

# Exploring Expressed Democratic Attempts in Space: Architecture and Landscape in Pier Paolo Pasolini

Riccardo Maria Balzarotti,  
Luca Maria Francesco Fabris

*ABSTRACT - This article explores the works of Pier Paolo Pasolini, focusing on the interplay between his artistic output and spatial themes like architecture and landscape, particularly as they reflect democratic values. Pasolini viewed space as a physical entity and a site for political, social, and cultural interaction. By examining locations such as Friuli and Casarsa della Delizia, Pasolini's youth environment, the paper delves into how these landscapes shaped his vision of democratic spaces. It also connects Pasolini's perspective to contemporary public spaces, which, like his poetics, emphasize the role of dissent in democracy. The article further investigates how modern urban developments may limit this potential for democratic engagement by prioritizing aesthetic and commercial objectives over historical and social memory. Additionally, Pasolini's involvement in education and local politics illustrates how spaces like schools and civic centers become arenas for resistance and public discourse. Ultimately, the essay argues that spaces become truly democratic when they foster active engagement and dissent, as reflected in Pasolini's works and the symbolic power of place.*

---

**Keywords:** democratic space; Pasolini; public architecture; school; urban development

---

The article focuses on the works of Pier Paolo Pasolini and examines the relationship between his artistic expressions and spatial and environmental themes, such as architecture and landscape. Specifically, it analyses how Pasolini conceived space as a human and social representation. The essay

explores Pasolini's art through a novel connection between his creative output, thoughts, and the territorial and landscape contexts he described, depicted, and perceived. Pasolini gave particular attention to the Friulian locations, especially Casarsa della Delizia in the province of Pordenone (northeast of Italy), where he had deep ties with his mother and spent the intense years of World War II, and its immediately subsequent years, from 1943 to 1949. From these early years, Pasolini's commitment to promoting a democratic vision of space became evident. A space that he reads not only as a physical entity but also as a field of political, social, and cultural interaction.

Pasolini's work is one of the most thoroughly studied in contemporary Italian culture, with many publications covering multiple themes. This body of research saw renewed interest during the centenary of his birth in 2022, with comprehensive reprints and anthologies. In Pasolini's work, landscape and architecture are constant elements of his poetics, worldview, and representation of contemporary society. However, despite numerous studies that address these themes episodically, focusing on specific and limited topics, a systematic reflection examining the relationship between space, architecture, and democracy in Pasolini's work in a comprehensive manner is still lacking.

Several studies delve deeply into the Roman periphery,<sup>1</sup> while others concentrate on the architecture represented in individual works<sup>2</sup> or the relationship with specific geographical areas.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, there is a gap in research that considers categories of thought related to space across the many architectures and landscapes that populated Pasolini's life and work, from the rural landscapes of Friuli that shaped his youth to his move to the Roman peripheries and finally to his discovery of the Third World through his travels and documentaries in India, the Middle East, and Africa. In this context, the places connected to Pasolini's youth offer a fertile ground for exploring the idea of democratic space, drawing insights from his discourse – which, in contemporary terms, we could describe as “pre-multimedia” – on how to conceptualize space about the broad concept of democracy.

## THE DEMOCRATIC SPACE AS A PLACE OF DISSENT

In Marie Warsh' monograph, *Central Park's Adventure-Style Playgrounds: Renewal of a Midcentury Legacy* (2019),<sup>4</sup> five intriguing analyses of public playgrounds in Central Park, New York, are offered, emphasizing their role as public spaces. The case of Costantino Nivola's work, located in the square in front of the Stephen Wise Towers, is fascinating. This 1964 installation, consisting of eighteen concrete horse-shaped sculptures, became a central element of children's play activities in the local community. However, in 2021, the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), the owner of the square, decided to remove the sculptures during restoration work, sparking an online outcry and subsequent debate among residents

and playground users. The NYCHA quickly assured that the removal was temporary, even though the removal damaged the sculptures. After the newly restored sculptures were reinstated, they reclaimed their place in the square's physical space and the community's cultural memory, which had enjoyed this public and relational space for over fifty years.

While this incident may appear to be a minor local quarrel, it holds a more profound significance. The debate surrounding the square revealed a rich cultural and historical layering that allowed the community to develop a sense of belonging and resistance. This example vividly demonstrates how a public space can catalyze democratic mobilization, especially when it challenges the authority of powers seeking to alter its use or meaning. Public space, as a site of social interaction, thus plays a central role in the political life of a community. This interpretation adds a higher significance level to critical insights about public space that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s through seminal publications that defined "public space" as a relational place.

