

**The National Hydrocarbons Authority Palace in Rome (Palazzo ENI, 1958-1962).  
Resilience and cultural meaning of an Italian office building.**

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**Architectural History thesis AR2011**

**TU Delft – Faculty of Architecture and Built Environment**

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## ABSTRACT

ENI Palace incorporates a unique role within the Italian offices' cultural heritage: it encompasses a technological advance of the post-war period, a resilient urban landscape and it is a piece of intangible knowledge, beliefs and cultural value having a robust influence on people's behaviours.

By conducting research ranging from Enrico Mattei's managerial approach, understanding the explanations that pushed him to decide on the E42 district to build the new ENI headquarters, the distinctiveness of his ideologies emerges and the ENI Palace become a significant representation of monumental modernization. The ENI Palace steel glass-box is one among the standard architectural entities of the post-war, a massive representation of the Italian International Style that influenced Italian cities' urban skylines. Nowadays the building is in a very mediocre status, and if increasing awareness about its value with a contemporary interpretation of facts, its richness would be highlighted.

The degradation, the negligence and urban sprawl increased the building vulnerability and therefore the risk of data loss. This document proliferation would allow reaching one among the missing criteria, being one step further to obtain its protection and diffusion.

Keywords: Palazzo ENI, Skyscraper, office building, Rome, EUR, Heritage.

**Figure 1.** (front page) ENI Façade with some builders during its accomplished process. Unknown, Views of the recently completed Eni building, 1962, ENI Historical archive, Castel Gandolfo, In Davide Spina, *Above and Opposite*, (London: AA Files 68, 2014), 101.

## INTRODUCTION

The European culture of Office design is manifold and diverse, strictly associated with the national context: office buildings look alike, but their differences are allied to the efficiency, functionality and flexibility that each country requires. During the post-war economic growth, Europe changed the social habits including the nature of the office environment, having a large impact on the design of office buildings.<sup>1</sup> “The optimism that was characteristic of these years was reflected in the introduction of a new type of office building: the glass box – a rectangular high-rise office block with glazed facades.”<sup>2</sup> In fact, not only there was the shared demand to reproduce the American skyscraper prototype with dissimilar heights but also the impossibility to get rid of the European complex urban setting, conflicting with the grid of American cities.

Italy was not a country of skyscrapers, but the attention to the overseas building phenomenon generated interest in constructing taller buildings. In 1962, as a mark for the Italian Economic Miracle<sup>3</sup>, the highest skyscraper of the Capital city was built: the ENI Palace in Rome, the National company headquarters located in the licitor architecture district of EUR. The ENI glass-box created a particular relationship with the EUR context, expressing the technological advance from tradition to modernization, displaying a pioneering design for employees’ care that the chairman of the ENI company had required. The Bacigalupo-Ratti studio gained the commission of the ENI Palace in 1958 with the landscape architect Pietro Porcinai, shaping a new Roman panorama (Figure 2). Many aspects of the Palace interior layout expressed the symbol of innovation and international progress, but the high-tech Palace peculiarity had been overshadowed over the years compared to other contemporary office buildings as Olivetti’s, or by new upcoming ENI constructions.



**Figure 2.** View of the magnificent ENI Palace from the Park in 1962.

Unknown, Views of the recently completed Eni building, 1962, ENI Historical archive, Castel Gandolfo, In Davide Spina, *Above and Opposite*, (London: AA Files 68, 2014), 102.

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<sup>1</sup> Juriaan van Meel, *The European Office: Office Design and National Context* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2000), 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Diane Ghirardo, *Italy: Modern Architectures in History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), 131.

What is the social and industrial vision that ENI office building embodies and why is essential to preserve it?

ENI Palace life has been influenced by socio-economic development since it was built, but today this factor is influencing its stability. ENI Palace glass-box manifests the first technological achievements in the capital city through the industrial materials, the social ideals over the interior layout and therefore the public resilience of the EUR area.

The methodology applied to reply started from archival research about the building but, due to COVID-19 restrictions of 2020, the information was reached only through the ENI online archive, because all the archives are momentarily inaccessible. The ENI physical archive, located in Castel Gandolfo, the private's archives of Pietro Porcinai in San Domenico-Fiesole, Studio Alberti Matti Ferrari in Milan and the CSAC Archive in Parma have their activities suspended and were not available to share digital content for the research. The majority of data regarding the building, including technical drawings, photos and documents, was obtained using secondary literary sources.

One main secondary source to analyse the Italian context through the war aftermath was Ghirardo's book *Italy*, that outlined a critical interpretation of the history of Italy. Starting from chapter four, *War and its aftermath*, the author enlightened the Italian approach about the urban environment and the meaning of some architectural artefacts, including the EUR area. The EUR area and the city of Rome were mentioned opening discussion points about architecture and political choices. Moreover, to better understand the social changes associated with the economy, the collection of articles of the field *La storia del capitalismo italiano*, introduced a political and social analysis that explained the reason for several economic, political and social events.

On the other hand, the academic thesis *The Bacigalupo Ratti studio and ENI (1955-1980)* by Federica Magni clarified the relevant figures of the architects Bacigalupo-Ratti, emphasising their ethics and modernity that influenced not only the ENI company progress but also the architecture of the Italian panorama. Furthermore, the academic thesis of Dorothea Deschermeier *Urban and architectural adventures of Eni by Enrico Mattei*, investigated Enrico Mattei personality and achievements, comparing him with Adriano Olivetti, a famous contemporary entrepreneur. Starting from the creation of the corporate to Mattei's death, Deschermeier compared the company to an empire lead by Mattei and put into practice by the architecture studio Bacigalupo-Ratti. What emerged from both academic works is the coherence of style, the functionality and also the efficiency of Mattei's architectural approach with extraordinary outcomes also within the marketing and design.

Furthermore, during the *Third International Congress on Construction History* of 2009, Stefania Mornati published a conference paper *The Skyscraper in Rome: between innovation and Italian building tradition*. The author highlighted the post-war experimentation era in Italy and the significant accomplishment of building the first skyscraper in the Capital city, as a national opportunity of breaking the traditions through innovation and technological experimentation, influencing the subsequent development of Italian urban skylines.

Additionally, Mattei's innovative working methods applied at The Skyscraper were discussed by Giuseppe Accorinti in his book *Quando Mattei era l'impresa energetica – io c'ero*. The author is testimony to each decision that Mattei took and the social and urban influence it provoked. To conclude, ideated by Mattei, the corporate magazine *Il Gatto Selvatico* was authentic evidence of Mattei's essence and contribution to employee's well-being and cultural education. The ENI Palace, photographed and described in many publications, was built as an acknowledgement of the company principles: openness and innovation.

The organization of the material was divided into two chapters:

Analysing the Italian context first with *Metanopoli*, then at ENI Palace, the first chapter describes how the ENI chairman aspired to generate a community reflecting an aesthetic quality because the profit would be easier to achieve. The ENI Palace in the new business peripheral district of EUR, located in a Capital city that until that moment was not involved in the financial business because dedicated to the government, religion and tourism, it was Mattei's view of innovation and international progress.

In the second chapter, the building is described highlighting Mattei's ethos. The urban and architectural qualities are the physical demonstration of Mattei's unique systemic approach because it might have guaranteed creativity and development for the people, the company and Italy. On the one hand, Italian Capitalism demonstrated to possess a speculative power over people and to supply perishable manufactures; on the other hand, The ENI Office building is the result of the fabrication of a long-term product, which have a robust identity and a cultural continuity, but today it is in a mediocre status.

Operating the most recent DGAAP<sup>4</sup> guidelines, the aim is to highlight the Palace as a high quality building that belongs to the Modern Heritage to retain it as part of the area for its architectural and cultural intrinsic value. To prevent the disaster of losing ENI Palace identity, attempting to enhance its status, it is the role of

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<sup>4</sup> "Architetture del secondo '900 – Palazzo per Uffici dell'ENI" [Architecture of the second half of the 1900s. ENI Office Building], Direzione Generale Arte E Architettura Contemporanee e Periferie Urbane [General direction of contemporary art and architecture and urban peripheries], MiBAC, accessed April 12, 2020. <http://www.architetturecontemporanee.beniculturali.it/architetture/index.php>

the Architect to globally underline those values to avoid the loss, being it the most representative artefact of Mattei's theoretical knowledge regarding the necessity for creativity, culture and community during working hours.



# 1 FROM NEOREALISM TO CAPITALISM: ENI AFTERWARD THE SECOND WORLD WAR

## 1.1 The economic Miracle: ENI expanding horizons

After the Second World War, the Italian speed in the renovation was constant, especially in the small technological industries such as scooters or microcars thought for the congested traffic of the expanding cities. The regions of the centre and south named *Mezzogiorno*, had always been dedicated to the first sector, but the reactivation of the northern economy pushed many people to emigrate because it would ensure them a job. However, the drastic movement caused the depopulation of the south and countryside: it was the period of “the train of the sun”<sup>5</sup> that would bring every day many folks from the south to Turin.

