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*Original*

Proceedings of the 3rd MoMoWo International Conference - Workshop. University of Oviedo, 2–4 October 2017, Oviedo / Garda, E.M., Franchini, C., María Fernández García, A., Seražin, H.. - ELETTRONICO. - (2018), pp. 1-181.

*Availability:*

This version is available at: 11583/2787920 since: 2020-01-31T14:12:02Z

*Publisher:*

France Stele Institute of Art History, ZRC SAZU

*Published*

DOI:

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# Proceedings of the 3rd MoMoWo International Conference - Workshop

University of Oviedo, 2–4 October 2017, Oviedo

Ljubljana 2018

**Proceedings of the 3<sup>rd</sup> MoMoWo International Conference-Workshop  
University of Oviedo, 2–4 October 2017, Oviedo**

Collected by Ana María Fernández García, Helena Seražin, Caterina Franchini and Emilia Garda

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Issued by ZRC SAZU, France Stele Institute of Art History

Represented by Barbara Murovec

Published by Založba ZRC

Represented by Oto Luthar

Editor-in-chief Aleš Pogačnik

Layout: Helena Seražin

The collected papers were submitted prior the 3<sup>rd</sup> MoMoWo International Conference-Workshop and written as preliminary versions of articles, which will be published in a separate, edited and peer-reviewed volume *Women Designers, Architects and Enigneers betwwen 1969 and 1989* in the series *Women's Creativity*.

The collected papers have not been peer-reviewed. The authors hold responsibility for English language proof-reading. Abstracts are published at <http://www.momowo.eu/momowos-3rd-international-conference-workshop/>.

Publication of the Project MoMoWo (Women's Creativity since the Modern Movement)

<http://www.momowo.eu>

This project has been co-funded with support from the European Commission.

This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

This project is co-funded by Creative Europe programme of the European Union, Slovenian Research Agency and Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia.



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## **POLITICS, POLICIES AND POLITICAL REGIMES**

## Beyond Architecture: Politics, Feminism and Art as a Way of Life

### The Work of Giovanna De Sanctis Ricciardone

Anna Riciputo

#### Sixties: The Gorgon and the Praise of Betrayal Architecture and Communism

*Noi eravamo  
chiaramente antiborghesi, e per  
questo d'altronde siamo stati i  
primi post-moderni, o per meglio  
dire antimodernisti, poiché  
rigettavamo il potere  
dell'establishment borghese  
rappresentato dal moderno. La  
nostra era una lotta politica,  
ideologica, che nulla aveva a che  
vedere con aspetti formalistici. Non  
combattevamo in difesa di un  
"segno" ma contro i principi  
borghesi della cultura modernista.  
Nonostante ciò, credevamo  
fortemente nella figura  
dell'architetto e nelle sue armi. Una  
figura mitologica, demiurgica, con  
la quale eravamo cresciuti e che  
invece crollò davanti ai nostri  
occhi.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Giovanna de Sanctis Ricciardone, "Una storia di passioni", in *Alessandro Anselmi. Frammenti di Futuro*, a cura di R. Angelini, E. Caramia, C. Moli, Quaderni del Dottorato di Ricerca in Architettura – Teoria e Progetto, Diap, "Sapienza" Università di Roma, Editore Lulu.com, 2 ed. 2015, pp. 18-23, in particolare p. 21 "We were clearly against the bourgeoisie and for this reason we were the first postmodernists, or rather antimodernists, as we re-energized the power of the bourgeois establishment represented by the modern. Ours was a political, ideological struggle, which had nothing to do with formalist aspects. We did not fight in defense of a "sign" but against

In 1963 in Valle Giulia, branch of the Rome University's Faculty of Architecture, broke out an inside revolution during which the students rose against "barocchetti" teachers and static-modernist teachings. They hunted Vincenzo Fasolo and Saverio Muratori to welcome Bruno Zevi, Ludovico Quaroni and Luigi Piccinato.

In those days, was impossible to be an architect and not to be involved in politics: the great ideals of the left required great intellectual projects but they were: poised between persuasive utopia and deterrent dystopia; uncertain between the gigantism of the mega-structure and the domestic dimension of the after-reconstruction style; hesitant facing the historicism of the Post-modern and the brutalism of Louis Kahn; fascinated by the noise of Pop Art and the silence of Arte Povera. Joining the Italian Communist Party was a rite of passage, it marked the division between "being here and now" and not be at all. Among the students is active a group of young communists who gathered to devise new politic strategies writing them in pamphlets: their names were Alessandro Anselmi, Federico Genovese, Paolo Grassi, Mimmo Parlato, Luciano Tombini. They studied and spread

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the bourgeois principles of modernist culture. Nevertheless, we strongly believed in the figure of the architect and his weapons. A mythological, demiurgical figure with which we had grown up and that instead collapsed in front of our eyes" (translation by the author).

Marxism and post-Marxism in all their forms, they were always updated and careful to the outcomes of the Vietnam War and the Cuban Revolution (the last one seen as an alternative to the violent and militarized Soviet communism but whose fragility became clear after Che Guevara's death in 1967). Despite the occupation of the Faculty in 1963, it still remained a bourgeois place, enrolling the golden progeny of roman architects and builders; intellectualized and closed on itself. The great revolution against the "barons of the fascist modernism" revealed itself less violent from what will have happen in 1968 by a new generation persuaded to destroy the bourgeoisie in order to entirely restore the "architectonic ethics".<sup>2</sup>

Giovanna de Sanctis Ricciardone,<sup>3</sup> one of the few girls enrolled at the Faculty of Architecture, had her PCI card and attended the headquarter in Viale Mazzini, known to be the most intellectual one. She was active and controversial, fighting to endorse the architects' social role with a committed self-engaging in class revolutions (she decided, as many others, to teach to the children of proletarians in middle school).

After her official presentation in the Communist Federation, Giovanna de Sanctis, just graduated from college in 1964, was elected city councilor for urban planning in Guidonia, a little town near the Italian capital city. She was engaged in a fierce fight against the illegal construction recording, at that time, a furious growth due to the expansion from Rome to Tivoli. The need to safely restore an architecture of precarious living, to

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<sup>2</sup> From a conversation between Giovanna de Sanctis and the author at Calvi dell'Umbria, August 7th, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> For a detailed and intense interview see: Alessandra Muntoni, "Parlando con Giovanna de Sanctis. Pieghe, frammenti, torsioni, trafissioni", *Metamorfosi* 58, (2006): 14-23.

bring the landscape back to its natural dignity, to relieve the rift between the population and the bureaucracy are the clashes during the collective meetings. However, the reality to face is another: there are two trunks of illegal building activities. The first concerns the petty dwellings of the new poor, workers returning emigrants from northern Europe, who live outside the bourgeois luxuries and join the PCI party as the right way to preserve themselves. The second trunk was instead constituted by the speculations of the big manufacturers, made of megastructures and extended built areas. At Giovanna's eyes was impossible ethically to vacate the ones and ignore the others, but that was what the PCI asked to her. In 1969, compromises and contradictions became unsustainable, and de Sanctis resigned from the institutional role and the Communist Party. It's the first great betrayal.

During the Sixties in Rome, despite the (forced) academic opening to the national and international contemporary art issues, the true architectural experimentation began to take place in the "studios",<sup>4</sup> independent research groups that, in the next years, will have formed the bedrock of Roman architectural intelligentsia.

