

Coordinates for a better world¹: squares and urban culture in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance

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Abstract

In 1327, the remote Tuscan town of Massa Marittima undertook two major urban initiatives: the creation of a new square within the existing city and the development of a new expansion area. The simultaneity of both projects, their occurrence in the same city and under the same promoters, highlights, even in urban planning, the diversity of medieval culture: the plasticity of space, the fluidity of building alignments, and the perspectival sequences of viewpoints in the square contrast with the regularity and ascetic orthogonality of the grid in the new expansion. These might seem like opposing worlds—two different ways of making a city or two cases separated by time and space. Beyond merely observing the formal contrast and contemplating their characteristics, the transformations in Massa Marittima allow us to place the phenomenon of squares within the broader context of medieval urbanism, connecting the nature of urban forms with the processes and interactions underlying them. In art history—and by extension, in architecture and urbanism—it is common to consider that certain forms have a specific origin and later spread to other places, and that certain works can only be explained by the influence they received from others. The underlying assumption is that certain locations lacked the culture and knowledge necessary to produce works with such characteristics on their own. Another assumption is that the artistic culture of a given place or region was highly monolithic, and therefore only capable of producing works with shared traits—traits that could only change in response to strong stimuli: someone from outside, a powerful external influence, or a new political and/or economic power capable of driving new works.

Keywords: Medieval Square, Renaissance Square, Massa Marittima.

I would like to restore to man of the past, and specially the poor of the past, the gift of theory.(Hobsbawm, 1997: 178-85)

1. In 1327, a remote town² in Tuscany, Massa Marittima, started two major urban operations: opening a square within the existing town and building a new urbanized development area. The simultaneity of both processes and their coincidence in the same city backed by the same promoters illustrates the diversity of medieval culture in that it encompassed town planning: the plasticity of space, the fluidity of the building alignments and the sequences of views in the square contrast with the regularity and the ascetical orthogonality of the grid of the new developed area. They would have seemed like two opposing worlds, two different ways of building a city or two cases distant in time and space. In addition to acknowledging the formal contrast and to examining its characteristics, the transformations that Massa Marittima underwent allow the inclusion of the squares' phenomenon in the scope of medieval town planning, combining the nature of urban forms with the processes and interactions that underlie it. In art history – and, by extension, in the history of architecture and urbanism – it is commonly considered that certain forms have an origin and that they subsequently expand to other places, and that particular works can only be explained due to the influence they received from others. The assumption is that certain places lacked the culture and the knowledge that would allow the emergence of works with certain characteristics. There is also another premise: that the artistic culture of a specific place or region was strongly monolithic, therefore producing works with common features that could only be changed as a result of strong pressure: someone from the outside, a strong external influence, and/or a new political or economic power capable of driving new works. However, what one notes in Massa Marittima is the existence of an urban culture capable of simultaneously using different ways of making a city, denoting both a clear command of the expressive means and of the combination of distinct elements. Moreover, (i) the regularity and the orthogonality of medieval layouts were not exclusive to planned cities built on flat ground, nor the consequence of a strong urban power, and (ii) irregularity was not a sign of backwardness and/or resistance (Castelnuovo; Ginzburg, 281-352, especially pp. 305-326) to the regular forms and winds of modernity that blew³ from the fifteenth century onwards, nor due to the absence of transformative capacity. This is because, in this case, the strength of the local government and its drive for change were much more important and decisive in the reconfiguration of the irregularly shaped square than in the new regular expansion⁴.

2. Currently, a square is a kind of space that, in its many forms and situations, has a common meaning in Western urban culture. However, how did the concept underlying it evolve? The idea of square that Western urban culture accepts as common, from antiquity to modern times, has, however, several diverse formal and spatial features that lead to the following question: to what extent are we dealing with a strict typological change of forms, uses and situations? Or rather, does it mean a change of concepts? And how did these mutations manifest themselves in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance? At the same time, the square as a place emerged as a geographical setting in the morphological structure of the city, also playing an urban and social role which, incidentally, has also changed over the last thousand years.

In the twentieth century, Pierre Lavedan and Enrico Guidoni proposed two definitions of square. The former asked three questions that were recurrent in his work between 1926 and 1982⁵: (1) what shape does a square have? (2) is it open or closed? and (3) what sort of buildings define it⁶? The author departed from these questions to offer a clearer definition, stating that *L'expression la plus parfaite de l'urbanisme classique celui qui, fidèle à Alberti, joint voluptas à commoditas, nous est donné par la série des Places Royales*⁷. In other words, the French *place royale* emerges as the culmination of the evolutionary process that Lavedan traced back to ancient Greece and then successively through Roman times, the medieval city and the classical ideals of Italian Renaissance that were put into practice in France from the seventeenth century onwards⁸. The square is thus defined as a quadrilateral space (square or rectangular in shape), surrounded by buildings (on three or four sides), of an institutional nature and with individual architectural design⁹.

The undeniable importance of the *corpus* prepared by Lavedan around urban forms and the nature of his approach centred on the history of the morphology of cities¹⁰, denote, nowadays, the boundaries of a history of town planning based on conventional parameters derived from art history¹¹ that have long been criticized. The urban form perceived as an individualized object resulting from a specifically designed project with its own distinct shape, with a formal coherence and unity deriving from its configuration and from the design of the buildings that define it reveal, to some extent, the limited, outdated nature of Lavedan's approach¹².

Some decades later, Enrico Guidoni also advanced an explicit definition of square: "Storicamente la piazza è definibile come uno spazio di uso pubblico e di significativa qualità architettonica e urbanistica, convergenza (o baricentro) di un determinato territorio urbano. L'unicità della piazza rispetto all'insediamento e al territorio trae la sua origine dalla comunità di villaggio: lo spazio centrale è il luogo sacro alle cerimonie e a tutte le principali attività collettive, di convergenza dei percorsi territoriali, della simbolica centralità della comunità rispetto al mondo" (Guidoni, 1992: 51-52).

Thus, square means size, centrality, regularity of forms, architectural quality, unitary image, institutional presence, and a privileged area for civic events¹³. More explicit in its enunciation, Guidoni's conceptual formulation is more open in substance, as the assumption of a new point of view, a different tradition of historical studies and distinct chronological latitude underlie it. Whereas Lavedan takes the French *place royale* of the seventeen and eighteenth centuries as his starting and finishing point, Guidoni discusses the evolution of the Italian historical square throughout medieval and modern times, connecting it both to the permanence of roman antiquity and to the urban reformulations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Both stances are based on the premise that the square is (i) the result of a planning mechanism practiced and designed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and (ii) an object enclosed in itself and, accordingly, detached from the historical and temporal transformation of space. As if designing, doing and using were just one thing which, in its temporal passage through the square, would leave it unchanged as a concept.

