

Patrimonio abbandonato e valore sociale: (ri)usi informali per una conservazione radicale

Abandoned heritage and social value: informal (re)uses for a radical conservation

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Da decenni i cittadini si stanno riappropriando di aree urbane abbandonate, sottoutilizzate o a rischio, in Europa e non solo. Queste iniziative sono spazi per nuove forme di cittadinanza, espressione artistica, interazione sociale e inclusione, traducendosi in valore sociale. Al contempo, queste trasformazioni dal basso, con fondi ridotti e necessità funzionali limitate, spesso rispettano e adattano gli spazi in modo più sensibile che in interventi istituzionali, talvolta guidati da intenti non sempre culturali. Dove l'interesse economico si affievolisce, ne trae vantaggio sia la comunità sia l'architettura, creando una sinergia con implicazioni significative per la conservazione. A partire dal caso di Berlino, per giungere fino a Torino, il contributo intende fornire una chiave di lettura sul fenomeno.

For decades, citizens have been reclaiming abandoned urban areas across Europe and beyond. These initiatives create spaces for new forms of citizenship, artistic expression, social interaction, and inclusion, providing primarily social value. At the same time, these grassroots transformations, with limited funding and specific functional needs, often respect and adapt spaces more sensitively than institutional efforts, which can overlook or disrupt the historical value of these areas. Where economic interest fades, both the community and architecture benefit, creating a synergy with significant implications for conservation. This paper will explore this phenomenon, beginning with the emblematic case of Berlin.

I. Abandoned spaces as a social and conservative opportunity

This essay proposes reflections on the vitality that often animates the interstitial spaces of contemporary cities, those parts of the urban context that are abandoned, underutilized, marginalized and momentarily spared from the speculative interests of the market. These spaces become opportunities for cultural and social experimentation for niche communities, which find a space of expression in these locations and contribute to preserving and transforming them. Such reuse processes often occur in unconventional, informal ways, but they can appear more socially, culturally and even architecturally significant, stimulating and sustainable than transformations enacted through institutional processes.

From a conservative perspective, observing these experiences is crucial because, even though they are fragile, precarious, temporary and often destined to fail quickly, they experiment with forms of transformation and management of disused heritage that go beyond the speculative logic of the market, showing alternative ways of reuse, sometimes more compatible with heritage conservation, precisely because they are conducted with minimal resources and limited functional requirements. These forms of reuse align more closely with the needs of entire sections of citizens and provide, in most cases, services for residents, spaces for collectivity, dialogue, confrontation and experimentation. These interactions generate a wide range of social values, as defined by Sian Jones, who states that “social values are fluid, culturally specific forms of value embedded in experience and practice. Some may align with official state-sponsored ways of valuing the historic environment, but many aspects of social value are created through unofficial and informal modes of engagement”¹. This social value emerges because the groups and subcultures that shape these places are simultaneously shaped within them, in a reciprocal relationship where collective action – such as occupation – and place – such as an abandoned industrial building – mutually influence each other. Occupations, cooperative living initiatives, artistic research, political and social activism – often all these things together – are some of the cultural phenomena that drive groups of citizens to reclaim these liminal realities – abandoned industrial sites, vacant residential buildings, potentially any abandoned structure within the urban fabric – asserting through their use a right to the city that, especially in advanced capitalist economies, appears constantly threatened by a growing trend towards institutionalization, privatization and commercialization of urban spaces.

As defined by Henri Lefebvre, the right to the city is the right of socially, economically and culturally diverse groups and individuals to use urban space for daily life, personal and social development, and dialogue². When capitalist or technocratic regimes do not guarantee this right, Lefebvre suggests that citizens should employ alternative tools such as the reappropriation of space, its occupation or its “*détournement*”³. The concept of *détournement* – diversion – is particularly interesting for this reflection: for Lefebvre, it indicates the act of diverting or subverting the original use and meaning of an object, symbol or space, reassigning it a new meaning in a different context or in contrast with the dominant one. It is a form of cultural critique and resistance aimed at revealing and destabilizing the power dynamics inherent in cultural and spatial representations. Specifically, in the city context, Lefebvre sees *détournement* as a means through which mar

1 Sian Jones, *Wrestling with the Social Value of Heritage: Problems, Dilemmas, and Opportunities*, in «*Journal of Community Archaeology & Heritage*», vol. IV, 2017, pages 21-37. On the same subject, see also: Chris Johnston, *What is Social Value?*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra 1992.

