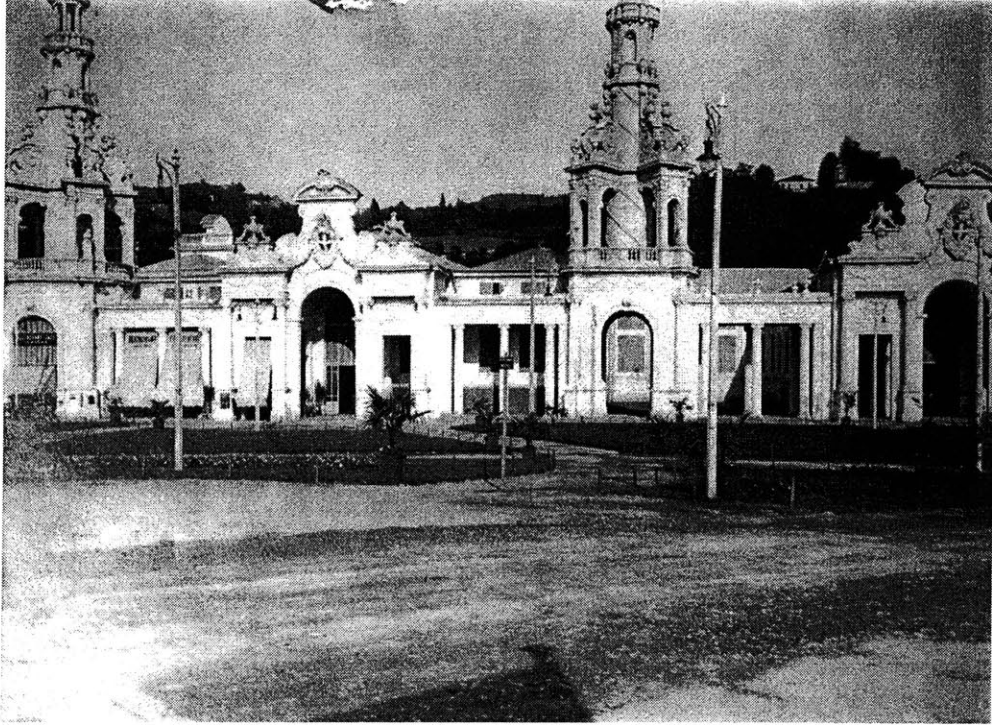
1.b-23. Abitazione isolata. Pellegrini photograph, ca. 1936.



1.b-24. Giovanni Pellegrini and Vittorio Agujari, Villa Salvi, Tripoli, 1936.



1.b-25. Carlo Enrico Rava, Albergo "Croce del Sud," Mogadishu, Somalia, 1934.



2.a-1. Mostra coloniale, Turin, 1911. Exterior of pavilion.



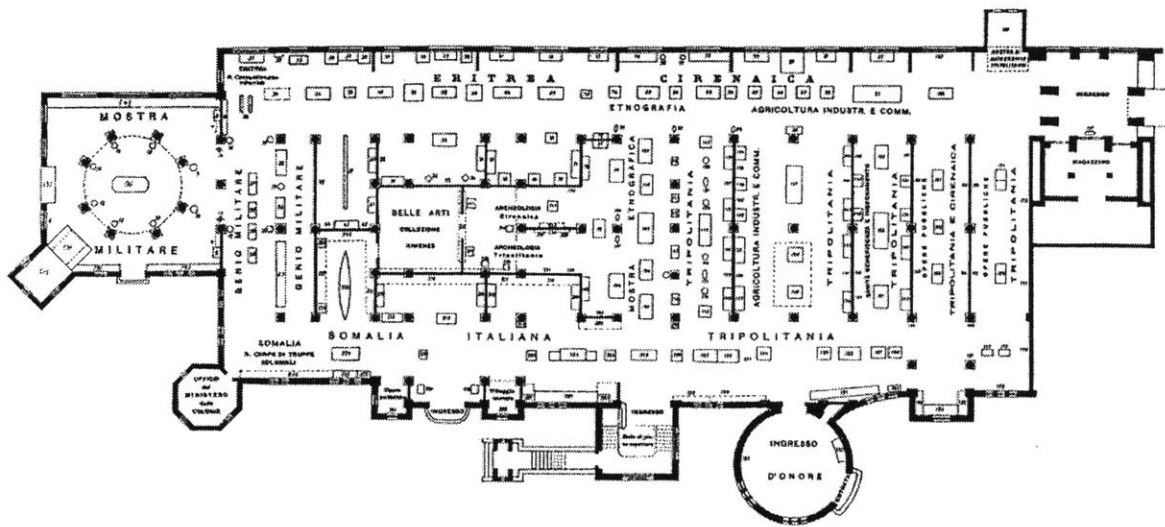
2.a-2. Turin, 1911. Entrance to Mostra bibliografica.



2.a-3. Turin, 1911. Villaggio eritreo.



2.a-4. Mostra coloniale, Genoa, 1914. Pavilion of Ministero delle Colonie.



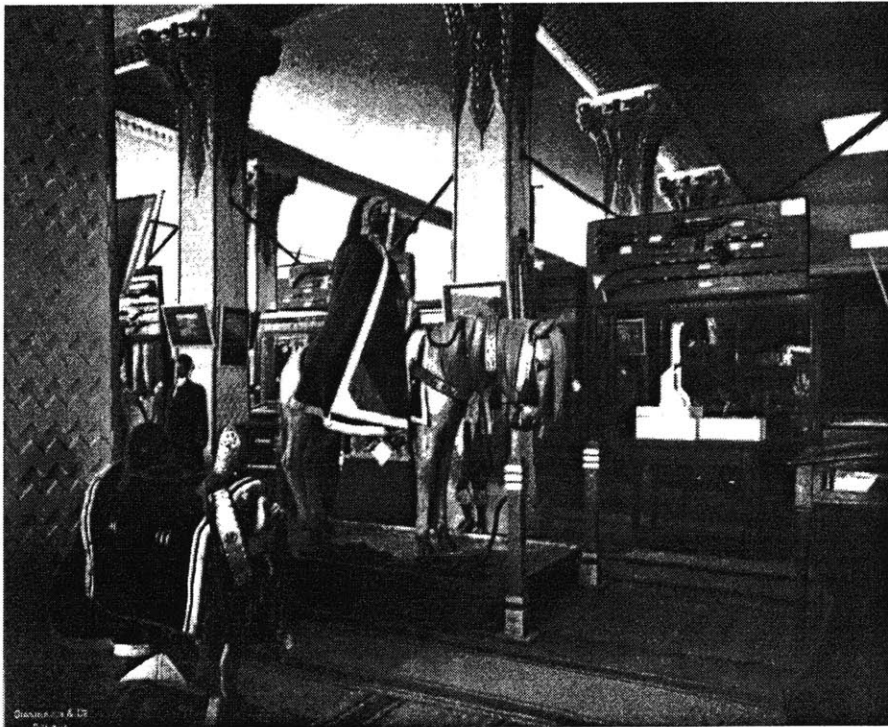
2.a-5. Genoa, 1914. Pavilion of Ministero delle Colonie, Plan.



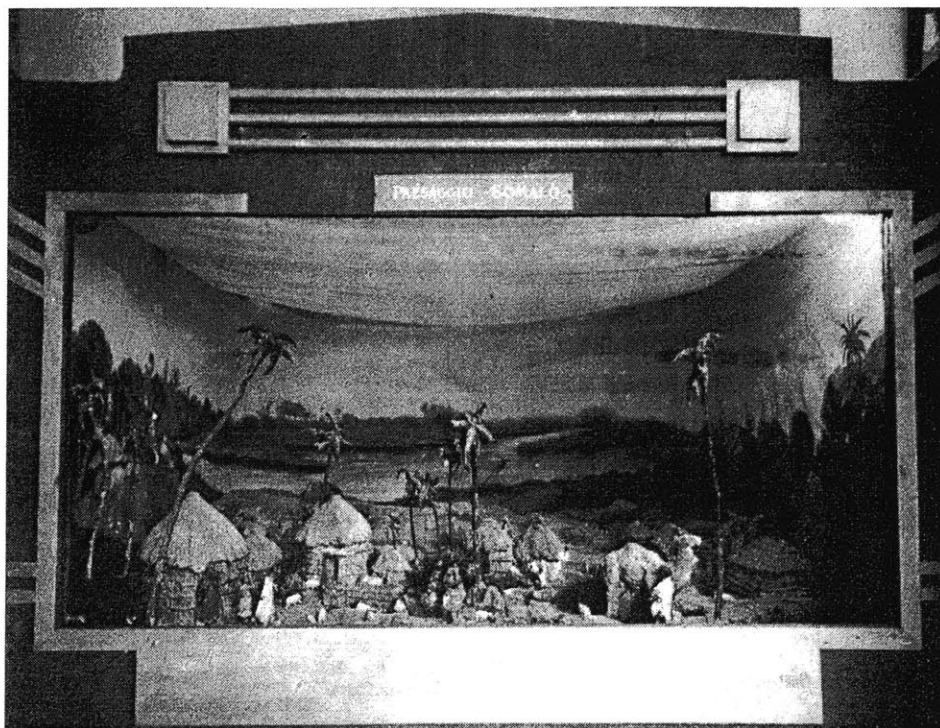
2.a-6. Genoa, 1914. Mostra della Tripolitania. Sezione agricoltura, industria e commercio.



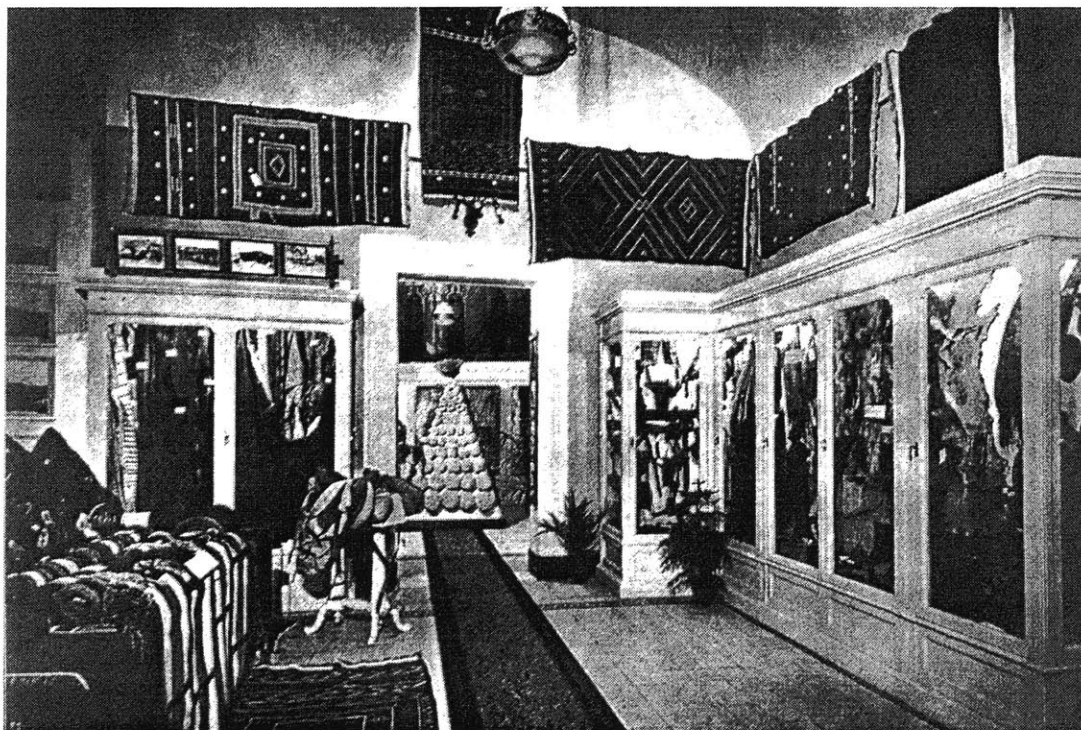
2.a-7. Genoa, 1914. Salone della Mostra militare coloniale.



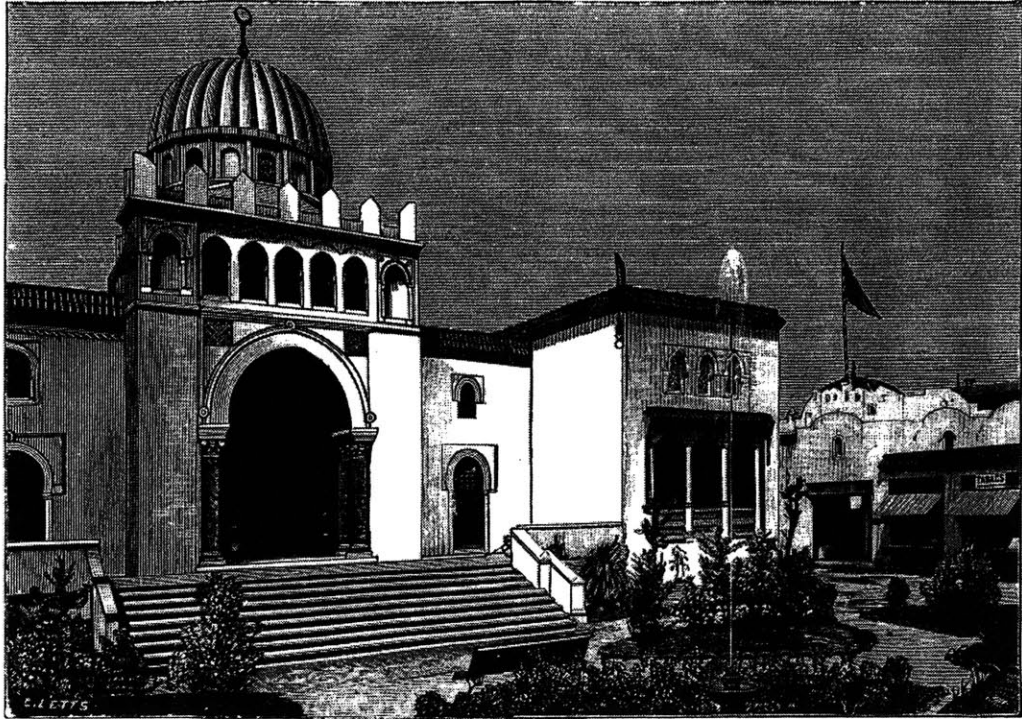
2.a-8. Genoa, 1914. Mostra della Tripolitania. Sezione etnografica.



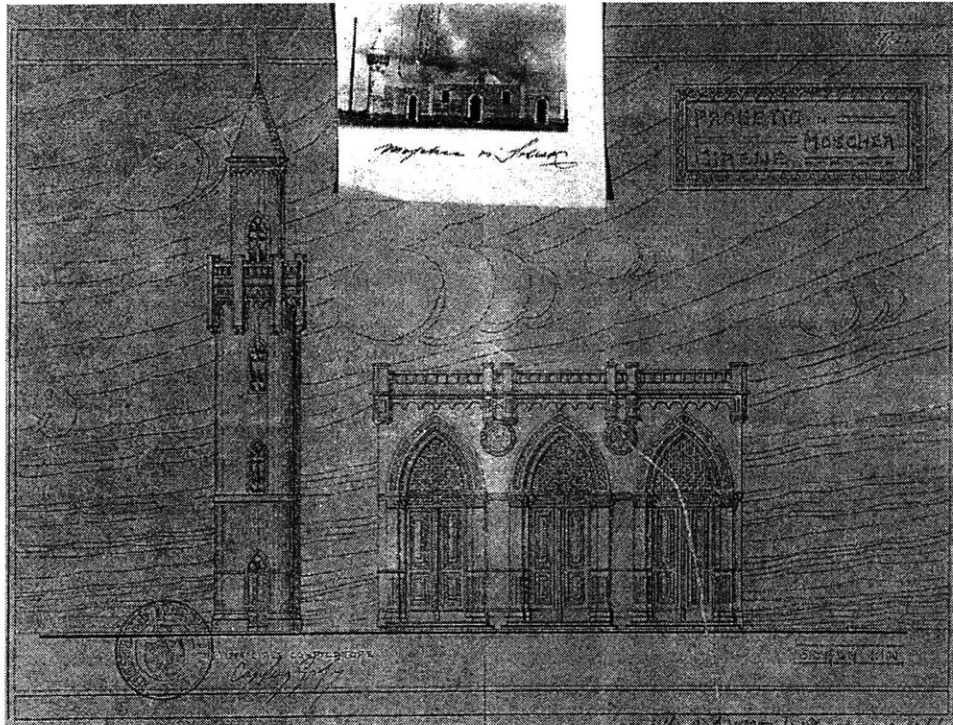
2.a-9. Genova, 1914. Mostra della Somalia. Paesaggio somalo, diorama.



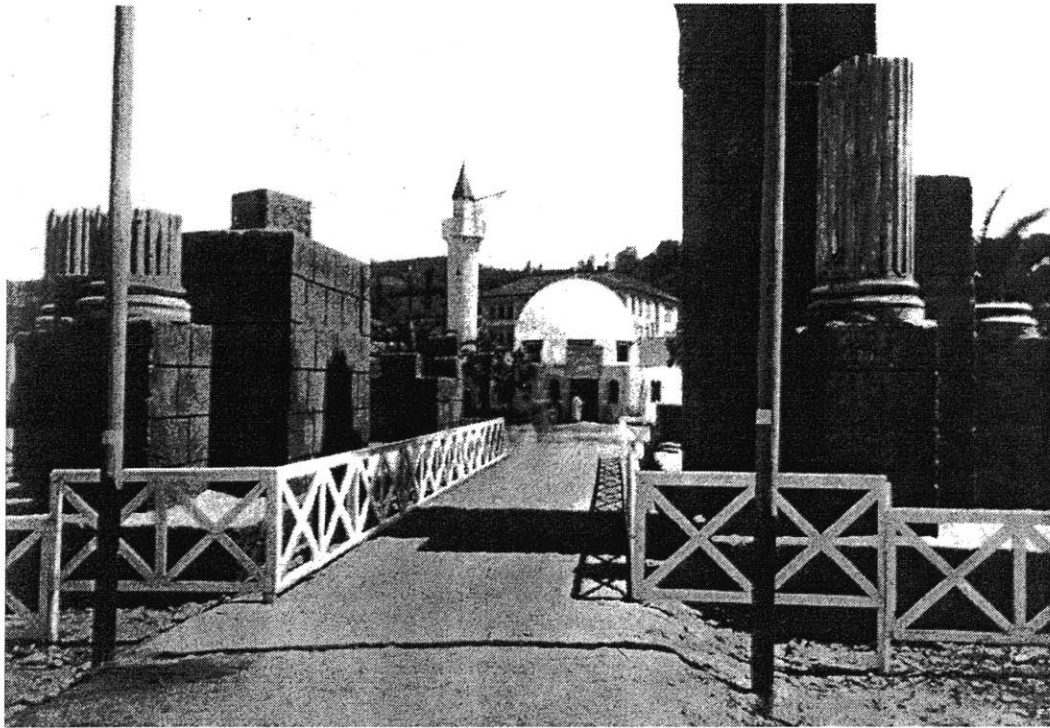
2.a-10. Museo coloniale, Rome, 1923. Mostra della Cirenaica.



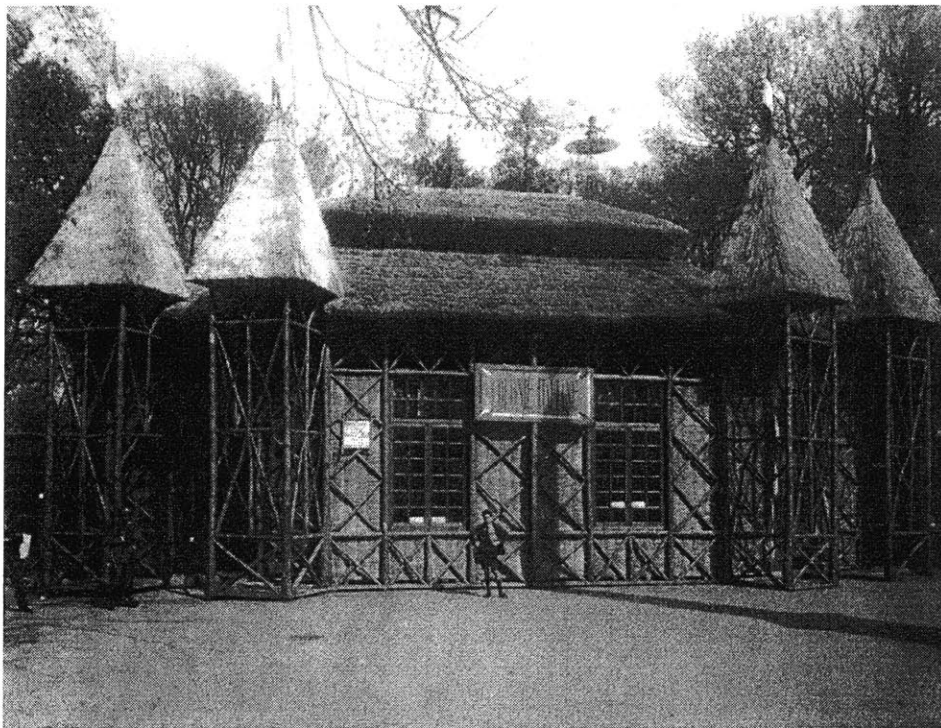
2.a-11. Paris, Exposition universelle, 1889. Tunisian palace.



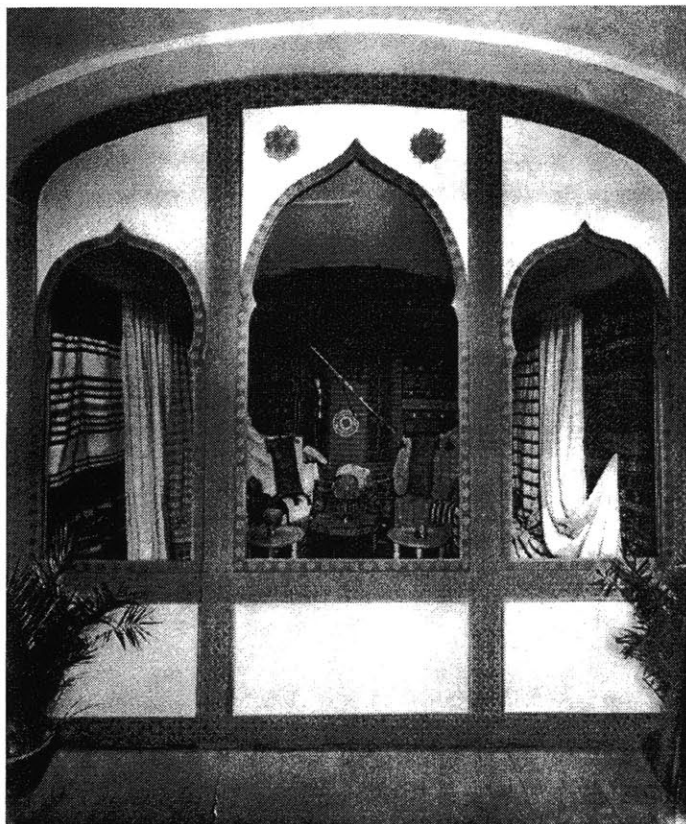
2.a-12. Genio civile, Progetto di Moschea, Cyrene, 1912. Elevation.



2.a-13. Mostra coloniale, Esposizione di Torino, 1928. Villaggio tripolino. View.



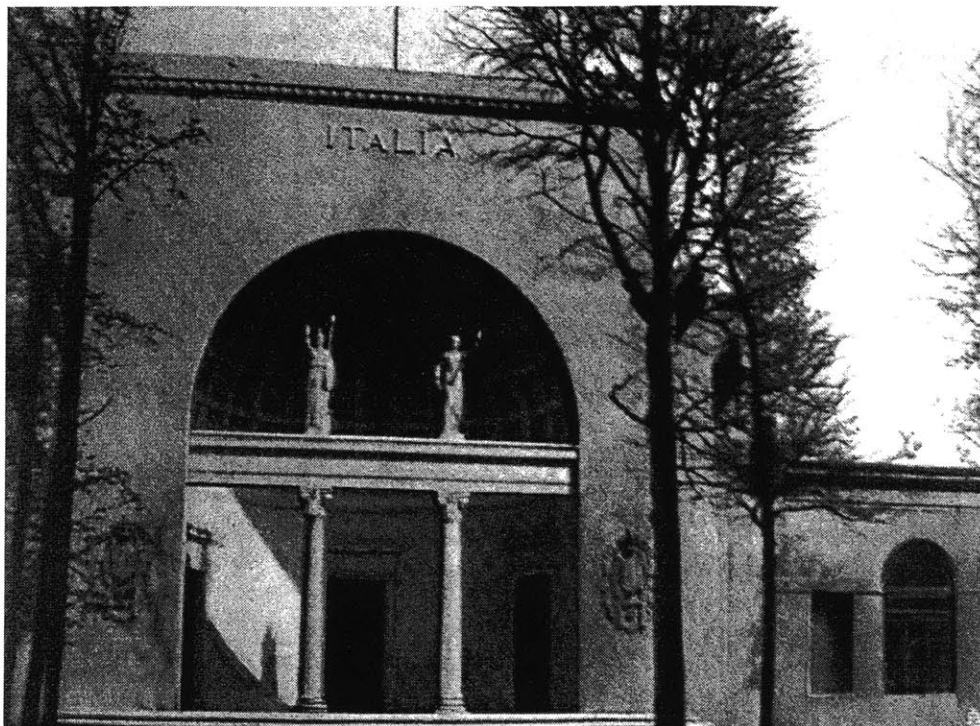
2.a-14. Fiera campionaria, Milano, 1922. Exterior of Padiglione delle colonie italiane.



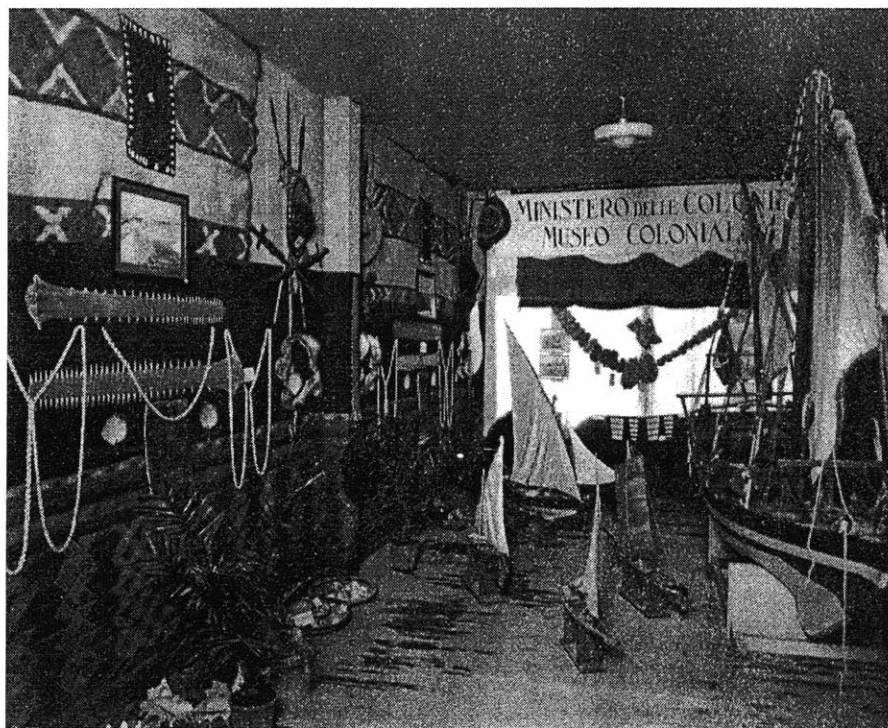
2.a-15. Mostra internazionale delle arte decorative, Monza, 1925. Mostra coloniale.



2.a-16. Colonial exhibition, Lausanne, 1925. Mostra della Tripolitania.



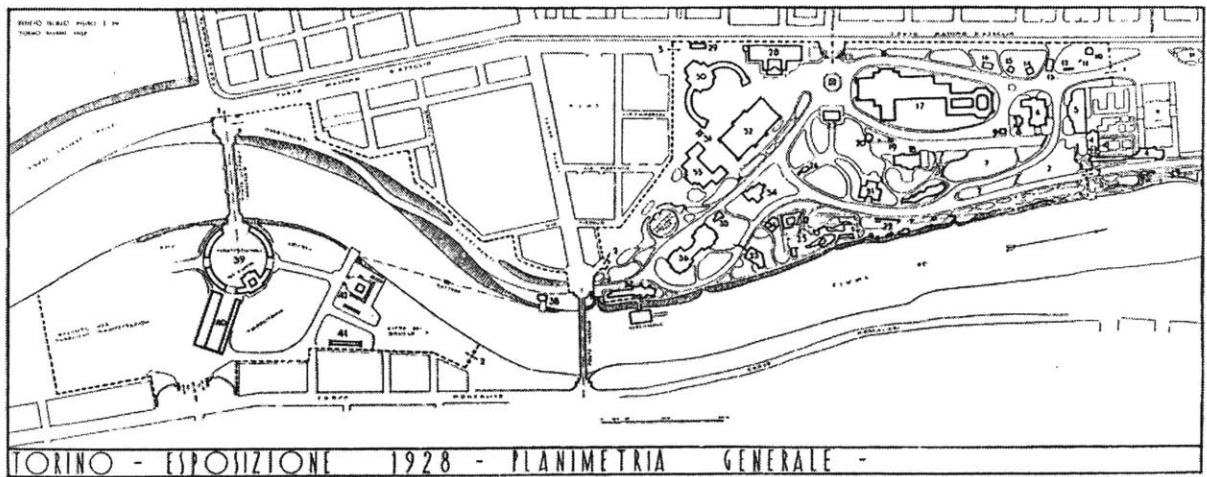
2.a-17. Colonial exhibition, Antwerp, 1930. Padiglione delle colonie italiane.



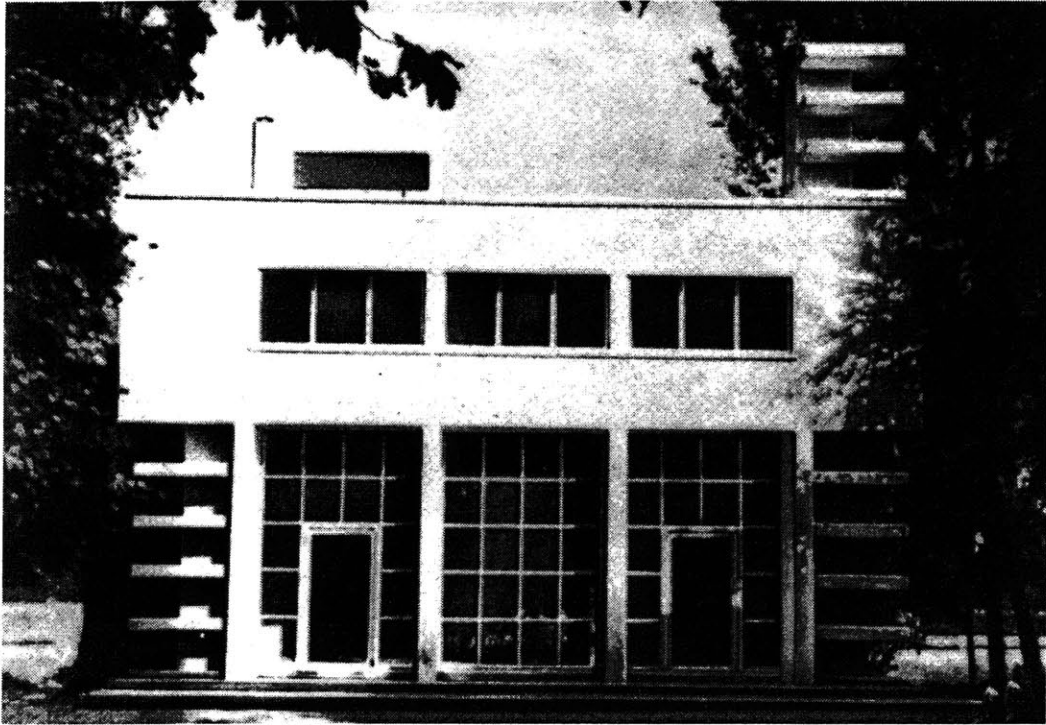
2.a-18. Mostra coloniale, Padua, 1930. Exhibit of Museo coloniale.



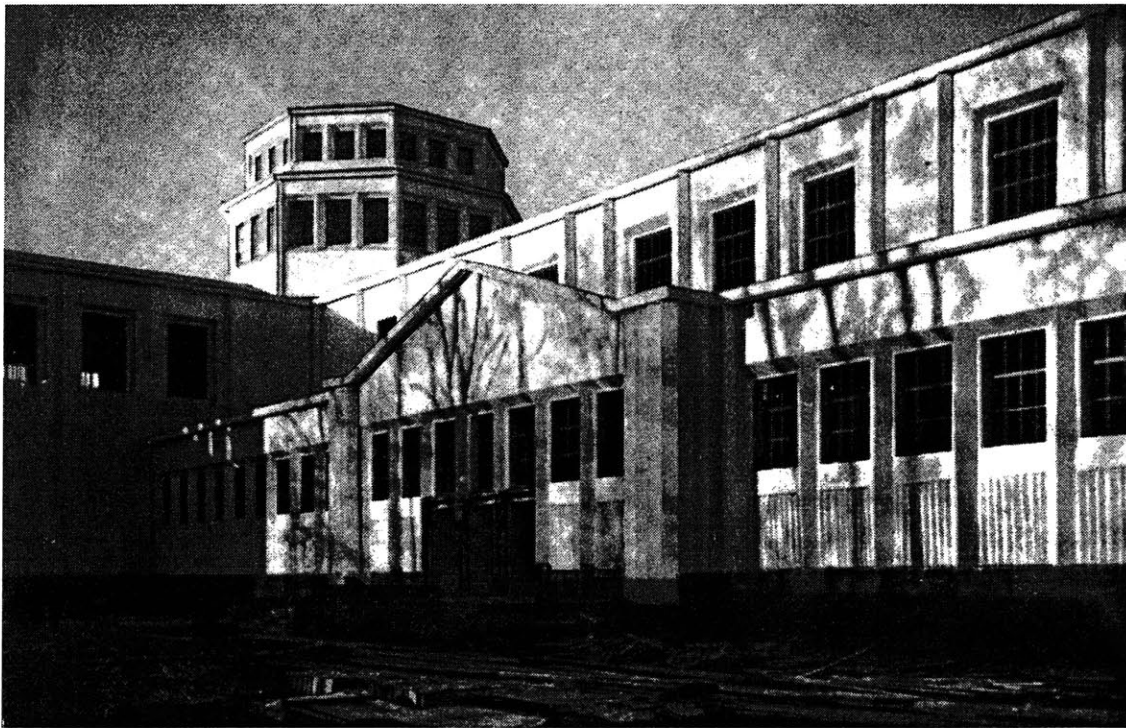
2.a-19. Museo coloniale, Rome, 1923. Collection of the Zammarano expedition to Somalia.



