

WHAT FUTURE AWAITS SCHOOLS OF ARCHITECTURE?

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DEBATE

Malthus, Giovannoni and Our Future. Italian Schools of Architecture in a Global Context

Matteo Robiglio

Italy today has 49 schools of architecture i.e. degree programs with which a young candidate can obtain the title of Master in Architecture, necessary for the practice of the profession of the architect. In Italy to day there are almost 155,000 registered architects, 27% of the architects in Europe and around 12% in the world. Current enrolment trends are producing a non-planned process of selective re-centralization, with evident territorial unbalances and the risk that relevant scientific cultures and disciplinary traditions will be impoverished or not cancelled at all. To avoid this we have to be able to design a network of Italian architecture schools in which the major universities work as aggregation, exchange and international projection platforms for the entire architectural system.

A New Phase for Italian Schools of Architecture

Alberto Ferlenga

What we are experiencing, as regards the teaching of Architecture in Italy is a crucial moment, a difficult passage in which everything that has been built, from the post-war period until today, can definitely be destroyed, and its ruins dispersed; or, put to good use in a new life, provided it is subjected to that necessary process of renewal that the change of the world requires. What has been considered the *mainstream* of the last fifty years of architecture in Italy, with the emerging figures of the Casabella group in Milan or with people like Quaroni in Rome, Cosenza in Naples, Samonà in Venice, etc. it was, in reality, the tip of a much larger and more composite iceberg and that the submerged part, with its many facets, still represents today a little known cultural reserve of extraordinary importance for the purposes of our discourse. The many issues faced by a composite array of excellent as unrecognized architects who are part of it, and which operated on national soil or emigrated abroad, are now back central and present as many questions, expressed in new forms from the *favelas* of Rio, at the *Basti* of Mumbai. Today the Italian Schools of Architecture would have this possibility: to produce architects for a new world, starting from a tradition that has built a reputation on the study of cities and the landscape.

Teaching Architecture

Fabrizio Rossi Prodi

The only true quality that we are able to instill in students, the only resource that they can really rely on, de-

rives from a careful and rigorous exercise of the project by us teachers, from its honest transmission to young students. And I do not see projection into the future or digital innovation, or technical innovations, or even exoticism of places that can scratch this resistant core of this education. In the book *Carattere dell'architettura Toscana* (Character of Tuscan architecture), Officina 2003, I once again registered a preference for choral and minor expressions, to the detriment of the major tradition, celebrated by books; an interest in the natural and urban landscape and rural architecture. I recognize an effort of linguistic rooting in places and in long lasting history, which induces to compose the project with the materials found in the places, in a strategy of transcription or re-writing, in which drawing itself is a tool of design investigation, it's a way to measure places and enhance their identities and to face the changing scenarios solicited by the contemporary era.

Rome. The Education of an Engineer-Architect

Lucio Valerio Barbera

The current moment in the academic education of the Architect. Eight interviews with current and former heads of the four Faculties or Departments of Architecture based in Rome (Renato Masiani, Anna Maria Giovenale, Orazio Carpenzano, Maria Argenti, Elisabetta Palottino, Carlo Melograni, Francesco Cellini, Tullia Iori) from which a complex picture emerges, in the form of a tale of a collective reflection. From the comparison and the intersection of the interviews, it is drawn the picture of the current problems of the institutions devoted to the education of the Architect in Rome, the city where where in 1920 the first High School of Architecture was founded by G. Giovannoni. The excessive number of students compared to the reality of the market, the decline in the prestige of the profession, the gradual loss of the relationship between Faculty and practice, the need to innovate the skills of the architect one hundred years after the foundation of the first High School, however preserving the Italian specificity of the relationship between project, history and construction; these are the main problems discussed. From the whole of the voices it seems possible, in the near future, to coordinate them in a more harmonic and efficient framework.

Learning from Naples?