2 Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l'espace*, Anthropos, Paris 1974.

3 Henri Lefebvre *Critique de la vie quotidienne, III. De la modernité au modernisme (Pour une métaphilosophie du quotidien)*, L'Arche, Paris 1981.

4 All the photos used here were taken within the RAW complex at the time of writing this article. The reason for this is that the area, as shown in these photos, will soon no longer exist. The decision to use only these photos is therefore intended as a tribute to this fundamental place of Berlin's counterculture. The photos were taken by Jacopo Calleri (to whom I express my gratitude for his great availability) with a Fujii GS 645 analogue camera. All persons pictured consented to be filmed.

5 In the vast bibliography on the subject, see in particular: Kenny Cupers, Marcus Miessen, *Spaces of uncertainty*, Muller and Busmann, Wuppertal, Germany 2002; Kate Shaw, *The Place of Alternative Culture and the Politics of its Protection in Berlin, Amsterdam, and Melbourne*, in «Planning Theory & Practice», vol. 6, n. 2, 2005, pages 149-169; Claire Colomb, *Staging the new Berlin; Place marketing and the politics of urban reinvention post-1989*, Routledge, London 2012; Claire Colomb, *Pushing the Urban Frontier: Temporary Uses of Space, City Marketing, and the Creative City Discourse in 2000S Berlin*, in «Journal of Urban Affairs», 34(2), 2012, pages 131-152; Ingo Bader, Martin Bialluch, *Gentrification and the Creative Class in Berlin-Kreuzberg*, in Libby Porter, Kate Shaw (eds.), *Whose Urban Renaissance? An International Comparison of Urban Regeneration Strategies*, Routledge, New York 2013, pages 96-99; Daniela Sandler, *Counterpreservation. Architectural Decay in Berlin since 1989*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca (NY) 2016.

6 Most of the information on the history of the RAW can be found online, within the websites of the associations involved in its management or in blogs that have provided updates on the status of the site over the years. More information can be found in: Natalia Kvitkova, Lorenza Manfredi, *Reconfiguring the Neoliberal City: Three Stories of Urban Pioneers in Berlin*, in Ianira Vassallo, Michele Cerruti But, Giulia Setti, Agim Kercuku, *Spatial Tensions in Urban Design*, Springer, Berlin 2022, pages 149-159.

ginal or alternative social groups can reclaim urban space, challenging the control and rationalization imposed by authorities and capitalist forces. This practice allows city dwellers to counter and critique institutional choices and power structures through creative and unconventional use of space, transforming abandoned or commercially oriented places into sites of political, cultural, and social expression. This includes the practice of occupying and reusing abandoned or decaying buildings as alternative cultural centers or communal living spaces in a process that not only contests the planned economic function of these spaces (such as their conversion into luxury properties) but also creates new meanings and uses that reflect the values and needs of the community inhabiting them. This concept is essential to understanding how the city can become a battleground for different visions of daily life, where the meaning and use of space are constantly negotiated and contested, and where architectural heritage – and its conservation – becomes both the stage and the object of this struggle.

2. Berlin: a city transformed by counterculture⁴

Berlin represents a unique case of spatial appropriation and countercultural initiatives. The city, particularly in its post-reunification period, has been a fertile ground for alternative cultures that have redefined the use of abandoned and derelict urban spaces⁵. Two prominent examples of this phenomenon are the RAW Gelände (*Reichsbahnausbesserungswerk* - State Railway Repair Workshops), a sprawling former railway maintenance yard in the district of Friedrichshain transformed into a multifunctional space for sociality and artistic expression, and Kunsthaus Tacheles an early 20th century department store that became an art center in the 1990.

Starting from the RAW (Figures 1-10), the history of this site is as long, rich and layered as that of many other spaces in Berlin. It began in 1867, when this part of the city was known as the *Königlich Preußische Eisenbahnwerkstatt Berlin II* (Royal Prussian Railway Workshop Berlin II). The workshop was built during the economic boom of the late 19th century in Prussia, serving as a support facility for the railway network and located southeast of the old Ostbahnhof. By the end of World War I, around 1,200 people were employed there. Following the war, the space was renamed *Reichsbahnausbesserungswerk Franz Stenzer*⁶.



