

ITALIAN RE EVOLUTION

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DESIGN IN ITALIAN SOCIETY IN THE EIGHTIES

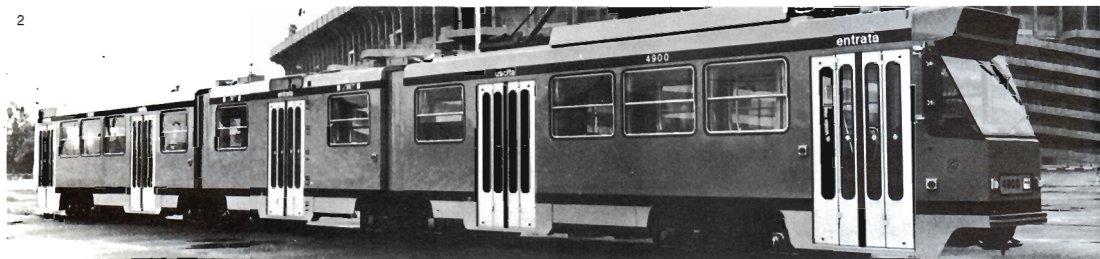
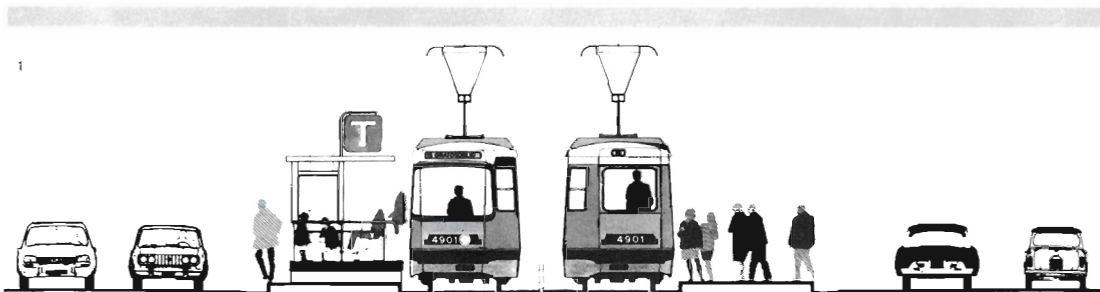
Luciano Mastronardi A Southerner in Vigevano

I am walking to the office. It is Saturday. There is an open-air market in Market Square. The one in Vigevano is a silent market; no voices are raised. The vendors are sitting behind their stalls, their braziers alight, or they are standing warming themselves at fires glowing between one stand and another. The post office hasn't opened yet, but old people are sitting outside the door with their pension books in their hands. There is a bar across from the post office building where I have my first cup of coffee. It is full of office

workers at this time of day, breakfasting on *cappuccino* and sweet rolls, their noses buried in the newspapers. Behind the counter the owner is busy at the *espresso* machine, while a boy maybe twelve years old, scared and stiff like somebody on his first job, washes saucers and cups and spoons and waits on table. There is a protective warmth here, even though the atmosphere is lugubrious. Every now and then, there are furtive glances at the clock followed by muffled sighs. Eight-twenty; a mute irritation is in the air. "I said two lumps of sugar!" "A spot of milk in the coffee!"

"The glass of water I asked for?" "Are you sure this cup was properly washed?" These remarks are addressed to the boy. He looks flustered and is doing all he can to bring second lumps of sugar, serve glasses of water, and bring coffee cups back to the owner for refills. Someone sends him to the tobacconist for a pack of *Nazionali*; somebody else hands him a jacket to remove a spot, a drop of coffee, kid, be careful with the spot remover, don't ruin the fabric. The clerks all wear new shirts with splendid collars, ready-made suits ironed as neat as can be, socks just

over the ankles revealing white skin when they cross their legs. Several of them are having their first cigarette of the day. There are office girls too, talking to the owner's wife, who is sitting at the cash register. They talk about their problems, always the same ones. One has a cleaning woman who is a monster, "I'm not exaggerating, madam, she's a monster." Every morning she reports the cleaning woman's latest monstrosity. "Yesterday she tried to poison me," she says dramatically, "I realized just in time, it was the hand of God!" Another clerk is telling with disgust



- 1.2.3. Street car, Tram / mod. Jumbo Tram / des. K. Koenig, R. Segoni / prod. GAI (Fiat/OM) / 1975.
4. Espresso Machine, *Macchina caffè* / mod. M20 CDV/3 / des. R. Bonetto / prod. La Cimbali / 1979.
5. Sugar bowl, *Zuccheriera* / mod. Bar / des. Ufficio Tecnico / prod. Alessi / 1965.
6. School uniforms, *Grembiuli scuola*.

L'ECLISSE

1962

MICHELANGELO ANTONIONI

Monica Vitti
Alain Delon



about her relations with her mother-in-law. "The good Lord should let her die, that mother-in-law of mine, if He is as just as He's supposed to be."

