

History of Italian Contemporary Architecture II | Academic year 2021/22

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 in the last 150 years, from the proclamation of the kingdom of Italy in 1861 to the recent outcomes of a country and its 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, seminars and readings. On-site visits will be organized, if allowed by the developments of the current covid-19 pandemic.

Assessment and final exam: one written paper and an interview.

The written paper will analyze a single building, project, protagonist or book related to Italian architectural culture since 1861. 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 and the weekly discussion of assigned readings will be taken into account for the assessment.

Course outline

1861–1914. The architecture of a new state

Torino, Firenze, Roma: The construction of three capital cities
Historicism, infrastructures and new technologies: Galleries, markets, railway stations
Liberty from Palermo to Torino: A new way to applied arts
A monument for the dead king: The long construction of the Vittoriano
Before the war: Futurism and its utopias

1922–43. Building and planning for a totalitarian regime

Translating modernism: manifestos, exhibitions and debates
The language of a regime: The hegemony of Marcello Piacentini

Fascist typologies: *case del fascio*, *case del balilla*, *colonie per l'infanzia*

Building in the lowlands: Agro Pontino, EUR and new settlements

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 cultural heritage

Looking for traditions: “The Italian retreat from modern architecture”

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

Connecting the country: highways, bridges, infrastructures

The architecture of an engineer: The works of Pier Luigi Nervi

Years of protest: From radical architecture to postmodernism

Since 1980. Italy in a global world

Italians home and abroad: Architects and projects

Archistars in Italy: Architecture as a brand

Architecture and temporary events: Expo, Biennale, Catholic Jubilee, Olympic Games

Suggested readings

The class will not be using a single textbook to cover all the topics of the course.

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

For a general overview on the history of architecture in the twentieth-century, see:

Davies, Colin. *A New History of Modern Architecture*. London: King, 2017.

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.

For an overview on the history of Italian fascist architecture, see:

Jones, Kay Bea, and Stephanie Pilat, eds. *The Routledge Companion to Italian Fascist Architecture*. London/New York: Routledge, 2020.