Building on the reflections of thinkers like Jane Jacobs<sup>5</sup> and Jan Gehl<sup>6</sup> on the relational qualities of streets and squares, it becomes evident that the meaningfulness of interactions in public spaces must also be considered. Public spaces must foster dialectical relationships and dialogue between citizens, sustaining the community's political life. From this perspective, public space becomes genuinely democratic only when it encourages active interaction and critical participation, particularly in its capacity to catalyze or express dissent, as is often observed in Western-style democracies. This case illustrates how public spaces can be more than just physical locations; they can act as platforms for civic engagement, where citizens express their values, contest authority, and claim their right to the city.

## ARCHITECTURE AND DISSENT IN COLLECTIVE MEMORY

In Casarsa della Delizia, a small town in the province of Pordenone, stands the Loggia of San Giovanni, a civic structure located in the main square, piazza Vittoria (Fig. 1). This small gothic loggia, adorned with Venetian-style windows and dating back to the fourteenth century, once served as a meeting place for civic debates and a marketplace. It functioned as the seat of the local government until the mid-nineteenth century, after which its political role diminished. However, this space is deeply tied to Pier Paolo Pasolini's political activity during his years in Casarsa, where he served as the secretary of the local Italian Communist Party. In the area under the loggia, Pasolini posted political manifestos and community news written in Italian and Friulian. Some of these original writings are now preserved in the Pier Paolo Pasolini Study Centre archive in Casarsa. Thus, the loggia became a symbol of active political participation and dissent, where alternative voices to established power could be physically and symbolically expressed in the heart of the community.



Figure 1. The recently restored Loggia of San Giovanni in Casarsa. The requalification of the outdoor spaces surrounding the loggia is planned for next year.

Pasolini, well-acquainted with the loggia, described the building in his novel *Romans*: “At the back of the little loggia with its two-pointed arches, a beggar lay on the worn marble floor: it was the only patch of shade, grey and impalpable.”<sup>7</sup> (Fig. 2.) Here, Pasolini shifts focus away from the physical description of the space, centering instead on its temporary inhabitant. This outcast finds refuge in the loggia, illustrating the space as a repository of historical memory, a site for dissent, and a shelter for the marginalized. The Loggia of San Giovanni embodies a triad of functions crucial to the concept of democratic space. Though its civic and political functions have long since faded, the loggia remains a central feature of San Giovanni di Casarsa. The building is well preserved, having recently been renovated, and plans for further improvements to the surrounding areas are underway. However, its contemporary presence, stripped of civic function, raises an important question: Is the mere preservation of a place and its embodied memory enough to maintain its status as a democratic space?

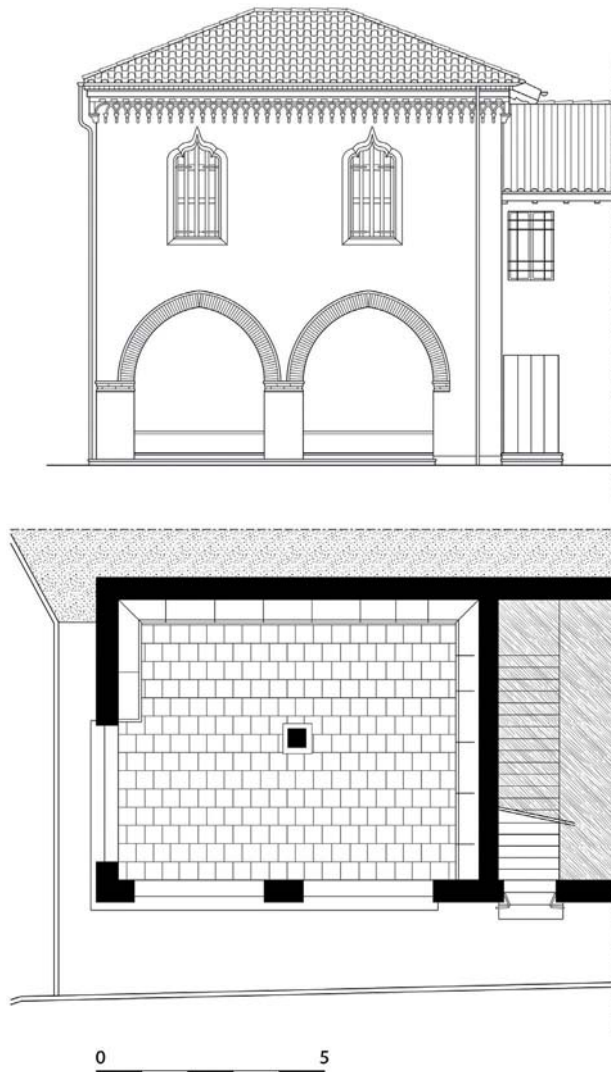


Figure 2. The ground floor plan and main elevation of the Loggia of San Giovanni in Casarsa are in their current state.

