

# Back to the Sources. Manfredo Tafuri's *Teorie e storia dell'architettura* (1968) between Project and Work in Progress

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Manfredo Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, Emilio Garroni, *Semantic Crisis*, Angelo Guglielmi

## /Abstract

A rigorous study of Manfredo Tafuri (1935-1994) must inevitably find compensatory strategies to overcome the main difficulty posed by the object of study: that of the sources. A challenge, we might say, made even more difficult by the fact that Tafuri, with rare exceptions, never included bibliographies in his books.

This contribution intends to present the first results of a philological analysis on one of the most important books in the historian's *œuvre* and the debate of the time, *Teorie e storia dell'architettura* (1968), closely compared with its second Italian edition (1970). This first step and the significant discovery of the letters exchanged in 1967-69 between Tafuri and the publishing house let to detect the extent to which Tafuri originally modified the book's project and intervened in its re-editions. This leads to the conclusion that he refashioned himself and politicised his work retroactively, probably to approach the new Venetian intellectual context.

Moreover, the systematic filing of 1968 book's bibliography, together with the critical bibliographies and recordings from his mid-1960s lectures, allow to give due weight to references hitherto unknown. They help us to enter into the historiographic framework in which the main problem – the relationship with history – is to be situated, and to identify a number of knots on which Tafuri will focus in the following years.

The analysis situates *Teorie e storia* in 1960s artistic and architectural discourse and brings to light, in particular, the underlying conversation with Emilio Garroni's book *La crisi semantica delle arti* (1964), a source that fits precisely a generational urgency, that of architecture and its meaning, to which Tafuri will constantly return.

The reading is intertwined with a parallel narration through the illustrations replaced by Tafuri for the second edition of *Teorie e storia*.

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Marco Capponi (Macerata, 1987), architect and Ph.D. in History of Architecture and Urban Planning. He graduated from Florence University with a thesis on the mid-twentieth-century architectural and town planning debate, concentrating on Candilis-Josic-Woods practice, rewarded in 2014 with the *Benedetto Gravagnuolo* prize. In 2019 he obtained a Ph.D. degree at the Iuav University of Venice with a dissertation on Theatine architecture in Venice, with a focus on the construction history of the church and monastery of San Nicolò da Tolentino in the early modern era. At the same university he is currently teaching assistant in history of architecture and research scholar thanks to a grant on the teaching activity of Manfredo Tafuri. He also cooperates in the "Progetto Tafuri" for the creation of an archive and documentation centre.

As a consequence of his initial interest in the relationship between modern architecture and the Mediterranean basin, he is author of essays and petitions in order to safeguard the built heritage in the Maghreb countries. Then he published scientific contributions on sixteenth-century Venetian construction techniques and seventeenth-century architectural drawings. Two essays on the church and the pronaos of San Nicolò da Tolentino in Venice are currently forthcoming.

His present research interests include the training and the technical culture of Venetian architects in the eighteenth-century European context. He is also working on a critical edition of sources about Manfredo Tafuri's teaching activity.

Manfredo Tafuri (1935-1994) has been one of the most influential architectural historians of the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> However, research on Manfredo Tafuri's training and early years of activity has been sporadic so far, and only recently his great social and civil commitment has begun to be highlighted.<sup>2</sup>

Tafuri's transition from a stance of ongoing criticism, through committed essays and architectural practice, to a different intellectual commitment, choosing the historical discipline, is marked precisely by the publication of *Teorie e storia dell'architettura* in 1968 [Fig. 1].<sup>3</sup>

It is a decision obviously reached over time. Civil struggles and disillusion may help us to understand Tafuri's book themes and reasons, but not entirely. We would like, therefore, to present some initial reflections starting from the first philological analysis of *Teorie e storia*'s text and references.<sup>4</sup>

It firmly situates the book in the 1960s artistic and architectural debate. Only afterwards, attempts were made – by Tafuri himself – to re-contextualise the book in a stronger political way. The analysis of the sources also allows to identify the intellectual tools that were used in detecting the problem – the relationship with history – and in facing a personal and generational unease.



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1 This article was written thanks to a postdoctoral research grant awarded by the Iuav University of Venice on the teaching activity of Manfredo Tafuri. First research results were presented on 12 June 2020 as part of the reading seminar on *Teorie e storia dell'architettura*, organised by prof. Fulvio Lenzo and Luka Skansi, within the activities of the Iuav Ph.D. in History of Architecture. The excerpts from lectures' transcripts are my own translation, as well as quotations of the sentences changed by Manfredo Tafuri in Manfredo Tafuri, *Teorie e storia dell'architettura*, 1st ed. (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1968). Otherwise, they are from Manfredo Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, trans. G. Verrecchia (London: Granada, 1980). Quotations of Manfredo Tafuri, *Ricerca del Rinascimento. Principi, città, architetti* (Torino: Einaudi, 1992) are from Manfredo Tafuri, *Interpreting the Renaissance. Princes, cities, architects*, trans. D. Sherer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006). I sincerely thank prof. Lenzo and Skansi for the opportunity to discuss the issue with which I was dealing, and in particular prof. Lenzo for his support and generosity. Finally, I would like to thank the Gius. Laterza & Figli S.p.A. publishing house, in the person of Carla Ortona, for her precious helpfulness, and my tireless friend Sandra Toffolo.

This paper comes after a difficult period. It brings with it the hope to come 'back to the future.'

2 Read, in particular, Luka Skansi, "Qualcosa oltre l'architettura. Gli anni formativi," in *Manfredo Tafuri. Seus leitores e suas leituras. Actas del Seminario Internacional* (Sao Paulo 2015), ed. Mario D'Agostino, Mario H. Simão, Adalberto da Silva Retto Jr., Rafael Urano Frajndlich (Sao Paulo: Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo, Universidade de Sao Paulo 2018), 138-57. We also suggest: Jean-Louis Cohen, "La coupure entre architectes et intellectuels, ou les enseignements de l'italophilie," *In extenso*, no. 1 (1984): 182-223. Republished as: Jean-Louis Cohen, "The Italophiles at Work," in *Architecture Theory since 1968*, ed. Kenneth Michael Hays (Cambridge-London: The MIT press, 1998), 506-20; Giorgio Ciucci, "The formative years," *Casabella*, no. 619-20 (1995): 12-25; Federico Rosa, "Progetto e critica dell'urbanistica moderna: i primi anni di attività di Manfredo Tafuri, 1959-1968," Master thesis (Iuav University of Venice, 2002-03, 2 v.); the talks and memories in Orazio Carpenzano, ed., *Lo storico scellerato. Scritti su Manfredo Tafuri* (Macerata: Quodlibet 2019).

3 Manfredo Tafuri, *Teorie e storia dell'architettura*, 1st ed. (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1968).

4 Marco Capponi, *La bibliografia di "Teorie e storia dell'architettura" di Manfredo Tafuri (1968) e sue modifiche nelle riedizioni italiane*, forthcoming online, <http://www.iuav.it/Ateneo1/eventi-del/PROGETTO-T/LIBRI-SCRIV>.

Fig. 1

Cover of Manfredo Tafuri, *Teorie e storia dell'architettura*, 1st ed. (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1968).

## Moving *Teorie e storia*: between “fixed point” and “substantial changes”

The first edition of *Teorie e storia dell'architettura* was printed in May 1968. The book starts with an introduction and is structured in six chapters, with twenty illustrations in total. The chapters are titled “Modern Architecture and the Eclipse of History,” “Architecture as ‘Indifferent Object’ and the Crisis of Critical Attention,” “Architecture as Metalanguage: the critical Value of the Image,” “Operative Criticism,” “Instruments of Criticism” and “The Tasks of Criticism.” The work ends with an appendix of illustrations divided by chapter and an index of names. The first chapter, on the beginning of modern architecture with Brunelleschi and his rupture of historical continuity, is the basis of any subsequent consideration.

*Teorie e storia* has also become the most successful of Tafuri’s books on a global scale. There are four Italian re-editions (1970, 1973, 1976, 1980) for Laterza’s *Biblioteca di cultura moderna* series, and two reprints (1986, 1988) for Laterza’s *Biblioteca Universale* series. These are intertwined with translations and, of course, other parallel publications by the author. The first translation is from the second Italian edition into Spanish (Barcelona: Laia, 1972; 2nd ed., 1973), followed by the fourth Italian edition into French (Paris: Éditions Sadg, 1976), Portuguese (Lisbon: Presença 1979; São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1979), a first one into English (London: Granada, 1980) and a second one for an American publishing house (New York: Harper and Row 1980), but in both cases translated from the fourth Italian edition by Giorgio Verrecchia. Then, there is a Japanese one (Tokyo: Asahi, 1985), as well as, of course, the circulation of unauthorised mimeographed copies.<sup>5</sup> After the author’s death, the book has also been translated into Korean and Chinese.

Looking at the translations, it would appear that the second and fourth Italian editions had the largest global diffusion. However, a series of changes had been already made to the first Italian edition and the book seems to be born destined to change together with its author.

The correspondence between Manfredo Tafuri and the publishing house, in fact, shows that the book profoundly changes between April 1967,<sup>6</sup> when Tafuri signs two contracts for what will be *Teorie e storia dell'architettura* and *L'architettura dell'Umanesimo* (1969), and January 1968, a few months before going to print. The text of the book is written almost at once, but with a parallel and conspicuous bibliographic update.<sup>7</sup> However, this should not be interpreted as a sudden and revolutionary change of course. Rather, Tafuri seems to have chosen to examine the issues he was dealing with from a different perspective.

At the end of January 1968, in fact, the book, now at the first draft of the fourth chapter, still has a provisional title: *I miti della Ragione nell'architettura europea*.<sup>8</sup>

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5 Manfredo Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, trans. G. Verrecchia (London: Granada, 1980), xiii.

6 Appendix, letters nos. 1 and 2.

7 Appendix, letters nos. 3, 4 and 5.

8 Appendix, letters nos. 5 and 6.

Only at the beginning of May 1968 the book has its definitive title, although the editor still confuses “Teorie” with “Teoria.”<sup>9</sup> For the cover image, Tafuri seems inclined to use the one finally adopted. However, he leaves the choice to the publisher, because Vito Laterza probably prefers a drawing by Giovan Battista Piranesi, previously discussed with Tafuri.<sup>10</sup>

The initial project probably was a great historical narrative, from Brunelleschi to the twentieth century, following the *fil rouge* that Tafuri would define as the “Reason’s adventures:” that is, the continuous transformation throughout history of rationality in its opposite, irrationality. An ambitious programme that will be postponed and articulated over time.<sup>11</sup>

Postponing for the moment this question, a possible link between the first and the second project for the future *Teorie e storia* could be found in a testimony to which we will return several times: the recording of the first lecture that Tafuri held in Venice in 1966 for Giuseppe Samonà’s course.

Here, focusing on the interventions on the city, Tafuri speaks about the overthrow of late eighteenth-century rationality in the irrationality of the demolitions in the Fascist era. Then he affirms: “and this practice, in which rationality becomes irrationality, precisely is [...] an explication of what I was saying before about the false stabilisation of the concept of relationship with history.”<sup>12</sup>

Therefore, in *Teorie e storia* Tafuri finally turns his attention to the ongoing problem of the relationship with history. A problem that, as we shall see, has its roots in the eighteenth-century rationalist turn.

When the French edition is published, Tafuri declared that *Teorie e storia* is the result of a maturation that began at least in 1964.<sup>13</sup> According to the author, the book is like “the fixed point one has to create for himself at certain times in his life.” It binds his personal experience “to the histories of individual and collective

9 Appendix, letter no. 8.

10 Appendix, letters nos. 5 and 8.

11 This is a hypothesis that we cannot treat properly here, but on which we can give some clues. The book project seems to have clear origins. The title originally conceived by Tafuri is, most likely, the most explicit proof of the influence of the Italian art critic and politician Giulio Carlo Argan (1909-1992). The title is in fact a literal quotation from a “memorable” conference held by Argan in 1960 at the Gallery of Modern Art in Rome, titled *The great problems of contemporary arts*. Tafuri publishes a significant transcription of this conference in the conclusion of *Manfredo Tafuri, L'architettura moderna in Giappone* (Rocca San Casciano, Bologna: Cappelli, 1964), 153-54. In the opening note to *L'architettura dell'Umanesimo*, according to Tafuri humanism is not “a defined ‘period’ in itself, but a ‘moment’ of the long history of the modern European intellectual and his ideology: the myth of Reason.” See *Manfredo Tafuri, L'architettura dell'Umanesimo* (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1969), 6. Later, in 1973, the narrative of *Progetto e utopia* will resume from the “Reason’s Adventures: Naturalism and the City in the Century of Enlightenment,” as title of the first chapter. See *Manfredo Tafuri, Progetto e utopia. Architettura e sviluppo capitalistico* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1973), 5. Although Tafuri never mentions it explicitly, it also seems possible to hypothesize the importance at this moment of Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno’s *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated for the first time into Italian by Renato Solmi and printed in April 1966 (Torino: Einaudi, 1966). In 1968 Tafuri only shows a general knowledge of Adorno’s American writings: *Tafuri, Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 107. While in 1992 he will remember the “socializing effect” of 1960s public demonstrations, during which students passed “a book by Adorno around the table at a restaurant, not reading him but creating complicated theories:” *Manfredo Tafuri, “History as Project: an Interview with Manfredo Tafuri,”* interview by Luisa Passerini, Rome, February-March 1992, *ANY: Architecture New York*, no. 25-26 (2000): 69.

12 *Manfredo Tafuri, “Le strutture del linguaggio nella storia dell’architettura moderna: i parametri di controllo,”* (February 1966) audio recording now on eight CDs, no archival signature, Archivio Progetti luav, luav University of Venice: CD 1, about 01:00:00-01:01:30.

