

1963-1974: How to Make a Revolution and Live Happily

A Decade of Battles to Change Every Theory of Teaching at the Politecnico di Milano

Today, the presence of subjects such as Contemporary Architectural Design Theory, Typological Features of Architecture, Theories and Histories of Modern Architecture, Elements of Architectural Typology, Philosophy of Knowledge, Hybridizations and Contaminations Between Modern and Contemporary Architecture, and Aesthetics of Architecture at the Politecnico di Milano (PoliMi) are possible thanks to the cultural revolution that occurred after more than a decade of hard political struggle at the University.

In 1963, at the beginning of the first turmoils, PoliMi's School of Architecture was characterised by authoritarian teaching, rigid curricula and teachers who had no relationship with the students: a structure that created an elite university aimed at training technicians/artists, not a place for research but an institution dedicated to transmitting static knowledge to train the future ruling class. At the same time, a group of students delivered a letter to the Year Four teachers in which they made a series of requests on the organisation of the courses in the subjects of Architectural Design and Urban Planning.

After five years of clashes, between the election of new deans and the suspension of student initiatives, in February 1968 Aldo Rossi, with others members of the Faculty Council, undertook the task of reconfiguring the teaching and research structure, known as «Experimentation»: in January 1969, he signed the «October Revolution document», which cost him his job.

On the 23rd of November 1971, by decree of the Minister of Education, Rossi with seven Faculty Council members, the Dean Paolo Portoghesi and Franco Albini, Lodovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Piero Bottoni, Guido Canella, Carlo de Carli and Vittoriano Viganò, were precautionary suspended from teaching, a measure that would be revoked three years later, on 11 May 1974.

This paper critically investigates their proposed teachings between 1969 and 1971, which included:

- «Research for a methodological framework for the formation of morphological characters of the built environment», research group Belgiojoso, 1969-1970;
- «Research proposal on the generation of urban fabric», research group Albini, 1969-1970;
- «Urban analysis and architectural design», research group Rossi, 1969-1970;
- «Participation/space/city: participatory spaces and a possible practice of intervention in the system of the physical and human surroundings», research group Viganò, 1969-1970;
- «Modern architecture as the architecture of the bourgeoisie in power», research group Portoghesi/Vercelloni/Bonfanti/Cuccuru/Patetta, 1969-1970;
- «Tools of Marxist culture for architectural and urban criticism», research group Portoghesi/Borradori/Gavinelli/Samsa, 1969-1970;
- «Tools of Marxist culture for architectural and urban criticism: chronology bibliography documents», research group Portoghesi/Borradori/Gavinelli/Samsa, 1970-71;
- «The education system», research group Canella, 1970-1971.

Short Presentation of the Author

Andrea Canclini is an Adjunct Lecturer at the Faculty of Architecture of the Polytechnic University of Milan, where he has been teaching for the past four years the subjects of Theory in Contemporary Architectural Design and Design Studio.

He participated in several international conferences, and published articles, in Scopus indexed journals such as *The Plan Journal* and *aut aut*, the leading Italian journal of aesthetic philosophy, as well as book chapters and peer-reviewed conference proceedings in Italy, Portugal, Turkey, China, England, Lebanon, Scotland and Belgium about my main research topics: the cultural basis of Modern and Contemporary architectural criticism.

His research on modern and contemporary architecture critique and history and their cultural basis includes his PhD dissertation at the Polytechnic University of Turin, which focused on the nature and the role that the French Theory has had on American architectural discourse during the Seventies.