Convinced that "the prospective could dominate the knowable reality",<sup>5</sup> Giovanna de Sanctis harnessed landscapes, forms and spaces in geometric patterns. Not even graduated, she drew for several studios in Rome, becoming an active part towards the middle of the decade. During this

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<sup>4</sup> Franco Purini et al., "La formazione degli architetti romani negli Anni Sessanta", *Rassegna di architettura e urbanistica* 112/113/114, (2004)

<sup>5</sup> From a conversation between Giovanna de Sanctis and the author at Calvi dell'Umbria, August 7th, 2017.

period, she designed the *Tower* (in 1964 at Studio Portoghesi) and the *Pop-Mobili* (*"Pop Furniture"*, fig.1) in 1967. The first project, realized on the occasion of a contest but discarded eventually, brings with it echoes of Futurists and Constructivists. The centrifugal movement of the plan rises upward through "rays" : it's the first step to an occupation of multidirectional space later performed with the sculptures *Trafissioni* (*"Pierces"*). The *Pop-Mobili* designed in 1967 were perfectly in line with the contemporary architectonic research about Radical Design, following the path of Superstudio, Archizoom, Studio 65 and UFO above all. In Rome, a collective of Pop Artists established the "School of Piazza del Popolo": they had investigated the modernity of the classics, turning historical characters into pop icons with a "serious irony". Beyond the mystification of Dada, they regain the past through the transposition of Italian artistic heritage from the immortality of history to the banality of everyday life. Tano Festa, Giosetta Fioroni, Mario Ceroli, used the Botticelli's *Venus*, sublime example of the female essence, by decomposing, multiplying, redesigning, re-coloring, displacing, re-materializing her figure. Although far from the area of the School and alien to the circuit of art galleries that supported its members, Giovanna de Sanctis Ricciardone also used the *Venus* as a communicative pop icon, engaging an higher level of interpretation of symbols and myths.

After drawing for Paolo Portoghesi, Carlo Aymonino and Luigi Pellegrin, Giovanna de Sanctis collaborated on occasion with GRAU (which owns the mate and then husband Alessandro Anselmi), and became a member of two studios: first at via Nicotera and then at

Archo (with Cellini and Cagnoni among others). The short-circuit came soon: in 1967 she participates with GRAU in the competition for the new wing of Parliament in Rome – with a project called *Determined Abstraction* (fig.2) - and invented the "cubic perspective"<sup>6</sup> but her name did not appear in the credits and in many of the publications to come. The consolidated socio-professional device of "architectural duo" does not allow it. The roles are clear: within the same group, the project architect is the man, his female partner (although architect) organizes, follows, accompanies but not decides. When the need for professional and intellectual independence of the female component is decisive, it manifests itself through hard choices: some decide to teach at schools or at the university in other cities, others will specialize in disciplines "collateral" as history or design, others will leave definitively "the art of building". Giovanna De Sanctis decided for a third way: in the early 70s she leaved professional studios and in 1975 said "goodbye" to architecture. It is the great betrayal, but it is thanks to it that she will finalize her metamorphosis into an architect: the art, which always moved in the rear, acquires intellectual priority but does not forget the architecture as a space modifier.

The praise of betrayal is the only way not to succumb to ourselves.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> A representative device based on the construction of a triple reversed perspective along the edges of a cube

<sup>7</sup> From a conversation between Giovanna de Sanctis and the author at Calvi dell'Umbria, August 7th, 2017.

**Seventies: We Will Regain The Cut Head  
Art and Feminism**

*Addio piani regolatori  
bocciati o non rispettati, cassette  
unifamiliari mai costruite o mal  
costruite, arredamenti per signore  
ricche e noiose, mobiletti di bambù,  
prospettive di mega-progetti fatti  
da altri... Addio!  
ESSI dimenticarono,  
schiacciarono LA TERRA  
per costruire i simboli  
verticali che penetrassero IL Cielo.  
ESSI HANNO VOLUTO:  
punta contro cerchio  
penetrazione contro  
comprensione  
grattacielo contro  
piazza  
fuori contro dentro  
produttività contro  
creatività  
tecnologia contro  
natura  
città contro  
campagna  
Essi consumarono  
divorarono LA TERRA  
ESSI HANNO VOLUTO:  
verticale contro  
orizzontale  
squilibrio contro  
equilibrio  
divenire contro essere  
obelisco contro  
anfiteatro  
azione contro  
meditazione  
velocità contro stasi  
sessualità contro eros  
potere  
competitività contro  
amore  
violenza  
PROGETTARE NELLA  
LORO LOGICA È DELITTO!*

*La contraddizione  
UOMO-DONNA è dominante  
PER UNA DONNA  
PROGETTARE è IMPOSSIBILE  
È NECESSARIO PRIMA  
PROGETTARSI  
All'inizio della STORIA  
l'eroe maschio tagliò la testa al  
MOSTRO-FEMMINA  
L'EROE legò la testa al  
proprio scudo e usò LO SGUARDO  
TERRIBILE  
LA TESTA TAGLIATA  
LA RIPRENDEREMO!<sup>8</sup>*

During the 60's, the architectural production of Giovanna de Sanctis Ricciardone was feverish but unattainable: the promises of communism had failed (causing the end of the Prague Spring by Soviet invasion in 1968, the massacre of Piazza Fontana in Milan and the defenestration of Giuseppe Pinelli, both in 1969) marking, for the intellectual Roman

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<sup>8</sup> Giovanna de Sanctis Ricciardone, *Addio all'architettura*, china e pastelli su cartoncino, 1977, "Good-bye plans rejected or unreserved, unstructured or badly built single-family houses, rich and boring ladies furnishings, bamboo cabinets, mega-projects prospects made by others ... Goodbye! THEY (MEN) forgot, they crushed the LAND to build the vertical symbols that would penetrate Heaven. They HAVE WANTED: tip against hoop, penetration against understanding, skyscraper against the square, external against internal, productivity against creativity, technology against nature, city against countryside. They consumed they devoured the EARTH. They HAVE WANTED: vertical against horizontal, imbalance against balance, become against being, obelisk against amphitheater, action against meditation, speed against stasis, sexuality against eros, power, competitiveness against love, violence. DESIGNING IN THEIR LOGIC IS DELETED! The MAN-WOMAN contradiction is dominant. FOR A WOMAN TO DESIGN IS IMPOSSIBLE. IT IS NECESSARY BEFORE TO RE-DESIGN HERSELF. At the beginning of HISTORY the male hero cut THE head to the MONSTER-FEMALE. The HERO tied his head to his shield and used the TERRIBLE LOOK. WE WILL REGAIN THE CUT HEAD! " (translation by the author)

communists, the winning of the big powers on the positive ideologies. The utopias are not over yet, but they no longer convince anyone. The drawings of 1972, entitled *Utopie* (fig.3), report - in their dichotomy between the hieratic spatial composition and the human organism in motion - the epic clash between architecture and man, construction and society, geometry and body:

I always remained a "drawer of perspectives", in my mind there is always a geometric structure that contained the bodies. For me, bodies and geometry are two entities that conflict, engage and pierce themselves, always fighting in some way. The body is not free, but within a technological cage.<sup>9</sup>

As Michelangelo used to, Giovanna de Sanctis forces the bodies in torsions - in the '80s "twisting" will become a predominant theme, able to turn pictorial spaces into sculptural elements. The tension with the architecture, symmetrical and rational, is not only intellectual but also physical and mythological: the effort to get rid of the postmodern man-architect also reflects the punishment of Atlas, responsible for supporting the entire sky as guilty of having rebelled. Rebellion is always punished: in early 70s Giovanna de Sanctis is already paying her betrayals by being excluded from the architecture practice - made of design and construction, roles and compromises, men and power. In 1974, she abandoned ARCHO's team and entered at *Politecnico*,<sup>10</sup> a multipurpose

cultural association self-managed, settled in the Flaminio district. It was due to it that she came in contact first with feminism (fig.4) and after with professional artistry (in 1975 with her participation in the X Quadriennale of Rome - *New Generation*). It was a period of a newfound lucidity: the feminist reinterpretation of archetypes and mythologies acted on numerous levels. Socially and politically, a new "female focused" thinking allowed to avoid the camouflage with the armed (male juncture) of the communist struggle. Artistically, it established a renewed study on the relationship between body and geometry, humanity and technology, the symbolism of male and female through the distinction between vertical and horizontal, skyscraper and cave, nudity and drapery. Personally, they let her to reach the awareness of motherhood as a tool for understanding the inner and outer cosmos. This last level, became an inexorable and indispensable existential choice, culminated with the birth of Cecilia and Valentino - depicted in the table *In memoria dell'architettura* ("*In memory of architecture*"), 1975. Giovanna was a single mother, her partner was an adulterer liable to legal persecution, her family did not understand: she addressed both parts alone, in alienating conditions. This traumatic experience imposed her to act for social commentary, through the produ-

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conventional entourage of art museums, decide to settle their studios getting involved in experimental way of expressions. In particular, the first nucleus moved in the early 70's was devoted to the production of theater and film works, installing the first true independent cineclub in Rome. For further informations please refer to: "Il Politecnico: una storia romana degli anni '70", a documentary by Amedeo Fago in partnership with Diap - Dipartimento di Architettura Teorie a Progetto, Sapienza University of Rome, Italy 2017.