Or is a continuous political and social reactivation necessary to retain its original value, albeit in new, dynamic, and evolving forms?

This case, much like the earlier example of Nivola's square, invites reflection on how the memory of spaces affects their democratic function over time. The physical preservation of a building can protect its history, but without cultural and social engagement, the space risks losing its democratic potential. The Loggia of San Giovanni is not only a space tied to numerous collective memories – its medieval origins as the central civic location, Pasolini's political activism frame, and a place where revolts occurred during local movements in 1948<sup>8</sup> – but also represents a broader challenge in how democratic spaces survive through time. Although the loggia is open, accessible, and rich in historical significance, its current use does not stimulate public debate or serve any meaningful civic function.



In this context, concepts like openness and public use, while significant, do not suffice to classify a space as genuinely democratic. What is missing is the active, living memory that engages with the present (Fig. 3). Instead, the memory that prevails is distant, focused on the building's medieval past, which fosters a superficial mythification of the space. The loggia's front façade is aesthetically appealing, yet its rear is modest and unremarkable, marked by technical installations. This aestheticization, muting the building's historical conflicts and aligning it with contemporary notions of decorum, neutralizes its potential for dissent and limits its capacity to serve as a democratic space in the present:

Capitalism is now at the center of a great internal revolution: it is evolving, in a revolutionary way, into neo-capitalism. Faced with this revolutionary, progressive, and unifying neo-capitalism, one experiences unprecedented world unity. [...] Nationalisms tend to be levelled by this naturally international neo-capitalism shortly. Thus, the unity of the world (now only faintly perceptible) will become a concrete unity of culture, social forms, goods, and consumption.<sup>9</sup>

The development of Western cities under late capitalism, as seen in urban projects like CityLife Park or the Biblioteca degli Alberi [Library of Trees] in Porta Nuova District in Milan, exemplifies an effort to neutralize dissent by conforming to a *unità del mondo* [unity of the world] ideology. These spaces, while theoretically accessible to all and designed to foster social interactions, often reflect the broader patterns of globalized urbanism. They are marked by high-quality architectural design, environmental sustainability practices, and a standardized aesthetic common to many Western cities. However, the ambiguity of these public spaces lies in their creation and initial management by private actors, raising questions about their true public nature.

Despite their openness and modern design, these spaces are often detached from historical memory and geared toward a contemporary ideal of leisure and consumerism, making it difficult to imagine them as places for civil dissent.

The lack of connection to local histories and their alignment with international development models creates a sense of neutrality, which limits their potential as democratic forums for protest or alternative expressions. As they embody the logic of global capitalism, these spaces contribute to a muted public sphere, minimizing the potential for critical discourse and dissent. In this context, these urban spaces offer freedom and access. Nevertheless, their very design and purpose constrain the types of interactions and expressions that can occur, particularly those that challenge the status quo. The privatized nature of their governance, combined with their role in sustaining a globalized, capitalist mode of urban development, places them in opposition to the idea of public spaces as arenas for active civic engagement and dissent.



Figure 3. The Loggia of San Giovanni in one of Silvia Rocchi's panels from the graphic novel she authored and exhibited, *Non possiamo che andare avanti* [We Can Only Move Forwards] (2024), freely inspired by Pier Paolo Pasolini's novel *Il sogno di una cosa* (1962). Rocchi vividly captures the atmosphere during the Friulian agricultural workers' days of protests described by Pasolini.

## THE RUIN AS A SPEAKING OBJECT

The theme of the vocalicity of a building or public space conceptually connects to another recurring theme, that of ruin. The ruin represents a “speaking sign,” which, even in its state of decay – contrary to the completeness and aesthetic of a restored historical building, but mute, like the Loggia di San Giovanni – continues to convey an underlying meaning and trace a path. As has been noted, this aspect is evident in the poem *Disperata Vitalità* [desperate vitality] where, referring to the *bestione papalino*, [Vatican beast] a ruined castle that symbolically represents Pasolini himself, one can read the following passage:

Death is not  
in the inability to communicate  
but in the inability to be understood anymore.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, the idea of death without resurrection, understood as the impossibility of renewing a cycle or reiterating a meaning – a recurring theme in

Pasolini's later works – finds its metaphorical expression in a ruined castle but is quickly reconsidered outside the metaphor. For Pasolini, the value of tradition and vernacular culture encapsulates this concept. The expressive power of even the most straightforward and anonymous objects indicates a resistance against capitalism's homogenization and destructive advance. This idea applies to ruin, especially when contrasted with a restored historical artifact, restructured and emptied of its meanings, provided that the ruin can still be understood. In this sense, his view on the preservation, safeguarding, and protection of all architectures and landscapes should not be interpreted as "sterile and immobilizing nostalgia"<sup>11</sup> but rather as the preservation of the capacity of things to cyclically reiterate their meaning and reaffirm the values connected to them, values which, in this sense, are democratic.

