

# Remembering Resistance:

An analysis of urban design features at sites of protest.

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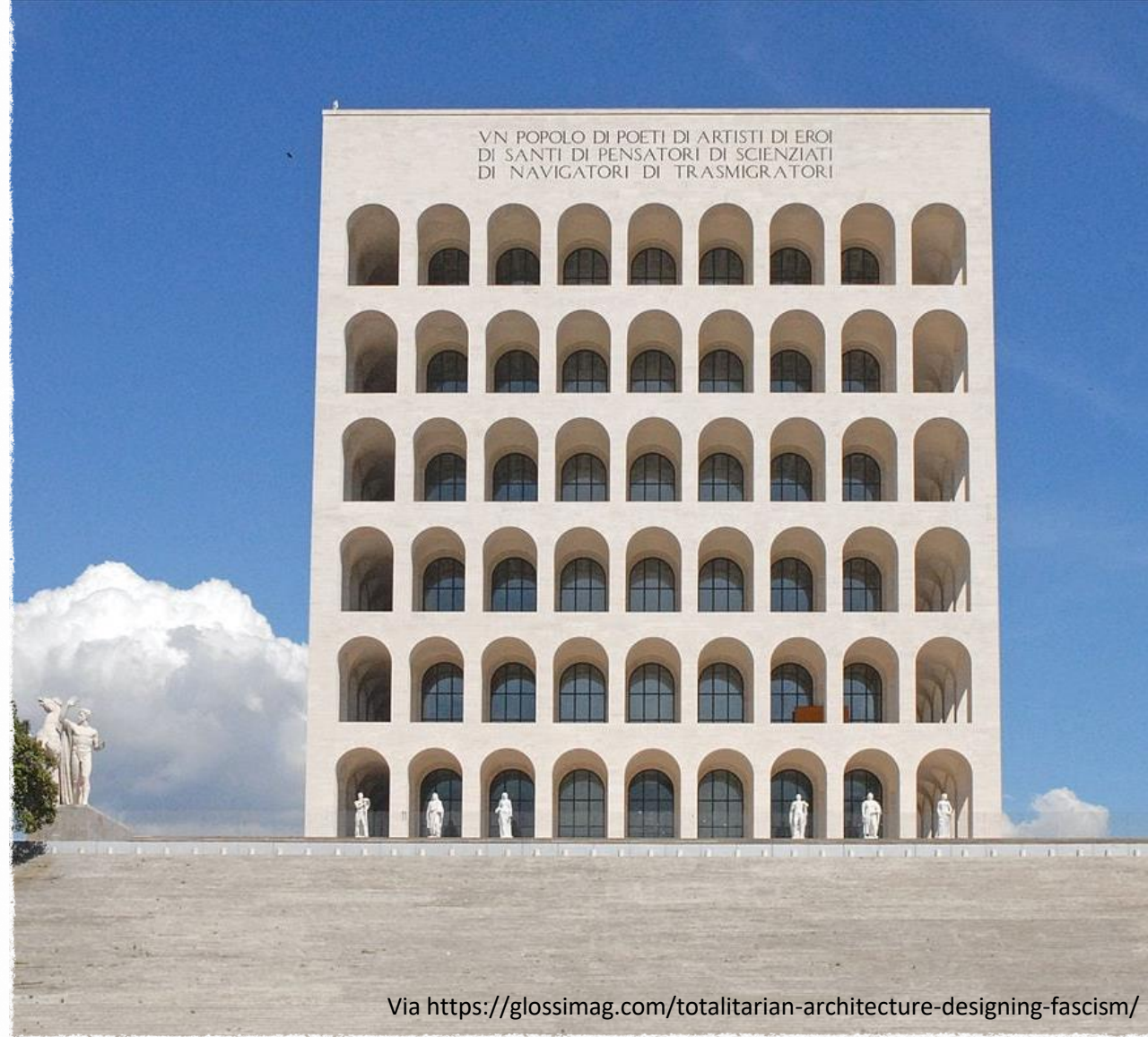
# Introduction 1

**Cities are concentrations of people, activity and capital.**

Physical location of power.