Among the Italian panorama, Fiat was one in all the numerous Italian industries that were well-known worldwide, like the Italian fashion Brands, typewriter manufacturer of Olivetti or the Film Production with the Italian Comedy genre. However, the Italian economy was vacillating concerning the management of the industries: innovative and culturally involved, aiming to the country growth, or traditional and family-related, focused on the personal profit. For instance, private companies such as Fiat or Pirelli had a traditional and familiar mindset compared to Olivetti that was searching for a pioneering and more human approach to benefit the workers. Likewise, Enrico Mattei, chairman of ENI company, was a public employee, but a brilliant entrepreneur who had the vision of an efficient Italy, aiming to have an independent country and producing energy for Italian consumers. Moreover, both companies were parallel in including research and social care with Global mindset within the investments, obtaining the best profit results. Conversely, for the average of the industrial entrepreneurs, modernity was summarising the religious faith, the family tradition, the will of progress, but with the boundaries of the market in a very detailed language.

Hence being Olivetti, Pirelli and Fiat competitive northern private industries with a contrasting mindset regarding investment and innovation they were not compared to ENI outcomes, because ENI was a public company. On the one hand, Olivetti’s urban approach embraced the development of the Italian industry through social edifications, resulting in the architectural quality developing in Northern Italy. His Ivrea complex was an unprecedented urban achievement for the Piedmont region with outstanding value. On the other hand, Enrico Mattei’s vision in Metanopoli and Rome followed the identical concepts. The chairman of the National Hydrocarbons Company (ENI) was inserted in a very more pragmatic context than Olivetti, and had been capable of facing and solving other social challenges.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Guido Crainz, *Storia Del Miracolo Italiano* [History of the Italian Miracle], (Rome: Donzelli Editore, 2005). 116

<sup>6</sup> Dorothea Deschermeier, "Avventure urbanistiche e architettoniche dell'eni di Enrico Mattei (1953-1962): tra progetto E Strategia Aziendale," [Urbanistic and architectural adventures of Enrico Mattei's ENI (1953-1962): between project and business strategy], (PhD diss., Università di Bologna, 2007), 7-11.

To deeply understand the reasons and wishes that led to the construction of a new building that accommodated the headquarters of the National Hydrocarbons Authority in Rome, it is required a review of the former projects, all functional in their aesthetic and construction. Ranging from the primary decade after the Second World War, the SNAM (previous ENI) was reformed and incorporated under the direction of Enrico Mattei in the newly formed National Hydrocarbons Authority (ENI). Enrico Mattei's sense of development meant architecture as a tool dedicated to ENI employees, with the notion to create a corporate identity and spread out a sense of belonging to the business. Mattei wanted to expand the Hydrocarbons National corporate to provide energy to each citizen, transforming the country to economically independent. Moreover, he established unusual economical agreements with foreigners countries to guarantee growth and development to Italy, being Mattei well-appointed to the rise of energy demand.

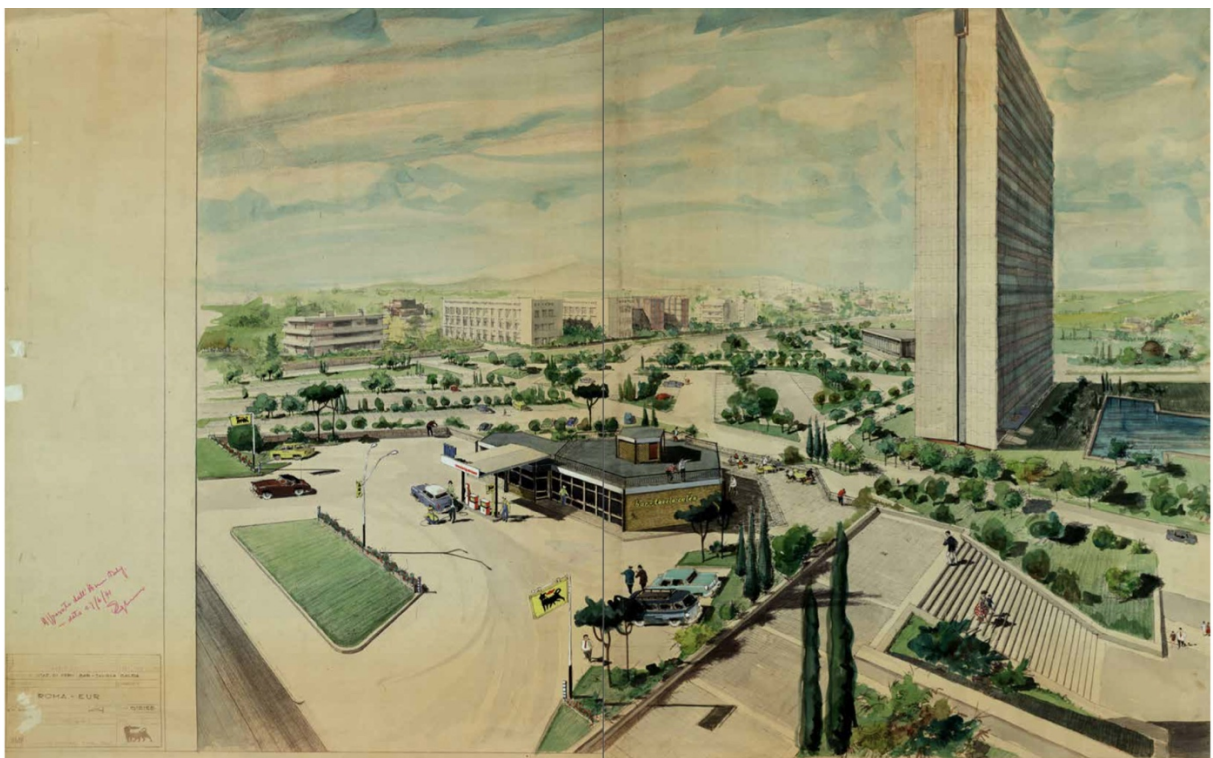
As a place to begin, Mattei conceived ENI as a public interest, a business development requiring research operations managed by a maintenance centre located near Milan, within the municipality of San Donato Milanese. The area would have been planned in a strategic position between the extraction centres of the Po Valley methane and the Falk blast furnaces of Sesto San Giovanni. The Metanopoli construction was launched in 1953 and it might incorporate in one place the production and management activities providing homes for workers, employees and managers, plus a dedicated area for scientific research and a high-level school on hydrocarbon studies. The features of the urban system in Metanopoli derived from Mattei's attention to employee's well-being.

Moreover, as a connection, the future highway *Autostrada del Sole* would have started from Metanopoli, connecting the country from north to south in a future vision of the automotive industry boom. The business centre was a new glass palace, designed in 1955 by Marcello Nizzoli (designer the famous typewriter Olivetti *Letter 22*) and Giuseppe Mario Olivieri. On the rooftop, Pietro Porcinai, one of the greatest Italian landscape architects of the 1900s, designed a roof garden on which Mattei's apartment overlooked. In the raising vision of the company, additionally to the construction of Metanopoli, a new representative building was planned for the National Headquarters in Rome: the ENI Palace.

In the fascist era, numerous plans were developed to convert Rome into an industrial city (gasometer and south industrial range), but the city was not able to compete with the northern Italy industrial districts. Since 1950s Rome was known as the traditional institutional capital, and companies' headquarters were located in the city centre. Nevertheless, the expression of classic Italian monumentality did not represent innovation and not convey the message of modernity that Enrico Mattei had set as the main objective. Up to 1962, the year of effective removal, the main ENI offices were located in Tritone street (AGIP General Management) and Tevere street (ENI presidency). However, the avant-garde Mattei's will was to transfer the

corporation headquarters from the heart of the city to eight kilometres away peripheral area, because he understood that everyone would drive to the working place and refilling the car in the stations that ENI installed across the nation. (Figure 3)

The chosen district was EUR, an area that would have become the representation of innovation for the capital city: new edifices, parks and plenty of areas dedicated to the Olympic Games of 1960. The ENI Palace would dominate the Central park, reflecting its façade in the water pond and offering a connection through public transport and Enrico Mattei futuristic vision included everything that might enhance the National company: wise investments, social well-being and services.



**Figure 3.** Drawing showing the petrol station and the ENI Palace closed side.

Unknown, Visualisation of the Eni building alongside one of the company petrol station, 1961, ENI Historical archive, Castel Gandolfo, In Davide Spina, *Above and Opposite*, (London: AA Files 68, 2014), 104-105.

## 1.2 A new building in the periphery of Rome: ENI Palace

While in Europe the post-war reconstruction urban plans intended to rebuilt with a development perspective prioritising the production and the infrastructures, in Italy the real estate privileged the immediate collection of urban income, to gain the maximum urban profit in the shortest time. The choice induced many private companies to prioritise the profit instead of solid production advantages, so visibly neglecting facilities.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, when European states were balancing the investments in the social well-being of the citizens, in 1949 the Italian Government invested in housing through the plan *INA Casa* (The National Plan of housing for workers)<sup>8</sup> with the aim to underline the employment status, but unsolved problems regarding Italian public facilities needed still to be managed and the urban development was one of the most pending.