Fig. 1, 2 – Life flows among the disused buildings of the RAW complex.

Over the years, the facility's importance to the railway system gradually diminished, leading Deutsche Bahn to close it. By 1995, only a few halls were still being used for train and locomotive maintenance. The other buildings fell into disrepair and, as was often the case in Berlin at the time, were reclaimed as cultural spaces.

In 1998, the newly formed association RAW-Tempel e.V. converted many of the former railway workshop buildings into artistic studios, exhibition spaces and venues suitable for performances and other activities of public interest, transforming the area into a vibrant hub of subcultural activity. Over the next two decades, RAW became synonymous with Berlin's alternative scene, a hub for street artists, including internationally recognized figures, as well as for sports enthusiasts and local communities.

The alternative scene in Berlin – a “brisk sub – and counterculture of punk, Industrial, New Wave and NDW (*Neue Deutsche Welle*)”⁷ – evolved out of a mix of new social movements, including squatters, community activists, artists, the gay scene and rebellious students. This scene thrived for three decades in abandoned industrial sites and empty residential buildings, mainly in the inner-West Berlin district of Kreuzberg⁸. Due to specific conditions such as low rents, these spaces enabled, or at least facilitated, experimental music and other forms of creative expression. The abandoned buildings offered the proper ambience for music, art and partying. Cheap or free inner-city places are breeding grounds for the alternative scene⁹. Its constituent subcultures form them and are formed within them. Their marginality has long ensured their lack of formal recognition. As Daniela Sandler notes, Berlin's unique history and socio-political landscape post-unification created an environment where counterpreservation – embracing architectural decay rather than restoration – became a form of resistance and cultural expression¹⁰.

Today, the area houses numerous venues that host live music and DJ events, as well as facilities such as a skate park and a space for climbing – one of the most popular sports among Berliners. Meanwhile, the ownership of the site changed hands multiple times between German and foreign investors, who acquired various parts of the complex, primarily intending to exploit its significant commercial and development potential, particularly for building apartments and offices. Despite its success as a cultural hub, RAW faced ongoing challenges related to its legal status and the interests of property developers. As Berlin's popularity grew, so did the pressure on inner-city areas to ‘clean up’ and cater to more affluent residents and tourists. The RAW Gelände, situated in a prime location, became a target for redevelopment.

The Kurth Group, the current owner, presented new development plans for the RAW Gelände in February 2022, to the deep disappointment of the numerous local club enthusiasts and street artists who characterize this space. Artistic and cultural spaces like Suicide Circus, Urban Spree, Astra Kulturhaus and parts of the climbing facilities will be replaced by commercial buildings and residential complexes. Even the open spaces are slated for construction.

Debates around the future of RAW highlight the tension between preserving the unique, grassroots cultural environment and the city's push towards gentrification and commercial redevelopment.

A similar case of transformation and reuse of abandoned and partially destroyed buildings by the community is represented by Tacheles¹¹, arguably Berlin's most renowned space for countercultural expression, known even beyond Germany. The Tacheles building has a complex and layered history that mirrors Berlin's transformations. Initially built

⁷ Ingo Bader, *Re-industrialization by companies of the culture industry. Or: the 'New Media' destroy their own 'locational factors'*, in Conference of the International Network for Urban Research and Action, Berlin, June 2003.

⁸ Shaw, *The place of alternative culture* cit.