Roberta Amirante

Naples: a Faculty founded in 1935 (with some anticipation already in '28...); Giovannonian didactic footprint but immediately very «Neapolitan», teachers rooted in the headquarters – Canino, Filo Speciale, Cocchia, Pane – also inclined to build privileged relationships with some places and some groups: the best known and most influential was the network with the Milanese of

the Tendenza, also lived through the common experience of Pescara. The school of Naples, with the latest reform has been able to put in place, with an obvious but practicable forcing the logic of the law, the non-traumatic passage from the Faculty to the Department: this step involves the recognition of a complex research field and interdisciplinary that, in the name of a communicative effect that technicians call «redundancy», we still call Architecture. Rather than making budgets and forecasts, those who guide the training processes, with responsibility for teaching to practice uncertainty, also in architecture, must above all «make room», allow the new generations to approach with freedom, autonomy, spirit critical, and even with a new lightness, to the disciplinary traditions, to the consolidated knowledge, to the specialized techniques, to the «certain» architectures that we all have the task of translating for them into subjects, courses, laboratories...

The Obligations of Design

Francesco Rispoli

If we take a look at those who teach architectural design we realize that the number of teachers who – by virtue of a paradoxical normative condition – are more and more away from the constructive identity of architecture. They build their academic careers by *writing about architecture* rather than *writing architecture*. This all-Italian condition does not contribute to a clear recognition of a figure, the Architect, who should have all the requisites for carrying out such a delicate and strategic task: Architecture. What can be the unitary and shared criteria for the education and the training of the architectural designer? How can the project be a scientific research product? What is the relationship between the quality of the professional figure and the quality of architecture? It is necessary to restrain the tendency to specialize the architect multiplying the figures involved in the project with the result of dispersing the design knowledge. In fact, architecture is indeed a kind of writing, endowed with its specific features and its rules of doing.

A Reflection on Architectural Education in Palermo

Andrea Sciascia

After the Unification of Italy, architect's education in Palermo follows the implementation of the Casati law, aimed above all at encouraging the formation of Polytechnic Universities. As a direct affiliation of the Faculty of Engineering, established in 1935, at the end of the Second World War the Faculty of Architecture was established in 1944, after the landing of the American Armies in Sicily in 1943. Protagonists of the starting period were the disciples and the epigones of Ernesto Basile, among which: Salvatore Benfratello, Salvatore Caronia Roberti, first Dean of the Faculty, and Edoardo Caracciolo. Vittorio Gregotti was professor in Palermo from 1968 until the early Seventies along with Alberto Samonà and Gino Pollini. During the Sixties among the professors, we find Guido Di Stefano, Renato Bonelli, Gino Levi Montalcini, Luigi Vagnetti, Giulio Roisecco. In the early Seventies, Pasquale Culotta was assistant of Gino Pollini and

since 1989 to 1996, he was Dean of the Faculty. Under Culotta's deanship the School had a good time with great vivacity. Today there is a new relationship between the town and the Department of Architecture. It is clear that the advantageous and indispensable contribution of designers – equally engaged in teaching, research and practice – is more and more reducing.

New and Permanent Questions About Teaching Design: the School of Milan

Francesco Menegatti

The change to the architect's polytechnic training does not take place in Milan immediately after the reformulation of the architect's figure promoted by G. Giovannoni in the twenties of the twentieth century. The debate evolved with particular interest in Milan between two opposing and alternate tendencies: the first of adhering to the vanguard of the twentieth century and, second, to the international style. Ernesto Nathan Rogers is undoubtedly the figure who, more than others, accepted the multiplicity of the problems that emerged between the two wars in Milanese culture, in architecture and in the School; above all, he is the one who played a dominant role in the translation of those instances in the post-war period and who is the bearer of the position of Banfi, Paci, Cantoni, Preti. The innovative intention of Rogers also emerges on the occasion of his mediation with the young students of the Faculty, which then involves the writing of «Casabella», young people who copy the architectures of those who choose to be their masters, as it happened in the studios of the Academy, and criticize the predominance of a functionalist tendency in design.

The Artistic Autonomy of Architecture at the Iuav

Dina Nencini

In the current difficult condition of the architectural discipline going back to the origins of our schools, can be an obligatory step, to restart with the identification, as a main theme, which in the Faculties of architecture, are the «ways» and «techniques» of teaching architectural design. The consideration concerns Giuseppe Samonà who in 1936 arrived at the Iuav (Istituto Universitario Architettura Venezia) – the new «institutional form» of the Scuola Superiore di Venezia – first as a teacher of architectural drawing and survey of monuments, then as Rector from 1943 until 1972. It is possible to identify a link between the Art Academy and the Iuav in a particular way of teaching architecture as an art that is transmitted by mimetic principles, through analogies, citations of figurative themes according to a specific process of the art, observation and identification in the poetics and techniques of what the «maestro» is. But what appears most relevant to us is the experience of the lessons of young people gathered in the publication *Design Theory* presents a profound change, the move towards a new process in the control of the project construction process, towards the research of a theoretical structure that outlines the possibilities of «institutionalizing» this process.