This road we walk on, with its uneven and ancient pavement, is nothing, almost nothing – it is a humble thing. It cannot even be compared to certain works of art, magnificent and authored, from the Italian tradition. Yet, I believe that this modest little road, so humble, should be defended with the same tenacity, goodwill, and rigor with which one would defend a great work of art by a renowned artist.<sup>12</sup>

This concept, which identifies the recovery of the past and tradition as a crucial element, updated and integrated into the present as the foundation of a democratic process, also finds expression in the 1970 film *Appunti per un'Orestiade africana*. The documentary, filmed as a series of notes or collected fragments, is a travel diary documenting the hypothetical intention to shoot a version of the Aeschylus' *Oresteia* reimagined in the African context. At the heart of the work is an analogy between the democratization process taking place in Africa and the narrative of Orestes, who, after killing his mother, is judged by a tribunal of his peers – constituted in the Areopagus, the first symbolic form of democracy in the Athenian sense:

All educated people agree [...] that archaic civilization – superficially called folklore – must not be forgotten, despised and betrayed. However, it must be taken up within the new civilization, integrating the latter and making it specific, concrete, and historical. The terrible and fantastic divinities of African prehistory must undergo the same process as the Erinyes: to become Eumenides.<sup>13</sup>

Democratic space is therefore born from the "rationalization" of the archaic or an updated reading of its past, its history, and its tradition, and finds its place in the model where debate, dialectical conflict, and dissent are the very foundation of the reason why that space exists: the court. Pasolini identified a compelling parallel between Orestes' "discovery" of democracy and the condition of many African states that had gained independence in the 1960s and 1970s. His location scouting became



a documentary capturing this transformation, consistently focusing the camera on the stark dualism between the presence of an archaic culture (dances, traditional costumes, rural areas) and the onset of modernity (cities, industries, schools). The school itself embodies this dialectical tension between democratic culture and modernity. The Temple of Apollo, the locus of reason toward which Orestes moves, is identified by Pasolini in the university complex of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. This institution, he observes, “[...] when seen from a distance, it immediately reveals unmistakable signs of resembling the typical Anglo-Saxon, neo-capitalist universities.”<sup>14</sup>

Regarding the schools, another especially noteworthy sequence centers on the education theme. Pasolini interviews a group of African students at Sapienza University in Rome, arranged in a classroom as if seated in a parliamentary assembly. He engages them in a discussion, soliciting their perspectives on his ideas for the film, the Orestes-Africa parallel, and the conditions of change across the African continent. The entire sequence takes the form of an open debate that is often highly critical of Pasolini’s points of view. It represents the enacting of the democratic process. This is a meta-dialogue that, at its core, embodies the concept of education as a staged representation of the democratic process itself. The setting – a university lecture hall – functions as a backdrop or scenography, closely resembling a parliamentary assembly or, in keeping with the Oresteia theme, the courtroom jury deliberations.

## EDUCATION AS A SPACE OF DISSENT

During Pasolini’s years in Friuli, alongside his political fervor and activism in the Italian Communist Party, he engaged in pedagogical work, which, after World War II, found its place in the local middle school in Valvasone:

I teach, and I have big plans (a theatre and countless extracurricular activities: the Superintendent has decided to make the school in Valvasone a sort of experimental school). I am also very involved in politics; as you know, I am the secretary of the San Giovanni section, which keeps me quite busy with conferences, meetings, wall newspapers, congresses, and arguments with the local priests who slander me from the pulpits. For me, believing in communism is something significant.<sup>15</sup>

During the war, however, the teaching theme took on an alternative form in a place that held significant symbolic value despite its small size. This place was the Casello di Versutta (Fig. 4), a small masonry tool shed with two tiny windows and a gabled roof, located in the fields in the district that housed Pasolini’s family during the most intense phase of the bombings on Casarsa. Pasolini used this modest space as an informal school. Here, he taught the children of farmers who, due to the bombings, struggled to reach



Figure 4. Photograph of the Casello di Versuta in 1991. This picture is probably the source of Paolo de Rocco's project drawings. Currently, the casello lies on private property and accessing it is difficult. The Municipality of Casarsa and the Centro Studi Pasolini have been engaged in long-standing negotiations for its acquisition, with recent developments appearing optimistic for the likelihood of a successful outcome.

schools in nearby towns. Later, he and others founded the “Academiuta di Lenga Furlana,” [Academy of Friulian Language] a small institution dedicated to transmitting and teaching poetry in Friulian. In this context, the democratic experience of the place resides in the convenience of providing an essential service to a segment of the population that, due to the war, struggled to access formal education. Dissent is a cultural and pedagogical reaction to the war: the school becomes a space of resistance, where forms of opposition to discrimination and social marginalization develop.