13 *Manfredo Tafuri, “Entretien avec Manfredo Tafuri,”* interview par Françoise Very, *AMC. Architecture-Mouvement-Continuité*, no. 39 (1976): 64-68. Republished as: *Manfredo Tafuri, “The culture markets. Françoise Very interviews Manfredo Tafuri,” Casabella*, no. 619-20 (1995): 37.

crisis together in a sort of complex knot."<sup>14</sup> At the same time, in the preface to the French edition, Tafuri defines the book as a "work in progress," since "after the additions and corrections made in 1970, the book was still revised for the Spanish edition in 1972 and finally for the third Italian edition in 1973."<sup>15</sup> However, changes were actually introduced at least until the fourth Italian edition.

Focusing on the printed versions, from a first comparison between the Italian editions it is evident that Tafuri took the opportunity of the book's republication to introduce additions and changes.

The most striking interventions are the two introductory notes to the second and fourth editions. Until the fifth edition (1980) both are present, to be reduced to the second note only from the 1986 edition onwards.

Less evident, but nonetheless eloquent, are the limited bibliographical updates, to texts up to 1975, and the self-censorships, the last of which was carried out for the fourth edition (1976).

With new editions, in fact, Tafuri proceeded to eliminate or replace his own publications considered no longer adequate. From the second edition onwards, the booklet on the cathedral of Amiens (Firenze: Sadea Sansoni, 1965) disappears from note no. 17 to the third chapter. Subsequently, in note no. 25 to the same chapter, from the fourth edition onwards Tafuri replaced *L'architettura del Manierismo nel '500 europeo* (Roma: Officina, 1966), on which the author's severe judgment is known,<sup>16</sup> with the second edition of *L'architettura dell'Umanesimo* (Bari: Laterza, 1972).

Sometimes, however, the changes pose a historiographic problem. In the second edition of 1970, for instance, Tafuri inserts new references from prior to 1968 and, in later interviews, he will say they were fundamental for the first draft of the book.<sup>17</sup> The impression is that the author tried to untangle and make the threads of the discourse more explicit, but that he also pulled them forcefully, in a direction that he would fully embrace only later.

In 1968, in fact, Tafuri starts his steady teaching period at the *Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia* and is committed to writing his first article for *Contropiano: Materiali marxisti*.<sup>18</sup> Based on these decisive biographical experiences,<sup>19</sup> Tafuri begins to modify and rewrite entire paragraphs of *Teorie*

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14 Ibid., 37-39.

15 Manfredo Tafuri, *Theories et histoire de l'architecture*, trans. J.-P. Fortin, F. Laisney (Paris: Sadg, 1976), xi.

16 Tafuri, "History as a Project," 33.

17 Tafuri, "The culture markets," 37. It would be possible to continue to verify Tafuri's subsequent statements with the data provided by the books, and we would come to realise that neither in the first edition, nor in the previous book on Mannerism, there is sure evidence of an early knowledge of Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre (Tafuri, "History as a Project," 43). No references in Manfredo Tafuri, *L'architettura del Manierismo nel '500 europeo* (Roma: Officina edizioni, 1966). The concept of "historical judgement" should be debated in this sense. But, for a different opinion, see the interesting Andrew Leach, *Crisis on crisis, or Tafuri on Mannerism* (Basel: Standpunkte, 2017), 16-17.

18 Manfredo Tafuri, "Per una critica dell'ideologia architettonica". *Contropiano: materiali marxisti*, no. 1 (1969): 31-79; see Alberto Asor Rosa, "Critique of ideology and historical practice," *Casabella*, no. 619-20 (1995): 29.

19 Tafuri, "History as a Project," 32-33, 54. Up to that moment, for Tafuri "on the one hand, there was history, while on the other, there was politics". The collaboration with the journal's authors and founders would also lead to the establishment of a first research group.

e *storia* and to re-contextualise the book's contents within a more evident and radical political framework. The most significant changes in this sense occur between the first and the second edition,<sup>20</sup> as also evidenced by the 1969 correspondence between the author and the publisher.<sup>21</sup>

Between October and December 1969 Tafuri revises the book at least twice: in the second edition he inserts an introductory note, he makes changes and additions to the text and replaces three illustrations: nos. 1, 16-17 (both of them of a covered bridge designed by Giacomo Quarenghi) and 18, the same that accompany this article [Fig. 2-3-4-5].

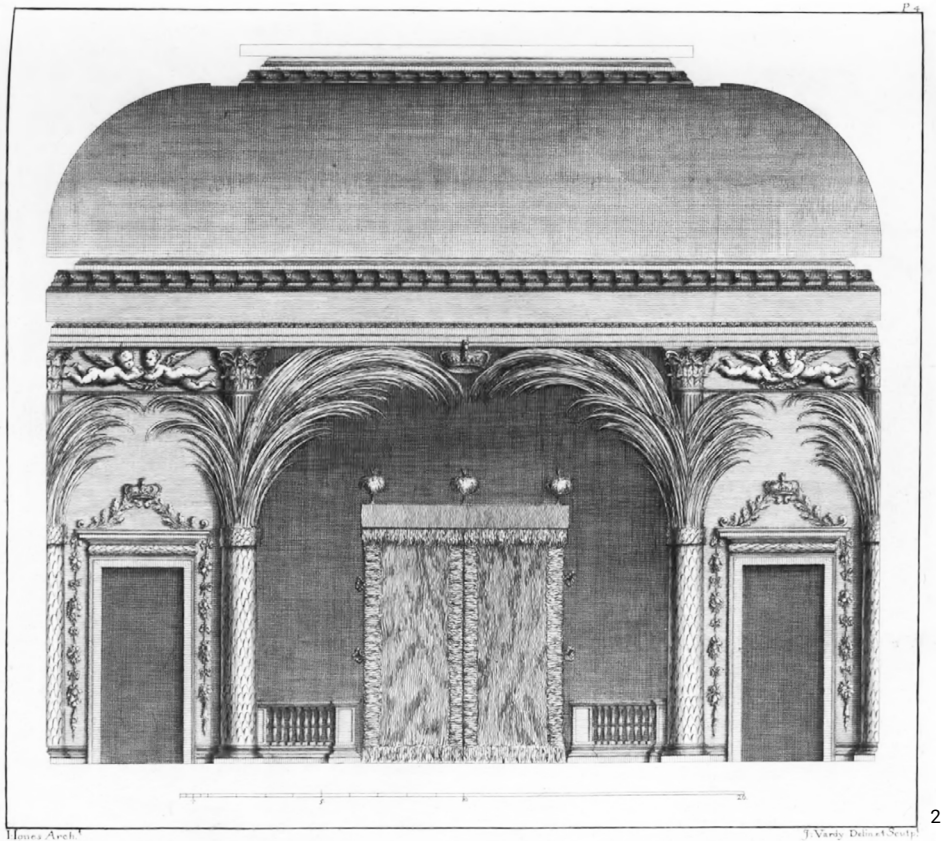


Fig. 2

John Vardy, from Inigo Jones and William Kent, "An Alcove for a Bed at Greenwich for King Charles 1st." From: *Some designs of Mr. Inigo Jones and Mr. William Kent*, drawn, engraved and published by John Vardy, 1744, tab. 4. The volume was reprinted in 1967 (Farnborough, Hants: Gregg P, 1967). It is likely that Tafuri used this modern reprint for the illustration to the text no. 1 of *Teorie e storia*. See Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 33.

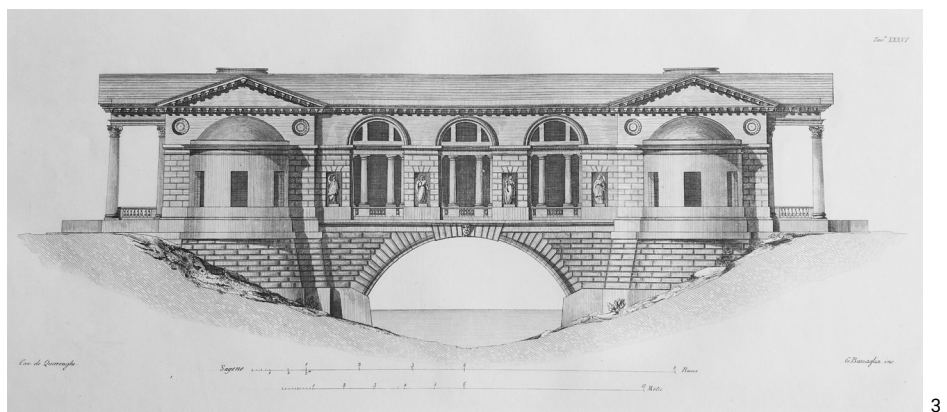
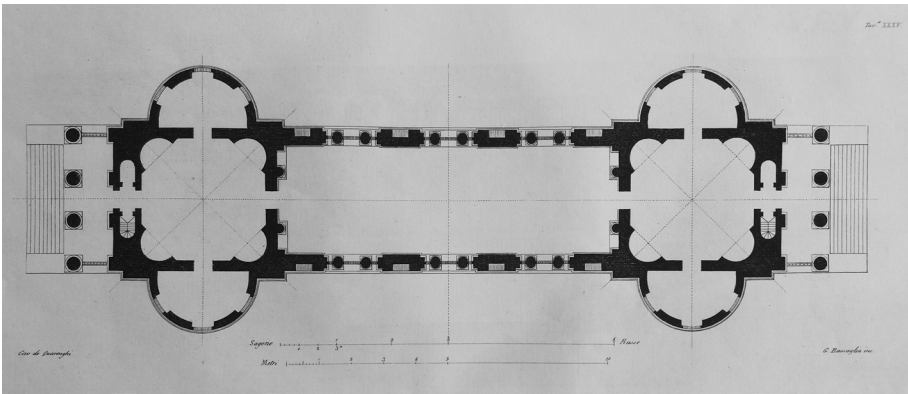


Fig. 3

Giulio Quarenghi, from a drawing by Giacomo Quarenghi, front on the water of the covered bridge for the Gatčina gardens. From: *Fabbriche e disegni di Giacomo Quarenghi, architetto, illustrate dal Cav. Giulio suo figlio*, 2nd ed. (Mantova: F.lli Negretti, 1844), tab. XXXVI. Tafuri cites a previous edition of this volume (Milano: presso Paolo Antonio Tosi, 1821) in "Simbolo e ideologia nell'architettura dell'Illuminismo" (1964), 82. He may have used one of these editions, or more likely a modern monograph or a journal, for the illustrations to the text nos. 16, 17 of *Teorie e storia*. See: Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 173.

20 Manfredi Tafuri, *Teorie e storia dell'architettura*, 2nd ed. (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1970). Some notes in Manuela M. Morresi, "Il Rinascimento di Tafuri," in *Manfredi Tafuri. Oltre la storia*, ed. Orlando Di Marino (Napoli: Clean, 2009), 34.

21 Appendix, letters nos. 9, 10 and 11.



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In the second edition, Tafuri states to write the introductory note in order to provide the coordinates for a less arbitrary reading of the text and defines it “only a step towards the acknowledgment of what architecture, as an *institution*, has meant up to now” in its entire ideological character, and concludes by announcing “an urgent second ‘political’ reading of the entire history of modern architecture.”<sup>22</sup> Tafuri therefore prefigures a clear radicalisation of his positions, as would have happened in the subsequent *Progetto e utopia*.<sup>23</sup>

To work more in depth in this direction, Tafuri acts on the previous text, sometimes even in a subtle way. First of all, he refers to the article “L’uomo, il poeta” by Alberto Asor Rosa, published in 1965 in the issue no. 5-6 of *Angelus Novus* journal, founded the previous year by Massimo Cacciari and Cesare De Michelis. It is a very eloquent reference: Asor Rosa’s article, in fact, defines a different and detached role for criticism to face the inevitable contradictions of art making,<sup>24</sup>

Fig. 4

Giulio Quarenghi, from a drawing by Giacomo Quarenghi, plan of the covered bridge for the Gatchina gardens. From: *Fabbriche e disegni di Giacomo Quarenghi architetto*, tab. XXXV. See: Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 173.

Fig. 5

Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, “abreuvoir et lavoir de Meilliand.” From Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L’architecture considérée sous le rapport de l’art, des mœurs et de la législation*, Planches (2nd v., Paris: Lenoir, 1847; Paris: De Nobele, 1961, limited edition of 300 copies), 348. This could be the source used by Manfredo Tafuri for the illustrations to the text no. 18. See: Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 195.

22 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 2nd ed. (1970), 3, 8.

23 Tafuri, *Progetto e utopia*.

24 Alberto Asor Rosa, “L’uomo, il poeta,” *Angelus Novus*, no. 5-6 (1965): 22.

and marks the beginning of the path that would lead to *Contropiano's* cultural experience.<sup>25</sup>

But the changes also infiltrate the core of the book. On page 85 of the first chapter, the comment inserted in round brackets “this has as its premise the most complete adhesion to the new conditions of artistic communications in the broad sense” becomes “if this has any meaning within an ideological super-structure.”<sup>26</sup> Then, at the end of the first chapter, Tafuri adds a new note, no. 124, to clarify that a political judgment was implicit in the previous note, no. 52. In this case, the range of references is clearly expanding in the debate inspired by the publication of Franco Fortini's *Verifica dei poteri* (Milano: Il Saggiatore, 1965; 2nd ed. 1969), to which Asor Rosa had replied with the above-mentioned article.