Architectural Education in the United States. A Rapid Historic Excursus

Anna Irene Del Monaco

The architecture of the United States has assumed from the nineteenth century a primary role in symbolically representing the European root of American culture and, together, its freedom of development. The essay intends to summarily trace the path through which the figure and profession of the architect in the United States has established itself, lived and changed providing a historical excursus *between nineteenth and twenty-first century* of the training programs. A characteristic feature of the development of the architect's academic training in the USA is the explicit role that the most important schools of architecture have soon assumed as vehicles of *imperial affirmation* of the American culture and of claiming pre-eminence even with respect to European academic institutions. The essay is focused on historical moments that correspond to relevant institutional and conceptual passages in the history of the discipline and of the profile of the architectural profession in US: between the nineteenth and twentieth century, the thirties of the twentieth century; during the Second World War and in the post-war period; in the sixties and seventies of the twentieth century; the early nineties at Columbia University in New York; the recent interpretative difficulties of climate change and in the anthropological anxiety that derives from it; the actual cultural and neo-colonial uncertainties of globalization.

RESEARCHES

Naples and the *Encyclopédie*. *Dizionario Universale delle Arti e delle Scienze* by Giuseppe Maria Secondo

Rosa Maria Giusto

The paper examines the influence exercised by the method of study and circulation of knowledge inaugurated by the universal dictionaries of arts and sciences during the eighteenth century, with particular reference to the Neapolitan environment at the turn of the forties and fifties of the eighteenth century. It is here that, ahead of its time and «contemporaneously» with the editorial project edited in Paris by Diderot and d'Alembert, it was in some ways «prepared» the critical fortune of the French *Encyclopedia*. From 1747 until 1754 Giuseppe Maria Secondo start off to the publication in eight Tomes of the *Dizionario Universale delle Arti e delle Scienze* edited and illustrated on the basis of the translation, reasoned and expanded, of the *Cyclopædia, or an Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* by Ephraim Chambers of 1728 from which the same *Encyclopédie* began. The voice «Architecture» and the related «planches» of the Neapolitan Dictionary are analyzed to favor, through the comparison between the sources, a more extensive critical analysis of the text edited by Giuseppe Maria Secondo some years before one of the most revolutionary editorial events of all times.

The Project for *Storia dell'architettura italiana* (1940-1947)

Paola Barbera

At the beginning of the 20th century, the history of architecture was in Italy, traditionally, a field of research for art historians. But, between 1920 and 1940, engineers and architects started claiming history as their own field of investigation.

One of the last volumes of *Storia dell'arte italiana* by Adolfo Venturi, published in 1938, was the object of a fiery argument between the old art historian and Gustavo Giovannoni, who began working on the idea of an Italian History of Architecture, able to connect organically different aspects: forms, functions, construction, materials and techniques.

The Ancient Architecture was entrusted to Massimo Pallottino and Roberto Paribeni; Carlo Cecchelli wrote about the Early Christian Architecture; the Medieval Ages was the field of research of Mario Salmi, Enrico Calandra and Giulio Ulisse Arata; Giovannoni personally dealt with the Renaissance and Roberto Pane the Baroque; Arata was also appointed for the 19th century.

The Second World War and Giovannoni's death interrupted the editorial plan. Retracing the framework of the *Storia dell'architettura italiana* lead us to reflect again on a historiographical method, in part still valid, and highlights one of the points of departure of contemporary Italian historiography (sometimes forgotten), written by engineers and architects for engineers and architects.

Genius loci and Urban Memories. Stockholm Town Hall-Committee Building by Ragnar Östberg

Chiara Monterumisi

The paper explores the city of Stockholm, apparently far from the main tracks of other significant European examples due to its peculiar morphological features. The study investigates the Stockholm Town Hall (*Stadshuset*) and the nearby never-to-be realized Commission Building (*Nämndhuset*) designed by the leading exponent of the national romanticism Ragnar Östberg (1866-1945). He published the drawing of the entire complex forming an open square, but it has never been studied by critics as a whole entity. The project responds to the Rossi's concept of a being a «part of the city» and it shows a dialectic relationship between the *genius loci* of the archipelago and *urban memories* which were the result of his interpretation of different townscapes. Particularly, the focus is on explicit, yet subtly concealed, influences of Venice and the Swedish traditional castles. The complex is an oscillation between the *locus* and types assembled according to spatial sequences of collective spaces.