Cities also *symbolically* embody power through the design of its buildings and spaces.

Architects, town planners and urban designers play an important role in telling the story of power in cities.



Via <https://glossimag.com/totalitarian-architecture-designing-fascism/>

# Introduction 2

**Cities are primary sites of activism (Kern, 2020).**

Critical mass of people.

Ability to take messages directly to halls of power.

Access to communications and media.

Right mix of resources to make protest visible and effective.

**Everyone should have a right to the city and to difference (Lefebvre, 1967).**

In practice, marginalised groups struggle to gain ground.



# Research questions

1. Is there a pattern to where protest events occur in cities?
2. What features of buildings and spaces are notable where protest events take place?



# Remembering Resistance project 1

## Project details

UK National Lottery Heritage Fund project from 2018-2019.

Brought together urban design, town planning, history and politics.

Focussed on women's activism in the North of England over the last century.

Specifically explored relationships between protest, power and place.

Engaged with activists, academics, artists, heritage and community organisations.



# Remembering Resistance project 2

## Data collection

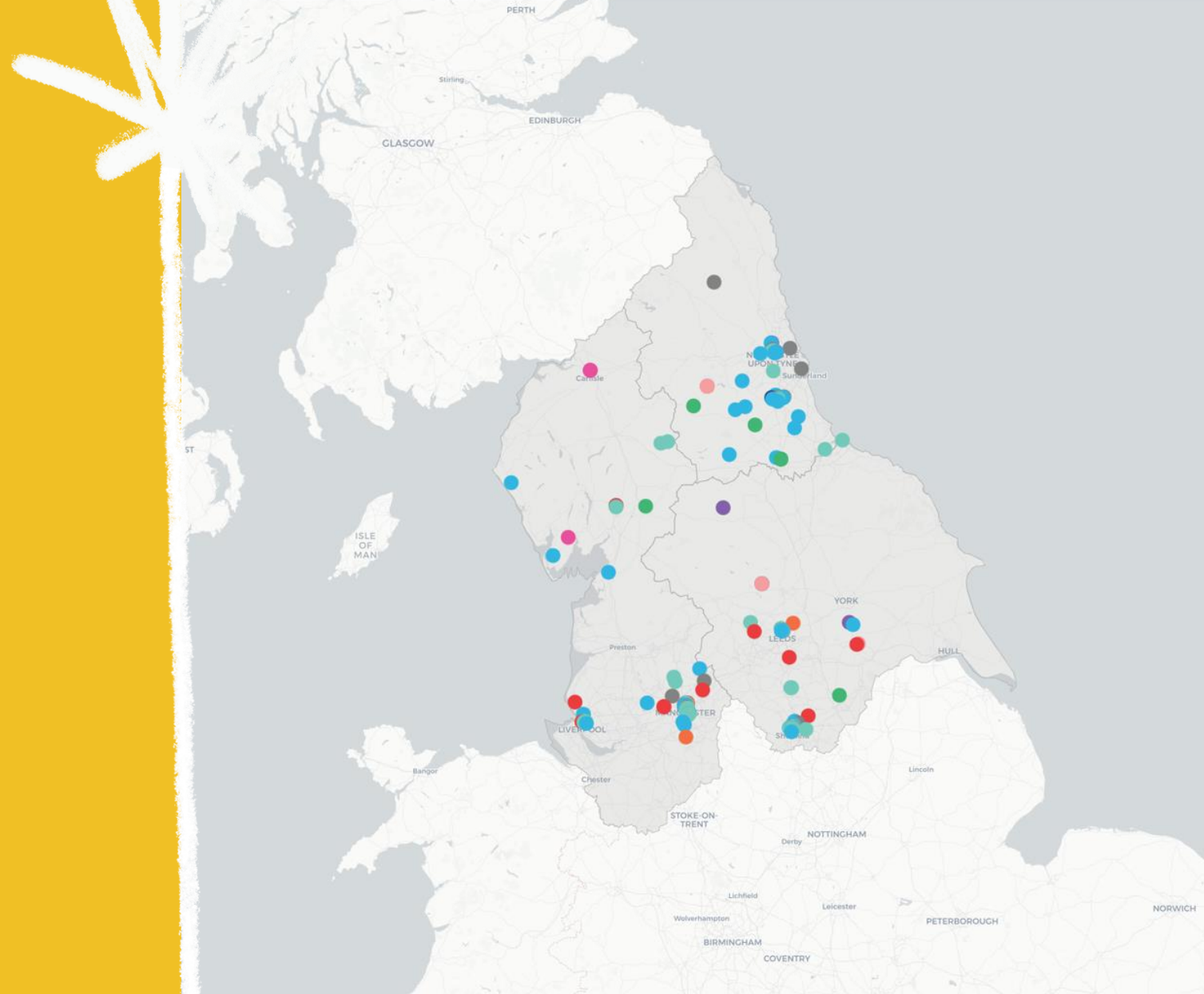
Gathered protest event data using various databases (e.g., British Newspaper Archive).