The Italian landscape made of small historic centres started to change in quality, creating peripheries lacking amenities and becoming irreversible, but none was aware while it was being arranged. Merely Italian film production was attractively characteristic for breaking down the Italian context with the typical malevolence of the fifties with the Neorealism genre, showing a society on its real aspects. While later on the Italian Comedy genre presented the transition of the consumerism society, the social and working achievements, including the new social habits contrasting with the traditions. Most of the films were set in Rome, which illustrated the community aspects and overviews of the capital city during the Economic Miracle and the development of the new peripheral suburbs.

Hence, a critique overview of the shifting social aspects of Rome's cultural facets due to the urbanization was given by the Italian literature and filmography of that period. For instance in the filmography the *Il Sorpasso* shows not only the traditional monuments of Rome but also many new areas of the periphery, representative of the Italian welfare and building speculation. Or *Boccaccio '70* displaying the new Italian temptation and costumes, setting them also in the empty EUR business area during the night.

But how did Rome arrive at that point? During the fascist era, Rome was the place where Rational architecture enforced unity and opposition against the Italian overpassed traditional architecture, but also a representation of the new regime. This paradox brought into a deep criticism regarding prominent rationalist architecture "first for being too eclectic, and then for being too controlling"<sup>9</sup>. Nevertheless,

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<sup>7</sup> Federico Oliva, "L'uso Del Suolo: Scarsità E Rendita"[The land use: shortage and profit] in *La Storia Del Capitalismo Italiano: Dal Dopoguerra Ad Oggi*, [The history of Italian Capitalism: from the post-war until today] (Rome: Donzelli Editore, 2010). 545-546.

<sup>8</sup> Ghirardo, *Italy: Modern Architectures in History*, 137-138.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* 75.

Rational architecture was able to tackle expressivity with new technologies and functionality, creating a discreet modern architecture capable of being both functional and social.

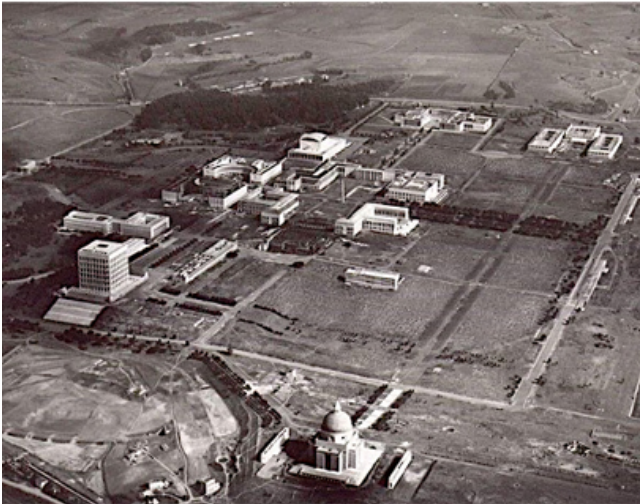
One of the major rational architects, but also a capable urban theorist was Marcello Piacentini, who was assigned to one of the essential urban development of the epoch: connecting the city to the sea, planning a new neighbourhood for the E42 universal exposition (Figure 4). The untraditional EUR neighbourhood was where the Rome Universal exposition would have taken place aiming to become the business area of the Italian capital city. The characteristic of the E42 strategy was the planning of a satellite city that would have been able to host different kinds of events, and at the same time connect through main axes the sea, then the periphery to the city centre. For realizing this ambitious project, Piacentini chose many young and talented rational architects to design the planned buildings. The first building realized would apply the new concept of Office building, proposed by Gaetano Minnucci<sup>10</sup>. Conversely, the Second World war occurred did not allow the Exhibition to take place.



**Figure 4.** Central axonometric view of EUR42.

Marcello Piacentini, Mappa dell'Esposizione Universale di Roma E42. Drawing, 1937, accessed March 5, 2020, <http://www.archidiap.com/opera/e42/>

<sup>10</sup> Carlo Bertilaccio and Francesco Innamorati, *Eur Spa E Il Patrimonio Di E42: Manuale D'uso Per Edifici E Opere* [Eur SpA and the heritage of E42: Manual for buildings and works], (Rome: Palombi, 2004).



**Figure 5.** EUR architectures survived after the war.  
 Unknown Author. *EUR Roma 1953*. 1953 Source Treccani, accessed March 5, 2020  
[http://www.treccani.it/magazine/atlane/cultura/Ottanta\\_anni\\_di\\_Eur\\_all\\_Archivio\\_centrale\\_dello\\_Sta%20to.html](http://www.treccani.it/magazine/atlane/cultura/Ottanta_anni_di_Eur_all_Archivio_centrale_dello_Sta%20to.html)



**Figure 6.** EUR SpA green areas today.  
 Unknown Author. *EUR SpA- Planimetria dei Parchi dell'EUR, Roma*, 2010, accessed April 1, 2020, <https://www.eurspa.it/it/asset-property/patrimonio/parchi-e-giardini>

In 1951 the commissioner of EUR institution determined to demolish the damaged architectures and to build what was omitted from the original masterplan, which included many buildings celebrating the arts, the modest workers, but chiefly detailed architecture from the materials to the furniture. (Figure 5) The functionality and the monumental scenography work together in every aspect of the area, which was green for one quarter.

If close to the most representative architectures, the articulation would have taken on more geometric design and scenographic support to the latter; while the entertainment areas and, however, more secluded, the compositional character would have been open and emphatically less austere<sup>11</sup>.

The EUR Area offered several outdoor spaces to the public such as Ninfa Park, Turismo Park, Eucalypti Park, Central Lake Park, to reverence the tradition of the Italian garden and to enhance the newly built landscape with the harmony of the green and the water (Figure 6). In fact, the heart of the Universal Exposition urban plan was a water reserve meant to be preserved in the Central lake, not only as an inner attraction point for the public but also as a view for the surrounding buildings. The Central Lake park was expected to be located perpendicular to the main axis of the Imperial Door, where people would have parked their car and walked across the door of the exposition. Strolling on the axial path leading through exhibitions and pavilions, the user would have arrived at the Garden of the Falls, enjoying the view of the

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.84

Central Park. However, as many of the building outlined in the original plan were not realized, the construction of the core water source congested for being remarkably expensive because it required specialized engineering work.

In 1955 the expensive construction process restarted since on the one hand, the Park would have become the main attraction point, on the other hand, it would provide the necessary water for the surroundings constructions, so avoiding fire in case of a fire emergency. The constructive works of the Central pond would be ended in 1960, to celebrate the opening of the Olympic Games in Rome. The Park became the core of the area, being another appealing element introduced at the end of the promenade: the sports arena PalaLottomatica designed by Marcello Piacentini and Pier Luigi Nervi for the Olympic Games event.