3. While interpreting the past in the light of contemporary concepts and practices is not only inevitable but also desirable, the study of a phenomenon occurring in that very same

past implies a two-way relationship. That is, in addition to what the square was to become in later times, and how we see it now, the question remains: what were squares like in those days? What were they in practice in the current culture of the time? What idea or reference was common to them? And from a normative perspective, what was their role for the upper or leading culture?

4. A description of Florence¹⁴ written in the fifteenth century exemplifies and situates these first interlacing issues, acknowledging the existence of fifty squares¹⁵ within the city, of which forty are named. There was a variety of spaces, forms and situations, such as the communal square (Piazza della Signoria), the areas in front of churches (Santo Spirito, Santa Croce, San Lorenzo) or outdoor trading spaces (Merchato Nuovo, Merchato Vecchio, Piazza degli Agli¹⁶, simple crossings (Piazza degli Alberti) and street sections in front of palaces and homes of notable Florentine (Strozzi, Alberti, Rucellai, Pitti). This diversity is distant from the formalism transmitted by the upper architectural culture from the late fifteenth century through the treatises, which the history of urbanism resumed and amplified. In this particular case, we are in the presence of a panegyric text praising the “beautiful Florence”, a kind of run-of-the-mill literature without scholarly aspirations, an immediate self-praising exercise understood by all. The fifty squares, ranging from large plazas with monuments to simple intersections or undifferentiated street sections, were named as they were because of the description stemming from a current culture without the conceptual coalescing capacity of the great figures of humanistic culture. However, this view was too simple and reductive. The city of Florence, with its fifteenth century innovations, was a place charged with cultural and social tensions where seigneurial feudalism, the rise of the bourgeoisie, communal power, territorial aspirations over the whole Tuscany, medieval culture, and humanistic renewal were still an indivisible whole. It was a major representation of upper culture that showed that social reality was much more intertwined than the partial interpretation of architectural treatises and subsequent historical simplifications. Leon Battista Alberti¹⁷, along his varied written production, used the word *piazza* to describe a set of spaces and situations very varied in terms of form and importance in urban structures. In several parts of *Momo*¹⁸, one of his denser works, the *piazza* is referred to as a simple street space. The detailed reading of *Re Aedificatoria*¹⁹ demonstrates that the architectural ideality of the square only emerged on occasions and was called *foro*.

The *piazza*²⁰ is described with features commonly found in Italian cities of the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. In Alberti's *Re Aedificatoria*, idealistic utopia, pragmatic reformism and the continuance – even if systematic - of late medieval uses and habits crisscross. This explains why the multiple contact points between the multifaceted squares of *Cronica Fiorentina* and those described by Alberti suggest a wide overlapping between high and popular culture.

5. This multiplicity of forms and situations and the proximity between high and popular culture²¹ can also be crossed with two other issues: the origin of the word and the continuity of the square area with urban structures of ancient times, particularly of the Roman Empire. One often reads that “square derives from the Latin word *platea*”²². However, this assumption lies in the field of mere etymological curiosity and the relationship between the word and the spaces it refers to have not been analysed, preventing the critical understanding of the evolution of the kind of spaces that *platea* or

piazza referred to²³. In the Latin language used after the end of the Roman Empire in the West, the word *platea* did not mean square but a "wide, perpetual and continuous" street²⁴. This was due to the fact that it was longer, wider, and eventually paved. That is, a definite street integrating the urban structure, fundamentally different from the blind alleys and lanes. As a street, the *platea* was a space that could act as a reference due to its staying power. This was the name used throughout the Middle Ages to designate street areas and spaces that somehow acted as a reference. Still in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the term *magna platea* often meant a large street wider than the others. In late Middle Ages and Renaissance Latin, the word *foro* was used to term spaces whose reference was a central area with a defined configuration, surrounded by buildings that were remarkable due to the power they instilled, their forms and the use that was made of them. An almost parallel process occurred in vernacular languages. Whereas in Portugal the ordinary "public square" was perceived as a metaphorical, colloquial and almost popular term, meaning in the street, in full view, the truth is that the same term was also used throughout the medieval period in the various Italian dialects, especially in Tuscan, the one that directly led to the Italian. *Piazza* started emerging in the Middle Ages as a designation for places in a street that referred to something. This is why, throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, one is far from a universe of stable meanings or, consequently, from an evolving concept or even from a typology of referential spaces. However, the material reality of the urban structure did not cease to configure spaces that somehow stood out from ordinary streets and, naturally, formed squares²⁵.

Whereas from an etymological point of view it is possible to draw a connection between the Greek *plateia* and *platea* in Latin and then to the European vernacular languages - *place*, *piazza*, *platze*, *placa*, *plaza*, *praça* – in terms of the meanings of the two words, and consequently of their corresponding spaces, we are far from a correspondence between the old etyma - *plateia*, *platea* - and the ones that succeeded them in the vernacular languages from the late Middle Ages. Here, the meaning of the word was not an end but a means to perceiving the materials and spatial reality of the spaces referred to in many sources²⁶.

6. While regarding concepts, categories and the meanings implied in the words the relationship between the old and late-medieval references is complex, the same applies to material and spatial structures. The Greek *agora* and especially the Roman *foro* are often seen as the origin of the square in general. The question of the continuity of classical antiquity into the Renaissance has been the subject of long and detailed studies, especially in the field of painting and its relationship with ancient literary sources²⁷. However, the analytical approach on the continuity of material, morphological and spatial structures of cities throughout the Middle Ages has been infrequent. Here it becomes necessary to draw attention to some facts that may help clarify and define the terms in which this problem arises. Cases where there is a real continuity between Roman forums and the medieval and Renaissance squares are relatively scarce. One just has to look at Rome to realize the profound changes the ancient urban structures underwent. What remains lays several metres below the level of medieval streets that form the basis of the city that still exists. In fact, a close look at Bufallini's map (1551) shows that only the powerfully built structures remain - such as the Coliseum and the various imperial baths - and that, in the area of the old *fora*, almost nothing is visible except for Trajan's column. In some cases due to overlaying – Florence, Lucca, Rome, Lisbon – and in others as a result of abandonment and growth around the edges of the

city – Fiesole, Volterra – most show that the urban spaces of Roman antiquity had no continuity in the Middle Ages. How to interpret cases such as the Piazza Navona, the Mercato Vecchio in Florence or the amphitheatre square in Lucca? In the same way we understand the permanence of the large sets of imperial baths in Rome or Trier. It is precisely the material presence, the size, the quality and the building solidness of some of the constructions that enabled them to last over time and the urban spaces they are part of to keep features of their former forms, even with high rates of reuse. By contrast, a forum was defined and limited by buildings that could "easily" be demolished in the context of the collapse of the Roman Empire and the successive invasions of the fourth and fifth centuries and following. Walls with elegant colonnades and statues covered by wooden structures and tiles disappeared after being vandalized and even mere neglect paved the way for vegetation to take over along the years and delete the material traces; as for temples, despite their grandeur, they could also face destruction²⁸.

