Modern Rome

Italo Insolera

Modern Rome:

From Napoleon to the Twenty-First Century

Edited by

Lucia Bozzola, Roberto Einaudi
and Marco Zumaglini

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Photographs: Google Earth

Editors-translators: Lucia Bozzola, Roberto Einaudi, Marco Zumaglini

PROLOGUE

PREFACE

Having a renowned intellectual in one's family does not always mean one is truly familiar with their work. Gift copies of their books, neatly lined on a shelf, are hardly ever studied, just occasionally leafed through. Their professional merits rely on an innate, unexplained aura of sorts, inextricably blended with the emotionally stronger component of family ties.

No wonder, then, that some event from outside the family circle is often needed to break the spell and refresh the perceived value of the work through an external perspective. This is the case with two of the editors of this book, Lucia Bozzola and Marco Zumaglini. Desideria Pasolini dall'Onda, founder of Italia Nostra, a well-known association for cultural heritage protection, was the outside agent: during a public meeting held after the death of Italo Insolera, she approached Insolera's widow, Anna Maria Bozzola, and strongly recommended that her husband's classic work on the urban history of modern Rome be translated and published abroad.

In this way, Lucia and Marco gained a stronger insight into their uncle's work, and fully understood the reasons for his excellent reputation. They also became aware that an obvious way of paying homage to a family member, and one liable to criticism of resting on his domestic laurels, could serve to disseminate high-level Italian scholarship and comprehensive knowledge of recent Italian history.

Lucia is an American writer and cinema expert, Marco an Italian engineer and spatial planner. They chose to initiate the long process of translation and of bringing the book up to date, adding to the team Roberto Einaudi, architect and a long-time friend of Insolera, who lives and works in Rome, is thoroughly familiar with the subject, and has both English and Italian as mother tongues. The combined forces of the three editors have been essential to provide a proper translation, adaptation, and integration of the fundamental work that is *Roma moderna.*

To do such a translation justice, however, is more than a matter of tackling the formal disparities between Italian and English, such as capitalization and punctuation (which is harder than it sounds). To clarify the inherent

challenges of this work, we quote a recent passage by journalist Eugenio Scalfari:

> A non-fictional work contains thoughts, which are the product of a specific individual. The translator, in turn, is another specific individual, with his/her own personality: hence, he or she embraces and comprehends another's thoughts and conveys them by using his/her own language, which inescapably creates a different perspective.
> For example . . . Hegel or Kant or Goethe translated into other languages become works where the translator's creativity plays a role, which we must neither overrate nor underrate. The basic line of reasoning will remain intact, but its scent and flavour will change.[1]

Insolera's quite personal way of coupling the delivered factual information with his own judgement—expressed in tones ranging from pointed irony and desolate accusation to concrete suggestions, and a final touch of optimistic hope—has indeed posed a problem. The initial attempt at maintaining precisely his style was transformed into a smoother, more fluent English rendering, reflecting the essentials of Insolera's complex prose.

If we were to define the general style of our text, we could say that we have striven to give our translation an "international" tone, aiming at addressing a vast English-speaking public, albeit possibly less exigent in terms of style requirements. Thus, the British-English core must have some occasional deviations towards expressions more familiar to American or European non-British ears. Such is the case of "apartment building," which has been preferred over "block of flats"; but there may be additional, less evident cases. We have also kept in mind, as recommended by the publisher, the specifications of the Chicago Manual of Style.[2] Some deviations from CMOS have been introduced in turn, as explained below, for the sake of easing the understanding of Italian terms.

We recommend that the book be read sequentially, as Insolera's narrative flows nearly as effortlessly as fiction. However, as Insolera himself seems to have made provisions for non-sequential reading by frequently repeating information in different chapters, we have expanded on this, so that many Italian terms (such as those designating specific urban planning tools and institutions or offices lacking specific equivalents in English, or recurring urban features) have been treated much in the same way. The

[1] Eugenio Scalfari, "Saffo? No, Quasimodo," *L'Espresso* 62, no. 35 (28 August 2016).
[2] Sixteenth edition.

first occurrences in each chapter generally include both the Italian expression and the English translation, while subsequently either the former or the latter is used.