This connection between education and dissent is fascinating in defining the public school as a democratic space. Education promotes critical awareness and political participation, and historically, schools and universities have represented privileged spaces for youth contestation. Numerous examples of student occupations in universities and public spaces can be cited from recent times, both in Western democracies

and in dictatorships, demonstrating how the physical space of education often becomes the center of political demonstrations and social claims. Therefore, the school is not only a building where knowledge transmission takes place but also a space of dissent, where dialectical relationships between teachers and students argue and where youth can express opposition to the existing social and political system. Unsurprisingly, Pasolini combined political activity and teaching, represented by the Loggia of San Giovanni sites and the Casello di Versutta. The role of the school as a space of dissent reflects the capacity of educational spaces to become incubators of social change and catalysts of political protest. If the public open space is where democracy must manifest itself in dissent, the school is the public building where the democratic spirit forms. (Fig. 5.)

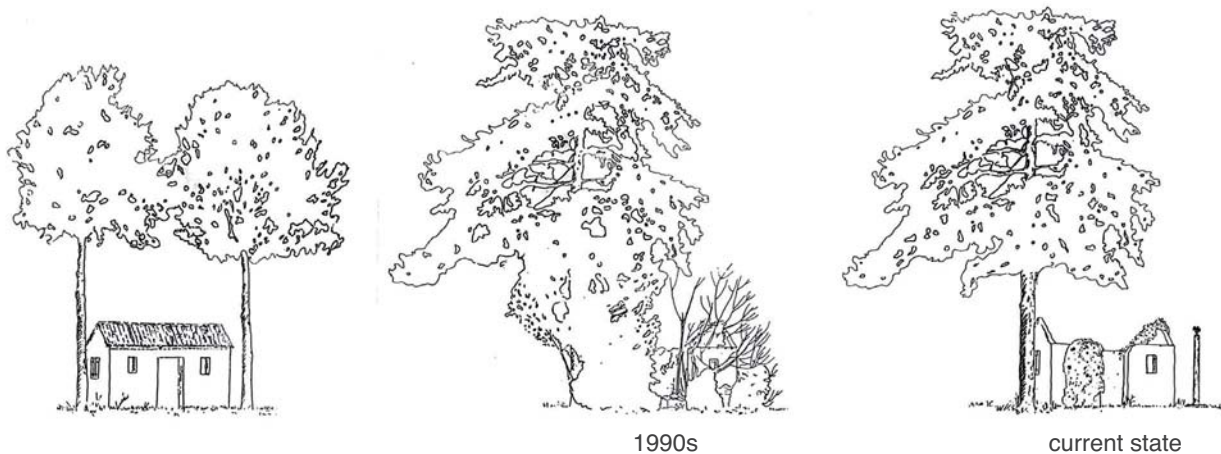


Figure 5. Drawings of the Casello di Versutta as part of the recovery and restoration of the area by architect Paolo de Rocco. The casello is depicted in its original condition (on the left, 1950s), in its state at the time of the project’s drafting (center), and in the proposed restoration plan (on the right, 1995).

### THE DEMOCRATIC SPACE AND THE CONCEPT OF “EMPTY PLACE”

After considering the democratic space as a site of dissent where memory merges with contemporary debate, it is helpful to analyze how “empty place” develops in Teresa Hoskyns’ work, *The Empty Place: Democracy and Public Space* (2014).<sup>16</sup> Hoskyns draws on Claude Lefort’s notion that democracy is an “empty place of power”; this interpretation refers to the idea that, in a true democracy, power is not permanently detained by a single individual, group, or entity. Instead, power is fundamentally contested and never established or claimed definitively. This “emptiness” ensures that authority remains temporary, continuously evolving, and subject to debate and change.

Starting from this premise and beginning the analysis with the classical Greek world – such as the court of Orestes – Hoskyns explores the idea

that democratic space should be read as an “empty” space in the most productive sense of the term: an open place, not determined by specific uses or centralized control but rather predisposed to the unforeseen, to contestation and dissent. This “empty” space becomes the essential condition for democracy, as it provides an open ground for the expression of multiple and conflicting voices without predefining who has the right to speak or act in a non-hierarchical, dynamic, and temporally mutable manner. Space is democratic when it not only constrains dissent but welcomes and nourishes it, serving as a stage for conflict and political negotiation.