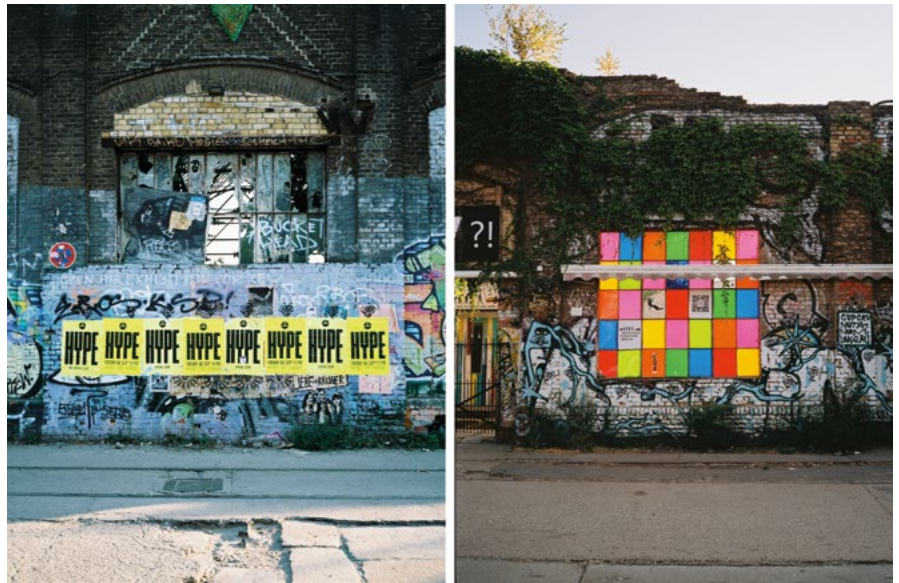
⁹ On the nature of sub-countercultures, see Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, Methuen, London 1979.

¹⁰ Sandler, *Counterpreservation* cit., p. 45.

¹¹ About Tacheles see Janet Stewart, *The Kunsthaus Tacheles: The Berlin Architecture Debate in Micro-Historical Context*, in Stuart Taberner, Frank Finlay (eds.), *Recasting German Identity: Culture Politics and Literature in the Berlin Republic*, Camden House, Rochester NY 2002, pages 51–66.

Fig. 3, 4 – The colours of the murals and posters and the spontaneous vegetation surrounding many of the buildings in the RAW.

Fig. 5 – Skatehalle, the skatepark created inside one of the disused buildings.



as a department store in the early 20th century, it suffered significant damage during World War II. By the 1980s, it was slated for demolition. However, in 1990, following the fall of the Berlin Wall, the building was occupied by a group of artists seeking to save it. Their efforts were successful, and Tacheles quickly became an iconic center for alternative culture in the city. Its name, derived from Yiddish meaning ‘to speak clearly’, embodied the spirit of the space, fostering a free and anarchic atmosphere that challenged conventional norms. A vibrant artistic community emerged within Tacheles, including painters, sculptors, musicians and performers. The building hosted artistic studios, exhibition spaces, galleries, an independent cinema and a theater. For over two decades, Tacheles served as a haven for Berlin’s counterculture, offering a venue where creativity could flourish outside the commercial art market’s constraints. However, rising property values and pressure from developers attracted by the growing notoriety of the place, which over time has also become a tourist attraction, increasingly threatened its future.

In 2012, following a series of legal disputes and protests, Tacheles was evicted and the building was closed. The site became the focus of an

ambitious redevelopment project by architects Herzog & de Meuron. Completed in 2023, this project has radically transformed Tacheles and its surrounding area. While some historical elements of the original structure, such as the exterior façade, have been preserved, new buildings have been introduced for commercial, residential and cultural purposes. A key component of the new development is *Fotografiska*, a private photography museum that now occupies part of the complex. This redevelopment has sparked mixed reactions. While some appreciate Herzog & de Meuron's selective preservation of the historical building, many critics view the transformation of Tacheles as a symbol of Berlin's increasing commercialization and gentrification. Once a bastion of artistic freedom and non-formity, Tacheles has been integrated into a contemporary complex that includes luxury spaces and commercial enterprises, marking a stark departure from its former identity. The transformation of Tacheles reflects Berlin's broader evolution, transitioning from a center of counterculture to a city increasingly driven by real estate development and commerce. This shift raises important questions about the preservation of cultural heritage and the changing nature of urban spaces, highlighting the conflict between the need to maintain spaces for alternative culture and the economic pressures that seek to incorporate them into urban development processes.

The experiences of RAW and Tacheles demonstrate the ongoing struggle to maintain spaces for alternative culture in the face of gentrification and urban redevelopment. These spaces represent not only artistic and cultural value but also social value, as they foster community and provide platforms for cultural resistance. However, their existence is continually threatened by the forces of market-driven redevelopment, which often prioritize economic gains over cultural preservation. As these spaces are redeveloped or commercialized, there is a risk that the unique cultural environments they fostered will be lost. And with this, there is also the risk of losing the historical, aesthetic, and memorial values embodied by the buildings themselves. The transformations carried out by these countercultural communities have, in effect, implemented a form of spontaneous and necessary integrated conservation. Due to the new functions' low impact and the occupants' limited financial means, these spaces were adapted without significantly altering the structures. By contrast, the transformation of Tacheles and the projects for RAW show a degree of alteration driven by excessive functional demands. If not for the tourist appeal of the sites' artistic heritage, it would seem more convenient to eliminate even the last remnants of these historical memories.