In the fifth chapter we have two significant changes. In the first case, Tafuri finds the detachment between criticism and architecture healthy, at least until such a clash has “induced a more authentic climate in the cultural debate;” a sentence that, in the second edition of the book, becomes “completely cleared the ideological and mystified character of architectural discipline.”<sup>27</sup> Subsequently, still in relation to the tasks of an independent criticism, Tafuri first writes that “it is in its constant and disruptive activity that a criticism can exert a direct action on the design,” then he modifies it to “by this constant demythologisation criticism can perform a ‘political’ rather than a ‘productive’ function.”<sup>28</sup>

Finally, in the last chapter, Tafuri removes the initial quote from Bertolt Brecht's poem *Praise of Doubt*,<sup>29</sup> and completely rewrites two of the concluding paragraphs. It is starting from the 1970 edition, in fact, that he renames historical activity as “criticism of architectural ideologies’ and, as such, ‘political’ activity.”<sup>30</sup> The first version's last words also were on a scarcely conciliatory, but actually more reformist position. Criticism, in fact, would have imposed “advanced obstacles in the architect's way, challenging him to overcome them,” so that architecture “could recover its specific dimension: that of the future. It is therefore clear that, by bringing the phenomena of contemporary architecture back into the historical channel, criticism must challenge the anti-historicism that, in the preceding pages, we have recognised as the great unsolved problem of modern art.”<sup>31</sup>

These are not normal text revisions that any author could make. Indeed, in the correspondence with the publishing house Tafuri defines some of these

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25 Marco Assennato, “Une Marseillaise sans Bastille à prendre: Manfredo Tafuri enquêté par la philosophie. Architecture, aménagement de l'espace,” PhD diss., Université Paris-Est, 2017, 146-52, HAL multidisciplinary open access archive (Id: tel-01866692), <https://tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-01866692>.

26 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 85; Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 2nd ed. (1970), 85.

27 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 206; Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 2nd ed. (1970), 206.

28 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 241; Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 2nd ed. (1970), 241.

29 “Praised be doubt! I advise you to greet / Cheerfully and with respect the man / Who tests your word like a bad penny. / I'd like you to be wise and not to give / Your word with too much assurance. [...] You, you are a guide, do not forget / That you are a guide because you doubted / other guides! So let those who are guided / the right to doubt.”

30 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 2nd ed. (1970), 272.

31 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 272.



changes as “substantial,”<sup>32</sup> which seem to have escaped the author’s first review.

All the references, additions and modifications mentioned above appear from the second edition of the book onwards, after Tafuri’s arrival in Venice. They represent covert attempts to disguise earlier less radical positions and explicitly tie *Teorie e storia* to the new political course. In other words, Tafuri seems to refashion himself and to politicise his work retroactively, probably to approach and enter the *Contropiano* group.

But it is not inconsistency, or a form of flattery. Rather, *Teorie e storia* represents a kind of laboratory, open to change along precise coordinates. It moves between a project and a work in progress: between the analysis and the diagnosis of the problem, as discussed in the first chapter and stated at the end of the first edition – on which Tafuri will believe for his entire life<sup>33</sup> – and the identification of the tools to intervene.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, this is the structure of the book and, within this polarity, *Teorie e storia* records the process through which Tafuri continued to build himself.

The philological analysis of the references must therefore be carried out a *fortiori* from the first edition of the book.

### **Manfredo Tafuri and the bibliography: a historiographical problem**

Throughout the indexes of Manfredo Tafuri’s books we rarely find a bibliography.<sup>35</sup> This does not mean that Tafuri was not aware of the usefulness of such an instrument. For instance, the course notes he prepared for his students are mainly based on bibliographies.<sup>36</sup> This teaching material was usually structured in an introduction, with a more general course bibliography, and lecture-specific summaries with critical bibliographies organised by themes and architects. Particular attention was paid to the iconographic and documentary apparatus of books and articles.

However, this does not happen in an organic and structured form in the books he wrote. Without his personal archive at our disposal, in order to understand how he uses the sources we have to rely on what he writes, on his changes and silences.

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32 Appendix, letter no. 11.

33 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 10-8, 272; Tafuri, “The culture markets,” 39; Manfredo Tafuri, *Ricerca del Rinascimento. Principi, città, architetti* (Torino: Einaudi, 1992), xxii, footnote no. 8.

34 Tafuri, “The culture markets,” 37-9; Morresi, “Il Rinascimento di Tafuri,” 32-4. However, rather than a co-existence, the approaches to the critique of ideology and philology should be linked to Tafuri’s research experiences over time.

35 Particular exceptions in Manfredo Tafuri, *Storia dell’architettura italiana, 1944-1985* (Torino: Einaudi, 1986), xxi; Manfredo Tafuri and Francesco Dal Co, *Architettura contemporanea* (Milano: Electa, 1976), 392. The final bibliography in Tafuri, *L’architettura moderna in Giappone*, has a structure

36 Manfredo Tafuri, “Storia dell’ideologia antiurbana,” (Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia, Istituto di Storia dell’architettura. Corso di Storia dell’architettura 1A/2A, 1972-1973) DEPIUAV B0034, Iuav University of Venice Library, Venice; Manfredo Tafuri, “Il grattacielo e la struttura della città terziaria in America e in Europa (1850-1975),” (IUAV, Istituto di Storia dell’Architettura, corso di Storia dell’architettura 2A, 1975-1976) DEPIUAV A0013, Iuav University of Venice Library, Venice.

Scholars have resorted, for instance, to a selection of cited references,<sup>37</sup> or to Tafuri's later statements,<sup>38</sup> or even to the reconstruction of the contemporary historical-artistic debate and political context.<sup>39</sup> These approaches, however, though erudite and stimulating, are not always attentive to the references actually cited by Tafuri.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, as we have seen, some choices, even when based on more rigorous strategies, do not always seem able to grasp the complexity of the experience with which they deal.

We believe, instead, that it seems more effective to concentrate on specific key issues of his production,<sup>41</sup> and a systematic cataloguing of the bibliography used by Tafuri can provide a valid tool to undertake a gradual deconstruction and analysis of his writings and thought.

This philological method, applied for the first time to the first edition of *Teorie e storia dell'architettura* (1968), brought about the first challenges [Fig. 3-4]. Not in verifying partial or inaccurate references, but rather because it posed the historiographical problem in clear terms: that is, a propensity for Manfredo Tafuri not to declare his references in some cases. In fact, it happens that he omits bibliographical references, does not state the origin of the illustrations, makes almost a clean sweep of architectural literature: for example, an emblematic passage in which Tafuri clearly places himself in a dialectical relationship with respect to Giulio Carlo Argan and Bruno Zevi.<sup>42</sup> Or, with regard to the illustrations, he always indicates, albeit in a shortened way, the eighteenth-century printed sources, but not the modern monographs and magazines from which the photographs are taken.<sup>43</sup>

It is therefore evident that the bibliographic filing alone is a blunt weapon. It will have to be interrogated from different perspectives, but compensatory strategies should be used in order to obtain a productive re-construction of the data. The teaching material could help integrating bibliographic omissions and re-evaluate the importance of books and authors that have remained hitherto mostly unnoticed.

The close relationship between the first edition of the book and the beginning of Tafuri's teaching activity, in fact, represents the main reason that led us to use a philological method with an elusive book such as *Teorie e storia*. Between

37 Marco Biraghi, *Progetto di crisi: Manfredo Tafuri e l'architettura contemporanea* (Milano: C. Marinotti, 2005), 9-53.

38 Andrew Leach, *Choosing History: A Study of Manfredo Tafuri's Theorisation of Architectural History and Architectural History Research* (Gent: A&S Books, 2007), 129, 134. [https://lib.ugent.be/fulltxt/RUG01/000/955/648/RUG01-000955648\\_2010\\_0001\\_AC.pdf](https://lib.ugent.be/fulltxt/RUG01/000/955/648/RUG01-000955648_2010_0001_AC.pdf). Titia Rixt Hoekstra, "Building versus Bildung: Manfredo Tafuri and the construction of a historical discipline," *University of Groningen*, 2005, 76-78. <http://irs.ub.rug.nl/ppn/283596589>.

39 Pier Vittorio Aureli, "Recontextualizing Tafuri's Critique of Ideology," *Log*, no. 18 (2010), 89-100; Assennato, "Une Marseillaise," 127-83.

40 Assennato, "Une Marseillaise," 100-101, points out some bibliographic additions in Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 2nd ed. (1970).

41 Carla Keyvanian, "Manfredo Tafuri's notion of History and its methodological Sources: from Walter Benjamin to Roland Barthes," MIT Libraries, 1992. <https://dspace.mit.edu/handle/1721.1/131110>; Carla Keyvanian, "Manfredo Tafuri: From the Critique of Ideology to Microhistories," *Design Issues*, no. 1 (2000): 3-15.

42 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 184-85.

43 The only exception is appendix ill. no. XXXVII, probably from the periodical *Rassegna Sovietica*, as we will see.

1963-64 Tafuri is invited to join Ernesto Nathan Rogers at the Polytechnic University of Milan,<sup>44</sup> and we have different kind of sources at our disposal. For the following year, Tafuri would draw up the first summaries with critical bibliographies intended for students of the faculty of Rome, at the time printed twice by Alberto Samonà in 1966 and 1973.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, a recording of the two lectures and debates that Manfredo Tafuri gave on February 1966 for Giuseppe Samonà's course on *La teoria della progettazione architettonica* in Venice has also been preserved.<sup>46</sup> Additionally, a revised version of these two lectures were published in 1968, the same year of *Teorie e storia*'s first edition.<sup>47</sup> It would be like starting from a hypothetical but probable library of the historian, to understand what material Tafuri mainly uses and why.

### The most cited authors: Zevi, Argan, Panofsky

The bibliography was first analysed using the frequency with which bibliographic references of authors and texts occur as a starting point [Fig. 5].

The authors with the greatest number of bibliographic references ever are Bruno Zevi (1918-2000) and Giulio Carlo Argan (1909-1992), with twenty-one and nineteen citations respectively. The data may not appear surprising,<sup>48</sup> however the two authors are cited for different reasons.

Tafuri mainly employs writings by Bruno Zevi to deal with problems of historiographic method, such as *La storia come metodologia del fare architettonico* (academic inaugural lecture, Roma, 18 December 1963) and *History as a Method of Teaching Architecture*, paper in the repeatedly cited collection *The History, Theory and Criticism of Architecture* (ed. Marcus Whiffen, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1965).

The most cited work by Giulio Carlo Argan, on the other hand, is *Walter Gropius e la Bauhaus* (Torino: Einaudi, 1951) with at least three citations, one of which in the text. The importance of this source in *Teorie e storia* must also be taken into consideration in the absence of other explicit and specific references on the German architect. Subsequently, there are two collections of essays by Argan,

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44 Tafuri, "History as a Project," 29. The article by Guido Canella, "Vecchie e nuove ipotesi per i centri direzionali," *Casabella-continuità*, no. 275 (1963): 42-56, should no longer be included in Tafuri's bibliography, because his name does not appear anywhere. Nevertheless, it remains an eloquent testimony of Canella and Rogers' design research in relation to history.

45 Manfredo Tafuri, "La storia dell'architettura moderna alla luce dei problemi attuali. Sommari e bibliografie critiche," (Palermo: Istituto di composizione, Facoltà di Architettura, Università di Palermo, 1966) Samonà 5.rci/10, Samonà, Giuseppe e Alberto, *Archivio Progetti luav*, luav University of Venice; (Palermo: Istituto di studi sull'architettura, Facoltà di Architettura, 1973) 1759/d, Biblioteca di Architettura, Università di Palermo.

46 Manfredo Tafuri, "Le strutture del linguaggio nella storia dell'architettura moderna: i parametri di controllo," (February 1966) eight CDs. Partial and not always accurate transcription in: Rosa, "Progetto e critica," 2nd v., 295-321; Hoekstra, "Building versus Bildung," 210-23.

47 Manfredo Tafuri, "Le strutture del linguaggio nella storia dell'architettura moderna," in Giuseppe Samonà et al., *Teoria della progettazione architettonica* (Bari: Dedalo libri, 1968), 13-30. Manuela Morresi stated that the lectures and the essay "differ significantly," but without stressing them: Morresi, "Il Rinascimento di Tafuri," 46, footnote no. 26. As we shall see, she used a transcript not always rigorous of Tafuri's voice, but Morresi tends to return an always 'coherent' Manfredo Tafuri, despite the use of different sources.

48 Tafuri, "History as a Project," 16.

*Salvezza e caduta nell'arte moderna* and *Progetto e destino*,<sup>49</sup> each of them with two citations. However, even in these cases, the mere number of citations can lead to underestimate their importance, as well as a deeper knowledge of Argan's writings.<sup>50</sup>

The long quote at the end of the introductory chapter, for instance, is almost a programmatic frame for the entire discussion. According to Argan, in fact, critical activity should first of all be free from predestined sentences or absolutions, and Tafuri does not hesitate to adopt this approach in order to also criticise the constructivist positions of Argan, without however citing a specific essay or article.<sup>51</sup>

The third most cited author, not adequately considered so far, is Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968) with sixteen citations.<sup>52</sup> Panofsky was certainly known by specialists, but the historical and cultural dimension of his method must be taken into consideration with respect to a Crocean aesthetic judgment that was still widespread in Italy.<sup>53</sup>

Panofsky's most cited works are the collection *La prospettiva come «forma simbolica» e altri scritti* (Milano: Feltrinelli 1961) and *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1957), both widely employed in the fifth chapter on the instruments of criticism. Tafuri shows that he already knew Panofsky's *Il significato nelle arti visive* (Torino: Einaudi, 1962) in his previous book on Mannerism (1966), where he attributed to Panofsky the hypothesis of the existence of a specific mannerist architecture.<sup>54</sup> In *Teorie e storia*, however, Tafuri is interested in Panofsky's methodological approach.

The relationship between theories and art history is clearly stated through Panofsky's words, according to which theories "do not 'explain' or 'designate' the values or the meanings of the works, but constitute parallel phenomena, with their own history – they are the *object* rather than the means of interpretation."<sup>55</sup> But for Tafuri, which assumes as clear the distinction between artistic intentions and the artist's intentions, Panofsky's separate analysis are impossible to be integrated in a final synthesis, and he suspects that "the relationship between the symbolic element and its 'referent,' its specific meaning, may not

49 Giulio Carlo Argan, *Salvezza e caduta nell'arte moderna* (Milano: Il Saggiatore, 1964); *Progetto e destino* (Milano, Il Saggiatore, 1965).