In the North of England.

From 1918-2020.

Women-led events/ issues relating to women.

Put data into spreadsheet and added protests to a map using lat, lon coordinates.





# Remembering Resistance project 3

## Analysis of protest event data

For this research, we analysed 152 protest events from 2000-2020.

We used Wooley's (2003) typology of open urban spaces to categorise protest event spaces.

We examined each protest event space and rated them on 8 urban design features (CABE, 2004).



# Remembering Resistance project 4

## Civic urban open spaces

Plazas.

Water features.

Office grounds.

Commercial (squares).

Health and education (hospitals).

University campuses (courtyards).

Recreational (woodland, golf courses).

Transport (ports & docks, transport & waterway corridors).

## Neighbourhood urban open spaces

Parks.

Streets.

City farms.

Playgrounds.

Playing fields.

School grounds.

Incidental spaces (including leftover green spaces).



# Remembering Resistance project 5

## Character

*Sense of place & history.*

## Quality of public realm

*Sense of wellbeing & amenity.*

## Diversity

*Ease of choice.*

## Legibility

*Ease of understanding.*

## Continuity

*Clarity of form.*

## Enclosure

*Spatial distinction.*

## Ease of movement

*Connectivity & permeability.*

## Adaptability

*Ease of change.*

# Findings 1: Where protest events occur in cities.

Open Urban Space types	No. of protests	% of protests
Streets	61	40
Squares	41	27
Plazas	12	12
Other	11	11
Parks	5	6
Hospital grounds	2	2
School grounds	2	2
Office grounds	1	1
Playing fields	1	1
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Findings 2: What UD features are notable.

Urban design feature	Rating	Ranking
Character (building)	361	1
Legibility	323	2
Enclosure	319	3
Ease of movement	309	4
Continuity	302	5
Character (landscape)	289	6
Adaptability (landscape)	281	7
Diversity	259	8
Quality of public realm	248	9
Adaptability (building)	150	10



# Findings 3: What UD features are notable.

Urban design feature	Streets	Squares	Plazas
Character (building)	129 (1)	142 (1)	53 (1)
Legibility	121 (2)	125 (3)	47 (3)
Enclosure	115 (3)	126 (2)	48 (2)
Ease of movement	110 (4)	124 (4)	41 (4)
Continuity	106 (5)	123 (5)	41 (4)
Diversity	97 (6)	102 (8)	34 (6)
Adaptability (landscape)	95 (7)	102 (8)	33 (7)
Character (landscape)	93 (8)	112 (6)	32 (8)
Quality of public realm	85 (9)	105 (7)	31 (9)
Adaptability (building)	63 (10)	49 (10)	21 (10)

# Reflections

Findings lay the foundation for further analysis.

Compare these protest events with other protest events.

Compare these protest events with other years (e.g., 1918-2000).

Gather more material about our protest event spaces.

Categorise the protest event spaces by Routledge's sites of intervention.

Protesters' motivations for choosing protest event spaces.

# Conclusions

Some urban spaces are magnets for protest for different reasons.



Town planners need to 'design in' democracy through creating and maintaining spaces for protest...

... but how can this happen?

UK's Policing Bill aims to 'design out' democracy.



# Thank You!

## Any Questions?

[rememberingresistance.com](http://rememberingresistance.com)

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