The struggle to maintain these spaces highlights a broader issue in urban development: how to balance the preservation of abandoned heritage and the cultural and social value connected to it with the pressures of economic growth and redevelopment. This balance is challenging to achieve in Berlin, as in many other cities around Europe, including Italy.

3. Beyond Berlin: a viable future for fragile experiences

Why are these two case studies of such great interest? The reason is that they provide an overview of the entire life cycle of significant experiences of the reclamation of spaces by the people, highlighting both their values and critical issues. Most importantly, these cases clearly illustrate the breaking point threatening their survival. Their

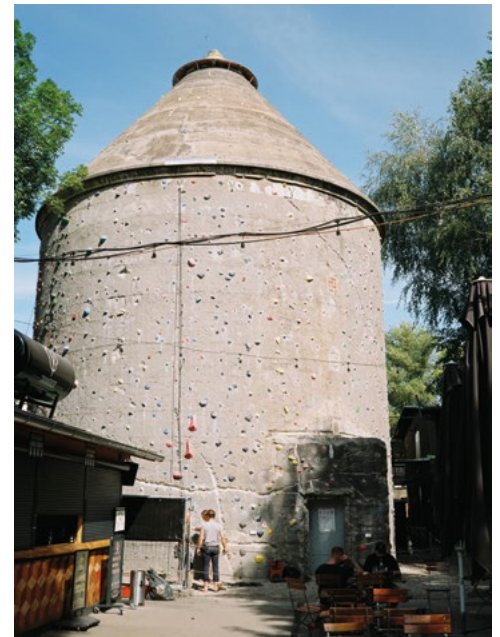


Fig. 6 – Der Kegel. This is one of the most interesting reuses within the RAW. An aboveground bunker of the Winkeltürme type converted into a climbing wall.



Fig. 7 - Bars and street markers characterise the network of streets running through the RAW complex.

progression can be summarized as follows: first, there is the abandonment of spaces, followed by their reclamation by niche groups of citizens, then a period of equilibrium in which these places reach their peak vitality. This is then followed by the onset of touristification, which re-attracts the attention of the state or investors. At this stage, these experiences may face a crisis due to market pressures and, in some cases, come to an end. This is what happened to Tacheles in 2012 and what seems to be occurring at RAW, which, while still active, appears to be moving towards its final transformation.

However, the story of these experiences does not end there: the memory of the vitality brought to these spaces through the spontaneous action of citizens is often utilized – or rather exploited – by new investors. They leverage the established image of these places to characterize their new projects, which, however, seem far removed from the original spirit that animated them. This appears to be an inevitable process, a typical example of gentrification.

This leads us to an inevitable question: are there solutions that, recognizing the value of these experiences both socially and conservatively, can ensure their existence 'in plain sight'? 'In plain sight' because these phenomena, not just in the case of Berlin, seem to thrive during phases of marginal protection, and then begin to disintegrate, as mentioned, when they start gaining wider recognition.

Is it possible to anticipate these dynamics of dissolution, fostering a secure development that is shielded from potential market aggression? In response to the challenges faced by alternative cultural spaces in urban environments, one promising approach is the adoption of

governance models that prioritize community engagement and collective use of abandoned or underused spaces¹². These models involve formal agreements between local governments and communities, allowing residents to manage and use abandoned or underused urban spaces directly. Such frameworks help protect the social and cultural values of these areas, resisting the pressures of commodification and ensuring that they remain accessible to diverse groups of people.