50 See Manfredo Tafuri, "La vicenda architettonica romana, 1945-1961," *Superfici: problemi di architettura e tecnologie edili*, no. 5 (1962), 23, 34. Marco Assennato rightly stresses the importance of Argan's essay "Architettura e ideologia" (1957) republished in Argan, *Progetto e destino*, 82-90; Marco Assennato, *Progetto e metropoli. Saggio su operismo e architettura* (Macerata: Quodlibet, 2019), 19-23. See also Rosa, "Progetto e critica," 1st v., 214-27.

51 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 184-185; Giulio Carlo Argan, *Progetto e destino*, 43-50.

52 For some initial considerations: Tomas Llorens, "Manfredo Tafuri: Neo-Avant-Gard and History," *Architectural Design*, no. 6-7 (1981): 85; Daniel Sherer, "Tafuri's Renaissance: Architecture, Representation, Transgression," *Assemblage*, no. 28 (1995): 40. Recently in Massimo Bulgarelli, "Tafuri e Giulio Romano," in *Utilità e danno della storia. Quaderni della ricerca – IUAV*, ed. Massimo Bulgarelli, Agostino De Rosa, Carmelo Marabello (Milano-Udine: Mimesis edizioni, 2018), 20-21.

53 Emilio Garroni, *La crisi semantica delle arti* (Roma: Officina edizioni, 1964), 109-11, 163, footnote no. 2.

54 Tafuri, *Architettura del Manierismo*, 3-9, 17.

55 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 224.

be so decisive.<sup>56</sup> At this point, Tafuri prefers to underline the inadequacy of the iconological analysis to grasp the meaning proper of the single works.

However, Tafuri will constantly refer to Panofsky, still twenty-years later in his *Ricerca del Rinascimento*.<sup>57</sup> Additionally, in Tafuri's view, the perspective as representation system seems progressively to lose its symbolic contents and to remain the only "control parameter" for architectural invention.<sup>58</sup> In fact, in 1992 Tafuri assumes that the transition to the long cycle of modern architecture was marked by a single criterion:

When compared to the medieval era, the only element that can be called truly innovative is a crucial one: the introduction of a system that is *completely representational* [*compiutamente rappresentativo*]. At stake was not the 'contents,' but rather, a process at once mathematically rationalized and subject to verification: one permitting their formalization within a system that 'placed the world epoch in an image.'<sup>59</sup>

But it is a – temporary – arrival point. In 1966-68, Tafuri placed the birth of modern architecture with humanism and he summarised it through the adoption of three "parameters," that were, at the same time, an explanation of contents already given and universal, and design tools. They were the univocity and measurability of the space, the perspective representation and the harmonic-mathematical proportions<sup>60</sup> – to which, starting from 1969, a rationalisation of the social organisation of the work would be added.<sup>61</sup> Modern architecture would have developed starting from challenging these parameters. The relationship between architecture and science, for example, would lead to the reversal of perspective as form of knowledge to a representation of the world; that is, from a concept of "form" as "representation of universal data," to a concept of "image" which can assume such universal data, but it is "subject to the transparency of the author's autobiography [...] proposing itself as an autonomous value."<sup>62</sup> So, according to Tafuri, at the end of the eighteenth century architecture would fall into a deep semantic crisis, reached through the total shattering of these parameters. As we will see, the adoption of a new indirect parameter, an instrumental use of history, would have allowed architecture to regain an institutional level.

However, as is well known, starting from the 1980s Tafuri began focused philological investigations and progressively dismantled the foundation of his first

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56 Ibid., 227.

57 Tafuri, *Ricerca del Rinascimento*, 3-24.

58 Bulgarelli, "Tafuri e Giulio Romano." Thanks to Massimo Bulgarelli for sharing some reflections about this point with me.

59 Tafuri, *Ricerca del Rinascimento*, 20.

60 Tafuri, "Strutture del linguaggio," CD no. 1, about 00:06:00-00:25:30; Tafuri, "Strutture del linguaggio," 13-6.

61 Tafuri, *L'architettura dell'Umanesimo*, 17-19.

62 Tafuri, "Strutture del linguaggio," CD no. 1, about 00:33:00-00:34:55; Tafuri, *L'architettura dell'Umanesimo*, 345-57.

hypotheses about the 'classic.'<sup>63</sup> Modern architecture would exclusively become 'representational.'

Naturally, the frequency is not the only criterion to be adopted. See for instance the importance of Angelo Guglielmi (1929- ), although mentioned only once. In reply to Guglielmi's book *Avanguardia e sperimentalismo* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1964), at the end of the first chapter Tafuri comes to prefigure the concept of a "zero-degree" history. Although Tafuri rejects Guglielmi's inevitable assassination of history, he polemically adopts the theoretical extremism of a history as "pure event," and no longer as "a value," to tackle the ahistorical attitude and instrumental use of history in design.<sup>64</sup>

It is a dialectical construction. But history as 'pure event' also represents – in the first edition of the book – the explicit precedent of the "total disenchantment"<sup>65</sup> reached by Tafuri, at least according to Asor Rosa, after the exercise of what would have been the critique of ideology.

## The most cited books

The most cited book in *Teorie e storia* is the Italian translation of Walter Benjamin's *L'opera d'arte nell'epoca della sua riproducibilità tecnica* (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), with at least eleven explicit citations. The data is interesting, albeit unsurprising. The "crisis of the object", in fact, was a highly topical issue in 1960s, especially among art historians, as stated by Tafuri himself.<sup>66</sup> Rather, it should be emphasised that *L'opera d'arte* and the collection of essays and fragments *Angelus Novus* (Torino: Einaudi 1962) are the only writings by Benjamin cited by Tafuri, about which he also shares the introductory analysis proposed by Renato Solmi.

After Benjamin, we find *La crisi semantica delle arti* by Emilio Garroni (Roma: Officina 1964) and Umberto Eco's *Appunti per una semiologia delle comunicazioni visive* (Milano: Bompiani, 1967), with eight and seven explicit citations respectively. In the second case, the book is mainly cited by Tafuri in the fifth chapter, first to warn – through Zevi's words – against a limited interpretation of architectural codes and, above all, the risk of a strong reactionary attitude.<sup>67</sup> Then it is extensively quoted to put forward the difficulty of current codes in grasping the philological meaning of the work.<sup>68</sup> Also in this case, Tafuri does not question the existence of the work's original message, rather he casts doubts on

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63 See, for instance, Antonio Foscari and Manfredo Tafuri, *L'armonia e i conflitti. La chiesa di San Francesco della Vigna nella Venezia del '500* (Torino: Einaudi, 1983), 3-10; Joseph Connors, "The culture of the fictitious," *Casabella*, no. 619-20 (1995): 160-163; Bulgarelli, "Tafuri e Giulio Romano," 16-21.

64 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 92-94, footnote no. 123.

65 Asor Rosa, "Critique of ideology and historical practice," 33; see also Alberto Asor Rosa, "Manfredo Tafuri, or, Humanism Revisited," *Log*, no. 9 (2007): 34.

66 Tafuri, "The culture market," 41; Argan, *Progetto e destino*, 50-51.

67 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 242-43.

68 *Ibid.*, 246-47.

the application of language analysis techniques to the art object, thus sharing Emilio Garroni's critics to Umberto Eco.<sup>69</sup>

The all but instrumental use of Garroni's book, and the continuity with which Tafuri quotes and cites *La crisi semantica delle arti* (in the introduction, first, second, fourth and fifth chapter), suggest a different role for this volume, almost as a theoretical platform or a dialogical reference for Tafuri's argumentation. A key role, still not sufficiently taken into consideration, despite being confirmed by both the course bibliography and the recordings of lectures.

### **Underlying conversations: Emilio Garroni and Cesare Brandi**

A close analysis of the text and footnotes allowed us to identify for the first time Emilio Garroni as a central reference for the project on which Tafuri focuses in *Teorie e storia*.<sup>70</sup>

Emilio Garroni (1925-2005) was an interviewer and author of TV programmes on artistic topics even before his assignment as university professor of Aesthetics in Rome, received after the publication of *La crisi semantica delle arti*.<sup>71</sup> This book is the continuation of a previous study on informal art, through widely debated and topical issues at the time. In fact, Garroni intends to analyse the communicative structure of the art object as well, but placing semanticity at the centre. Starting from that point, the methods of analysis derived from semiotics and the information theory are first used critically, and then dialectically overcome within a broader methodological horizon.

It is worth noting that Garroni already uses a peaceful vision of the concept of crisis, intended as a relevant but not exhaustive moment of a historical and cultural phase, and simultaneously perceived as a "real need for transformation and continuity."<sup>72</sup> For this reason, from the first pages of the book Garroni warns against all the disciplines (such as sociology) and other strictly analytical methods, that produce attitudes of renunciation of crisis, since they lead to accepting the world "as it is."<sup>73</sup>

A crisis of the arts was ongoing since at least the late eighteenth century and it concerns its semanticity.

According to Garroni, the process of semantic reduction of intentionality, that is, those operations through which the semanticity of the sign could rely on the

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69 Ibid., 111, footnote no. 26.

70 Argan, *Progetto e destino*, 71, footnote no. 1, 2, refers to Garroni and Umberto Eco for an in-depth analysis of the concept of crisis; this reference has been pointed out by Biraghi, *Progetto di crisi*, 24, footnote no. 16, but without links to Tafuri's book; Assennato, "Une Marseillaise," 176, dedicates a few words to Garroni; Bulgarelli, "Tafuri e Giulio Romano," 14. Although more attentive to the text, neither Assennato nor Bulgarelli have pointed out the central role of Garroni's book. On July 10, 2020, in the above-mentioned reading seminar on *Teorie e storia*, prof. Marco Biraghi spoke about Garroni in relation to Manfredo Tafuri and semiology, considering Garroni's notion of crisis important for Tafuri.

71 Lorenzo Dorelli, "Garroni, Emilio," in *Enciclopedia del Cinema*, 2nd v. (Roma: Istituto dell'enciclopedia italiana, 2003): 709-10.

72 Garroni, *Crisi semantica*, 65.

73 Ibid., 35-36.

intentionality that had concretely determined it, was torn apart.<sup>74</sup> In the nineteenth century, art appeared incapable of intersubjective and institutional status without returning to a now-lifeless language. In this perspective, the sign tends to become objective – without an internal intentionality – and to be regained through an external intentionality, that is, not contained in the sign itself.<sup>75</sup> During the nineteenth-century experience, the “sign recovery” also corresponds to a “semantic recovery,” but this does not happen to contemporary art, whose continuous attempts to re-invest the artistic language with meaning produce the maximum linguistic ambiguity.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, the semantic crisis of the arts, for Garroni, precedes and conditions the notion of “crisis of the object.”<sup>77</sup>

Positivistic analytical approaches, such as linguistics and semantics, have contributed to the development of a plural notion of art. But, consequently, their cognitive capacity is severely limited when applied to these “misleading signs.”<sup>78</sup> Rather, Garroni proposes a method that is inextricably composed of a double analytical phase: the object-linguistic analysis and the historical-intentional moment. Nevertheless, he is fully aware of its historicist approach, at the same time an instrument of investigation and a historical outcome.<sup>79</sup>

It is possible that Tafuri met Emilio Garroni for the first time at the Ugo Spirito’s lectures, of which Garroni was teaching assistant since 1951.<sup>80</sup> Later, it is certain that Tafuri and Garroni met at least in 1967, during a round table conference on Francesco Borromini.<sup>81</sup> However, Tafuri had long been aware of Garroni’s book.

In the summaries with critical bibliography for students, *La crisi semantica delle arti* is recommended from the first lecture on, to understand the “problems concerning the relations of architecture with other arts and semantic aspects.”<sup>82</sup> Although within the context of a design course, Tafuri also intends to provide students with theoretical tools, in order to develop a methodology that does not include an instrumental use of history. According to Tafuri’s diagnosis, for architecture the problems would arise from a methodological leap, from the programme to immediate figurative results, without a conscious linguistic research and from the ambiguous and contrasting positions assumed by critics.

In much more sophisticated terms, the two 1966 recorded lectures given by Tafuri in Samonà’s course also revolve around the eighteenth-century “semantic crisis of the arts,”<sup>83</sup> as well as the following essay published in 1968.<sup>84</sup> Even in

74 Ibid., 198-205.

75 Ibid., 317-21.

76 Ibid., 336.

77 Ibid., 330.

78 Ibid., 338.

79 Ibid., 147-70.

80 Tafuri seems to have a good knowledge of Ugo Spirito’s thought, and he associates it, with some distinctions, to the design methodology of Saverio Muratori: Tafuri, “Strutture del linguaggio,” CD no. 3, about 00:59:35-01:00:06.

81 Emilio Garroni, Paolo Portoghesi, Manfredo Tafuri, “Il metodo di progettazione del Borromini,” in *Studi sul Borromini: atti del convegno promosso dall’Accademia di San Luca*, 2nd v. (Roma: De Luca, 1967), 5-34.

82 Tafuri, “Storia dell’architettura moderna,” (1973), 10.

83 Tafuri, “Strutture del linguaggio,” CD no. 1, about 00:43:38, 00:44:40, 00:56:06; CD no. 6, about 00:00:30.

84 Tafuri, “Strutture del linguaggio,” 21.



these cases, however, observing the aims of the course, it would appear that Tafuri tries to make clear the central concept by speaking of direct and indirect “design control parameters,” such as the instrumental use of history, which would seem to coincide with Garroni’s “external intentionality.”

But the core of the 1966 lectures and the 1968 essay consists in the awareness that, since the eighteenth century, history has been used to resolve the semantic crisis in which architecture found itself.