2.a-20. Esposizione di Torino, 1928. Site plan.



2.a-21. Alberto Sartoris, Padiglione delle comunità artigiane, Esposizione di Torino, 1928.



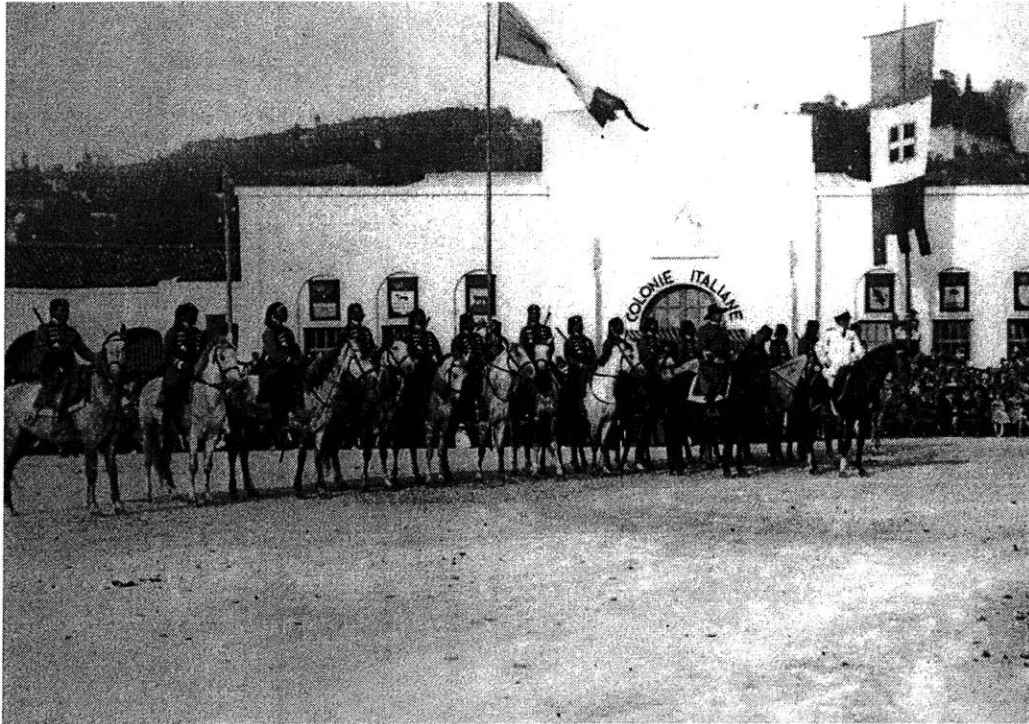
2.a-22. Giuseppe Pagano, Padiglione della chimica, Esposizione di Torino, 1928.



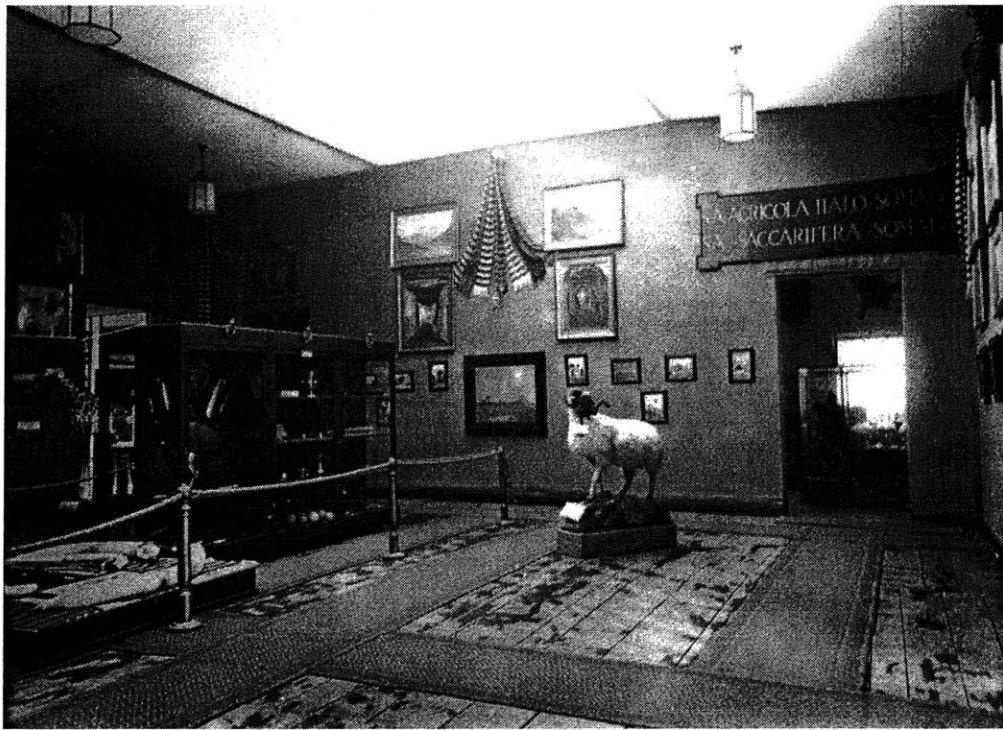
2.a-23. Giuseppe Pagano, Padiglione della caccia e della pesca. Esposizione di Torino, 1928.



2.a-24. Giuseppe Pagano and Ettore Pittini, Mostra coloniale, Turin, 1928. Aerial view.



2.a-25. Pagano and Pittini, Padiglione d'onore, Mostra coloniale, Turin, 1928.



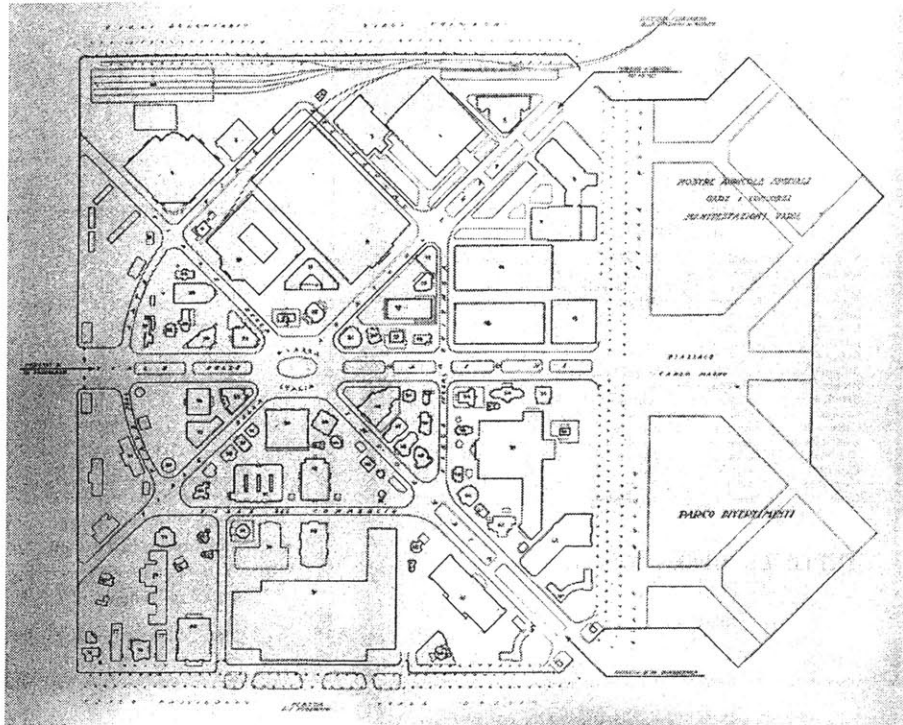
2.a-26. Pagano and Pittini, Padiglione d'onore, Mostra della Tripolitania. Interior view.



2.a-27. Pagano, Padiglione della chimica, Turin, 1928. Mostra "Snai Viscosa."



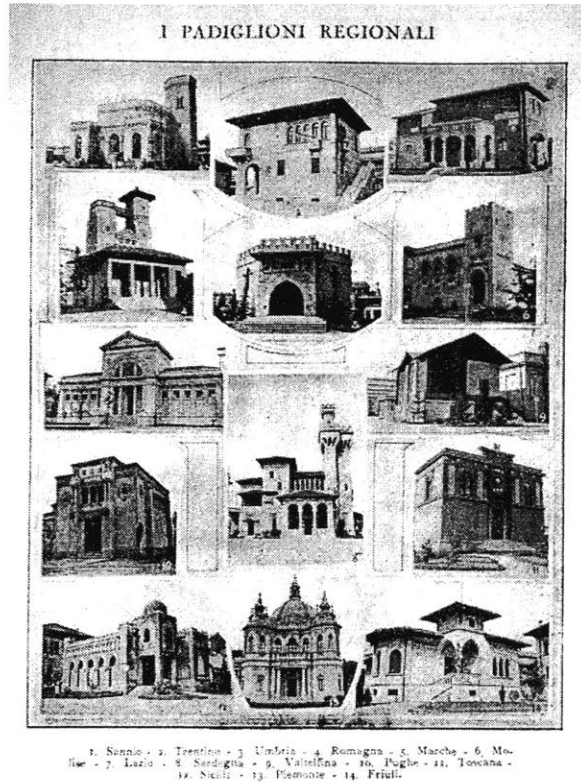
2.a-28. Mostra coloniale, Turin, 1928. Suk tripolitano.



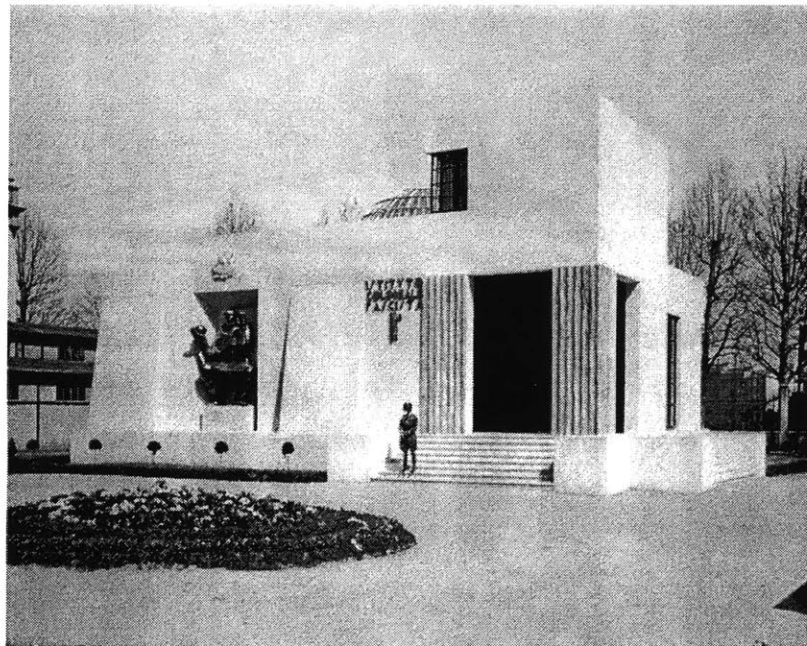
2.a-29. Fiera Campionaria di Milano, 1928. Site plan.



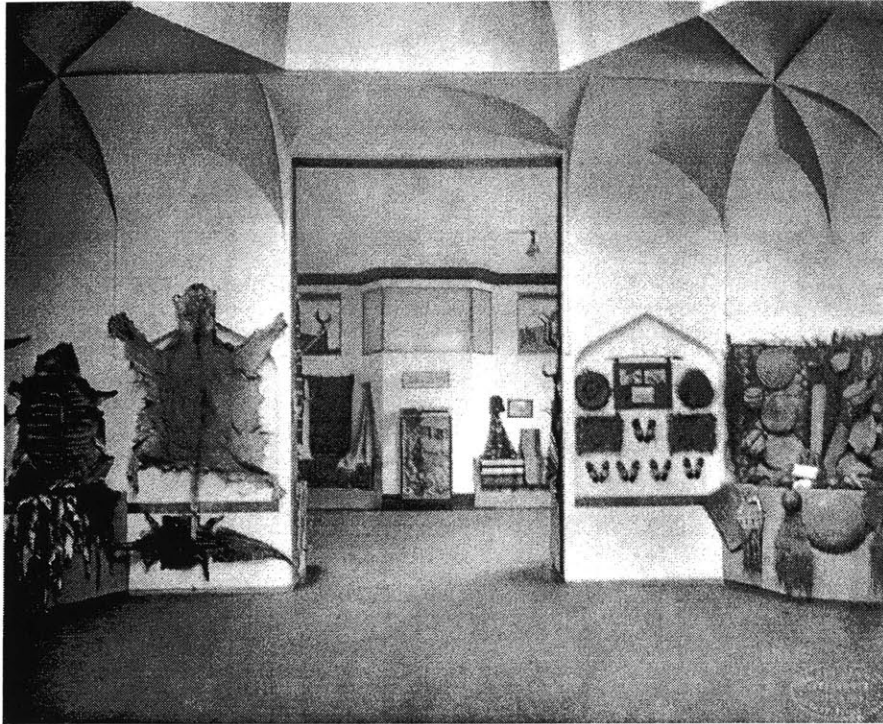
2.a-30. Alpago Novello and Cabiati. Padiglione delle industrie casalinghe, Milan, 1928.



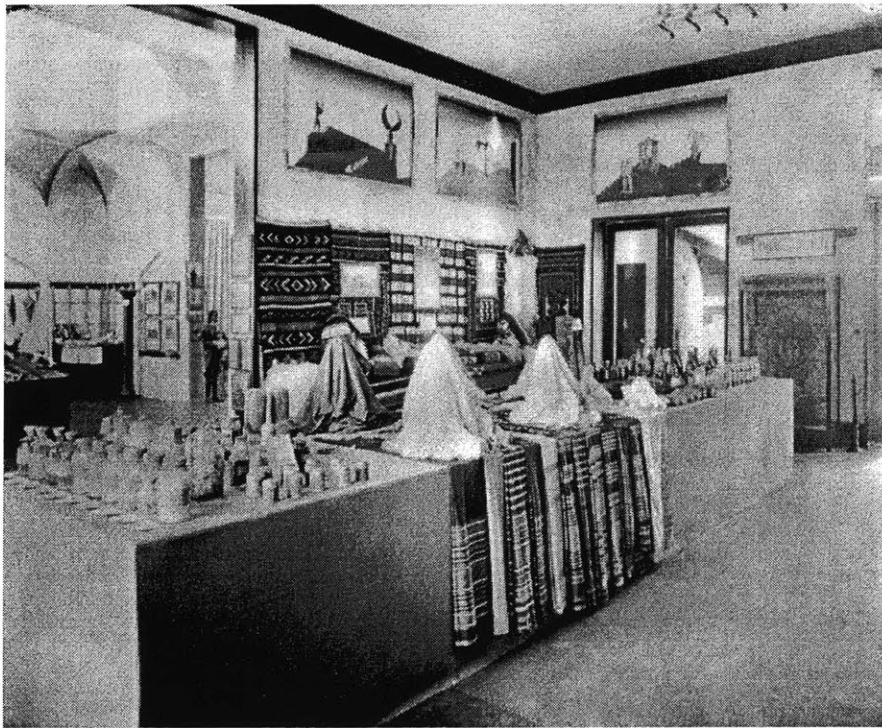
2.a-31. Fiera di Milano, 1928. I padiglioni regionali.



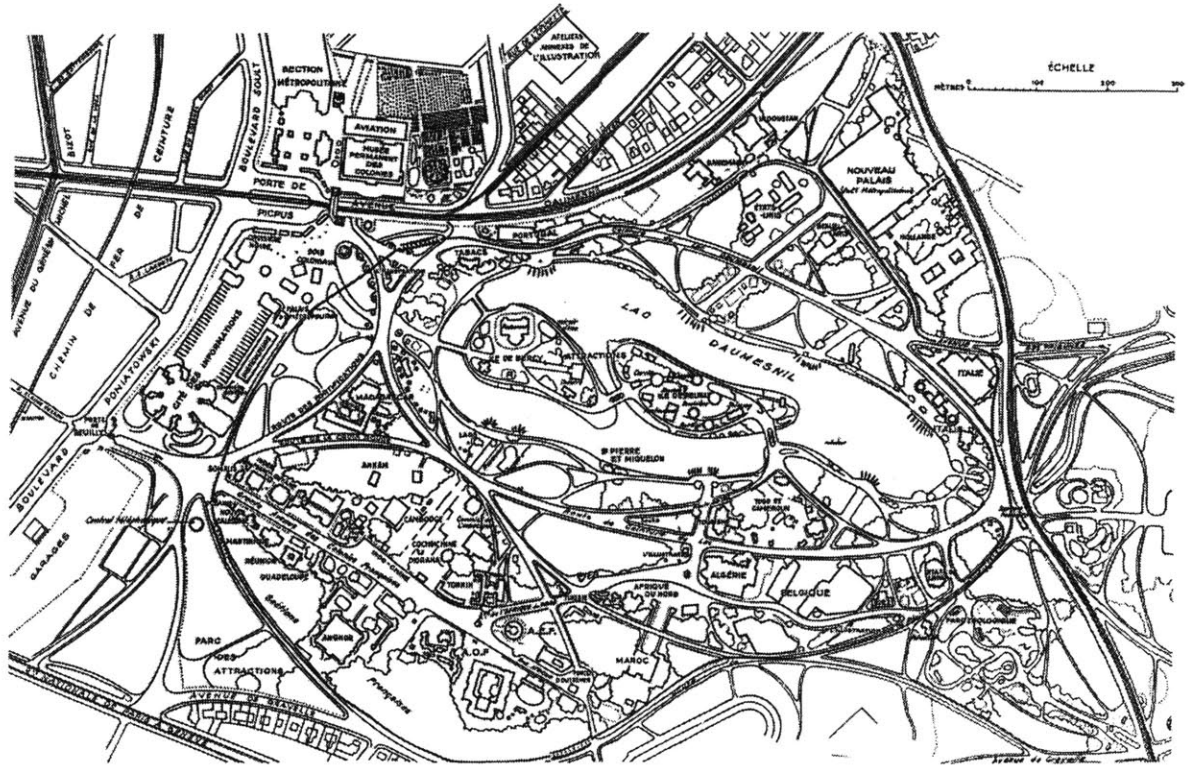
2.a-32. Larco and Rava, Padiglione delle colonie, Fiera di Milano, 1928. Frontal view.



2.a-33. Larco and Rava, Padiglione delle Colonie. View of domed space.



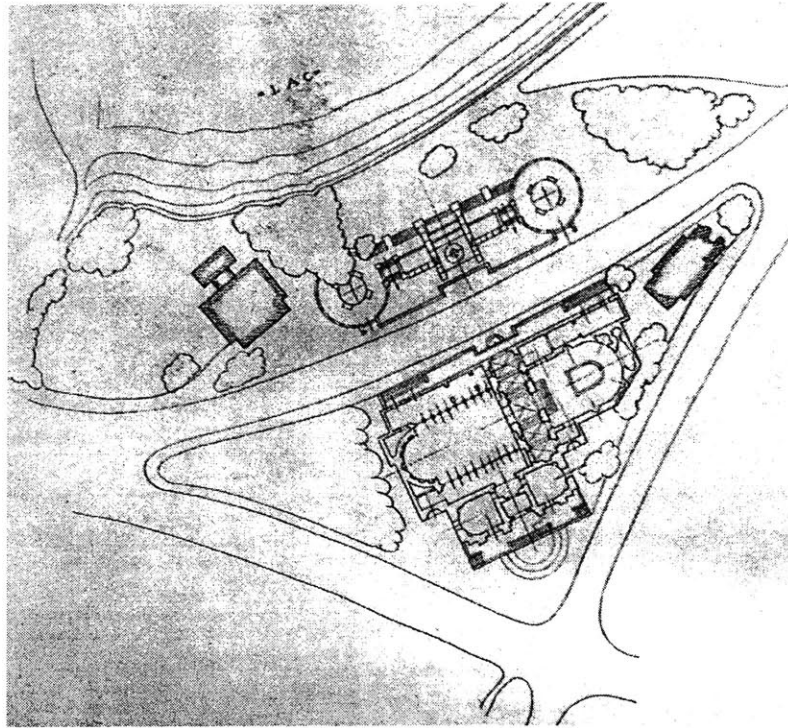
2.a-34. Larco and Rava, Padiglione delle Colonie. View of display.



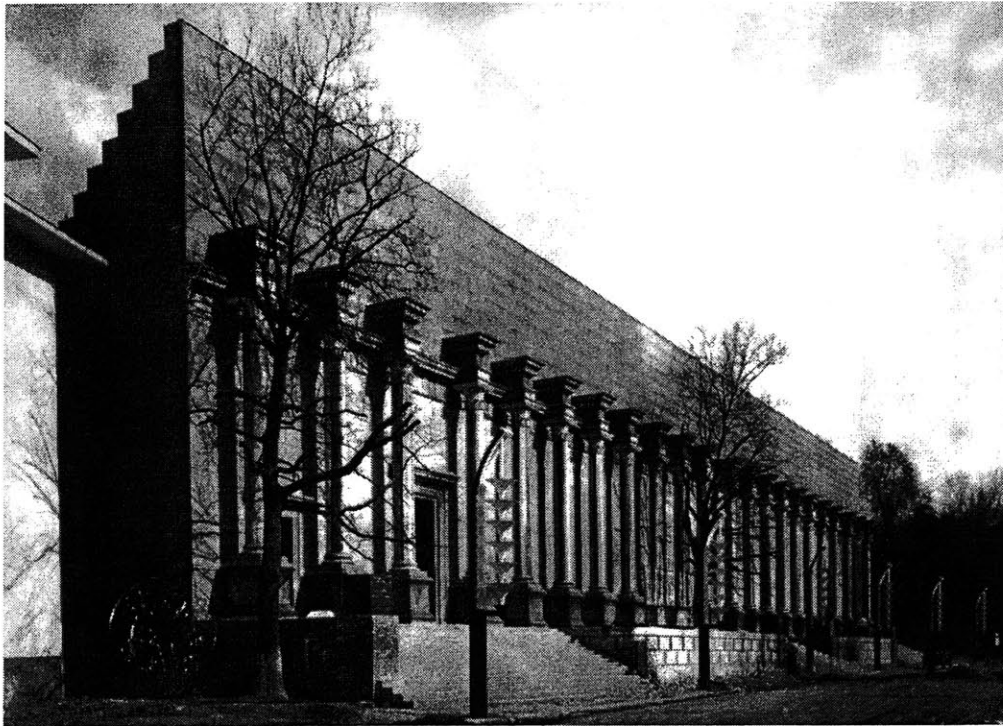
2.a-35. Exposition Coloniale Internationale, Paris, 1931. Site plan.



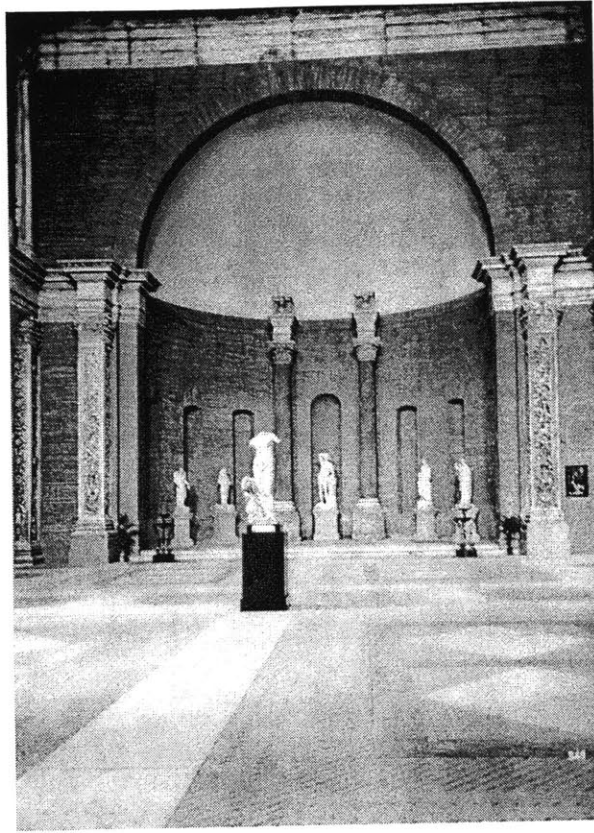
2.a-36. Fourniez and Laprade, Moroccan pavilion, Exposition coloniale, Paris, 1931.



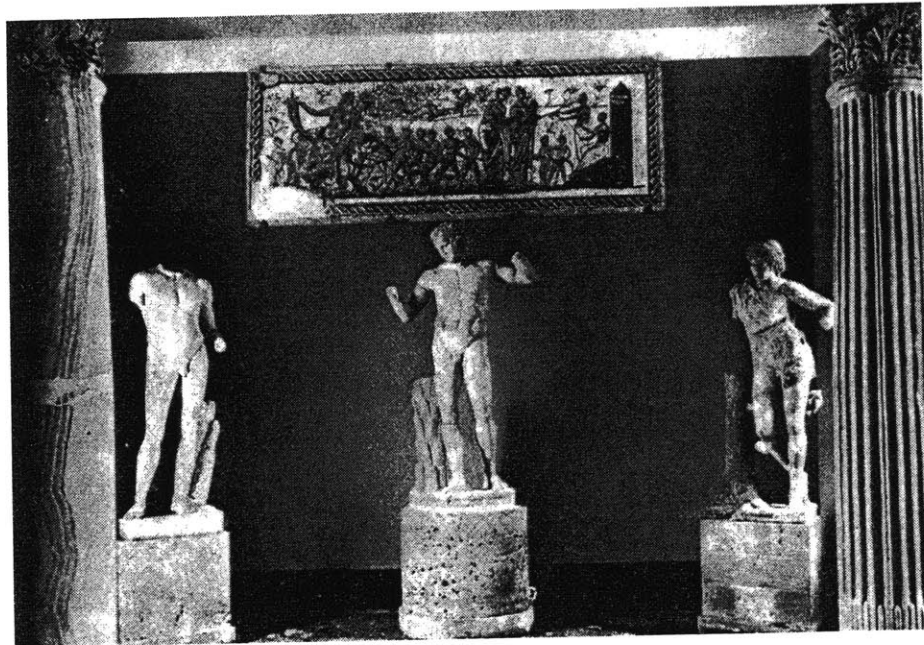
2.a-37. Armando Brasini, Padiglione dell'Italia, Exposition coloniale, Paris, 1931. Site plan.



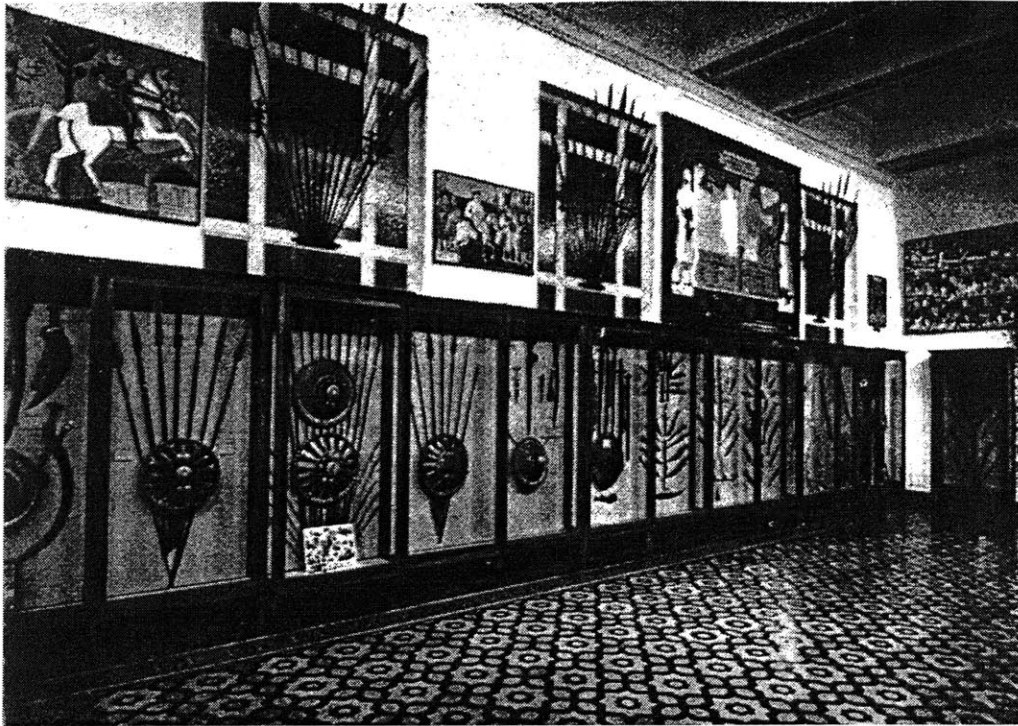
2.a-38. Armando Brasini, Padiglione dell'Italia, Paris, 1931. Exterior view.



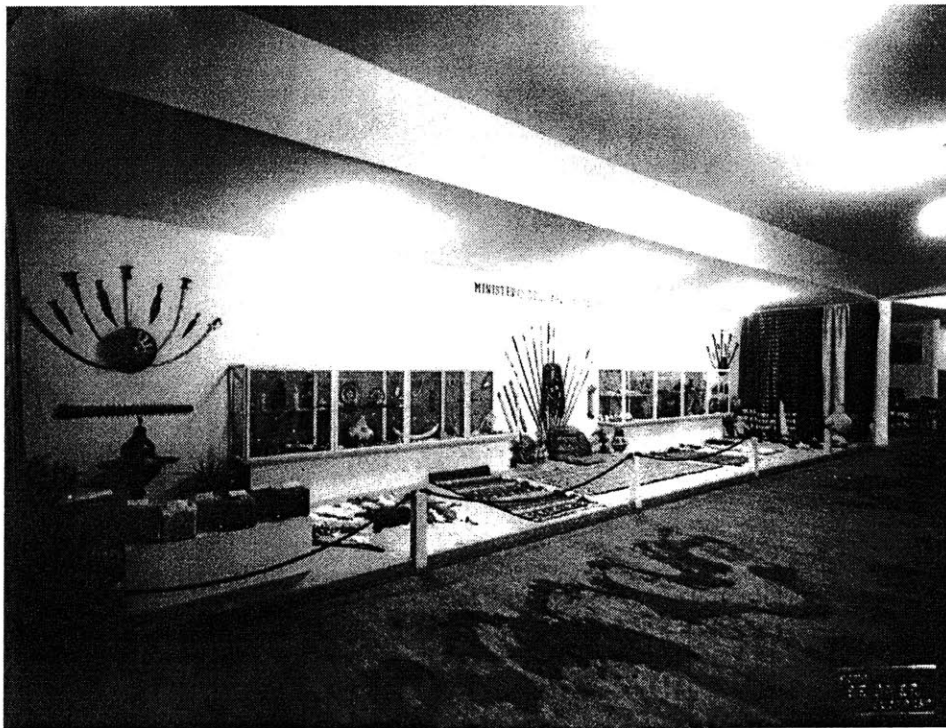
2.a-39. Brasini, Padiglione dell'Italia, Paris, 1931. Interior of main exhibition space.



2.a-40. Nuovo museo archeologico, Leptis Magna, 1931. Interior view.

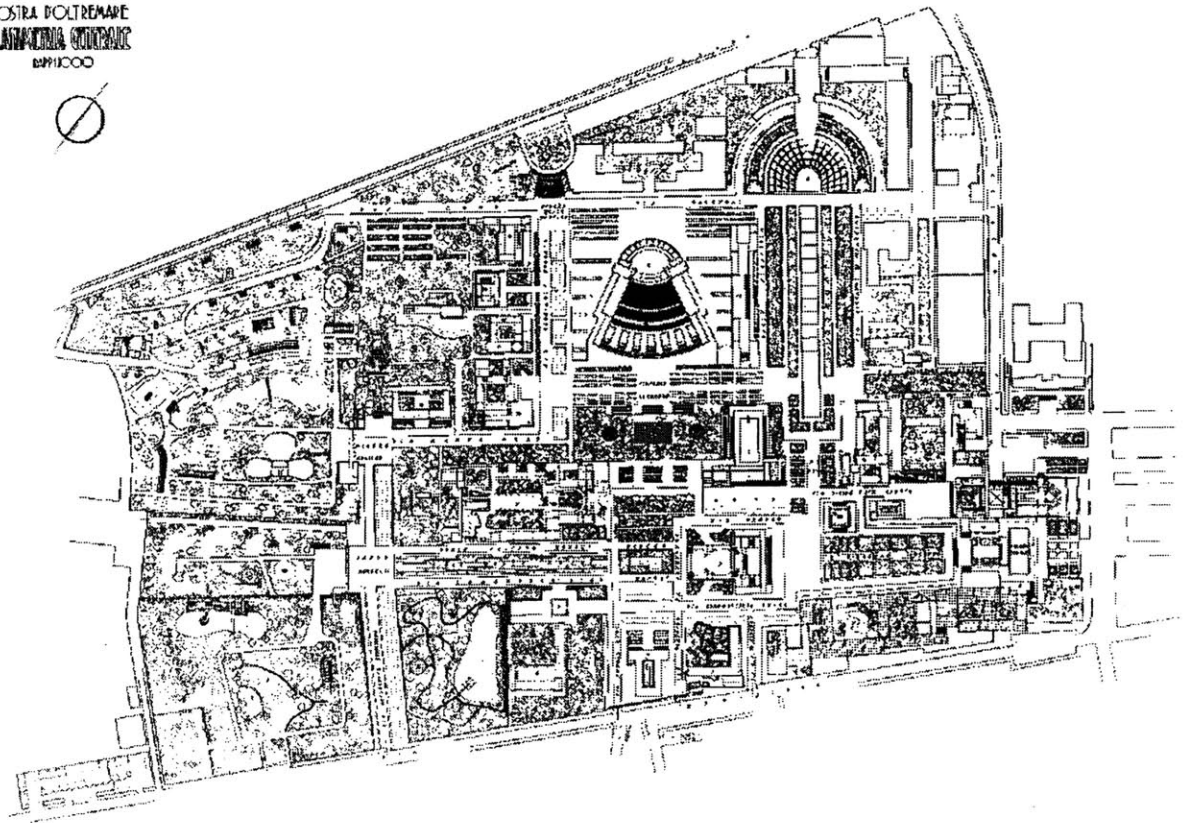


2.a-41. Museo Coloniale, Rome, 1935. Sala delle armi abissine.



