

Monument in Revolution: 1968, *Tendenza* and Education in Aldo Rossi

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ABSTRACT

In the 1960's, as Italian architectural schools faced student protests and forceful occupation attempts, Aldo Rossi tried to reform the schools through the idea of 'tendency school' shared with Carlo Aymonino, and to reconstruct architecture as discipline and theory. His theory has two aspects: urban analysis and architectural project. The former presents a dynamic conception of the temporal evolution of the city, as if echoing the restless social situation of the time; the latter centers on the logicity of architecture represented by monuments. This study explores the meaning of this dualism between urban analysis and architectural project as an intent for revolution, and in light of this, investigates the idea of 'monument in revolution'.

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KEYWORDS

Aldo Rossi; tendenza; school; monument; urban analysis; revolution

Introduction: Aldo Rossi and the '1968' phenomenon

While Aldo Rossi's famous 1966 book *The Architecture of the City* has come to gain a worldwide reputation as a manifesto for an 'autonomous architecture'¹ and as an explanatory device for his own works, we find very few studies that pay attention to the relationship between the book's contents and the phenomenon known as '1968' despite their relatively close temporal proximity². In addition, it can be said that these studies are divided into two opposite poles: on one hand, Rossi's book is understood in function of the more general political ideology of the left, as somewhat 'close to the Operaists' conclusions' such as Raniero Panzieri and Mario Tronti³; on the other hand the book has been stuck in a more narrow sphere, namely, that of architecture itself, under the pretense of searching for an 'autonomy post-1968'⁴, based on the Kantian concept of auto-criticism and the Derridian of deconstruction of disciplinary borders. However, it can be argued that the book has a more concrete context, in a place other than in the realm of generalist political ideology or that of overly-abstract art criticism: it is the period of crisis and reform of Italian architectural education circa 1968.

At that time, Italian architectural schools were also facing the challenges of student revolts and forceful occupations. It is of note that the concerns of Italian architectural students were originally limited to institutional or disciplinary problems inside the schools; in other words, their collective intents and actions were undergoing an initial phase, better described as 'reformatory' rather than 'revolutionary'⁵. In this regard, they stand in striking contrast to the cases of students' revolts in other European countries, who generally pointed towards the situation outside of the schools themselves, displaying an 'international and "planetary" character'⁶.

Particularly in the case of the Milanese architectural school (*Politecnico di Milano*) that was Rossi's alma mater, it was the stage for 'the first attempt to break down the fences—hierarchical and authoritarian—inside Italian universities and to reform the discipline of architecture', with 'the complete absence [...] of a specifically political connotation'⁷; and also the example of a certain degree of success in reforming the traditional institutional structure through the initiative called 'Experimentation' (*Sperimentazione*) in 1968. Therefore, the events that took place at the Milan school can be said to represent an exemplary case for surveying the relations between the '1968' phenomenon and the specific and concrete problems of architecture at that time. In this period, Rossi, who was also actively engaged in the reform of the Milan school as one of its teachers, came to develop his own architectural theory reflecting his teaching experiences.

In Italian historiographic studies of the '1968', when expressing the peculiarity of the Italian 1968 movements in comparison with those

1. Rafael Moneo, 'Aldo Rossi: The Idea of Architecture and the Modena Cemetery', trans. Angela Giral, *Oppositions*, no. 5 (1976), 1.

2. One of the reasons for this scarcity can be identified in the fact that the book was disseminated in its English version only in 1982, long after the period of the '1968', and also because its contents were filtered through an Anglo-Saxon 'post-modernist' culture, which had to some extent different origins and concerns, when compared to the original Italian context.

3. Pier Vittorio Aureli, *The Project of Autonomy: Politics and Architecture Within and Against Capitalism* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2008), 53.

4. Peter Eisenman, 'FOREWORD: [BRACKET] ING HISTORY', in *Histories of the Immediate Present. Inventing Architectural Modernism, 1930-1975*, by Anthony Vidler (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press, 2005), xi. See also Peter Eisenman, 'The Houses of Memory: The Texts of Analogue', in *The Architecture of the City*, by Aldo Rossi, trans. Diane Ghirardo and Joan Ockman (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, 1982), 3–11; Peter Eisenman, 'Autonomy and the Will to the Critical', *Assemblage*, no. 41 (2000), 90–91.

5. Gianni Ottolini, 'Per Una Storia Della Facoltà Di Architettura Di Milano', *Notiziario Della Banca Popolare Di Sondrio*, no. 107 (2008), 122. All English texts quoted from non-English sources have been translated by the author, unless otherwise indicated.

6. Nicola Tranfaglia, 'Il '68 e Gli Anni Settanta Nella Politica e Nella Società', in *La Cultura e i Luoghi Del '68*, ed. Aldo Agosti, Luisa Passerini, and Nicola Tranfaglia (Milano: Franco Angeli, 1991), 328.

7. Marco Biraghi, 'Università. La Facoltà di Architettura del Politecnico di Milano (1963-1974)', in *Italia 60/70. Una stagione dell'architettura*, ed. Marco Biraghi et al. (Padova: Il Poligrafo, 2009), 89. Later on, especially after the second occupation of the school in 1967, the Milanese architectural student movement was gradually accompanied by an 'ideology of contestation' which provided a compelling impetus for subsequent student movements in other universities such as the Catholic University. See Robert Lumley, 'Il Movimento Studentesco Di Milano', in *La Cultura e i Luoghi Del '68*, 270.

in other European countries, the expression 'drawn-out May (*maggio strisciante*)' has been employed: this is meant to describe the Italian 1968 with 'the image of the gradual process'⁸, or as the 'long duration', by which throughout 1968 the movement of students and workers continued up to the 'hot autumn in 1969', finally entering into the 'years of lead'. While originally this term was aimed mainly at prolonging the range of the '1968' to its successive years, since then other studies have emerged that point towards the opposite direction, by considering also the years preceding 1968 as a part of this 'long 1968'⁹. Interestingly enough, we can perceive some echoes of this Italian peculiarity of 'long duration' in Rossi's contemporary theory as the transmission of the architectural discipline beyond generations and eras¹⁰.

In the midst of calling for radical changes towards a new age, Rossi searched for a way to maintain architecture as discipline. Nevertheless, his architectural thought also belies an inclination to envisage an alternative for the present condition, namely to move towards revolution. This dualism in Rossi's thought that contemplated both 'revolution' and 'long duration', or 'event' and 'process'—which are two interpretative categories of the historiographic studies of the 1968¹¹—probably comes from his experience of the 1968 as a teacher at architectural schools. When the protagonists of the Italian 1968 are identified as the students, their aim is explained as being that of destabilizing 'the balance of society based on [...] transmission of values'¹². However, the architectural theory of Rossi—who in this period while trying to have continuous dialogues with the students never abandoned his duties as teacher—can be said to show an intention to reconcile enduring transmission and momentary disruption or destabilization, which he respectively portrayed as the transmissibility of architecture as discipline, and the disruptive, revolutionary power of architecture.

It is at this point that his concept of 'monument' manifests itself as the node between the two poles. For Rossi, the monument, which can often persist through the long duration of centuries as a symbol of a certain event, can be said to be what represents the revolution in its duration, or the condition of continuously being 'in' a state of revolution. This view of the 'monument' appears to have the potential to offer a new perspective for the building condition circa 1968. Based on the above, this study will seek to survey Rossi's architectural theory writings from that period including *The Architecture of the City* without falling into simplistic reductions, not from the viewpoints of general political ideologies or abstract art criticism, but based on the concrete problems of architectural education in Italy due to the crisis and reform of its architectural schools; it also aims to clarify the meaning and potential of Rossi's thoughts on 'monument in revolution'.

This article is divided into three parts: firstly, we will confirm that in

8. Emilio Reyneri, 'Il "maggio strisciante": l'inizio della mobilitazione operaia', in *Lotte operaie e sindacato: il ciclo 1968-1972 in Italia*, ed. Alessandro Pizzorno (Bologna: Mulino, 1978), 54.

9. See Simona Urso, 'Il lungo decennio: l'Italia prima del '68', in *I giovani e la politica: il lungo '68*, ed. Nicoletta Fasano and Mario Renosio (Torino: Gruppo Abele, 2002), 18–25. In recent historiographic studies of 1968, this term is no longer limited to Italy but has become a common interpretative category applicable for other countries. For example, see Daniel J. Sherman et al., *The Long 1968: Revisions and New Perspectives* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013); Richard Vinet, *The Long '68: Radical Protest and Its Enemies* (London: Penguin UK, 2018).

10. This resonance can be found also in *The Architecture of the City*, which looks at urban dynamism from the ancient period up to the twentieth century. Carlo Olmo explains this book by using this exact term. See Carlo Olmo, 'Attraverso i Testi', *Aldo Rossi: Disegni Di Architettura, 1967-1985*, Milano: Mazzotta, 1986, 85–108.

11. Marco Revelli, 'Movimenti sociali e spazio politico', in *La trasformazione dell'Italia: sviluppo e equilibri. 2. Istituzioni, movimenti, culture*, vol. 2, *Storia dell'Italia repubblicana* (Torino: Einaudi, 1995), 402.