According to Tafuri, on the one hand the culture of the Enlightenment has produced a history that is “history of human values,” a history in which “values can be selected and transformed into current values.”<sup>85</sup> On the other hand, the rationalist turn would have definitively generated a crisis in humanistic culture, still based on a “precise intelligibility of the expressive sense of language within its determining structures,” through the split between “significant structure of the art work” and “semantic value of the art work itself.”<sup>86</sup>

The culture of Enlightenment, Tafuri clearly says

precisely in its desire to restore a dignity and an institutional status, I would say an authoritativeness to the linguistic architectural sign, again reproduces indirect control parameters, resorting however – and I would say this is fundamental – to something completely new: that is, an instrumental use of history. That has such a profound influence on European culture from the eighteenth century to the present day, that today we are still deeply involved in it, I would say, we are not able to detach ourselves from it, and evidence of this is [...] the extensive use that is made of the history of architecture [...] as a tool on the drawing board.<sup>87</sup>

Contemporary architecture is still facing the consequences of this centuries-old flawed relationship with history, because twentieth-century “architects and artists need a direct relationship, completely recognisable by the observer, with structures, works and eras that had aroused those same ethical and civil values.”<sup>88</sup> The instrumental use of history as a design control parameter is, using Tafuri’s words, “undoubtedly one of the greatest and one of the most moving, I would say, of the modern history of architecture.” But, he concludes, “the revolution accomplished is a revolution that is still incomplete.”<sup>89</sup>

Similarly, in the first chapter of *Teorie e storia*, one of the most meaningful parts of the book, Tafuri places the eighteenth-century intellectual rupture at the basis of today’s semantic crisis of the arts. He merges the “crisis of the object” with the crisis of the historicity of modern art, and makes it incapable,

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85 Tafuri, “Strutture del linguaggio,” CD no. 1, about 00:53:30-00:54:00.

86 Tafuri, “Strutture del linguaggio,” CD no. 1, about 00:44:30-00:45:00. See also Tafuri, “Strutture del linguaggio,” 21-24.

87 Tafuri, “Strutture del linguaggio,” CD no. 1, about 00:40:40-00:42:10. The transcription used by Morresi has “the Renaissance culture” instead of “the culture of Enlightenment.” Morresi, “Il Rinascimento di Tafuri,” 31.

88 Tafuri, “Strutture del linguaggio,” CD no. 1, about 00:45:00-00:45:40.

89 Tafuri, “Strutture del linguaggio,” CD no. 1, about 00:42:40-00:43:00, 01:02:50-01:02:58; see also Tafuri, “Strutture del linguaggio,” 26-28.



from this moment, of becoming an intersubjective institution.<sup>90</sup> Therefore, the de-historicising process started with Brunelleschi, but this process, however, was still based on a balance, a capacity to still produce institutional results,<sup>91</sup> and it would have a fundamental turning point in the late eighteenth century.<sup>92</sup>

Therefore, it does not seem correct to consider that Garroni's role in Tafuri's *Teorie e storia* is limited to the field of semiotics. This is true at least because *La crisi semantica delle arti* contains only the premises for future and more detailed investigations on the subject, added by Tafuri in following bibliographic updates.<sup>93</sup> Rather, it would seem that, starting from the years of *Teorie e storia*, Tafuri sets out on a path parallel to that of Garroni. A path which, at the beginning of "The historical project" in 1980, will lead him to claim to have reached comparable positions, but via different roads.<sup>94</sup>

Garroni, after Armando Plebe and Luciano Anceschi, also provides the starting point for a deeper reflection to redefine the field, the tasks and instruments of criticism, a question already posed by Tafuri in the introduction and taken up in the fifth chapter on the instruments of criticism.<sup>95</sup>

Tafuri verifies the crisis of a traditional and defining aesthetic based on a metaphysical and static concept of art, but also the ineffectiveness of analytical and

90 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 42-45.

91 Ibid., 24-26, footnote no. 10.

92 In 1966 Tafuri said: "What does it mean for the eighteenth-century architect to relate his production to Greek or Roman architecture? It certainly does not mean the supra-historical dialogue that the theorists of humanism had instituted. It means something profoundly new. It mainly means finding content values that pass through a profound semantic crisis." From Tafuri, "Strutture del linguaggio," CD no. 1, about 00:43:00-00:43:40. There would be no significant differences between the 1966 lectures, the 1968 essay and the historical setting of the problem as formulated in *Teorie e storia*.

93 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 2nd ed. (1970), 242, footnote no. 77.

94 Manfredo Tafuri, *La sfera e il labirinto. Avanguardie e architettura da Piranesi agli anni '70* (Torino: Einaudi, 1980), 3, footnote no. 2.

95 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 13-14, 199-200; to be compared to Garroni, *Crisi semantica*, 147-54.

Fig. 6

Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, "abreuvoir et lavoir de Meilland," detail. From Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art*, 348.

inductive approaches. The path to follow is that of a historicist attitude “able to determine, each time and with a future-oriented perspective, a horizon for the study of aesthetic problems that is constantly variable and determined by the concrete experience of art’s unforeseeable changes,”<sup>96</sup> therefore effective only within the limits of the selected aesthetic problems.

As it was for Garroni, for Tafuri the founding choice is to leave the field neither to empirical critics, nor to architects. Problems and concrete experiences determine methods, strategies and tools, which will still be verified, updated or even revolutionised. But the nature of criticism changes: it must be identified, right now, with history.<sup>97</sup>

Garroni is not the only one with whom Tafuri establishes one of the founding dialogues of the book [Fig. 6]. A second exchange is intertwined with Cesare Brandi (1906-1988), who Tafuri had probably known in the years 1966-67, when he held his first teaching position at the University of Palermo.<sup>98</sup> In this case, however, Tafuri refers to Brandi mainly to disprove his theories.

The second recurring book in *Teorie e storia*, in fact, is *Le due vie* (Bari: Laterza, 1961), with a total of five citations, in the first, second, third and fifth chapter. For Tafuri, the dialectic triggered with this book, but also with the most recent of Brandi’s publications on architecture and development of the previous one, *Struttura e architettura* (Torino: Einaudi, 1967),<sup>99</sup> becomes of vital importance. The criticism of Brandi’s thought, also here in line with Garroni,<sup>100</sup> is in fact almost the fundamental precondition for the activity and existence of the criticism itself, particularly historical.

Tafuri rejects Brandi’s reduction of architecture to a pure metaphysical “astanza” and a tautological system, empty of meanings other than its internal laws. On the contrary, according to Tafuri the very basis of architecture’s existence would rest precisely on the continuous and “unstable balance between a nucleus of permanent values and meanings, and their metamorphoses in historical time,”<sup>101</sup> citing as example the reinterpretations of the ancient architecture by the fifteenth- and sixteenth-centuries architects. If on the contrary the artwork lacked its “historical” character, the critical activity would be reduced to a simple description, being unable to interpret or historicise. Rather, Brandi’s statement of the artwork’s “supremacy” appears to be the consequence of a contingent, prejudicial and ideological position, in reaction to the difficult challenges posed to criticism by contemporary art.

Two books of two fundamental authors. Tafuri makes his own the first one in search of the historical foundations of the unease and to define a renewed

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96 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 199.

97 Ibid., 200.

98 Tafuri, “History as a Project,” 36.

99 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 214-15.

100 Garroni, *Crisi semantica*, 227-30.

101 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 211.



7 |

critical method, even if its instruments were deeply affected by the debate at the time. On the other hand, however, Tafuri is engaged in an idealistic struggle in defence of the meaning of architecture.<sup>102</sup>

## Historiography and critics on twentieth-century architecture

The bibliographic filing also lends itself to direct questions, for example about the presence and use of historiography and critical literature on twentieth-century architecture [Fig. 7].

It is a known fact that, in *Teorie e storia's* chapter on operative criticism, Giedion, Zevi and Benevolo's historiographical accounts represent the great narratives to be contested, although Tafuri's criticism is always articulated on various levels.<sup>103</sup>

However, one should not think that Tafuri censored these books while teaching.<sup>104</sup> In the cycle of lectures on *La storia dell'architettura moderna alla luce dei problemi attuali*, they represent three manuals to be known and overcome dialectically at the same time. Tafuri invites to a critical reflection on various historiographic positions, including literature produced by architects such as Saverio Muratori and Louis I. Kahn, critical writings by Bruno Zevi, Renato Bonelli and Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, but also the volume *Ragionamenti sull'architettura* by Giusta Nicco Fasola (Città di Castello: Macri, 1949) on the critical production since 1935. This last book is also cited by Emilio Garroni as one of the first, timid post-Crocean attempts of a different interpretation of architectural

102 Ibid., 217.

103 Ibid., 185, in particular footnote no. 27.

104 Tafuri, "Storia dell'architettura moderna" (1973), 9; Tafuri, "Ideologia antiurbana," 7.

Fig. 7

Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, "abreuvoir et lavoir de Meilland," detail. From Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art*, 348.

phenomena.<sup>105</sup> Through the lectures, Tafuri would then be able to show the strongly limited visions of the three manuals, integrating them with lessons on more articulated panoramas and contexts.

It should be stressed that magazines were also the network from which to draw on primary sources in translation, otherwise difficult to find and read in the original language. The most evident case in *Teorie e storia* is that of *Rassegna Sovietica*, Italy-USSR Cultural Association's periodical.<sup>106</sup> A similar role should also be recognised in *Edilizia moderna*, a quarterly technical periodical, whose no. 86 (1965) titled *Ricerca storica* is among the most used issues by Tafuri, with a total of four citations. Indeed, as we can observe from the course critical bibliographies, this dossier is a fundamental source for Hugo Häring and Bruno Taut's translated writings<sup>107</sup> and for questioning the simplified and flattened architectural histories supported by manuals available at the time.<sup>108</sup>

Even though freely cited, in *Teorie e storia* Tafuri cannot avoid mentioning these manuals, which constituted a fundamental background in the cultural and architectural debate of the time.<sup>109</sup> On the other hand, whenever possible Tafuri dismisses all the critical literature on twentieth-century architects.

The most conspicuous exception is represented by Louis I. Kahn. The monograph by Vincent Scully (Milano: Il Saggiatore, 1963), and the periodicals *Perspecta*, *Architectural Design* and *Zodiac* remain reference points on the subject. This, however, is not only due to autobiographical reasons, given the strong interest in the Estonian-American architect of the students of the faculty of architecture of Rome. Tafuri feels that behind the phenomenon there was an extremely topical urgency. For instance, in the 1966 lectures, he wonders about the reason for the interest in Kahn's linguistic system: "not only because it is easy to adopt," was the answer, "but also because it has something inside it. What, what I call the institutional attitude."<sup>110</sup>

As we said, however, Kahn represents the exception. Besides the aforementioned volume on Gropius by Argan, whose importance is confirmed, within the pages and footnotes of *Teorie e storia* any secondary source on the main contemporary architects, such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier, is absent.

Furthermore, Tafuri completely closes the distance with Wright and Le Corbusier by directly quoting their writings. Tafuri quotes Wright's *Architettura organica: l'architettura della democrazia* (ed. Alfonso Gatto, Giulia Veronesi, Milano: Muggiani 1945) and, more frequently, Le Corbusier's *Quand les cathédrales étaient blanches. Voyage au pays des timides* (Paris: Plon, 1937), *Urbanistica*

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105 Garroni, *Crisi semantica*, 109-10.

106 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 58, footnote no. 62.

107 Tafuri, "Storia dell'architettura moderna" (1973), 33-34.

108 Ibid., 23, 27; Tafuri, "Strutture del linguaggio," CD no. 5, about 00:33:40-00:42:40.

109 Tafuri, "History as a Project," 11.

110 Tafuri, "Strutture del linguaggio," CD no. 3, about 01:01:28-01:01:42.

(Milano: Il Saggiatore, 1967) and *La Carta d'Atene* (Milano: Edizioni di Comunità, 1960). From this point of view, the critical bibliographies written for his students are a very useful tools to integrate book's references.