Connecting this notion to the previously mentioned Pasolinian places, we can see how spaces such as squares, schools, and rural areas can be interpreted as “empty” democratic spaces, where uncertainty and indeterminacy allow for the manifestation of dissent and the construction of a political community. For example, the Loggia of San Giovanni in Casarsa can be seen as one of these “empty” places where the original function is not determinative. Still, instead, the place’s ability to reactivate by political and social practices renders it – at least potentially – a democratic space. The struggle for the preservation of the square in front of the Stephen Wise Tower in Nivola, New York, as well as student occupations in public and university spaces, fully aligns with this conception of democratic space as a place of possibility, a place that exists in its openness to dissent and the negotiation of meanings and uses.

## THE LAST ELEMENT

In Casarsa, we can count one last element corresponding to the concept we have outlined of democratic space: the tomb of Pier Paolo Pasolini (Fig. 6). At the behest of his mother, Susanna Colussi Pasolini, the project was entrusted to Gino Valle (1923–2003), one of the greatest Italian architects who shared the artist’s Friulian origins and was part, together with other intellectuals from Friuli, of his circle of friends. Valle’s project resumes, through three minimal elements, the tragic essence of being a poet, which Pasolini was mainly during his Casarsa period. Inside the city cemetery, the Municipal Administration allowed a small strip of land for the burial of the body leaning against the boundary wall. This element becomes, perhaps completely involuntarily, emblematic. Pasolini is permanently, even after death, a personality who places himself at the limit, on the edge of a space, be it ideal or real, that has yet to find a solution but is open, public, and above all, belongs to everyone. It is democratic.

Valle<sup>17</sup> uses the cemetery wall as a barrier that the laurel, an essence attributed to poetry since antiquity, can easily overcome. At the evergreen tree foot, Valle places a square tombstone bearing only the name of the poet from Casarsa. Along an invisible median, a straight line branches off from here, becoming a real obstacle almost hidden in the gravel of the



cemetery avenue. A long Piasentina stone marks the void and suddenly claims a higher meaning simultaneously with denunciation. Thanatos, Eros, and Poiesis unite and give life to the tragedy, that ancient Greek lyric song, that poetry that Pasolini gave us and that still, fifty years after his tragic death, screams at us the desperate need to use “empty spaces” to tell life.

## CONCLUSION

Therefore, the “empty place” concept refers not solely to a physical void but also to an institutional and symbolic void that allows for new democratic practices. In this sense, democratic space can accommodate plurality, contestation, and transformation. It is not a space filled with fixed symbols or predetermined uses but a dynamic place where relationships between individuals, memories, and institutions are constructed and transformed through participation and dialectic – also conflictual.

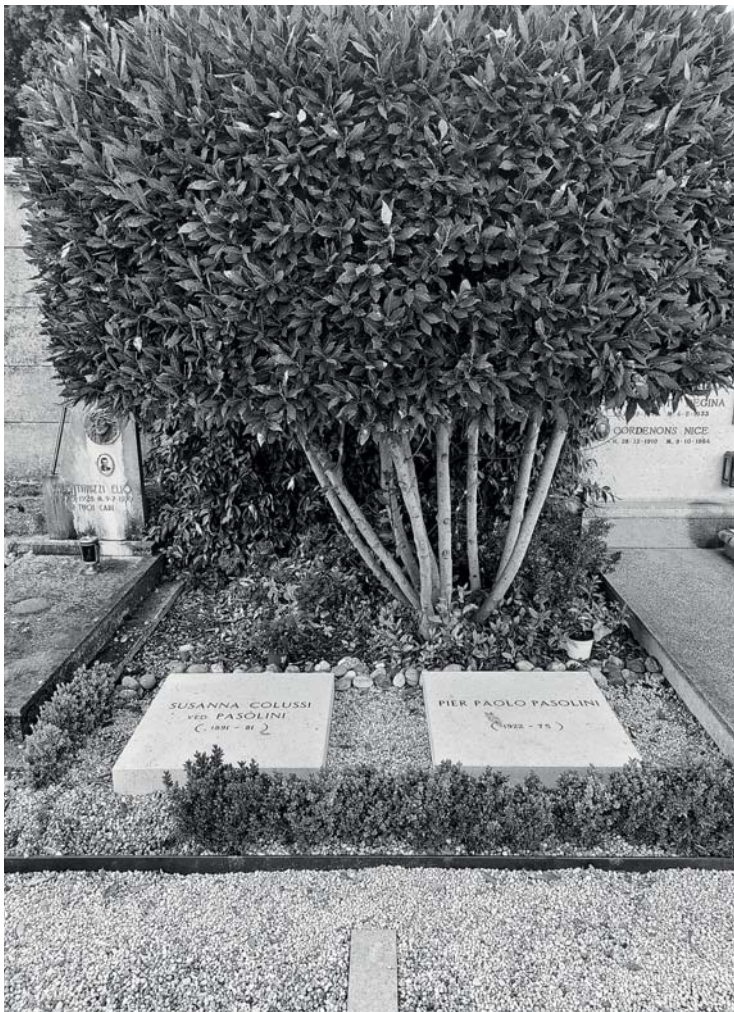


Figure 6. The Pasolini tomb monument. Designed by architect Gino Valle, the simple composition of a square and a line, inspired by minimal art, has a laurel plant – a symbol of heroism – as a backdrop. Today, the tombstone is accompanied by the one of his mother.