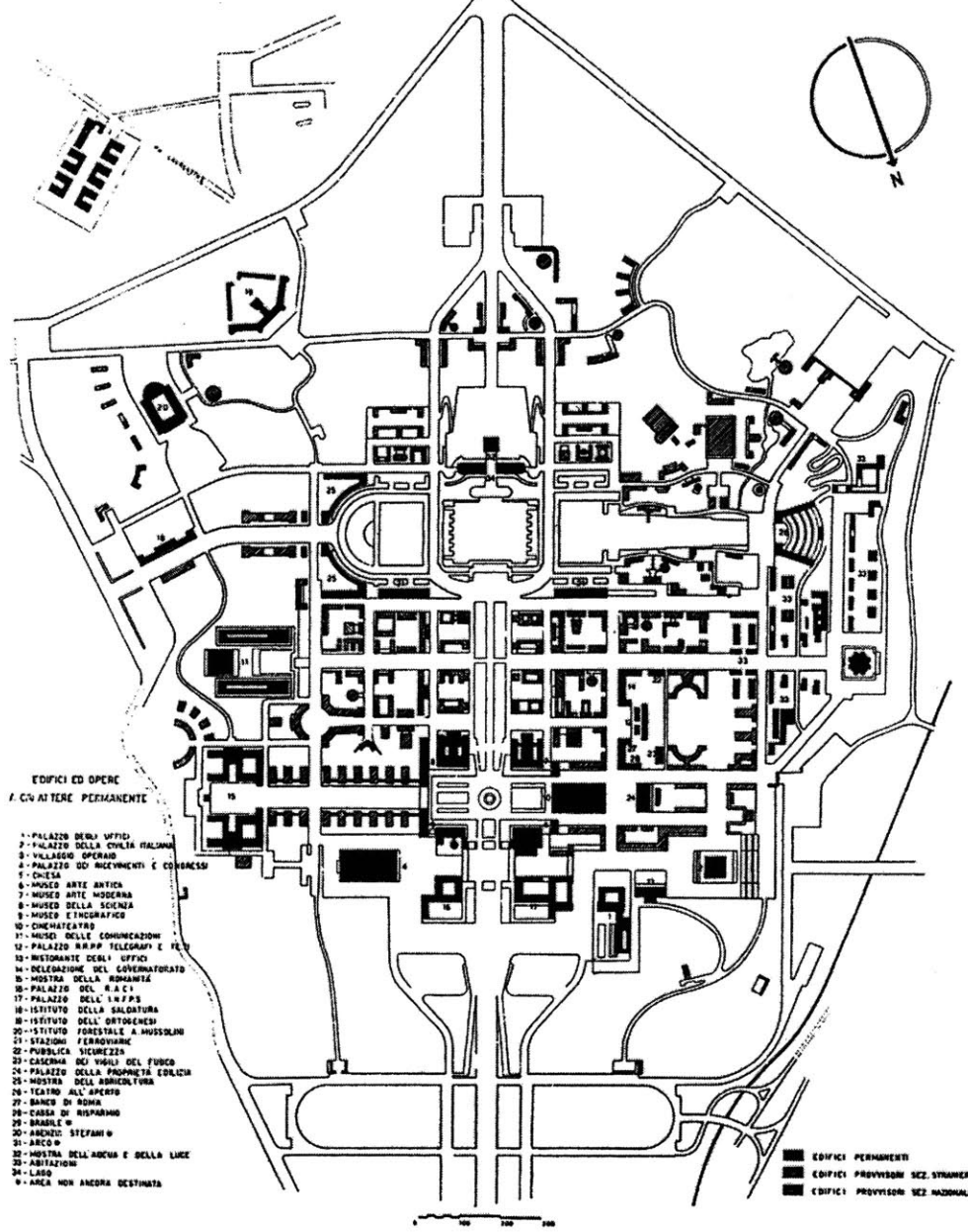
2.a-42. International Fair, Budapest, 1938. Mostra del Ministero dell'Africa Italiana.

MOSTRA D'OLTREMARE
PALAZZO CENTRALE
1:11.000



2.a-43. Mostra triennale delle terre italiane d'oltremare, Naples, 1940. Site plan.

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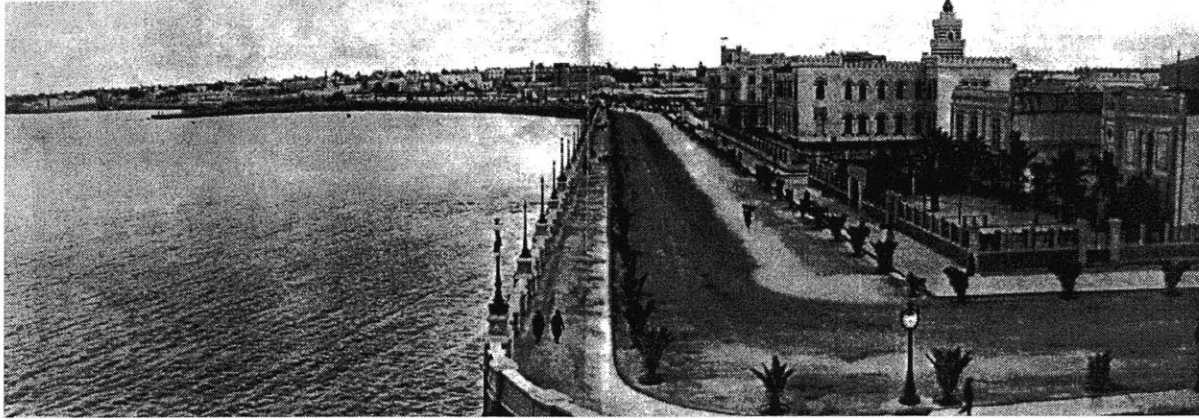
2.a-44 Piacentini, et.al., Esposizione Universale di Roma, 1942. Regulatory plan, 1938.



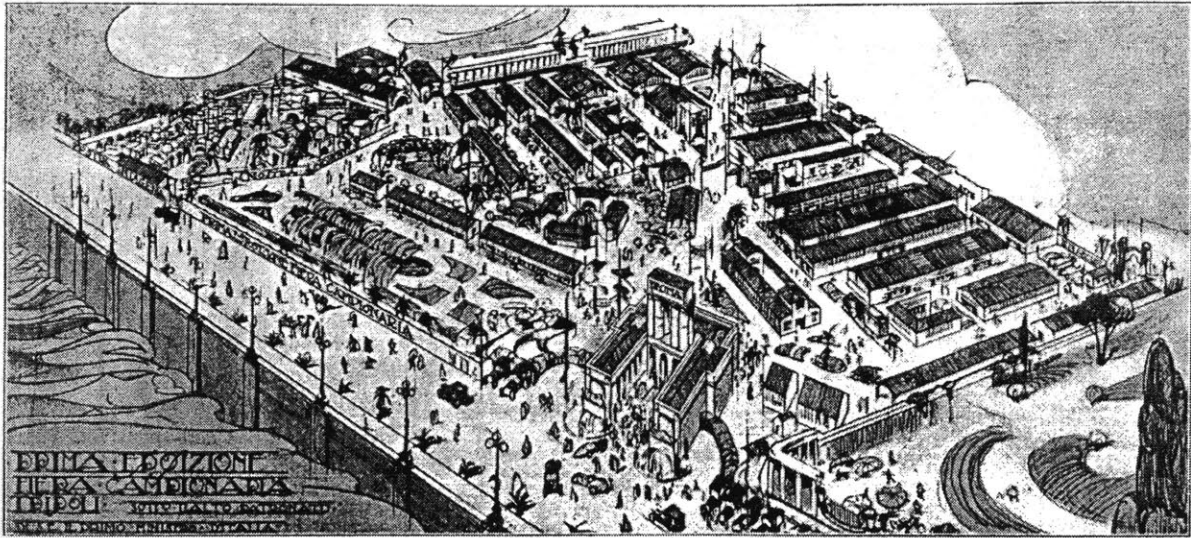
2.a-45. Florestano Di Fausto, Padiglione della Libia, Mostra d'oltremare, 1940.



2.a-46. Villaggio indigeno dell'Africa Orientale Italiana. Mostra d'oltremare.



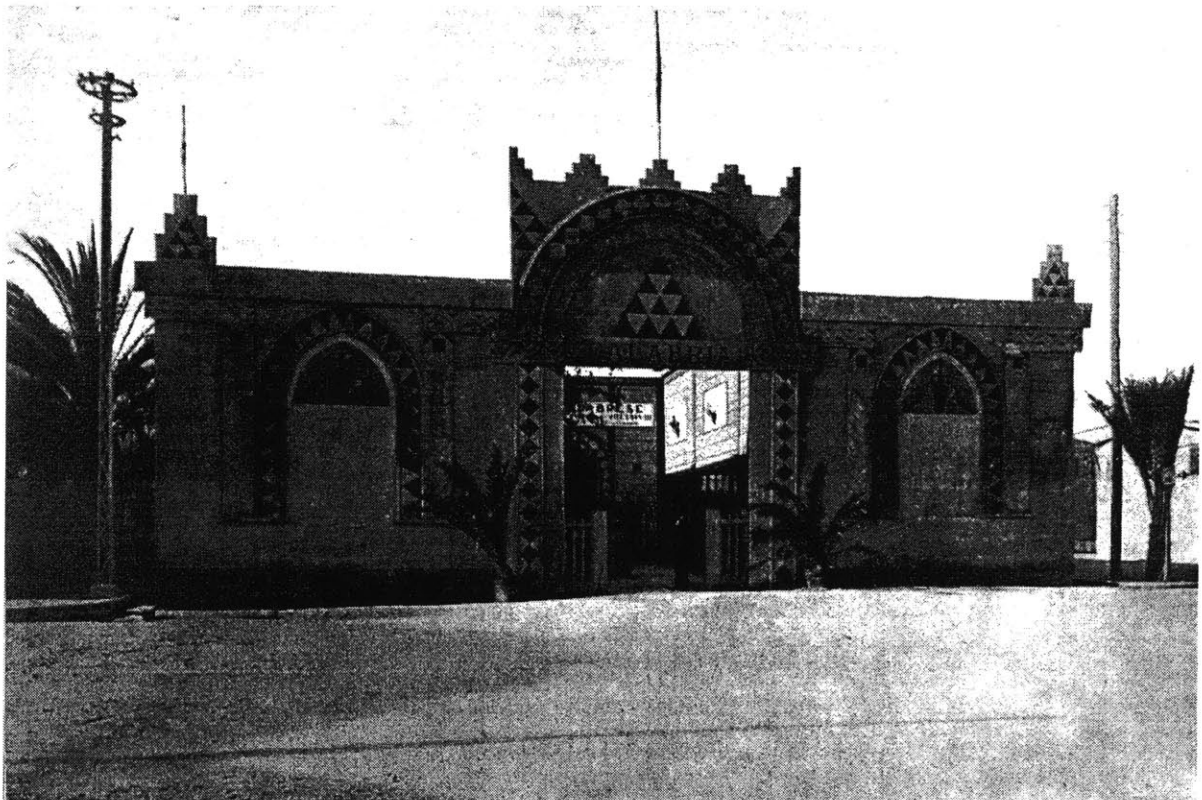
2.b-1. Tripoli, Lungomare Conte Volpi, 1927.



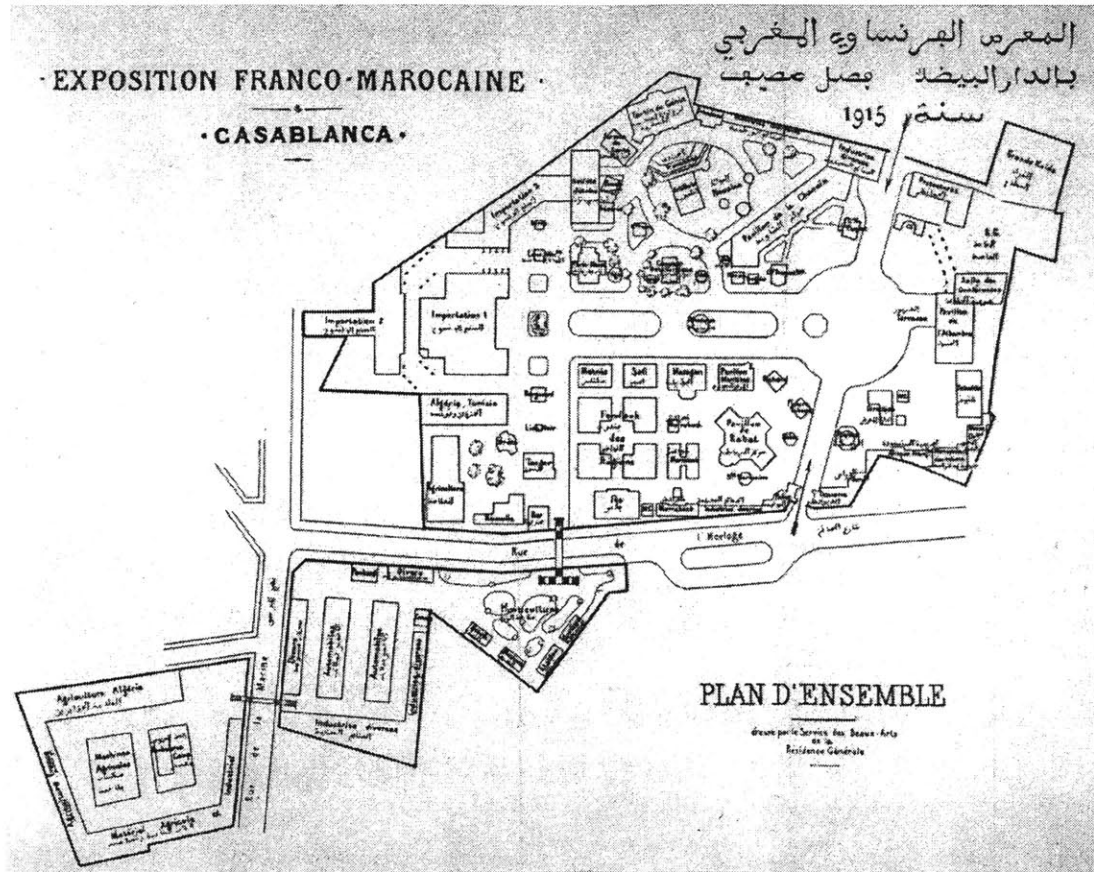
2.b-2. First Fiera campionaria di Tripoli, 1927. Aerial view.



2.b-3. Fiera di Tripoli, 1927. Padiglione degli apparati motori.



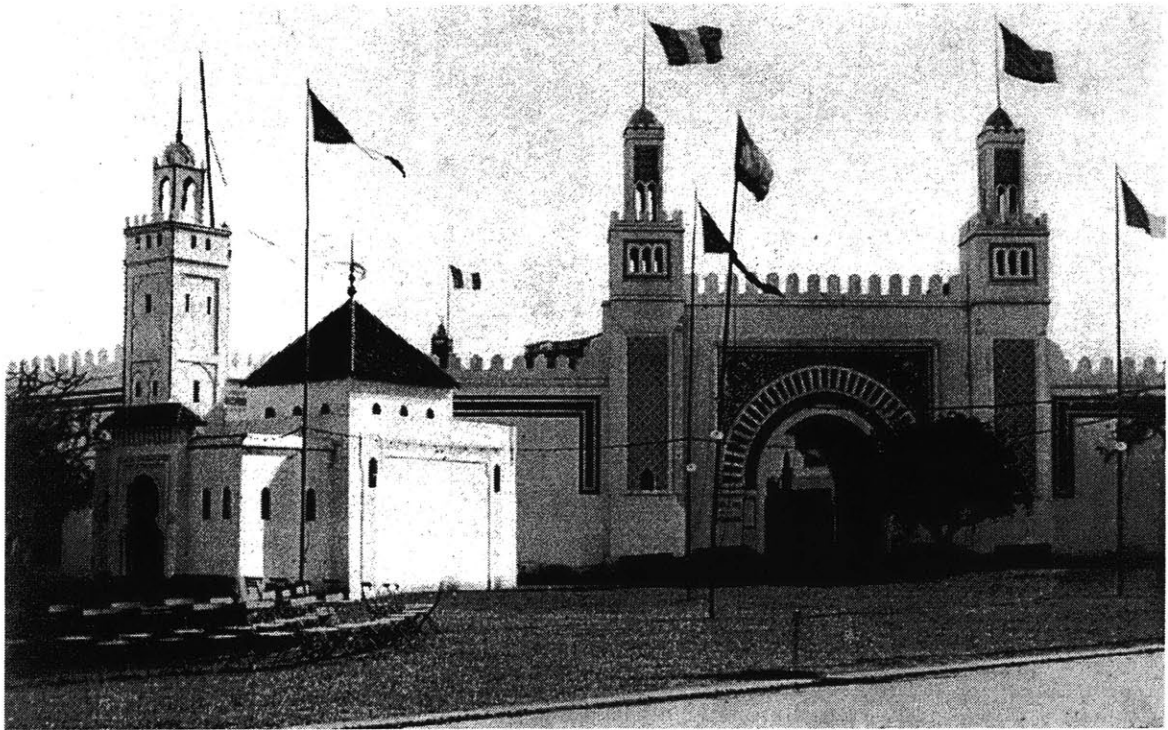
2.b-4. Fiera di Tripoli, 1927. Padiglione della Calabria.



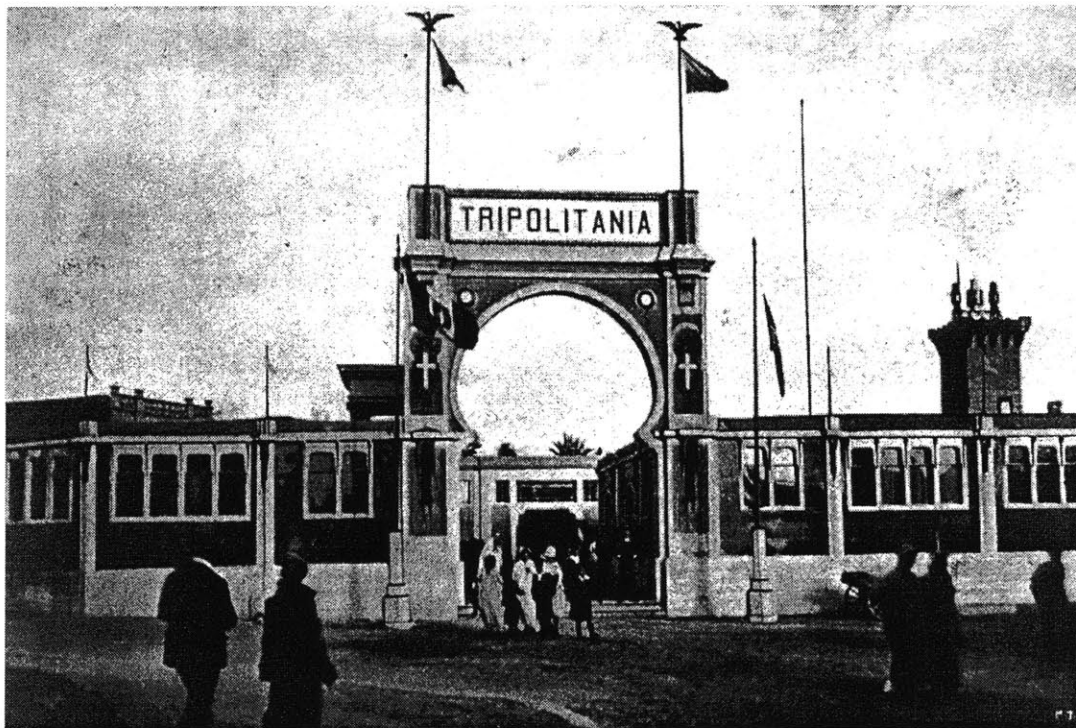
2.b-5. Exposition Franco-Marocaine, Casablanca, 1915. Plan.



2.b-6. Exposition Franco-Marocaine, 1915. Pavillon de l'Importation, Postcard.



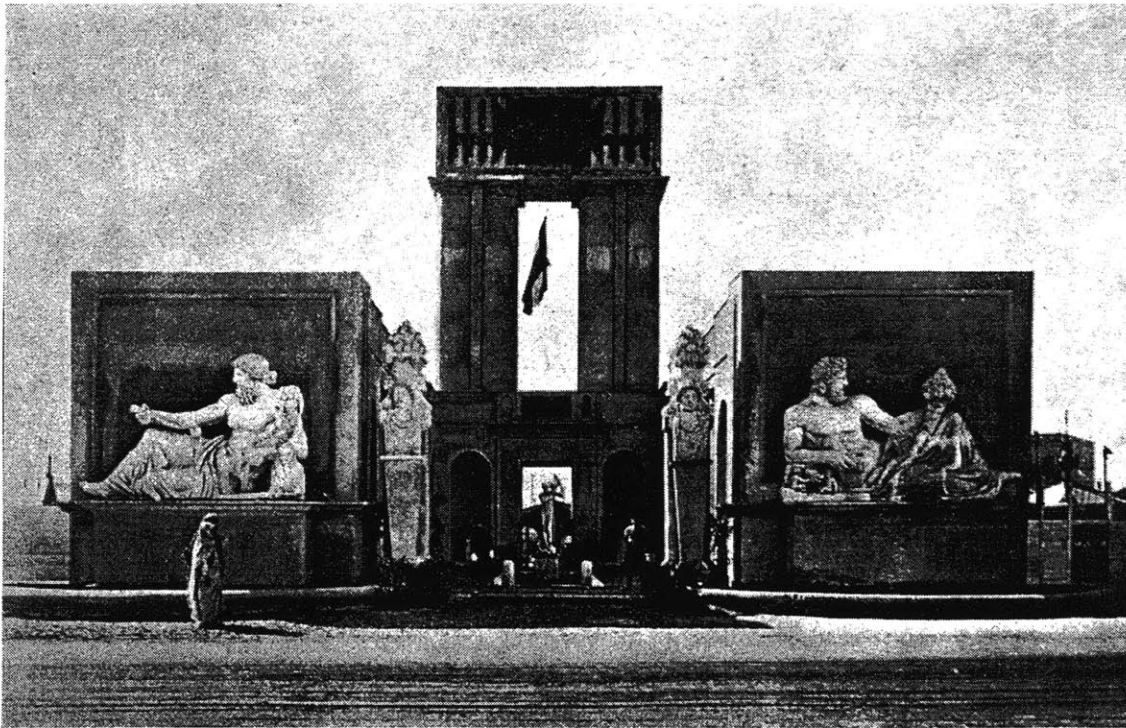
2.b-7. Exposition Franco-Marocaine, 1915. Pavillon de la Chouïa.



2.b-8. Fiera di Tripoli, 1927. Villaggio Coloniale, Entrance portal.



2.b-9. Fiera di Tripoli, 1927. Villaggio Coloniale, Padiglione di Zliten.



2.b-10. Felice Nori, Padiglione di Roma, Fiera di Tripoli, 1927. View.



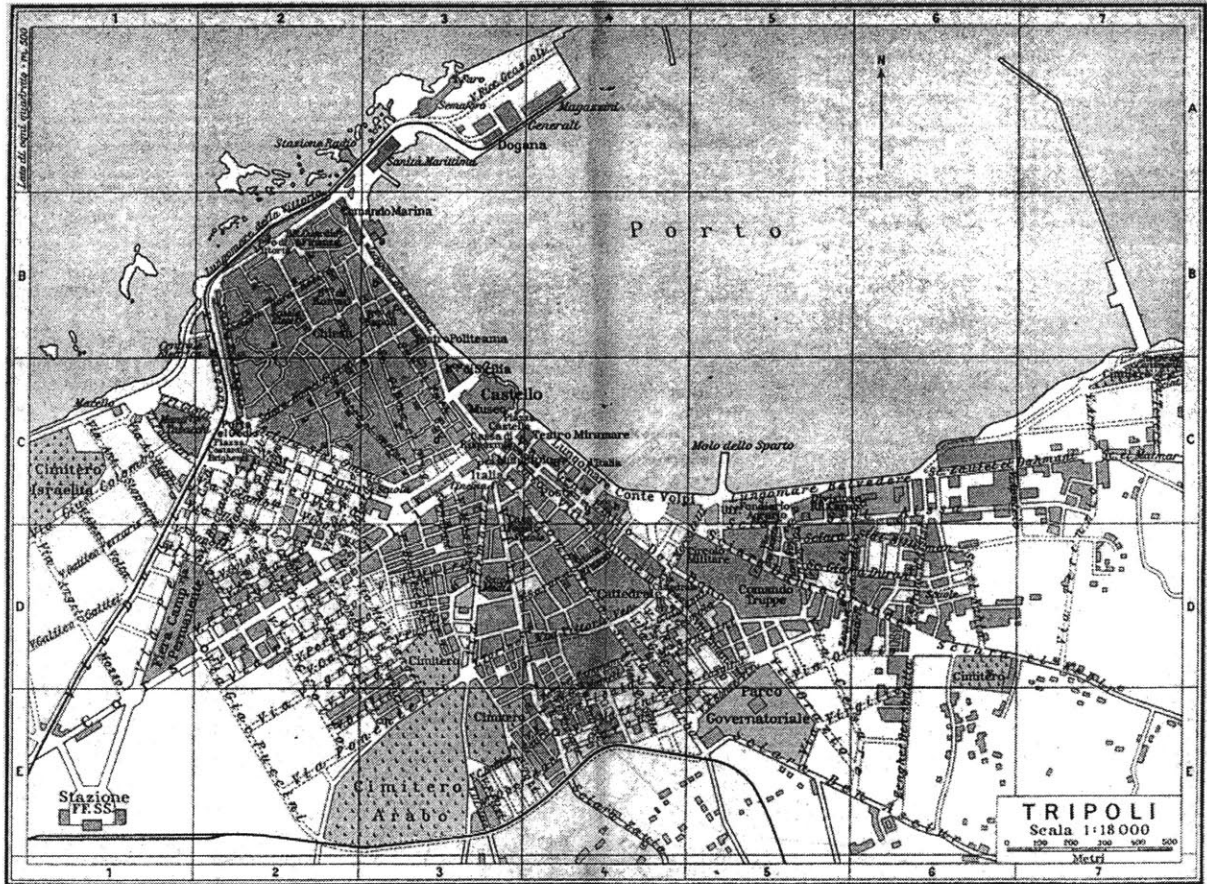
2.b-11. Felice Nori, Padiglione di Roma, Fiera di Tripoli, 1927. View of cortile.



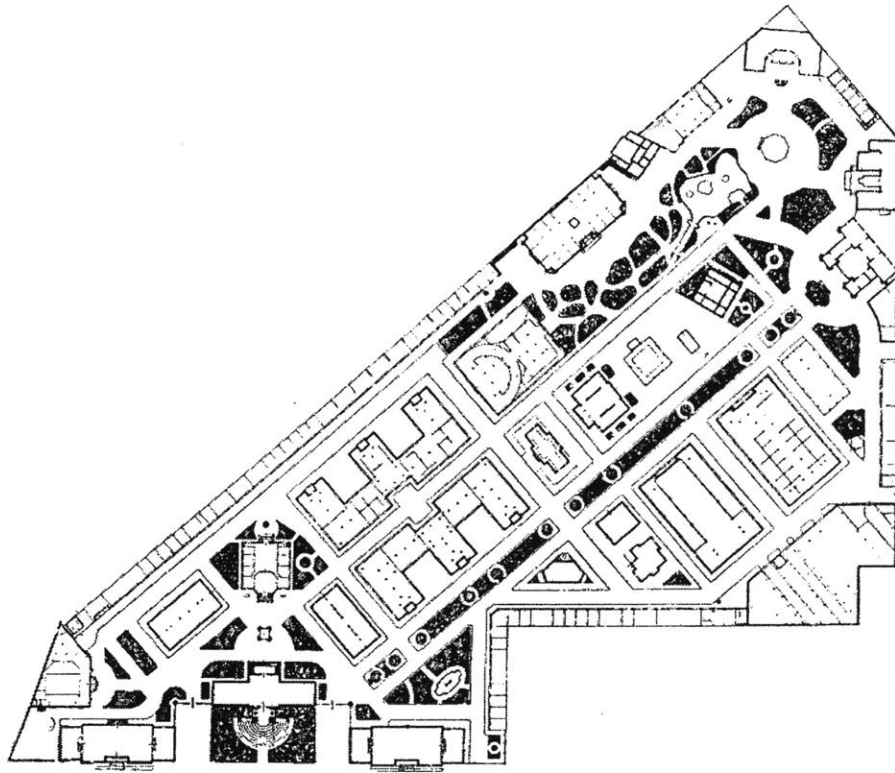
2.b-12. Armando Brasini, Monumento ai Caduti e alla Vittoria, Tripoli, 1923-25.



2.b-13. *Esotica*, February 1927. Cover.



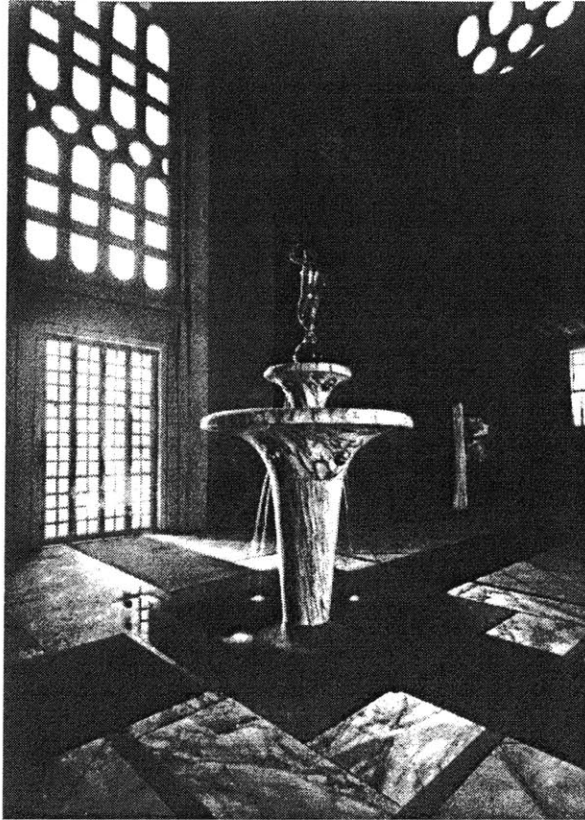
2.b-14. Plan of City of Tripoli, 1929.



2.b-15. Fiera di Tripoli, 1929. Plan.



2.b-16. Alessandro Limongelli, Padiglione di Roma, Fiera di Tripoli, 1929. View.



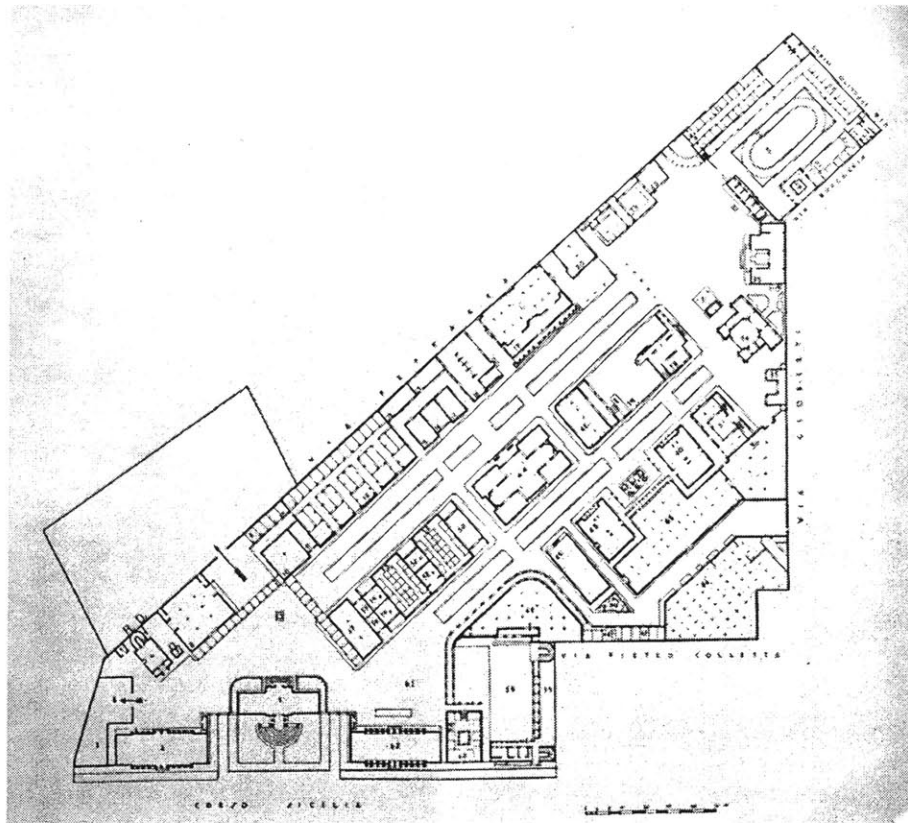
2.b-17. Limongelli, Padiglione di Roma, Fiera di Tripoli, 1929. Interior.