In the bibliography dedicated to Le Corbusier, Tafuri separates primary sources from literature, warning that all the monographs are completely inadequate.<sup>111</sup> Among the primary sources, besides the available volumes of the *Œuvre complète* (1910-1965), he invites students to read *La mia opera* (Torino: Boringhieri, 1961) and *La ville radieuse. Éléments d'une doctrine d'urbanisme pour l'équipement de la civilisation machiniste*, (Boulogne: Éditions de L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui, 1935; Paris: Fréal, 1964), while being aware of the differences between Le Corbusier's statements and his parallel œuvres.<sup>112</sup> He also includes the collection *Le Corbusier* (Milano: ed. Rosa e Ballo, 1945), edited by Giancarlo De Carlo. Among the available publications, Tafuri indicates the catalogue on the 1963 Florentine exhibition at Palazzo Strozzi, *L'opera di Le Corbusier* (Firenze: Giuntina, 1963), with a useful summary of the Italian bibliography edited by Italo Insolera and Alberto Samonà. He finally suggests students to read some commemorative articles to demonstrate the different and contrasting reception of Le Corbusier's work by the Italian architectural culture. Alongside articles by Zevi, Ernesto Nathan Rogers and Giovanni Klaus König, Tafuri also inserts his own article *La lezione di Le Corbusier*, published in the PSIUP political journal (*Mondo nuovo*, no. 35, 5 September 1965), a contribution hitherto unknown to the last, generous bibliographical project on Tafuri's huge printed production.<sup>113</sup>

## The meaning of architecture

The immediate editorial success of *Teorie e storia*, at least in Italy,<sup>114</sup> seems to have been due to the strong and transversal relevance compared to the contemporary historical-artistic debate, rather than to a strictly political reason. As even Tafuri would have admitted, many issues that the book deals with were more comprehensible to art historians than to architects, while it would be useless to look for "a political message, since the book was targeting a public that was me, and a particular discipline, even if it does contain an implicit political discourse."<sup>115</sup>

According to Tafuri's words, the year 1964 is a common element in both *La crisi semantica delle arti* and *Teorie e storia*. We would not assign an altered

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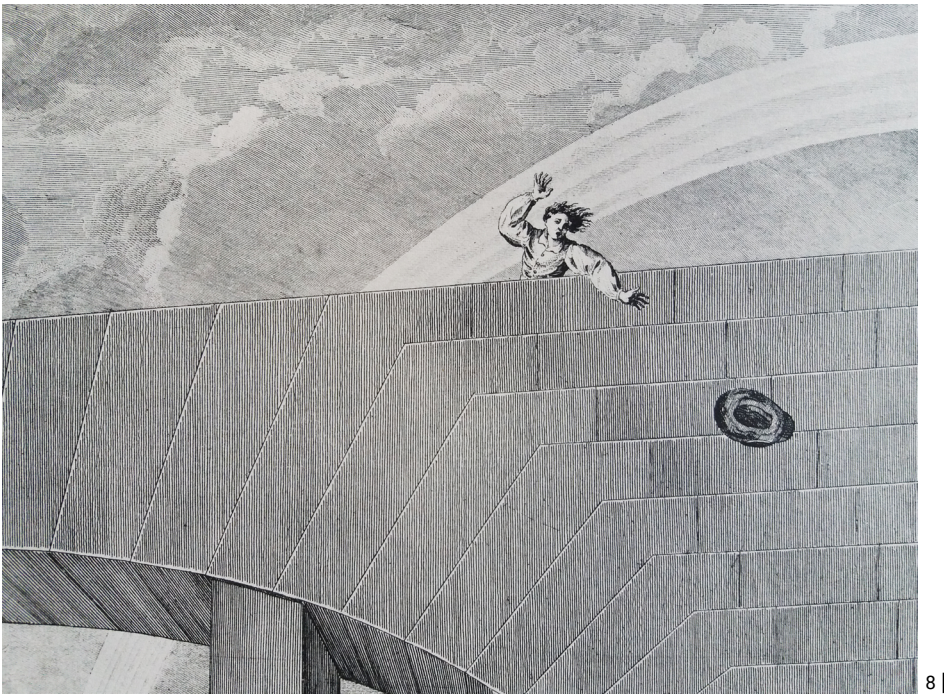
111 Tafuri, "Storia dell'architettura moderna" (1973), 60-61.

112 Tafuri, "Strutture del linguaggio," CD no. 5, about 00:34:50-00:35:05.

113 Victor Pérez Escolano, "Manfredo Tafuri (1935-1994). Un ensayo de bibliografía," *Arquitectura*, no. 300 (1994): 90-94; Anna Bedon, Guido Beltramini, Pierre-Alain Croset, "Una prima bibliografia," *Casabella*, no. 619-20 (1995): 170-75; Leach, *Choosing History*, 307-32; Federico Rosa, "Bibliografia degli scritti di Tafuri," in *Manfredo Tafuri. Oltre la storia*, ed. Orlando Di Marino (Napoli: Clean, 2009), 110-27. Consider now: Manfredo Tafuri, *Bibliografia degli scritti in Biblioteca Iuav*, ed. Paola Chiara Barsotti, with the collaboration of Marco Capponi, <http://www.iuav.it/Ateneo1/eventi-del/PROGETTO-T/LIBRI-SCRITTI/>. This is a bibliography including Manfredo Tafuri's printed production kept and available at the Iuav University Library, Venice. It is constantly updated with new bibliographic acquisitions.

114 Tafuri, "The market culture," 39.

115 *Ibid.*, 41.



8 |

role to Garroni's book within the biography of Tafuri, who, at the time, was just making the first steps with Rogers outside a Roman framework. However, Garroni is certainly a link in the chain, a source that precisely fits a common question, about architecture and its meaning.

In a 1964 article, in fact, Tafuri defines late eighteenth-century architecture as the construction of new myths on the ruins of the classicist ones, "through a new interpretation of the symbol and its role in determining the social content of the image," a consequence of a "generalised rejection of the transcendence of meaning traditionally connected to the forms used."<sup>116</sup> In 1966 this passage has a precise diagnosis, a 'semantic crisis': a crisis which, still in the second half of the twentieth century, is faced by resorting to a history 'of values,' looking for operative solution and meanings for architectural choices.

At this point, the other side of the coin becomes clear. *Teorie e storia* is the answer to this urgency, to use Tafuri's words, to "know whether architecture still had meaning," only to discover that "once you had entered the maze, Ariadne's thread was broken, and to go on from there you had simply to ignore Ariadne's thread. A leap suddenly made after writing *Theories and history*."<sup>117</sup>

However, that thread was anything but lost. Perhaps it was deliberately not fully addressed, or removed. Nevertheless, in his last book, Tafuri is interested more in the way in which, in the so-called Renaissance, the "production of meaning" took place, than in the consolidation of standards.<sup>118</sup> At the core: the belief that the origins of the present lie in the awareness of the architectural construction's arbitrariness. A crucial point, which Tafuri finally moves from Piranesi back

116 Manfredo Tafuri, "Simbolo e ideologia nell'architettura dell'Illuminismo," *Comunità. Giornale mensile di politica e cultura*, no. 124-25 (1964): 76-77.

117 Tafuri, "The market culture," 37-39. The last sentence is our own translation.

118 Tafuri, "Ricerca del Rinascimento," 5.

Fig. 8

Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, "abreuvoir et lavoir de Meilliand," detail. From Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art*, 348.

over the centuries, to at least the sixteenth century, where he seems to recognise the existence of a “subjective relationship between naturalness and artifice.”<sup>119</sup>

In *Teorie e storia*, as is evident in the critique of Brandi’s position, on this issue Tafuri exposes himself in an explicit struggle in defence and reaffirmation of a meaning of architecture [Fig. 8]. The task of history, Tafuri concludes, “is the recovery, as far as possible, of the original functions and ideologies that, in the course of time, define and delimit the role and meaning of architecture.”<sup>120</sup> What that is, is not said.<sup>121</sup> It is a task without a predictable outcome, and another reason why “solutions are not to be found in history.”<sup>122</sup>

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119 Ibid., 12; Tafuri, *La sfera e il labirinto*, 74-75.

120 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 263.

121 See the passionate article Tafuri, “Vicenda architettonica romana.”

122 Tafuri, *Teorie e storia*, 1st ed. (1968), 272.



## Appendix

The appendix is composed of a selection of letters exchanged in 1967-69 between Manfredo Tafuri and the Gius. Laterza & Figli publishing house. They concern the first and the second edition of *Teorie e storia dell'architettura*. The appendix is also enriched with the photographs of Tafuri's handwritten letters and of the most significant ones concerning writing process and changes, the choice of the title and the cover image. Our interventions are limited to the text between square brackets.

Source: Archivio Autori Editori Laterza – per gentile concessione / Archivio Autori Editori Laterza – with kind permission.

### Letter 1. [typewritten]

Bari, 5 aprile 1967

Prof. Arch. Manfredo Tafuri  
Via Etiopia 18  
ROMA

Caro Tafuri,

nell'inviarLe i contratti per i due libri che si concordarono a Roma, tengo a ringraziarLa nuovamente e a manifestarLe la mia più viva soddisfazione per questo nostro primo incontro che spero continui proficuamente in futuro.

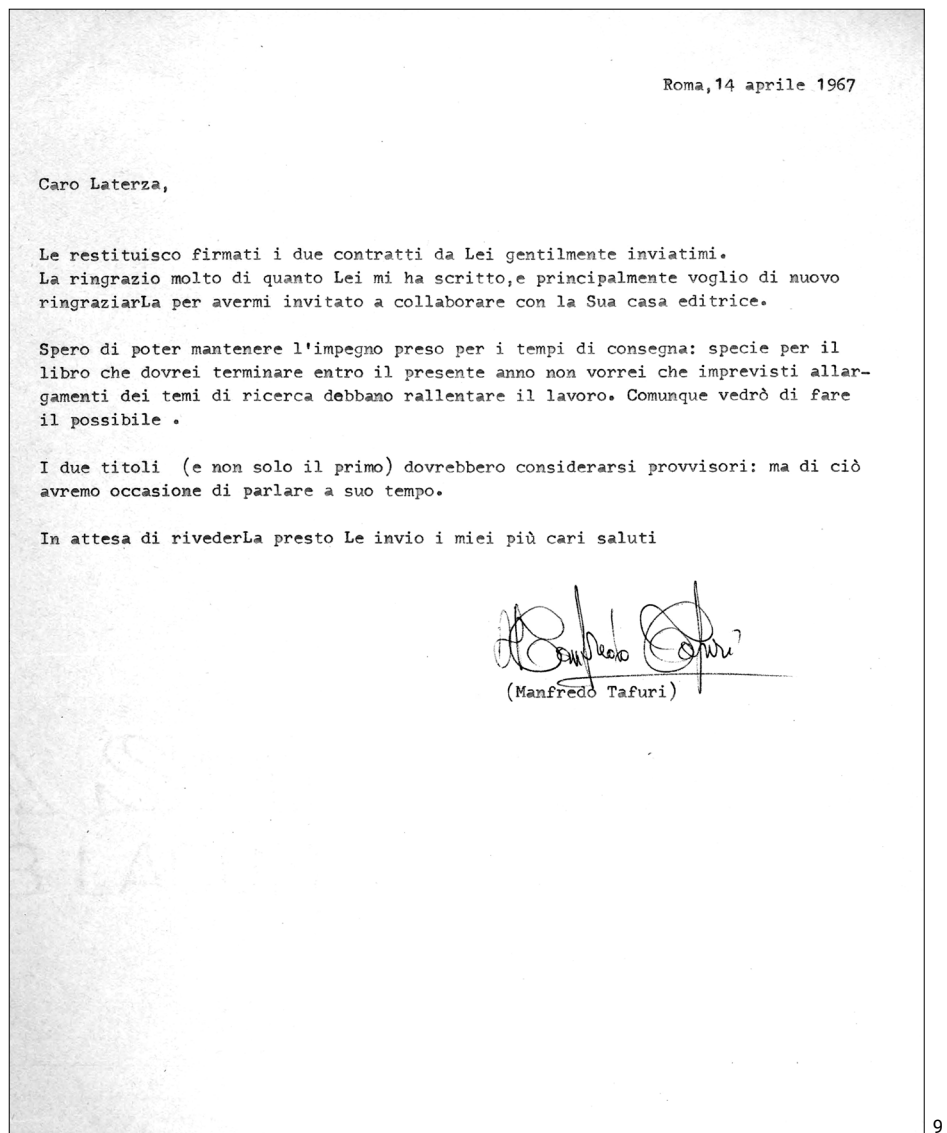
Se Le pare che i contratti vadano bene, me ne torni per favore una copia controfirmata.

Spero molto di rivederLa a Roma la prima volta che tornerò, e cioè tra il 17 e il 20.

Mi abbia, con molti cordiali saluti, Suo

(Vito Laterza)

## Letter 2. [typewritten and signed] [Fig. 9]



Roma, 14 aprile 1967

Caro Laterza,

Le restituisco firmati i due contratti da Lei gentilmente inviatimi.

La ringrazio molto di quanto Lei mi ha scritto, e principalmente voglio di nuovo ringraziarLa per avermi invitato a collaborare con la Sua casa editrice.

Spero di poter mantenere l'impegno preso per i tempi di consegna: specie per il libro che dovrei terminare entro il presente anno non vorrei che imprevisti allargamenti dei temi di ricerca debbano rallentare il lavoro. Comunque vedrò di fare il possibile.

I due titoli (e non solo il primo) dovrebbero considerarsi provvisori: ma di ciò avremo occasione di parlare a suo tempo.

In attesa di rivederLa presto Le invio i miei più cari saluti

(Manfredo Tafuri)

Fig. 9

Manfredo Tafuri, typewritten and signed letter to Vito Laterza. Rome, 14 April 1967 (Source and credits: Archivio Autori Editori Laterza – per gentile concessione / Archivio Autori Editori Laterza – with kind permission).