From this perspective, Italy represents an intriguing case study. Starting in around 2010, but with many examples already in the previous two decades¹³, innovative initiatives have been spreading all over Italy, involving the direct reclamation of abandoned or underused cultural spaces and theaters – often of significant architectural value – by communities of citizens, committees and artists. The major initiatives of this kind, often in the form of occupations, include Macao and Tempio del Futuro Perduto in Milan, Teatro Valle and Cinema Palazzo in Rome, Teatro Garibaldi and now Assemblea Montevergini in Palermo, Teatro Rossi Aperto in Pisa, Sale Docks in Venice, Cavallerizza Irreale and Variante Bunker in Turin¹⁴, along with Teatro Pinelli in Messina. Not to mention the more historic experiences, such as the Askatasuna, and Murazzi and Docks Dora in Turin, which can be seen as part of this phenomenon.

Some of these experiences, unfortunately, have already ended. A notable example is Macao in Milan, which was occupied from 2012 to 2021. Macao transformed an old Art Nouveau slaughterhouse into a hub for cultural experimentation. It was a space which housed a diverse range of activities within the space of just a few years:

It was not unusual to see your parents leaving an event dedicated to plant exchange while you were entering to dance. But not only that; inside you could also find a market, a carpentry workshop, boxing, numerous meeting groups, a cinema, a silkscreen printing workshop, tango, an orchestra, a recording studio, a tailoring workshop, a theater hall, and a clothing swap space¹⁵.

Similarly, Cavallerizza in Turin was occupied from 2014 to 2019, serving as another emblematic example.

This civic impetus did, however, lead to some intriguing developments, proving that it is possible to incorporate these experiences more systematically into the planning of future cities. In other words, a space exists for dialogue between institutions and communities that is not merely oppositional but constructive.

An example of this approach can be seen in Bologna¹⁶, where the local government in 2014 has implemented civic use agreements to enable communities to manage public spaces. These agreements, known as Patti di Collaborazione, allow local groups to take on the stewardship of urban areas, transforming them into vibrant spaces for community activities, cultural events, and social interaction. In Bologna, civic agreements have facilitated the reclamation of unused spaces and their transformation into community hubs, fostering a resurgence of community-led activities and initiatives. For instance, previously neglected spaces have been repurposed for communal gardens, art workshops, and cultural festivals, highlighting the potential of civic use to revitalize urban areas while maintaining accessibility to all residents. These civic use agreements represent a shift from traditional property rights and urban space management, moving towards a framework that recognizes the communal and cultural benefits of these spaces. By emphasizing collective decision-making and local management, cities can foster environments where alternative cultures and community initiatives can thrive. This model not only prevents the market-driven

¹² On this topic see Giuseppe Micciarelli, *Introduzione all'uso civico e collettivo urbano. La gestione diretta dei beni comuni urbani*, in «Munus», 1/2017; Giuseppe Micciarelli, *I beni comuni e la partecipazione democratica. Da un "altro modo di possedere" ad un "altro modo di governare"*, in «Jura Gentium», vol. XI, n. 1, 2014.à

¹³ Sandrone Dazieri (ed.), *Italia overground. Mappe e reti della cultura alternativa*, Castelvecchi, Roma 1996.

¹⁴ On this topic see: Lidia Cirillo, *Lotta di Classe sul palcoscenico. I teatri occupati si raccontano*, Alegre, Roma 2014; Salvatore Settis, *Azione popolare*, Einaudi, Torino 2014; Paolo Cacciari, Nadia Carestato, Daniela Passeri (edited by), *Viaggio nell'Italia dei beni comuni*, Marotta&Cafiero, Napoli 2012.

¹⁵ These words are taken from the interview *Cosa resta della vita notturna di Milano dopo Macao* published by the on-line magazine Vice on 24 March 2023.

¹⁶ Paolo Michiara, *I patti di collaborazione e il regolamento per la cura e la rigenerazione dei beni comuni urbani, L'esperienza del comune di Bologna*, in «Aedon», 2, 2016.



Fig. 8, 9, 10 – More shots that capture the genius loci of the RAW: colourful murals, posters, brick buildings and spontaneous vegetation.

transformations that often threaten alternative cultural spaces but also promotes social cohesion and inclusivity.

In addition to Bologna, other Italian cities have explored similar approaches. In Naples, for example, local movements, starting with the occupation of the former Filangieri kindergarten in 2012, transformed by citizens into a cultural production center, have successfully advocated for the recognition of rights to civic use, leading to the formalization of community-led initiatives in managing urban spaces. These cases illustrate the potential for civic use agreements to empower local communities, giving them a voice in the governance of their cities and the opportunity to shape the future of their urban environments according to their needs and aspirations.