2.b-18. Fiera di Tripoli, 1929. View of central street.



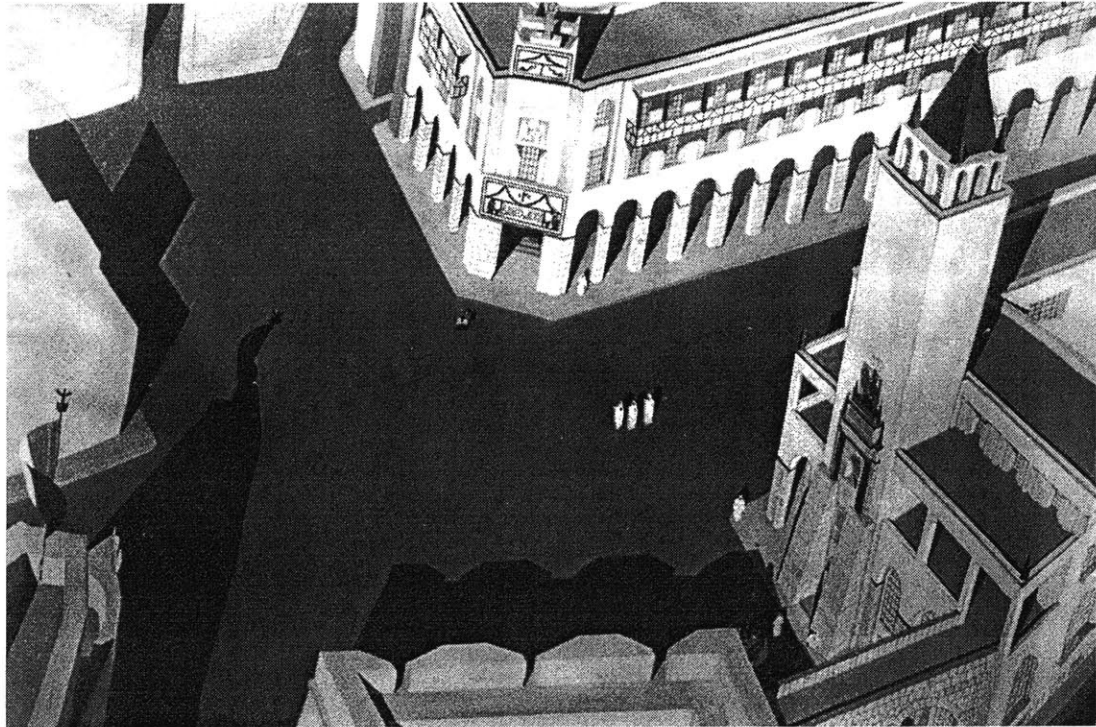
2.b-19. Fiera di Tripoli, 1939. View of main street.



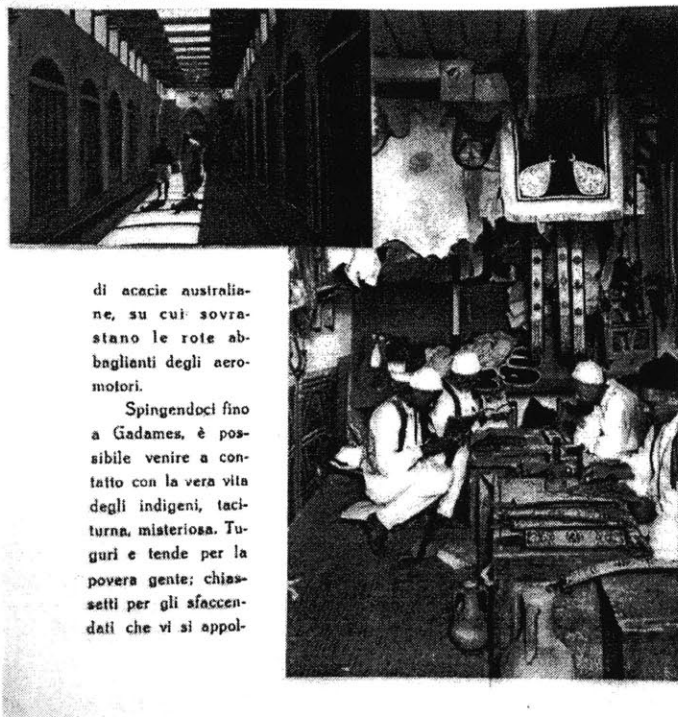
2.b-20. Fiera di Tripoli, 1939. Plan.



2.b-21. Fiera di Tripoli, 1939. Laghetto e mostra delle imbarcazioni.



2.b-22. Alessandro Limongelli, Proposal for rearrangement of Piazza Italia, 1931.



di acacie australiane, su cui sovrastano le rote abbaglianti degli aeromotori.

Spingendoci fino a Gadames, è possibile venire a contatto con la vera vita degli indigeni, taciturna, misteriosa. Tuguri e tende per la povera gente; chiosetti per gli sfaccendati che vi si appol-

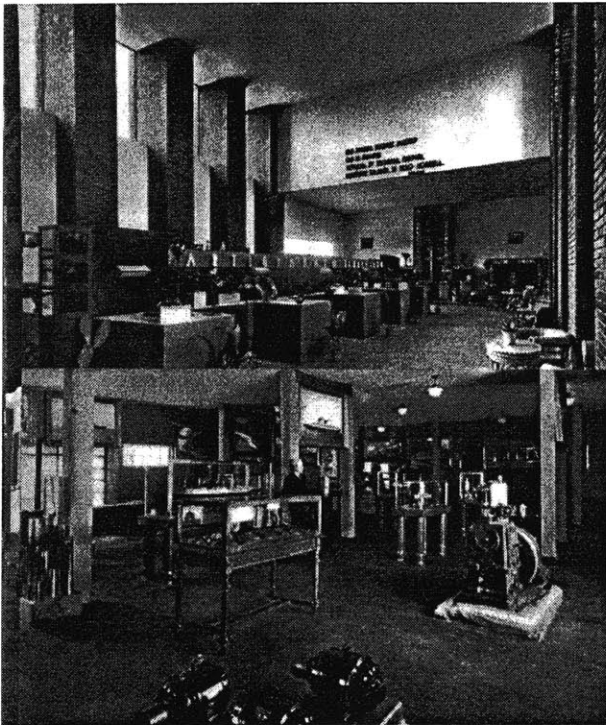
lano in circolo all'ora del thè, ma con una certa aria di congiura; corridoi tenebrosoi vigilati da vecchi fermi ed incantati come statue; moschee bastionate, e come immerse nel folto ispido dei palmeti.

Alla lontana e sotto il sole che incombe, si profilano tra le dune le bianche guardie armate del deserto.

o

TRIPOLI 1935 - A. XII

2.b-23. Views of suq in old city. Fiera di Tripoli, IX. *Manifestazione*, 1934.



été conçus spécialement pour attirer les foules et les produits de tous les pays qui ont des intérêts commerciaux avec l'Afrique.

Dans cette petite cité caractéristique on a vu l'an dernier 1.600 exposants qui y ont conclu pour environ 5 millions de livres d'affaires.

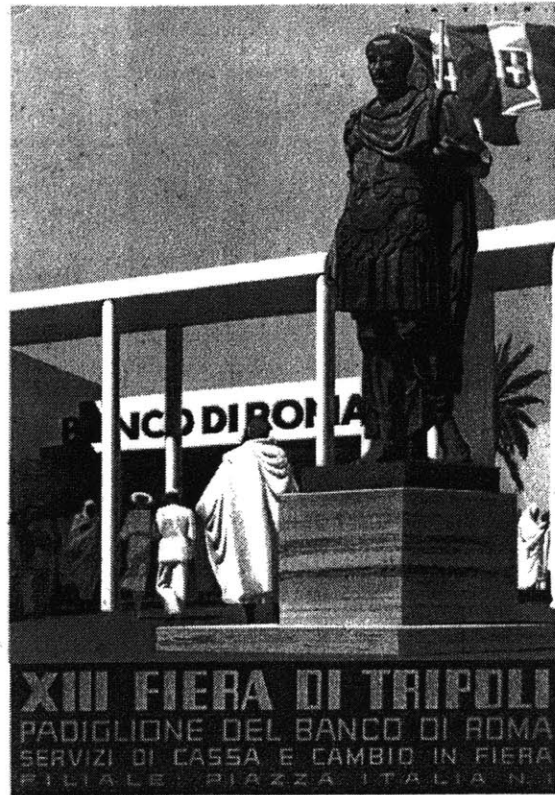
Les nations qui ont pris part à la Foire de Tripoli étaient: la Belgique, l'Égypte, l'Éthiopie, la France, le Luxembourg, la Suisse, la Tchécoslovaquie, l'Algérie, le Maroc, la Tunisie, l'Administration Internationale de la Zone de Tanger.

Cent dix mille personnes ont visité la Foire, parmi lesquelles de nombreuses personnalités italiennes et étrangères du monde politique, financier, industriel et commercial.

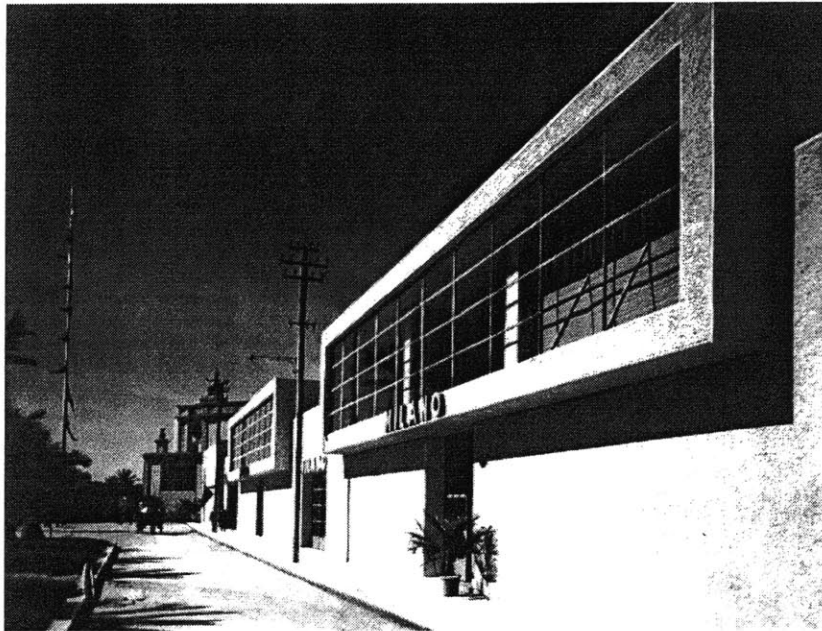
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TRIPOLI 1935 - A. XII

2.b-24. Views of metropolitan displays. Fiera di Tripoli, IX. *Manifestazione*, 1934.



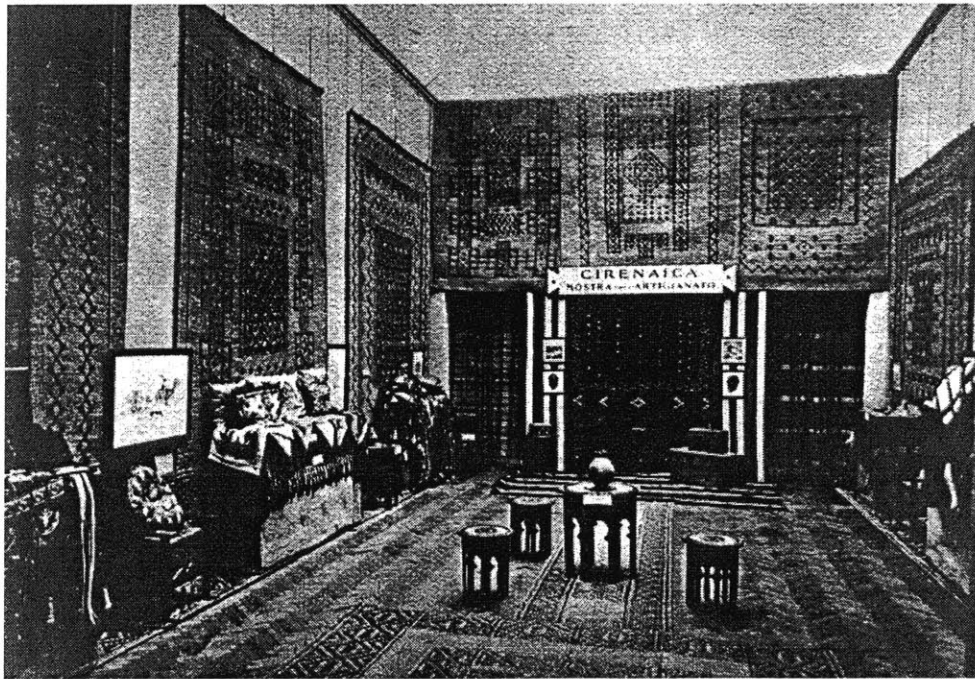
2.b-25. XIII Fiera di Tripoli, Padiglione del Banco di Roma. Postcard, 1939.



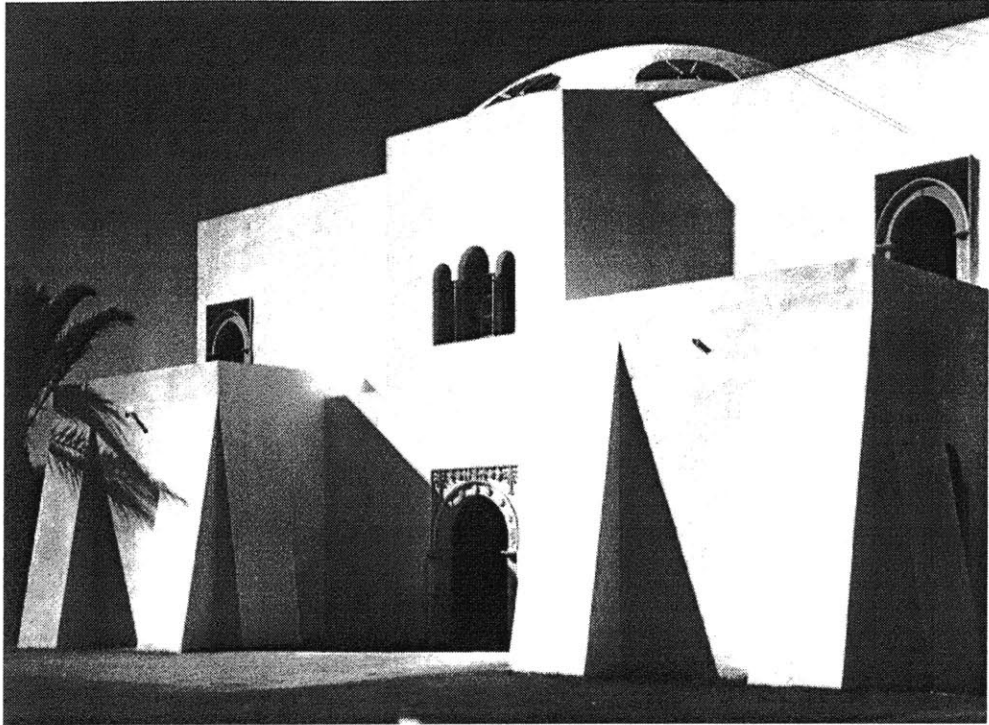
2.b-26. Florestano Di Fausto, Padiglione delle mostre collettive, Fiera di Tripoli, 1935.



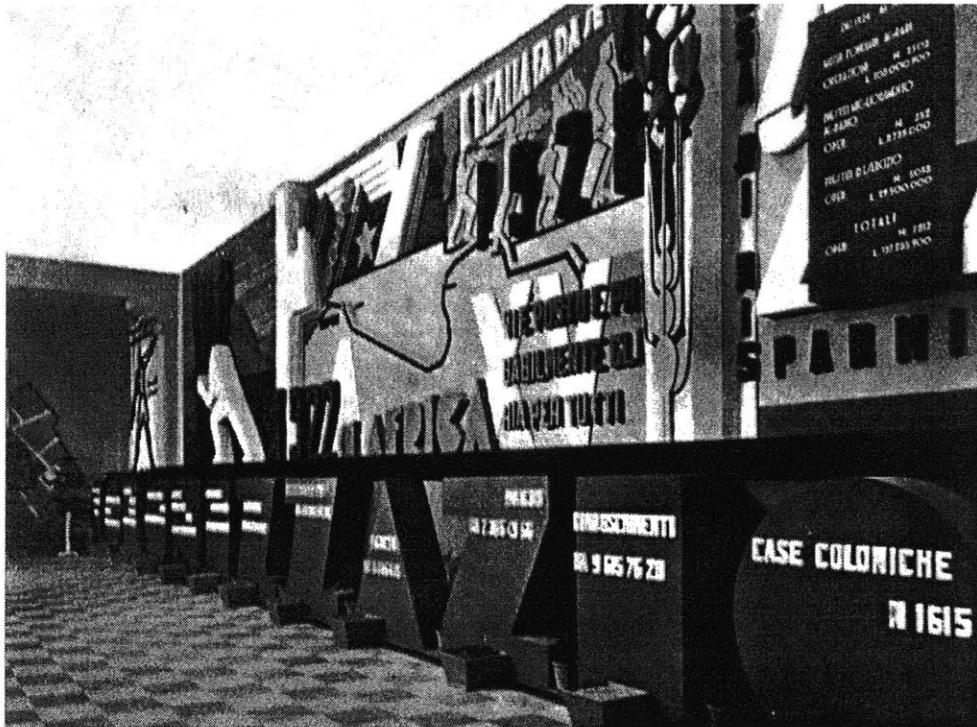
2.b-27. Mostra del CPEC di Milano, Fiera di Tripoli.



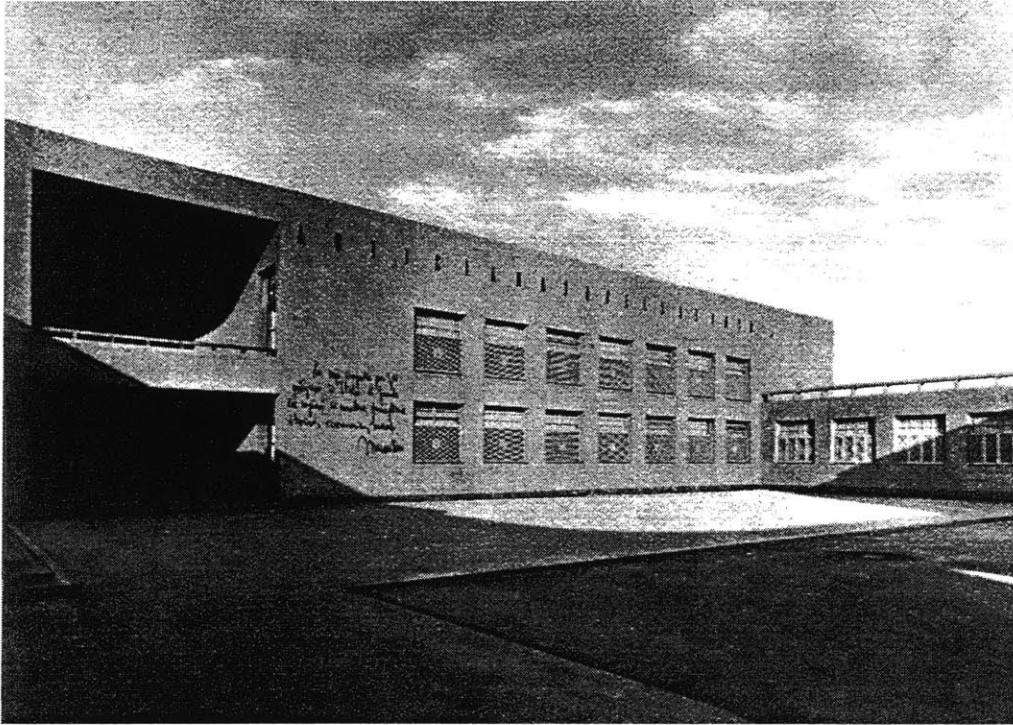
2.b-28. Padiglione della Cirenaica, Fiera di Tripoli, 1932. Interior display.



2.b-29. Padiglione della Tripolitania, Fiera di Tripoli, 1929. Exterior.



2.b-30. Padiglione della Libia, Fiera di Tripoli. Mostra della Colonizzazione, 1937.



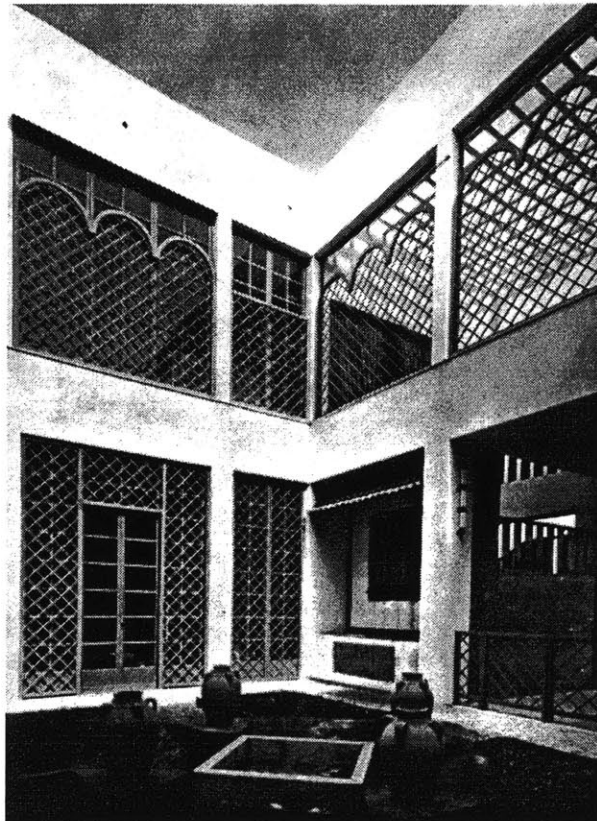
2.b-31. Pietro Lombardi, Padiglione dell'Artigianato libico, Fiera di Tripoli, 1936.



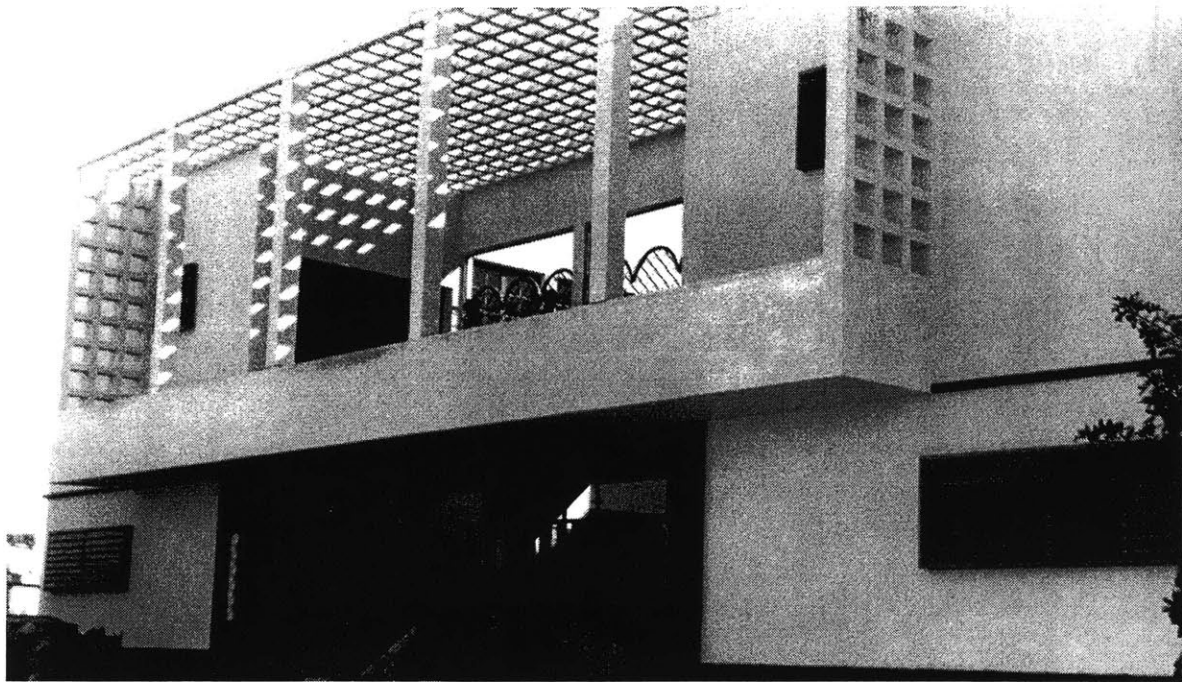
2.b-32. Pietro Lombardi, Padiglione dell'Artigianato libico. Interior.



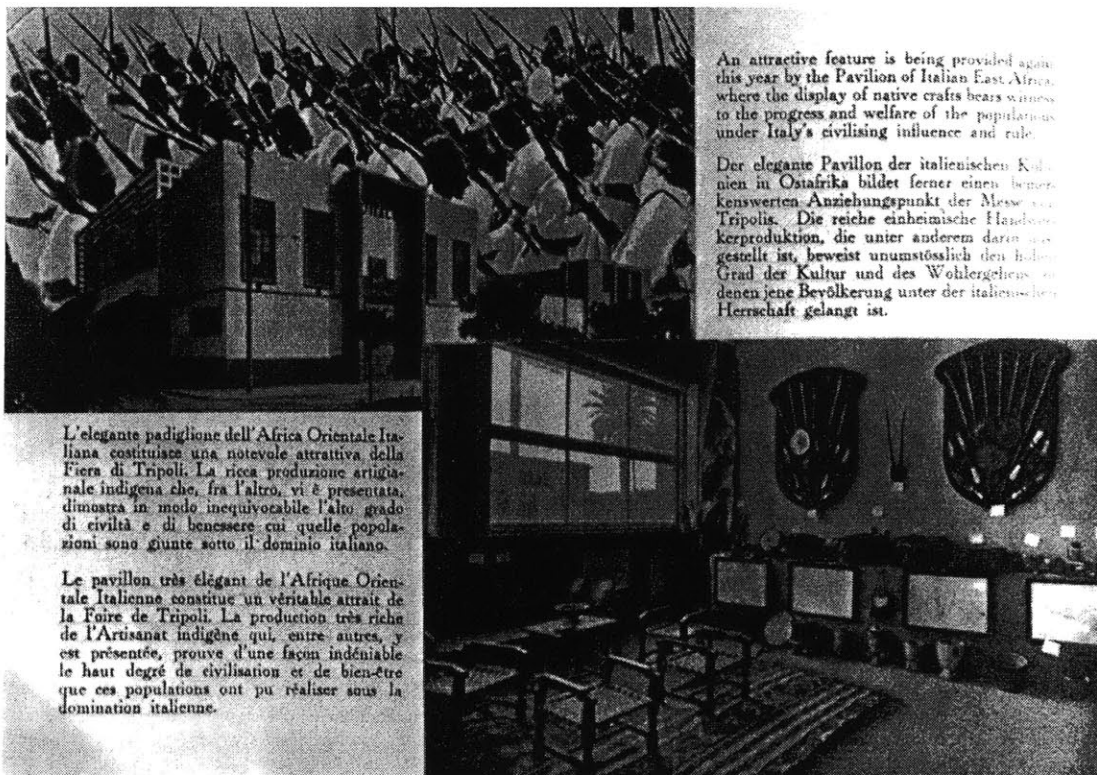
2.b-33. Larco and Rava, Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia, Fiera di Tripoli, 1934. View.



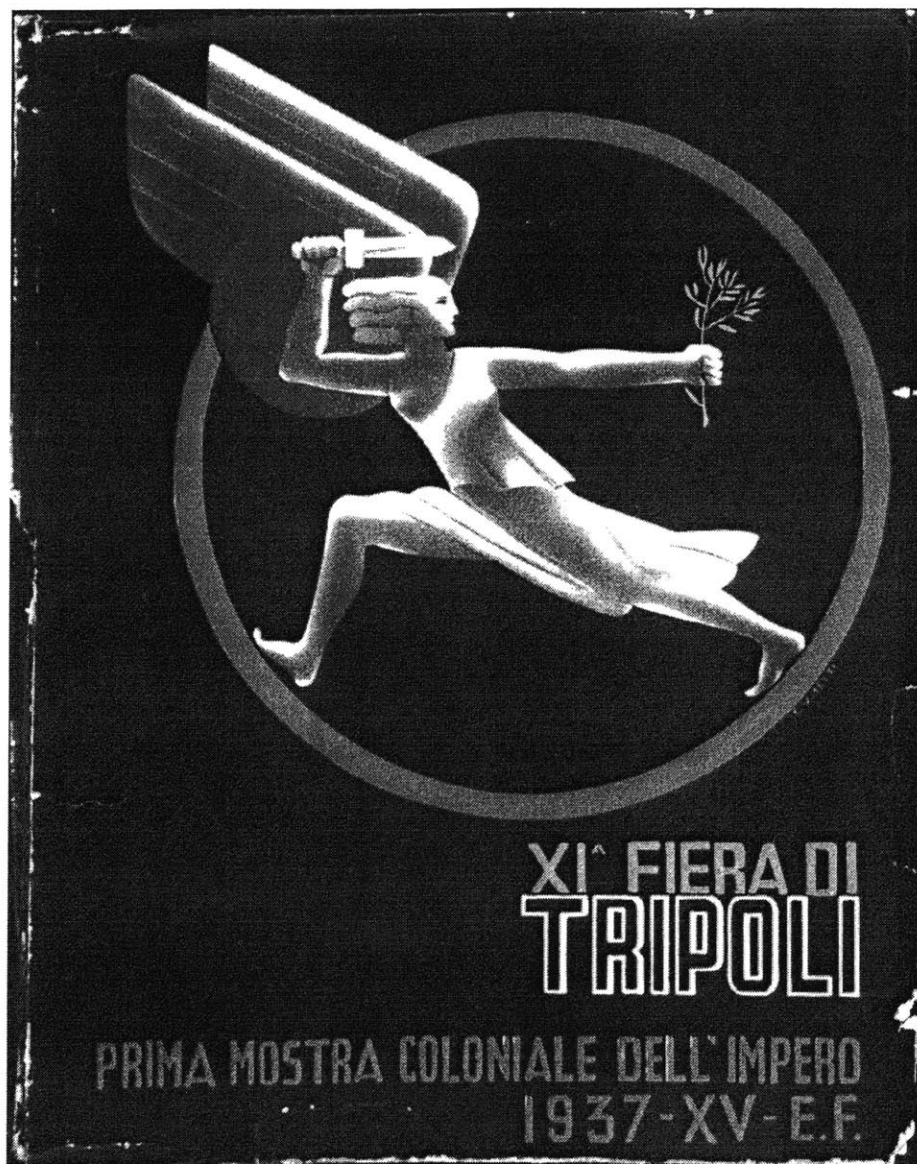
2.b-34. Larco and Rava, Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia. Courtyard.



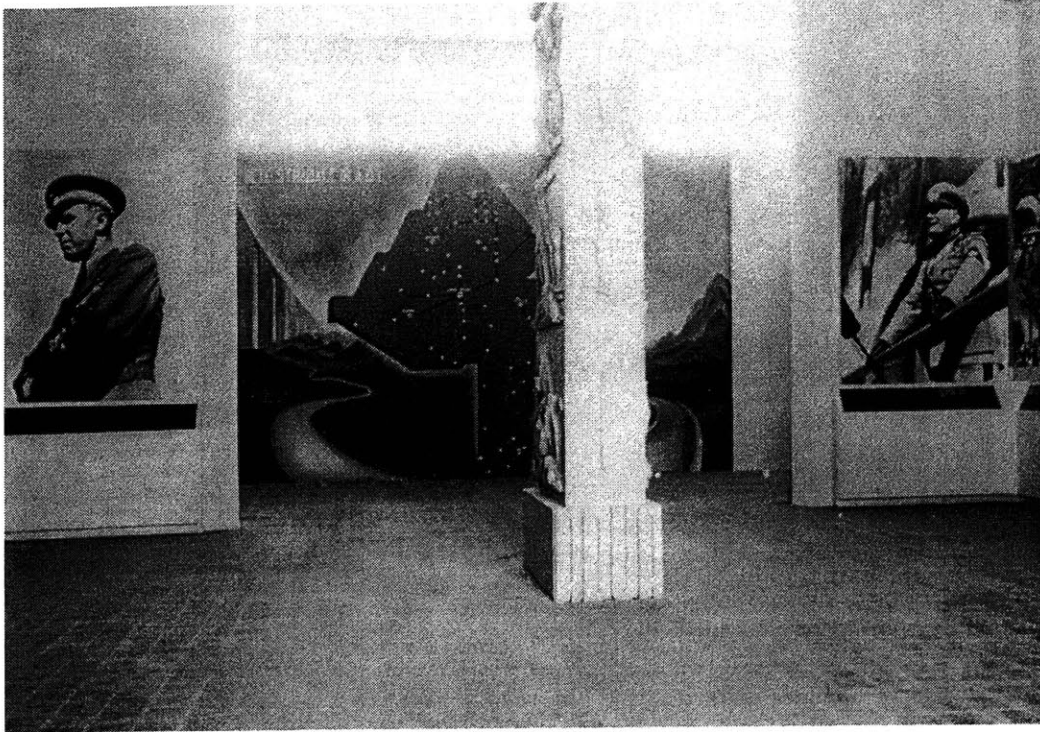
2.b-35. Larco and Rava, Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia. Rava photograph, ca. 1934.



2.b-36. Larco and Rava, Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia. X Fiera di Tripoli, 1936. Catalog.