**Letter 3. [typewritten]**

Bari, 14 dicembre 1967

Prof. Arch. Manfredo Tafuri

Via Etiopia 18

ROMA

Caro Tafuri,

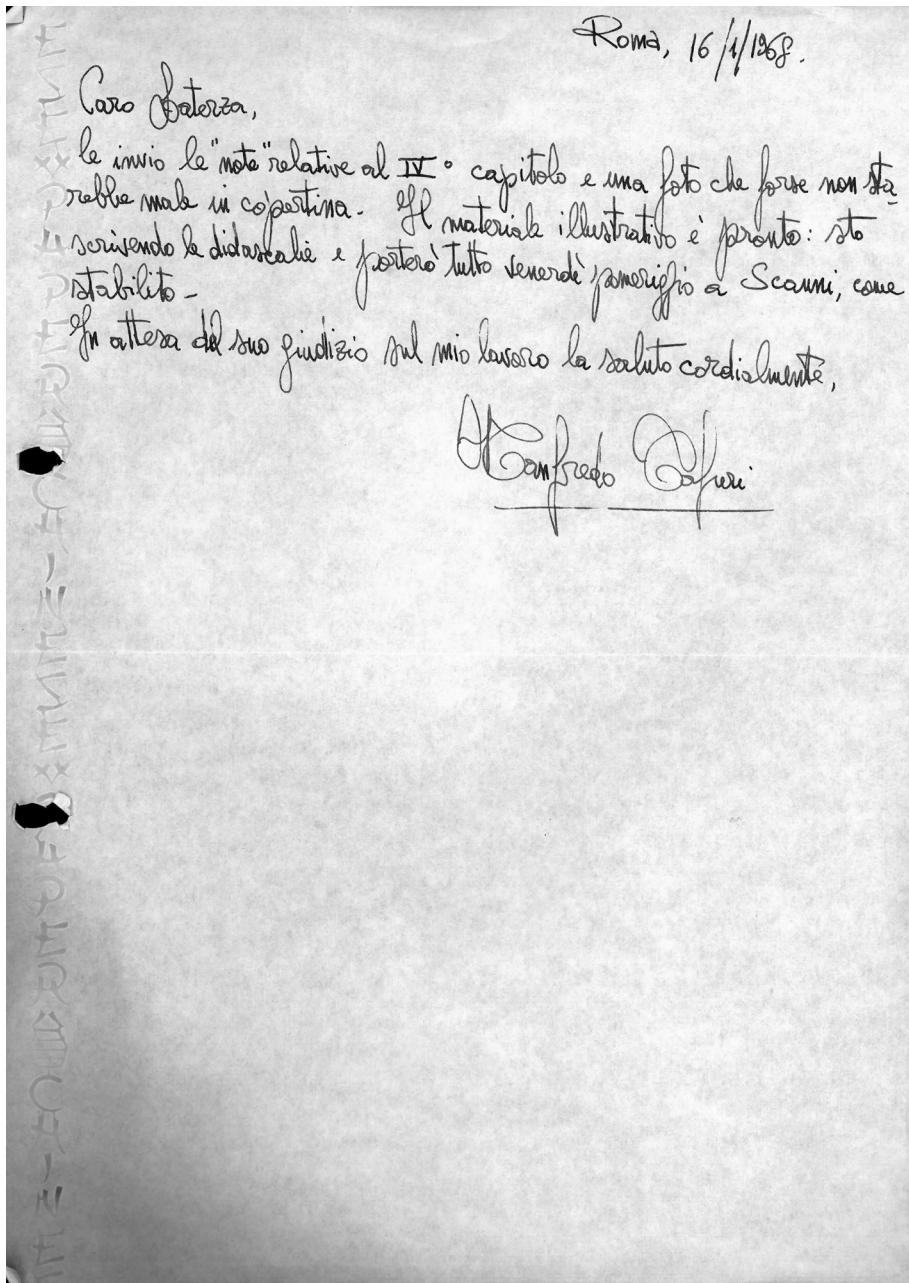
La signorina Metta mi comunica che Lei conta di consegnare tutto il Suo lavoro per il 10 gennaio.

Va benissimo. Arrivederci allora a Roma il 10 e intanto i più affettuosi auguri dal Suo

(Vito Laterza)

P.S. Ho definito l'accordo con Piccinato e sto per definirlo anche con Quilici.

Letter 4. [handwritten] [Fig. 10]



10

Roma, 16/1/1968

Caro Laterza,

le invio le "note" relative al IV° capitolo e una foto che forse non starebbe male in copertina. Il materiale illustrativo è pronto: sto scrivendo le didascalie e porterò tutto venerdì pomeriggio a Scanni, come stabilito.

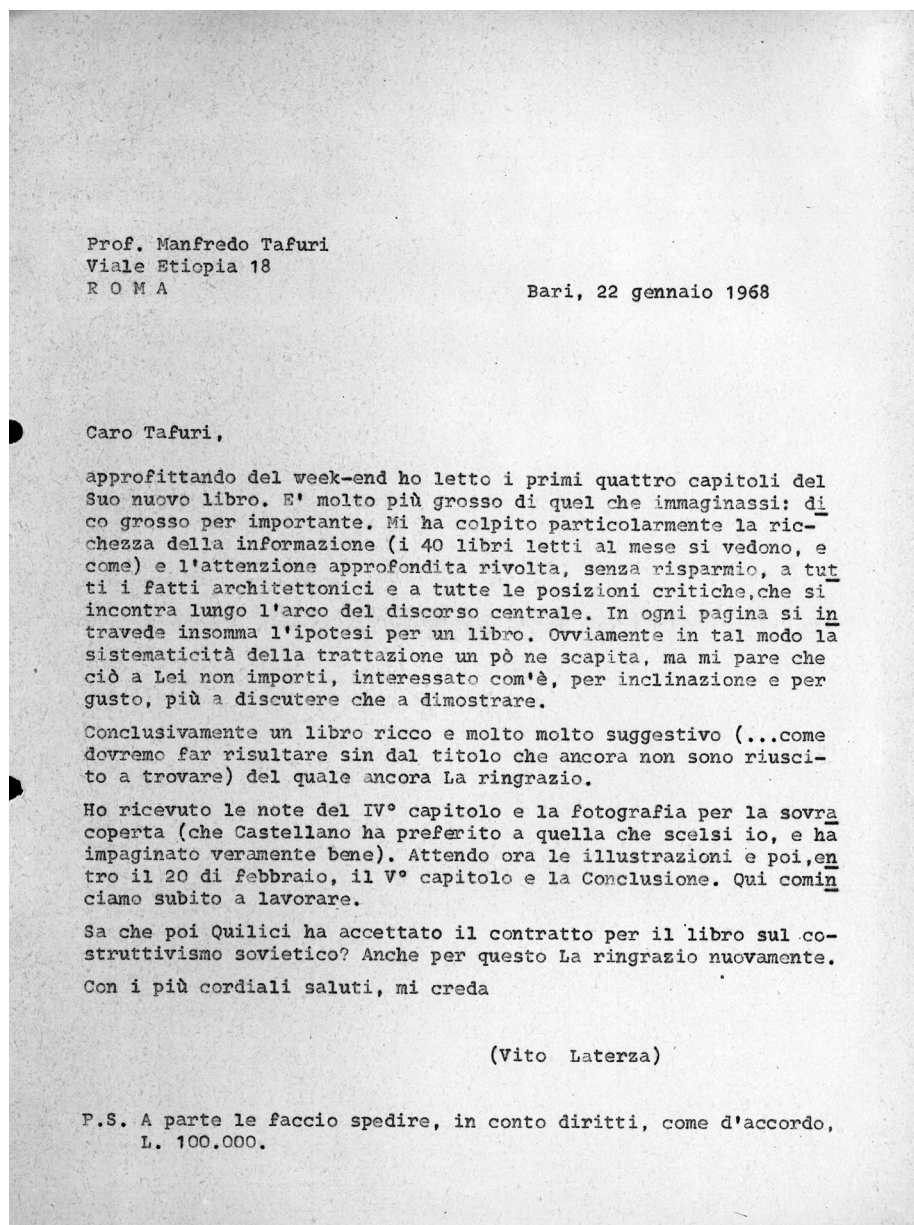
In attesa del suo giudizio sul mio lavoro la saluto cordialmente,

Manfredo Tafuri

Fig. 10

Manfredo Tafuri, handwritten letter to Vito Laterza. Rome, 16 January 1968 (Source and credits: Archivio Autori Editori Laterza – per gentile concessione / Archivio Autori Editori Laterza – with kind permission).

Letter 5. [typewritten] [Fig. 11]



11 |

Prof. Manfredo Tafuri

Via Etiopia 18

ROMA

Bari, 22 gennaio 1968

Caro Tafuri,

approfitando del week-end ho letto i primi quattro capitoli del Suo nuovo libro. È molto più grosso di quel che immaginassi: dico grosso per importante. Mi ha colpito particolarmente la ricchezza della informazione (i 40 libri letti al mese si vedono, e come) e l'attenzione approfondita rivolta, senza risparmio, a tutti i

Fig. 11

Vito Laterza, typewritten letter to Manfredo Tafuri. Bari, 22 January 1968 (Source and credits: Archivio Autori Editori Laterza – per gentile concessione / Archivio Autori Editori Laterza – with kind permission).

fatti architettonici e a tutte le posizioni critiche che si incontra lungo l'arco del discorso centrale. In ogni pagina si intravede insomma l'ipotesi per un libro. Ovviamente in tal modo la sistematicità della trattazione un pò [sic] ne scapita, ma mi pare che ciò a Lei non importi, interessato com'è, per inclinazione e per gusto, più a discutere che a dimostrare.

Conclusivamente un libro ricco e molto molto suggestivo (...come dovremo far risultare sin dal titolo che ancora non sono riuscito a trovare) del quale ancora La ringrazio.

Ho ricevuto le note del IV° capitolo e la fotografia per la sovracoperta (che Castellano ha preferito a quella che scelsi io, e ha impaginato veramente bene). Attendo ora le illustrazioni e poi, entro il 20 di febbraio, il V° capitolo e la Conclusione. Qui cominciamo subito a lavorare.

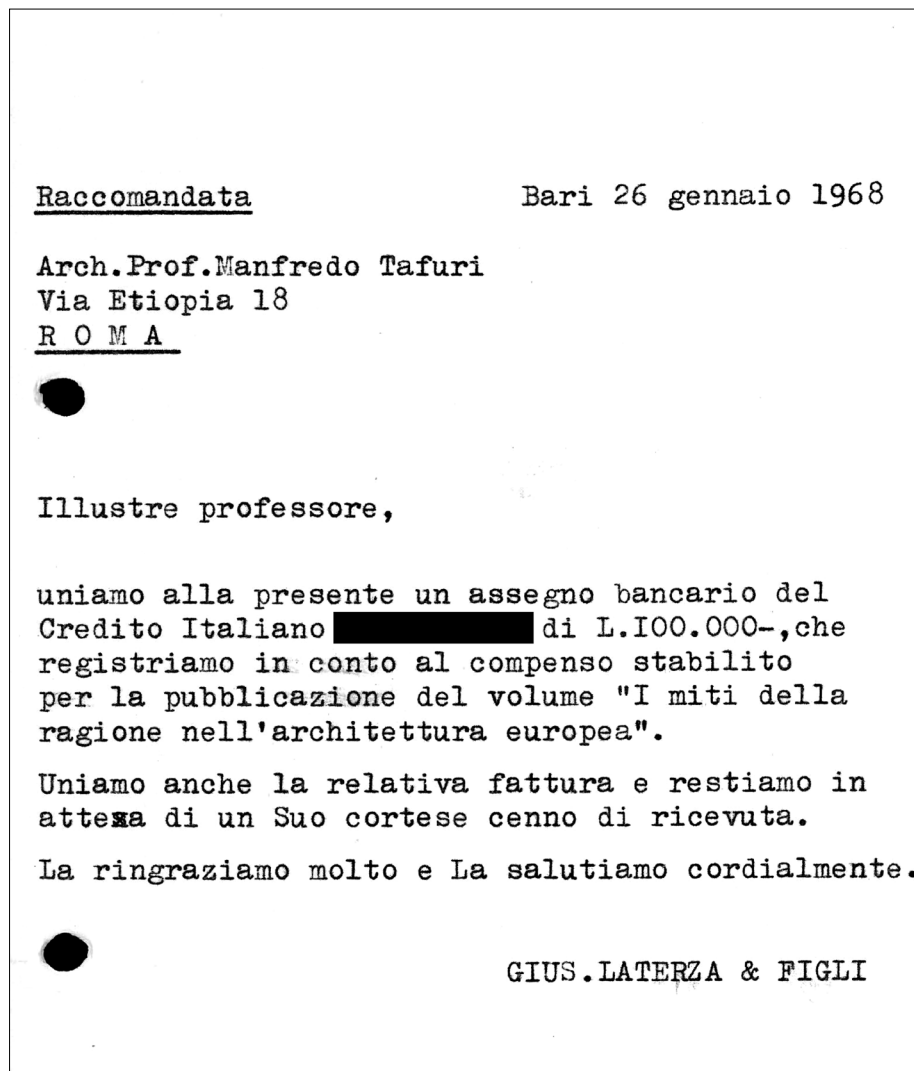
Sa che poi Quilici ha accettato il contratto per il libro sul costruttivismo sovietico? Anche per questo La ringrazio nuovamente.

Con i più cordiali saluti, mi creda

(Vito Laterza)

P.S. A parte le faccio spedire, in conto diritti, come d'accordo, L. 100.000.

Letter 6. [typewritten] [Fig. 12]



12

Raccomandata

Bari 26 gennaio 1968

Prof. Arch. Manfredo Tafuri

Via Etiopia 18

ROMA

Illustre professore,

uniamo alla presente un assegno bancario del Credito Italiano [omissis] di L. 100.000-, che registriamo in conto al compenso stabilito per la pubblicazione del volume "I miti della ragione nell'architettura europea".

Uniamo anche la relativa fattura e restiamo in attesa di un Suo cortese cenno di ricevuta.