This procedure has an additional justification when one considers that Insolera makes no references in the text to the glossary entries, the illustrations, or the maps. In fact, increasing the wealth of the already extant footnotes would have probably proved detrimental to smooth reading: those elements were substantially intended as self-sufficient entities, the figures and maps provided with exhaustive captions, and the glossary items often attaining the scope of real sub-chapters.

As examples of translation options, the word "Umbertine" has been used in the English text, meaning "the period of King Umberto I." Only three churches have been referred to by their English names: Saint Peter's, Saint John the Lateran and Saint Paul's. Note the introduction of the article "the" after Saint John, typical of the spoken English heard in Rome. All other churches have kept their Italian name in the text.

We have made some minor amendments and adjustments to the original text, addressing inaccuracies of various type and origin, or reflecting new facts and changes that occurred after 2011, when the last Italian edition was released.

In addition to this Preface and a "Presentation to the Anglo-Saxon Reader," we have added two chapters to the English edition. One includes a critical review of Insolera's *Roma moderna,* with additional information casting new and often disquieting light on a number of key issues in the post-WWII history of Rome (and Italy). We are indebted to Vezio De Lucia, a renowned Italian urban planner and good friend of Insolera, for this refreshing material.

The second chapter refers to the post-2011 urban history of Rome. The author is Paolo Berdini, an expert on the Roman suburbs, who collaborated with Insolera on the 2011 edition of the book and was responsible for urban planning in Rome at the start of the new municipal government established after the June 2016 elections.

A map relating to the city centre and the changes that have occurred there since the early nineteenth century, additional photos,[3] and an index of places, intended to help the Anglo-Saxon reader to understand the wealth of spatial information provided in the book, complete the materials designed for the English edition.

[3] Twenty-two in number.

In addition to Anna Maria Bozzola and Desideria Pasolini, we are indebted to Arthur Molella from the Smithsonian Institution, who played a key role in giving our work a decisive thrust toward publication. Among the people who gave advice, also by reading sections of the book and suggesting amendments, are Paola Pace and Francesco and Ann Siravo. Finally, together with Vezio De Lucia and Paolo Berdini, we want to mention Rita Paris, Walter Tocci, and Peter Kammerer, all of them deeply familiar with Insolera as both a colleague and a friend: their support, their participation in the discussions and their constant feedback, coupled with their deep knowledge of Rome, have greatly helped to develop and implement our project.

PRESENTATION TO THE ANGLO-SAXON READER

Some Questions (and Answers) about Rome and the Book

The publication of Italo Insolera's *Roma moderna* in 1962 was an exceptional event. For the first time, and with such extraordinary detail, the expansion of the modern city of Rome was set forth. In the 1980s, as director of the Rome branch of the College of Architecture, Art and Planning of Cornell University, I called on Insolera to lecture to the students on the city of Rome. After all, who better than he could teach the history of Rome to young undergraduates who had just recently arrived in the capital of Italy. Italo asked me if I wished to concentrate on modern Rome or look at its development through history. We agreed that for someone with little background on Rome or Italy, it was good to start at the beginning in order to better contextualize later events. So Italo started with the seven hills of Rome separated by the winding Tiber River and its tributaries, with the space of the future Roman Forum still occupied by a marshy plain. In the hour devoted to the lecture Italo managed to masterfully take us through three millennia of history, up to the latest developments of modern Rome.

If one were to ask the Anglo-Saxon reader about Rome, probably he or she would be able to tell us more about the rise and fall of the Roman Empire than what has happened in the last century or two. And yet today it is of utmost importance to learn what happened to Rome during the last two centuries, when its population increased by a factor of 18, from 165,000 to 2,867,000 in 2016. There is much to learn from the growth of Rome, both from the undeniable success in preserving a great deal of its past, especially when compared to other cities, but also from its excessively chaotic growth and the many mistakes made that could, and should, have been avoided.