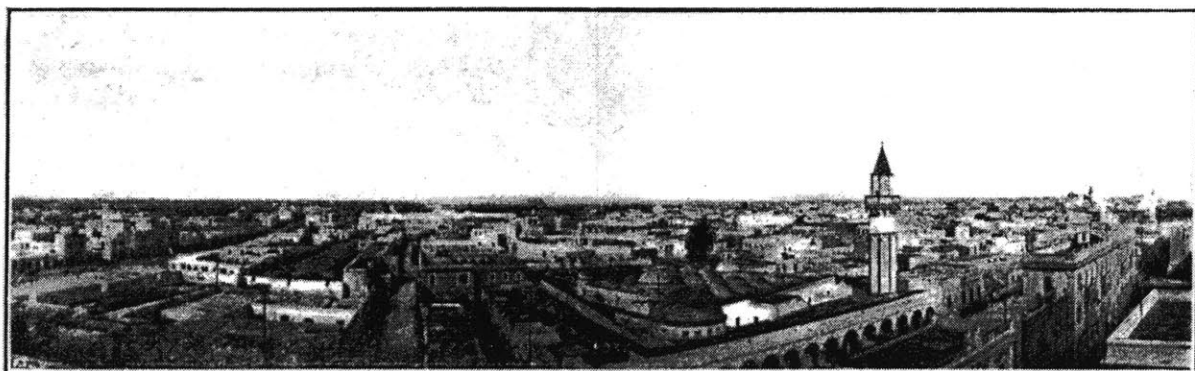
2.b-37. *XI Fiera di Tripoli, Prima mostra coloniale dell'Impero fascista, 1937. Cover.*



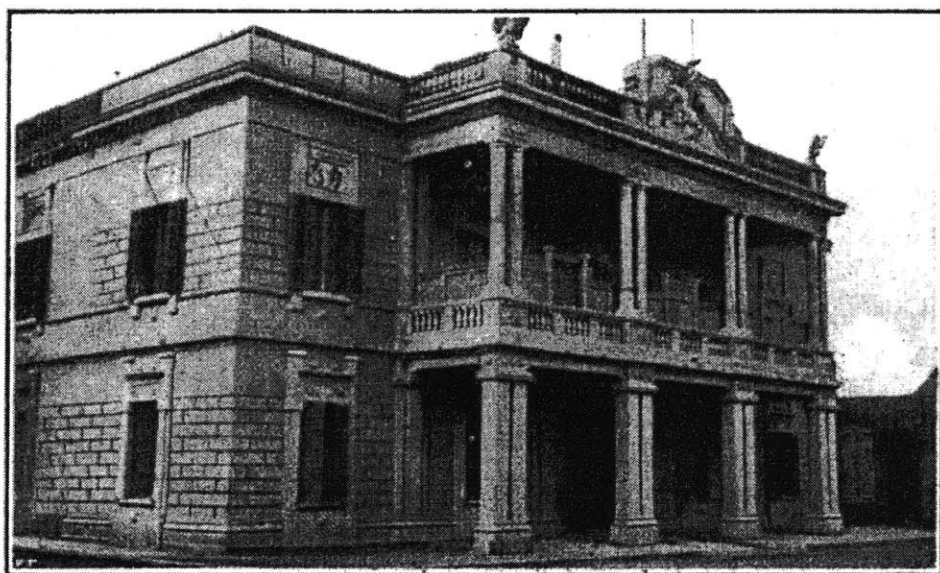
2.b-40. Lombardi, Padiglione dell' Africa Orientale. Exhibition of military conquest.



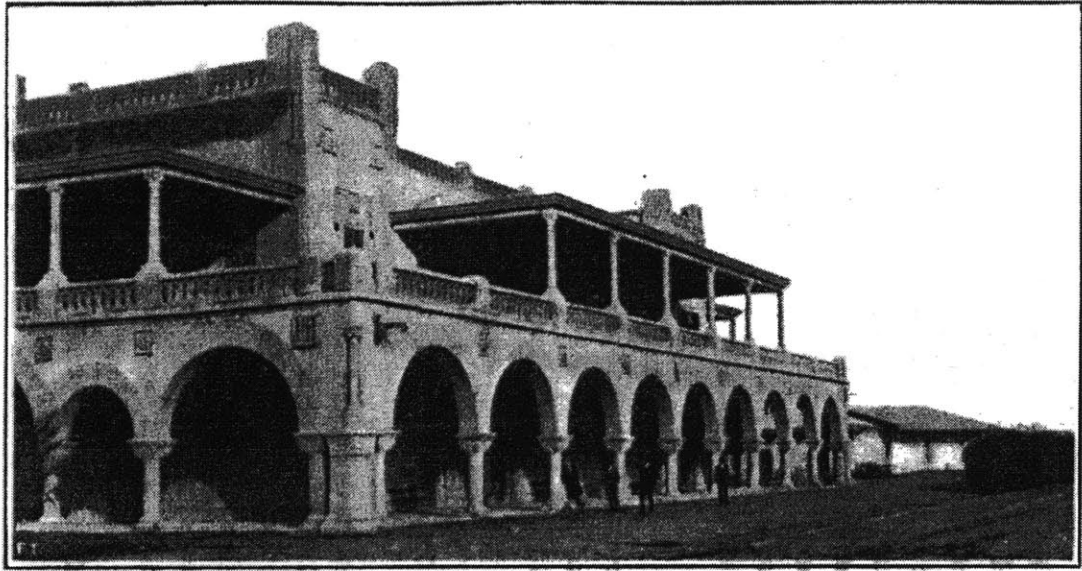
2.b-41. Lombardi, Padiglione dell' Africa Orientale. General interior view.



3.a-1. Panorama di Tripoli. *Guida di Tripoli e dintorni*, 1925.



3.a-2. La palazzina del Governatore. *Guida di Tripoli e dintorni*, 1925.



3.a-3. La Stazione ferroviaria principale. *Guida di Tripoli e dintorni*, 1925.

11

LA NUOVA TRIPOLI

La metropoli continua di svilupparsi che Tripoli ha, dall'evacuazione al regime fascista, accanto al governo, che nel campo edilizio e delle opere pubbliche, si è avuta, specie nell'ultimo quinquennio, grazie del tutto superabundanti, non solo nel passato, ma anche nell'epoca post-bellica. La nuova Tripoli, accanto al fatto che nel solo primo semestre del 1927 furono costruiti ben 152 nuovi appartamenti per abitazioni private, con il costo globale di 700 milioni, l'incremento della popolazione che risulta da tale sviluppo, è un felice sintomo del diverso carattere della capitale. E nel 1928 la città di 270.000 abitanti ha ben 105 appartamenti con numero 415 vani.

È vero che non è così raggiunta la eccezionale attività dell'anno 1925, in cui furono fabbricati ben 545 nuovi appartamenti per 9.370 vani, ma, giova notare che, nel secondo semestre del 1927, per un valore non meno rilevante dei risultati definitivi, l'attività edilizia del paese fu ancora un nuovo gradimento incrementato con il non ripieno di nuovo tempo lontano dal vero affermarsi che l'anno 1927 segnerà indubbiamente una felice svolta. E il ripieno è confermato il fatto che l'attività edilizia dei privati si svolge ora con un ritmo che non può essere ad esempio, per non limitarsi di un esempio, tempo lungo del vecchio edificio.

Nelle immediate vicinanze del Corso Vittorio Emanuele sono anche le nuove zone per abitazioni private, regolate e ordinate e tutte le altre categorie che si integrano l'attività edilizia, anche nei suoi punti più vitali, vanno sviluppando. Lo stesso, fuori dell'attività edilizia, si vede in tutto il paese, da una parte, e, dall'altra, per la sua prospettiva indefinita, per il carattere di piano dove cittadini e perché la costruzione di tutto fra i limiti principali della capitale nazionale — il Castello reale, del Governo, la Cattedrale, il Palazzo di Giustizia, la prefettura provinciale ed il palazzo della Pace — viene a creare quell'impressione di grandiosità e di serietà di cui è degna.

Il fenomeno Uffice, Teatro, Municipio, con un loro consiglio di governo, ha dato una svolta, ripieno l'abitazione a gran parte della città. Si sono elevati e si stanno costruendo viale, strade, parzialmente, dunque, anche la situazione dei vecchi e dei padoni, creando

di nuovi fabbricati e per la riparazione ed abbellimento di quelli esistenti.

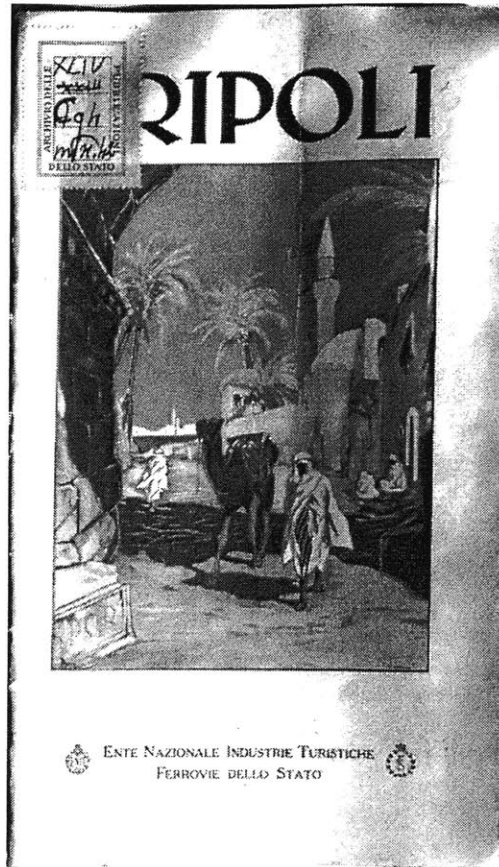
È vero che i più modesti di tale attività di opere, di un'attività che stanno per essere trasformata, soprattutto Tripoli, hanno che qui si trovano il fatto che nel solo primo semestre del 1927 furono costruiti ben 152 nuovi appartamenti per abitazioni private, con il costo globale di 700 milioni. L'incremento della popolazione che risulta da tale sviluppo, è un felice sintomo del diverso carattere della capitale. E nel 1928 la città di 270.000 abitanti ha ben 105 appartamenti con numero 415 vani.

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Nelle immediate vicinanze del Corso Vittorio Emanuele sono anche le nuove zone per abitazioni private, regolate e ordinate e tutte le altre categorie che si integrano l'attività edilizia, anche nei suoi punti più vitali, vanno sviluppando. Lo stesso, fuori dell'attività edilizia, si vede in tutto il paese, da una parte, e, dall'altra, per la sua prospettiva indefinita, per il carattere di piano dove cittadini e perché la costruzione di tutto fra i limiti principali della capitale nazionale — il Castello reale, del Governo, la Cattedrale, il Palazzo di Giustizia, la prefettura provinciale ed il palazzo della Pace — viene a creare quell'impressione di grandiosità e di serietà di cui è degna.

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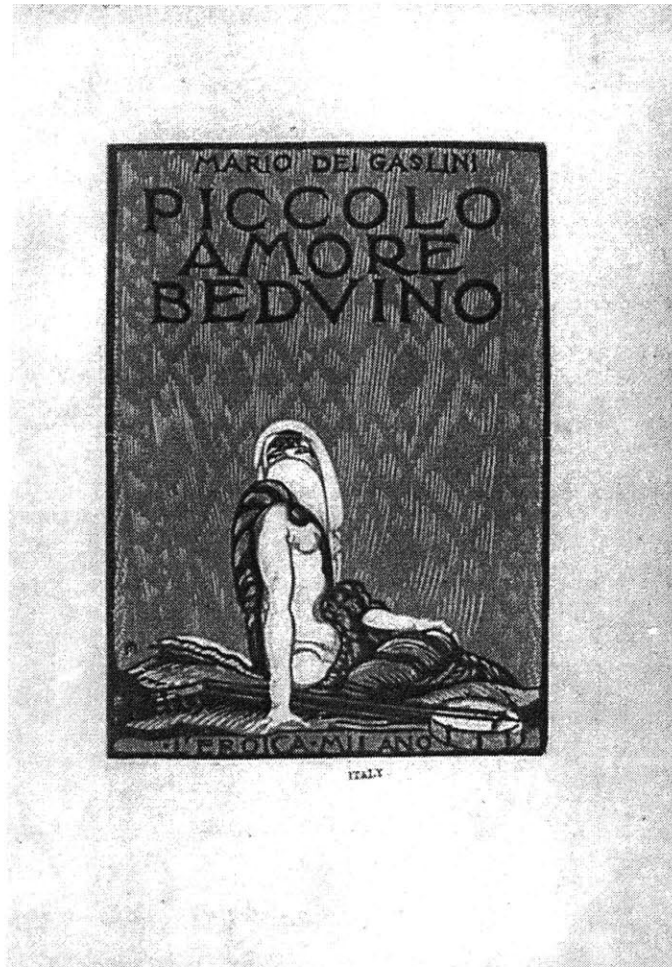
3.a-4. "La nuova Tripoli," *Ospitalità Italiana*, January 1928.



3.a-5. ENIT e Ferrovie dello Stato, *Tripoli*, 1929. Cover.



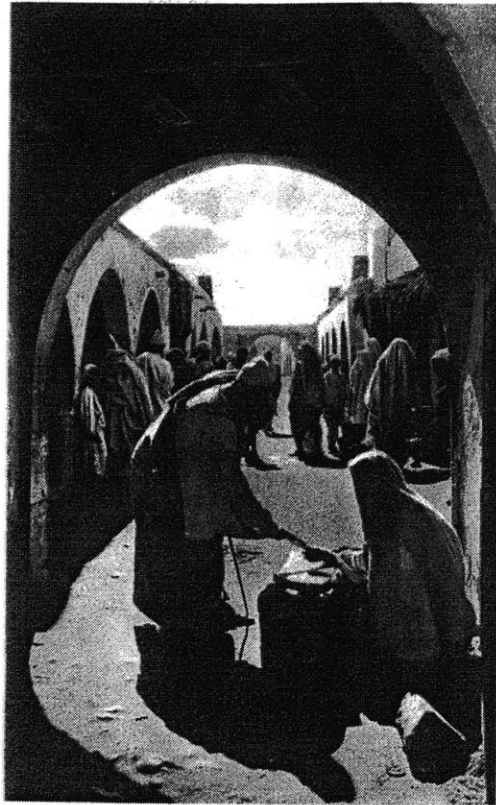
3.a-6. La cattedrale. ENIT e Ferrovie dello Stato, *Tripoli*, 1929.



3.a-7. Mario dei Gaslini. *Piccolo amore beduino*, 1926. Cover.

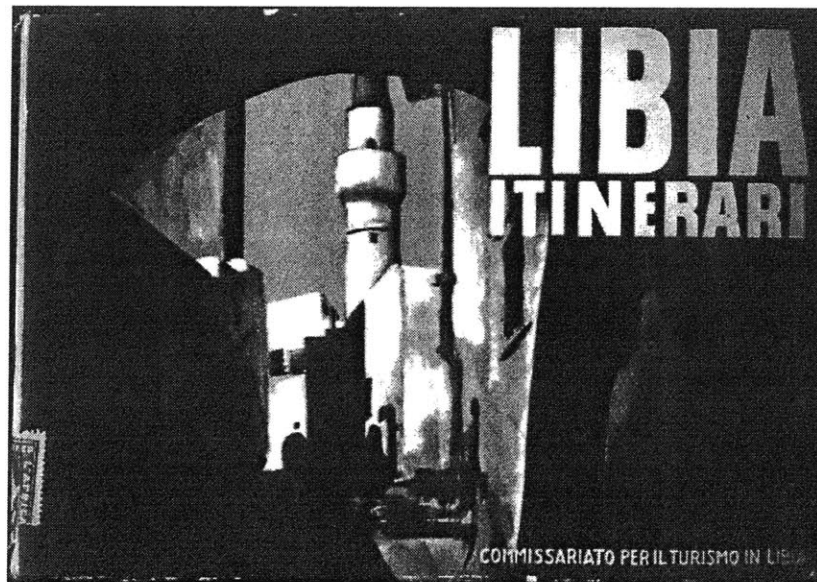


3.a-8. Sheik Abd el Kefi. *Piccolo amore beduino*, 1926.



Tripoli - Una via del Quartiere Arabo

3.a-9. Tripoli - Una via del Quartiere Arabo. Postcard, ca. 1930.



3.a-10. Commissariato per il turismo in Libia. *Libia itinerari*, 1935. Cover.



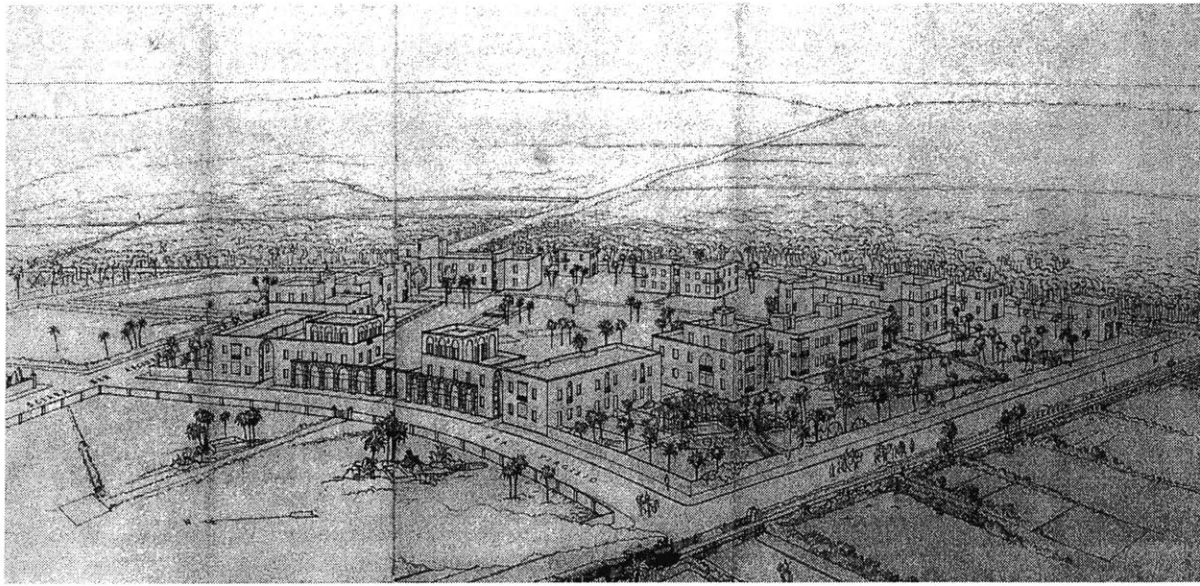
GADAMES - Nella calma riposante dell'oasi, sorge l'Albero di "Ain El Frass,,

3.a-11. Albergo Ain el-Fras, Ghadames. Postcard, ca. 1930.

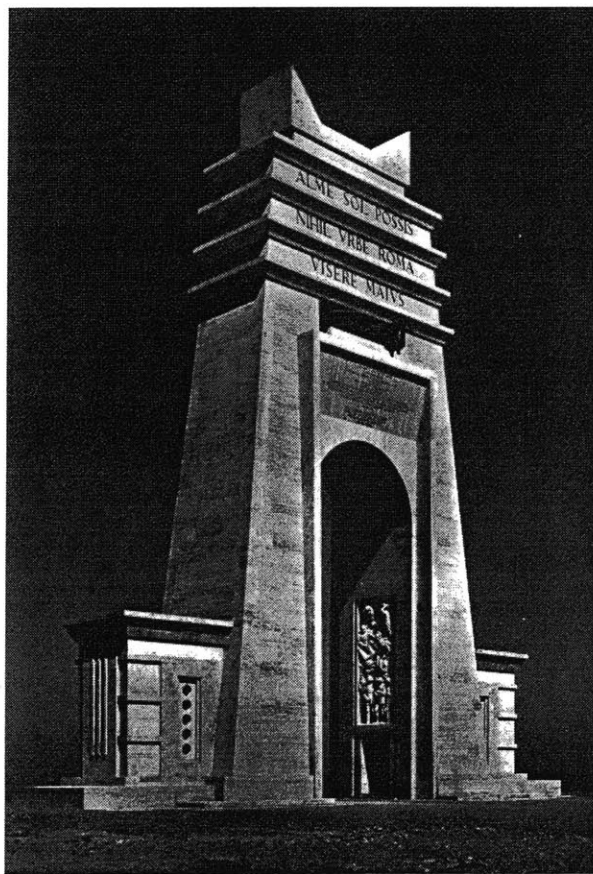


Tripoli - Mendicanti di Tagiura

3.a-12. Mendicanti di Tagiura. Postcard, ca. 1930.



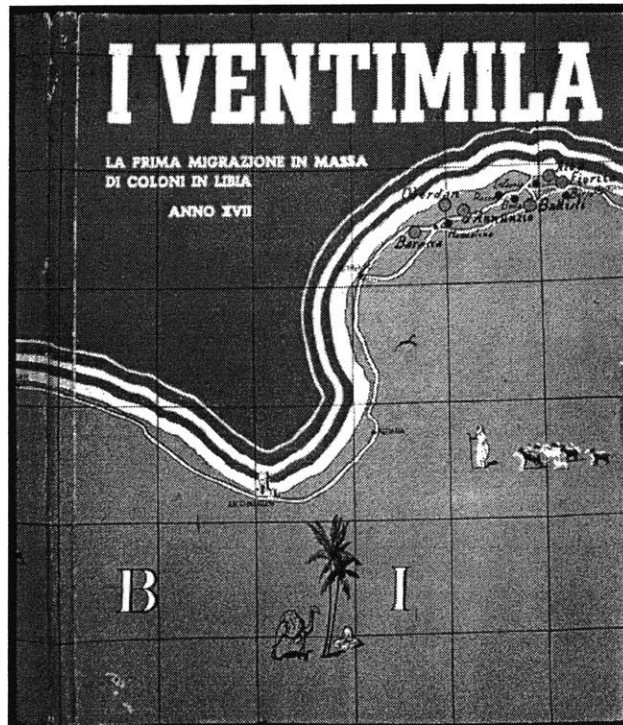
3.b-1. Alberto Alpago Novello, et.al. INCIS housing, Tripoli, 1931-34.



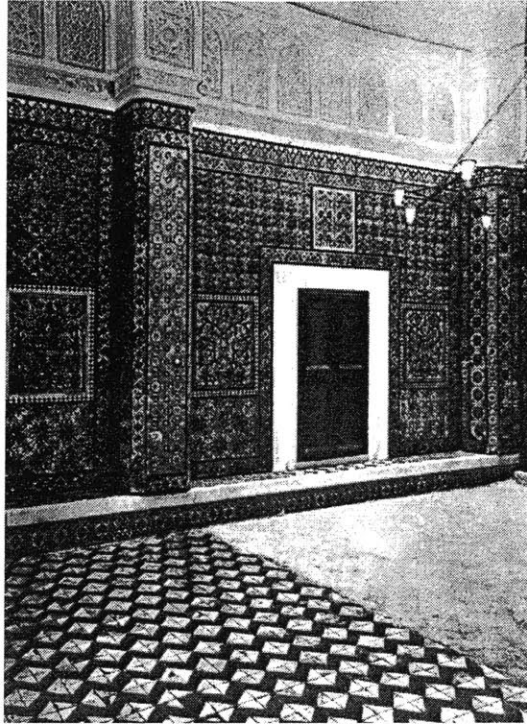
3.b-2. L'Arco nella sirtica - (Arch. Di Fausto). ETAL Postcard, 1937.



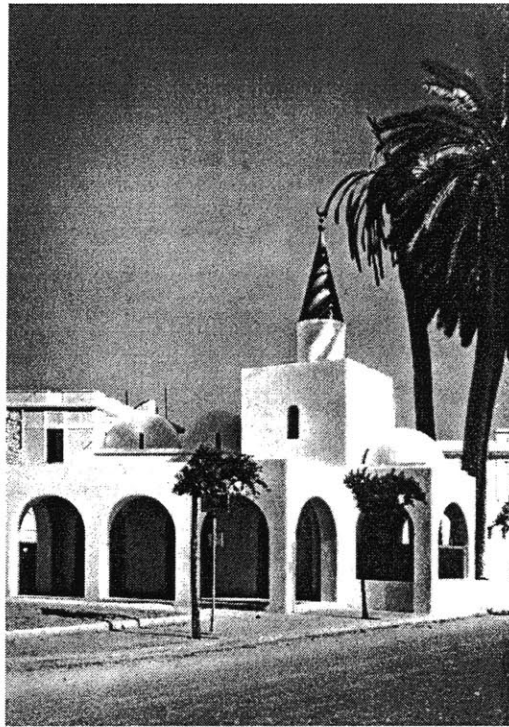
3.b-3. Florestano Di Fausto, Oliveti agricultural village, Libya, 1938.



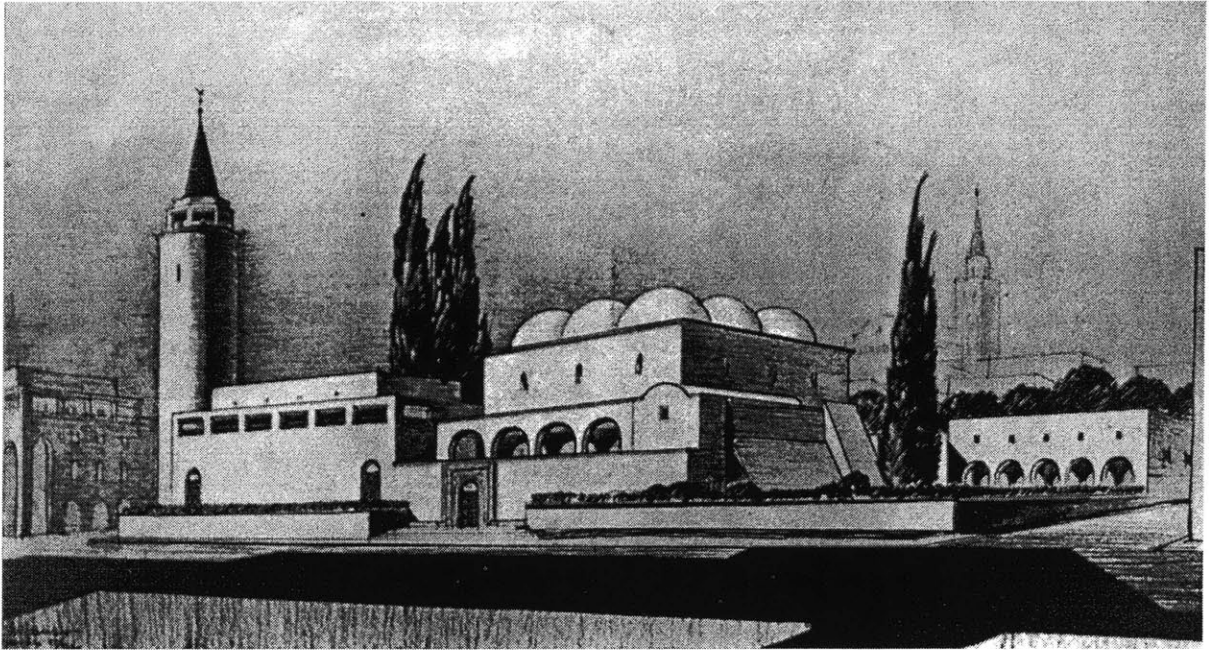
3.b-4. *I Ventimila*, 1938. Cover.



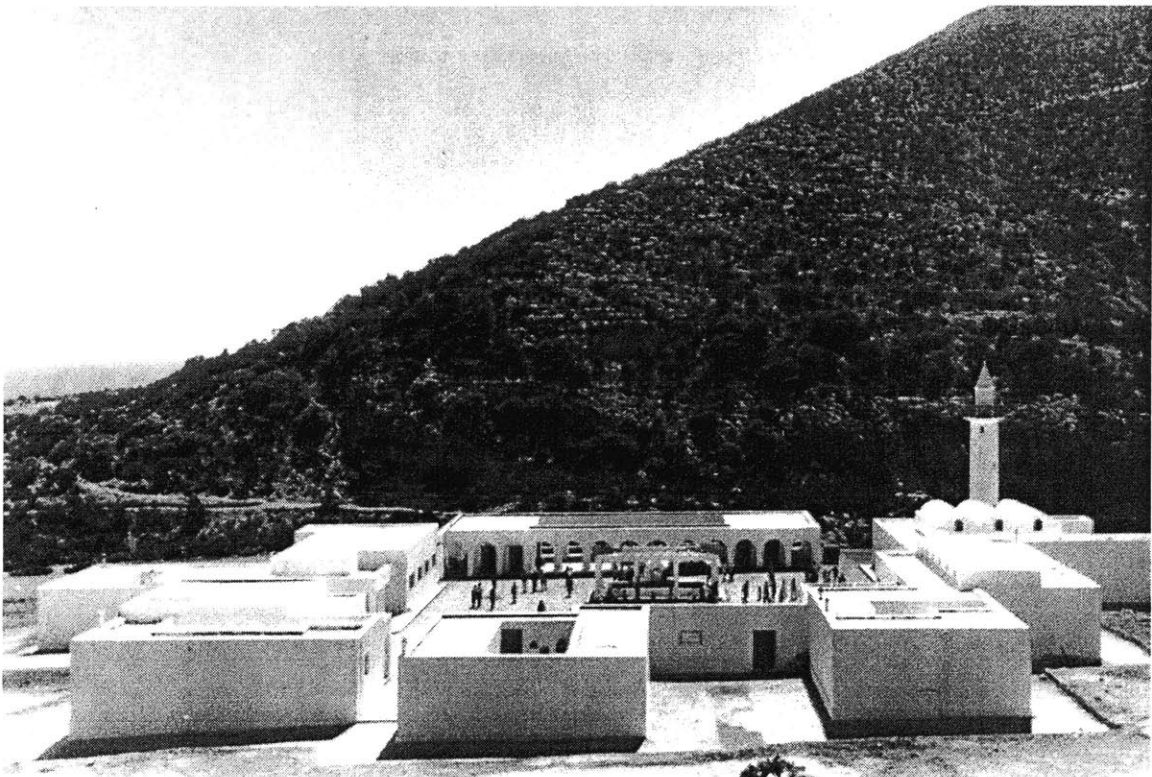
3.b-5. Restoration of Mosque of Ahmed Pasha Qarahmanli, 1934. Interior.



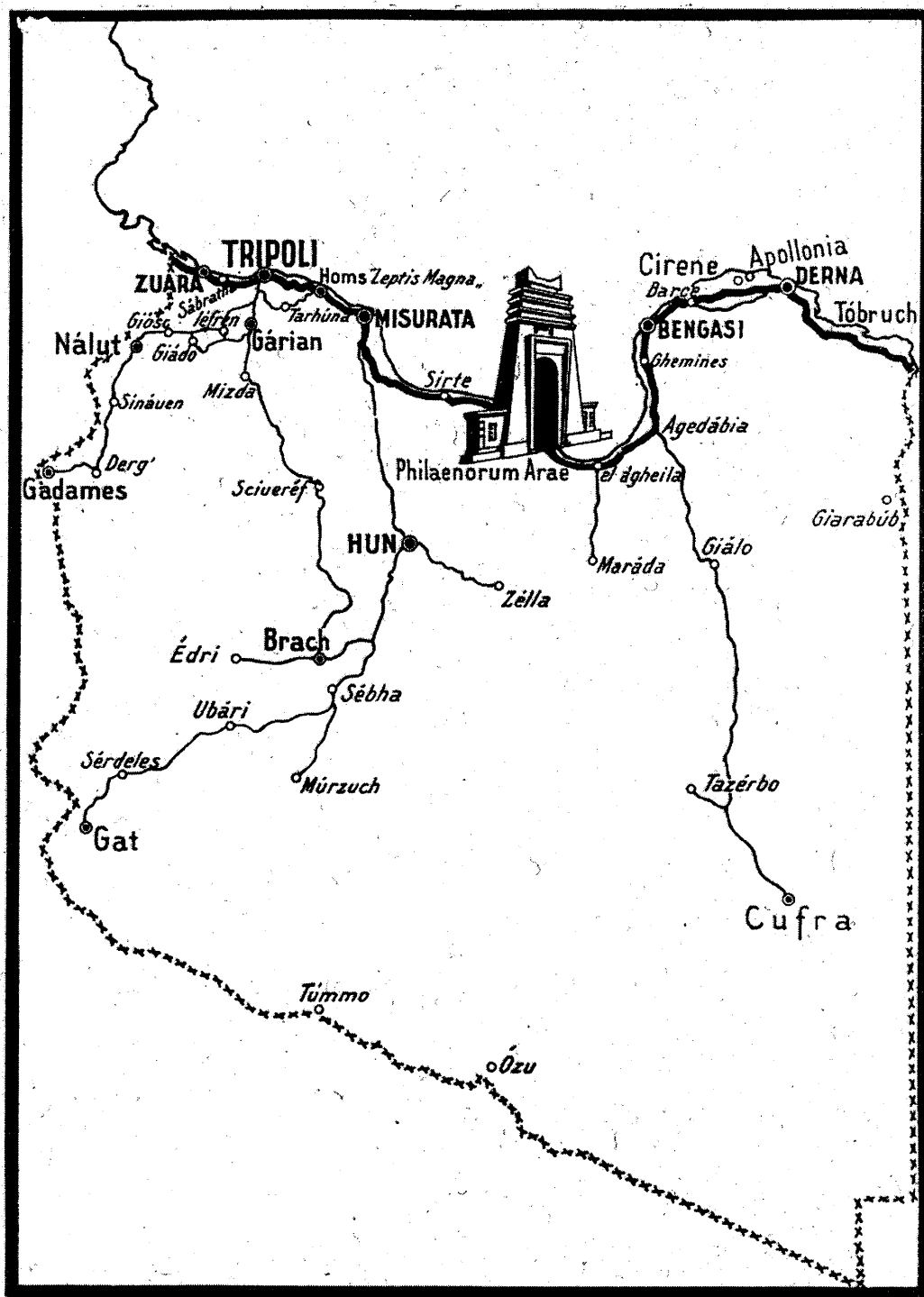
3.b-6. New Mosque of Sciara Bu-Harida, Tripoli, 1937. Exterior view.



