

found tangible expression in the emergence of fashionable new neighborhoods in the city and foothills. Here expensive villas and apartment buildings arose that proudly displayed the Art Deco style, which made the city a major international center of this movement in modern architecture. The triumph of Art Deco in Turin was particularly ironic, since it was a style that arose in reaction to the industrial revolution. In contrast to the mass-produced products coming off the assembly lines of the city's factories, Art Deco created works of art that required a high level of craftsmanship and consciously drew its forms from nature.

The prosperous middle classes enthusiastically participated in a new urban culture of leisure that blossomed in those years and involved the cinema, sports, and other forms of voluntary group participation. In the first decade and a half of the twentieth century, Turin became an important center of Italy's embryonic movie industry. On the eve of World War I, the city had fourteen production companies and some forty theaters. The industry attracted a large number of actors and actresses to the city, including such celebrated divas as Eleonora Duse. Movies, however, had to take a back seat in popularity to sports among the city's leisure activities.

In fact, Turin emerged as the principal center for Italy's most popular sports in the years before 1914. Predictably, it was the capital of the new sport of auto racing, hosting the country's first road race in 1898 as well as the first national track race in 1900. Two years later, Giovanni Agnelli, himself, set the record for the Tour of Italy (*Giro d'Italia*) by covering 2,141 kilometers in 57 hours in his 12-horsepower Fiat. Turin played a similar pioneering role in the growth of professional soccer in Italy. The city was the home of the first Italian Federation of Soccer as well as the first national soccer championship in 1898. The following decade saw the rise of two local professional squads, Torino and Juventus, which would dominate the increasingly popular national sport in the ensuing decades. Turin also pioneered the development of cycling, a sport that enjoyed a broad base of support among both the wealthy and the working classes. The oldest cycling club in Italy, the Veloce-club Torino, was founded in the city's Valentino park in the 1880s. The Veloce sponsored the inaugural national championship as well as the first international professional races in the country. Turin's special status in the sporting world received a sort of official recognition in 1911, as the government chose to construct the National Stadium there to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Italian nation.

At the same time, the industrial transformation of Turin after 1900 introduced a renewed vitality and dynamism into the intellectual life of