One might ask: when did modern Rome start? Did it start when Rome became the Capital of modern Italy, or can we go back further in history? Was not the abolition of the monarchy and the declaration of a Republic in Rome in 509 BC the very first sign of modernism? Perhaps that is going

too far back, but might not the Renaissance, considered by many as marking the beginning of the early Modern Age, represent the rebirth of Rome? Many Renaissance buildings and streets still characterize Rome today, as do those of previous or succeeding periods. Their strong presence in modern Rome help make the city what it is today. And certainly Insolera does not ignore the early periods of Rome's growth. Saving the past from destruction is one of the primary goals that he identifies for modern Rome.

In the introduction to his book *Roma*, published by Laterza in 1980, Insolera states: "A book on Rome is not and cannot be complete and comprehensive: there needs to be a subtitle and an introduction—albeit brief—so that the reader does not look for something that deliberately is not there." The subtitle to the first editions of *Roma moderna* was *Un secolo di storia urbanistica* (A century of urban history). The time frame covered started in 1870 with the so-called Breach of Porta Pia, when the troops of the Kingdom of Italy defeated those of the Papal State, enabling Rome to become the Capital of a reunited Italy. The latest Italian edition, published in 2011, clarifies the longer period covered with a new subtitle: *Da Napoleone I al XXI secolo* (From Napoleon I to the twenty-first century). It starts with the first decrees signed by Napoleon in 1811 to prepare the city for the arrival of his newly born son, declared King of Rome. Fate would have it that in the following years Napoleon was defeated, and his son never made it to Rome. Nonetheless, work did start then to transform the city into a modern capital.

Italo Insolera's *Modern Rome* is a captivating day-by-day history of the growth of Rome. It can be read in sequence, or piecemeal, depending on the immediate interest in understanding the reasons for the development of a particular district or a specific time frame. It delves deeply into the reasons why Rome is what it is today. At times Insolera forces the reader to fully understand the problems investigated by him by insisting on issues that to the reader may appear secondary. As an example, in Chapter Fourteen he gives an extremely long list locating the position of early public transportation lines, so long that one begins to ask oneself, why? Is it really necessary? As if Insolera had heard the question, he immediately gives the answer: "We have purposefully dwelled (tedious as we must have sounded) on this very rich railway network built all around the new capital from the end of nineteenth to the beginning of twentieth centuries. It could well have served the new metropolitan city. Instead, it was completely destroyed, in order to make way for private cars."

There are many questions that arise spontaneously while one reads *Modern Rome*. For instance, what would Rome look like today if the Urban Plan of 1883 had been respected? Why was it not respected? Or what would Rome be like today if the English mayor, Ernest Nathan, had had his way? Did Rome really have an English mayor? Nathan, in effect, was born in London from a naturalized English father and an Italian mother, both of Jewish origin. He came to Italy after the death of his father at the age of 14, moved to Rome at 25 and became an Italian citizen only in 1888 at age 43, and mayor at 62.

As the reader peruses the book, more questions come spontaneously to mind. What period was the most disastrous for the well-being of Rome's inhabitants? What was its most glorious period? What were the lost opportunities during the often chaotic development of Rome? What can still be done to improve the urban planning of one of the most intriguing cities in the world? The reader will find many answers to these questions in the book; on others she or he can speculate, based on the information received. It is important to see what is beautiful in Rome today and enjoy it, but equally important is to be able to understand why many areas have been destroyed due to dubious decisions made over the years, and what could be done to improve the situation.

The reader could also ask themselves, as I have done, what period of modern Rome would I have loved most to live in? The development of a large city is never easy, and certainly that of Rome has been extremely complicated. Life in the city fifty-five years ago, when I came to live here, was much simpler and rewarding: the automobile had not yet conquered it as it has today, public transportation was adequate, and the suburban sprawl was more limited and less chaotic. Yet there have been important conquests as well: the project of transforming the Roman and Imperial Fora into part of the city has been initiated, although it is currently blocked, the transformation of the Appia Antica into a park has made significant progress, important excavations throughout the city have given us a better picture of the past, new museums have been opened. The Parco della Musica complex for music and cultural events designed by Renzo Piano, and the MAXXI modern art building designed by Zaha Hadid, have become realities which have enriched the city, attracting every year many visitors. Since I am an optimist, I think that the future could become the best time to live in Rome, if, and it is a big if, many of the battles fought, and ideas developed, by Italo Insolera and his friends were to become a reality.