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>10</sup> The *Politecnico* was an extremely lively artistic reality in which many artists of the capital, who were deliberately kept out from the

ction, in 1975, of the illustrations *Maternità e nascita* ("Maternity and birth", fig.5) and *Nascita tecnologica* ("Technological birth"). If the second represents explicitly the human aspect of the child's suffering, the first cycle of works expresses the social conflict between women and their archetypes through a "technological crucifixion": the *ancilla domini*, chosen by God without asking her approval (she is shown without the eyes: only the "look" could turn her from being object into a subject<sup>11</sup>), declares her capitulation through a gesture of surrender. The hand, isolated in another sheet, is depicted as a fragment seen in its orthogonal projections. Birth and abortion occur within a cross-trellis that trap without embracing: architecture is a *celibate machine* whose meaning coincides with the signifier.

The sterility of architecture, as a discipline pursued professionally and culturally, is now clear: in 1975 Giovanna de Sanctis wrote and drew her own Manifesto, the two panel *Addio all'architettura* ("Farewell to architecture", fig.6) and *In memoria dell'architettura* ("In memory of architecture", fig.7), in which the trio man-architecture-woman is expressed in all its tragic conflict: until the woman-gorgon does not understand how to redesign herself as a new primitive and individual being, men will continue to rape land and sky in the constant practice of a violence they ancestrally were made for.<sup>12</sup>

The architecture tools are now used to study the body: plans, elevations and sections work like x-rays; orthogonal projections portrait profiles; clothes and accessories are categorized as archaeological finds. It is the time of *Analisi di un prototipo giovanile* ("Analysis of a youthful prototype", 1977,

fig.8): while denied as aim, architecture is established as principle.

Female issues and graphic virtuosity return in *Materiali per una messa in scena dell'estasi* ("Materials for a staging of ecstasy), 1979-81, anamorphic drawings of the Beata Ludovica Albertoni. In those illustrations, Michelangelo's echoes return with the *unfinished* style and Gianlorenzo Bernini claims his baroque teaching: among lines, lights, shades, torsions, tensions appears the drapery that, while sailing the "unknowable female", opens to Giovanna de Sanctis' great vocation, the sculpture.

### **Eighties: The Terrible Look and the Sculpture Revolution as / is a project**

*Viaggiare nel mito è  
un guardare indietro che è un  
guardare dentro  
contemporaneamente, affondare  
diagonalmente, staccandosi  
dall'orizzontalità ad una  
dimensione su cui si spiaccica il  
quotidiano, l'orizzontalità  
dell'esistenza quando è solo  
"destino", mai scelta. Ecco perchè il  
mito, per noi, che con dolore e  
fatica trasmutiamo rabbiosamente  
da un vivere in cui siamo sempre  
state "oggetti" di un destino, ad un  
vivere in cui diveniamo "soggetti"  
in grado di scegliere. Ma scegliere è  
esistere anche come proiezione,  
simbolo, memoria, immagine,  
specchio di sé: un "essere" che sia  
contemporaneamente un "sono  
stata" e un "sarò". Ecco perché il  
mito, per noi del femminile  
tagliato, mostrificato o avvilito  
all'esistente puro del quotidiano;  
per noi a cui "simbolizzare",  
prendere dall'oggetto quella*

<sup>11</sup> See note n.6.

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem.

*distanza che ci fa "soggetti", è stato sempre impedito. (...) Se "rivoluzione" è "progetto" di un insieme sociale (classe categoria razza sesso) che si pone per la prima volta come soggetto storico e intende lottare per esserlo, noi abbiamo bisogno di questo progetto.*<sup>13</sup>

While Giovanna de Sanctis was initiating to the feminist cognitive path, the murder of Pierpaolo Pasolini in 1975 marked in her mind the awareness about the incommunicability between male and female, a "duo" that the Roman poet embodied with oxymoron and complexity. It's all about the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, in which the poet, the "male", was looking for his wife, the "female", although it's forbidden for to him to see her. Besides the suggestion, the re-reading of that myth<sup>14</sup> was decisive for

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<sup>13</sup> Giovanna de Sanctis Ricciardone, "Perché il mito", in *Incontri sul mito. Disegni a china e incisioni di Alessia Fani*, pamphlet del Politecnico – Arti Visive, ciclostilato in proprio, Roma 4 maggio 1978, "Traveling through the myth is a look back and a glimpse at the same time, sinking diagonally, moving away from horizons to a dimension on which daily life is spooked, the horizons of existence when it is just a "destiny", never chosen. That is why the myth for us, with pain and fatigue, is angrily conveyed by a life in which we have always been "objects" of a destiny, a life in which we become "subjects" able to choose. But choosing to exist also as a projection, symbol, memory, image, self-mirroring: a "being" that is both "I have been" and a "I will be". That is why we use the myth, for us of the feminine cut, overwhelmed or downplayed in the pure existence of everyday life; for us who were forbidden to "symbolize", taking from the object that distance that makes us "subjects" (...) If "revolution" is the "project" of a social group (class sex breed category) that is set for the first time as a historical subject and intends to fight for it, we need this project" (translation by the author).

<sup>14</sup> "Traveling in the myth is a look back that is a look at it simultaneously, sink in diagonally, detached from horizons to a dimension on which

the definition of a deep artistic reflection in de Sanctis' career: she found in baroque drapery the solution of the conflict between male and female. The series of drawings *Orfeo ed Euridice* ("Orpheus and Eurydice" 1982/83, fig.9), was presented at the Temple University in 1984 with a further rejection of academicism from the author who denied any critical presentation.

Painting and myth met again in *Icaro/Mediterraneo* ("Icarus / Mediterranean", 1985), a project that pays the last due with the "body theme", after which Giovanna de Sanctis turned to a sort of "architectonic art". In the early 80s, the archi-artist de Sanctis did participate in competitions for the design of a fountain and two squares (fig.10)<sup>15</sup>. The first project is post-modern

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the daily is spooked, horizontality of existence when it is only "destiny", never chosen. That's why the myth, for us, who angrily transmute pain and fatigue from a life in which we have always been "objects" of a destiny, a life in which we become "subjects" are able to choose. But choosing to exist also as a projection, symbol, memory, image, self-mirroring: a "being" that is both "I have been" and a "will". That's why the myth, for us the feminine cut, or a monster of the existing pure dejected daily; For us to "symbolize", taking from the object that distance that makes us "subjects", has always been prevented. (...) If "revolution" is "project" of a social whole (class race category sex) that arises for the first time as a historical subject and intends to fight to be, we need this project", Giovanna de Sanctis Ricciardone, "Perché il mito", *Incontri sul mito. Disegni a china e incisioni di Alessia Fani*, Politecnico – Arti Visive (1978),5.

<sup>15</sup> In particular, with Carlo Severati and Stefania Bedoni, *Piazza Cardinal Consalvi*; with Aldo Aymonino and his studio, the competition for "Cento Piazze", in Decima neighborhood; the competitions "Meno è Più" for public services and spaces in the department n.VI Comune di Roma, directed by Gabriella Raggi. See Giovanna de Sanctis Ricciardone, "Inconsci cosmici", in M. Baldissara, M. Montori, TMM. Piccinno *Roma | Cosmo | Materia | Cultura. Proiezioni trasversali per il progetto della città*, (Roma:, Notebooks of Architecture PhD - Theory and Design, Department

and metaphysical, a large head protruding from the water is alienating because of displacement and gigantism. In the other two, the spatiality reflected pop-influenced architectural echoes of 60s in geometries, volumes and massive decorations. In the project for Piazza Cardinal Consalvi in Rome, 1983 (realized in 2000), she materialized her idea of a tridimensional painting: starting from *Torture*, paintings on canvas mounted on twisted grooved structures, she left the canvas using the metallic structures with three dimensional rays that pivot forming pyramids and canopies. It is the beginning of a long and profitable food for thought on public art<sup>16</sup> over the next thirty years<sup>17</sup>: the approach of Giovanna de Sanctis aims to overcome the concept of "urban quality" resetting the visual hierarchy of spaces, creating micro-centrality through the appreciation of the environment and triggering, by the inhabitants, a re-reading

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of Architecture and Design, Faculty of Architecture of "La Sapienza" University of Rome, 2016) 8-23.

