

Two Hippodromes, Two Cultural Temporalities. Reframing Fitting across Milan and Ankara

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This paper presents a comparative ground through two hippodrome structures designed by Italian architect Paolo Vietti-Viola, in Milan and Ankara, both conceived in the early twentieth century as instruments and symbols of modernization. While originating from a shared architectural authorship and typological logic, the two cases reveal radically divergent urban conditions today: the Milan hippodrome persists as an active, institutional, and culturally embedded entity, whereas the Ankara hippodrome—initially conceived as part of a larger sports complex—ceased operation in the late twentieth century and was ultimately demolished in 2019. This asymmetry forms the conceptual basis of the paper. Rather than comparing two existing contexts, the study examines two modes of architectural existence—presence and absence—as equally operative spatial conditions. Within the framework of the Architecture of the Fitting, the paper argues that these cases, which frame two different divergent trajectories, reveal distinct scenarios of historical continuity. Therefore, it extends the discussion of fitting beyond the physical scale of built form to encompass cultural continuity and a dialogue with history.

It seeks to examine, from a contemporary standpoint, the perspectives through which the fitting and integration of cultural heritage within cities can be understood and discussed. In this sense, fitting is not treated as a static condition, but as a time-based process, examined through the transformation of each case and the evolving relationships they establish with their surroundings. The discussion focuses on how both hippodromes engage with their urban context over time—how they adapt, persist, detach, or dissolve—and how, in turn, they actively reconfigure their immediate and extended environments, thus scenarios of fitting. Through this temporal and relational reading, the paper demonstrates that fitting can be discussed as a dynamic condition, produced through continuous negotiation between architecture, context, and change.