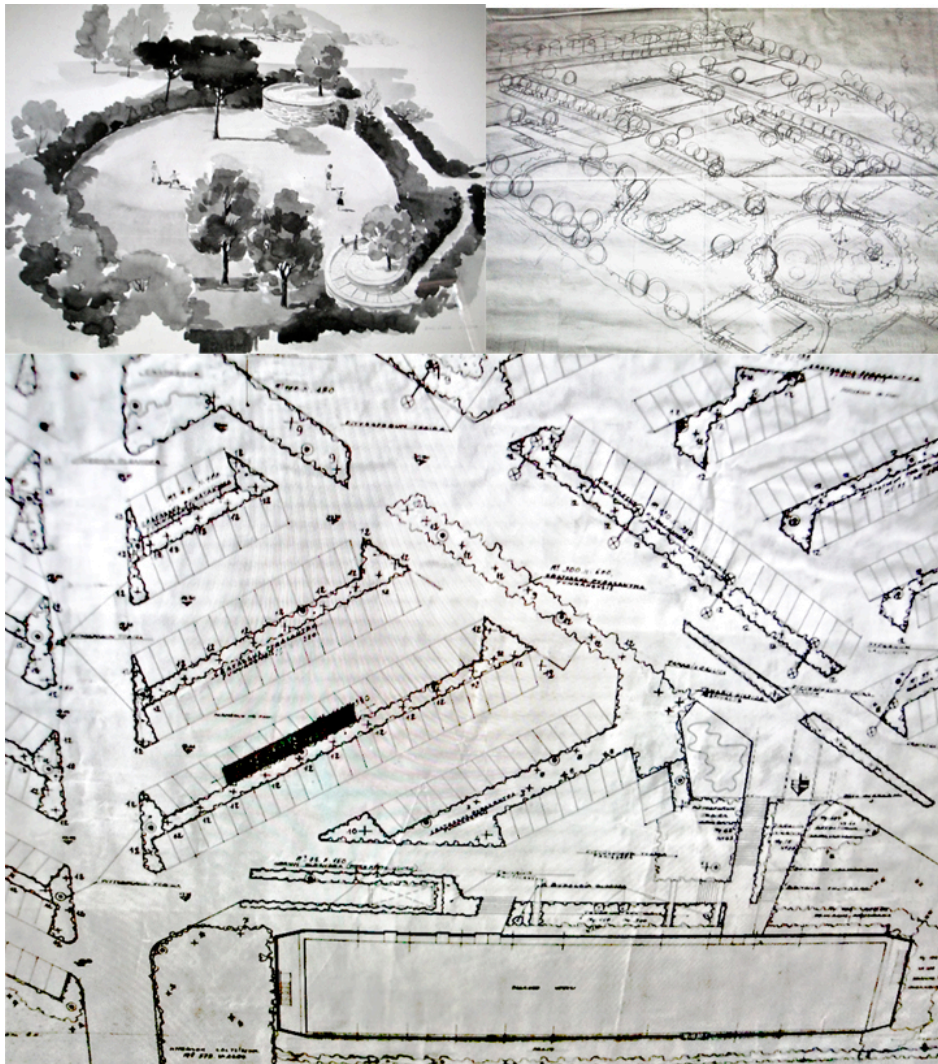
However, PalaLottomatica was not the only building that was introduced in the core of the urban proposal. In 1958 an additional building started to take place on one side of the Central Lake area: the ENI Palace. The new office building was meant, by ENI chairman Enrico Mattei, to become highest skyscraper of the city of Rome, representing the expanding economic power of the National Hydrocarbons company during the Economic Miracle. The symbolic functional building was designed by the Bacigalupo-Ratti studio, a Milan based studio that already collaborated with ENI, although the surrounding landscape and the parking spaces were planned by Pietro Porcinai. (Figure 7) The horizontal line of the pond would turn the building in the vanishing point, showing on the façade the architectural and technological achievements of ENI, in a district that had believed in progress. As a matter of facts, Mattei's office would be located at the last of the twentieth floor comprised in the office building and the palace would be completely climatized, with a glass façade.<sup>12</sup>

ENI Palace was one of the many new buildings in the capital city, Rome was expanding creating new peripheries, but it maintained its position as a not industrial city: the developing industrial companies had their office headquarters in the capital city, but not the factories. Many renowned companies were growing in dimension, offering new jobs and many people were moving from the countryside to the city to undertake the jobs. In fact, with the rose of the mass-media in 1953, the national public broadcasting RAI (Radiotelevisione Italiana), was moved to Rome too, including the management office that was previously located in Turin. As a consequence, Rome became the capital of the television while Milan and Turin maintained and evolved their places of editorial production. This decision caused the moving of all the audio-visual Italian industry to Rome, inasmuch it had been since the twenties of the century the capital of the cinema with Cinecittà.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Giovanni Accorinti, *Quando Mattei Era L'impresa Energetica - Io C'ero-* [When Mattei was the energy company - I was there-], (Metelica: Kindustria, 2008), 102-105.

<sup>13</sup> Peppino Ortoleva, "I Mezzi Di Comunicazione Di Massa"[The means of mass communication], in *Storia del Capitalismo Italiano Dal Dopoguerra ad Oggi* [The history of Italian Capitalism: from the post-war until today], (Rome: Donzelli Editore, 2010) 253-254.



**Figure 7.** Drawings of the ENI Palace Landscape project including green areas and parking spaces.  
Paola Porcinai, Photo of Pietro Porcinai's drawings. San Domenico Fiesole (FI): Pietro Porcinai Archive. Accessed April 10, 2020.  
<http://luomoeilpaesaggio.blogspot.com/2011/12/palazzo-eni-roma.html>

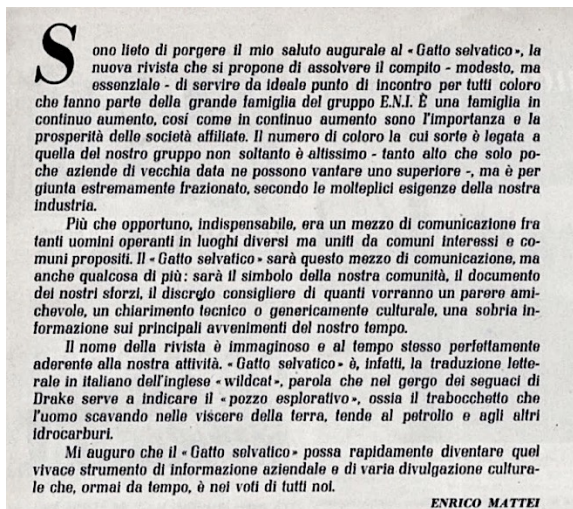
Within the overall picture of the Italian cultural industry of that period, that was characterised by an old-fashioned mindset regarding politic and linguistic, the cinema industry was unexpectedly outside the box.<sup>14</sup> The presence in the city of such structures dedicated to the audio-visual production encouraged the economy in this field, but the quality of the cinema and the television started to delineate a different influence. RAI was the communication medium owned by the Government, limited in its politic and linguistic features, that did not take part in a cultural industry while the cinema was an international industry tackling and criticizing the social demands and uncertainties.

The lack of services in the peripheries had repercussion creating a social issue that twisted to constant, so many intellectuals were called by the companies argue it: in Turin, there were recognised literary authors such as Elio Vittorini or Italo Calvino who were facing the complications of the society and the relation

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 257-258.



with the machine in their written productions in the Magazine 'Il Menabò'<sup>15</sup>. In the city of Rome Enrico Mattei in July founded the Magazine *Il Gatto Selvatico*, entrusting as a director the poet Attilio Bertolucci. Many collaborations appeared in the Magazine such as Leonardo Sciascia, Goffredo Parise and others, aiming to contribute to the employees' life, informing them of common culture topics. The publication was directed to employees, printed in colour and with many photographs, in the style of a weekly which was not limited to being a mere business tool. In fact, in its ten years of life it was a true cultural laboratory contrasting the social instabilities; a space where writers, journalists, through their articles and the columns of sport, cinema, fashion, gastronomy, retraced the customs and lifestyles of Italy at that time.



**Figure 8** Mattei greeting to the magazine opening. Enrico Mattei. *Saluto inaugurale alla rivista*. Rome: *Il Gatto Selvatico* 1955 (Year I), July, n°1. Screen Photograph. ENI Archive, Castel Gandolfo, accessed March 5, 2020.



**Figure 9.** The powerful and agile structure of the new E.N.I Palace at EUR in advanced construction phase. Romano Costa. *The powerful and agile structure of the new E.N.I Palace at EUR in advanced construction phase*. Rome: *Il Gatto Selvatico* 1961 (Year VII), August, n°8. A4 Photograph. ENI Archive, Castel Gandolfo, accessed March 5, 2020.

On the second page of the first number, Enrico Mattei expressed a greeting to the new Magazine, explaining that it will be a new meeting point and a cultural divulgation of the expanding ENI family, involving employees all over Italy (Figure 8). Mattei chose the name Wild Cat because in slang meant borehole (wildcat), not only a device allowing to locate hydrocarbons but also a creative name that would enhance imagination from now on. Being the ENI Office Building in Rome a relevant change for the wide-reaching company, the magazine reported its construction phases in several publications: informing the employees about the new innovative building was a wise approach to inspire involvement and motivation in receiving a job at the peripheral ENI Palace (Figure 9).

<sup>15</sup> Paola Gaddo, "Il Menabò," CIRCE, Università degli studi di Trento, accessed March 27, 2020. <https://r.unitn.it/it/lett/circe/il-menabo;>

To conclude, during the War Aftermath growth of the population pressure, the job need and the moving of many people from the countryside to the city enforced the city of Rome to rapidly take action to the buildings limitation. In that period many illegal housing suburbs were built, becoming the lacking of a quality image of Italian architecture products. The urban peripheries gradually transformed from provisional to permanent houses, being legalized without a tangible permit. EUR was one of the previously planned peripheries which assured to follow a strict urban plan to become the capital's business district, but also the representative area of the Olympics. However, not everywhere a quality outcome would be guaranteed. First, Italian corruption was one issue, that put the personal interest of a few people in front of the social development through the *INA Casa* development plan. Secondly, the incapacity of Italian traditional culture to highlight innovative quality. The creative industry such as cinema and editorial were arguing and contrasting the contemporary anomalies, so highlighting the negative social repercussion of the phenomenon. However, only a few industrial entrepreneurs were aware of their influence over the society and that is the reason that motivated them to share the business vision in which included the cultural investment in the industrial production.