## Notes

1. John D. Rhodes, *Stupendous, Miserable City: Pasolini's Rome* (Minneapolis MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); Gregory Smith, *Urban Narratives and the Spaces of Rome: Pier Paolo Pasolini and the City* (Abingdon, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2022).
2. Vittorio Prina, *Pier Paolo Pasolini, Teorema: I Luoghi: paesaggio e architettura* (Santarcangelo di Romagna, It.: Maggioli, 2010).
3. Simone Chiani, *Tuscia in Pasolini: Studio onnicomprensivo di un rapporto articolato* (Bologna, It.: Edizioni Sette Città, 2022).
4. Marie Warsh, *Central Park's Adventure-Style Playgrounds: Renewal of a Midcentury Legacy* (Louisiana MO, USA: Louisiana State University Press, 2019).
5. Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961).
6. Jan Gehl, *Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space*, trans. Jo Koch (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987; or Danish ed., 1980).
7. Pier Paolo Pasolini, "Romans," in *Romanzi e racconti*, ed. W. Siti and Silvia De Laude, vol. I, "I Meridiani" (Milan: Mondadori, 1998), 249 (trans. by the authors). Original text: "In fondo alla loggetta coi suoi due archi a sesto acuto, era disteso un mendicante, sul pavimento consumato di marmo: era l'unica zona d'ombra, grigia e impalpabile."
8. Pier Paolo Pasolini, "Il sogno di una cosa," in *Romanzi e racconti*, ed. Walter Siti and Silvia De Laude, vol. II, "I Meridiani" (Mondadori, 1998), 103. The passage, taken from the cited novel, describes the failure of the peasant revolt in 1948 and is set in the square in front of the Loggia di San Giovanni: "From the schools to the square, there was chaos, and no one understood what was happening on the other side. The workers numbered three or four hundred, but there were also many agents. The struggle was fiercest before the Malacart gate, spreading in all directions. [...] others pushed up along the sheer walls of the enormous gothic church built fifty years earlier, through the narrow path that led, precisely, between the church and the loggia, to the sacristy, and to the priests' cinema [...]" (Trans. by the authors.) Or. text: "Tutta la strada, dalle scuole alla piazza, era in subbuglio, e nessuno capiva quello che accadeva dall'altra parte. Gli operai erano tre o quattro centinaia, ma anche gli agenti erano molti. La lotta era più accanita davanti al cancello di Malacart, e da lì si propagava da tutte le parti. [...] altri si spingevano su, lungo le pareti a strapiombo dell'enorme chiesa in stile gotico costruita cinquant'anni prima, per la stradina che conduceva, appunto, tra la chiesa e la loggia, alla sagrestia, e al cinema dei preti [...]."
9. Pier Paolo Pasolini, "Quasi un testamento," interview by Peter Dragadze, *Gente*, November 17, 1975, 25, in *Saggi sulla politica e sulla società*, ed. Walter Siti and Silvia De Laude, "I Meridiani" (Milan: Mondadori, 1999), 861 (trans. by the authors). Or. text: "Il capitalismo è oggi il protagonista di una grande rivoluzione interna: esso sta evolvendosi, rivoluzionariamente, in neocapitalismo. Davanti a questo neocapitalismo rivoluzionario, progressista e unificatore si prova un inaudito sentimento (senza precedenti) di unità del mondo. [...] E infatti i nazionalismi tendono, in un prossimo futuro, a essere livellati da questo neocapitalismo naturalmente internazionale. Sicché l'unità del mondo (ora appena intuibile) sarà un'unità effettiva di cultura, di forme sociali, di beni e di consumi."
10. See these considerations about the poem in Gianni Biondillo, *Pasolini. Il corpo della città* (Bologna, It.: Guanda, 2001), 78 (trans. by the authors). Or. text: "La morte non è nel non poter comunicare ma nel non poter più essere compresi."
11. Biondillo, *Pasolini*, 77.
12. This quotation is part of the documentary *Pasolini e la forma della città*, (RAI - Italian Public Television, July 7, 1974 – trans. by the authors). Or. text: "Questa strada per cui camminiamo, con questo selciato sconnesso e antico, non è niente, non è quasi niente, è un'umile cosa. Non si può nemmeno confrontare con certe opere d'arte, d'autore, stupende, della tradizione italiana, eppure io penso che questa stradina da niente, così umile, sia da difendere con lo stesso accanimento, con la stessa buona volontà, con lo stesso rigore con cui si difende un'opera d'arte di un grande autore."
13. Pier Paolo Pasolini, "Nota per l'ambientazione dell'Orestide in Africa," in *Per il cinema*, ed. Walter Siti and Franco Zabagli, vol. I, "I Meridiani" (Milan: Mondadori, 2001), 1200 (trans. by the authors). Or. text: "Tutte le persone avanzate sono d'accordo [...] sul fatto che la civiltà arcaica – detta superficialmente folclore – non deve essere dimenticata, disprezzata e tradita. Ma deve