Trying to demolish an amphitheatre or bath, even of average size, was quite a different situation: vaults, domes and walls sagged and collapsed over the centuries but the sturdy structures of the walls were virtually indestructible until the industrial age²⁹. Thus, inherently, many medieval urban spaces were formed from these buildings and not by sheer durability of spaces as such. The strength and endurance of some buildings contrasted with the material fragility of the *fora*. In a few cases, only the combined action of the permanence of populations, the persistence of trade and, above all, the maintenance of external road structures allowed *fora*, enduring within the city, to continue to correspond to a crossing of external roads and therefore remain free urban spaces within a few cities. The Piazza della Signoria in Florence is a paradigmatic case of material structures that allowed the opening of the square, and not of persistence of an empty space. The site was occupied by baths since Roman times and remained in the centuries that followed the fall of the Empire³⁰, falling into disuse but continuing to be used uninterruptedly until the twelfth century. It was the fact that the area remained occupied by public buildings, i.e., not tied to private possession, which allowed their subsequent transformation into a square through the demolition of buildings in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

7. Today, when the square is taken as an object of study, one sees it as an urban space identifiable due to its location, unity, the quality of buildings, and importance in the city: centralization, form, architecture, and power. Somehow, those are the elements that can be found in the lost world of classical antiquity and fully reappeared, on the verge of our times, in the royal squares of Spain and France, coinciding, among other events, with the construction of the central modern state. In addition to the examples of antiquity that can be seen in the ruins or in drawn reconstructions, it was in the second half of the Middle Ages that the first squares appeared, which, in terms of the unity described above, lasted until the present. Among the diversity of building processes and settings, it is important to highlight two phenomena: the Italian communal square³¹ and the square in planned cities. The former due to the diversity of materializing processes, spatial richness, and complexity and sophistication of the various articulating points. The latter due to the clarity of the relationship between the square and the urban structure and the evidence of a medieval urban design culture based on the elementarity of processes that not only act as a basis in many areas of central and Western Europe but also largely shape the urban forms of the Renaissance.

8. The Italian communal square cannot be seen as a unitary phenomenon. Italy, as a state and political entity, did not exist for fifteen hundred years - since the end of the Roman Empire in the fifth century until the unification in the mid-nineteenth century - and the diversity of powers interacting in cities resulted in a complex interlacing of interests, reasons, processes, and urban forms³². More than an attempt to enunciate typologies or classification systems, one should first find a common denominator to the cases presented here: their profound artistry. The degree of preparation, the compositional features and the visual strategies bring together, in several cases, the configuration of squares and the plasticity of sculpture and painting. This convergence, if not a dominant rule, is still significant given the importance they had and the way they allow us to see the culture of medieval urban forms from new points of view. Indeed, leaving aside the concept of the square as an organic spontaneous form, which is a long outdated and criticized hypothesis, some cases show how the figurative culture of the time was a means to combine the transformation of urban spaces with historical events, the rejection of the old with urban design techniques using a set of expressive means: regularity, sequence of spaces, polarization, perspective and, above all, the primacy of visibility. In addition to Massa Marittima, cities such as San Gimignano and above all Siena illustrate the convergence between urban and pictorial forms. Regarding the latter, a regular form - even if not orthogonal - embodies an integral project of urban space with clear connotations with the religious iconography of the time. In fact, whereas the Latin cross became a privileged form of Christian iconography after the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the figure of Christ in Majesty was, in medieval iconography, a theme as recurrent as the cross³³. What today may seem interpretative boldness seems much more natural when put side by side with the forms of medieval painting³⁴. In Perugia and Volterra there were two different forms of square in the late medieval period. With regard to the former, a long and wide track rose from a sort of street market³⁵, which extended at both ends into two spaces with a triangular and rectangular design, respectively. In Volterra, the opening of the square was part of a wider urban redesign that aimed to make communal power a visible centre of the city, giving rise to a rectangular space, with the palace and the tower enclosing all the back of the existing cathedral, with the other buildings of the square characterized by the uniformity of the architecture.

9. Cities founded in the Middle Ages transcended, by far, the universe of the French *bastides*. The Republic of Florence and the Dukes of Zähringen are some of the best known cases of a common phenomenon in medieval Europe that was characterized by the creation of new settlements as a means to populate the territory, administer it, increase trade, and define boundaries or zones of territorial domain³⁶.

Located in different chronological and geographical contexts, the squares that appeared in them were distinct. Characterizing these cities seems a matter of simple typological classification: street-market (without a square)³⁷, central square, square outside the centre, closed square and some or another possible variant that can be inferred by their geometric configuration - rectangular, square, ... - or by the existence of "public" buildings - market, church, chamber house. This list of possible categories is associated with an also elementary description of such cities: long streets and short alleys in the form of a grid, usually rectangular boundaries demarcated by fences - first by palisades and then walls at the back - four main doors coinciding with the outer roads, extending inwardly of the city and setting its two main axes. A whole perfectly set in its structure and



configuration, in its constituent parts and the relationships among them, in line with the whole and with the territory. By accepting this model as a certainty, it is easy to establish a kind of dominant typology for these squares. However, planned cities have a variety of forms and circumstances that go far beyond the model mentioned earlier. In many cases, the initial settlement consisted only of one street and the respective houses. In these boroughs, the square was often marginal or built later. The role of common public space was ensured by the churchyard, an outdoor yard, or even by some widening within any of the entries to these boroughs. It was as a result of its extension, of new walls and the implementation of the mendicant orders that the square subsequently emerged in these cities. The ownership and acquisition of property allowed some local authorities to encourage the opening or expansion of public space in the form of squares. It is in this context that different solutions for squares appeared: trapeze shapes, buildings located on the axis or huddled in corners, favouring the view of the corner.