## 2 ENI OFFICE BUILDING: AIMS AND OUTCOMES

### 2.1 Mattei's ethos: ENI Palace

Introducing a new national building in the EUR financial district and not in the city centre, moreover using new technological materials was a choice that only a pioneering entrepreneur such as Mattei would be able to make. The ENI Palace followed the same principles of the Agip Hotel of Metanopoli, but aiming to innovation and to an international image of the corporation through the use of the largest steel structure and glass façade of the country. Composed by Marco Bacigalupo and Ugo Ratti, both graduated at the Milan Polytechnical University in 1948, the Bacigalupo-Ratti studio designed Mattei's viewpoints about the ENI Palace. The architects' studio in Milan followed a functional methodology regarding the architectonic shape, though simplification and subtraction of pieces allowing them to be original and not repetitive.<sup>16</sup> However, the responsibility of working for a big company was not simple, they had an important role in shaping the future society, which motivated them to researching and exploring.

The architects choose the same façade concept that had been applied in the projects of Metanopoli: curtain-wall solution, the symbol of business efficiency. The extensive façade was characterized by a vertical and horizontal modular solution that became continuous and mirrored the water of the pond: in an office building the façade represented the flexibility, the adaptability and the openness of the business.

Whereas the spatial characteristic of the building were completely dedicated to the functionality and well-being of the office hours. For instance, the vast outside space dedicated to parking spaces, the disconnected canteen construction or many elevators located in the centre of the building to clearly show the principles of the functional project (Figure 10). In fact, it can be considered an Italian International style related to the directional architecture, even though Italian office buildings are more known for the furniture design than the structural strategy.<sup>17</sup>



**Figure 10.** ENI palace design process showing the canteen and the parking spaces. Unknown, *ENI palace site model and side elevation*, Studio Associato Alberti Matti Ferrari, Milan in Federica Magni, *Lo studio Bacigalupo Ratti e l'ENI (1955-1980). Rappresentazione della modernità ed etica della professione*, (MSc diss., Politecnico di Milano, 2011,) 200-205.

<sup>16</sup> Federica Magni, "Lo Studio Bacigalupo Ratti e L'eni (1955-1980). Rappresentazione Della Modernità Ed Etica Della Professione" [The Studio Bacigalupo Ratti and ENI (1955-1980). Representation of modernity and ethics of the profession], (MSc diss., Politecnico di Milano, 2011), 4.

<sup>17</sup> Van Meel, *The European Office: Office Design and National Context* , 113.

The previously shown *Il Gatto Selvatico* of August 1961 (Figure 9) put the building structure in the front page, highlighting the magnificence looking over the pond and the park which surrounds it. Two publications later the ENI Palace was publicised as a strong structure leading the landscape becoming a clear landmark of the growing spirit of the Company at that time. Furthermore, the picture were used to designate the atmosphere from the bottom to the top and a view of a builder from the scaffolding to highlight the height, the surroundings and the palace as an immense container of the whole National company services. (Figure 11)

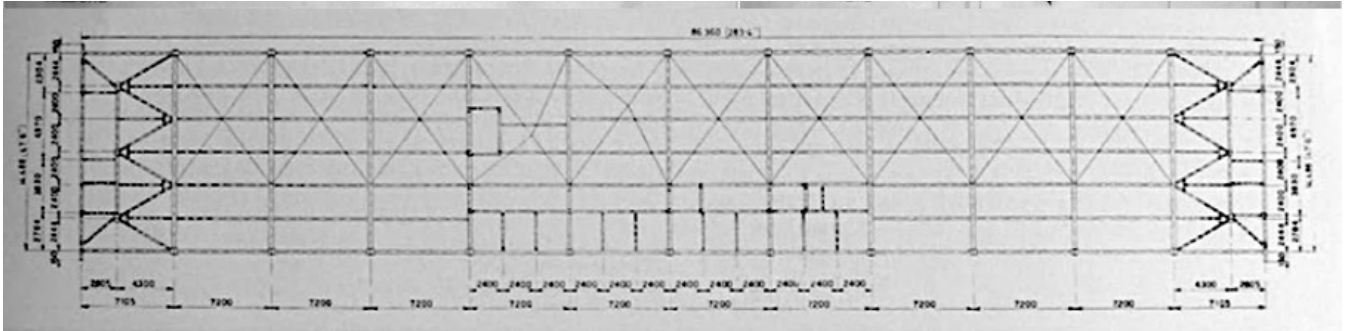


**Figure 11.** The building façade and a builder at extreme height who works with EUR in the background. Ubaldo Bertoli, *A palace is growing up at EUR*. Rome: *Il gatto Selvatico* 1961 (Anno VII), Ottobre, n. 10. Photos and text. ENI Archive, Castel Gandolfo, accessed March 26, 2020, [https://archiviostorico.eni.com/aseni/bookreader/books/GattoSelvatico\\_1961\\_10.html?r=gattoselvatico#page/16/mode/2up/search/palazzo+eur](https://archiviostorico.eni.com/aseni/bookreader/books/GattoSelvatico_1961_10.html?r=gattoselvatico#page/16/mode/2up/search/palazzo+eur)

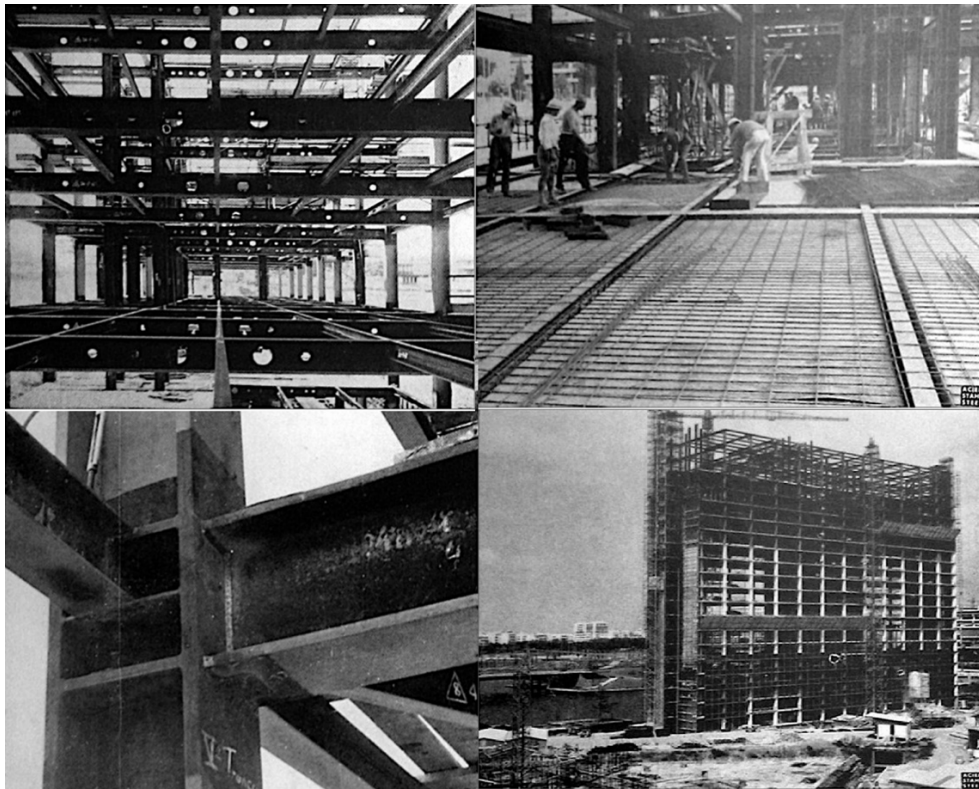
Nonetheless, for starting the construction process was chosen the frame system, that had already been used in the 1930s in Italy, albeit with different construction techniques, the masonry component of the construction was supposed to be incorporated, but it was partially removed. In fact, only the minor facades were configured as solid elements, while the two main facades were built with the light facade techniques using an innovative component: the Bauer iron, already applied in Italy on the Pirelli skyscraper construction.

The Bauer profile was implanted into the concrete slabs, allowing the connection with different types of joints and ensuring the free horizontal sliding of the facade panels during assembly. Sliding in other directions was guaranteed by the joint itself. During operation, the Bauer-joint node guaranteed the elasticity of the whole.<sup>18</sup> (Figure 12)

<sup>18</sup> Stefania Mornati, "La Facciata Leggera Del Complesso Direzionale Eni a Roma"[The light façade of the Eni office complex in Rome], *Theory and Practice of Construction: Knowledge, Means, Models. International congress in Ravenna*, vol.2 (October 2005): 822-823.