<sup>16</sup> During the 60's and 70's many Italian governments turned their historic centers in "museums" through temporary and widespread installations of sculptures (not always site-specific) and the creation of an exhibition on urban scale. Among the most successful occasions are included: *Sculptures in the city* in Spoleto in 1962 (conceived and curated by Giovanni Carandente); *City sculpture space* in Rimini and *Contemporary sculptures* in the urban space both in Parma in 1973; the most complex exhibition *Volterra 73*; *Sculpture in the city* in Fano in 1974. In all these cases, the objectives pointed the approach to art of the inhabitants (through the cracking of the museum system in order to achieve a sort of "democratization of art") and to prepare a strategic new dialectic between old and new.

<sup>17</sup> The most important are: *Fossils*, via delle Chiese Rome 1998; *Ophelia*, via Sabatini, Rome 1999; *Source*, Piazza San Francesco, Terni 2000; *Nike*, installation in Piazza della Memoria near the New Palace of Justice, Palermo 2001; *Stele*, via Trionfale, Rome 2004, Sacred furniture for the San Pio Church, Rome 2010.

of the environment - thanks to the new "urban object" that puts the architecture-space-sculpture system into crisis. The *Fracta* project, conceived between 1989 and 1990, worked on conflicts. The first one leads a physical conflict: the great stone is fractured and mended by metallic wires that seem to expand - rather than compress- in support of the effort. The second one tells about the artificial an natural dichotomy: the artistic artifact is "dropped" in a naturalistic dimension of isolation in which it appear uncommon and, at the same time, complementary. It is the fight against the "terrible condemnation of gravity" initiated by *Icarus*:

I have always thought that from this archetypal passion-imagination arise sculpture and architecture. Taking a serious crush on the ground and drawing it up vertically by exercising its own strength, the first act of human power, the result of a project, born of a creative imagination in communication with cosmic forces . The fight against gravity through a monolith (menhirs) is the first act of sculpture; through a trilithon (dolmen) is the first act of architecture.<sup>18</sup>

In 1989 the grooved structures acquired depth with *Galaxias*, a series of high-relief plaster in which the search for all previous years achieved accomplishment: surfaces in multiple curvature which close asymptotically creating a volumetric "negative" central space , forerunner of a reflection on the fold and on the parameterization of the form - that will begin to materialize with Deconstructivism during the 90s.

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<sup>18</sup> Giovanna de Sanctis Ricciardone, "Inconsci cosmici", op.cit, 11.

The end of the 1980-89 decade for Giovanna De Sanctis Ricciardone established the fulfillment of the project of revolution which had unconsciously started in the '60s and had irrevocably decided in the '70s. In 1992, with a final betrayal, she leaved her studio at *Politecnico* to open her own studio, *ProgettoArte*, settled in Calvi dell'Umbria in which she still live and works in a sort of creative isolation. Still linked to the contemporary art scene in Rome, Giovanna became the art curator for Politecnico XX ARTE, involving herself in an endless search for new talents and new inspiring art workers.

During her lifetime work, Giovanna De Sanctis Ricciardone always distinguished "self-management" from "self-gating" of women within the art world, because there is no "feminine" art but there are women who experience art through their being "females". She teach us that art is revolution and both are female. The cut head had been regained and now the terrible gaze of the Gorgon turns to stone what she sees: is the beginning of the sculpture work, cultivated over the next thirty years until nowadays.

But this is another *myth*.

## Ucelay and Careaga Two Women during the Franco Regime

Íñigo Galdeano Pérez

Historical documentary silence makes difficult the task of the biographical study of women, including the pioneers and illustrious one. This article analyses the oppression suffered by two women of antagonist gender ideology. María del Pilar Careaga Basabe (1908-1993) who was the first woman graduated in engineering, by the School of Engineers of Madrid in 1929, and Matilde Ucelay Maórtua (1912-2008) who was the first one graduated in architecture, by the School of Architecture of Madrid in 1936.

Set in a constantly changing Spain, suffering the Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (1923-1931), the Second Republic (1931-1936), the Civil War (1936-1939), the Dictatorship of Francisco Franco (1939-1975) and the so-called Democratic Transition (1975-1982); both protagonists had very different personal and public experiences.

The first one, Pilar, was an award-winning Falangist protected by the Franco's Regime, which after the Transition was separated from the public life and became target of the leftist armed group ETA. On the other hand, the second one, Matilde, during the dictatorship was sanctioned and separated from her architecture profession and from the public life, but after Transition she was awarded and her role as a pioneering architect was widely recognized.

Pilar defended that women had to be good patriots, good wives, and good Christians. She thought that women were inferior than men and they should remain subordinated to them. Marriage, children and housework were women's main goals in life. On the contrary, Matilde defended

the political, economic, personal, and social rights for women, including equal educational and professional opportunities.

Each one suffered the vicissitudes of both different periods. When Matilde was awarded, Pilar was imprisoned. Then, when Pilar was released and awarded, Matilde was sanctioned by a drumhead court-martial.

Nevertheless, fascists or liberals, inside or outside prisons, sanctioned or in full faculties, they could never escape from an oppression generated by the fact of being women, gender oppression.

### Family and Environment

Daughter of Concepción Basabe y Zubiria and Pedro González de Careaga y Quintana, María del Pilar Careaga Basabe was born in October 1908, in Madrid. Her siblings were María Begoña, María Concepción Rosario and Pedro María.

Pilar grew up in a wealthy and influential family settled in Neguri, linked to the financial and industrial bourgeoisie of Biscay. Furthermore, her father was a renowned diplomatic Weekly Stewards of the king Alfonso XIII, who named him the first Count of Cadagua. Consequently, her brother, Pedro María, inherited the county, María Begoña married the fifth Marquis of Ledesma, Luis Pérez de Guzmán y Sanjuan; and María Concepción Rosario married a purchasing powerful shipowner from Bilbao, Antonio Mechaca de la Bodega. Nevertheless, that traditional and misogynous environment did not prevented Pilar from studying what she

wanted, engineering.

The second main character, daughter of Purificación Maórtua Lombera and Enrique Ucelay Sanz, Matilde Ucelay Maórtua was born in October 1912, in Madrid. Her sister were Luz, Margarita and Carmen.

Unlike the traditional and ancient environment in which Pilar grew up, Matilde lived her childhood in a liberal and open family, influenced by the fine arts, music and literature. Her mother, Pura Maórtua Lombera, was a revolutionary woman in her time who founded in 1926 the first feminist association that fought for women's rights, promoting their cultural, educational and professional development, the "Liceum Club". In the same way, with the arrival of the Second Republic in 1931, she founded "The Civic", an association with the same goals, but this time focused on middle and low class women.

This environment propitiated the academic formation of the sisters and although Carmen died prematurely due to a meningitis, Luz studied music, Margarita literature and Matilde architecture.

Therefore, one traditional and another liberal, both family environments allowed the academic formation of their daughters. Despite of those two different but pioneering environments, they were the first women graduated in engineering and architecture

## **Studies**

Pilar Careaga started in 1922 at the Higher School of Industrial Engineering of Madrid. She obtained the title being only 21 years old in 1929, a fact recognized by giving "Pilar's Promotion" name to her generation of engineers.

Her stay in the school caused a great social disturbance, especially in her last

year when she coursed the subject of Railways. The obligatory practices of that subject placed her to the control of the 4.700 steam locomotive of the North Company from Madrid to Bilbao, becoming the first woman driver of a railroad, apart of obtaining in her spare time the title of Professional Pleasure Craft Skipper.

In that year 1929, when Pilar finished the degree, Matilde joined the Higher Technical School of Architecture of Madrid. She had already studied piano in her childhood and while her mother Pura Maórtua founded the "Liceum Club", she studied in the Free Educational Institute, where men and women had fair treatment.