In the Foreword, Insolera indicates he should rightly thank many who contributed to his work, but writes: "I think that all those persons would agree if I include them by thanking Antonio Cederna for his continual teaching and for having proposed fifty years ago that I write this book." Insolera was an architect and urban planner turned historian and prolific writer. Cederna was an archaeologist turned journalist, environmentalist and politician. Both led many battles against building speculation and for a better built and greener environment. Both dreamt of creating more beautiful cities, preaching the necessity of combining the protection of the environment and of historic heritage with the need for a sustainable modern urban development.

To help the reader follow the expansion of Rome, Italo Insolera added to the text a series of maps: the first starting in 1870, the subsequent ones each covering a period of thirty years. Because no map covered the time frame from Napoleon to the unification of Italy, I have added for the English edition a detailed map covering the period 1800–1870, allowing the reader to better understand the changes to the structure of the city centre that Insolera describes so well in the text. Rome at the advent of Napoleon was substantially the same as that portrayed by Giovan Battista Nolli in his map of 1748, a map of great detail and precision, describing the city within the perimeter of the third-century Aurelian Walls. That map is used as the base to indicate the major transformations to the historic city that occurred both during the period 1800–1870 and in subsequent years.

The interventions in Rome completed prior to the unification of Italy were limited in number, but very important. For the first time an effort was made to revitalize the past, after centuries of ignoring or destroying it. The excavations of the Roman Forum directly below the Capitoline Hill, seat of the municipal government, were begun, as were those around the Column of Trajan; the Coliseum was consolidated and restored. The northern gateway to the city, the Piazza del Popolo, was enlarged and the Pincio gardens remodelled, affording a spectacular view over the city. The first railway station serving the city centre (Stazione Termini) was built near the Terme di Diocleziano (the ancient Baths of Diocletian), later enlarged and moved a short distance away from the Terme.

When Rome became the capital of a united Italy in 1871, construction activity started with great frenzy, as can be appreciated following Insolera's detailed descriptions. Clearly identified in the map are the major new roads built to join the centre to the ever-expanding periphery, as well as the location of the new *quartieri* (districts), such as the Nomentano, Prati ("meadows" in English), Esquilino, Celio or Testaccio. Shown are

the major public buildings built to service Italy and Rome, as well as the most important public parks and archaeological areas. Residential and commercial buildings covered the other areas not built upon at the time of the Nolli map. They can be seen in the subsequent maps.

Also shown are the demolitions of the pre-existing buildings in the historic city, replaced by roads, piazzas or new buildings. Despite periods of unnecessary and violent destruction, predominantly under Mussolini in the 1920s and 1930s, the demolition in the city centre was limited, especially when compared to that in other cities. The birth of Rome as a modern city brought with it the desire to protect its past as well as develop its future.

The great majority of the existing buildings present in 1748 have remained unchanged, at least in their footprint, although extra floors were added to many until it became illegal to do so after the Second World War. Many neighbourhoods have remained intact. The demolitions and reconstruction within the city centre during the Umbertine period (1878–1900), when the construction fever hit Rome, were done primarily to widen existing roads or create new avenues, piazzas, and bridges to help distribute the increased traffic. At times they have violently altered the original character of the city, at times they dialogue with the Renaissance and baroque buildings around them, so much so that one must look closely to determine if some of them are Umbertine or Renaissance. During the Fascist period, instead, the demolitions were done primarily with the desire to prove to the world that the new Rome was resuming the grandeur of ancient Rome.

If we examine the map in detail we can see, for example, the demolitions performed in order to build the Lungotevere river embankments and avenues along the Tiber, or to form streets such as Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, Corso Rinascimento, Via Arenula, Via Cavour, Via del Tritone, Viale Trastevere, Via dei Fori Imperiali, Piazza Augusto Imperatore, or the demolitions of the sixteenth-century district covering the Imperial and the Roman Fora, or those at the Ghetto and at the Forum Boarium, just to name a few. Also shown are the new bridges crossing the Tiber, ten in number, added to the four existing ones shown by Nolli. The use of the map as a reference tool to accompany Insolera's fascinating text will help the Anglo-Saxon reader check the inter-relationships between the different areas being discussed and better understand modern Rome.