12. Marco Grispigni, 'Note per una storia da fare: la stagione dei movimenti in Italia', in *I giovani e la politica: il lungo '68*, ed. Nicoletta Fasano and Mario Renosio (Torino: Gruppo Abele, 2002), 10.

regards to Italian architectural culture, the '1968' phenomenon manifested itself first of all as the crisis of architectural schools. In this context, a number of Italian architects including Rossi searched not so much for new architectural forms or styles, as for a new role or setup of architectural schools. Following this, we investigate Rossi's program of 're-foundation' of architecture as a transmissible discipline and theoretical body, which he championed as his response to the school crisis. Throughout this investigation, it will be shown that an intent towards revolution lies underneath his conception of architectural education. Finally, in light of Rossi's architectural theory, we will consider the episode of an occupied school in Milan as a 'monument in revolution'.



FIG. 1 Students' occupation at Rome.
Cited from *Casabella Continuità*, no.287, (1964), 4-5.

Towards the reform of architectural schools in 1960s Italy

Protests by architectural students in the 1960s

From the beginning of the 1960s, architectural schools in Italian cities began to take direct criticism from the students against their anachronistic educational systems. Already in the 1950s, just after the World War, Italian architectural schools had revealed their inability to respond to students' needs, who for example in Milan found a more attractive place for their activities and personal formation outside the school system, like in the Milanese architect group MSA (*Movimento di Studi per l'Architettura*) or in the architectural journal *Casabella Continuità*¹³. In the context of the rapid increase of enrollment in universities and the aggravation of urban problems caused by fast economic growth (especially in terms of housing), architectural students demanded an authentic 'mass-university'¹⁴ which could maximize the potential of students as a proactive mass and give them the ability to solve real social problems. Starting with the occupation of a school by Milanese students in February of 1963, architectural schools all over the nation were transformed into barracks by students.

Reacting to these student movements, Ernesto Nathan Rogers, chief editor of *Casabella Continuità*, devoted a special number of his magazine to the theme of 'discussion of Italian architectural schools'¹⁵. This edition provided reports of the student movements in each school (Milan, Turin, Vicenza, Venice, Genoa, Florence, Rome, Naples and Palermo) with many shocking pictures [Fig. 1-2], along with articles written by its young editors and others. According to Rogers' prefatory note, the students' protests were an attempt to substitute the unrequited 'dogmatism' based on the old academicism with a 'democratic' education based on a 'new relation between teachers and students'¹⁶. Expressing sympathy with their

13. On the situation of the Milan school in the immediate postwar period, see Giovanni Durbiano, *I nuovi maestri: architetti tra politica e cultura nel dopoguerra* (Venezia: Marsilio, 2000); Lucia Tenconi, 'The City and Its Social Problems, as a Subject of Study: Rebel Architects at the Faculty of Milan (1963–1973)', in *Student Revolt, City, and Society in Europe: From the Middle Ages to the Present*, ed. Pieter Dhondt and Elizabethanne Boran (London: Routledge, 2017), 393–409.

14. Biraghi, 'Università. La Facoltà di Architettura del Politecnico di Milano (1963–1974)', 91.

15. *Casabella Continuità*, no. 287, (1964).

16. Ernesto Nathan Rogers, 'Elogio dell'architettura', *Casabella Continuità*, no. 287 (1964), 1.

demands, Rogers professed his idea of education not as 'the Chair as a kind of pulpit from which the Word is given forth', but as 'the common discovery of new horizons' with 'increased responsibility, in the life of the School, mingling with my assistants and all the students'¹⁷. Rogers and a number of younger Italian architects who were collaborating with him, including Carlo Aymonino and Aldo Rossi, sought a new form of architectural education as a collaboration between teachers, assistants and students.

The notion of 'tendency (tendenza)' as an alternative to existing architectural schools

In the same number of Casabella, Aymonino presents his own idea for architectural education by using the word 'tendency (*tendenza*)', namely 'tendency school (*facoltà di tendenza*)'¹⁸. He also identified the target of students' attacks as a 'telling (*raccontato*)' and 'dictating (*dettato*)'¹⁹ mode of education which arose their suspicions regarding the cultural autonomy of schools and their relationship with society. Furthermore, Aymonino, referring to the case of the Roman school, accused that the solutions offered by the school revealed its intent to preserve its previous academic and conservative structure. Against this situation, Aymonino insists on the 'necessity to construct tendency schools', i.e., schools 'with different educational tendencies differentiated in their cultural bases and therefore in their teaching methods and procedures'²⁰. Thus, Aymonino's idea of tendency school aimed to improve architectural schools by having them accept more pluralistic viewpoints.

Aymonino's idea can be further inferred through the consideration of its original context: a clear awareness of crisis within the Modern Movement. He had already showcased the word 'tendency (*tendenza*)' as a technical term in 1961 on the pages of *Casabella Continuità*, which sent to several Italian architects, critics and historians a questionnaire on the fifteen years of Italian architecture after the war²¹. When answering one of the questions regarding the 'many talks today about a rupture in the midst of modern architects', Aymonino admitted such a rupture and as its definitive evidence, pointed out that many groups of modern architects established after the war (including MSA) 'today can no longer be able to work as a group and conduct joint actions'²². This was made explicit by their gradual distancing from political or economic powers and expressing reservations about the current moment of civic revolution inherent to architectural



FIG. 2 Making a poster at Turino. 'The students occupy the school.' *Ibid.*, 10.

17. *Ibid.*

18. Carlo Aymonino, 'Facoltà di tendenza?', *Casabella Continuità*, no. 287 (1964), 11.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. Carlo Aymonino and Leonardo Benevolo, 'Risposta a Sei Domande', *Casabella Continuità*, no. 251 (1961), 3–8.

22. *Ibid.*, 4.

discussion. Aymonino identified the underlying cause of this situation in Italian elites' ancient habit of 'neutral eclecticism' which tries to avoid any confrontation; and in opposition to this eclecticism, he introduced the word 'tendency' as 'a certain way of thinking about working relationships', which is aimed at 'a united engagement of powers truly invested in the transformation of Italian society, accepting in their confrontation their equal share (*pariteticità*) of rights and duties, and within this framework, address specific architectural problems'²³.

Aymonino's idea of tendency has two moments: the need to manifest one's own cultural position which is not neutral but differentiated, and the development of discussions based on the confrontation of these positions²⁴. It should be noted that here, architecture itself or its style is not what is relevant to the issue, but rather the ways of organizing architects as a group, or approaching architectural problems. Thus, originally, Aymonino conceptualized the notion of tendency as indicating an alternative mode of organization of architects against the habitual eclecticism inherent to postwar Italian architectural culture; later, he applied it to the problem of revising the organization of architectural education in the context of the architectural school crisis, where this idea found an agreement with the diversity of students' needs and became one of the key phrases in the discussion of architectural school reform at that time.

From the above investigation on Aymonino's notion of tendency it becomes clear that the crisis of Italian architectural schools in the 1960s should not be considered as a mere revolt against anachronistic academism due to the rapid postwar changes of the society. Such an understanding could reduce it to a simple matter of updating the contents of architectural education in accordance with the new social situation. It should also be noted that proactive intervention towards solving social problems was—although not pervasive in the school environment—a central topic to which the generation of the Modern Movement in the immediate postwar period was diligently committed. The critical conscience of Aymonino and other Italian young architects also brought to the fore the tentative concerns of their generation and expanded their focus from the contents of architectural education towards its system and approaches as an institution. Such concerns were not limited to the problems of architectural schools, but were seen as a symptom of crisis in the whole Italian architectural culture.

Aymonino's idea of tendency schools did not remain as an ideal, but to some extent was realized in the form of experimental education initiatives in some architectural schools. In the following section, we comment briefly on two examples of these initiatives in which Aldo Rossi, the keyperson of this study, participated.

23. *Ibid.*, 5–6.

24. Such an idea clearly has its origins in Marxism, even if Aymonino did not reference any specific Marxists. Aureli notes that 'Tendenza is a Gramscian term. It refers to the potential of a cultural movement to express the hegemonic line of the dominant class.' (Aureli, *The Project of Autonomy*, 86, note 78)

The course at Venice and The Architecture of the City

The place where Aymonino had the chance to try out his idea of tendency school was Venice. The Venice school (*Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia*), where students' protest activities had already occurred in the late 1950s, was 'an example for other schools that from 1963 began to be open to reform'²⁵. This reform was guided by Giuseppe Samonà, the president at the time, who wrote in 1959 *The urbanism and the future of the cities in European countries (L'urbanistica e l'avvenire della città negli stati europei)*—one of the earliest Italian books on urbanism—and aimed to construct a 'Venetian School' in line with the interests of the city²⁶. Aymonino was invited by Samonà as professor of the course 'Distributive characters of buildings (*Caratteri distributivi degli edifici*)' in 1963.