10. Already at the dawn of the Renaissance there were towns which, with regard to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, can be described as smaller centres. Although distant in time from the planned medieval cities, they shared common points: small in size, similar layouts – reticular, defined limits - and the distance from large cities. The study of these small urban centres, which often lack the category of city or municipality, has proved crucial³⁸ for the history of cities, for three main reasons, among others. First because these are small cities distant from the major capital cities, which ultimately explicitly reveals a set of specificities: the urban interventions denote the continuation of medieval models that combined with and adapted to the ongoing changes of the Renaissance; the small size implied that the intervention encompassed the entire city, including the opening of new layouts, the redesigning of buildings, the building of squares and the erection of buildings³⁹. Then, because it was in these small centres that some urban redesign combined with the ideal city that was so dear to humanist culture. Indeed, during the humanism in Italy, it was not in the big cities - the "Babylonian" and troubled Florence, Rome or Milan – that the social and urban utopia of the ideal city could be achieved. On the contrary, it is precisely in the small distant and isolated centres that one finds attempts to build a new urban world. In some cases this happened due to the initiative of relatively established powers - as in Pienza and Urbino -. In other situations, it was triggered by local lords, old or new *condottieri*: Urbania, Giulianova, Carpi, Guastalla, and Correggio are centres that show how the new culture was linked to the medieval urban practice and models. The humanist idealism was set in motion through the use of forms and models typical of medieval urbanism: narrow streets, alleys, deep lots, and elongated blocks. In some cases, only the uniformity of architecture - arcades and/or the repetitive design of the facades of some squares - seems to bring classicism forward and mitigate the traces of medieval structures that have been at the forefront of several of these urban operations.

Finally, one notes some very fast opening and systematization of squares. Completed in relatively short periods of time - in some cases little more than a decade since the initial purchase of land to the construction of buildings – they allow us to see how the desire for affirmation of local lords crossed with an architectural culture in renovation and the medieval tradition. It was the will and the ability to operate rapid changes that led to the use of medieval urban forms, while the classicist architecture played the role of renewing the image in specific buildings or in selected urban sections, such as squares.

11.

*To the centre of the city where all roads meet
Waiting for you⁴⁰.*

The construction of squares in European cities over the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was seen as the triumph of the dominant culture, a happy alliance between architectural forms dominated by classicism, urban theories spread through treatises and the progressive centralization of the state. Accordingly, squares acquired regular shapes after still unshaped areas, the uniformity of architecture - with the architectural orders and arcades - emphasized this unity, and their location redefined the centre of the city, where often institutional buildings - chamber houses, stately palace, church - were located.

It is this convergence of trends and political phenomena, on the one hand, and urban-architectural culture, on the other, that explains and becomes evident in works such as the French *places royales* and the *plazas mayores* in Spain. It was in this context that the growing importance of these spaces in the cities was evoked, due to their capacity to represent certain dominant powers - the papacy in Rome, the Spanish Empire, and the absolute monarchy in France. While the relevance of these three cases is undeniable, they must be, however, downplayed in the European context. The political affirmation of the papacy in Rome and later in the Italian peninsula was the culmination of a long building process and conflict whose origins date back to the times that immediately followed to the fall of the Western Roman Empire and which run through the medieval period. The reordering of the urban area between St. Peter and the Tiber in the middle of the fifteenth century, the opening of the Via Giulia⁴¹ and the Piazza del Campidoglio were some of the moments that marked urban policy in Rome, which were more clearly illustrated in the so-called plan of Pope Sixtus V and the construction of St. Peter's Square.

The absolutism of Louis XIV ended up being a restricted phenomenon largely born out of a conflict between the nobility and the crown that culminated in the Fronde and rebellion in Paris. This front was joined by the church, parliament, the nobility, the bourgeoisie, and the Parisian population. The reconquering of Paris and the victory of the real forces hardly had other consequence than strengthening royal power, in what became known as absolutism and whose manifestation in other countries was far from what it was in France. The Versailles model, a u-shaped palace open to nature and with the convex area becoming the convergence point of all roads in the kingdom, turned out to be a formal reference for many royal squares in France, a representation of royal power, of the king and his omnipresence.

In Spain, the union of the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon in 1479 marked the formation of a European empire that a few decades later, in the reign of Charles V, became global. The *plazas mayores* were a sign of imperial power, and they were different because the power they represented and materialized them was different. While in mainland Spain the model only clearly emerged in the Plaza Mayor of Madrid in the early sixteenth century, the 1573 Law of the Indies unmistakably established the shape that would become a characteristic of squares widely used both in the Spanish colonies and in Spain - a quadrangular square, closed to the streets, completely surrounded by a continuous unbroken and uniform façade.

While the French and Spanish squares have a more linear relationship with the central power that gave rise to them, the Italian denote a greater variety of shapes and assumptions.

12. A brief come back to Florence and the early years of the Renaissance shows how post-medieval European urbanism and the urban phenomenon of squares in particular have origins that are far from being restricted to the culture of the upper classes of urban elites. The Santa Croce yard, formed in the suburbs of Florence during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries due to the construction of the Franciscan church and convents, owes its regular shape and exceptional size to the fact that it was located outside the city in those days. That is, it was far from any initiative linked to absolute power. Moreover, it was its ability to remain as a sociability and meeting place⁴² - trade, religion and recreational activities⁴³ - that definitively fixed its shape when the city grew and enclosed it. Two churches designed by Brunelleschi, Santo Spirito and San Lorenzo, on opposite sides of the Arno River, provided two different urban solutions in the fifteenth century. In the former there was almost a direct relationship between the church and the nearly rectangular square. In the square, the regularity of urban space precedes by almost two centuries⁴⁴ the architectural classicism of Brunelleschi's bright and final work. This predates the church that regulated and rectified some medieval streets and blocks by almost two centuries.