The owner's wife has a very disappointing manner. She always says "yes, yes" at once, "of course, of course." Or as she did just now, while the office girl was telling her about the cleaning lady poisoning her, she seems totally taken by surprise.

"What ever do you say! Just think, think what kind of people there are in the world. What do you think of that!" The owner of the cafe and his wife look strangely alike, at first glance you'd

take them for brother and sister. They are southern Italians. First they had a news-stand. Then they opened up a little shoe factory. And now they've taken over this cafe.

The office workers are getting up. It is almost eight-thirty. While the wife makes change and wishes everybody a good day, a good day at the office, the owner and the boy are straightening out the newspapers, brushing crumbs off the tables, and cleaning the rings left by the saucers.

The office I work in is in the building next to the post office. The porter at the door has three different ways of greeting people, depending on the position

of the bosses. For ordinary employees, he brings his hand up to his visor, and for trainees, he simply gives them a nod.

The porter's wife, instead, is more generous. She immediately strikes up an acquaintance with the employees and after a moment or two she is giving them an affectionate pat on the cheek. "I don't have children of my own, but I'm sure if I had a son, he'd be just as good-looking as you are, just as intelligent as you, and have the same brilliant career you do!" That's what she has said to all the men that work in the tax and mortgage offices, and there must be fifty of them.

She has a good word for the train too.

"Cheer up, the last shall be first. Th what St. Paul said," she says with a touch of pride people have when t can quote from memory.

When she sees me, she says, "V sir, did you think about what I s? Hmm?... Remember there's no en fine, good-looking girls here in V vano."

"I never doubted it for a minute!" "Old-fashioned girls, like they u to be..."

When the porter and his wife man to make a match they look so plea you would take them for the bride

The design of the transit stops for the Milan transit authority ATM, took into account that a number of tram lines were to become a surface extension of the subway system. The stops (marked by a "T" identical to that of the subway stations), have a platform at the same level as that of the subway cars and are protected by a roof. There is an automatic ticket machine at ground level. Ramps and underpasses allow pedestrians to cross the tracks.

At the rear of the stops, there is an illustration of the vehicles. The Jumbo-tram, divided into three parts, with a capacity of 300 passengers. This is the first car of its type, allowing passengers to enter and exit at platform level; since the front and rear doors project from the car body, the Jumbo-tram is highly asymmetric.

Given the current rebirth of interest in urban rail transit, this vehicle which is the largest and most modern in Italy, could have become the prototype for a unified surface-level urban transit system in Italy. But the failure to construct the stops with their raised platforms, as well as the necessity to isolate the lines from other traffic (a characteristic which differentiates surface rapid transit from normal tram lines), has aroused a strong negative reaction, fueled by the misunderstanding of the asymmetry of the vehicle.

Giovanni Klaus Koenig - Roberto Segoni

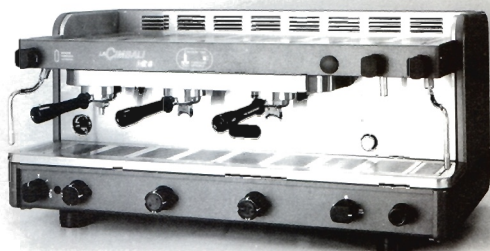
Il progetto di fermata tipo dell'ATM di Milano, fu fatto in previsione della trasformazione di alcune linee tranviarie in "metropolitane leggere di superficie". La fermata (il cui simbolo "T" ripete la segnaletica delle stazioni delle linee metropolitane) è rialzata a livello delle vetture, ha una pensilina con sedili e biglietteria automatica a terra, rampe di accesso e sottopassaggi pedonali di attraversamento.

Dietro la fermata è disegnato il veicolo articolato in tre spazi - detto Jumbo-tram - capace di trasportare circa 300 persone. È il primo veicolo a sagoma tranviaria che, nonostante abbia due porte a sbalzo sui carrelli estremi, sia riuscito a mantenere parallele le fiancate, permettendo così l'accesso e lo sbarco diretto dalla vettura al piano della fermata. Le testate delle carrozze sono quindi fortemente asimmetriche.

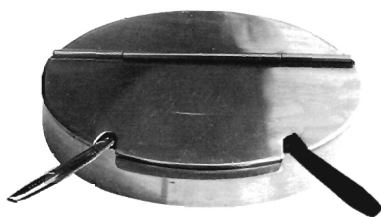
Nella prospettiva del rilancio attuale del trasporto pubblico su rotaia, questo veicolo - il più lungo, il più moderno ed il più capace, fra quelli costruiti in Italia - poteva diventare il prototipo per una unificazione delle future metropolitane di superficie italiane, ma la mancata realizzazione delle fermate e delle banchine a livello nonché della necessaria protezione di linea (caratteristica che differenzia la metropolitana di superficie del tranvai) ha suscitato clamorose reazioni negative dal momento che non si comprende più l'asimmetria del veicolo.

Giovanni Klaus Koenig - Roberto Segoni

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