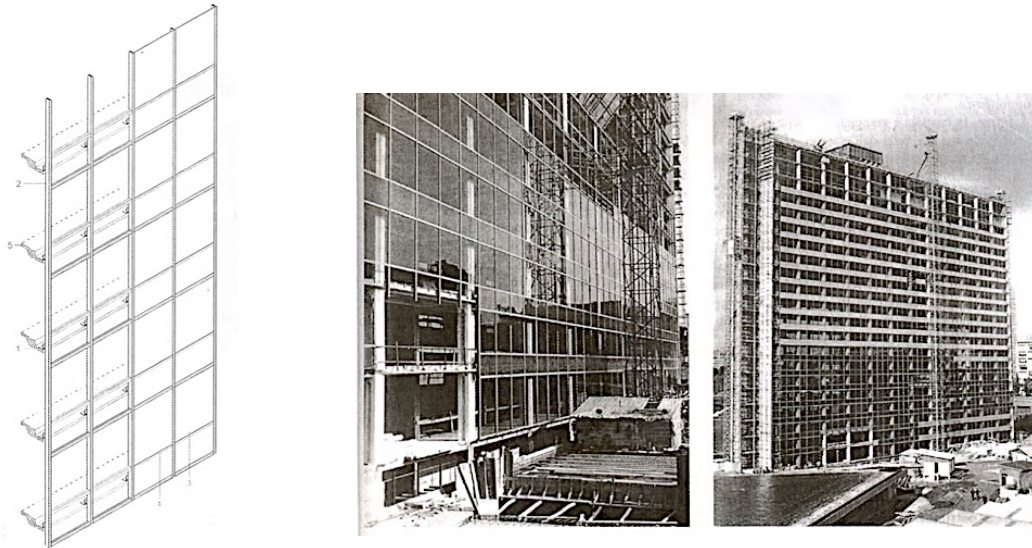


**Figure 12 .** The elastic steel structure plan. Studio Bacigalupo Ratti, *Steel structure plan, first project*, folder 70-3, item number 4058/42, CSAC - Centro Studi e Archivio della Comunicazione, Parma in Federica Magni, *Lo studio Bacigalupo Ratti e l'ENI (1955-1980). Rappresentazione della modernità ed etica della professione*, (MSc diss., Politecnico di Milano, 2011,) 178.



**Figure 13.** The pictures show the metal structure assembling process with the drilled beams for the pipes passage, the floor slabs and the use of steel with concrete reinforced floors, a beam-column joint and internal scaffoldings. Unknown, *Metal structure, floor slabs, beam-column connection detail and whole structure*, unknown in Federica Magni, *Lo studio Bacigalupo Ratti e l'ENI (1955-1980). Rappresentazione della modernità ed etica della professione*, (MSc diss., Politecnico di Milano, 2011,) 170-173.

The verticality of the facade was unbroken and marked by uprights in natural anodized aluminium (Figure 13), arranged at a centre distance of 1,80 meters while the horizontality was provided by the crosspieces arranged at 1,15 meters and 2,25 meters. The façade was devoid of openable profiles, thus optimizing watertight problems, reducing the number of profiles (uprights and crosspieces) and simplifying the construction section. (Figure 14)



**Figure 14-15.** ENI building façade structure constructive axonometry and two photos of the façade structure construction. Unknown, *ENI building façade under construction*, Archivio Storico Eni, Roma, 1961, in Stefania Mornati, “La facciata leggera del complesso direzionale ENI a Roma tra produzione industriale e tecnica artigianale” [The light façade of the Eni business complex in Rome: between industrial production and artisan technique] In. *Theory and practice of construction: knowledge, means, models*, International congress in Ravenna, (October, 2005): 824-825.

The air recycling therefore took place through an internal air conditioning system: a decisive and innovative revolution compared to the solutions adopted in the country, mostly dictated by the culture of physical and visual connection with the outside. Another peculiarity concerned the assembly of the façade that occurred from the inside without using any external scaffolding. Therefore, the finishing of the facade was completed through the use of two different types of crystals: a part with completely transparent fixed-wing windows in simple blue-green crystals allows internal-external visual permeability, and the part corresponding to the horizontal structures and cabinets for air conditioning was composed by enamelled glass panels. (Figure 15)

The ENI Palace dimensions were the factors that shaped it in a long and compact building eighty-seven meters by 16 meters, similar to the Britannic and American office buildings. But the characteristic that identified it as an Italian office building was the interior layout configuration.

The workplaces are located along the perimeter, to give employees access to daylight and outside view. Just as in the rest of continental Europe, architects and client emphasize the importance of a maximum penetration of light.<sup>19</sup>

As a representative Italian typology of office building, the open space offices were placed lengthwise the perimeter, while in the inner spaces were located secondary areas such as meeting rooms, services and vertical movement cores. (Figure 16)

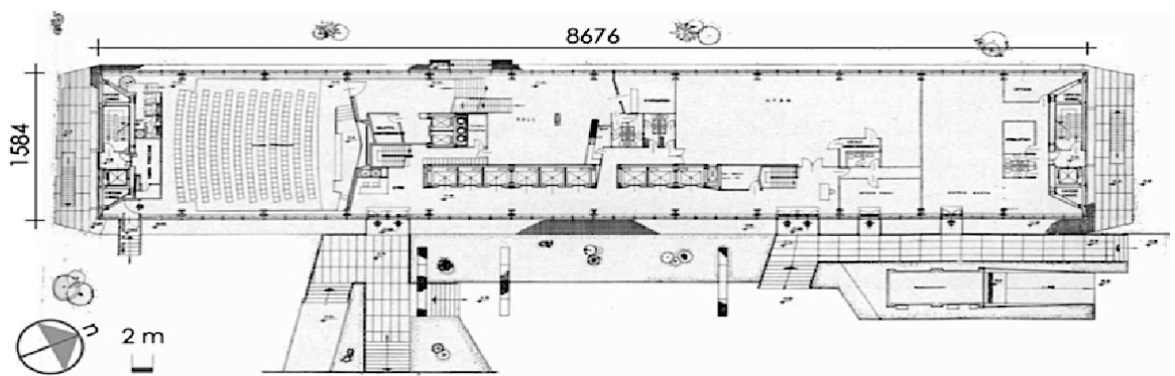
<sup>19</sup> van Meel, *The European Office: Office Design and National Context*, 115.

**Figure 16.** Photos showing the windows and some aspects of the office life as the open spaces or the canteen.



C.C. *La vita nel grattacielo*. The photographs show aspects of the office life and canteen in the new ENI Palace. 1962 (VIII), September, n°9. Screen Photograph. ENI Archive, Castel Gandolfo, accessed March 13, 2020, [https://archivistorico.eni.com/aseni/bookreader/books/GattoSelvatico\\_1962\\_09.html?r=gattoselvatic\\_o#page/10/mode/2up/search/palazzo+eur](https://archivistorico.eni.com/aseni/bookreader/books/GattoSelvatico_1962_09.html?r=gattoselvatic_o#page/10/mode/2up/search/palazzo+eur)

Moreover, the staircases were located in the short sides of the palace and the main corridor that was not located in the central axes, but it was moved to clarify the space hierarchy. On the other hand, at the centre of the main corridor were situated two elevators and behind them the services allowing the space to be lived in steps: arrival across the elevator, horizontal movement through the corridor, stop by the waiting area (Figures 17,18). The working space design was thought as one floor plan with open spaces to provide connection among the employees, and their desks were divided by furniture and two meeting rooms; only the managers were supposed to work in closed glass boxes. The chosen office layout established the innovative corporate vision desired by Mattei, with respect to the cultural context: an idea of a different workspace that favoured social relationships, interaction and job sharing among teams.



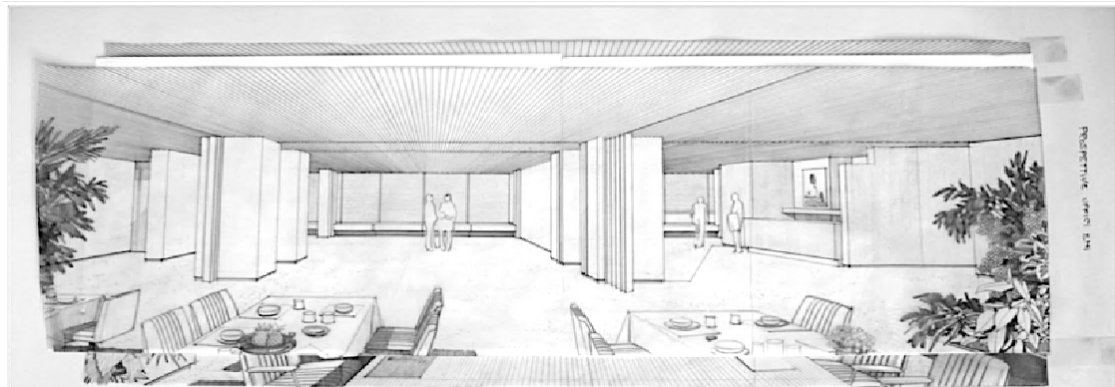
**Figure 17** Ground floor plan showing the entrance and the elevators.

Unknown, *Ground floor plan, current situation*, in Federica Magni, *Lo studio Bacigalupo Ratti e l'ENI (1955-1980). Rappresentazione della modernità ed etica della professione*, (MSc diss., Politecnico di Milano, 2011,) 162.