San Lorenzo, in turn, wrapped in a maze of medieval streets, opens its lateral side and front towards a piazza, where the basilica occupies the nook and corner. Also in the fifteenth century, the Piazza della Santissima Annunziata, a former front yard to a church founded in the thirteenth century outside the city walls, began a cycle of decisive transformations. After two centuries of works and expansion of the original church in the northern end, the Spedale degli Inocenti work was launched under the direction of Brunelleschi. Its arcade facing the square displays the elements that would become characteristic of Brunelleschi's experimentalism: visual separation of the structural elements, the square module with round arches and a strict delimitation of decorative forms. The two later interventions - the basilica (by Michelozzo⁴⁵ from 1444 and the Loggia dei Servi di Maria (by Antonio da Sangallo and Baccio d'Agnolo) in 1513 - consolidated the primacy of urban space over the buildings, in what was called "the principle of the second man"⁴⁶, whereby those coming after (in this case Michelozzo, Antonio da Sangallo and Baccio d'Agnolo) extended and completed the work done before and which set the matrix of urban space. This process was later taken up by Michelangelo in the Piazza del Campidoglio in Rome from 1536. Also in Florence, the system of squares and axes being built as from 1400 shows how the great baroque works of papal Rome have a history that attests that the absolute power as not the only one capable of such operations. Even though it originated in an initiative of Pius II⁴⁷, the case of Pienza is paradigmatic of how medieval urban culture and fully fledged architectural classical forms come together in a small town. Its architect, Bernardo Rossellino, worked within the logic of medieval layouts, accepting the long grids, introducing corrections and drawing a square lateral to the main street. Taking advantage of the irregular nature and the curvature of the road, the square has a trapezoidal shape that accentuates significantly the turning of the road and affirms the symmetry of space, expanding towards the Duomo in a combination of perspectives that had a precedent in other earlier places in Tuscany (Massa Marittima, Lucca, Siena). Interestingly, it was also Rossellino who first systematized the Capitoline Hill, which,

eight decades later, Michelangelo resumed with the *Piazza del Campidoglio*, also trapezoidal, adopting the same organizing principle of Pienza: the combination of new constructions with pre-existing ones, with clear perspective objectives.

13.

*And we're changing our ways, taking different roads*⁴⁸

The aforementioned convergence between central authorities, architectural culture and the building of new squares after the sixteenth century must be explained. The fact that the centuries have turned many of these spaces into central areas does not imply that they had been the architectural expression of a state or central government in the past. In a way, the cases mentioned herein prior to the fifteenth century show the existence of an urban culture founded on formal universes that were as clear as those during the Renaissance. Equally, the fact they occur at a time prior to the dissemination of knowledge through books also indicates the ample coexistence of this universe with an everyday culture.

Resorting again to Alberti allows us to examine and clarify some points. The references to squares in several of his writings suggest the complex relationship between the culture of the elites and the trend that dominated the cities and European territories in the fifteenth century. And again, this is not a mere matter of words and the evolution of their meaning. In *Re Aedificatoria* he explicitly points out urban forms intended for city-colonies:

“Quando si giunge in una città, se questa è famosa e potente esigerà strade diritte e molto ampie, confacenti al suo decoro e alla sua dignità. Se invece è una colonia o una semplice piazzaforte, le vie di ingresso più sicure non sono quelle che conducono diritto alla porta, bensì quelle che svoltano a destra o a sinistra lungo le mura, meglio ancora se passando proprio sotto la merlature e all'interno della città non dovranno passare in linea retta, ma piegare con ampie curve, come anse di fiume, più volte da una parte e dall'altra. Ciò perché, in primo luogo, apparendo più lunga la strada, si avrà l'impressione che la città sia più grande; inoltre perché il fatto è di grande giovamento sia alla bellezza sia alla pratica convenienza, sia alle necessità di determinati momenti. È infatti cosa di non poco conto che chi vi cammini venga scoprendo a mano a mano, quasi ad ogni passo, nuove prospettive di edifici; che l'ingresso e la facciata d'ogni abitazione si affaccino direttamente in mezzo alla strada; e che la stessa ampiezza sia qui giovevole, mentre altrove un eccessivo allargamento riesce spiacevole e malsano” (Alberti, 1989: 161).

The figurehead of the high culture of humanism advocating the use of winding streets is very explicit about the persistence of a medieval culture with remote and distant backgrounds. And it shows how the social and cultural elite knew, dominated and used medieval instruments for action in the field of architecture as it did in legal⁴⁹ or other matters. It is with this deep stratum that humanism proposals and classical innovations interacted, in a process where the preservation of medieval structures crossed with their own reform and utopia⁵⁰.

14.

Ma un mugnaio⁵¹ come Menocchio, che cosa sapeva di quest'intrinco di contraddizioni politiche, sociali, economiche? (Ginzburg, 1976: 20)

This crisscrossing brings up a question that is clearer today than a few decades ago: "the popular roots of much of European high culture, both medieval and post-medieval"⁵². The assumption is that the analogies between certain popular cultural forms and the elites are not due to a simple influence of high culture on the general population, rather to a complex and true interaction⁵³. It is the further evolution of European societies with (i) the affirmation of the central state, (ii), the clear distinction between the culture of the ruling classes and the rural and traditional culture, (iii) with an one-way indoctrination of the general population, that led to the construction of a vision, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, of a society where ideas were the exclusive realm of the higher strata and from there spread to subaltern groups⁵⁴. This is far from illustrating the reality of the medieval world and the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries⁵⁵

15.

Is it something so good, just can't function no more⁵⁶

The aforementioned explanation and cases seem to indicate the existence of multiple convergences and divergences in the evolution of squares. The convergence between central powers, architectural culture and the building of squares, while explaining some borderline cases of squares in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was preceded and accompanied by interpenetration between different cultural levels. The square as a reference was present in everyday culture during the Middle Ages⁵⁷.

Examples as distinct as Massa Marittima, Siena, or the *bastides* cannot be explained by an elite culture wandering around such diverse places. And the diversity of the planned cities shows how their formal roots may be as close to an almost popular culture as to a literate and enlightened elite. Squares evolved in the fifteenth-seventeenth centuries, from being areas of sociability common to the various social strata and with various uses to becoming constrained representation spaces, where the population came to witness increasingly institutionalized events⁵⁸: parades, increasingly codified ceremonies, and the actual commercial nature of the square, which changed and became more specialized. This is how, rather than the creation, the transformation of these spaces was achieved through a complex crisscross of reasons where powers, beliefs, customs, material heritage, and architectural culture were exposed in several ways. It is in this context that the relationship between the specificity of the microcosm of each case and the general structures in which the history of architecture and of cities became compartmentalized can be paradigmatic and revealing of largely unexplored viewpoints.

