TURIN AND THE POLITICS OF VISIBILITY
INTERNATIONALISATION, BRANDLING AND CITY REPOSITIONING

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SALUTI DA

FIAT 850

TORINO
TURIN: KEYWORDS

Industrialization/deindustrialization
Urban regeneration
Creative city
Mega-events
Economic crisis
Smart city
...

Politics of visibility: selective storytelling has moved (and still is moving) the boundary between the visible and the invisible in order to promote the city
THE IDENTITY OF THE CITY: TURIN AND INDUSTRIALISM

- Industrial culture is palpable in stereotypes about the inhabitants, historical events, economic specializations, urban landscapes
- Share of employment industrial sector (Province)
  - 1996: 36,4%
  - 2006: 34,9%
  - 2015: 30,1%
THE EVOLUTION OF THE ‘SELECTIVE STORYTELLING’

1970s/1980s Fordist crisis

1980s/early 1990s internal debates: what to do in case of a FIAT crisis?

Late 1990s let’s join the new economy!

1999-2006 the hype of the Games: Turin is changing!

2006-2010 chasing big (and not so big) events

2010-2016 crisis
VISUAL MATERIALS:
BRANDING THE CITY, 2006-2010
A SNAPSHOT OF THE CRISIS IN 2016

**Unemployment:** 11.9% (in 2006 it was 4.1%)

**Business failures:** 519 (in 2007 they were 256) ‘a Spoon River of enterprises’

**Public debt per-capita:** about 3,520 euros per head (total debt 3 billion euros)

AN UNEXPECTED CRISIS

Survey, 2004: people agreed with the project of hosting the Games with a percentage of 79%, while negative opinions made up just 2%. More than 90% said that they feel proud that Turin won the bidding competition for hosting the Games

Survey, 2006: 53% were confident that the positive effects of the Games will be long lasting for years
WHICH ECONOMIC VOCATIONS?

October 2014: FIAT Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) → headquarters in London and Amsterdam

Severe cuts in the cultural sector (2012 protest) involving about 37,000 workers
WHICH ECONOMIC VOCATIONS?

Cultures and practices ‘on the margins’ have been ‘reinvented’ in order to diversify the economic basis and/or as rhetorical devices.

Examples:
- Cinema
- ‘Informal’ urban practices, such as urban gardening
- Food (enogastronomy)
Turin as a cultural city

industry / culture / consumption –> high-quality enogastronomy

in the framework of the on-going crisis of the local economy and, partly, of the local cultural industry, food has been reframed as both a cultural experience and a local industrial activity.
JANUS BRANDING: OPEN PROBLEMS

External image ➡ luxury, food, consumption [framed as culture] [no mention of the crisis]

Internal discourse ➡ hope for the future, new technologies [smart city] [no mention, but implicit references to the crisis]

“a smart city is able to spend less and better without lowering the quantity and services provided to citizens and businesses”
THANKS!

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