In the opening lecture for this course, Aymonino referred once more to the notion of tendency school, and based on this notion, he tried to reform the prevailing discourse, namely, 'to modify some traditional notions and the course program'²⁷. Firstly, in light of the interest for the city that he shared with Samonà, Aymonino reinterpreted the course's objective, by shifting it from the distribution inside single buildings (distributive scheme) to the distribution between buildings in the city, i.e., the urban structure. Then, by manifesting his own tendency to intervene in actual urban problems, he set the course's agenda as the investigation of birth and development of the modern speculative city through an original approach that relates building typology with urban morphology²⁸. His innovative intents can be seen also from his method of conducting the course. He set up six topics as research themes²⁹ and attributed them to six groups, each of which were composed of a few students and one assistant³⁰. Aymonino asked assistants and students to collaborate in the course and to confront their different positions with each other.

Aldo Rossi, an old friend of Aymonino, also participated in this course as an assistant from the start of the course until 1966, the year when he transferred to Milan and also published his first book *The Architecture of the City (L'architettura della città)*. It appears that it was through his discussions with Aymonino during these educational activities at Venice that Rossi was exposed to the notion of tendency³¹, which later—and especially after the exhibition he organized at the XV Milan Triennial in 1973—became one of the representative words for Rossi and his architectural works. After the exhibition, the word 'Tendenza' was diffused all over the world as an indicator for 'Rossism'³² which came to be defined as a certain architectural style. However, it should be noted that this word came from its original context in the crisis of Italian architectural schools after the war.

Moreover, this course gave Rossi another benefit, which is that of serving as a basis for *The Architecture of the City*, his first book which was later taken as a manifesto for his architectural projects and as one of

25. Michela Maguolo, 'Gli anni tempestosi', in *Officina luav, 1925-1980: saggi sulla scuola di architettura di Venezia*, ed. Guido Zucconi and Martina Carraro (Venezia: Marsilio, 2011), 178.

26. On the educational activity of Giuseppe Samonà and his school, see Paola Di Biagi, 'La "scuola di Venezia" e i "maestri della città", 1945-1970', in *Officina luav, 1925-1980: saggi sulla scuola di architettura di Venezia*, ed. Guido Zucconi and Martina Carraro (Venezia: Marsilio, 2011), 145–60.

27. Carlo Aymonino, 'I caratteri distributivi degli edifici: possibilità di modificare alcuni concetti tradizionali e programma del corso', in *Aspetti e problemi della tipologia edilizia: documenti del Corso di caratteri distributivi degli edifici: anno accademico 1963-1964* (Venezia: Cluva, 1964), 1–6.

28. Under this framework, various topics were discussed in the course, such as: laws and regulations of urbanism; public facilities, as understood within the urban scale; or the urban peripheries, among others.

29. They are: the building typology; the relation between regulations of buildings/urbanism and architecture; the structure of the modern city; the relation between various forms of services; approaches towards rationalization and quantification such as standardization; and the relations between utopias and the realizations of civic organizations. See Aymonino, 'I caratteri distributivi degli edifici: possibilità di modificare alcuni concetti tradizionali e programma del corso', in *Aspetti e problemi della tipologia edilizia*, 1964. The published course material of the Academic year 1963/4 includes the list of these groups with the names of assistants and students: 'Indice ragionato delle ricerche effettuate dagli studenti', in *Aspetti e problemi della tipologia edilizia*, 115–31.

31. In the materials of Rossi's lecture at the Milan school in 1966, which makes references to discussions on school reform, we can find several statements common to those of Aymonino, where Rossi says '... each school has to specify the character of its unitary education and research and finally construct a true and proper tendency', or 'Only the formation of several tendencies and the manifestation of several theses born out of internal labor may enable such a dialogue at the university level, exposition, verification and dispute of diverse theses, of which to date we feel is sorely needed'. See Aldo Rossi Papers, 4 *Lezione Poli*, Box 1, Folder 31 (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1966). Before 1966, the ending year of Rossi's activity as Aymonino's assistant at Venice, none of his published articles or lecture materials ever referred to the notion of 'tendenza' in relation to the architectural school system.

32. 'Entretien avec Aldo Rossi', *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, no. 190 (1970), 43.

the 'bibles' for Postmodernist architecture. In spite of its 'crystallized and mythicized reading of a key person such as Aldo Rossi'³³, this book owes major parts of its arguments to his experiences in the course at Venice. In fact, the fundamental framework of 'building typology and urban morphology' that the book assumes as a methodological approach to the city was first proposed and investigated by Aymonino in the course³⁴. Furthermore, Rossi's lecture manuscripts for the course were reprinted in the book with relatively few modifications. In his lectures, the main topic was the elaboration of a methodology for the study of the city as is suggested by his lecture titles, such as: 'Lecture on the methodological problems of urban research' or 'The city as a basis for the study of the character of buildings'³⁵. This indicates that *The Architecture of the City* is rather a sort of manual for urban study than a manifesto for a particular architectural style³⁶. The book itself should also be considered as the fruit of a collaboration seeking to construct a new urban science (*scienza urbana*), not as an independent authorial work by a single artist.

The 'Group Research (Gruppo di Ricerca)' program at the Milan school

The idea of tendency school shared by Aymonino and Rossi had another opportunity to be tested, this time in Milan. In 1967, a year after Rossi's transfer from Venice to Milan, the Milan school (*Politecnico di Milano*) suffered the largest protests from architectural students since 1963 and was occupied for three months. The repeated dialogues between the occupying student group and the administrative commission during this period finally resulted in the decision to put into action a major reform of architectural education called 'Experimentation (*Sperimentazione*)'³⁷. Its most transformative point consisted in the substitution of large parts of lectures with a program called 'Research Group (*Gruppo di Ricerca*)'³⁸. This program enabled teachers to set their own original topic as a research theme and allowed students to choose between different research groups so that the school could create a democratic environment for the students and instill a greater sense of responsibility for society. Rossi also took charge of his own group³⁹. According to Giovanna Gavazzeni and Massimo Scolari, active students in the protest movement and members of Rossi's research group, the Experimentation of the Milan school and its Research Group Program brought to the education field 'an articulation of school activities, a different disciplinary vision, and a different way of thinking about the training of architectural students', and substituted 'the rigid hierarchy of working relations and power' with an 'equal share (*pariteticità*) of labor and its foundational bases on the collective processes of participation and decision'⁴⁰.

These words closely resonate with the idea of tendency school derived from Aymonino via Rossi. In fact, Rossi and his research group members saw this program as the realization of the very idea of 'tendency school',

33. Elisabetta Vasumi Roveri, *Aldo Rossi e L'architettura della città: genesi e fortuna di un testo* (Torino: Allemandi, 2010), 24.

34. Rossi's book barely explains this framework, and merely refers to Aymonino's lecture in the course. In addition, it can be said that Rossi's discourse on the notion of type or typology, while playing an important role in the reception of Rossi's theory (especially in Anglo-Saxon architectural culture), owes almost all of its characterization to other teachers' lectures on type/typology (including the one just mentioned by Aymonino, or that of Costantino Dardi which can be consulted in Costantino Dardi, 'Processo architettonico e momento tipologico', in *Aspetti e problemi della tipologia edilizia: documenti del Corso di caratteri distributivi degli edifici: anno accademico 1963-1964*, Venezia: Cluva, 1964, 8-13), and never shows much of his own originality in *The Architecture of the City*. Moreover, the other two texts that Rossi published in the same period, and which will be latter referred in more detail in this study, almost never make any mentions to this notion. Therefore, a detailed analysis of the notion of type/typology falls outside the scope of this study.

35. Aldo Rossi, 'Comunicazione sui problemi metodologici della ricerca', in *La formazione del concetto di tipologia edilizia: atti del corso di caratteri distributivi degli edifici, anno accademico 1964-1965*, Istituto universitario di architettura di Venezia (Venezia: Cluva, 1965), 83-92; Aldo Rossi, 'La città come fondamento dello studio dei caratteri degli edifici', in *Rapporti tra la morfologia urbana e la tipologia edilizia: Documenti del corso di caratteri distributivi degli edifici. Anno accademico 1965-1966* (Venezia: Cluva, 1966), 85-95.

36. In fact, the original title of the book was 'manual of urbanism (*Manuale d'urbanistica*)'. Regarding the change of the book's title, see Roveri, *Aldo Rossi e L'architettura della città*, 23ff.

37. On the chronology of events from the occupation to the start of *Sperimentazione*, see Fiorella Vanini, ed., *La rivoluzione culturale: la Facoltà di architettura del Politecnico di Milano 1963-1974* (Milano: Associazione G.R.U., 2009).

38. On the details of the program, see *Controspazio*, no. 1, (1973).

39. On the activities of Rossi's group between 1967 and 1971, see Florencia Natalia Andreola, 'Architettura insegnata. Aldo Rossi, Giorgio Grassi e l'insegnamento della progettazione architettonica (1946-79)' (Doctoral Thesis, Università di Bologna, 2016), 193-205; Beatrice Lampariello, *Aldo Rossi e le forme del razionalismo esaltato: dai progetti scolastici alla 'città analoga': 1950-1973* (Macerata: Quodlibet, 2017), 231-40.