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¹ O que faremos do Rio/Quando, enriquecendo/Passarmos a dar/As cartas/As coordenadas/De um mundo melhor” (what shall we do about Rio/When, as we get more affluent/ We start having the ball in our court/and shaping the coordinates/for a better world, Caetano Veloso (2009) – Falso Leblon. In idem *Zii e Zie*, Rio de Janeiro: Universal, (my underlining).

² Remote not so much due to its the distance from Portugal but mainly due to its situation regarding what were then the main centres of influence in Tuscany: the Republics of Pisa, Siena, and Florence.

³ “lo spirito che soffia dove vuole” (the spirit that blows where it wishes), Enrico Castelnuovo, Carlo Ginzburg – “Centro e Periferia”, op. cit., p.286.

⁴ One just needs to think that the new cathedral replaced the previous one and is facing north-south at a time when it was still almost mandatory to have an east-west direction, and that a large number of houses were demolished to build this new square.

⁵ From his first book Pierre Lavedan (1926) – *Qu'est-ce que l'urbanisme?* Paris: Henri Laurens, until the almost posthumous, revised and enlarged, by P. Lavedan (1982) – *L'urbanisme à l'époque moderne XVe-XVIIIe siècle*. Paris: Arts et Métiers Graphiques.

⁶ It was in P. Lavedan's first edition (1926) – *Histoire de l'urbanisme. Antiquité - Moyen âge*. Paris: Henri Laurens, (2nd ed. 1966), pp. 222, that this characterization of squares was first made.

⁷ P. Lavedan (1982) – *L’urbanisme à l’époque moderne XVe-XVIII siècle*. Paris: Arts et Métiers Graphiques, p. ...). For a discussion of Lavedan’s historiographical construction on the French squares, see Alexandre Gady (2008) - “La place royale existe-telle? Réflexions sur les places royales en France sous Louis XIV”. In *Praças reais. Passado, presente e futuro*. Lisbon: Horizonte, pp. 95-104, and Richard Clearly (1999) - *The Place Royale and Urban Design in the Ancien Régime*. Cambridge.

⁸ This evolutionary *terminus* is confirmed by the fact that his book on the contemporary city hardly addressed the square as a topic; Pierre Lavedan (1952) – *Histoire de l’urbanisme. Époque contemporaine*. Paris: H. Laurens.

⁹ In addition to these, there are other implicit characteristics. Nationalist rhetoric – the square presented as a French creation -, linear reassembling of the past – considering as a single project what actually was a set of situations that resulted from interventions and initiatives in the distant past -, teleological conception of history – the *place royale* as the culmination and ultimate end of an historical process - and history of urbanism still based on evaluative criteria derived from art history – the need to justify the original characteristics of the French *place royale* -, are some of the resisting elements that recent urban history, especially French and Italian, find necessary to surpass, despite Lavedan’s work still being considered a reference today, even being treated with deference.

¹⁰ See P. Lavedan’s (1982) introductory pages – *L’urbanisme à l’époque moderne XVe-XVIII siècle*, op. cit.

¹¹ For example: See the need to justify the original characteristics of the French *place royale*.

¹² See Mario Manieri Elia (1979) – *Città e lavoro intellettuale dal IX al XVIII secolo*. In *Storia dell’arte italiana. Vol. 1, Questioni e metodi*. Torini: Einaudi, p. 353-417, where, somewhat ironically, the author speaks of the “crisis of the will of form” and points the seventeenth century as the end of the history of the Italian city within art history, p. 412-413.

¹³ See E. Guidoni (1992), *ibid*, pp. 51-76. He approaches the issue for the first time in E. Guidoni (1970) – *Arte e urbanistica in Toscana. 1000-1315*. Roma: Bulzoni (reed. 1988); this is where the author develops his possibly most important approach to the Italian *piazza storica* and urban morphology through the confrontation between models and architectural, urban and artistic project procedures, factual data and coeval cultural practices. That was when he started a study strand published in *Storia della Città* magazine, which formed the basis for systematic surveys of the *piazza storica* with the aim of forming its *corpus* – first regional and then national. The importance of Guidoni’s pioneering approach in 1970 is equally assessable in two studies by David Friedman (1974) - *Le terre nuove fiorentine*. “Archeologia Medievale. Cultura Materiale, Insediamenti, Territorio”, no 1, pp. 231-247, and *idem* (1988) - *Florentine New Towns: Urban Design in the Late Middle Ages*. New York: MIT, which take on and expand on his interpretation. The latter became one of the studies on the *terre nuove fiorentine* most referred to outside Italy. For a radical critique of the limits of Guidoni’s approach, see Manfredo Tafuri [1st Italian edition 1992] - *Sobre el renascimento: princípios, ciudades, arquitectos*. Madrid: Cátedra, 1995, p. 46, note 15.

¹⁴ *Cronica Fiorentina* by Benedetto Dei. The manuscript in vernacular (Tuscan/Italian) dated 1472, is kept in the *Arquivo di Stato* in Florence and was transcribed and first published in full in Giusepina Carla Romby (1976) - *Descrizioni e rappresentazioni della città di Firenze nel XV secolo*. Firenze: Libreria Fiorentina, pp. 40-53.

¹⁵ “50 piazze dentro alla città nominate”, see note above.

¹⁶ Today significantly called Via degli Agli, having dropped the old name *Piazza*.

¹⁷ See a significant and recent reference to Alberti by a scholar as experienced as Christoph Frommel "[...] bisogna ipotizzare un progettista che riunisse capacità eccezionali in ambedue i campi e che non seguisse ciecamente un unico prototipo, una persona in grado di combinare una conoscenza eccezionale non solo degli archi trionfali ma dell'arte antica e rinascimentale in generale. L'unico artista che a quell'epoca possedesse tali qualità era Leon Battista Alberti." (my underlining); Christoph Luitpold Frommel (2008) – "Alberti e la porta trionfale di Castel Nuovo a Napoli". *Annali di architettura. Rivista del Centro internazionale di Studi di Architettura Andrea Palladio*. n. 20. Vicenza: CISA, p. 29, (my underlining).

¹⁸ The text written before 1450 has two recent critical editions (in Latin and Italian), *Momo o del principe*. Ed. by Rino Consolo. Genoa: Costa & Nolan, 1986 and *Momus*. Ed. Francesco Furlan e Paolo D'Alessandro. Milano: Mondadori, 2007.