essere assunta all'interno della civiltà nuova, integrando quest'ultima, e rendendola specifica, concreta, storica. Le terribili e fantastiche divinità della Preistoria africana devono subire lo stesso processo delle Erinni: diventare Eumenidi.”

14. Siti and Zabagli, eds., *Per il cinema*, 1190 (trans. by the authors). Or. text: “[...] vista da lontano, subito mostra inconfondibili segni di assomigliare alle tipiche università anglosassoni.”

15. Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Lettere, 1940–1954*, ed. Nico Naldini (Turin, It.: Einaudi, 1986), 353 (trans. by the authors), from a letter by Pasolini to Laura Betti, sent from Casarsa in 1949. Or. text: “Faccio scuola, ho grandi programmi (un teatro e un'infinità di faccende para-scolastiche: il Provveditore ha deciso di fare della scuola di Valvasone una specie di scuola sperimentale). Lavoro molto anche in campo politico; come sai sono segretario della sez. di San Giovanni, e ciò mi impegna molto, con conferenze, riunioni, giornali murali, congressi e polemiche coi preti della zona che mi calunniano dagli altari. Per me il credere nel comunismo è una gran cosa.”

16. Teresa Hoskyns, *The Empty Place: Democracy and Public Space* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2014). [See also Maurizio Sabini's book review of this volume, included in this issue of the journal – Ed.].

17. See the monograph on Gino Valle and his projects: Pierre-Alain Croset and Luka Skansi, *Gino Valle (1923–2003)* (Milan: Electa, 2010) [See also Kenneth Frampton's book review of this volume, included in *The Plan Journal* 4, no. 1 (2019): 223–26.

## Acknowledgments

The authors conducted the work jointly. In this context, sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 are attributed to Riccardo Maria Balzarotti, while the introduction, and sections 5 and 6 are attributed to Luca Maria Francesco Fabris. Both authors wrote the conclusion. Riccardo M. Balzarotti has participated as co-author within the framework of the doctoral research project “Architecture, Territory, and Landscape in the Work of Pier Paolo Pasolini”, conducted at the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies of the Politecnico di Milano within the AUID doctoral school and funded by the Italian National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR - 118 PC Research Field).

## Credits

Figures 1 and 6: photos by © Luca Maria Francesco Fabris (2024).

Figure 2: redrawn by © Riccardo Maria Balzarotti, based on archival sources from the Municipality of Casarsa della Delizia (2024).

Figure 3: panel from *Non possiamo che andare avanti* [We Can Only Move Forwards] by © Silvia Rocchi (2024). Courtesy of Silvia Rocchi, Centro Studi Pier Paolo Pasolini Casarsa della Delizia, and Palazzo del Fumetto.

Figure 4: photo by © Giovanni Castellarin (1991). Courtesy of Castellarin's family and heirs.

Figure 5: drawings by © Paolo de Rocco (1995). Courtesy of the Technical Office of the Municipality of Casarsa's archive.

**Riccardo Maria Balzarotti** graduated in architecture at Politecnico di Milano. He is currently a PhD candidate with the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies at the Politecnico di Milano. His research focuses on the relationship between the work of Pier Paolo Pasolini and architecture, landscape, and territories. He is a Teaching Assistant for various technology classes at the Politecnico di Milano. In 2012, he established the architecture firm AOUMM (with Luca Astorri, Rossella Locatelli, and Matteo Poli). E-mail: riccardomaria.balzarotti@polimi.it

**Luca Maria Francesco Fabris** holds a degree in architecture, a PhD in environmental technology and a master's in urban planning and environment. He is a Politecnico di Milano Professor of Architectural Technology. The author of several articles and books, Fabris has published on international magazines such as *The Plan Journal* and *ABITARE*. As a visiting professor at universities around the world and a Distinguished Expert at BUCEA (北京建筑大学特聘专家), he focuses on the contemporary built environment, sustainability, landscape issues, and new technologies. E-mail: lucamariafrancesco.fabris@polimi.it