40. Giovanna Gavazzeni and Massimo Scolari, 'Note metodologiche per una ricerca urbana', *Lotus*, no. 7 (1970), 118.

where different 'cultural tendency groups' present 'different disciplinary visions and different ideas about the training of architectural students'⁴¹. Even though the program of research groups in the Milan school was stopped in 1971, Rossi and his group continued to seek the potential for such pluralist approaches and the tensions that they facilitate. And finally, they brought this idea to fruition as the exhibition of 'City-Architecture' which Rossi organized at the XV Milan Triennial in 1973⁴².

When considering the postwar crisis of the Italian architectural school and some attempts to reform it in the light of the idea of 'tendency' which focused on the positive potentialities of different positions and their dialectic confrontation, it should be repeated once more that this phenomenon was not concerned with architecture in itself, or its form and style, but with devising a new approach to architectural problems, especially within architectural schools. In this case it might be less accurate to say that the revolution of '68 in Italian architecture failed because it could not appropriate the 'language of revolution' like Bruno Zevi did⁴³ (who also sorely criticized the Triennale exhibition of Rossi and his group). Instead, what mattered was not a new language but a search for a collective and educational approach to architecture. And the approach which Rossi chose as his research group's own tendency was that of architecture as theory or discipline.

Theory and education of architecture in the case of Rossi

Tendency of Rossi's group: disciplinary re-foundation of architecture

In Research Group's program at the Milan school, Rossi's group designated the issue of 'disciplinary re-foundation of architecture'⁴⁴ as its chosen tendency. The idea of reconstructing architecture as a discipline can be found already in the materials of Rossi's lecture in 20 April 1966 when the student protest movement was rising again before the start of Research Group⁴⁵. In this case, the issue was defined in contrast to 'authoritarianism' and 'professionalism'⁴⁶: the latter represents the functionalist conception and as mentioned before, Rossi's critical attention was directed not only towards anachronistic academicism but also to its alternative, offered by the generation of the Modern Movement.

After the relative clean-up of academic authoritarianism through the reforms brought about by Experimentation, a number of issues related to architecture as a discipline continued to be discussed by Rossi and his group within the battles between different tendency groups. His group explains its own position by confronting two other tendencies in the school: one which placed social themes at the core of the school's concerns, and another which updated the contents of architectural education with the topics of urban planning, architectural industrialization, etc.⁴⁷

41. *Aldo Rossi Papers, 1967-1968 Gruppo Rossi. Materiale ciclostilato, Box 5, Folder 8* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1968).

42. Rossi explained this exhibition as the place for 'a dialectic confrontation between positions which for years in Italy and over the world, have confronted each other, grown up together and have always been differentiated' (Aldo Rossi, 'Perché ho fatto la mostra di architettura alla Triennale', *Controspazio*, no. 6, 1973, 8). In the exhibition catalogue, Scolari used the expression 'Tendenza' with the first letter capitalized for the purpose of presenting this idea on the international scene. The installation included the presentation of school projects by students from several cities and countries such as Milan, Rome, Pescara, Naples, Zurich and Berlin. See Aldo Rossi et al., *Architettura razionale: XV Triennale di Milano - Sezione Internazionale di Architettura* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 1973).

43. Bruno Zevi, 'Architettura versus Sessantotto', in *Sterzate architettoniche: conflitti e polemiche degli anni settanta-novanta*, by Bruno Zevi (Bari: Dedalo Libri, 1992), 321.

44. Gavazzeni and Scolari, 'Note metodologiche per una ricerca urbana', 119.

45. *Aldo Rossi Papers, Box 1, Folder 31* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute).

46. *Ibid.*

47. Gavazzeni and Scolari, 'Note metodologiche per una ricerca urbana', 119.

For Rossi and his group, while no longer being at war against academism, both of these positions are nevertheless still viewed as problematic. The former denies or minimizes discourses specific to architecture and leaves any meaningful decisions up to the whims of general political positions; while the latter, called professionalism, accepted the traditional structure of the bourgeois society and commercialized the skill of architects or their professional routines and practices for the sake of individual profits. Based on the claim that both paths are dismissive of cultural engagements, Rossi's group chose a third way: the 'foundation of a school of architecture with autonomous disciplinary characters', for the sake of intervening in concrete reality in an autonomous cultural way, without restricting architecture to the epistemological cage of 'disinterested knowledge (*conoscenza disinteressata*)' or leaving its own body of decisions up to politics or the pressing needs of 'immediate utility' (*utilizzazione immediata*)⁴⁸.

The concrete aim of Rossi's group in searching for such a disciplinary autonomy of architecture is to 'construct a logical formal system of architecture', and this system should be based not so much on 'some kind of slogans' as on 'the research of specific facts of architecture' which can ensure its scientificity and provide freedom from claims of necessity or utility.

This kind of strong concern with practical intervention towards a more scientific method of research, or the identification of 'cognitive momentum' with 'projectual activity' constitutes the 'exact cultural position related to the problems of architecture' adopted by Rossi's group⁴⁹. From this position arises a particularly controversial topic for the group: the dualism of analysis and project. What matters here, is how the analysis of architecture—concerning the question of *what it really is*—connects to the problem of project, namely the question of *how architecture is made*. In Rossi's architectural theory, these two issues respectively take the form of the theory of urban analysis⁵⁰, and that of the theory of logical and rational construction of architecture, as indicated by the title of a book detailing the group's activity published in 1970, *Urban analysis and architectural project (L'Analisi Urbana e la Progettazione Architettonica)*.

Rossi's urban analytical theory

Rossi's theory of urban analysis is summed up in his book *The Architecture of the City* which was also included in the bibliography for Rossi's research group⁵¹.

The expression 'urban analysis' might seem strange as a referent for the analysis of architecture. In fact, it can lead to misunderstandings. But although the theory of urban analysis is one moment of architectural theory, its main analytical object is not the city itself. Correctly speaking,

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. More precisely, the dualism of analysis/project has two dimensions dependent on two distinct scales of analysis: 'urban' analysis and 'architectural' analysis. In the latter case, which is the main discussion theme of Giorgio Grassi (Rossi's assistant and collaborator), for whom the notions of type, classification and architectural elements constitute key concepts, the analogy between analysis and project within the same level of architecture does not seem to be such a complicated issue (see Giorgio Grassi, 'Il rapporto analisi-progetto', in *L'Analisi Urbana e la Progettazione Architettonica: contributi al dibattito e al lavoro di gruppo nell'anno accademico 1968/69*, ed. Aldo Rossi (Milano: Cooperativa libraria universitaria del politecnico, 1970), 64–82); however, the former seems to demand a more complicated approach to the relation between analysis and project, because of considerable differences in scale (city and architecture). When referring to the relation between analysis and project, Rossi always means 'urban' analysis. Therefore, this study will also focus on the topic of analysis at the urban scale in relation with project, while arguing that the topic of 'architectural analysis' or its corresponding relation should be situated within his architectural project theory.

51. The references for his research group, in addition to Rossi's own book, also included the published lecture materials of the course in the Venice schools and the books of Aymonino and Samonà: *Aspetti e problemi della tipologia edilizia: documenti del Corso di caratteri distributivi degli edifici: anno accademico 1963-1964* (Venezia: Cluva, 1964); *La formazione del concetto di tipologia edilizia: atti del corso di caratteri distributivi degli edifici, anno accademico 1964-1965*, Istituto universitario di architettura di Venezia (Cluva, 1965); Carlo Aymonino, *Origini e sviluppo della città moderna* (Padova: Marsilio, 1965); Giuseppe Samonà, *L'Urbanistica e l'avvenire della città negli stati europei* (Bari: Laterza, 1959).

the analysis of architecture is one which investigates what architecture is in the real world, and this real world is precisely the city. Therefore, Rossi rephrases what architecture in the real world is, as the expression '*fatto urbano* (urban artifact or urban fact)', which simultaneously means artificial object and real, concrete fact⁵².

The basic viewpoint of Rossi's theory of *fatto urbano* consists in observing the growth process of the city or 'the construction of the city in time'⁵³, and tries to capture the city in its dynamism. It clearly reflects the real face of the city that was dealing at the time with urban sprawl, which Rossi did not always view as negative⁵⁴. From this perspective is deduced the classification of *fatto urbano*: the monument and the dwelling area. This is based on the criterion of how they contribute towards urban dynamism, where monuments work as a stable catalyst or promoter, and dwelling areas are an ever-changing performer. These two aspects define the idea of the city that Rossi presents in his book, namely, '*Città per parti* (city constituted from its parts)⁵⁵. This idea means that the city is complex, constituted from different components, and grows through 'the continuous tension between these elements'⁵⁶. It is possible here to find echoes of the restless mood of the time, and also of the concept of 'tendency' explained above, in the idea of *Città per parti*, in that the latter is also based on the pluralism of components and the confrontation between them⁵⁷. In fact, Rossi associated this idea with the new urban situation of the postwar period, and he points to its novelty, explaining it as 'a new bilateral conception of urban architecture'⁵⁸.