In the first years she was a member of the "University Students Federation", that was an alternative group to the hegemonic "Catholic Students Association". She fought against the Dictatorship of Primo the Rivera and against the Monarchy of Alfonso XIII. The Federation was dissolved in 1931 with the arrival of the Second Republic when her mother founded "The Civic".

In the following years she obtained numerous outstandings, finishing the degree in 1936. Her generation of architects were not "Matilde's Promotion" but yes, they honored her in June at the National Hotel of Madrid.

In summary, Pilar and Matilde during their youth were two women without complexes who faced the social barriers and whose efforts and pioneer life plans were recognized at the end of their studies. Unfortunately, after that each one took different courses.

## **Second Republic**

During the Second Republic, from 1931 to 1936 Pilar was beginning a

premature political career by which she gave up her engineering career, that she finally never practiced. On the other hand, Matilde was finishing architecture with the determination of practicing it.

Pilar was a member of the “Spanish Renovation”, that was a rightist and monarchist political party, reaching to be candidate in the General Elections of 1933. In addition, she promoted the anti-Semitic and ultraconservative magazine “Spanish Action”, inspired by the far rightist Charles Maurras.

Matilde finished her studies at the age of 24 in 1936 and she became a member of the Cabinet Meeting of the Official College of Architects of Madrid.

Thus, in 1936 their vital courses were separated: Pilar opted for a political career and Matilde for an architectural one, decisions that later conditioned seriously their lives.

## **Civil War**

Then in 1936, Pilar was imprisoned by the republicans in the prison of Larrinaga, but in the same year she was transferred to the Convent of the Guardian Angels, where she and other 150 prisoners were exchanged for the children of the colony school of La Guardia.

Once exchanged, she moved away to the national area, Valladolid where she joined to the column in the front of Madrid as a delegate for “Assistance to Fronts and Hospitals of the Women’s Section”, section of the “Traditionalist Spanish Phalanx of the Committees of the National Syndicalist Offensive”.

There she organized the assistance to the fighting forces in the Country House and in the University City of Madrid, and later she opened the first dining and refuge centers of “Social Help”, an organization inspired by the Nazi

“Winterhilfswerk”.

In 1936, Matilde was a member of the Cabinet Meeting of the Official College of Architects of Madrid that was closed with beginning of the Civil War. Unfortunately, in the same year, the tribute received in the Official College after her graduation with the participation of republican figures like Amos Salvador, led her to a drumhead court-martial.

She was sanctioned and separated from her architecture profession and from the public life. Specifically, she was condemned to five years full disqualification of her career, to a permanent disqualification of a public service position and to a fine of 30.000 pesetas. That circumstance and the threats made to her family forced her to move away from Madrid. In her private life, in 1937, she married Jose Ruiz Castillo Basala with whom she had her first son in 1938, Jose Enrique Ruiz Castillo Ucelay.

But that sanction and family circumstances did not prevent her from working underground and from reopening the College in 1937, although those actions had consequences on her professional future.

## **Franco’s Dictatorship**

In 1939 Franco won the war, and he established a military dictatorship proclaiming himself Head of State and Government. A dark HERstory of Spain which both characters faced in their adult stage, between the thirties and the sixties.

Forty years of dictatorship that marked their lives, while Pilar’s political career achieved a pompous trajectory thanks to the fascist regime, Matilde’s architectural career continued suffering its oppressions.

With the end of the Civil War in 1939 Pilar was opening dining and refuge

centers of "Social Help", but when the "Assistance to Fronts and Hospital" closed, she moved to Bilbao. Thereafter settled in the Basque Country, in the forties and the fifties she focused her work on charities and religiousness.

She was Chair and Vice-president of the "Provincial Board of Sub-normals of Biscay", Chair of the "Board of Safeguarding Children", Founding President of the "Board of Ladies Against Cancer", Vice-president and President of the "Diocesan Board of Pilgrimages", Chair of the "Board of the Marine Sanatorium of Gorniz", President of the "Diocesan Board of Parochial Temples Construction of Bilbao", President of the "Good Readings Library", and member of the "Royal Basque Society of the Country Friends" among other positions. Extensive curriculum for which she obtained the post of Chair of the "National Charity Council."

During that decades, in her private life she married Enrique Lequerica Erquiza in 1943, who was the brother of the Mayor of Bilbao, and with whom she had no children. Both moved to the Eguzkialde Palace of Neguri in 1957.

After 25 years of charitable and religious work from 1939 to 1964, in the sixties Pilar began to combine her activity with a political career. In 1964 she was named Councilor of the "Provincial Council of the National Movement", becoming the first female deputy of Biscay, President of the "Charity and Social Works Commission", and member of the Government Commission until 1969.

After that in 1969 she became the first woman Mayoress of Bilbao and the first woman Mayoress of a provincial capital. In 1970 and 1971 she was Lawyer in Courts occupying the posts of Vice-presidency of the "Delegated Commission of the Local Administration Lawyers Group", and of Vice-presidency of the

"Second Inter-Parliamentary Commission of the Spanish Courts".

But the mayoralty and the Courts did not limit her to have numerous positions. She was President of the "Municipal Savings Bank of Bilbao", President of the "International Fair of Samples Commission of Bilbao", President of the "Administrative Corporation Executive Commission of the Greater Bilbao", President of the "Water Consortium, of the Greater Bilbao", President of the "Charity Board of the Generalissimo's Civil Holy Hospital", President of the "Charity Board of the Mercy Holy House", President of the "Trustees Board of the Historical Museum of Biscay" and President of the "Trustees Board of the Artistic Reproductions Museum". Vice-president of the "General Council of the Administrative Corporation of the Greater Bilbao", Vice-president of the "Administrative Board of the Water Supply Consortium of the Greater Bilbao", Chair of the "Government board of the Hydrographic Confederation of the North of Spain", Chair of the "Board of Port Works", and Representative of the "Board of Autonomous University Trustees". A public positions excess from which she resigned when Franco died in 1975, when Pilar left the mayoralty and the Basque Country.

Aforementioned, although Matilde was sanctioned since 1936 she was determinate to practice the architecture. Condemned to five years full disqualification of her career, to a permanent disqualification of a public service position and to a fine of 30.000 pesetas, the drumhead court-martial was celebrated in 1942 when she and her family returned to Madrid. So the five years full disqualification extended till 1946, year in which finally she obtained the architecture title.

Between the two dates, in 1944, the

marriage had its second son, Jose Enrique Ucelay Maórtua. As has been mentioned before her sanction and family circumstances did not prevent her from working underground under the name of her partners of profession Aurelio Botella and Jose Maria Arrillaga, so until the 1951 she did not officially register her first project, the Guard's House for Jose Arce in the Iron Gate. That stage lasted from 1951 to 1979.

At the beginning she faced the situation of leaving a political disqualification and a lacking list of customers, but she gradually began her career thanks to foreign customers and women of the high bourgeoisie of Madrid. Most of her works were single-family residential houses because she had a permanent disqualification of public charges. Nevertheless 122 projects were registered in the Historical Service of the Official College of Architects of Madrid, a numerous project which defined her extensive and prolonged architectural career.

### **Spanish Transition to Democracy**

After the death of Francisco Franco, on 20 November 1975, began the Spanish transition to democracy, so Pilar being 71 years old and Matilde being 63 years old faced the consequences of their actions during the fascist regime.

Whit the death of the dictator Pilar's political career was seriously discussed by her fellow citizen, and she had to leave the active politic and move from Basque Country to Madrid that was a less hostile city. Pilar supported far rightist organizations there and she participated in the foundation of "New Force", which was far rightist party that perpetuated a numerous attacks and murders in its short history.

Soon, she became the first woman target of the leftist armed group ETA. Therefore, in 1979 she suffered an attack when she returned to an act of "New Force" in Bilbao. While she was parking her Seat 127 she was shot six times, and although she survived, she had long term physical damages. Then she retired from the public live and 14 years later, in 1993, she died.

In the same way, in 1975 with the end of the regime the long architectural career of Matilde was concluding, but in that case by her advanced age. In 1979 she finished her last project and in 1981 she presented the request for old age benefit in the Official College of Architects of adrid.

