

History of Italian Contemporary Architecture II | Academic year 2022/23

Università degli Studi di Firenze
Master's degree in Architecture
Curriculum: Architectural Design – iCad

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Focus & methods

The course outlines the history of Italian architecture over the last 150 years, from the proclamation of the kingdom of Italy in 1861 to the recent outcomes of Italian architectural culture in a globalized world. The course offers a multidisciplinary approach to architectural history, taking different points of view into consideration, such as: art history, construction history, literature, cinema, religion, politics, society.

The aim of the course is to offer an overview of the history of Italian architecture since 1861. The course fosters the development of critical thinking, knowledge and understanding about Italian architectural culture, its key protagonists, movements, and buildings. The course is comprised of lectures, on-site visits and readings.

Assessment and final exam: one written paper, presentations during the course and an interview.

The written paper will analyze a single building, project, protagonist, or book related to Italian architectural culture since 1861. A few presentations will be organized throughout the course and will focus on some specific topics tackled in class. The interview will focus on one of the topics mentioned during the course. Reviews of the written paper will be organized during the last weeks of the course. The details will be discussed at the beginning of the semester. Active participation in class will be considered for the final assessment.

Course outline

1861–1914. The architecture of a new state

Torino, Firenze, Roma: The construction of three capital cities
Liberty from Palermo to Torino: A new way to applied arts
Before the war: Futurism and its utopias

1922–43. Building and planning for a totalitarian regime

The architectural language of the Fascist regime
Fascist typologies and urban planning

Italy abroad: Colonialism, cities and the empire
Fascist architecture: A difficult heritage for Italy?

1945–80. From postwar to postmodern

Building after the bombs: The reconstruction of cities and “The Italian retreat from modern architecture”

Highways, bridges, and infrastructures: The architecture of the engineers

Housing and religion for the people: The INA-Casa programme and the new churches

Years of protest: From radical architecture to postmodernism

Since 1980. Italy in a global world

Global Italy and architects

Architecture as a brand: The design of temporary events

Suggested readings

The suggested handbooks are:

Kirk, Terry. *Architecture of Modern Italy: The Challenge of Tradition, 1750–1900.* New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005.

Kirk, Terry. *Architecture of Modern Italy: Visions of Utopia, 1900–present.* New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005.

Further readings on specific topics will be provided to the class before each lecture.

For an overview on the history of modern Italy, see:

Duggan, Christopher. *The Force of Destiny: A History of Italy since 1796.* London: Penguin, 2008.