Rossi's architectural project theory

The most important materials for exploring Rossi's architectural project theory, another significant momentum of his architectural theory—which is not handled within the pages of *The Architecture of the City*, per its own clear statement to this effect⁵⁹—are constituted by two of his texts published in the same period: a 'foreword' to Etienne Louis Boullée's book, translated into Italian in 1967 by himself⁶⁰ and 'Architecture for museums'⁶¹. Boullée's book focuses mainly on the way of teaching architecture, and Rossi's latter text is a draft for his lecture held at the Venice school in 1966. Moreover, for Rossi, architectural project theory represents 'the concrete objective of an architectural school' and he adds that its 'supremacy over all other types of research is indisputable'⁶². Thus, it should be noted that his architectural project theory is, first and foremost, the problem of education or instruction in the architectural school.

Before investigating his own project theory, it is useful to look at two approaches which Rossi rejects as being inadequate for education or instruction of architectural project in schools. One is the position which insists on the power of architectural forms through two possible

52. As for the English translation of the Italian term '*fatto urbano*' several ideas are offered such as 'urban fact' in Moneo, 'Aldo Rossi: The Idea of Architecture and the Modena Cemetery', 'urban artifact' in Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*, trans. Diane Ghirardo and Joan Ockman (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, 1982), and 'urban event' in Pier Vittorio Aureli, 'The Difficult Whole', *Log*, no. 9 (2007), 39–61.

53. Aldo Rossi, *L'architettura della città* (Macerata: Quodlibet, 2011), 11.

54. Rossi regarded this phenomenon as an opportunity to redistribute the population and to achieve the development of the State and its cities. See Aldo Rossi, 'La città e la periferia', *Casabella Continuità*, no. 253 (1961), 23–26.

55. In the introduction of *The Architecture of the City*, Rossi explains that its second chapter is devoted to the structure of *Città per parti* (Rossi, *L'architettura della città*, 19).

56. *Ibid.*, 91.

57. Aureli identifies a similarity between the idea of *Città per parti* and the thought of Operaists such as Raniero Panzieri and Mario Tronti in the notion of 'a reality based on the tension between antagonists' (Aureli, *The Project of Autonomy*, 66).

58. Aldo Rossi, 'Architettura per i musei', in *Teoria Della Progettazione Architettonica* (Bari: Dedalo Libri, 1968), 130.

59. Rossi, *L'architettura della città*, 129.

60. Aldo Rossi, 'Introduzione à Boullée', in *Architettura: saggio sull'arte*, by Étienne Louis Boullée, trans. Aldo Rossi (Padova: Marsilio, 1967), 7–24.

61. Rossi, 'Architettura per i musei'.

62. *Ibid.*, 123.

means: visual 'psychological' cognition and the experience of 'formalist' architecture⁶³. Even though Rossi accepts the value of form, he denies these means because the former 'cannot be proposed inside architecture' and the latter does not exhibit logicity, so that students cannot help but merely 'imitate'⁶⁴. Rossi places the emphasis not so much on architectural forms as on the procedure itself because 'it is always difficult to judge the superiority of one procedure over another on the basis of the architecture, namely of the results of the procedures'⁶⁵.

The other target of Rossi's criticism is the advocacy of 'method' represented by the Modern Movement, especially Walter Gropius and his Bauhaus⁶⁶. Unlike the first position, it addresses the procedure rather than its result, but denies its logical or theoretical aspects, claiming that 'the theory is exceeded by the method'⁶⁷. Rossi found two risks in the notion of method: its excessive allowance of freedom for students, which can cause them to lose their way and fall into eclecticism, and its possible rigidification as *métier* which contributes towards the previously-mentioned problem of 'professionalism'. Contrary to the notion of method, Rossi aims to construct a theory which can enable the adequate regulation of students and stands for disciplinary dignity, rather than the exclusive profiteering of the professional.

Based on these criticisms against architectural teaching approaches discussed through the concepts of form and method, it can be said that Rossi's architectural project theory gives priority to the procedure of the project over architectural forms as its final result, and that this procedure should be a 'logical construction'⁶⁸. Borrowing his own words, the architectural project theory is a 'rational explication about the procedure for making an architecture'⁶⁹.

The primacy of procedure over its end result means not so much a disparagement or disregard of architectural forms, but rather the definition of teachable contents, namely, that which is transmissible from teachers to students in architectural project education. Here for Rossi, such a 'teachability' or 'transmissibility' of the contents of architectural education is made equivalent to a 'logicity' or 'rationality' of the procedure of architectural project. When emphasizing the transmissibility and logicity of architecture from an educational viewpoint, Rossi uses the term 'architecture as technique'⁷⁰ in contrast to *fatto urbano*, or architecture observed in its concrete reality.

One of 'the fundamental points of a project theory' is 'the analysis of monuments'⁷¹, because monuments have the 'character of logical formation' which enables a rational explanation or architectural project theory. This rational character makes monuments into principles of 'immutability'⁷² or fixity, which in turn enables freedom of choice for the individual or students because 'the choice presupposes fixed points of architecture'⁷³. Here, it is possible to find another interpretation to Rossi's

63. Rossi, 'Introduzione à Boullée', 9–10.

64. *Ibid.*, 10. To explain the confrontation between the architecture of formalism and that of logicity, Rossi gives examples of the contrasts between Louis Kahn and Le Corbusier, or Claude-Nicolas Ledoux and Boullée.

65. *Ibid.*, 9.

66. Rossi, 'Architettura per i musei', 124. Rossi's view of Gropius and *Bauhaus* as the best example of architectural education through 'method', as of the year 1966, comes probably from his interpretation of the educational context during the Modern Movement diffused by Rogers, who identifies 'the most profound discovery of the Modern Movement' in 'exactly the introduction of methodological research in the process of form' (Ernesto Nathan Rogers, 'Metodo e tipologia', *Casabella Continuità*, no. 291, 1964, 1). Daniele Vitale, a student guided by Rossi, recalls Rossi's criticism against method as the confrontation between him and Rogers at the occasion of the Milan school course; while Rogers considers that a good teacher should teach a method which enables students to discover their own talent and personal approach, Rossi showed his disagreement with Rogers and insisted on the construction of a system (Daniele Vitale, 'Narrate, uomini, la vostra storia', in *Italia 60/70*, 310). Later, Rossi changed his judgement to a more positive appreciation of the architectural project education of Gropius and Bauhaus as indicated by his lecture manuscript of the academic year 1967/68, Cf. Aldo Rossi Papers, *Lezioni Poli 1967/68*, Box 1, Folder 31, Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1967.

67. Rossi, 'Architettura per i musei', 124.

68. Rossi, 'Introduzione à Boullée', 9.

69. Rossi, 'Architettura per i musei', 123.

70. *Ibid.*, 126.

71. *Ibid.*, 130. Here we can find another dimension of the previously-mentioned dualism of analysis and project, namely 'architectural analysis' and architectural project. See note 50.

72. *Ibid.*, 126.

73. *Ibid.*, 132.

classification of monument/dwelling as seen in his theory of *fatto urbano*. On the criterion of logicity or rationality, monuments are so logical that they can be regarded as the fixed points of architecture, while 'the discourse on dwelling is (...) separated from architecture as technique and largely subjected to other factors'⁷⁴. In addition, the logicity or rationality of monuments makes them autonomous or 'ahistorical (*astorico*)', namely, it enables us to observe them separately from their historical contexts so that they are 'always repeated not only as history and memory but as elements for a project'⁷⁵. To make a project is to, on the basis of monuments chosen with personal responsibility as fixed principles, give an always-different solution for each occasional real problem.

'Resonance' between analysis and project

The relation between the two aspects of urban analytical theory and architectural project theory is quite complicated. While *The Architecture of the City*, in its concern with the theory of urban analysis, never touches upon the concrete contents of architectural project procedures, in the case of 'Foreword to Boullée', which exemplifies Rossi's architectural projects in reference to Boullée's projects, he claims that 'B. [Boullée], unlike Ledoux and other architects of the Enlightenment, never brings forward the urban question in a systematic way'⁷⁶. Nevertheless, 'Architecture for museums' points out that one of the fundamental aspects for a project theory, besides the study of monuments, is 'the analysis [reading] of the city, namely, our conception of urban architecture which is new in many points'⁷⁷. Thus, we are required to distinguish and associate them at once⁷⁸.

This ambivalence is suggested also in the title of the book, namely, *The architecture of the city*. As Rossi tells in the beginning of the first chapter of the book, with the term 'the architecture of the city' he refers to 'two different aspects'⁷⁹: architecture seen as a component of the city and the city seen as an architecture. The first is exactly what he calls *fatto urbano*. Contrary to the expectation of readers who think they can deduct from the book certain instructions for making an architecture closely connected to the city, Rossi's intention behind the introduction of this notion consists in the denial of the possibility of giving instructions to achieve it. In other words, *fatto urbano*, the subject of urban analytical theory, is required to be strictly distinguished from an architectural project, which is the subject of architectural project theory⁸⁰.

Here, Rossi tries to draw a boundary line between the teachable through architectural project theory and the unteachable. *Fatto urbano* remains within the sphere of that which is unteachable or untransmissible as architectural project theory. Surprisingly, this sphere includes also 'the built work' which should be distinguished from 'the thought of architecture'⁸¹, and this means that Rossi's teachable and transmissible architectural

74. Rossi, 'Introduzione à Boullée', 11.

75. Rossi, 'Architettura per i musei', 132. As an example of such a repeatability or transmissibility of monuments, Rossi refers to the gothic cathedral, which Le Corbusier associates with his Unité d'Habitation, or San Lorenzo and the Duomo in Milan which Francesco Borromini synthesized to achieve his baroque style.