**Figure 18.** Corridor and furniture along the windows.

Unknown, *Interior Space corridor*, Studio Associato Alberti Matti Ferrari, Milan in Federica Magni, *Lo studio Bacigalupo Ratti e l'ENI (1955-1980). Rappresentazione della modernità ed etica della professione*, (MSc diss., Politecnico di Milano, 2011,) 210.



**Figure 19** Canteen perspective drawing, first project.

Studio Bacigalupo Ratti, *Canteen perspective drawing, first project*, folder 70-3, CSAC - Centro Studi e Archivio della Comunicazione, Parma in Federica Magni, *Lo studio Bacigalupo Ratti e l'ENI (1955-1980). Rappresentazione della modernità ed etica della professione*, (MSc diss., Politecnico di Milano, 2011,) 185.

Mattei desired to create a common sense of belonging to the business and to integrate all the employees into a single family building as was shown by the corporate magazine *Il Gatto Selvatico*, which office was moved on the ground floor of the new ENI Palace. The idea of wanting to create a community in which all employees felt they were a fundamental component of the company was redirected in the entrance and the canteen (Figures 19, 20). The canteen, which had seventeen hundred seats and served meals in two shifts, was hence conceived as a gathering space for lunch breaks among workforces, regardless their position. (Figure 21)

However, a little is known about the original furnishings of the canteen or the working spaces but some dynamics of those years may be considered. First, the collaboration between Mattei and Borsani, founder of the Tecno furniture corporation, for the interior design and furnishing of the offices of the first ENI buildings built in Metanopoli. Second, considering the culture of preference for more subtle things such as Italian office equipment. “ The freedom to choose your own ‘designer’ furniture may therefore be more important



than the size of your room".<sup>20</sup> For instance, public concern of clothing style and the visual arts persuaded managerial life.



**Figure 20.** ENI Palace main entrance from the outside and inside.

Unknown, *Entrance*, Studio Associato Alberti Matti Ferrari, Milan in Federica Magni, *Lo studio Bacigalupo Ratti e l'ENI (1955-1980). Rappresentazione della modernità ed etica della professione*, (MSc diss., Politecnico di Milano, 2011.) 210.



**Figure 21.** ENI Palace at EUR and the canteen building.

Author. *ENI Palace at EUR and the canteen building*. Rome 1962 (VIII), September, n°9. Screen Photograph. ENI Archive, Castel Gandolfo, accessed March 18, 2020, [https://archivistorico.eni.com/aseni/bookreader/books/GattoSelvatico\\_1962\\_09.html?r=gattoselvatico#page/8/mode/2up/search/palazzo+eur](https://archivistorico.eni.com/aseni/bookreader/books/GattoSelvatico_1962_09.html?r=gattoselvatico#page/8/mode/2up/search/palazzo+eur)

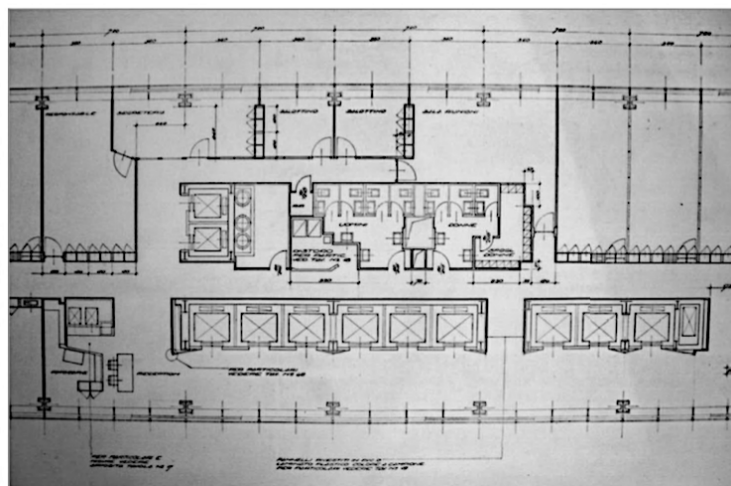
When the building opened, some of the finishing still needed to be completed, and after only two months from the building opening, Eni's chairman brilliant story ended up when he mysteriously died in a plane accident in 1962. The news about his death was tragic when it happened, but a few days later the media attention disappeared, making the event every year vaguer and more suspicious. Since Mattei passed away, his progressive figure remained untouched for Italian public opinion. Every Italian remembers Mattei as part

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 123.

of the culture, with respect and joy about the reforms, the buildings or the introduction of ENI service stations.

Afterward 1962, the architecture studio Bacigalupo-Ratti will be responsible for some changes of the building due to fire regulation update in 1977 and the general renovation in 1980, but the building kept its original appearance overall. As part of the general renovation of the Roman building, the traditional separation into small autonomous offices returned in 1980, due to a plan that was not totally suitable for the innovative open spaces. However, the presidency arrangement in the top floors of the building may have suggested respect for a hierarchical order, not a mere hierarchical approach. (Figure 22) On the contrary, Mattei had always worked and developed his ideas in a different way than the traditionalist and hierarchical context of the nation. As an additional example the restaurant, bar and guesthouse were also located alongside the rooms for the presidency, therefore demonstrating the sense of openness of the company towards the society.



**Figure 22.** Building central core with elevators and wet rooms, first project.

Studio Bacigalupo Ratti, *Building central core with elevators and wet rooms, first project*, folder 371-1, CSAC - Centro Studi e Archivio della Comunicazione, Parma in Federica Magni, *Lo studio Bacigalupo Ratti e l'ENI (1955-1980). Rappresentazione della modernità ed etica della professione*, (Master diss., Politecnico di Milano, 2011,) 167.

Nevertheless, meantime the architects developed many big scale projects in Italy, but not abroad. As F. Magni states their projects are not listed or protected because the buildings were not built on destroyed pre-existences as in case of Torre Velasca or Pirelli Centre.<sup>21</sup> In 1980 the architect Ugo Ratti passed away, and the studio work followed during the years, with new members. Fourteen years after his death, Marco Bacigalupo passed and the studio changed its name to Studio di Architettura Associato Alberto Matti Ferrari, losing every relation with the ENI company.

<sup>21</sup> Magni, "Lo Studio Bacigalupo Ratti e L'eni," 41.

However, a competition was held in 1999 and the *L'Arca*<sup>22</sup> magazine published it, but it would never be realized. The competition exhibited the need of a new image for the building, mirroring the principles of ENI in the new century: openness and sustainability. The winning project signed by Jean Nouvel would be a green façade, an opposite concept compared to the openness wanted by Mattei. (Figure 23)



**Figure 23** . Renders of the building, renewal proposal.

Jean Nouvel et al., *Renewal Proposal for ENI office building*, 1999, "Riqualificazione palazzo uffici ENI". *L'Arca*, n.140, September 1999, accessed March 25, 2020, <https://issuu.com/zirak/docs/131111100842-d0c5500d4a114cb19dd2c1032ae0142f>

As usual in Italy, the project of façade restyling was not accomplished, maintaining the building how it was. In 2016 a new project for the ENI Headquarters in Rome will be proposed, maintaining the ENI Palace as the representative building. The new headquarters, planned to be completed on June of 2020, are located in EUR Castellaccio, in the developing side of the EUR district nominated *Business park*<sup>23</sup> where the Euroski tower (the higher skyscraper of Rome), Europarco Tower and EUROMA 2 are located. EUR district maintained its domain over the other districts during the years, being still today a residential and commercial area where the major companies, both public and private, have the headquarters. Since the start of its reconstruction in 1951 the EUR district developed in both urban and architectural design, becoming the most important financial and tertiary pole of the capital. The Central Lake Park it is still today

<sup>22</sup> Stefano Pavarini, "Riqualificazione Palazzo Uffici Eni" *L'ARCA*, September, 1999, 5-29.

<sup>23</sup> Danilo, Campagna, and Alessandro Aronica, "New ENI Headquarters in ROMA EUR", Ingenio IMREADY Srl, last modified February 2, 2020, <https://www.ingenio-web.it/24659-strutture-in-calcestruzzo-la-nuova-sede-eni-roma-eur>.

a trend area, and ENI Palace its milestone: in 2019 the original magnificent façade of the Palace was used as a background for the opening act of the Solid Light Festival, promoting sustainability. (Figure 24)



**Figure 24.** Eni Palace façade during the Solid Light Festival in 2019.

Unknown, Solid Light Festival 2019, "Roma, il colossale videomapping che trasformerà il Palazzo Eni all'Eur", Il Messaggero fotogallery, accessed 1 April 2020, [https://www.ilmessaggero.it/fotogallery/roma/roma\\_videomapping\\_palazzo\\_eni\\_eur-4807754.html](https://www.ilmessaggero.it/fotogallery/roma/roma_videomapping_palazzo_eni_eur-4807754.html)

## 2.2 ENI Palace cultural meaning

During the 1950-1960 economic growth, many new companies flourished around Europe, and one of the successful entrepreneurs of the Italian post-war development was Adriano Olivetti, whom ideas were able to connect the industrial advance practically involving social and cultural factors.<sup>24</sup> Despite Olivetti influenced the Modern building design, he was not the only man to adopt an innovative approach to development.