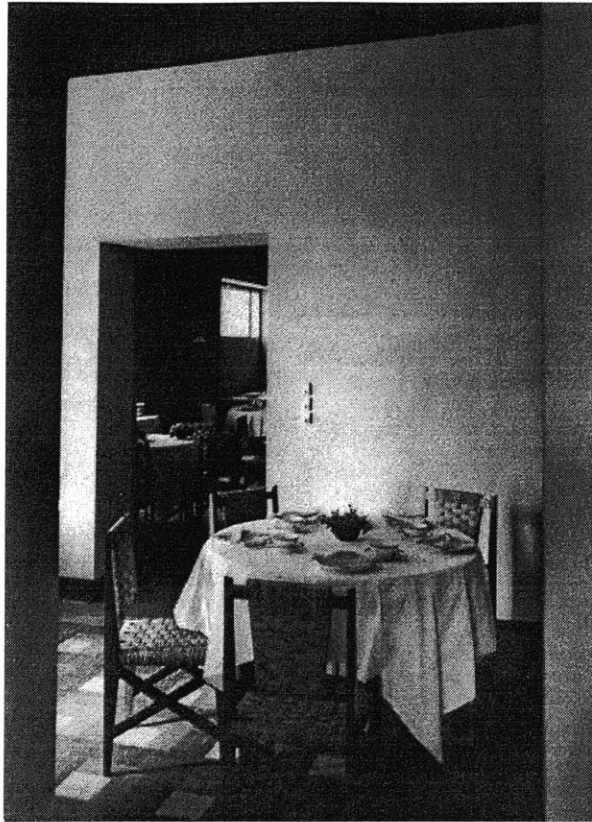
3.b-7. Florestano Di Fausto, Scuola superiore di cultura islamica, Tripoli, 1938. Proposal.



3.b-8. Fiorita, Muslim colonization village, 1939. View.



3.b-9. Map of the road system of Libya, 1938.



3.b-10. Umberto Di Segni, Saletta da pranzo dell'Albergo alle Gazzelle, Zliten, 1935.



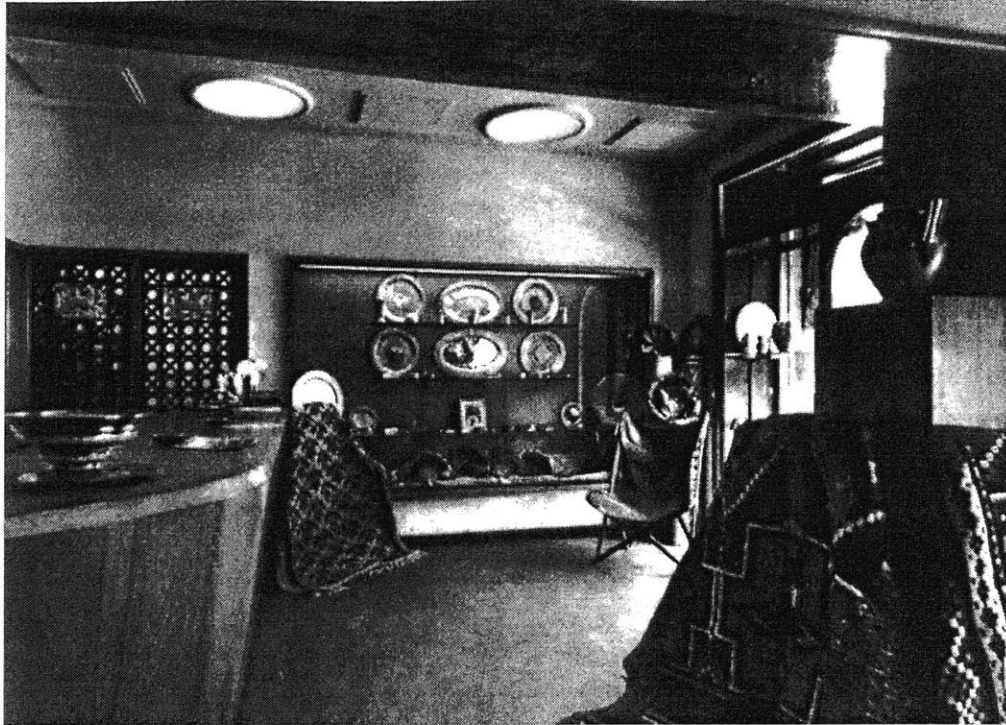
3.b-11. Florestano Di Fausto and Stefano Gatti-Casazza, Teatro "Uaddan," Tripoli, 1935.



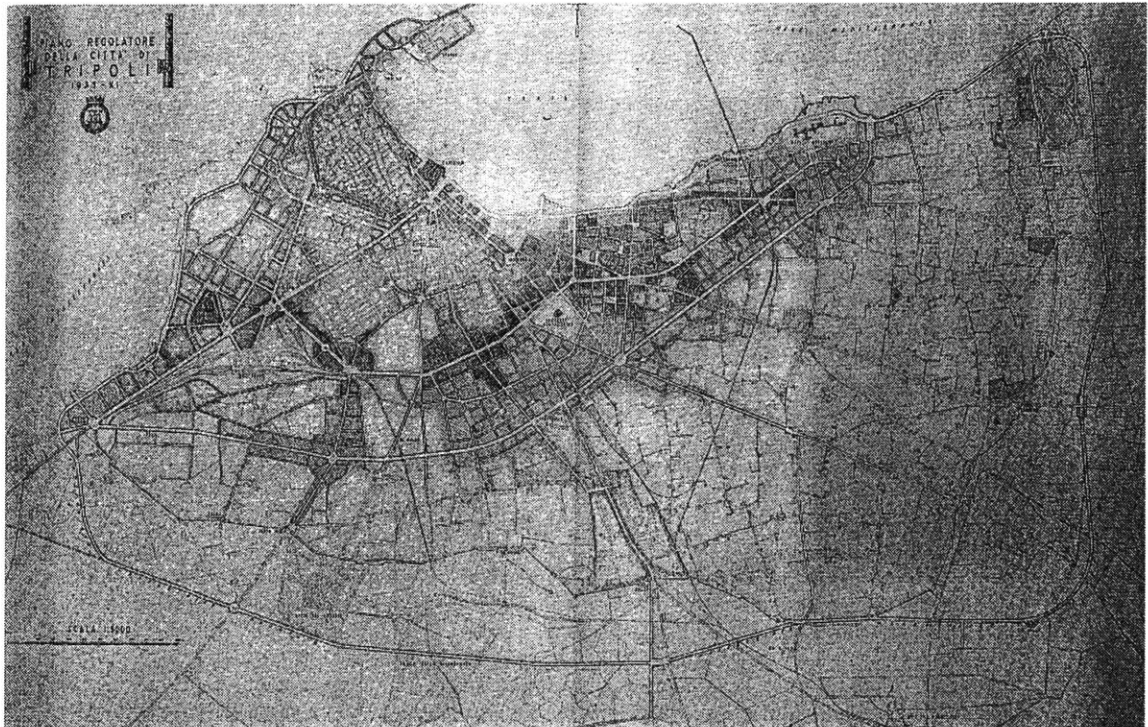
3.b-12. Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia, *La Libia*, 1936. Cover.



3.b-13. Danza Orientale. ETAL postcard, 1937. Seria Q: 2.



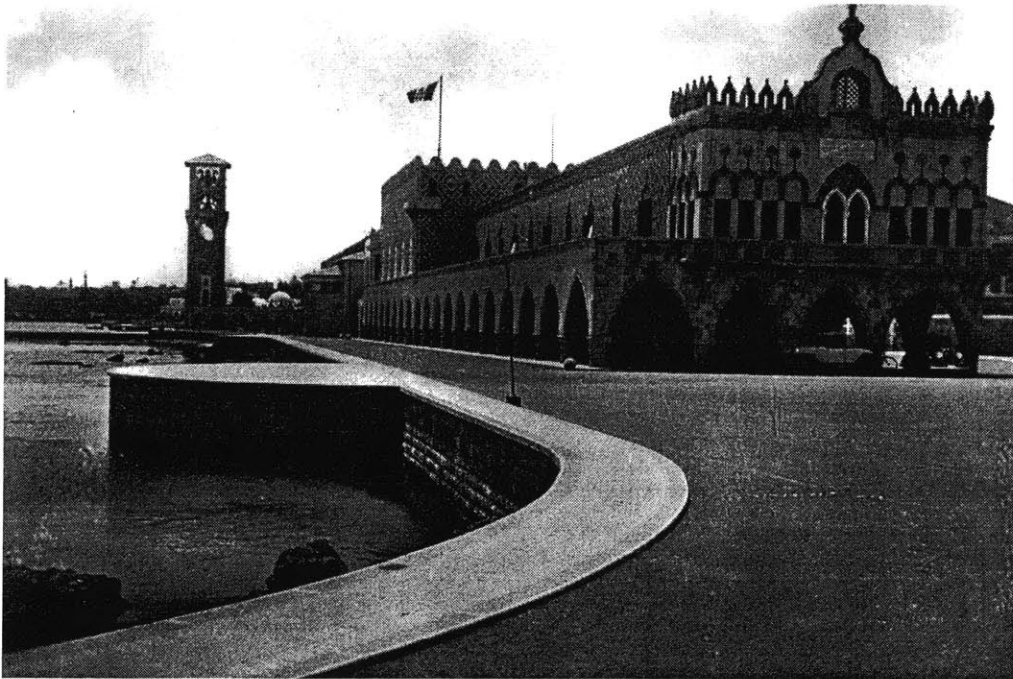
3.b-14. ETAL, tabaccheria e negozio dell'artigianato libico, Rome, ca. 1937.



3.b-15. Alpago Novello, Cabiati and Ferrazza. Regulatory plan of Tripoli, 1933.



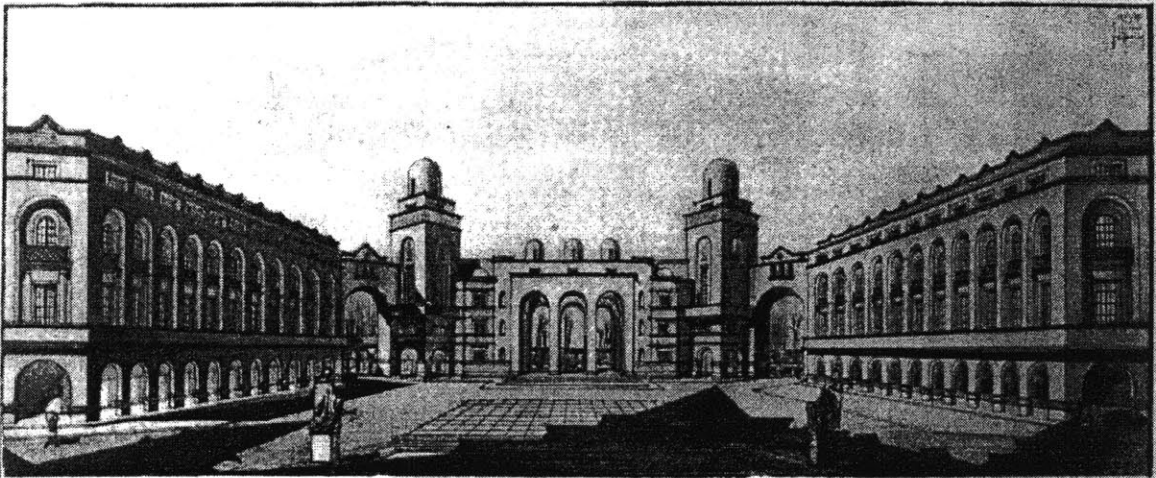
3.b-16. Henri Prost, Regulatory plan of Casablanca, 1914.



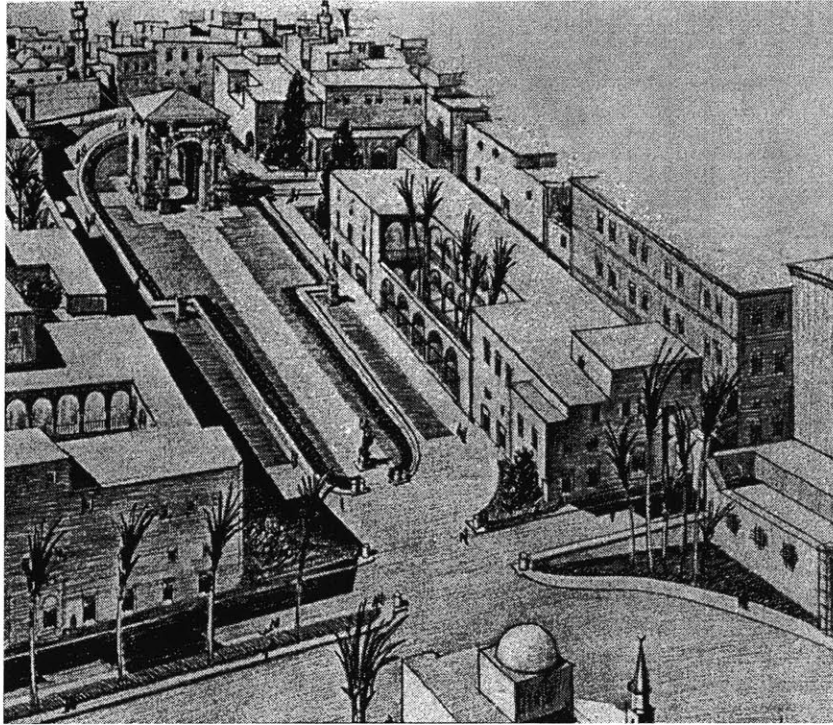
3.b-17. Florestano Di Fausto, Palazzo del Governo, Rhodes, 1926..



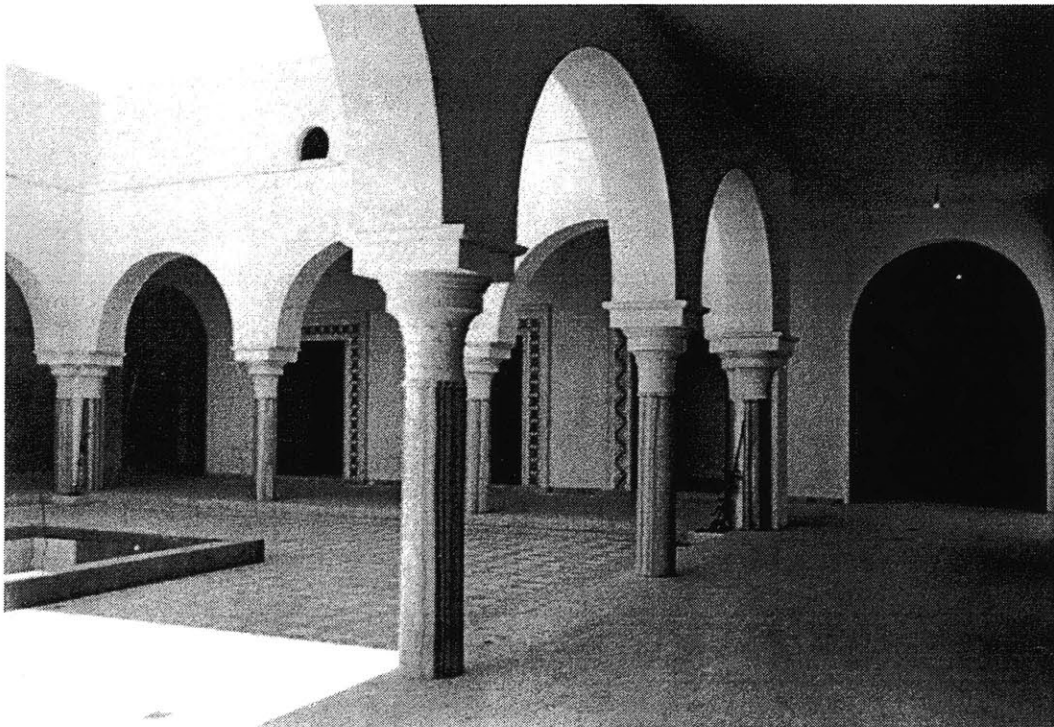
3.b-18. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo delle Rose, Rhodes, 1927.



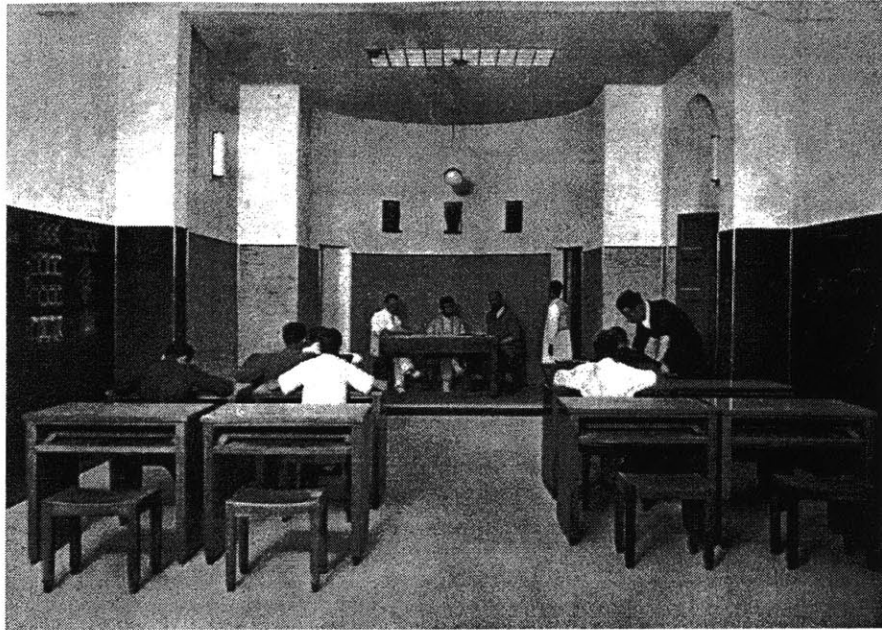
3.b-19. Florestano Di Fausto, Competition for Piazza della Cattedrale, Tripoli, 1930. View.



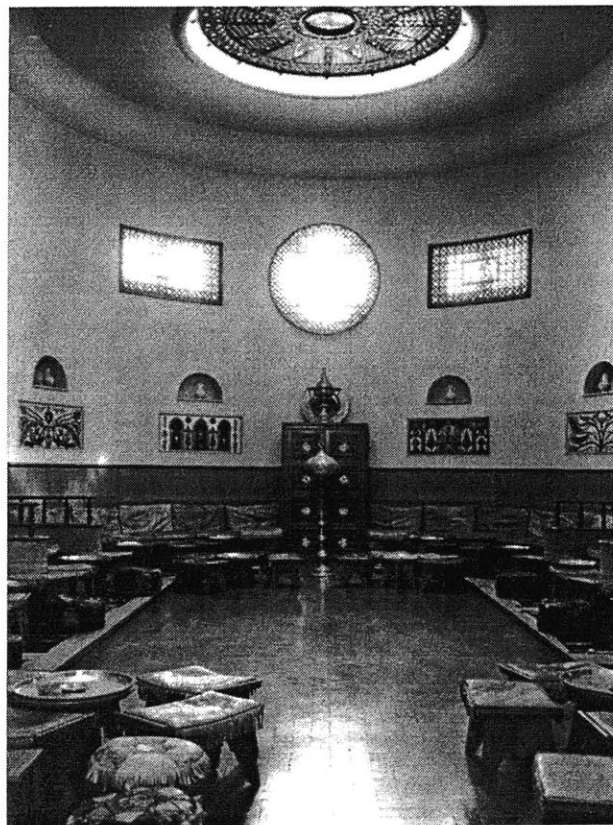
3.b-20. Di Fausto, Sistemazione dell'Arco di Marco Aurelio, Tripoli. Proposal, 1932.



3.b-21. Di Fausto, Quartiere artigianato, Suq al-Mushir, Tripoli, 1935. Courtyard.



3.b-22. Florestano Di Fausto, Quattiere artigianato, Suq al-Mushir. Interior.



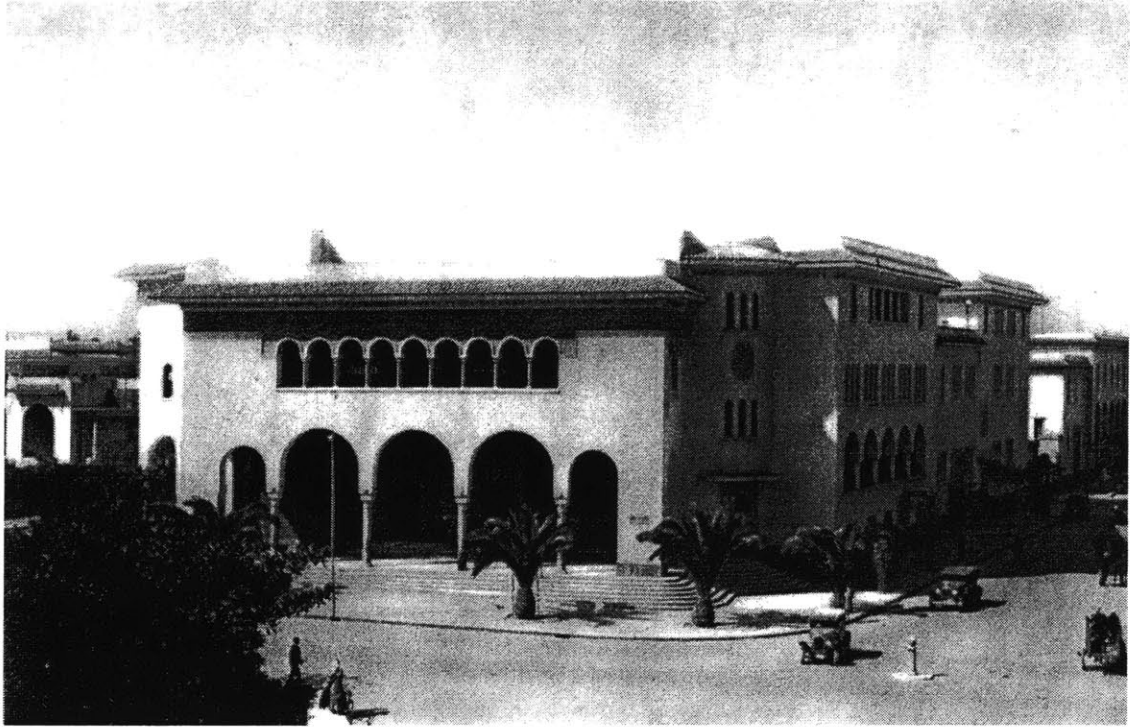
3.b-23. Florestano Di Fausto. Caffé arabo, Suq al-Mushir. Interior.



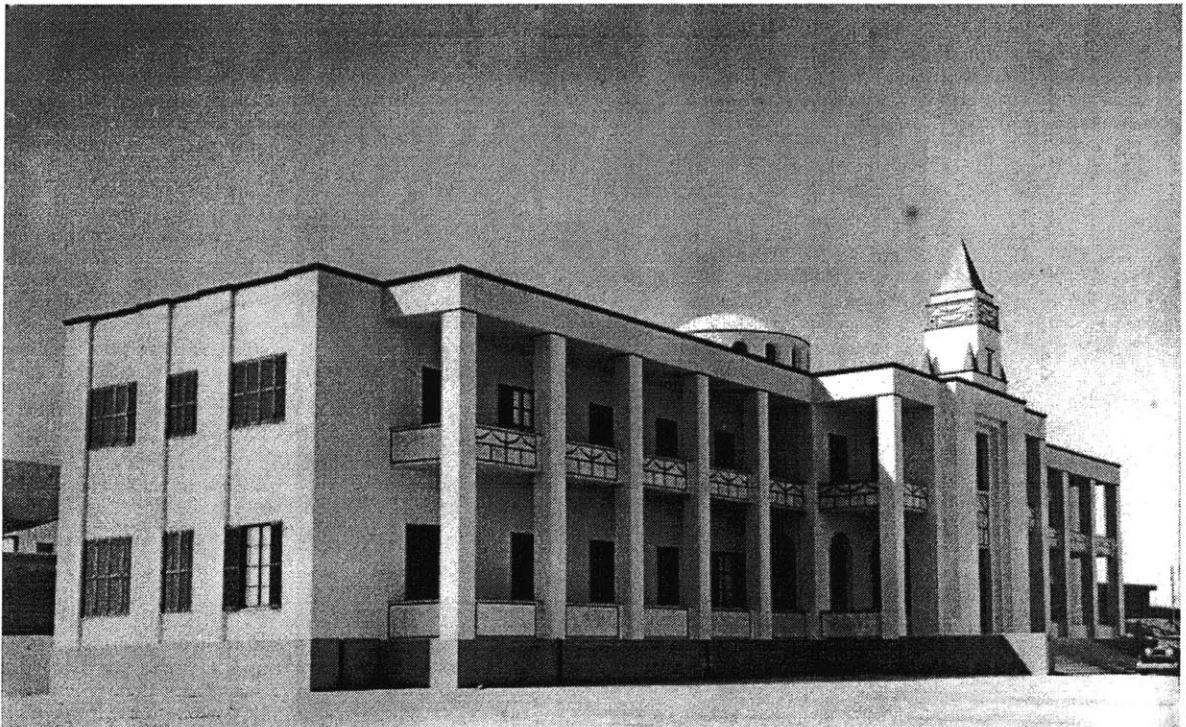
3.c-1. Henri Prost, Boulevard du IV^a Zouaves, Casablanca. View.



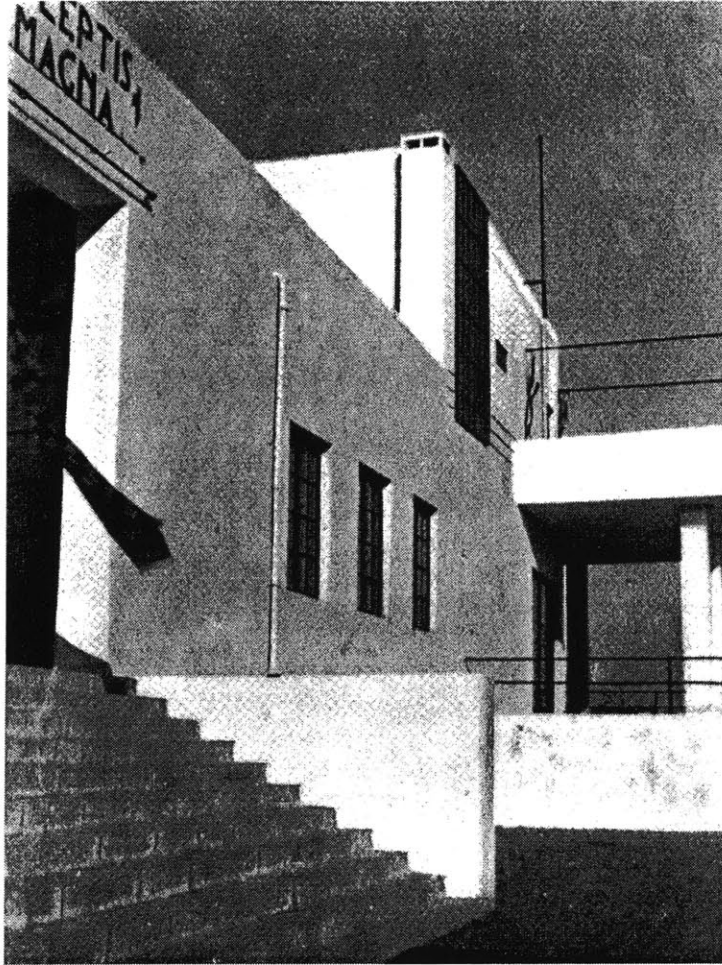
3.c-2. Florestano Di Fausto, Palazzo INA-INPS, Tripoli, 1938.



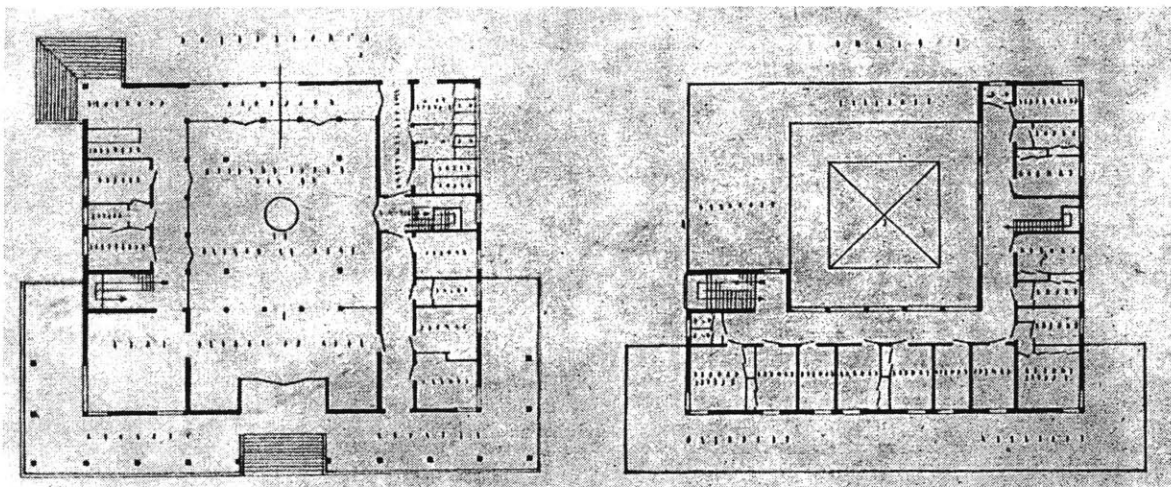
3.c-3. Adrien Laforgue, Central Post Office, Casablanca, 1920. View.



3.c-4. Alessandro Limongelli, "Grand Albergo agli Scavi," Cyrene, 1932. Exterior View.



3.c-5. Larco and Rava, Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna," 1928-31. Side view.



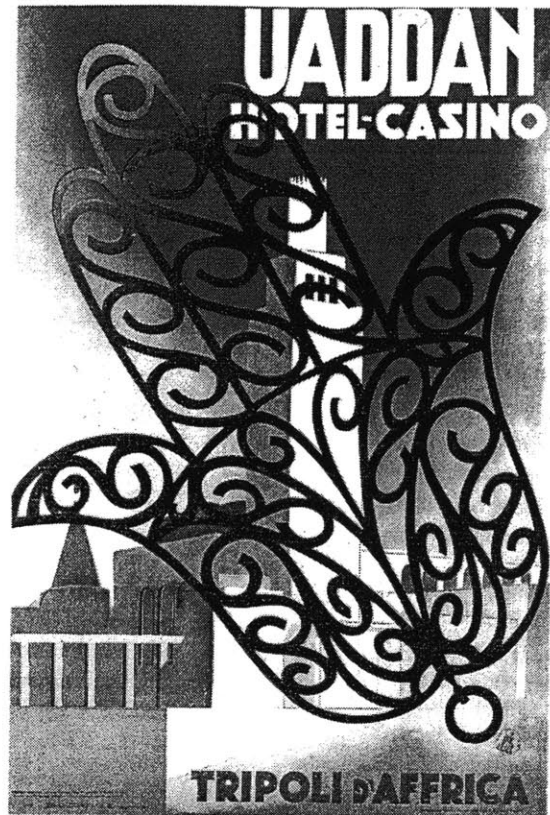
3.c-6. Larco and Rava, Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna." Plans.



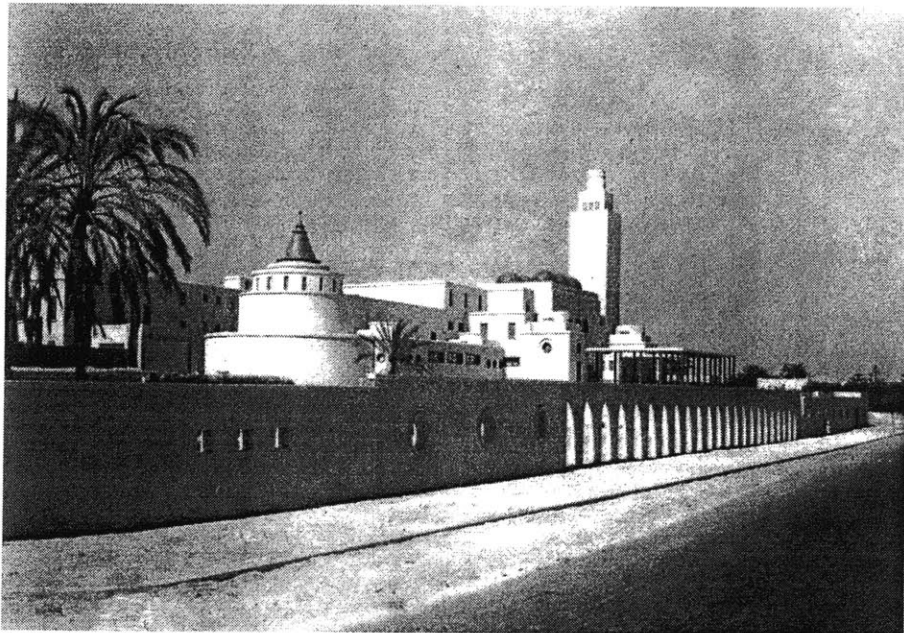
3.c-7. Larco and Rava, Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna." View from seafront.



3.c-8. Albergo-casino "Uaddan." ETAL postcard, 1937.