76. Rossi, 'Introduzione à Boullée', 22.

77. Rossi, 'Architettura per i musei', 130.

78. This ambivalence also confused the very students participating in Rossi's group. This confusion can be found in the form of questions directed towards teachers in the course: 'analysis and project: no nexus of consequence nor of continuity?' (Aldo Rossi, ed., 'Questionario sui problemi dell'analisi urbana. Elaborazione collettiva di studenti e docenti', in *L'Analisi Urbana e la Progettazione Architettonica: contributi al dibattito e al lavoro di gruppo nell'anno accademico 1968/69* (Milano: Cooperativa libraria universitaria del politecnico, 1970), 27). The answer to this, while denying any fracture between the two, was limited to insisting on the necessity of conducting more research, but without choosing any clear position for the time being.

79. Rossi, *L'architettura della città*, 21.

80. See *Ibid.*, 22; 143, and *Id.*, 'Architettura per i musei', 126.

81. Rossi, 'Introduzione à Boullée', 14.

project theory stops short of the start of the process of physical building construction. From this, Rossi deduces his controversial affirmation of 'theoretical architecture (*architettura teorica*)'⁸² or 'conceptual architecture (*architettura pensata*)'⁸³. However again, it should not be overlooked that Rossi's above arguments have nothing to do with the question of what architecture in the real world is, or should be, but is strictly limited to the original problematics of architectural project education. His emphasis on the theoretical or conceptual aspect of architecture signifies a clarification of what is teachable and transmissible as architectural project theory from the teacher's point of view, and not an insistence that architects should make or consider only theoretical or conceptual architecture⁸⁴.

On the other hand, the vision of the city as an architecture indicates a certain association between urban analytical theory and architectural project theory at a different level from that of theoretical subject. Here again we need to reconsider the meaning of Rossi's statement that 'the analysis of the city' is one of 'the fundamental points of a project theory'⁸⁵. To this end, it might be meaningful to refer to the words of Rossi's students, Gavazzeni and Scholari, which explain the association between urban analytical theory and architectural project theory not as 'rapport', but as 'resonance', because the former might 'presuppose the possibility, at least potentially, to describe and identify this nexus through rational categories'⁸⁶.

According to this explanation, the nexus between urban analysis and architectural project does not conform to ideas such as urban contextualism, in which urban analysis provides certain data or conditions for the architectural project. In such case, the two theories of urban analysis and architectural project are related in a rational way; instead, we should think of the nexus between the two more as 'resonance' rather than as rational rapport. It may be best to think that the word 'resonance' signifies the structural similarity between them, especially in those terms by which their respective processes are explained: fixed principles, and ever-different aspects. The growth process of the city as a 'construction in time' is explained through the existence of monuments as a fixed catalyst and an occasional growth stage of dwellings; whereas the projectual process of an architecture as 'logical construction' arises through the use of principles and occasional solutions.

By considering such a structural similarity in theoretical procedures between architectural project theory and urban analytical theory, and placing it in its original context of architectural education, it can be presumed that urban analysis has the function of motivating students towards the recognition of architectural project as a logical and rational construction. In other words, in Rossi's architectural theory, students are expected to learn, as a logical construction, how to make an architectural project from the recognition of how the city and its real architecture

82. Ibid.

83. Rossi, 'Architettura per i musei', 128.

84. The qualification of 'appropriation of the real' which Alessandro Armano and Giovanni Durbiano attributes to Rossi's project theory as being a negative aspect (Alessandro Armano and Giovanni Durbiano, *Teoria del progetto architettonico. Dai disegni agli effetti* (Roma: Carocci, 2017), 60.) could in fact be reinterpreted positively from this viewpoint.

85. Rossi, 'Architettura per i musei', 305–6.

86. Gavazzeni and Scolari, 'Note metodologiche per una ricerca urbana', 125.

exist as a real fact. Therefore, the urban analysis procedure functions as a means of legitimization for the sake of recognizing the architectural project as a logical and rational procedure. In this case, monuments play an extremely important role as nodes between the two.

Moreover, further consideration leads us to infer that this approach, geared towards the motivation of students and based on the notions of 'resonance' and 'structural similarity', presupposes the possibility to superimpose the growth process of the city and the projectual process of an architecture. Such 'resonance' suggests not only the similarity of theoretical procedures between the two, but also the superimposition between the temporality of urban growth and the logicity or rationality of the architectural project. To understand the significance of this superimposition, it is necessary to explore once again the meaning of transmissibility in architectural project education.

Transmissibility and Revolution

Rossi does not expect the transmissibility of logical procedures based on architectural organizing principles to be objective. In agreement with Boullée, who thinks that 'the way of teaching architecture cannot be made fully objective', Rossi insists that 'the system of instruction cannot give the same results for different students, so long as each of them develops the system according to their own capacity'⁸⁷. But on the contrary, he assumes that some results based on the exact same principles can push forward the progress of architecture as discipline, where the individuals play the role of 'promoter'⁸⁸ who can change or even invent their own principles. Rationality is not always permanent or unchangeable, but 'rationality of monuments (...) is founded in their relations, which are continuously renovated, and give rise to ever-newer techniques'⁸⁹. In this statement is depicted the progressive process of architecture as discipline, showing that in Rossi's architectural project theory, its 'teachability' from teachers to students also signifies its transmissibility through the passage of time. Rossi's superimposition of the logical processes of architectural project and the temporal growth process of the city means that he considers the transmission of architectural project theory as a temporal process, where the double meaning of the expression 'transmissibility' is fully expressed: instruction and inheritance⁹⁰.

This double meaning of transmissibility poses a question: how long is the time-span, by which the transmission of architecture as discipline is to be considered? Or, what is the temporal duration that Rossi attributes to the transmissibility of architectural project theory? *The Architecture of the City* pursues the process of growth of the city and its architecture over centuries, and it seems fair to assume that architecture as a discipline is likewise thought to be transmitted over centuries. From this point of view, we can understand why Rossi refers to the classical monument as being

87. Rossi, 'Introduzione à Boullée', 21.

88. Rossi, *L'architettura della città*, 125.

89. Aldo Rossi, 'L'ordine greco', *Casabella Continuità*, no. 228 (1959), 16.

90. This explains the reason why the third chapter of *The Architecture of the City* which focuses on the historicity of the city contains the paragraph entitled 'architecture as science'. Architecture as science, that is, as rational project theory that is also inherited during the passage of time.

the same as modern architecture when it comes to providing organizing principles for the project. This juxtaposition which states that 'it is meaningless to say that the problems of ancient architecture are different from ours'⁹¹, should not be regarded as a mere flattening of historical facts through the deprivation of each building's historicity. Following this last phrase, Rossi goes on to add: 'on the other hand, it is meaningful to say that the conditions of ancient architecture are different from ours'⁹². This nuanced affirmation about the traversal between past architecture and the modern or present will require more careful investigations.

What matters here, are the transitions, alternations and discontinuities from one period to another period. By logical and rational architecture, Rossi means 'an architecture which is rational and transmissible from one society to another, from one state to another'⁹³. This transmission might not be smooth and free of troubles (if so, it is not a transmission from one society to another, but inside the same one), nor may it remain unchanged, neutral and objective. This leads us to infer that the defining aspect of a logical and rational architecture consists of its power to break and jump from one reality towards another; the power of glimpsing an alternative, that is, the power of aiming at a revolution. This intent for revolution seems to underlie Rossi's theory of logical and rational architectural project.

Based on the above considerations, the 'autonomy' or 'ahistoricity' which Rossi attributes to logical and rational architecture ('the principles of the architecture, as bases, do not have history'⁹⁴), can be understood not as the abandoning of reality, but as seeking transition and separation *from* one reality, in order *to reach* at and identify itself *with* another alternative reality⁹⁵. What should not be overlooked is that the separation, and the identification *from/to* reality appear simultaneously as two indispensable momentums for revolution.

From this view point, we can fully understand Rossi's words as he writes: 'architecture (...) is decisively inscribed into the constitution of urban facts when it is able to assume the whole civic and political range of its time; namely, when it is highly rational, comprehensive and transmissible'⁹⁶. This apparently paradoxical phrase which states that the more rational and transmissible—that is, autonomous *from* reality—architecture is, the more connected it is *to* reality, indicates the power of architecture 'in' revolution which enables separation and identification from/to reality to manifest themselves simultaneously as two indispensable momentums for revolution.

It would be pointless to think that revolution is simply an instant of alternation from old or past realities, eras and societies to new and future ones. Being 'in' revolution should be understood as the simultaneity of separation and identification in both directions of past and future, where 'logical and rational' architectures are still in the course of breaking

91. Rossi, 'Introduzione à Boullée', 12.

92. Ibid.

93. Rossi, 'Architettura per i musei', 136.

94. Ibid., 125.

95. It can be said that the 'ahistoricity (*astoricità*)' of architecture is not just 'non-temporality' but also one of the modes of temporality which persists beyond several historical moments. Olmo interprets Rossi's argument in *The Architecture of the City* in terms of the expression 'longue durée (*lunga durata*)', and paraphrases the 'ahistoric dimension' of Rossi's text as 'a time without events (*un tempo senza accadimenti*)'. Based on our discussion, it seems better to say a time 'beyond' events. See Olmo, 'Attraverso i Testi', 96.