**Figure 25.** Palazzo ENI Roma EUR

Agostino De Maio, *Palazzo ENI di Roma EUR*, "Fotoweb", Roma, 2015, accessed March 5, 2020, [https://www.fotoweb.it/roma/Foto\\_Roma\\_EUR.htm](https://www.fotoweb.it/roma/Foto_Roma_EUR.htm)

Enrico Mattei besides meant the whole ENI company as a family where cohesion and communication were two fundamental factors both in Italy and abroad. The innovative method influenced not only architectural aspects of the Italian office building landscape that did not match the Italian standards, but also social interaction with the open-minded activities and facilities to the employees such as *Il Gatto Selvatico* magazine.

Mattei was convinced that the richness of the company were the people. Machines, tools, installations could be replaced and rebuilt, people no. People are the biggest heritage for a company: they are who gives it quality and make it diverse, they compose the authentic strength.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Ghirardo, *Italy: Modern Architectures in History*, 132.

<sup>25</sup> Francesco Mancini, "Mattei E La Comunicazione Aziendale"[Mattei and the Corporate communication], in *Eni. Un'autobiografia. La Vita Delle Imprese* [Eni. An autobiography. Business Life.] (Milan: Sperling & Kupfer, 1994), 213.

Mancini discussed why Mattei cared about employees personal life, education and cheerfulness, pretending to offer them any kind of facility structure for sports entertainment, leisure villages, religious structure and retirement homes.

ENI Palace was the architectural representation of these principles, additionally, the building was located in the city of Rome, a city that had always been persistent to changes, treasuring its axes development and following the direction of the pre-existing artefacts. In the ENI Office Palace central headquarters, the architects Bacigalupo-Ratti applied the efficiency principles of the offices in Metanopoli, but the capital city was distant from the steel northern industrial mindset. The building was a new freestanding mass over the Central Lake park of EUR, a technological enhancement for the country, an image for the citizens and still is nowadays. (Figure 25)

Today the building artefacts of Modern Heritage are not considered masterpieces, and many buildings are abandoned or have been demolished. Luckily, ENI Palace was kept, but during the years it changed, adapting to the working requests of the moment, currently becoming just the representative building. However, it is a risk if it is not documented as modern heritage, safeguarded and protected by intervention criteria that correspond to its testimonial value. Such knowledge and awareness can be acknowledged by research, that through a specific methodology studies the building highlighting its peculiarity. ENI Palace characteristic is not only interrelated to technological, architectural and urban qualities, but also include a significant social aspect associated with Mattei's personality and his working approach.

"Office buildings, in particular, are prone to obsolescence, due in part to the general economic downturn of the last years, but also, and more structurally so, due to new work formats that are being adopted."<sup>26</sup> However, the ENI office building is a type of both tangible immovable cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage for the National Company management and working traditions that did not develop further. Rome's tradition about office buildings had always been associated with the representative eclectic buildings located in the inner area of the city and ENI Palace pushed the citizens to move to EUR, a new district that had to offer an innovative type of office building.

During the last years, it was presented in the *Third International Congress on Construction History* as a demonstration of the Italian innovation in skyscrapers for the use of steel and curtain wall, influencing the Italian urban skyline. Moreover, the DGAAP (General direction of contemporary art and architecture and urban peripheries) has been applying a strategy of intervention on contemporary architectures of the Italian peripheries, so establishing criteria to protect and retain modern buildings. The architecture catalogue

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<sup>26</sup> Wessel de Jonge and Marieke Kuipers, *Designing from Heritage: Strategies for Conservation and Conversion* (Delft: TU Delft, 2017), 32.

includes the ENI Palace in the category "A. Work of excellence"<sup>27</sup>. However, some of the updatable criteria such as an international publication in English or an analysis of the relevant aspect in the urban context are missing in the record. Bringing evidence to the lack of DGAAP criteria and giving input regarding the importance of building protection, the thesis will recognize the Palace architectural and cultural value in the Italian modern heritage framework.

The year 2020 is the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary from the death of Olivetti, and Giovanni Bertoluzza argues about how our cities would have been today if we had followed Olivetti's urban approach and working methods.

In the 1960s, the history of our urban development took other paths; the same planning principles had deliberately broken the direct link with architecture, placing strong tools (among all zoning) between the idea and the realization, only many years later and only partially overcome.<sup>28</sup>

The author mentions the principles that were not accurately highlighted in history and all the theory related to the employee as human being and part of a community got lost. Italian cities would be different today, made of culture, work, community as both Mattei and Olivetti would have wanted.

If none take action about documenting the ENI Palace and its resilience and cultural value, all the history associated with Mattei's influent figure for the city of Rome will be lost. This thesis aims to emphasise ENI Palace reality and records, to channelling a new image and interpretation of the original production, reinforcing its new essence in 2020. Social-cultural changes are not controllable, they do not follow an established framework, but they are represented by building and their *locus solus*.<sup>29</sup> The office building could be recognized as an archetype identity emphasizing its specific features: pioneering urban location, structure technology, interior, furniture, working spaces, working methods, are the resilient guidelines to resolve the conflicting ideas about the Modern heritage in a traditional city such as Rome. In *Place, Naming and the Interpretation of Cultural Landscapes*, Alderman explains the importance of the architect in the cultural practice not only for creating a sense of continuity but also for challenging and shifting lines of uniqueness<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> "Architetture del secondo '900 – Palazzo per Uffici dell'ENI" [Architecture of the second half of the 1900s. ENI Office Building], Direzione Generale Arte E Architetture Contemporanee e Periferie Urbane [General direction of contemporary art and architecture and urban peripheries], MiBAC, accessed April 12, 2020.

<http://www.architetturecontemporanee.beniculturali.it/architetture/index.php>

<sup>28</sup> Giovanni Bertoluzza, "Ivrea e l'eredità dispersa di Adriano Olivetti" [Ivrea and the Adriano Olivetti's loss of legacy], *Il giornale dell'architettura* [Newspaper of architecture], March 10, 2020, <https://ilgiornaledellarchitettura.com/web/2020/03/10/ivrea-e-leredita-dispersa-di-adriano-olivetti/>

<sup>29</sup> Aldo Rossi and Peter Eisenman, *The Architecture of the City*. (Cambridge,IN: MIT Press, 1982), 7.

<sup>30</sup> Derek H Alderman, "Place, Naming and the Interpretation of Cultural Landscapes," in *Heritage and Identity*, ed. Brian Graham and Peter Howard (Burlington: Ashate, 2008), 195-213.

### 3 MODERN HERITAGE: IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The social and industrial vision that ENI Palace embodies is the architectural evidence of resilience and cultural value. Resilience is the flexibility of supporting the negative unexpected and flourish from it, the Palace urban and architectural design has always been a challenging point, firstly when it was built at EUR being new area aloof from the city centre, secondly because its architectural image is decreasing in relevance although it is located in a exceedingly magnificent location. Furthermore, the cultural meaning is the social aspect, associated with Enrico Mattei influent figure, that settled the building intangible and emotionally related: the working environment and therefore the services he shaped to ENI employees are still an example of a person that invested more in human brainpower than machines.

During the Economic Miracle, the Italian panorama began to measure new transformations which changed the economic and social system involving inequities and inner disorder. As an example, with the absence of supervisory control, production and consumption were mismanaged, giving space to North-West regions with former industrial features, focusing the progression on the private goods than the general public.

ENI was one example of the rare managerial success: Enrico Mattei, the chairman of the ENI public company, invested in renovation for a public interest believing that innovation, services and culture would lead to progress and profit. Proving his achievements in Metanopoli, Mattei wanted to build a Palace in Rome as a representative building of a both nationally and internationally developing business. The EUR peripheral district will be chosen as it was destined to become the business district of the Capital City, and it would allow the building to become a landmark over the Central reservoir.

The ENI building was le largest in its kind steel structure that will be sitting on the Central Park Lake reflecting the extensive glass façade within the water. The palace façade displayed Mattei's social principle in its technological advance: innovative materials, façade openness, open space layout, a canteen as an organization meeting point and plenty of other features. The modernisation, expressed in the architectural definition of the building and the building technology will be photographed and emphasised within the corporate magazine *Il Gatto Selvatico*, raising awareness among ENI employees about the Palace prominence in the corporation and worldwide.

After Mattei's death, the Palace will be subjected to minor changes until 1980, but anon, it will not mirror the image of the corporate anymore. Hence, despite the Palace is the magnificent backcloth of the lake, it is lacking maintenance and being overshadowed by the new ENI Office headquarters, risking to be forgotten.



The thesis acknowledges several values of architectural and historical relevance associated with the cultural heritage of the city, while underlining the danger of losing the ENI Palace significance. Through cooperation the building would acquire the missing specifics, and it could become protected by the DGAAP, that may guarantee its maintenance and therefore the spread of its resilience and cultural values over the years.

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