Another addition to the book has been the inclusion of fifteen photographs taken by Insolera during the period 1951–83, which provide an important supplementary visual description of the development of Rome during its period of maximum expansion. During the years 1959–

67, when I had not yet met Italo, I too was systematically photographing the chaotic expansion of Rome. I noted at that time: "The biggest danger to the historical centre of Rome comes not from within, but from the city that surrounds it." Of my photos, four have been selected as a complement to Italo's truly magnificent shots.

To safeguard our past is a modern discipline, as we have seen. Until the beginning of modern Rome, the demolition of the ancient Roman monuments was a common occurrence in order to reutilize their materials for the building of the papal city. The Pantheon is an exception only because it was transformed into a church. Modern is Rome if in addition to protecting and conserving its historical centre, it expands within properly studied and applied urban plans. Not modern is a city that expands following the interests of speculation, as all too frequently has occurred in Rome in the last century. It is not strange therefore that Insolera, shortly before dying, considered adding a question mark after *Roma moderna*.

Roberto Einaudi

An Outline of Modern Rome

Insolera identifies the origins of "modern" Rome with the year 1811, when Napoleon and his prefect de Tournon signed what he considers the first urban planning laws in Rome's history based on a modern social approach, stemming from the principles of the French Revolution. Aimed at "embellishing our fair Rome," these laws remained mostly unimplemented.

Insolera's narrative takes us on to the last years of papal government and the establishment of Rome as the national capital of the newly unified Italy, when papal minister Monsignor de Mérode, Belgian, played a key role in starting Rome's urban development and showing how it could be pursued.

The unswerving pursuit of profit by the big landowners, who had no social or aesthetic scruples, soon brought about the destruction of most of the Renaissance and baroque villas and gardens splendidly crowning the old city, while the poor immigrants from southern Italy's misery-stricken villages, or the Romans chased by extensive demolition of the historical centre, were progressively relegated to the *borgate* suburban slums, frequently nothing more than shabby hovels.

Savoy pre-unification legislative legacy ranks among the chief causes for lack of significant urban planning: in Italy the right to build has been linked to the property of land rather than to a public decision stating what

and where to build. Alternating phases of exacerbated construction fever (1883–87) and crisis (from 1888 to end of the nineteenth century and after WWI) were the inevitable results of substantially ineffective planning of the nation's new capital.

In 1907, Ernesto Nathan became the first mayor of Rome that did not belong to the land-owning elite which, save during Mayor Pianciani's short interlude, had controlled the city since Rome had become the capital of Italy. Nathan's electoral and administrative programme was based on spreading elementary education, protecting public health, limiting construction speculation and land monopoly, encouraging social housing and promoting citizen participation.

Nathan's counterpart at the national level was Prime Minister Giovanni Giolitti. Beside promoting utilities nationalization and municipalization, his urban planning laws (1904 and 1907) strove to check speculation by introducing a tax on plots susceptible to building within the urban plan boundaries.

A new urban plan was needed to favour implementation of the Giolitti Laws: Nathan entrusted engineer Edmondo Sanjust from Milan with the task. Insolera considers Sanjust's 1909 Urban Plan to be the best in modern Roman times for its considering public transportation and for its soundness of design at the district scale. One of the few districts which was built in compliance with it, around the Piazza Verbano, has remained a liveable space throughout its history.

Periods such as Pianciani's and Nathan's stints as mayors, when excellent progress was made in providing for the needs of the city, were but short interludes of good administration, soon overthrown by renewed adverse coalitions.

In fact, one typical trait in Roman modern urban history soon emerged: the century-long opposition by the landowners and their references within the municipal administration, against any planned development of the city. The urban plans were only formally enforced, while the city expansion took place mostly out of their provisions and of their absurdly limited spatial boundaries.