96. Rossi, *L'architettura della città*, 130.

themselves from the past, but yet to arrive at the future.

Besides, it would be reasonable to say that their rationality or logicity is completely different from the neutral generality obtained through the removal of causal or occasional moments. The order of reasoning is reversed: architecture is rational and logical because it is transmissible, and not that it is transmissible due to being rational and logical. It is concluded that for Rossi, architectural rationality and logicity are first of all ensured by transmissibility as a temporal process.

Monument in revolution

Duality of experience of monument

In the last section, we showed that at the root of Rossi's project theory is the intention towards revolution, which has two simultaneously-occurring momentums: separation and identification from/into reality. This chapter tries to extend these momentums from rational project theory to the level of concrete experience, by referring to Rossi's discourses on monuments as *fatto urbano*. In other words, it explores the possibility of experiencing revolution as the concrete experience of monuments.

The monument is simultaneously: element or principle for the logical procedure of the architectural project; and promoter or catalyst for the temporal growth of the city, becoming a junction that connects the two in the form of resonance. Apparently, to these two different levels of monument, Rossi assigns two momentums of revolution: separation and identification from/into reality. This duality of the monument can be found in one of paragraphs of *The Architecture of the City* entitled 'the place (*il locus*)', where two different types of discourses on the monument coexist⁹⁷. On the one hand, in the urban 'place', *fatto urbano* presents itself as being identified with the original event occurring at the same time as its construction. As a specific example Rossi cited Adolf Loos's 'mound in the woods': 'If we were to come across a mound in the woods, six foot long by three foot wide, with the soil piled up in a pyramid, a somber mood would come over us and a voice inside us would say, "There is someone buried here." *That is architecture.*'⁹⁸ Rossi deemed the mound as 'an extremely intense and pure architecture precisely because it is identified in facts'⁹⁹. On the other hand, he claims that the 'separation' of this unification, or 'between the original element and the forms' can happen only in the logical and rational process of the artist(s) or by an ahistorical reading of architecture¹⁰⁰. In other words, the separation and the identification which Rossi attributes to monuments are explained as two different and heterogeneous experiences. While the identification between the architectural project and real events can be experienced only in the urban place, the separation between the two is possible only as the 'rational experience of history'¹⁰¹, in the words of Giorgio Grassi who

97. Rossi, *L'architettura della città*, 115ff.

98. Adolf Loos, *On Architecture*, trans. Michael Mitchell (Riverside California: Ariadne Press, 2002), 84. This paragraph is also cited in Rossi's argument on the urban place in *The Architecture of the city*.

99. Rossi, *L'architettura della città*, 118.

100. *Ibid.*

101. Giorgio Grassi, *La Costruzione Logica Dell'architettura* (Franco Angeli, 1998), 37.

was Rossi's assistant and tried alongside him to establish a theory of 'the logical construction of architecture'.

However, this begets the question: is such a distinction, between two momentums of separation and identification as heterogenous experiences, in danger of making impossible a real experience of revolution through architecture, given our conclusion that the condition of revolution is a simultaneity of the two? And through the assumption of this distinction, is architecture as discipline—even if being potentially led to a revolution—eventually forced to wait for 'a happy coincidence'¹⁰² with a new real event or political choice without intervening in the reality that preexisted this coincidence?¹⁰³

In order to verify the true critical power of Rossi's theory, beyond the apparent non-coexistence or heterogeneousness of the two momentums of monuments in his discourses, we need to explore the possibility of identifying these momentums of separation and identification at once, within a real experience of monuments. In fact, Rossi's discourses also seem to show, though in a negative way, this possibility, especially when referring to Loos' mound mentioned above. As some previous studies indicate¹⁰⁴, Rossi offers at separate occasions different and contradictory interpretations about Loos' argument on the mound in the woods. In his first article on Loos, Rossi regards Loos' mound as 'the negation of all the values of arts in the world without history'¹⁰⁵, that is, as being separated from concrete reality. On the contrary, in *The Architecture of the City*, as we already saw, the mound is explained as being 'identified in facts'¹⁰⁶. This shift of value, found in Rossi's later interpretation of Loos' mound, suggests the possibility of experiencing separation and identification at once in a monument. It might be said that when Rossi talks about the feeling of the 'ancient surprise of a man in front of an experience which overwhelms his reason'¹⁰⁷, which refers to Loos' monument, it signifies the appearance of the dual power of the monument such as coexistence of separation and identification, that is, the power of revolution. We can see the same duality of experience of monuments also in his article on Greek monuments, where Rossi explains them as that which 'represents at once the order and the exception, being tensioned between the knowable and the unknowable, (...) [which] represents, first of all itself'¹⁰⁸. It is this sort of surprise that activates the birth of architecture as discipline, as Rossi admits referring to Ludovico Geymonat, the advocate of 'a new rationalism' based on Neo-Positivism: 'The act of the birth of science is connected to the production of means for sounding out the marvelous [surprising]¹⁰⁹. Moreover, it can be said that the structure of the dual aspect of monuments is incorporated even in our ordinary experience of them. The simple experience that we see in an ancient monument today reveals the contradiction that the monument which still exists at the present represents a past age that does not exist anymore.

102. Rossi, *L'architettura della città*, 188.

103. From this view point, Aureli's interpretation of Rossi's locus (place) as 'a political category of the city' (Aureli, *The Project of Autonomy*, 60ff) is open to criticism. Aureli claims that against the infinite extension of capitalism's control, Rossi opposes the concept of locus (place) as an individual component of the city, with its absolute separateness from other components and the pluralistic image of the city. However, it seems possible to question if this absolute individuality that allows for separateness comes from the 'happy coincidence' between architecture and political choice. Can it be said that Aureli's argument focuses only on the aspect of identification and overlooks the other of separation as a momentum of revolution? In other words, does it concern the situation not in-revolution, but post-revolution?

104. Cf. Marco Biraghi, «Das Ist Architektur». Da Adolf Loos a Aldo Rossi, in *La Lezione Di Aldo Rossi*, ed. Annalisa Trentin (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2008), 60–65; Roveri, *Aldo Rossi e L'architettura della città*, 122–24.

105. Aldo Rossi, 'Adolf Loos, 1870-1933', *Casabella Continuità* 233 (1959), 8.

106. Rossi, *L'architettura della città*, 107.

107. Rossi, 'Adolf Loos, 1870-1933', 8.

108. Rossi, 'L'ordine greco', 16.

109. Ibid. Rossi refers to Ludovico Geymonat, *Studi per un nuovo razionalismo* (Torino: Chiantore, 1945).



FIG. 3 Posters on the façade of the Milan school in 1963. Original: Archivio Walter Barbero, Bergamo, cited from Lucia Tenconi, 'The City and Its Social Problems, as a Subject of Study: Rebel Architects at the Faculty of Milan (1963–1973)', in *Student Revolt, City, and Society in Europe: From the Middle Ages to the Present*, ed. Pieter Dhondt and Elizabethanne Boran (London: Routledge, 2017), 396.

Could it be that when facing a monument with surprise at its duality, while remaining situated in the ordinary experience of them, the experience of revolution is truly made possible?

Monument in 1968: the occupied school

So far, we have argued that Rossi’s discussions on monuments suggest the possibility of a real experience of simultaneous separation and identification in a concrete monument. In the concrete experience of a monument, lies the potential of an experience of revolution. Finally, we will discuss this possibility by taking up the case of monuments during the revolutionary period represented by the year 1968. For the purpose of comprehending the two momentums of revolution at the same time, it is not enough to consider the monument (or an architecture) ‘of’ revolution, which Zevi once urged us to seek¹¹⁰. This subtle word, ‘of’, presupposes the idea that revolution could be realized or completed through a new architecture or monument; this may overshadow the other momentum of separation, by overestimating only the momentum of identification as the suitability of a new architecture or monument for a new reality or society. Moreover, it can be said that the construction of such a new architecture or monument is, correctly speaking, a phenomenon that

110. Zevi, ‘Architettura versus Sessantotto’, 321.

only fully manifests itself 'after' revolution, not 'in' revolution. Instead of considering monuments as an instrument for the achievement of revolution, this study tries to observe monuments 'in' revolution, in order to grasp the continuous tension of monuments, lying in the liminal state between separation and identification in terms of transmission, without focusing on either side of before/after the experience of revolution. Only in this way, it is possible to understand what the dualism of *revolution happening within the monument* represents¹¹¹. We take the case of Milan, the same place where Rossi established his theory of urban analysis and architectural project, both of which were developed while thinking about the challenges of architectural education.