¹⁹ Leon Battista Alberti [1485] – *L'architettura [De re aedificatoria]*. Trad. a cura di G. Orlandi. Milano: Il Polifilo, 1989.

²⁰ In the Latin text of *Re Aedificatoria*, the *piazza*, when different from *foro*, is called *trivium*, a place where streets cross, even if it presents some architectural characterization, with Alberti prescribing arcades or designed buildings in corners specifically adapted to the situation.

²¹ The term "popular culture" is avoided since over the last decades, it has acquired too many connotations which I believe should be avoided here.

²² Generally speaking, studies (Portuguese or otherwise) frequently include the phrase "the word square is derived from the Latin *platea*", even though with some variants.

²³ The question of the meaning of the Latin word *platea* is now present in several studies. For an overview of its implications on how it was used in medieval urban forms see Francesca Bocchi (1997) – "Lo specchio della città". In *Lo specchio della città: Le piazze nella storia dell'Emilia Romagna*. A cura Francesca Bocchi, Bologna: L'Inchiostroblu, p. 9-77. In Sylviane Lazard (1980) – "Grecismi dell'esarcato di Ravenna". *Studi Romagnoli*, vol. XXXI, p. 59-74, one can find an analysis of the semantic value of the Greek-Latin *platea* in the context of late antiquity, of its passage to Italian vernacular in the Middle Ages and its confrontation with the *Etymologiarvm* ... by Isidore of Seville.

²⁴ The *platea* is different from the *viae*, which were narrow streets without continuity ending up in alleys. The distinction between different types of street, hierarchically defined by language, was explained by Isidore of Seville in the seventh century: "Vicus, ut praedictum est, ipsae habitationes urbis sunt; unde et vicini dicti. Viae ipsa spatia angusta quae inter vicos sunt. [23] Plateae perpetuae ac latiores civitatum viae sunt, iuxta proprietatem linguae Graecae a latitudine nuncupatae;" Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi – *Etymologiarum sive originum libri XX*. Ed. W. M. Lindsay. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911. For some details on the meanings of *platea* in Isidore of Seville see Joshua Whatmough (1925) - "Scholia in Isidori Etymologies Vallicelliana". *ALMA: Archivum latinitatis medii AEVI, Bulletin du Cange, Vol II*, p. 57-75/134-169.

²⁵ For an explanation of the use of the word in specific cases from medieval sources see Antonio Ivan Pini (1992-93) – "Le piazze medievali di Bologna". *Annali di Architettura*. N. 4-5, p. 122-133, mainly p. 124.

²⁶ A directory of sources of the 6th-12th centuries with several excerpts can be found in E. Guidoni (1991) – *Storia dell'urbanistica: Il Medioevo. Secoli VI-XII*. Roma-Bari: Laterza, mainly pp. 319-385.

²⁷ This field of studies, generally known as iconography/iconology, had a first big push with Aby Warburg and later with Erwin Panofsky, Fritz Saxl and Ernst Gombrich, all members of the



Warburg Institute. For an explanation of the iconological-iconographic method see Carlo Ginzburg [1966] - *Da A. Warburg a E.H. Gombrich. Note su un problema di metodo. In idem - Miti Emblematici. Morfologia e storia.* Turin: Einaudi, 1986, pp. 29-106, where a critical analysis of it, unsurpassed to date, can be found.

²⁸ Curiously, one should note that cases of temples whose material structure has subsisted as a church are rare, basilicas or spas such as Trier being much more frequent.

²⁹ A quick calculation test shows that it would be possible to topple the pillars of a temple using ropes and a few horses, but it would be unthinkable to attempt the destruction of spas or amphitheatres using those means.

³⁰ When Charlemagne conquered Florence in 774, the existence of a building functioning on the site of the spa was referred to. It was only in the second half of the thirteenth century that existing buildings were demolished to allow the opening of the Piazza della Signoria; see Jacopo Bruttini (2011) – *“Enclavi urbane a Firenze: il caso della famiglia Uberti”*. *Annali di Storia di Firenze*, n. VI, p. 5-35 and Giovanni Villani [1823] – *Nuova Cronica*. A cura di Giovanni Porta. 3 voll. Parma: Fondazione Pietro Bembo, Ugo Guanda, 1991.

³¹ The communal period is deemed to be located between the eleventh and the fourteenth centuries when, particularly in Italy, each city-state acted as a community government. In the thirteenth/fourteenth centuries it moved on to take the form of seignorial governments that tended to be dynastic and initially coexisted with communal institutions, later leading to the hegemony of family oligarchies. The Medici in Florence, the Gonzaga in Mantua, the Visconti and the Sforza in Lombardy (Milan), the Este in Ferrara, the Malatesta in Rimini and the Montefeltro in Urbino were among those who, in the following centuries, became centres of political influence and artistic innovation. For an excellent analysis of this transformation see Andrea Zorzi (2008) – *La trasformazione di un quadro politico. Ricerche su politica e giustizia a Firenze dal comune allo Stato territoriale*. Firenze: Firenze University Press, (1972) *Storia d'Italia. Vol 1: I caratteri originali*. Torino: Einaudi, (1978) *Storia d'Italia. Annali Vol. 1: Dal feudalesimo al capitalismo*. Torino: Einaudi e (1985) *Storia d'Italia. Annali Vol. 8: Insediamenti e territorio*. Torino: Einaudi. For an introduction to the topic see Alberto Tenenti (1996) – *L'Italia del Quattrocento. Economia e società*. Roma-Bari: Laterza.

³² See Enrico Guidoni (1980) – *“L'urbanistica dei centri signorili”*. In *Le sedi della cultura nell'Emilia Romagna. L'epoca delle signorie. Le corti*. pp. 91-115 and ibid (1992) – *“Emilia Romagna: l'industria dei centri signorili (sec. XIV-XV)”*. In *L'arte di progettare la città. Italia e Mediterraneo dal medioevo al settecento*. Rome: Kappa, p. 97-109.

³³ The current setting of the Piazza del Campo is due to its systematization in the fourteenth century. In addition, documentation written in the fourteenth century refers to it as the “piazza del mantello”.

³⁴ It is curious that nowadays there is no need for any external confirmation (in the form of a document) for a Latin cross plan to be directly associated with the body of Christ on the cross, when such compositional scheme did not result from a natural and immediate evidence but rather from a long process over several centuries. It was after the intersection, adaptation and experimenting with various typologies – a basilica plan with three naves and the Greek cross plan – that the Latin cross emerged after the eleventh century as an option that became dominant in large churches.