Gustav Langen and the German Contribution to the Problem of Urban Form

Gianluca Gnisci

In the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution, the sudden and chaotic growth of European capitals push

the research for the form of the city along several contradictory yet complementary lines of experimentation. The '20s of the twentieth century could be considered as one of the founding moments for defining a new idea of living for the contemporary city. In the lesson at the Technical University of Berlin-Charlottenburg, *Stadt, Dorf und Landschaft* (1912), Gustav Langen, the famous architect whose studies have been focused on the forms of settlement in the German area, searches for a solution to the widespread vagueness of the formless expansion of the metropolis. The lack of civic value in this vague city and the destruction of nature in favour of the urban expansion are the hurdles to overcome for the reform of the *Großstadt*. In Langen's perspective, it is necessary to establish a new concept of city that will consider nature as the context of the urban construction. It might occur through a development model of the city by parts, where parts are the units of settlement, the so called *Kleinstädte*. Their finite and recognizable nature enlightens their potential as residential spaces and restores an indisputable relation with the natural environment. He imagines a polycentric model of the city, where a mother-city is surrounded by a group of small semi-autonomous cities dipped in nature. Each part is connected to the others by an efficient transport network. The identification of the city-nature relationship of each single part is one of the fundamental design topics.

Bernard Rudofsky. The Sky in a Room

Alessandro Lanzetta

Bernard Rudofsky, author of the *Architecture Without Architects* exhibition (MoMA, 1964), studied the vernacular architecture traveling all over the world and living in Italy, Brazil, United States, and Spain. The patio of the Mediterranean house known as the «open-air room», has been the vernacular typological element that he studied deeply. Indeed, he inserted the «open-air rooms» in all the residences he designed: Casa a Procida (1934), designed for himself and for his wife; Villa Oro (Napoli, 1935); Casa a Positano (1937), designed with Luigi Cosenza; Albergo nel bosco a San Michele a Capri (1938), designed with Gio Ponti; Hollenstein House (Rio de Janeiro, 1939); Frontini House and Arnstein House (São Paulo, 1940); Nivola «house-garden» (Long Island, 1949); La Casa (Frigiliana, 1969), the residence that Rudofsky finally managed to build near his beloved Mediterranean Sea. To sum up, Rudofsky's architecture proposed an alternative lifestyle to the modernity of the industrial era, so radical that he declares: «It does not take a new way of building, it takes a new way of living».

Jože Plečnik and the Ljubljana. Modernity in the Tradition

Domenico Potenza, Michele Manigrasso

The exhibition organized for the 60th anniversary of the death of Jože Plečnik reopened the debate concerning the contemporary architecture of this master and in particular the work in Ljubljana.

In the recent years, Ljubljana has significantly changed its urban layout, especially in the historical center and along the river Ljubljana that crosses it.

In the most important years of his profession, Plečnik has concentrated his attention on the river, transforming it into an urban infrastructure where the main public buildings are overlooking the river itself.

Through important investments, the local administration has realized a series of unfinished projects that are part of Plečnik's program: it aims to mitigate the emptiness of its spaces through a path – over two kilometers long – affected by the new renovation program.

This operation has returned visibility to the Slovenian capital according to the idea of splendor that Jože Plečnik had planned and started to realize.

Newness of Denys Lasdun

Carlo Prati

Synopsis. Starting from a brief biographical excursus the text highlights the characteristics of the work by D.L. focusing on the elements that make it modern and qualifying; through a reflection on this emblematic figure we can see the opportunity to focus on the inspiring principles of the Sixties and Seventies architecture. Furthermore, questioning ourselves today about the role played by L. in the Italian architecture is important because it highlights how much this legacy can now be the object of a necessary critical and methodological recovery.

Themes. What are the themes that qualify the architectural research of D.L. and that make it so current? In a trans-scalar point of view that is able to dwell on the permanencies and connections that work between the projects at the urban scale (macro themes) and at the building (micro themes), the text shows how much for L. are the most important among others: the relationship with history (seen not in a nostalgic way but rather as a project «material»), the internal organization of the building in relation to the use and function, the structural question.