Fascism (1922–43) struck the final blow on the city. Ancient Roman archaeology was converted into a propaganda pretext for extensive demolition across the historical centre; the lower-class residents were expelled toward the spreading suburban *borgate*, built either officially or unofficially. The mayors were replaced with non-elected governors, almost invariably chosen from among the land-owning aristocracy. But the

real policy maker turned out to be the Governorate's secretary general Virgilio Testa, head of the Roman bureaucracy. He launched (1928) the never formally planned idea of a new direction for Rome expansion: towards the sea. Under his auspices, construction of the monumental EUR district was started and later resumed and completed after WWII. Testa remained the reference figure for the big landowners. Paradoxical as it may sound, the so-called 1942 Shadow Plan, designed to serve their interests and never formally approved, was progressively implemented: the 1950 Jubilee, and then the 1960 Olympics, were seized as opportunities to shape modern Rome as the Fascist Duce Mussolini had wanted.

Insolera's narrative unwinds through the tragic years of the war and then on to the early post-war era, when public opinion learned to mobilize, preventing the few remaining private parks (the Villas Ada and Chigi) to be built upon and avoiding new demolitions planned to cut through the historical centre (such as the project for the new Via Vittoria).

The 1960s marked the disengagement of the Roman professionals vis-à-vis the social relevance inherent in urban planning; they turned to architecture per se, as Insolera exemplifies in the masterful account he gives of the 1966 competition for an office building to be annexed to the parliament. This does not mean that the struggle for protection of the city's heritage had stopped; quite the contrary.

In 1965, it was decreed that the ancient Appian Way become a park: the building projects in the area came to an end, save for recurring unauthorized construction of VIPs' luxury houses. The Roman Fora, planned to become an urban park as a continuation of the Appian Way park under Mayor Petroselli (1979–81), represented an important project, unfortunately doomed to remain substantially unenacted, leaving the Fascist Via dei Fori Imperiali, linking the Piazza Venezia to the Coliseum and built destroying medieval and late Renaissance quarters, to bisect and partially cover that unitary archaeological complex.

This was also the age of terrorism in Italy, when the hopes for a fairer society were frustrated. To some extent and despite several contradictions, the work during the decade of left-wing municipal administrations in Rome (1976–85) stood, especially from the cultural standpoint, as a civil response to all whose goal was hate, violence and turmoil.

Starting in the 1980s, urban planning in Rome (and in Italy) has further renounced its key social function. New concepts and tools have emerged (such as "compensation," "conditional building amnesty," "house plan" and "negotiated planning"), their main goal being to favour private initiative and encourage unplanned building.

Since the 1970s, the frenzied urban sprawl has become wholly unconnected from a stagnant demography. An astounding share of the new buildings are illegal, conferring to the capital the uncommendable position as the nation's leader in this field. Unauthorized construction fulfilled, to some extent, the demand for social houses, which the public sector was not able to meet. As far as urban development is concerned, no matter what the orientation of the municipal governments, their policy remained substantially similar: the 2008 Urban Plan, released under Veltroni's centre-left-wing mayoralty, makes provisions for a 30% increase in built areas, unlike what is happening in the rest of Europe, where new urbanization has become severely restricted.

The instances of sound planning, such as when Deputy Mayor Tocci redesigned public transportation in the early 1990s to shift toward rail, remained isolated episodes invariably discontinued before completion. Finally, Insolera acknowledges that "urban and spatial planning have been put aside: no longer needing them, the market now can find no obstacles"; when interviewed for *l'Unità* daily newspaper, he pointed out that "radical change becomes impossible when ideology has been renounced as a provider of aims and instruments. And I must remind those who maintain that planning is unnecessary that it is so only for the ruling class, but not for the others."

Insolera identifies Culture and Art as the key elements from which future Rome may eventually draw new reinvigorating life and meaning. The ancient Appian Way should be one pillar; multi-ethnicity should be the other. Since Hadrian, the ancient emperors came from the conquered provinces, and Catholic Rome has always been filled with religious people from all over the world. Now 600,000 immigrants live in the Eternal City, a source of fresh energy from the social, cultural and economic points of view. The Piazza Vittorio Orchestra, composed of immigrants from all continents, is taken as the symbol showing the way for the possible redemption of the city.