³⁵ Wide streets with porticos acting as market axles were a recurring element, especially in European central cities; see E. Guidoni (1991) – *Storia dell'urbanistica: Il Medioevo. Secoli VI-XII*. Roma-Bari: Laterza, mainly p. 243-286.

³⁶ Regarding the French *bastides* see P. Lavedan (1974) – *L’urbanisme au moyen âge*. Genève: Droz and Françoise Divorne, Bernard Gendre, Bruno Lavergne, Philippe Panerai (1985) – *Les bastides d’Aquitaine, du Bas-Languedoc et du Béarn: essai sur la régularité*. Bruxelles: AAM. On the cities in Tuscany see E. Guidoni – *Arte e urbanistica ...*, op. cit. and David Friedman – *Florentine New Towns ...*, op. cit. The cities founded by the Dukes of Zähringen in what is now Switzerland and Southern Germany were studied by Françoise Divorne (1991) – *Berne et les villes fondées par les ducs de Zähringen au XIIe siècle*. Bruxelles: AAM.

³⁷ F. Divorne – *Berne et les villes ...*, op.cit, writes that one of the distinguishing features of the cities founded by the Dukes of Zähringen was the street market, which was wide and connected the city from one end to the other, and also the fact that they had no central square. This statement needs to be played down since, as already pointed out, in the context of medieval culture the square could be a street or a street section. The “larger” street of some medieval cities, Italian and others, was often called the “*platea magna*”, and was later transformed and delimited in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as in Vigevano or Perugia, but examples abound in Europe; in Portugal see the elementary case of Monsaraz.

³⁸ See the works (1980) – *Storia dell’arte italiana, vol. VIII, Inchieste su centri minori*. Torino: Einaudi, mainly pp. XLIII-LI and 3-35, and (2004) – *L’ambizione di essere città. Piccoli, grandi centri nell’Italia rinascimentale*. A cura di Elena Svalduz. Venezia: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, especially pp. 7-44.

³⁹ Of course this desire for global intervention was often left to stand alone. Still, the cases of Pienza and Urbania show a high degree of execution.

⁴⁰ Ian Curtis (1979) – “Shadowplay”. In Joy Division – *Unknow Pleasures*. Manchester: Factory Records. Portuguese publication Ian Curtis. Joy Division. Lisbon: Assírio e Alvim, 1983, p. 73.

⁴¹ See Luigi Salerno, Luigi Spezzaferro, Manfredo Tafuri (1973) – *Via Giulia: una utopia urbanistica del 500*. Roma: Staderini.

⁴² The Piazza della Signoria was a place of power excessively associated with traumatic events (public executions), the Piazza del Duomo had no large space due to the fact that the area was distributed around the cathedral and the Baptistry and the piazza in front of the Palazzo Pitti was naturally an almost private representational space.

⁴³ It was the Florentines’ favourite place to play the *calcio*, a remote antecedent of football and rugby, mentioned in Florentine sources as far back as the fifteenth century.

⁴⁴ See Pseudo Brunetto Latini [13th century] – “Cronica fiorentina compilata nel secolo XIII”. In *Testi fiorentini del Dugento e dei primi del Trecento*. A cura di Alfredo Schiaffini. Firenze: Sansoni, 1954.

⁴⁵ Alberti’s participation is also documented, among others, although only in the design of the dome and tribune, which were executed with changes to his design.

⁴⁶ A clever sentence by Edmund Bacon (1967) – *Design of Cities*. New York: Penguin, 1976, p. 45.

⁴⁷ Pope between 1458 and 1464.

⁴⁸ Ian Curtis (1980) – “Love Will Tear us Apart”. In Joy Division – *Unknow Pleasures*. Manchester: Factory Records. Portuguese publication Ian Curtis. Joy Division. Lisbon: Assírio e Alvim, 1983, p. 93.

⁴⁹ One should not forget that Alberti was educated as a lawyer and that his main activity until at least 1450 was as priest in the Catholic Church. The importance and the structuring role of Alberti's legal education was highlighted by Ernst H. Kantorowicz [1961] – "La sovranità dell'artista". In *idem* – *La sovranità dell'artista. Mito e immagine tra Medioevo e Rinascimento*. Venezia: Marsilio, 1995, pp. 17-38.

⁵⁰ "Si deve al realismo illuminato dell'Alberti un tentativo di mediazione tra realtà e teoria", M. Manieri Elia – "Città e lavoro intellettuale", op. cit., pp. 357-358.

⁵¹ *Mugnaio* = Miller.

⁵² Carlo Ginzburg (1976) – *Il formaggio e i vermi*. Torino: Einaudi, p. 146. This author highlights the existence of a common origin between popular and high culture in the medieval world and the importance of an ancient oral culture in the light of which high culture is perceived and reformulated. Kantorowicz [1961], op. cit., pp. 37-38 has a different view, stating that "la teologia artistica rinascimentale possa aver seguito il cammino già battuto dal pensiero politico dei giuristi medievali".

⁵³ "Spiegare queste analogie con una diffusione dell'alto verso il basso significa aderire senz'altro alla tesi, insostenibile, secondo cui le idee esclusivamente nell'ambito delle classe dominanti", C. Ginzburg – *Il formaggio ...*, op. cit., p. 145.

⁵⁴ Even if not in an immediate and linear way, it was the appearance of the press and growing widespread access to books that somehow paradoxically contributed to making cultural influence an increasingly one-way phenomenon: the elites culturally dominating the population.

⁵⁵ Again the *Re Aedificatoria* offers a paradigmatic example by describing (book VII, ch. XIII) church altars as meeting places to eat, illustrating the clear persistence of ancient customs which, after 1550, started to be quite unacceptable. Consequently, this text passage is crossed out or removed from several sixteenth-century books preserved in Spanish and Italian libraries; see Javier Rivera (1991) – Prologue. In Leon Battista Alberti – *De Re Aedificatoria*. Madrid: Akal, pp. 7-54.

⁵⁶ Ian Curtis (1980) – "Love Will Tear us Apart". In Joy Division – *Love Will Tear us Apart*. Manchester: Factory Records. Portuguese publication Ian Curtis. Joy Division. Lisbon: Assírio e Alvim, 1983, p. 93.

⁵⁷ The very term "current culture" as used herein should be understood broadly as it encompasses rural populations up to guilds.

⁵⁸ The way the square is referred to over time confirms this.