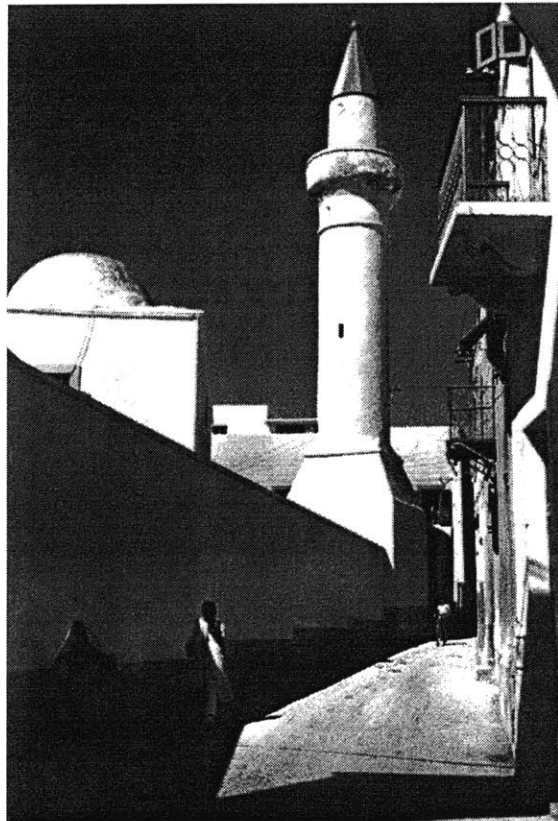
3.c-9. Marcel Dudovich, Albergo-casinò "Uaddan." Poster, 1937.



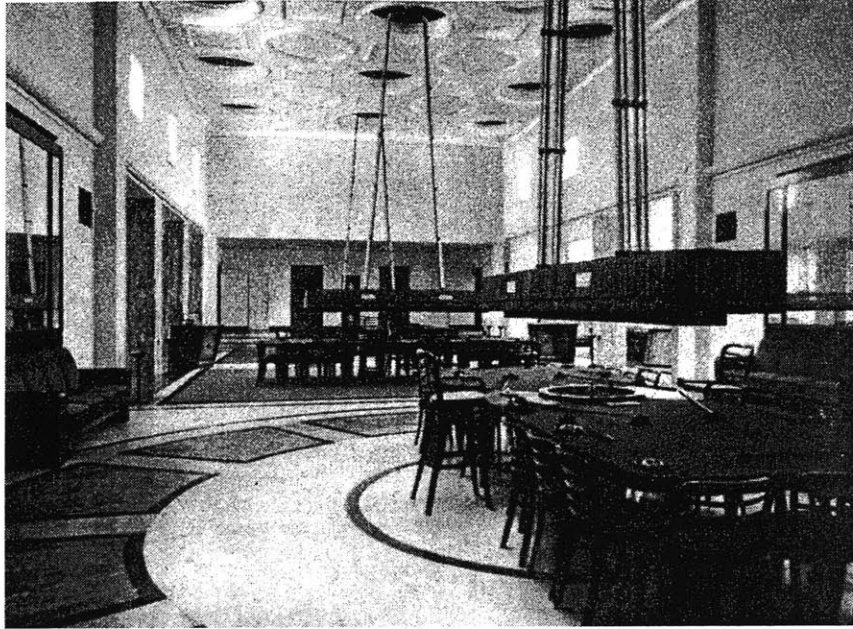
3.c-10. Di Fausto, Albergo-casinò "Uaddan," Tripoli, 1935. View from east seafront.



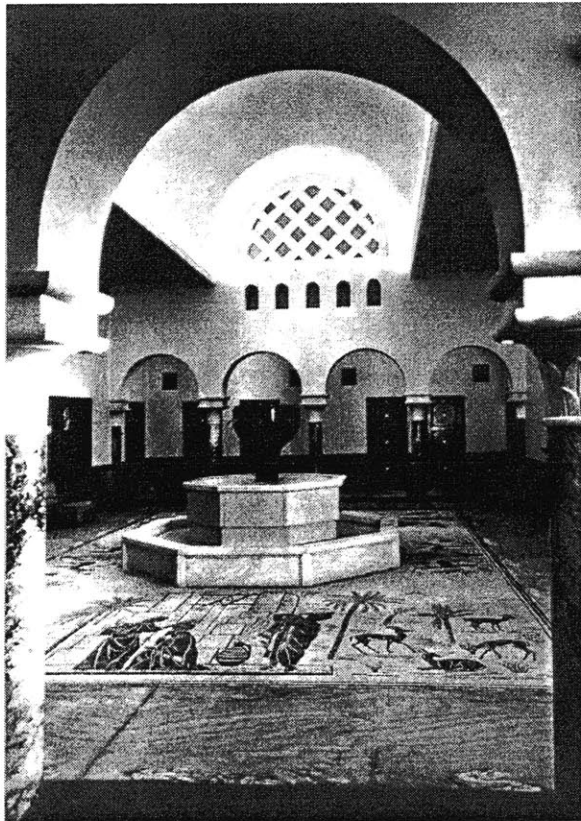
3.c-11. Di Fausto, Albergo-casino "Uaddan." View from west seafront.



3.c-12. Moschea di Sidi Darghut. ETAL postcard, 1937. Serie C: 3.



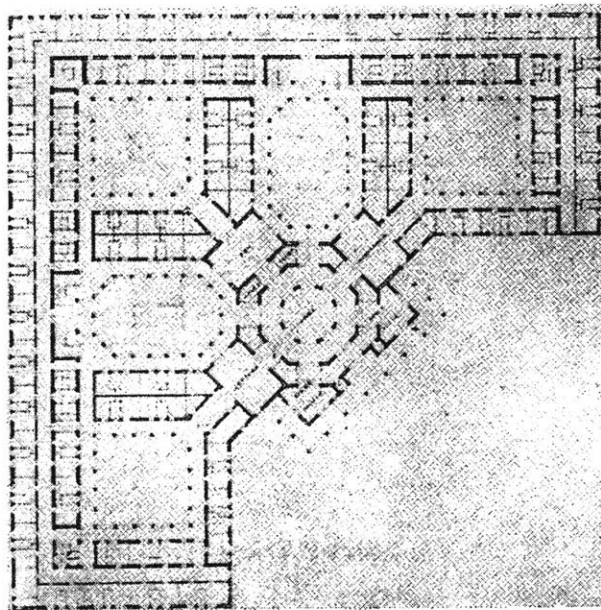
3.c-13. Di Fausto and Gatti-Casazza, Albergo-casino "Uaddan." Sala del casinò.



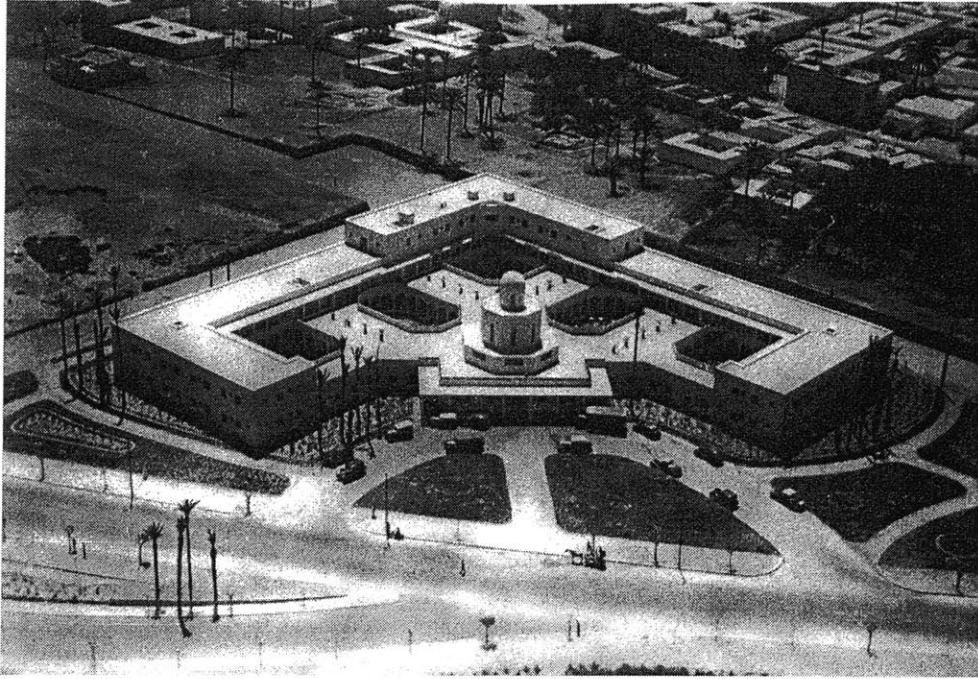
3.c-14. Di Fausto and Gatti-Casazza, Albergo-casino "Uaddan." Terme romane.



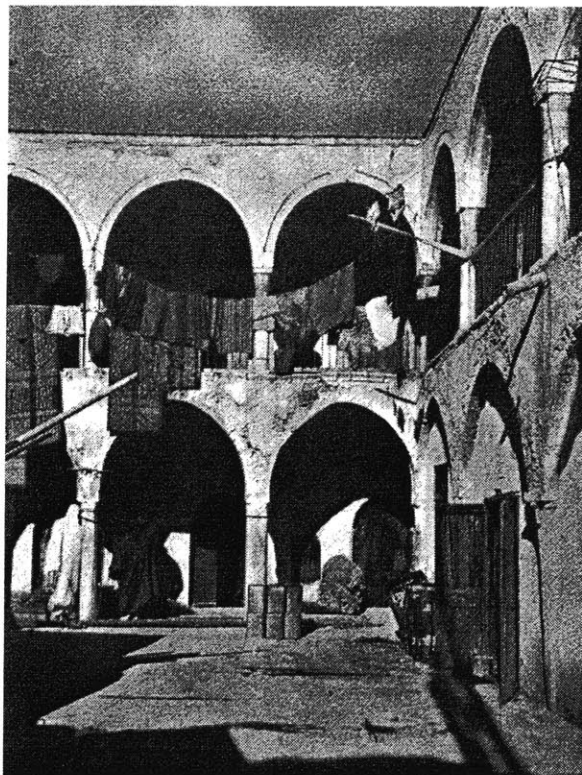
3.c-15. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo del "Mehari," Tripoli, 1935. Exterior view.



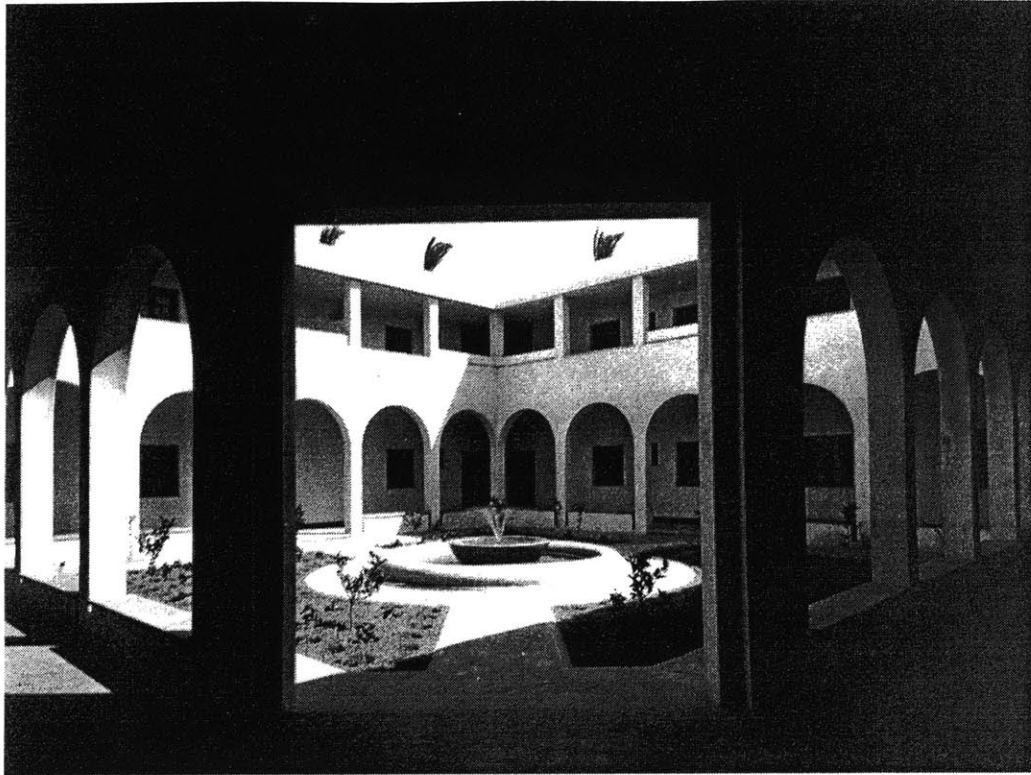
3.c-16. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo del "Mehari." Plan.



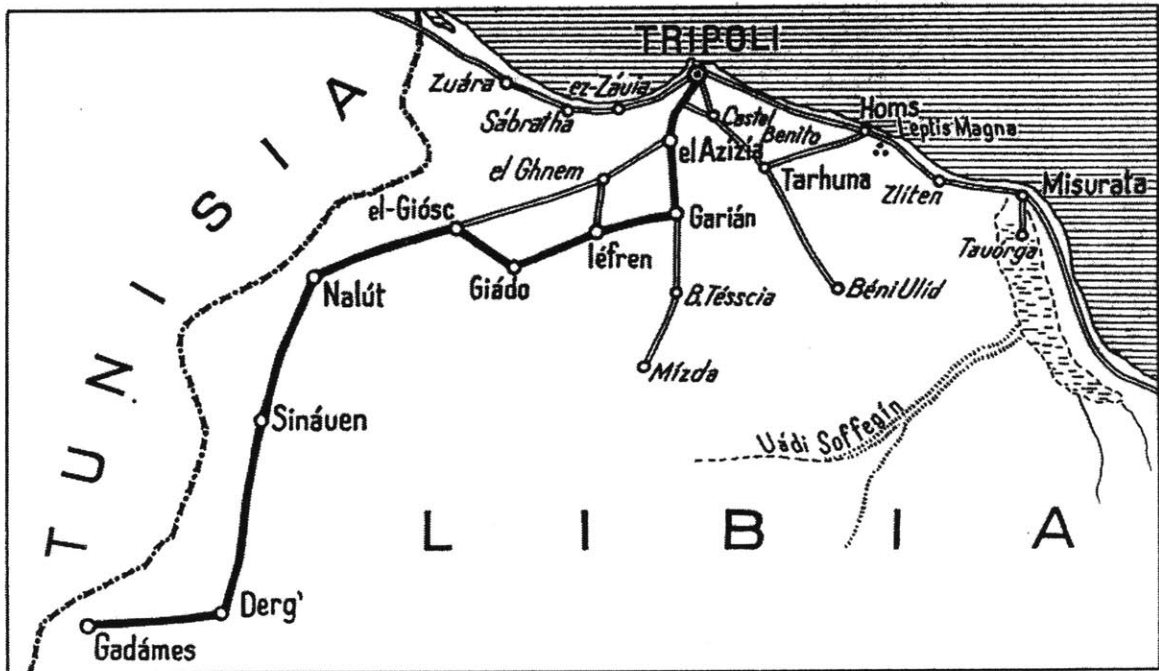
3.c-17. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo del "Mehari." Aerial view. Postcard, 1930s.



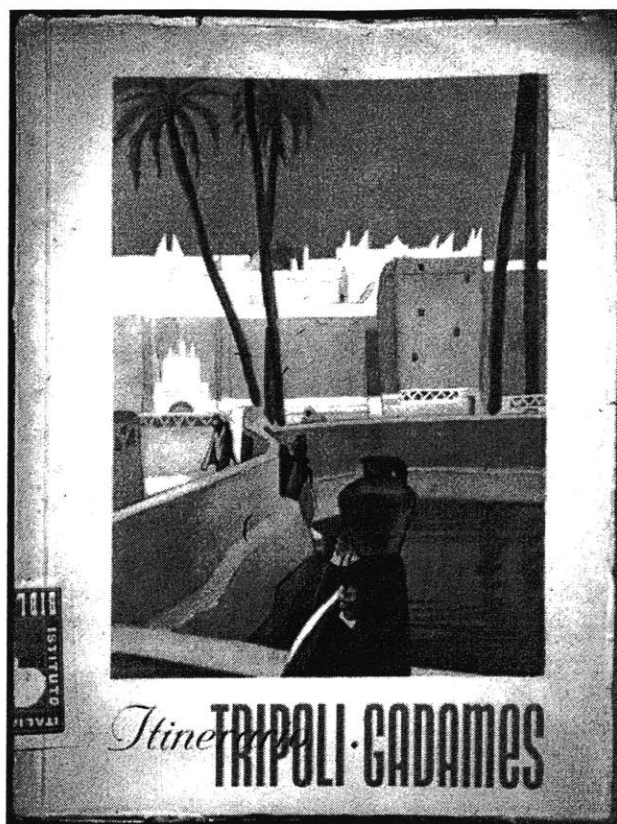
3.c-18. Funduq dei Maltesi, ca. 1750. Courtyard view.



3.c-19. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo del "Mehari." View of courtyard.



3.c-20. Network of highways in the Libyan desert, 1936.



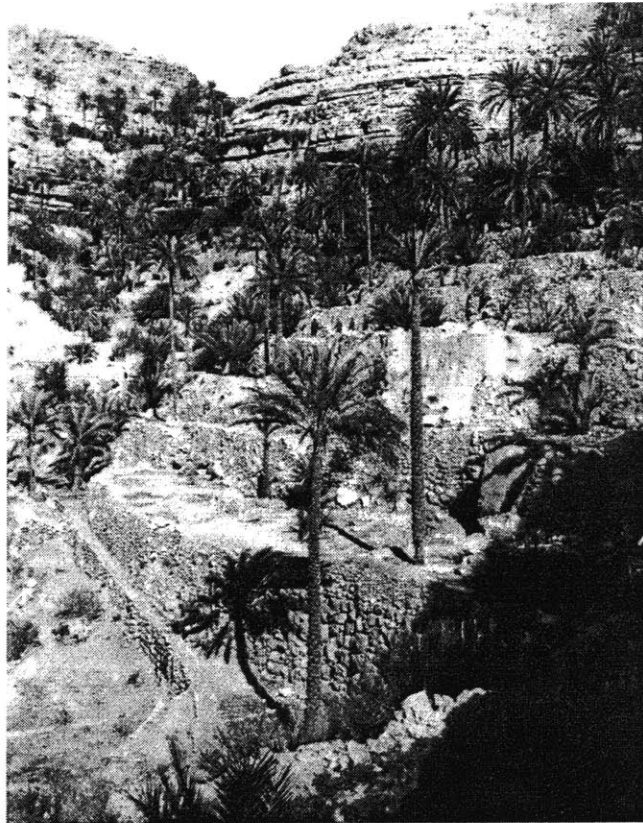
3.c-21. ETAL, *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, 1938. Cover.



3.c-22. Casa trogloditiche. ETAL postcard, 1937. Serie E:2.



3.c-23. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo "Rumia", Jefren, 1934. Exterior view.



3.c-24. La vallata di Rumia. ETAL, *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*.



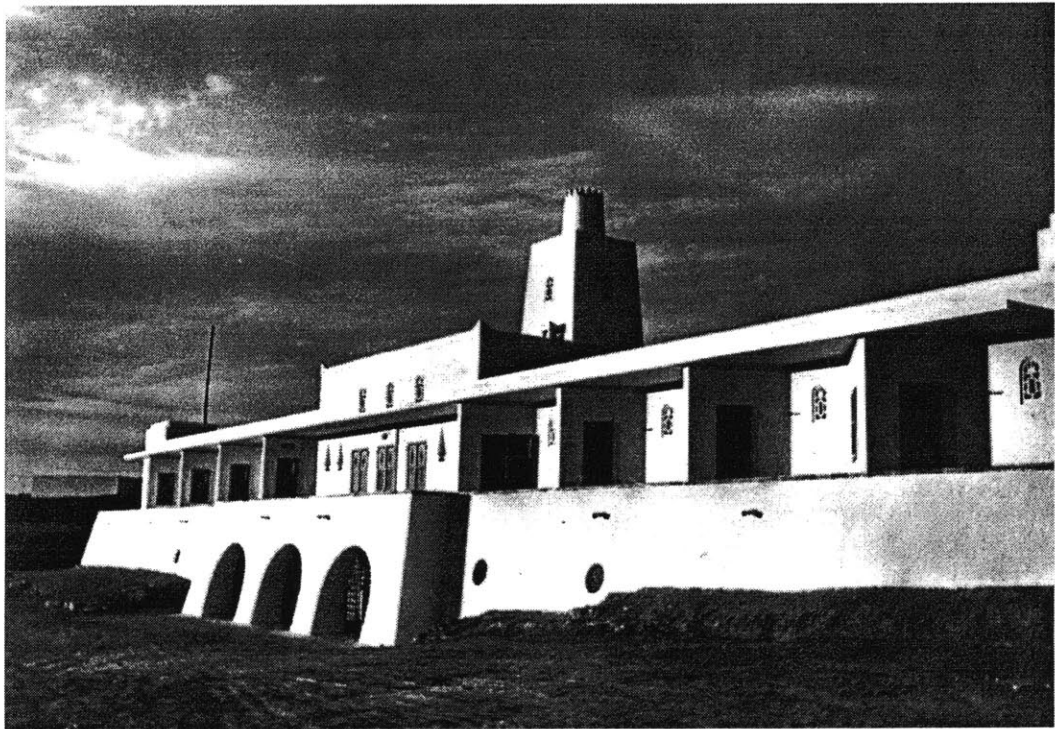
3.c-25. Di Fausto and Gatti-Casazza, Albergo "Rumia." Interior.



3.c-26. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo Nalut, 1935. View.



3.c-27. Nalut, panorama. ETAL postcard, 1937. Serie E: 6.



3.c-28. Nalut. L'albergo. ETAL postcard, 1937. Serie E: 4.



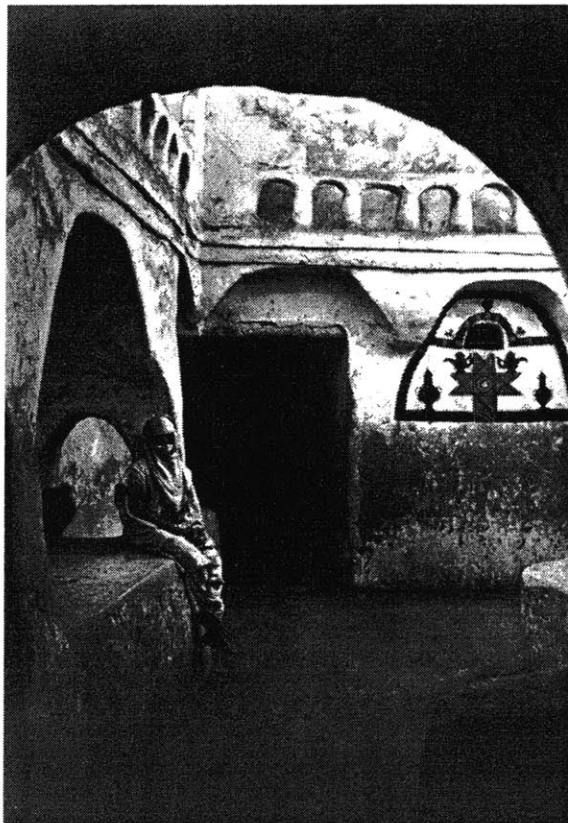
3.c-29. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo "Ain el-Fras," Ghadames, 1935. Main facade.



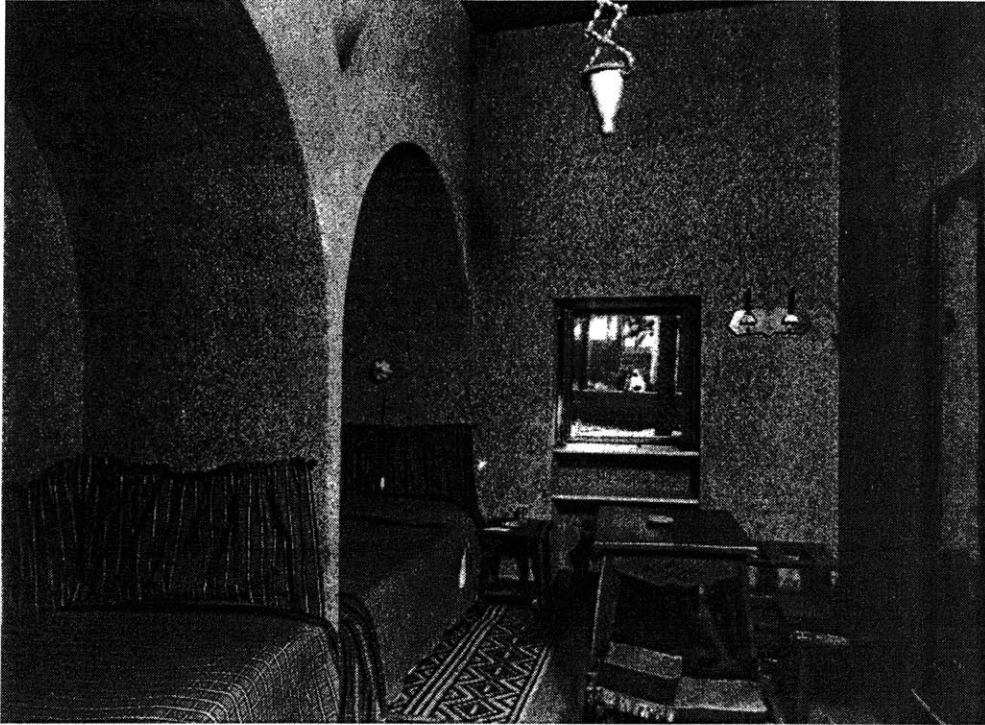
3.c-30. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo "Ain el-Fras." Portichetto delle palme.



3.c-31. Gadames. Albergo "Ain el-Fras." ETAL postcard, 1937. Serie E: 10.



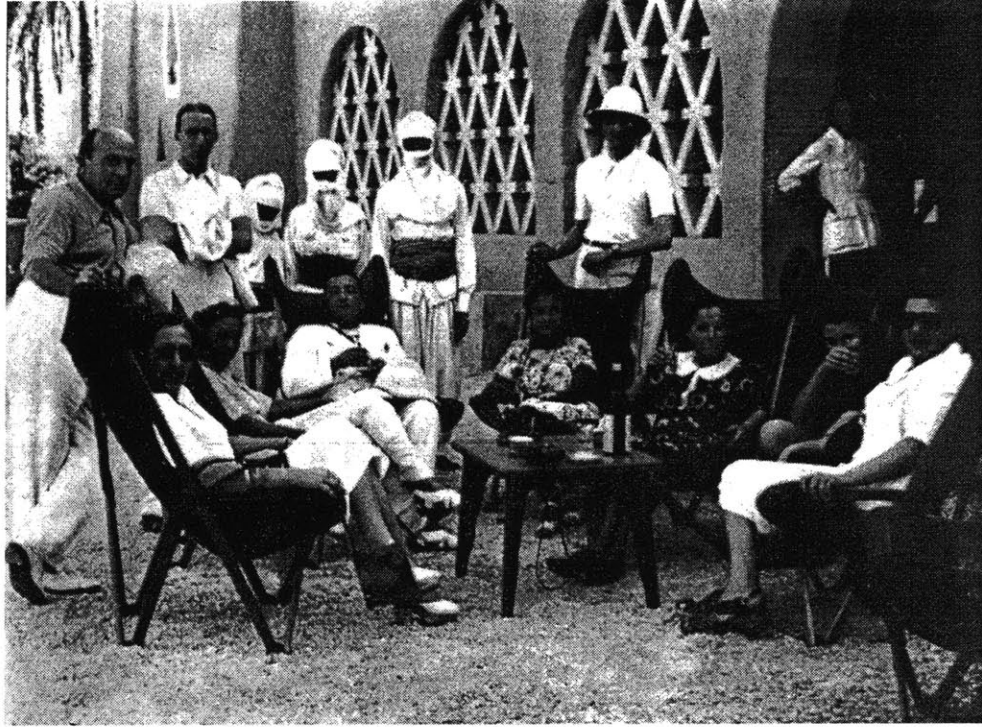
3.c-32. Una caratteristica via di Gadames. Postcard, ca. 1935.



3.c-33. Di Fausto and Gatti-Casazza, Albergo "Ain el-Fras." Interior.



3.c-34. Ghadames interior, ca. 1930.



3.c-35. I gitanti nel chioostro. Albergo "Ain el-Fras."

List of Illustrations

Part 1. Modern Italian Architecture and Colonialism

A. Carlo Enrico Rava and the "Svolta Pericolosa" of Italian Rationalism

- 1.a-1. Palazzo Mattei in Trastevere, Rome. From Giovannoni, "Case del quattrocento in Roma," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* V, 6 (February 1926): 244.
- 1.a-2. Gustavo Giovannoni, Via dei Coronari e piazza S. Salvatore in Lauro. Proposal, 1913. From Giovannoni, "Il 'diradamento' edilizio dei vecchi centri - il Quartiere della Rinascenza in Roma." *Nuova Antologia* LXVIII, 997 (1 July 1913): 73.
- 1.a-3. Camillo Jona, Amalfi, 1918. From Mariani, "L'Architettura rustica alla Cinquantennale romana," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* I, 4 (March-April 1922): 379.
- 1.a-4. Marcello Piacentini, Villa in the Parioli quarter, Rome, 1916-18. From Mariani, "L'Architettura rustica alla Cinquantennale romana," 383.
- 1.a-5. Rural house in Anacapri. From Cerio, "L'architettura minima nella contrada delle Sirene," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* II, 4 (December 1922): 161.
- 1.a-6. Giuseppe Capponi, Casa per un'artista a Capri, 1927. From Capponi, "Motivi di architettura ischiana," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* VI, 11 (July 1927): 481.
- 1.a-7. Salotto d'arte calabrese. First Biennale, Monza, 1923. From Mezzanote, "La Prima Mostra internazionale delle Arti Decorative a Monza," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* II, 10 (June 1923): 396.
- 1.a-8. Fortunato Depero, Sala futurista italiana Depero. First Biennale, Monza, 1923. From Mario Universo, *Fortunato Depero e il mobile futurista*, (Venezia: Marsilio Editore, 1990), 34-35.
- 1.a-9. Saletta del *Gruppo 7*. Third Biennale, Monza, 1927. View. From Papini, "Le arti a Monza nel 1927. I - gli italiani," *Emporium* LXVI, 391 (July 1927): 14.
- 1.a-10. Adalberto Libera, Casetta economica. First Rationalist exhibition, Rome, 1928. From Piacentini, "Prima internazionale architetonica," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* VI, 12 (August 1928): 547.
- 1.a-11. Alberto Sartoris, Progetto di casa in cemento armato, 1927. First Rationalist exhibition, Rome, 1928. From Piacentini, "Prima internazionale architetonica," 559.
- 1.a-12. "Deutsche Bauen in der UdSSR," *Das Neue Frankfurt* IV, 9 (September 1930): cover.
- 1.a-13. Emil Fahrenkamp, Parkhotel, Bochum, ca. 1930. From "Emil Fahrenkamp das Parkhotel Haus Rechen in Bochum," *Moderne Bauformen* XXIX, 1 (January 1930): 1.
- 1.a-14. Irving Gill, Mary Banning House, Los Angeles, 1911. From Richard J. Neutra, *Amerika. Die stilbildung des neuen Bauens in den Vereinigten Staaten* (Vienna: Verlag von Anton Schroll & Co., 1930), 124.

- 1.a-15. Erich Mendelsohn, Restaurant, Schocken Store, Stuttgart, 1926-28. From "Drei Kaufhäuser Schocken in Nürnberg, Stuttgart und Chemnitz von Erich Mendelsohn," *Moderne Bauformen* XXIX, 11 (November 1930): 470.
- 1.a-16. Emil Fahrenkamp, Restaurant, Michel store, Wuppertal, ca. 1930. From "E. Fahrenkamp und G. Schäfer, Susseldorf "Kaufhaus Michel" Wuppertal," *Moderne Bauformen* XXIX, 10 (October 1930): 452.
- 1.a-17. Pier Maria Bardi, "Tavolo degli orrori." Second Rationalist exhibition., Rome, 1931. From Brunetti, *Architetti e fascismo*, (Firenze: Alinea Editrice, 1993), 161.
- 1.a-18. Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini, Villa studio per un'artista. Fifth Triennale, Milan, 1933. From *Architettura e Arti Decorative* XII (Special Issue 1933): 33.
- 1.a-19. Giuseppe Terragni, Casa del Fascio, Como, 1932-36. Regulating lines. From *Quadrante* 35/36 (October 1936). 37.
- 1.a-20. Una grande masseria nella regione di Taranto. From Giuseppe Pagano and Guarniero Daniel, *Architettura rurale italiana* (Milano: Ulrico Hoepli Editore, 1936), 99.
- 1.a-21. Luigi Cosenza and Bernard Rudofsky, Villa per Positano, 1937. View. From "Una villa per Positano e per... altri lidi," *Domus* 109 (January 1937): 11.

B. Carlo Enrico Rava and the Discourse for a Modern Colonial Architecture

- 1.b-1. Dinanzi alla tenda con Hag Muchtar. Rava photograph, March 1930. [Rava, Album di viaggio, 1928-30, p. 80.]
- 1.b-2. Carlo Enrico Rava, Chiesa in Oriente, 1924. Elevation. [CSAC-Rava. Image B007230S]
- 1.b-3. Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava, Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna." Proposal, 1928. [ARP-Sezione Iconografica. Scatola 4 - 70. Carlo Enrico Rava e Sebastiano Larco]
- 1.b-4. Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava, Padiglione delle colonie, Fiera di Milano, 1928. Rear view. [CSAC-Rava. Image B007232S]
- 1.b-5. Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava, Competition for Piazza della Cattedrale, Tripoli, 1930. View. From N.D.R., "Un progetto per il concorso della Piazza della Cattedrale di Tripoli," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* IX 12 (August 1930): 574.
- 1.b-6. Castello di Gasr-el-Hagg. Rava photograph, February 1930. From Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte prima," *Domus* 41 (May 1931): 41. [Rava, Album di viaggio, 1928-30, p. 88.]
- 1.b-7. Mizda con le due torri. Rava photograph, April 1929. From Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte prima," 41. [Rava, Album di viaggio, 1928-30, p. 42.]
- 1.b-8. Casa-torre, Gadames. Rava photograph, March 1931. From Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte prima," 40. [Rava, album di viaggio, 1931-32, p. 51.]
- 1.b-9. Cortile della Moschea Maggiore, Gadames. Rava photograph, February 1929. From Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte prima," 39. [Rava, Album di viaggio, 1928-30, p. 56.]