Italo Insolera: A Concise Biography

Born in Turin in 1929, Insolera spent his life in Rome since early childhood. There he studied, graduated in architecture and intensively worked until August 2012, when he passed away in his Roman home. An urban and spatial planner, historian and scholar specializing in urban

studies, he wrote dozens of books,[1] essays and articles, many of them dealing with Rome, like his masterpiece *Roma moderna*. He was professor at Venice and Geneva Universities, and gave courses at the Universities of Florence, Rome, Naples, Paris, Kassel, Barcelona, and Madrid. He worked on dozens of municipal master plans and regional plans, designed public and other buildings, and planned rehabilitation of historical buildings; he curated numerous exhibitions.

Since 2003, Insolera's professional documents, designs, photos and writings have been deemed of public interest and protected by the Regional Superintendency of Archives (Soprintendenza Archivistica per il Lazio).

His vast activity as planner was focused on environmental and historic urban complexes, where the issues of the relations between archaeology and the modern city, of appropriate reuse of the ancient city and conservation of the natural resources were tackled with an interdisciplinary approach, leading to proposals for restoration of buildings and urban areas, enhancement of public green areas, integrated management of parks, traffic restriction and pedestrianization.

An example of his work, dating from the 1960s and 1970s, are the coordinated plans for five municipalities (Castagneto Carducci, San Vincenzo, Bibbona, Cecina, and Sassetta) of the northern Maremma (Province of Livorno, Tuscany). The park of Rimigliano and the great network of parks of the Val di Cornia, the promontory of Populonia Italica, the San Silvestro medieval mines, the landscape of the reclaimed lands, the coastal pine forests, the shore and the sea: approximately seven thousand hectares devoted to culture, leisure, study, contemplation and swimming are the splendid result, in heartbreaking contrast to the disaster predominating on the Italian coasts.

As an architect, Insolera usually preferred public clients. He sometimes questioned the underlying reasoning behind the assignment, showing how an architectural work could be better treated as a district-scale, urban

[1] Some of his writings are referenced throughout the chapters of *Modern Rome*. Among his other works, we mention here: "L'urbanistica," in *Storia d'Italia* (Turin: Einaudi, 1973); *Roma. Immagini e realtà dal X al XX secolo* (Rome: Laterza, 1980); *Roma fascista attraverso la documentazione dell'Istituto Luce* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 2001); with A. M. Sette, *Roma tra le due guerre. Cronache da una città che cambia* (Rome: Palombi, 2002); with A. M. Sette, *Dall'Augusteo all'Auditorium*, Collana dell'Auditorium 1 (Rome: Musica per Roma, 2003); with Andrea Camilleri, *L'occhio e la memoria: Porto Empedocle 1950* (Rome: Palombi, 2007); *Saper vedere l'ambiente* (Rome: De Luca, 2008); *Roma, per esempio. Le città e l'urbanista* (Rome: Donzelli, 2010).

planning issue. Apart from the above-mentioned 1966 competition for the parliament office building,[2] another such instance refers to the competition for the new Florence University at Sesto Fiorentino (1971). Insolera with Pier Luigi Cervellati[3] ranked second: however, as Edoardo Salzano,[4] one of the members of the selection board, admits: "I now realize that their proposal was the truly far-sighted one, hinting as it did at the potential for culture and cultural institutions to occupy the public spaces across the historical city, and convert them into places for discussion, participation and politics."[5]

Insolera was also interested in and practised photography: strictly black and white, covering forty years of travels, of planning activity, of promenades across the cities he loved most. We refer the reader to the recent exhibition and volume aimed at casting light on this captivating aspect.[6]

"His ability to sow so as reaping can occur later on in time and space is a trait of the intellectual. . . . Italo started many battles that are still open and need to be carried on . . . such as the Fora Project, which featured Antonio Cederna[7] as the catalyst and Luigi Petroselli[8] as the one who started its implementation. . . . Remaining faithful to Insolera's memory requires us to never give up finding whatever . . . lessens or might lessen the beauty and justice of our earth and society. . . . Then, like him we must convert complaint into rational indignation, and, by using simple terms devoid of any technicalities, show how we can act in order to correct mistakes or prevent threats."[9]

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[2] See Chapter Twenty-Four

[3] Pier Luigi Cervellati (Bologna, 1936), architect and urban planner. Member of Bologna's Municipal Board responsible for traffic, urban planning, and public and private construction (1964–80), contributed to the development of a rehabilitation project based on locating social houses across the historical centres in Bologna and Modena.