Later her work was recognized by numerous awards, acts and institutions, even receiving the "National Prize of Architecture". Also in 2003 the Government Board of the Official School absolved her of all the charges imposed by the regime, absolution that became official in 2004, when she was 92. Four yeas later, in 2008, she died.

That was the end of the careers of the first women graduated in engineering and architecture.

### **Awards**

Previously mentioned, each one suffered the vicissitudes of both different periods, when one was awarded, the other one was oppressed. So, both careers were recognized, one by the Franco's Regime and the other by the democracy.

First, before 1936 during their youth, Pilar and Matilde's efforts and pioneer life plans were recognized at the end of their studies. But afterward, while Matilde was

sanctioned, Pilar's political career was awarded by the Fascist regime. Her work during the civil war was recognized with the "Medal of Sufferings for the Fatherland", the "Medal of Campaign" and the "Red Cross of Military Merits". And among other awards her work during the Franco's Regime was recognized with the "Silver Medal of the Excellency Council of Biscay", the "First Class Cross with White Distinctive of the Charity Civil Order", that was raised to "First Class Big Cross of Charity", the "Cross of Pope For Church", the "Commander with Star of the Health Civil Order", that was raised to "Big Cross of Health Service", the "Sash of Alfonso X the Wise's Civil Order", the "Big Cross of the Cisneros's Order", and the "Silver Medal of Youth".

In the same way in democracy, while Pilar was relegated from the active political and while she was chased by an armed group, Matilde's architectural career was awarded. Her architectural work was recognized in 1998 with "the woman builds" honour in the Second Architectural Meeting of the University of Alcalá, and in 2004 with the reparation honour by the Government Board of the Official College of Architects of Madrid, that absolved her of all the charges imposed by the regime. In the same year she was awarded with the "National Prize of Architecture". In life and postmortem, she received numerous tributes, and became the subject of articles and exhibitions such as the temporary showing "Building the parity" organized by the Andalusian Institute of Women in 2006.

Although it was proved that they were two pioneering women in their studies and in their political and architectural careers, whose efforts and life plans were recognized and awarded by their environments, fascist or liberal they could never escape from an oppression generated by the fact of being women,

gender oppression.

## **Gender Oppression**

From their childhood each one had very different education and environment, while Pilar was surrounded by the most select bourgeoisie of the country, Matilde was surrounded by the liberal and feminist new movement in which her mother was precursor.

Although Matilde lived the foundation of the feminist groups in her own home, "Liceum Club" and "The Civic", which led her in the university to fight against the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera and against the monarchy, Pilar, four years older, started at the university seven years before Matilde, a fact by which she had to face a more misogynous university environment.

Both environments and academic careers made aware them of the discriminatory treatment suffered by the fact of being women. After the ending of their studies both protagonists were brave women without complexes who did not want any recognition for being pioneers in the university field, and who defended equal educational and professional opportunities for women. Unfortunately, with the Spanish Civil War, when all the advances obtained in the Second Republic were lost, each one took different courses.

Mussolini, Hitler, José Antonio and Franco rewrote a feminization speech to gain the women's support and to erect them like a key element of their nation construction. The Mothers of the Nation. Pilar integrated in the "Women's Section of the Traditionalist Spanish Phalanx of the Committees of the National Syndicalist Offensive", section with a Catholic National Patriarchy ideology. There Pilar defended that women had to be good patriots, good wives, and good Christians.

Because she thought that women were inferior to men and they should remain subordinated to them, so marriage, children and housework were women's main goals in life. She defended that women never discovered anything and they could do no more than interpret what men said.

In the same way the increasing radicalism of the domestic women figure was extrapolated to the tasks given by the Phalanx to the Women's Section. It was conceived as an extension of the domestic role of women to the public sphere, creating a "Social Service for Women" equivalent of the Franco's military service but centered in housework.

In her political career the numerous charges that she obtained were always related with tasks relegated to the women, usually charitable and religious ones. In that political environment, in which the woman was in a moral and intellectual inferiority roll, is not difficult to imagine men and women's power relationships. Consciously or unconsciously she suffered the oppressions of the Catholic National Patriarchy, which she supported.

Proof of that was that being one of the few female models in the Franco regime, as mayoress the only interest in improving the women presence in the public life was the incorporation of them in the local police, with the only duty of guard the children and the urban aesthetics, and of course unarmed.

On the other hand, Matilde defended the political, economic, personal, and social rights for women. After the university she collaborated with the cultural aspect of the republic. She was a founder of the "Spanish University Women's Association", but in 1951 her candidature to the directors board of the organization was vetoed by the Franco's administration. That association in contrast to the Phalanx Women's Section

defended the full incorporation of women to the university studies as well as legislative change to suppress their discriminations.

But that ideology, opposed to Pilar's values, did not prevented her to suffer her partners daily oppressions. As a working woman and mother of two children, in the mornings she had to ride her car to the construction work and in the afternoons, she spent her time taking care of her children. Her career coincided with a fascist Spain where the Spanish customer said that women were not trustworthy in the architectural work, so most of her initial ones were foreigners from countries which had more open ideologies. **(fig.3)** Later she obtained a great list of customers formed by the initial for her architectural works. While the male architect figure was an individual one, Matilde opted for a cooperative work with her partners and with all the guilds involved in the project, detailing exquisitely the design of the home spaces destined to the women for their greater comfort and dignity. Sample of her commitment was her fight against the Architects Brotherhood to reach the same widow's pension for men and women.

Both Pilar's political career and Matilde's architectural career were pioneering routes in their respective areas and environments. They suffered the ups and downs of a constantly changing Spain, but of fascist or liberal ideology, feminist or antifeminist, both, precursor or not, could never escape from the oppression suffered by the fact of being women. Oppression that even today predominates in the patriarchal society, factor and optics by which their careers were admirable, and kept with the work of opening way to the later women.

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# Modern hospital complexes by architect Zoja Dumengjić in Croatia (1969-1981)

Zrinka Barišić Marenčić

## 1. Introduction

The architect Zoja Dumengjić<sup>1</sup> made a significant contribution to the 20<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Born in 1904 in Odessa (Ukraine), died in 2000 in Zagreb. Graduated in 1927 from the Architectural Department of the Technical Faculty in Zagreb. Worked in I. Fischer's studio from 1928-1930. Chief architect in the Public Health School Institute 1930-1941. Worked as an architect in the Pliva State architectural office from 1941-1945, in the Ministry of Health from 1945-1947 and in APZ (Architectural Design Office of Croatia) from 1948-1954. She headed her own Architectural office Dumengjić from 1954-1975. Specialized in public health architecture. "Viktor Kovačić" (1979) and "Vladimir Nazor" (1995) Lifetime Achievement Award Winner. Selection of projects: 1928-1931 Residential-business building Herzog and Harmica passage, Pod zidom 6 (reconstruction and addition to residential-business building Gavella, Ban Josip Jelačić Square 6), Zagreb (while working for Fischer studio; passage Harmica widened in 1987); 1936-1938 State Children's Tuberculosis Sanatorium Strmac, Šumetlica near Nova Gradiška (1<sup>st</sup> stage realization); 1938-1941 Aid nurses' boarding school, Mlinarska Street 34, Zagreb (today Medical nurses' school and Pupils' home); 1940 Economic and commercial school on Svetice, Zagreb (+ S. Dumengjić, Z. Vrkljan, competition project); 1941 State Tuberculosis Sanatorium Snopljak, Medvednica, Zagreb (project); 1951-1976, 1959-1964 General hospital; Main hospital building and Polyclinic, Spinčićeva Street 1, Firule, Split (today KBC Split – Firule); 1953-1957 Health Centre, A. G. Matoša Street 32, Kutina (adapted and added to); 1954-1958 Tuberculosis pavilion of the General hospital, Spinčićeva Street 1, Firule, Split (today Department for Pulmonary Diseases of KBC Split); 1957-1959 Health Centre, Mlije Way 2, Omiš (adapted); 1960-1976 Medical Centre, Andrije Štampara Street 3, Karlovac (today General Hospital Karlovac); 1962-1976 Centre for

century Croatian Modern architecture. Her long life (1904-2000) spanned most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century while her active professional career lasted from 1928 to 1981. She is widely considered a unique figure not only in Croatia, but in former Yugoslavia as well. Her leading role stems from several factors: she was a woman in architecture an emigrant, a specialist in health care architectural design and the first female architect in Croatia who achieved recognition culminating in the Lifetime Achievement Awards "Viktor Kovačić" given to her by the Association of Croatian Architects in 1978 and "Vladimir Nazor" given by the Parliament of Republic of Croatia in 1995. These pioneering aspects and the overall context of her work were more extensively presented by the author at previous MoMoWo conference held in Ljubljana in 2016, in a paper and presentation entitled "*Remarkable Public Health Service Architecture by Architect Zoja Dumengjić in Croatia*", and researched in the doctoral thesis entitled "*Architect Zoja Dumengjić - the Remarkable Features of Her Oeuvre in the Context of Croatian Modern Architecture*" defended at the University of Zagreb in 2007.