- 1.b-10. Moschea di Gasr-el-Hagg. Rava photograph, February 1930. From Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte prima," 42. [Rava, Album di viaggio, 1928-30, p. 89.]
- 1.b-11. Casa araba nell'oasi di Tripoli. Rava photograph, December 1929. From Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte seconda," *Domus* 42 (June 1931): 33. [Rava, Album di viaggio, 1928-30, p. 70.]
- 1.b-12. Garvin Hodson, Cutting house, Los Angeles, ca. 1930. From Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte seconda," 35. Originally published in "A California house of Monterrey type. The house of Edwin J. Cutting, Los Angeles." *House Beautiful* LXVIII, 4 (October 1930): 345.
- 1.b-13. Villa di Hassuna Pascià presso Tripoli. Rava photograph, December 1929. From Rava, "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna, parte seconda," 35. [Rava, Album di viaggio, 1928-30. p. 68.]
- 1.b-14. Casa dei Caramanli, Tripoli, ca. 1790. Courtyard. From Romanelli, "Vecchie case Arabe di Tripoli," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* III, 5 (January 1924); 194.
- 1.b-15. Tripolitania - Gadames. Postcard, ca. 1930. [Collection of the author]
- 1.b-16. Giorgio Oprandi, Mercato Arabo, ca. 1925. From Marangoni, "Giorgio Oprandi e due sue mostre artistiche," *Emporium* LXI, 361 (January 1925): 43.
- 1.b-17. Ignazio Guidi and Cesare Valle, Urbanistic program for per Addis Ababa, 1937. From, Valle, "Programma urbanistica per Addis Abeba," *Architettura* XVII, 12 (December 1937): 768.
- 1.b-18. Giuseppe Pagano, Front view of "Casa tipo quattro," 1938. From Mazzucchelli, "Arch. G. Pagano: Studi per l'applicazione razionale di una struttura a elementi in cemento," *Casabella* 123 (March 1938): 25.
- 1.b-19. Luigi Piccinato, Villa tropicale su palfitte, 1936. From Piccinato, "La casa in colonia. Il problema che prospetta ai nostri architetti," *Domus* 102 (June 1936): 17.
- 1.b-20. Casa tropicale. From Piccinato, "La casa in colonia," 16.
- 1.b-21. Florestano Di Fausto, Proposal for restructuring of the Suq al-Mushir, Tripoli, 1932. View. [ASMAE-MAI-3-56. Fascicolo. 35. "Fotografie OO.PP. Libia"]
- 1.b-22. Una via di Zliten. Pellegrini photograph, ca. 1936. From Pellegrini, "Manifesto dell'architettura coloniale," *Rassegna di Architettura*, VIII, 10 (October 1936): 357.
- 1.b-23. Abitazione isolata. Pellegrini photograph, ca. 1936. From Pellegrini, "Manifesto dell'architettura coloniale," 355.
- 1.b-24. Giovanni Pellegrini and Vittorio Agujari, Villa Salvi, Tripoli, 1936. View. From Sartoris, *Gli elementi dell'architettura funzionale. Sintesi panoramica dell'architettura moderna. Terza edizione*, (Milano: Ulrico Hoepli Editore, 1941), 624.
- 1.b-25. Carlo Enrico Rava, Albergo "Croce del Sud," Mogadishu, Somalia, 1934. From Paniconi, "Due lavori dell'arch. Rava a Mogadiscio," *Architettura* XIV, 1 (January 1935): 29.

Part 2. Italian Colonial Architecture and Representation

A. Italian Colonial Exhibitions and the Representation of Local Culture

- 2.a-1. Mostra coloniale, Turin, 1911. Exterior of pavilion. [ASMAE-MAI.3-42. Album, Mostra coloniale, Torino, 1911.]
- 2.a-2. Turin, 1911. Entrance to Mostra bibliografica. [ASMAE-MAI.3-42. Album, Mostra coloniale, Torino, 1911.]
- 2.a-3. Turin, 1911. Villaggio eritreo. From Ministero delle Colonie, *Le Mostre coloniali all'Esposizione internazionale di Torino del 1911. Relazione generale*. (Roma: Tipografia nazionale di G. Bertero e C., 1913), 46.
- 2.a-4. Mostra coloniale, Genoa, 1914. Pavilion of Ministero delle Colonie, exterior. From Ministero delle Colonie, *La Mostra coloniale di Genova, 1914*. (Roma: Tipografia nazionale di G. Bertero e C., 1913), frontispiece.
- 2.a-5. Genoa, 1914. Pavilion of Ministero delle Colonie, plan. From Ministero delle Colonie, *La Mostra coloniale di Genova, 1914*, n.p.
- 2.a-6. Genoa, 1914. Mostra della Tripolitania. Sezione Agricoltura, industria e commercio. [ASMAE-MAI.3-40. Busta 8. "Foto-esposizioni-musei, 1931-34."]
- 2.a-7. Genoa, 1914. Salone della Mostra militare coloniale. From Ministero delle Colonie, *La Mostra coloniale di Genova, 1914*, 432.
- 2.a-8. Genoa, 1914. Mostra della Tripolitania. Sezione etnografica. From Ministero delle Colonie, *La Mostra coloniale di Genova, 1914*, 60.
- 2.a-9. Genoa, 1914. Mostra della Somalia. Paesaggio somalo, diorama. [ASMAE-MAI.3-40. Busta 8. "Foto-esposizioni-musei, 1931-34."]
- 2.a-10. Museo coloniale, Rome, 1923. Mostra della Cirenaica. From "L'inaugurazione del Museo Coloniale a Roma," *L'Illustrazione Italiana* L, 46 (18 november 1923): 641.
- 2.a-11. Paris, Exposition universelle, 1889. Tunisian palace. From *Le Courrier de l'Exposition* 28 (October 13, 1889): 4.
- 2.a-12. Genio civile, Progetto di Moschea, Cyrene, 1912. Elevation. From Gresleri, "L'Architettura dell'Italia d'oltremare. Realtà, funzione, immaginario." In *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, edited by Giuliano Gresleri, Pier Giorgio Massaretti and Stefano Zagnoni. (Venezia: Marsilio Editori, 1993), 22.
- 2.a-13. Mostra coloniale, Esposizione di Torino, 1928. Villaggio tripolino, view. From "Le colonie all'Esposizione di Torino," *L'Italia Coloniale* V, 6 (June 1928): 119.
- 2.a-14. Fiera campionaria, Milano, 1922. Exterior of Padiglione delle colonie italiane. [ASMAE-MAI.3-47. Fascicolo 2, Sottofascicolo "28 foto dei padiglioni e fiere varie."]
- 2.a-15. Mostra internazionale delle arte decorative, Monza, 1925. Mostra coloniale. [ASMAE-MAI.3-42. Fascicolo "Ministero dell'Africa Italiana. Fototeca. Fotografie in prestito per pubblicazione."]
- 2.a-16. Colonial exhibition, Lausanne, 1925. Mostra della Tripolitania. [ASMAE-MAI.3-42. Fascicolo S-203 "Mostre e esposizioni."]

- 2.a-17. Colonial exhibition, Antwerp, 1930. Padiglione delle colonie italiane. From "L'Italia all'Esposizione internazionale di Anversa," *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane* IV, 6 (June 1930): 517.
- 2.a-18. Mostra coloniale, Padua 1930. Exhibit of Museo coloniale. [ASMAE-MAI.3-47. Fascicolo 2, Sottofascicolo "28 foto dei padiglioni e fiere varie."]
- 2.a-19. Museo coloniale, Rome, 1923. Collection of the Zammarano expedition to Somalia. From "L'inaugurazione del Museo Coloniale a Roma," 640.
- 2.a-20. Esposizione di Torino, 1928. Site plan. From Melis, "L'Esposizione di Torino del 1928," *Architettura* VII, 8 (April 1928): 373.
- 2.a-21. Alberto Sartoris, Padiglione delle comunità artigiane. Esposizione di Torino, 1928. From *Il razionalismo e l'architettura in Italia durante il fascismo*, edited by Silvia Danesi and Luciano Patetta. (Milano: Electa Editrice, 1976), 65.
- 2.a-22. Giuseppe Pagano, Padiglione della chimica. Esposizione di Torino, 1928. From Melis, "L'Esposizione di Torino del 1928," 379.
- 2.a-23. Giuseppe Pagano, Padiglione della caccia e della pesca, Esposizione di Torino, 1928. From Melis, "L'Esposizione di Torino del 1928," 379.
- 2.a-24. Giuseppe Pagano and Ettore Pittini, Mostra coloniale, Turin, 1928. Aerial view. From Melis, "L'Esposizione di Torino del 1928," 374.
- 2.a-25. Giuseppe Pagano and Ettore Pittini, Padiglione d'onore, Mostra coloniale, Turin, 1928. Exterior. [ASMAE-MAI.3-42. Fascicolo S-203 "Mostre e esposizioni."]
- 2.a-26. Giuseppe Pagano and Ettore Pittini, Padiglione d'onore, Mostra della Tripolitania. Interior view. [ASMAE-MAI.3-42. Fascicolo S-203 "Mostre e esposizioni."]
- 2.a-27. Giuseppe Pagano, Padiglione della chimica, Esposizione di Torino, 1928. Mostra "Snia Viscosa." From "La "Snia-Viscosa" all'Esposizione internazionale delle industrie chimiche di Torino," *L'Illustrazione Italiana* LV, 22 (27 may 1928): 427.
- 2.a-28. Mostra coloniale, Turin, 1928. Suk tripolitano. [ASMAE-MAI.3-42. Fascicolo S-203 "Mostre e esposizioni."]
- 2.a-29. Fiera campionaria di Milano, 1928. Site plan. From Ente Autonomo Fiera di Milano. *Fiera Esposizione di Milano. Campionaria internazionale. 12 aprile - 19 giugno 1928 (VI). IX Manifestazione. Notizie per gli aderenti pei compratori e pel pubblico.* (Milano: Ente Autonomo della Fiera di Milano, 1928), n.p.
- 2.a-30. Alberto Alpago Novello and Ottavio Cabiati, Padiglione delle industrie casalinghe. Milan, 1928. From Reggiori, "Padiglioni nuovi alla Fiera di Milano," *Architettura e Arti Decorative* VII, 11 (July 1928): 509.
- 2.a-31. Fiera di Milano, 1928. I padiglioni regionali. From Ente Autonomo Fiera di Milano. *Fiera Esposizione di Milano. Campionaria internazionale. 12 aprile - 19 giugno 1928 (VI)*, 21.
- 2.a-32. Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava, Padiglione delle colonie, Fiera di Milano, 1928. Frontal view. Studio fotografico Dario Gatti, Milano. [ASMAE-MAI.3-47. Fascicolo 2, Sottofascicolo "28 foto dei padiglioni e fiere varie."]

- 2.a-33. Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava, Padiglione delle colonie. View of domed space. [ASMAE-MAI.3-40. Busta 8. "Foto-esposizioni-musei, 1931-34."]
- 2.a-34. Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava, Padiglione delle colonie. View of display. [ASMAE-MAI.3-40. Busta 8. "Foto-esposizioni-musei, 1931-34."]
- 2.a-35. Exposition coloniale internationale, Paris, 1931. Site plan. From "Exposition Coloniale Internationale di Paris, 1931," *L'Illustration* (July 1931): n.p.
- 2.a-36. Robert Fournez and Albert Laprade, Moroccan pavilion, Exposition coloniale, Paris, 1931. From "Exposition Coloniale Internationale di Paris, 1931," n.p.
- 2.a-37. Armando Brasini, Padiglione dell'Italia. Exposition coloniale, Paris, 1931. Site plan. From *Il Viandante*, "L'Esposizione coloniale internazionale di Parigi," *L'Italia Coloniale* VII, 10 (October 1930): 188.
- 2.a-38. Armando Brasini, Padiglione dell'Italia, Paris, 1931. Exterior view. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto XI. Busta 8. "Esposizioni Coloniale Internazionale di Parigi: Padiglioni, autorità all'inaugurazione."]
- 2.a-39. Armando Brasini, Padiglione dell'Italia, Paris, 1931. Interior of main exhibition space. [ASMAE-MAI.3-42. Album. Exposition Coloniale Internationale, 1931. Padiglione dell'Italia.]
- 2.a-40. Nuovo museo archeologico, Leptis Magna, 1931. Interior view. From Piccioli, *La nuova Italia d'oltremare* (Milano: A. Mondadori Editore, 1933), 1213.
- 2.a-41. Museo coloniale, Rome, 1935. Sala delle armi abissine. From R.S. "Il Museo Coloniale: Gioiello dell'urbe," *L'Italia Coloniale* XIV, 9 (September 1937): 139.
- 2.a-42. International Fair, Budapest, 1938. Mostra del Ministero dell'Africa Italiana. [ASMAE-MAI.3-42. Fascicolo "Ministero dell'Africa Italiana. Fototeca. Fotografie in prestito per pubblicazione."]
- 2.a-43. Mostra triennale delle terre italiane d'oltremare, Naples, 1940. Site plan. From, Siola, *La Mostra d'Oltremare Fuorigrotta*, (Electa: Napoli, 1990), 49.
- 2.a-44. Marcello Piacentini, et.al., Esposizione Universale di Roma, 1942. Regulatory plan, 1938. From Lupano, *Marcello Piacentini*, (Bari-Roma: Giuseppe Laterza & Figli, 1991), fig. 148.
- 2.a-45. Florestano Di Fausto, Padiglione della Libia, Mostra d'oltremare, Naples, 1940. From "Mostra della Libia. Arch. F. Di Fausto," *Architettura* XX, 1-2 (January-February 1941): 46.
- 2.a-46. Villaggio indigeno dell'Africa Orientale Italiana. Mostra d'oltremare, Naples, 1940. From *L'Illustrazione Italiana* LXVII, 22 (2 June 1940): 839.

B. The *Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli* and the Politics of Representation

- 2.b-1. Tripoli, Lungomare Conte Volpi. ca. 1927. From *L'Italia Coloniale* IV, 4 (April 1927): 72-3.
- 2.b-2. First Fiera campionaria di Tripoli, 1927. Aerial view. From Piccioli, "L'imminente inaugurazione della Fiera di Tripoli," *L'Italia Coloniale* IV, 2 (February 1927): 24.
- 2.b-3. Fiera di Tripoli, 1927. Padiglione degli apparati motori. From Rossi, "La Fiera e le piccole industrie tripolitane," *L'Italia Coloniale* IV, 4 (April 1927): 68.

- 2.b-4. Fiera di Tripoli, 1927. Padiglione della Calabria. From Rossi, "La Fiera e le piccole industrie tripolitane," 69.
- 2.b-5. Exposition Franco-Marocaine, Casablanca, 1915. Plan. From *Le Livre d'Or de l'Exposition Franco-Marocaine*. Edited by Maurice Rouillet. (Paris: Librairie Générale et Internationale G. Ficker, 1916), 74.
- 2.b-6. Exposition Franco-Marocaine, 1915. Pavilion de l'Importation. Postcard. [Collection of the author]
- 2.b-7. Exposition Franco-Marocaine, 1915. Pavilion de la Chouïa. From *Le Livre d'Or de l'Exposition Franco-Marocaine*. 49.
- 2.b-8. Fiera di Tripoli, 1927. Villaggio coloniale, entrance portal. From Rossi, "La Fiera e le piccole industrie tripolitane," 67.
- 2.b-9. Fiera di Tripoli, 1927. Villaggio coloniale, Padiglione di Zliten. From Rossi, "La Fiera e le piccole industrie tripolitane," 70.
- 2.b-10. Felice Nori, Padiglione di Roma, Fiera di Tripoli, 1927. View. From Ciampi, "Roma alla prima Fiera coloniale. Tripoli - Febbraio-Marzo 1927," *Capitolium X* (January 1927): 570.
- 2.b-11. Felice Nori, Padiglione di Roma, Fiera di Tripoli, 1927. View of cortile. From Ciampi, "Roma alla prima Fiera coloniale. Tripoli - Febbraio-Marzo 1927," 573.
- 2.b-12. Armando Brasini, Monumento ai Caduti e alla Vittoria, Tripoli, 1923-25. From *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 265.
- 2.b-13. "Tripoli, Prima Fiera Campionaria," *Esotica II*, 2 (February 1927): cover.
- 2.b-14. Plan of the city of Tripoli, 1929. From Bertarelli, *Guida d'Italia del TCI. Possedimenti e Colonie*, (Milano: Touring Club Italiano, 1929), n.p.
- 2.b-15. Fiera di Tripoli, 1929. Plan. From Piccioli, *La nuova Italia d'oltremare*, 1511.
- 2.b-16. Alessandro Limongelli, Padiglione di Roma, Fiera di Tripoli, 1929. View. From N.D.R. "Corriere architettonico. Il Padiglione del Governatorato di Roma alla Fiera di Tripoli dell'Arch. Alessandro Limongelli," *Architettura e Arti Decorative VIII*, 11 (July 1929): 517.
- 2.b-17. Alessandro Limongelli, Padiglione di Roma, Fiera di Tripoli, 1929. Interior. From N.D.R. "Corriere architettonico. Il Padiglione del Governatorato di Roma alla Fiera di Tripoli dell'Arch. Alessandro Limongelli," 519.
- 2.b-18. Fiera di Tripoli, 1929. View of central street. From Piccioli, *La nuova Italia d'oltremare*, 1521.
- 2.b-19. Fiera di Tripoli, 1939. View of main street. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto XI. Busta 2D. "Fiere ed esposizioni."]
- 2.b-20. Fiera di Tripoli, 1939. Plan. From Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli," *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana I*, 2 (August 1938): n.p.
- 2.b-21. Fiera di Tripoli, 1939. Laghetto e mostra delle imbarcazioni. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto XI. Busta 2D. "Fiere ed esposizioni."]
- 2.b-22. Alessandro Limongelli, Proposal for rearrangement of Piazza Italia, 1931. [ASMAE-MAI.5-29. Fascicolo 337. Busta "OO.PP. e Portuali (26 f), Stampa varia: note di architettura coloniale, 1931."]
- 2.b-23. Views of suq in old city. From Ente Autonomo Fiera di Tripoli, *IX. Manifestazione. VI. Rassegna coloniale internazionale in Africa* (Milano: S. A. Arti Grafiche Bertarelli, 1934), 6. [WF - LIBY.XB1992.1982(Main)]
- 2.b-24. Views of metropolitan displays. From Ente Autonomo Fiera di Tripoli, *IX. Manifestazione*, 28.

- 2.b-25. XIII Fiera di Tripoli, Padiglione del Banco di Roma. Postcard, 1939. [WFG-INT3.GE1993.1.161]
- 2.b-26. Florestano Di Fausto, Padiglione delle mostre collettive, Fiera di Tripoli, 1935. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto XI. Busta 2D. "Fiere ed esposizioni."]
- 2.b-27. Mostra del CPEC di Milano, Fiera di Tripoli. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto XI. Busta 2D. "Fiere ed esposizioni."]
- 2.b-28. Padiglione della Cirenaica, Fiera di Tripoli, 1932. Interior display. From Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli," n.p.
- 2.b-29. Padiglione della Tripolitania, Fiera di Tripoli, 1929. Exterior. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto XI. Busta 2D. "Fiere ed esposizioni."]
- 2.b-30. Padiglione della Libia, Fiera di Tripoli. Mostra della colonizzazione, 1937. From Quadrotta, "La XI Fiera di Tripoli." *Rassegna Economica delle Colonie* 25, 4 (April 1937): n.p.
- 2.b-31. Pietro Lombardi, Padiglione dell'Artigianato libico, Fiera di Tripoli, 1936. Exterior. From Piccioli, "La Fiera di Tripoli," n.p.
- 2.b-32. Pietro Lombardi, Padiglione dell'Artigianato libico. Interior. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto XI. Busta 2D. "Fiere ed esposizioni."]
- 2.b-33. Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava, Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia, Fiera di Tripoli, 1934. View. From Rava, *Nove anni di architettura vissuta, 1926 IV - 1935 XIII*. (Roma: Cremonese editore, 1935), figure 10.
- 2.b-34. Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava, Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia. Courtyard. From Paniconi, "Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia alla Fiera di Tripoli," *Architettura* XIII, 8 (August 1934): 490.
- 2.b-35. Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava, Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia. Rava photograph, ca. 1934. [CSAC-Rava. Image B007220S]
- 2.b-36. Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava, Padiglione dell'Eritrea-Somalia. From Ente Autonomo Fiera di Tripoli, *X. Fiera di Tripoli* (Milano-Roma: S.A. Arti Grafiche Bertarelli, 1935), 8. [WFG]
- 2.b-37. *XI Fiera di Tripoli. Prima mostra coloniale dell'Impero Fascista*, 1937. Cover. [WF-ITA2-TD1989.125.6(Main)]
- 2.b-38. Pietro Lombardi, Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale, Fiera di Tripoli, 1937. Exterior. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto XI. Busta 2D. "Fiere ed esposizioni."]
- 2.b-39. Pietro Lombardi, Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale. Plan. [ACS-AFG Album 41. Foto 6144. "Tavole (23) del Primo padiglione dell'Africa Orientale Italiana alla XI Fiera Campionaria di Tripoli," 1937.]
- 2.b-40. Pietro Lombardi, Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale. Exhibition of military conquest. [ASMAE-MAI.Archivio Segreto-173. Fascicolo XII/2 "Cerimonie varie." Sottofascicolo 5. "Fiera di Tripoli."]
- 2.b-41. Pietro Lombardi, Padiglione dell'Africa Orientale. General interior view. [ASMAE-MAI.Archivio Segreto-173. Fascicolo XII/2 "Cerimonie varie." Sottofascicolo 5. "Fiera di Tripoli."]

Part 3. Colonial Architecture and Tourism

A. Tourism and Colonization

- 3.a-1. Panorama di Tripoli. From *Guida di Tripoli e dintorni*, (Milano: Fratelli Treves, Editori, 1925), 8-9.
- 3.a-2. La palazzina del Governatore. From *Guida di Tripoli e dintorni*, 5.
- 3.a-3. La Stazione ferroviaria principale. From *Guida di Tripoli e dintorni*, 111.
- 3.a-4. "La nuova Tripoli." From *Ospitalità Italiana* III, 1 (January 1928): 13.
- 3.a-5. Ente Nazionale Industrie Turistiche (ENIT) and Ferrovie dello Stato, *Tripoli*, (Roma: Novissima, 1929), Cover.
- 3.a-6. La Cattedrale, Tripoli. From ENIT and Ferrovie dello Stato, *Tripoli*, 11.
- 3.a-7. Mario dei Gaslini, *Piccolo amore Beduino*, (Milano: L'Eroica, 1926), Cover.
- 3.a-8. Sheik Abd el Kefi. From Mario dei Gaslini, *Piccolo amore beduino*, n.p.
- 3.a-9. Una via del quartiere arabo. Postcard, ca. 1930. [Collection of the author]
- 3.a-10. Commissariato per il turismo in Libia. *Libia itinerari*, (Milano: S.A. Arti Grafiche Bertarelli, 1935), Cover.
- 3.a-11. Albergo del "Ain el-Fras," Ghadames. Postcard, ca. 1930. [Collection of the author]
- 3.a-12. Mendicanti di Tagiura. Postcard, ca. 1930. [Collection of the author]

B. Italo Balbo and the "Valorization" of Tourism in Libya

- 3.b-1. Alberto Alpago Novello, et.al. INCIS housing, Tripoli, 1931-1934. From *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 266-67.
- 3.b-2. L'Arco nella sirtica - (Arch. F. di Fausto). ETAL Postcard, 1937. [Collection of the author]
- 3.b-3. Florestano Di Fausto, Oliveti agricultural village, Libya, 1938. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto II. Busta 22T. "Colonizzazione della Libia in atto (1938): Villaggio Oliveti."]
- 3.b-4. *I ventimila. Documentario fotografico della prima migrazione in massa di coloni in Libia per il piano di colonizzazione demografica intensiva. Anno XVII - 1938.* (Tripoli: Edizione della rivista Libia, 1939) Cover. [WF-ITA2 XC1991.433 (Main)]
- 3.b-5. Restoration of Mosque of Ahmed Pasha Qarahmanli, 1934. Interior. From *L'Italie pour les populations islamiques de l'Afrique italienne*, (Roma: Società Editrice "Novissima," 1940), 22.
- 3.b-6. New Mosque of Sciara Bu-Harida, Tripoli, 1937. Exterior view. From *L'Italie pour les populations islamiques de l'Afrique italienne*, 14.
- 3.b-7. Florestano Di Fausto, Scuola superiori di cultura islamica, Tripoli, 1938. Proposal. From *Libia* II, 1 (January 1938): 5.
- 3.b-8. Fiorita, Muslim colonization village, 1939. View. From *L'Italie pour les populations islamiques de l'Afrique italienne*, 93.
- 3.b-9. Map of road system in Libya, 1938. From *Tripoli: Piccola guida pratica e pianta della città* (Tripoli, Unione Coloniale Italiana Pubblicità & Informazioni, 1938), rear cover.

- 3.b-10. Umberto Di Segni, Saletta da pranzo dell'Albergo "alle Gazzelle," Zliten, 1935. ETAL photograph, ca. 1936. [ASMAE-MAI.5-29. Fascicolo 338. Foto africa settentrionale, Libia. Busta, turismo (36 f.)]
- 3.b-11. Florestano Di Fausto and Stefano Gatti-Casazza, Teatro "Uaddan," Tripoli, 1935. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto I. Busta 15B. "Tripolitania: Alberghi."]
- 3.b-12. Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia, *La Libia*. (Milano: F. Milani, 1936). Cover. [APS-Sezione XLIV, Scaffale Cg. N. 3. ENIT - Propaganda turistica miscellanea, Misc. 54.]
- 3.b-13. Danza Orientale. ETAL postcard, 1937. Serie Q: 2. [Collection of the author]
- 3.b-14. ETAL, Tabaccheria e negozio dell'artigianato libico, Rome, ca. 1937. From Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia (E.T.A.L.)." *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana* V, 4 (December 1942): n.p.
- 3.b-15. Alberto Alpago Novello, Ottavio Cabiati and Guido Ferrazza, Regulatory plan of Tripoli, 1933. From De Rege, "Il nuovo piano regolatore di Tripoli," *Urbanistica* III, 3 (May-June 1934): 129.
- 3.b-16. Henri Prost, Regulatory plan of Casablanca, 1914. From Vaillat, *Le Visage Français du Maroc*, (Paris: Horizons de France, 1931), 6.
- 3.b-17. Florestano Di Fausto, Palazzo del Governo, Rhodes, 1926. From *Rodi (Egeo)*, 20 Vere Fotografia, n. 8. [Collection of the author]
- 3.b-18. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo delle Rose, Rhodes, 1927. From *Rodi: Guida del Turista*. (Milano-Roma: Casa Editrice d'Arte Bestetti & Tumminelli, 1928), 68.
- 3.b-19. Florestano Di Fausto, Project for Piazza della Cattedrale, Tripoli, 1930. View. From Piccioli, *La nuova Italia d'oltremare*, 882.
- 3.b-20. Florestano Di Fausto, Sistemazione dell'Arco di Marco Aurelio, Tripoli. Proposal, 1932. From Biancale, *Florestano Di Fausto*, (Genève: Editions "Les Archives Internationales," Serie des Grands Architectes, 1932), 60.
- 3.b-21. Florestano Di Fausto, Quartiere artigianato, Suq al-Mushir, Tripoli, 1935. Courtyard. [ASMAE-MAI.3-56. Fascicolo. "35 Fotografie OO.PP. Libia."]
- 3.b-22. Florestano Di Fausto, Quartiere artigianato, Suq al-Mushir. Interior. From Quadrotta, "Sviluppo e realizzazioni dell'artigianato in Libia." *Rassegna Economica dell'Africa Italiana* XXV, 7 (July 1937): 953.
- 3.b-23. Di Fausto, Caffé arabo, Suq al-Mushir. Interior [WFG-AFAC. Reparto I. Busta 15c. "Tripolitania: Caffè, Ritrovi."]

C. Florestano Di Fausto and the Architecture of Tourism

- 3.c-1. Henri Prost, Boulevard du IV^a Zouaves, Casablanca. View. From Vaillat, *Le Visage Français du Maroc*, 10.
- 3.c-2. Florestano Di Fausto, Palazzo INA-INPS, Tripoli, 1938. From *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 36.
- 3.c-3. Adrien Laforgue, Central Post Office, Casablanca, 1920. View. From Vaillat, *Le Visage Français du Maroc*, 8.
- 3.c-4. Alessandro Limongelli, "Grand Albergo agli Scavi," Cyrene, 1932. Exterior view. From "Architettura coloniali italiane," *Rassegna di Architettura* V, 9 (September 1933): 397.
- 3.c-5. Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava, Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna," 1928-31. Side view. From N.D.R., "Architetture libiche degli Arch.

- Carlo Enrico Rava e Sebastiano Larco." *Architettura e Arti Decorative X*, 13 (September 1931): 684.
- 3.c-6. Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava, Albergo agli Scavi di Leptis Magna." Plans. From Piacentini, "Prima internazionale architettonica," 561.
- 3.c-7. Sebastiano Larco and Carlo Enrico Rava, Albergo "agli Scavi di Leptis Magna." View from seafront. [ASMAE-MAI.3-56. Fascicolo. "35 Fotografie OO.PP. Libia."]
- 3.c-8. Albergo-casinò "Uaddan." ETAL Postcard, 1937. [Collection of the author]
- 3.c-9. Marcel Dudovich, Albergo-casinò Uaddan, Poster, 1937. From *Libia I*, 2 (May 1937): n.p.
- 3.c-10. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo-casinò "Uaddan," Tripoli, 1935. View from east seafront. From *Architettura italiana d'oltremare 1870-1940*, 39.
- 3.c-11. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo-casinò "Uaddan," 1935. View from west seafront. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto I. Busta 15B. "Tripolitania: Alberghi."]
- 3.c-12. Moschea di Sidi Darghut. ETAL postcard, 1937. Serie C: 3. [Collection of the author]
- 3.c-13. Florestano Di Fausto and Stefano Gatti-Casazza. Albergo-casinò "Uaddan," 1935. Sala del casinò. From Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia (E.T.A.L.)." *Gli Annali dell'Africa Italiana V*, 4 (December 1942): n.p.
- 3.c-14. Florestano Di Fausto and Stefano Gatti-Casazza. Albergo-casinò "Uaddan." Terme romane. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto I. Busta 15B. "Tripolitania: Alberghi."]
- 3.c-15. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo del "Mehari," 1935. Exterior view. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto I. Busta 15B. "Tripolitania: Alberghi."]
- 3.c-16. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo del "Mehari." Plan. From Apollonj, "L'attuale momento edilizio della Libia," *Architettura XVI*, 12 (December 1937): 808.
- 3.c-17. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo del "Mehari." Aerial view. Postcard, 1930s. [ARP-Sezione Iconografia. Collezione di cartoline. Località straniera, Libia.]
- 3.c-18. Funduq dei Maltesi, ca. 1750. From Corò, "Alla scoperta dei vecchi "Fondugh" tripolini." *Le Vie d'Italia XLV*, 2 (February 1939): 204.
- 3.c-19. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo del "Mehari." View of courtyard. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto I. Busta 15B. "Tripolitania: Alberghi."]
- 3.c-20. Network of highways in the Libyan desert. From M.A. Loschi, "L'autostrada del deserto libico," *Le Vie d'Italia XLII*, 8 (August 1936): 530.
- 3.c-21. Ente Turistico ed Alberghiero della Libia, *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames* (Milano: Tipo-Litografia Turati Lombardi, 1938), cover.
- 3.c-22. Casa trogloditiche. ETAL postcard, 1937. Serie E: 2. [Collection of the author]
- 3.c-23. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo "Rumia," Jefren, 1934. Exterior view. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto I. Busta 15B. "Tripolitania: Alberghi."]
- 3.c-24. La vallata di Rumia. From Ente Turistico ed Alberghiero della Libia, *Itinerario Tripoli-Gadames*, 23.
- 3.c-25. Florestano Di Fausto and Stefano Gatti Casazza, Albergo "Rumia." Interior. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto I. Busta 15B. "Tripolitania: Alberghi."]
- 3.c-26. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo Nalut, 1935. View. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto I. Busta 15B. "Tripolitania: Alberghi."]
- 3.c-27. Nalut, panorama. ETAL postcard, 1937. Serie E. 6. [Collection of the author]
- 3.c-28. Nalut. L'albergo. ETAL postcard, 1937. Serie E. 4. [Collection of the author]

- 3.c-29. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo "Ain el-Fras," Ghadames, 1935. Main facade. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto I. Busta 15B. "Tripolitania: Alberghi."]
- 3.c-30. Florestano Di Fausto, Albergo "Ain el-Fras." Portichetto delle palme. [WFG-AFAC. Reparto I. Busta 15B. "Tripolitania: Alberghi."]
- 3.c-31. Gadames. Albergo "Ain el-Fras." ETAL postcard, 1937. Serie E. 10. [Collection of the author]
- 3.c-32. Una caratteristica via di Gadames. Postcard, ca. 1935. [Collection of the author]
- 3.c-33. Florestano Di Fausto and Stefano Gatti Casazza. Albergo "Ain el-Fras." Interior. From Vicari, "L'Ente turistico ed alberghiero della Libia (E.T.A.L.)," n.p.
- 3.c-34. Ghadames interior, ca. 1930. [Rava, album di viaggio, 1931-32. p. 59.]
- 3.c-35. I gitanti nel chiostro. Albergo "Ain el-Fras." [WFG-AFAC. Reparto I. Busta 15B. "Tripolitania: Alberghi."]