[4] See Chapter Twenty-Seven, note 3.

[5] Quotation drawn from A. Valentinelli, ed., *Italo Insolera fotografo* (Rome: Palombi, 2017).

[6] *Italo Insolera fotografo*; the exhibition held at the Museo di Roma in Trastevere (11 May 2017–3 September 2017) and at Naples' Faculty of Architecture (5–19 November 2018).

[7] For Cederna, refer to sub-chapter "Some Questions (and Answers)" above. See also Chapter Twenty, note 2.

[8] See Chapter Twenty-Six.

[9] From Edoardo Salzano as reported in *Italo Insolera fotografo*.

Vezio De Lucia[10] stresses the meaningfulness of the forty-year-long fellowship between Insolera and Cederna, and singles out their lasting, strong and undisputed relations with the environmental and cultural organizations, with citizen participation and protest: their ability to establish productive links between high culture and the truest energies of our society is their most important legacy.

[10] See Chapter Twenty-Seven, note 22.

MODERN ROME

BY ITALO INSOLERA[1]

Far more than building, investors buy and sell land, while the people do not have enough houses.
—Luigi Pianciani, mayor of Rome, April 1873

Until a single student cannot receive civil education in a healthy and suitable environment, financial concerns must imperatively give way to moral and intellectual concerns.
—Ernesto Nathan, mayor of Rome, December 1907

Rome's urban history wholly and solely coincides with the history of land profit, with its speculation extremes, its interests and culpable complicities.
—Giulio Carlo Argan, mayor of Rome, June 1978

We run the risk that in 10–20 years' time, we will lose what we have not lost for centuries. We cannot remain unresponsive to this plea for responsibility, mainly because, whenever a crisis hits, the city turns to its past in order to find new ways of speaking of its present and future.
—Luigi Petroselli, mayor of Rome, March 1981

[1] With Paolo Berdini as collaborator.

FOREWORD

The first edition of this book was published in 1962: some fifty years ago.[1] Therefore, this edition *From Napoleon to the Twenty-First Century* cannot be a mere update: many things happen during half a century.

On the one hand, knowledge and assessment of long-past years have changed: new documents have emerged from archives and relevant literature has not only increased, but also reflects evolving historical methods. On the other hand, the city itself at the onset of a new millennium appears bigger, more congested and polluted, and enormously vaster than fifty, one hundred, or two hundred years ago. We have become accustomed to considering the breach in the city wall gate of Porta Pia on 20 September 1870 as the starting date for the modern capital. We have decided that the new edition should be broadened to include not only recent years through the twenty-first century, but also to propose that modern Rome indeed was born two hundred years ago, and that it was Napoleon I who christened it. The French Revolution exudes far greater historical-cultural charisma than ministers and generals from a modest Savoy dynasty, uncertain whether to ally themselves with Garibaldi, certain they should regard Mazzini as an enemy.

It was Napoleon that signed the first decree for "Capital Rome" on 27 July 1811, quoted in the Introduction. The prefect of Rome was Camille de Tournon: we are not alone in regarding him as the first city planner of modern Rome. Similarly, the second city planner was cardinal François-Xavier de Mérode, during Pius IX's papacy. Through the various positions he held in the Holy See's administration, and partly on his own, he understood how this new "modern" city could be, and laid its foundations prior to his retirement in the Vatican on 20 September 1870 and his death four years later.

It may be surprising that in this book we also propose as the third city planner of modern Rome the less known and less resounding name of Virgilio Testa. From WWI to the 1960 Olympics, he was the technical-administrative-political head of many municipal bureaucracies. What de Tournon is to Napoleon, what de Mérode is to Pius IX, so Testa is to

[1] The various editions and reprints were published in 1963, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1974, 1976, 1978, 1983, 1992, 1993, 2001, 2004, 2007 and 2008.