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Gynaecological Cancer of the Clinic for Women's Illnesses and Childbirths, Petrova Street 13, Zagreb.

Andrej Uchytíl and Zrinka Barišić Marenčić and Emir Kahrović, *Lexicon of Architects - Atlas of 20th Century Croatian Architecture* (Zagreb: University of Zagreb, 2011):83

## 2. Health Architecture of Zoja Dumengjić (1969-1989)

The period discussed at this conference was the final stage of Zoja Dumengjić's professional career. She was head of the *Architectural practice Dumengjić* in Zagreb (1954-1975) and designed all presented projects within her field of specialisation, i.e. health service architecture. As a mature architect, after her retirement at the age of 71, she persisted in the completion of two hospital complexes in Ogulin and Koprivnica that she had designed in 1975. They were finished in 1981.

The projects in the final stage are: The General Hospital Complex in Split (realisation in stages 1951-1969, final equipping of the main hospital building 1975/76)<sup>2</sup>, Medical centre in Ogulin (1958-1969, various projects), Medical Centre, Karlovac (1960-1976, today General Hospital Karlovac) and Centre for Gynaecological Cancer of the Clinic for Gynaecology and Obstetrics, Petrova Street 13, Zagreb (1962-1976). After 1969 Zoja Dumengjić designed the following projects: Medical centre in Dubrovnik (1970 competition project, unbuilt), Department of Pathology and Forensic Medicine in Split (1974, unbuilt), Medical centre in Koprivnica (design 1975, realisation 1977-1980) and Medical centre in Ogulin (1975-78 1<sup>st</sup> stage realisation,

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<sup>2</sup> The General Hospital Complex in Split was presented in the article Remarkable Public Health Service Architecture by Architect Zoja Dumengjić in Croatia, 2<sup>nd</sup> MoMoWo conference-workshop *Women Designers, Architects and Engineers between 1946 and 1968*, in Ljubljana (at Research Centre of Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts, Slovenia), on October 5, 2016, by the author of this paper. Between 1969 and 1989 Zoja Dumengjić designed the Department of Pathology and Forensic Medicine in Split (1974), which has never been built.

1978-1981 2<sup>nd</sup> stage realisation). The most significant projects and realisations are presented below.

### 2.1. Medical Centre, Karlovac (1960-1976, today General Hospital Karlovac), Karlovac

The Medical Centre was realised upon the 1<sup>st</sup> award-winning competition project designed in 1960/1961.<sup>3</sup> Most of the complex was realised in stages within a period of 16 years due to financial difficulties.<sup>4</sup> The main phases in the hospital construction are: TBC pavilion (1963-1969, 1<sup>st</sup> stage of construction within the Medical Centre complex), the main hospital building (built in two phases: 1974, 1974-1976, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> stage realisation within the Medical Centre complex), and finally the Medical High School of the Medical Centre in Karlovac (designed in 1961, completed in 1975/76).

The project of the new health center in Karlovac covered the surface of 47,000 m<sup>2</sup>, and was intended to meet the needs of 300,000 inhabitants from the districts of Karlovac, Ogulin, Gospić and partly from the districts Sisak and Bihać (Bosnia and Herzegovina). The program included: a hospital (with 714 beds), polyclinics, medical facilities for the polyclinic and the hospital, hygienic-epidemiological service, education facilities, administration, service facilities and staff housing. The site for the new medical center is in the southern part of Karlovac, on the hill of Švarča, bordered to the south by an access road to Karlovac from the southwest. The

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<sup>3</sup> This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> realisation in her rich competition oeuvre of 70 competition entries of which 20 were ranked high and which were realised over 53 years.

<sup>4</sup> Still now the skyscrapers conceived as housing accommodation for medical staff and the south-facing pavilion for infectious diseases have not been built.

hospital complex was conceived as an autonomous urban entity dominating the south entrance to Karlovac.

*“The proposed concept resulted from our efforts to integrate all units into one functional entity with the shortest communications for patients and staff. Although the need for phased construction was considered, the departments are closely linked and are simply and clearly designed. It is particularly evident in linking the polyclinic area with the hospital wards and medical facilities. Regarding the program and the proposed phased construction it was planned to build a combination of a central hospital building with separate pavilions for lung diseases, a pediatric unit and administration, education and service rooms”* the architect explained in 1975.<sup>5</sup>

The complex of Karlovac General Hospital is designed as a set of parallel wings with a predominantly south orientation, which follow the pitch of the south access road and thus allow the insolation of the south-facing rooms. A disadvantage is the access road that divides the hospital plot in the southeast zone but it was neutralized by a compositional counterpoint of the whole complex, i.e. the buildings conceived as housing accommodation for medical personnel, which have never been built. A tall longitudinal hospital block<sup>6</sup> dominates the entire complex and the surrounding area.<sup>7</sup> North from the monoblock is a

<sup>5</sup> Zoja Dumengjić, “Medicinski centar Karlovac”. *Arhitektura* 152-153 (1975), 55.

<sup>6</sup> One can draw a parallel between the main hospital building in Karlovac and the Military Hospital designed by the architect Antun Ulrich in Split. The realization of the longitudinal eight-storey building of the Split Military Hospital was realized on the basis of a post-competition design whose construction started not earlier than 1960 and was completed in 1965, and therefore Ulrich’s influence is absent.

<sup>7</sup> It was realised in two stages, which was clearly seen before recent renovation.

lower polyclinic-therapeutic-diagnostic block, conceived along a series of atrium spaces. The lower TBC pavilion<sup>8</sup> is realised south from the main building, and with the main hospital building forms the main outline of the hospital complex.<sup>9</sup> The harmonious composition of the complex was achieved through a rhythmic disposition, height gradation and careful design composition of longitudinal hospital wings.

Recently, energy-efficient renovation project is completed for the hospital complex.<sup>10</sup> The Modernist hospital complex with a harmonious spatial composition and design dominates today the southern suburbs of Karlovac.<sup>11</sup>

## **2.2. Centre for Gynaecological Cancer of the Clinic for Gynaecology and Obstetrics, Petrova Street, Zagreb (1962-1976)**

Due to insufficient capacity for treating gynaecological cancer, a new building was planned to be built in the eastern zone within the existing site of the Clinic for Gynaecology and Obstetrics at 13, Petrova Street in Zagreb.<sup>12</sup> The

<sup>8</sup> The TBC pavilion in Karlovac was built 10 years after the same one in Split. The elements of the external galleries for helio therapy have been retained as well as the multi-layered facades (a horizontal, skeletal axis, and a retracted shaded facade.). A crystal hovering volume of the Karlovac TBC pavilion refers to the architect’s works from the 1950s.

<sup>9</sup> The Medical High School of the Medical Centre in Karlovac was built to the north in the final stage in 1975/76.

<sup>10</sup> Energy-efficient renovation retained most of the original design, although a thicker façade envelope is obvious upon careful observation. Previously added slanted roof was removed, which is positive. Due to energy efficient renovation, the mosaic façade at the north-facing polyclinic was demolished.

<sup>11</sup> The project was funded by local citizens.