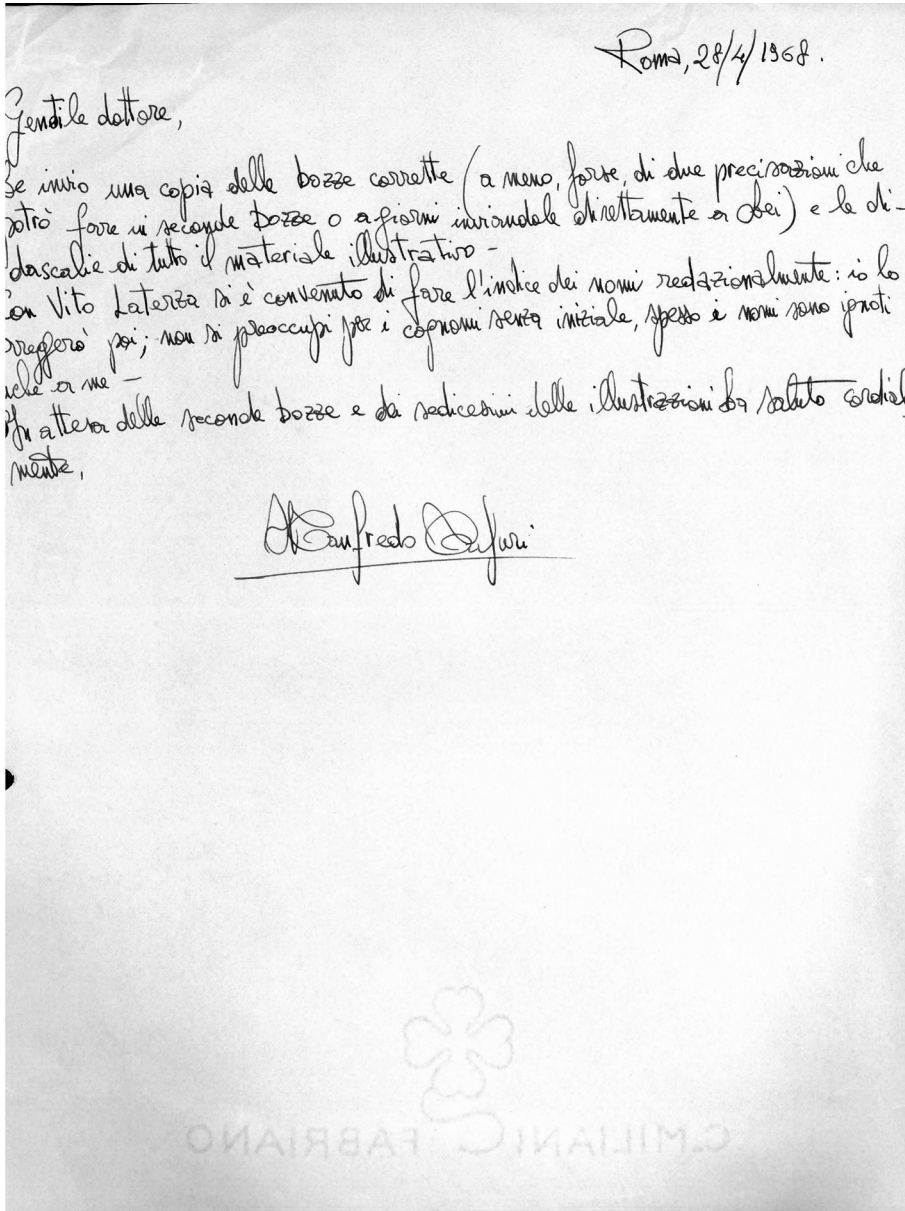
La ringraziamo molto e La salutiamo cordialmente.

GIUS. LATERZA & FIGLI

Fig. 12

Gius. Laterza & Figli Publishing House, typewritten letter to Manfredo Tafuri. Bari, 26 January 1968 (Source and credits: Archivio Autori Editori Laterza – per gentile concessione / Archivio Autori Editori Laterza – with kind permission).

Letter 7. [handwritten] [Fig. 13]



Roma, 28/4/1968

Gentile dottore,

Le invio una copia delle bozze corrette (a meno, forse, di due precisazioni che potrò fare in seconde bozze, o a giorni inviandole direttamente a Lei) e le didascalie di tutto il materiale illustrativo.

Con Vito Laterza si è convenuto di fare l'indice dei nomi redazionalmente: io lo correggerò poi; non si preoccupi per i cognomi senza iniziale, spesso i nomi sono ignoti anche a me.

In attesa delle seconde bozze e dei sedicesimi delle illustrazioni La saluto cordialmente,

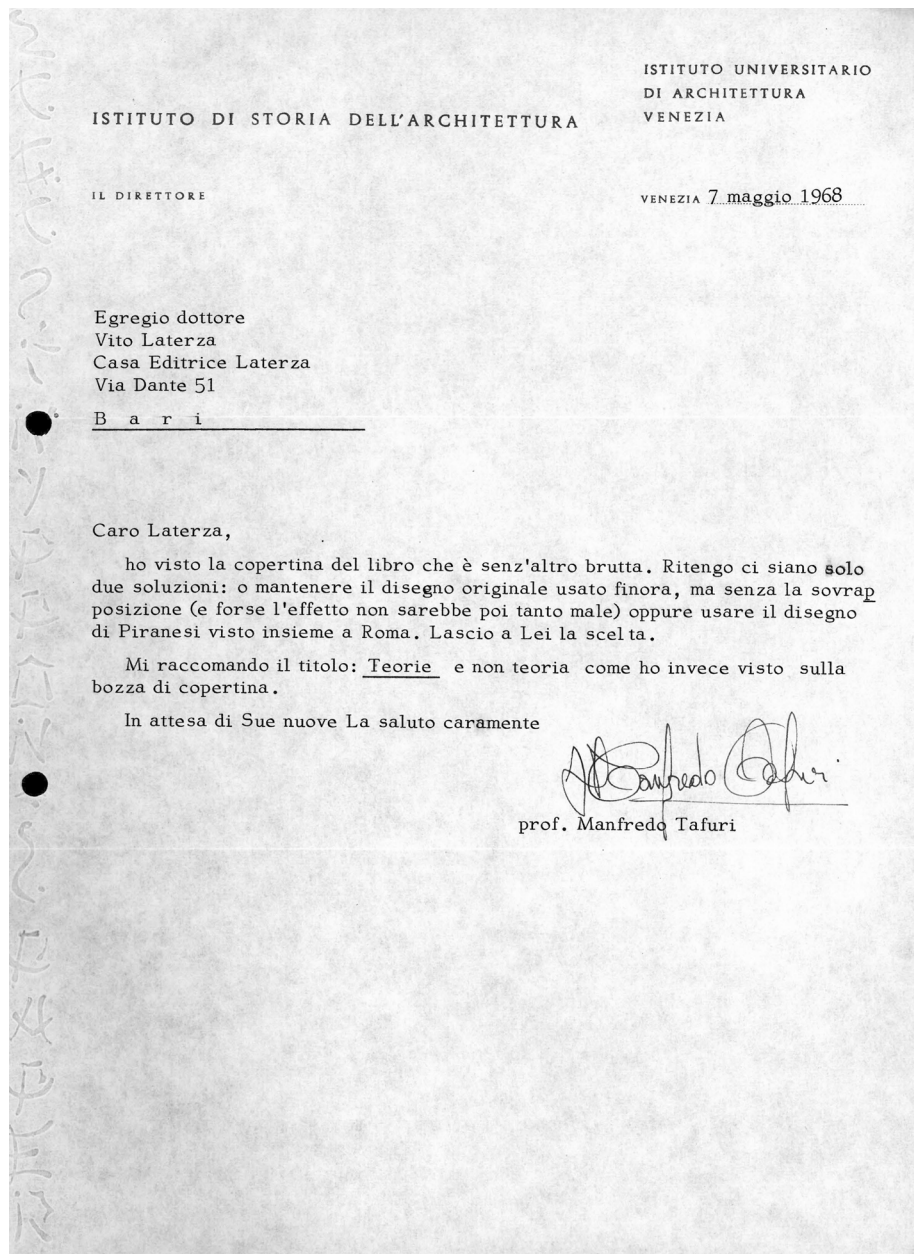
Manfreda Tafuri

Fig. 13

Manfreda Tafuri, handwritten letter to Franco Buono, Gius. Laterza & Figli Publishing House. Rome, 28 April 1968 (Source and credits: Archivio Autori Editori Laterza – per gentile concessione / Archivio Autori Editori Laterza – with kind permission).



Letter 8. [typewritten on headed paper and signed] [Fig. 14]



14 |

Istituto Universitario  
di architettura  
Venezia  
Istituto di storia dell'architettura  
Il direttore

Venezia, 7 maggio 1968

Egregio dottore  
Vito Laterza  
Casa Editrice Laterza

Fig. 14  
Manfredo Tafuri, typewritten  
on headed paper and signed  
letter to Vito Laterza. Venice, 7  
May 1968 (Source and credits:  
Archivio Autori Editori Laterza  
– per gentile concessione /  
Archivio Autori Editori Laterza –  
with kind permission).

Via Dante 51

Bari

Caro Laterza,

ho visto la copertina del libro che è senz'altro brutta. Ritengo ci siano solo due soluzioni: o mantenere il disegno originale usato finora, ma senza la sovrapposizione (e forse l'effetto non sarebbe poi tanto male) oppure usare il disegno di Piranesi visto insieme a Roma. Lascio a Lei la scelta.

Mi raccomando il titolo: Teorie e non teoria come ho invece visto sulla bozza di copertina.

In attesa di Sue nuove La saluto caramente

prof. Manfredo Tafuri

**Letter 9. [typewritten and signed]**

Roma, 7 Ottobre 1969

Egr. Signor

FRANCO BUONO

Casa Editrice "Laterza"

Via Dante n. 51

BARI

Egregio Dottore,

Le invio i fogli corretti della seconda edizione di "Teorie e Storia dell'Architettura" insieme all'avvertenza da aggiungere e alle tre tavole al tratto da inserire nel testo in luogo di quelle cancellate nelle bozze.

Nell'indice dei nomi vanno aggiunti: Fischer E., Goldmann L., Della Volpe G., Marx C., Fortini F., Asor Rosa A., Cacciari M., Tafuri M., De Michelis M., Venturi M., Dal co Fr., Hauser A., tutti nomi contenuti nell'avvertenza e di cui quindi non so ancora la collocazione nelle pagine.

Ringraziandola, Le invio i più cordiali saluti.

(Manfredo Tafuri)

P.S. Sarà opportuno che io riveda l'impaginato definitivo specie per le tavole. Con il Dr. Laterza eravamo rimasti d'accordo che il disegno di copertina cambiasse colore (si pensava ad una seppia).

**Letter 10. [typewritten]**

ESPRESSO

Bari, 27.XI.1969

Prof. Manfredo Tafuri  
Piazza dei Caprettari 70  
Roma

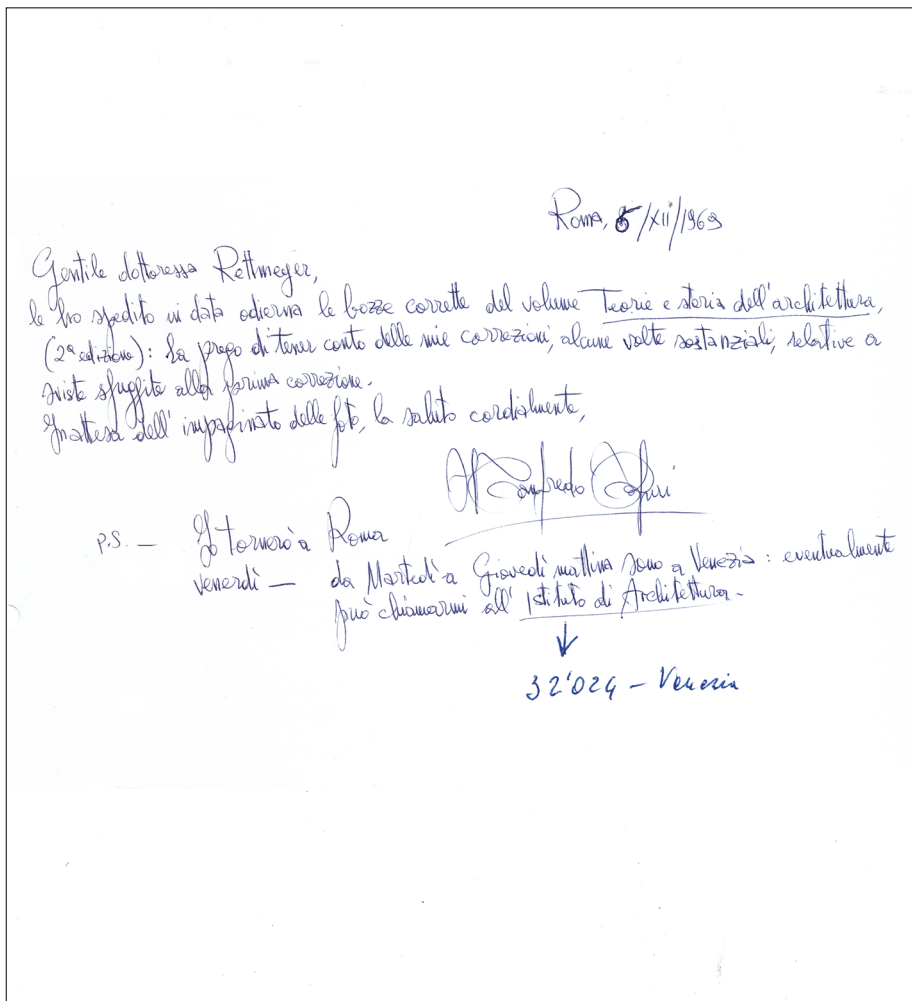
Illustre professore,

Le abbiamo spedito, in due invii successivi per raccomandata espresso, le bozze del Suo Teorie e storia dell'architettura cui facciamo seguire oggi stesso l'originale.

Per rientrare nei tempi fissati per l'inizio della stampa, abbiamo già compiuto in redazione un accurato riscontro delle integrazioni e modifiche da Lei inserite nel testo dell'edizione precedente. È quindi indispensabile che anche le Sue eventuali correzioni siano comunicate a noi al più presto e indirizzate alla sottoscritta. Vorrà dunque scusarci se Le proponiamo anche in questa occasione l'assillo della fretta, mentre La ringraziamo sin da ora e Le porgiamo i nostri migliori saluti.

La segretaria di redazione  
Nelly Rettmeyer

Letter 11. [handwritten] [Fig. 15]



15

Roma, 6/XII/1969

Gentile dottoressa Rettmeyer,

le ho spedito in data odierna le bozze corrette del volume Teorie e storia dell'architettura, (2<sup>a</sup> edizione): la prego di tener conto delle mie correzioni, alcune volte sostanziali, relative a sviste sfuggite alla prima correzione.

In attesa dell'impaginato delle foto, la saluto cordialmente.

Manfreda Tafuri

P.S. - lo tornerò a Roma venerdì - da Martedì a Giovedì mattina sono a Venezia: eventualmente può chiamarmi all'Istituto di Architettura. -> 32'024 - Venezia

Fig. 15

Manfreda Tafuri, handwritten letter to Nelly Rettmeyer, Gius. Laterza & Figli Publishing House. Rome, 6 December 1969 (Source and credits: Archivio Autori Editori Laterza - per gentile concessione / Archivio Autori Editori Laterza - with kind permission).

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