By integrating these governance models into urban policy, cities can create sustainable frameworks that support the preservation and growth of alternative cultural spaces in ways that appear compatible with the structures' conservation needs precisely because of the reduced adaptation requirements¹⁷. This approach ensures that these spaces remain vibrant and inclusive, reflecting the diversity of the communities that use them. It also offers a counterbalance to the forces of gentrification and commercialization, helping to maintain the unique character and social value of urban areas in the face of rapid change.

Conclusion

The examination of alternative cultural spaces in cities like Berlin, Milan, Bologna, Napoli and Turin highlights the need for innovative urban policies that prioritize community engagement and cultural diversity, not only for social purposes, but for reasons related to the preservation of the buildings housing these experiences, often of historical value. These spaces, frequently on the margins of the city, have become vital centers for creativity and social interaction. However, they face significant challenges from gentrification and market-driven redevelopment.

One possible solution is the adoption of models that emphasize communal governance and the civic use of urban spaces. This approach involves formal agreements between communities and local

¹⁷ Emanuele Romeo (ed.), *Memoria Conservazione riuso del patrimonio industriale. Il caso studio dell'IPCA di Ciriè*, Ermes, Ariccia 2015; Maria Adriana Giusti, *Factory e Pop Arch: quando l'arte abita l'industria*, in Cristina Natoli, Manuel Ramello (eds.) *Strategie di rigenerazione del patrimonio industriale. Creative Factory Heritage telling temporary use business model*, Edifir, Firenze 2018, pages 132-141; Emanuele Morezzi, *Abbandono e adaptive reuse: attualità di due premesse all'intervento di conservazione*, in Cristina Coscia, Silvia Gron, Emanuele Morezzi, Alessio Primavera (eds.), *Occasioni di Dialogo. Progetto di recupero urbano a Vinovo per la Piccola Casa della Divina Provvidenza*, WriteUp Site, Roma 2018, pp 28-41; Patrizia Lombardi (ed.), *Riuso edilizio e rigenerazione urbana: innovazione e partecipazione*, Celid, Torino 2008.

governments, allowing citizens to directly manage and use abandoned or underused spaces. By prioritizing collective decision-making and community involvement, these models can help resist the commodification of urban spaces and maintain their historic, social and cultural value.

In practice, such models require a shift in the way cities view property rights and urban space use, moving beyond a purely economic framework to one that recognizes the broader social, cultural and communal benefits. For example, agreements like those implemented in some Italian cities have allowed local communities to take over the management of public spaces, fostering a resurgence of community-led activities and initiatives.

As cities continue to grow and evolve, there is an opportunity to explore alternative paths toward possible futures – where the value of cultural and communal spaces is recognized and preserved. Thinking of the city of Turin, home to numerous disused historical buildings, especially from the second half of the 20th century, which are destined to increase in number in the years to come, spaces like Parco Michelotti, Palazzo del Lavoro and the former FIAT industrial buildings, represent opportunities for the future to experiment with new governance models that prioritize collective use and community engagement, preserving buildings from the risk of excessive transformations driven by interests that often do not put the preservation of structures first¹⁸.

By embracing these alternative governance-conservative models, cities can create environments filled with historical memory, where alternative cultures thrive, fostering creativity, resilience and community engagement in the face of rapid urban change.

¹⁸ The city of Turin is no stranger to such actions. See, above all, the emblematic cases of the Palavela and Palazzo del Lavoro: Carla Bartolozzi, *Cosa perdiamo quando gli edifici non sono tutelati. Il riuso del Palavela e dei Padiglioni delle Regioni in occasione dei Giochi Olimpici Invernali di Torino del 2006*, in Gentucca Canella, Paolo Mellano (eds.), *Architettura d'autore del secondo Novecento. Il diritto alla tutela*, Franco Angeli, Milano 2019; Carla Bartolozzi, *Il Palazzo a vela e i Padiglioni delle Regioni nell'area di Italia 61. Processi decisionali, progetti e trasformazioni in occasione dei Giochi Olimpici Invernali di Torino 2006*, in Guido Montanari (ed.), *Italia 61 a Torino. Una modernità tradita*, SPABA, Torino 2023.