In the student protests of 1960s Italy, one of the remarkable and recorded actions which students took for showing their disapproval was to hang some posters on the façades of school buildings. For example, at the Milan school, in 1962 they hung posters which poked fun at a classical building designed by a professor from the school, for the purpose of criticizing against its anachronism and the academic educational system¹¹² [Fig. 3], and in 1968, a more direct message which accused the Minister of Education and the president of the school at the time of disturbing the school reform process could be seen above the school's entrance [Fig. 4]. Although these actions show the desire for revolution by physically modifying a monument considered to be a symbol of the authority of academism, and are interesting enough on their own as a sort of strategic conversion of a building by its typical users in untypical manners, these episodes only prove that the forces of contestation have already occupied and conquered the symbols of authenticity; in other words, the 'event' already happened without showing any 'process'. Therefore, it would be difficult to capture through the messages in these posters how the monument in revolution and its revolutionary power were experienced as the tension between separation and identification. In this regard, what truly attracts our attention would be the phenomenon happening literally behind these posters: the actual occupation of the school.

During the 1960s, the Milan school of architecture was often occupied by its students. The action of occupation itself can be said to be the attempt by students to acquire their own rights through the appropriation of a building which is a symbol of authority. However, if our aim is to



FIG. 4 Poster on the façade of the Milan school in 1968. Taken by Walter Barbero, cited from *Occupanti 1963-1968. Gli esordi della moderna Facoltà di architettura nelle fotografie di Walter Barbero* (Firenze: Alinea Editrice, 2011), 76.

111. For the same reason, this study does not discuss Rossi's own building works constructed in this period as the exemplification of a monument 'in' revolution. From the point of view of this study, it does not matter if his built works actually achieve social revolution in practice. Moreover, Rossi's own statement on the definition of *fatto urbano* lays strong doubts as to the validity of assuming that his own built works can be observed as *fatto urbano*: 'if the architectural artifact which we examine is, for example, constructed recently, it does not present yet the richness of motives with which we can recognize a given *fatto urbano*' (Rossi, *L'architettura della città*, 22). In this statement, he may be arguing that a separation of monument from reality becomes possible only after the passage of a certain amount of time. Because of the relatively short length of time that Rossi's contemporary built works have experienced, these should not be treated as *fatto urbano* or as monuments 'in' revolution.

112. On this event, see Tenconi, 'The City and Its Social Problems, as a Subject of Study: Rebel Architects at the Faculty of Milan (1963-1973)', 396.

observe the experience of the dualism of revolution between separation and identification, the photos of these occupations which convey this most effectively, and cause the most impression, would not be the ones which narrate the enthusiasm of the conquest, but the ones which capture various domestic and daily scenes like cooking, chatting and sleeping in the school as if it was their home [Fig. 5-7]¹¹³. The strangeness of these photos seems to come from the transformation of the school into a dwelling area for students. However, if we assume the viewpoint of Rossi's classification of monument and dwelling, which is completely different from the functionalist viewpoint as previously mentioned, it leads us to find it inappropriate to see the occupation of the school as a mere shift of functions from monument to dwelling.

In terms of the dualism of revolution between separation and identification, it would be desirable to say that the photos show that the school was used as if it was a house, but in fact it was still the same school that it used to be; it also seems as if the students behaved more like family, but they were still students as before. In other words, just because the students started to engage in practices typical of domestic and familiar contexts, it does not mean that the school fully ceased to be a school, and that the students fully ceased to be students. It is necessary to think about this from a non-functional viewpoint, and identify the clear tensions between the school as monument and dwelling which are portrayed in the photos.

As already seen, Rossi's classification of urban components is based on criteria that differ from function: (in)stability in urban dynamism, and logical or rational purity. When reconsidering this criterion in terms of the tension between polar opposites, it can be said that the field of human life is divided and distributed by rationality and dynamism into two spaces: the monument for human life, which is lived in the form of 'reason', and kept away from dynamism; and the dwelling for human life, which deals with 'the concrete problem of the habitation of man' and escapes from architectural rationality¹¹⁴. Each refuses the life of its opposite through rationalism or dynamism: the monument rejects the aspect of concrete and daily life by its rationality, and the dwelling excludes the stabilization of life by its dynamism.

Considering all of this, we can say that the occupation of the school by



FIG. 5 Cooking in the occupied Milan school in March 1967. Taken by Walter Barbero, *ibid.*, 54.

113. We can see such photos taken by Walter Barbero, who graduated from the Milan school in 1969, and later became a professor there, in *Occupanti 1963-1968. Gli esordi della moderna Facoltà di architettura nelle fotografie di Walter Barbero* (Firenze: Alinea Editrice, 2011).

114. Rossi, 'Architettura per i musei', 310-11.



FIG. 6 Playing chess in the occupied Milan school February 1967.
Taken by Walter Barbero, *ibid.*, 39.

students, or even the act of inhabiting a monument means not so much an inversion of the classifications of monument and dwelling, as it is a shaking at the core level of this distribution of human life, shaking of 'the sense of reading of a monument'¹¹⁵; or if we may borrow the words of Jacques Rancière, the shaking of the 'distribution of the sensible'¹¹⁶. Here, the daily and concrete life dares to ignore the rejection of rationality and tries to become identified in the monument. The occupied Milan school, as a monument 'in revolution' that temporarily incorporates the foreign mode of daily life inherent to the dwelling, enables the experience of revolution, as the shaking of the distribution of human life in its dual facets.

115. Rossi, 'L'ordine greco', 16.

116. Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics. The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (London, New Delhi, New York and Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2013).

Conclusion

This article investigated the original contexts, the structure, and the potentiality of the architectural theory that Aldo Rossi developed in the uncertain mood of the age represented by the year 1968.

In the first chapter, we surveyed Rossi's activity in the 1960s as a teacher. At that time, faced against the context of the architectural school crisis, his focus moved from architectural forms towards a new approach to architectural problems. Afterwards, seeing how he problematized the consciousness of architectural education, we showed that the notion of tendency (*tendenza*), a defining term for Rossi and often regarded as



FIG. 6 Sleeping in the occupied Milan school in March 1967.
Taken by Walter Barbero, *ibid.*, 52.

a certain style of his architectural works, was originally conceptualized first by Aymonino and then transferred from him to Rossi, as a form of collaboration engaged with architectural problems and methods of education.

In the second chapter, this study investigated the nexus between Rossi's theories of urban analysis and architectural project, in terms of the re-foundation of architectural education or architecture as discipline, and we have argued that it can be considered as a structural similarity between the two, and as a superimposition of the temporality of urban growth on the rationality of the architectural project. Based on these investigations, it was shown that his architectural rationalism was focused on the transmissibility of architectural project education, and that at the root of this rationalism lies an intent towards revolution, where the dualism of event/process of the '1968' appears as the simultaneous occurrence of two momentums of revolution: separation and identification from/to reality.

In the last chapter, this study explored the possibility of experiencing revolution—postulated by Rossi's architectural theory—as a concrete experience of monuments, and from this view we presented a reinterpretation of the protests at the Milan school by students, where their occupation of the school signifies the shaking of the distribution

of human life defined by architectural spaces, which are presupposed in Rossi's classification of monument and dwelling.

To conclude this study, we suggest two potential directions for further investigations.

The first direction concerns the relation between the '1968' and the problematic of 'subjectivity'. Although this study had to put aside any considerations on the topic of subjectivity, which was one of the key notions of the period during the search for 'autonomy' or liberty of individuals, it can be formulated as the problem of the interpretation of Rossi's activities after the end of the age of enthusiasm. At the time, as cultural and political movements started to escalate again eight professors, Rossi included, were suspended from all educational activities because of their political involvements. The enthusiasm of the movement passed away, and Rossi began to make architectural works of silence or suspension. This change in his activity has often been considered as his shift from logical objectivity to poetic subjectivity, the proof of which has been found in his second book, *A Scientific Autobiography* published in 1982. However, it should not be overlooked that Rossi suggested his plan to write his own autobiography already in 1966, the same year of publication of *The Architecture of the City*, during his lecture at the Venice school¹¹⁷, and this study argued that for Rossi, logicity or rationalism does not equal objectivity, nor are they even contradictory, when seen from the viewpoint of transmissibility. For a better understanding of the meaning of subjectivity for Rossi and his (non-)shift, we need to consider the role that the notion of subjectivity played in Rossi's architectural theory by situating it in its original context of architectural education, from the viewpoint of transmission of architecture as discipline or technique.

In the second direction, one could potentially explore the true and concrete meaning or effect brought out by the '1968' into the sphere of architecture, based on Rossi's viewpoint of the double meaning of transmissibility of instruction and inheritance; in other words, by associating the questions 'what is teachable?' and 'what length of temporal duration is inheritable?', we may be able to evaluate the situation of architecture after the '1968' without resorting to abstract explanations of it as the 'de(con)struction' of architecture as an institution or system. The most important places for this exploration would be architectural schools, which according to Rossi, should offer to their students a 'transmissible' theory and discipline of architecture through its 'long duration'. His discourses on architectural education can be said to open an interesting perspective for today's architectural education and culture, where the topics of conversion, renovation and others, that necessarily go beyond the duration of the projectural process are becoming increasingly important.

117. Rossi, 'Architettura per i musei', 124.