<sup>12</sup> The existing main clinic on this site has a symmetrical classical composition, with two

modestly-sized plot had a direct impact on the spatial differentiation of three departments, i.e. blocks planned to be built in three stages. Taking full advantage of the modest plot, the out-patient units and the polyclinic block were placed perpendicularly to Petrova street, while the other two blocks were set to the north, parallel to the terrain slopes and at an angle to perpendicular urban disposition of the complex. Three blocks were linked by corridors with a northern entrance providing necessary communication with the Gynaecological Clinic, laboratories, and technical and ancillary services. The northern wing consisted of a therapeutic tract with X-ray therapy, partially located in the basement. The new hospital ward had a capacity of 52 beds.<sup>13</sup> It was located on the highest point of the site,<sup>14</sup> thus providing peace and quiet and open views from the shaded loggias and patients' rooms. The out-patient units and the polyclinic block with a laboratory, X-ray and administration is located in the two-storey wing located along the eastern edge of the plot, i.e. Lobmayer's stairs. Logically positioned internal staircase, in relation to terrain configuration, links the entry porch with the first-floor waiting rooms (with recognizable skylights) and the northern hospital ward. Three main blocks were designed as a parallelepiped of sharp edges extended from the ground. Harmonies integration of the complex into the existing topography of the sloping terrain and the framework of dense urban fabric does not express the complexity of

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shorter lateral wings. Originally it was used as the maternity ward and since 1921 it was a part of the Gynecological Hospital, School of Medicine, University of Zagreb. The narrow eastern segment of the plot shows 15, 5 m difference in height.

<sup>13</sup> Twelve beds for patients on radium therapy are isolated in a separate tract.

<sup>14</sup> With good connections to the radium therapy block.

topographic and spatial restraints of this intervention. This is a typical feature of Zoja Dumengjić's design approach: she is capable of transforming every disadvantage into a creative solution. The Center for Gynecological Cancer was opened in 1976, the International Women's Year, on March 8th.<sup>15</sup>

### **2.3. Medical centre in Dubrovnik (1970 competition project, unbuilt)**

The competition project was launched with the aim to invite six architects, i.e. architectural groups from former Yugoslavia, specialists in health architecture to submit their entries.<sup>16</sup> The proposed site was close to Velika Petka, east from Dubrovnik's historic core<sup>17</sup>, with a beautiful view of the sea. Zoja Dumengjić<sup>18</sup> rejected the urban restrictions set up by the competition propositions which limited the height of the complex to a maximum of four levels. She found it silly. Upon the competition closure, she wrote: "How ironic – having at our disposal a building plot along the seaside in one of our most beautiful coastal cities, and deny the possibility of providing open views of the sea. Instead it is required from us to accommodate patients in a depressed zone with closed views between the two hills and expose them to the most unfavourable orientation. According to this obsolete

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<sup>15</sup> Centre for Gynaecological Cancer of the Clinic for Gynecology and Obstetrics is in the intact original state, functions harmoniously, but the renovation of the southern facade is necessary.

<sup>16</sup> Three of them did not submit their projects at all.

<sup>17</sup> Listed at the UNESCO list of world heritage.

<sup>18</sup> Collaborators: the architect Selimir Dumengjić, architectural technician Branko Blažić, architect Blanka Haramija and architect Vjera Jerbić.

urbanists' concept, the most important objective is to make an impression on passers-by while the patient himself is irrelevant. In this attempt at an 'integration into the environment' approach there is really no care for the patients."<sup>19</sup> She decided to design a taller main hospital building, which is a tall structure with a cross-shaped plan with a terrace descending at the end of each wing forming "the silhouette of the hill".

The Hospital complex was conceived as a two-volume structure. The architect presented her project: "The first volume (all services with preventive and curative work) is conceived as a central facility on a wide base, in the form of a stepped pyramid with a cross-shaped plan. It includes an in-patient clinic with 634 beds, polyclinic administration, diagnostics, ancillary wards and service units. The position and height of the building allow open views of the sea. The second volume consists of smaller blocks of varying heights, which in their mutually stepped transitions fully adapt to the southern slopes of Velika Petka. It contains pavilions for chronic patients and psychiatry, and initially consisted of 80 beds. The central facility with short, vertical and horizontal communications develops around a central vertical communication core with an additional area on the same floor and with other areas depending on the function. Such a layout proved highly functional."<sup>20</sup>

Of the six invited teams, the competition entry was submitted by two

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<sup>19</sup> Zoja Dumengjić's letter upon the closure of the architectural competition for the Medical Center in Dubrovnik, 20th July 1970, Legacy of architects Dumengjić, Zagreb City Museum, Zagreb.

<sup>20</sup> Zoja Dumengjić, "Natječajni projekt Medicinskog centra Dubrovnik / Competition Entry for the Medical Centre in Dubrovnik," *Arhitektura* 152-153 (1975).

design teams: the architect Zoja Dumengjić and the architects Mladen Vodička and Duško Rakić. Architects Vodička and Rakić won an unusual "the first-award for their competition entry without an award" (sic!).<sup>21</sup>

For Zoja Dumengjić this competition was a terrible disappointment, because of the unprofessional attitude of the jury and silly competition requirements. With this project Zoja Dumengjić completed her rich competition oeuvre of 70 competition entries which she designed over 53 years. The fact that only 3 out of 62 awarded projects were built according to her competition solution, present briefly her perseverance.

#### **2.4. Medical centre in Koprivnica (design 1975, realisation 1977-1980)**

Koprivnica is a small town in the north of Croatia. During the 1<sup>st</sup> stage of hospital construction, the architect Dumengjić designed and built the Tuberculosis Pavilion (1960-1966) in the eastern part of the site planned for the Medical Center in Koprivnica. The project of a longitudinal two-storey building is analogous to the pavilion TBC in Karlovac (from 1961 to 1969). The southern facade of the building is characterized by a typical deep shaded loggias.<sup>22</sup>

In view of the fact that the existing hospital in Koprivnica was 100 years old and with insufficient capacity, it was decided to build up a new hospital complex.

The funds were provided by the citizens themselves, based on the Citizens' of Koprivnica Referendum held in 1975.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> The majority of the invited architects did not submit their entries.

<sup>22</sup> The structure has been partly renovated.

<sup>23</sup> Citizens of Koprivnica and the surrounding municipalities of Đurđevac and Križevci voted at

The hospital is located east of the historic core. The architect Zoja Dumengjic designed it before her retirement in 1975.<sup>24</sup> It is characterized by a low base with a six-storey cruciform structure that dominates this part of town.<sup>25</sup>

The outpatient polyclinic is placed in a low single-storey (and partly two-storey) base with interpolated atriums. The architect said: "On the first floor adjacent to the administration is the meeting room, a library, transfusion area and radiology. The second floor accommodates the surgical ward. Access to the operating room is resolved so that there are almost completely sterile zone with sanitary passes. On the third floor there is a maternity ward. The patients' rooms have 30 beds, some rooms are designed for 3 women, and in between are rooms for six of their newborns separated by glass thus allowing better contact between mother and child, along with many other advantages. Rooms with four beds also have a separate toilet for maximum comfort."<sup>26</sup> This standard was not reached

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referendum for funding the construction of the general hospital in Koprivnica (with 1-5% of personal income).

<sup>24</sup> Built between 1977 and 1980, Organization for design and supervision Gradec, Zagreb, OOUR Health Architecture, Blanka Haramija, dipl.eng. and Đorđe Montina, dipl.eng.

<sup>25</sup> During the first construction stage of the main hospital building, other facilities were built too: the surgical department, the gynecological and maternity ward, the intensive care unit, the operating block, the central X-ray, the emergency, the central sterilization, the polyclinic, the medicine of work, the school healthcare unit, the woman's health unit, out-patient unit, orthopedic out-patient unit, psychiatric unit, dental clinic, and service (laundry and central wardrobe). Hospital capacity was up to 500 beds.

<sup>26</sup> Krešimir Švarc, "Novi Medicinski centar u Koprivnici /New Medical Center in Koprivnica". *Zdravstvo* 1 (1981), 60-69.

in Croatia until recently actual "rooming-in" in several maternity wards.<sup>27</sup>

The six-storey cruciform structure for in-patients revolves around a vertical communication core with staircases and elevators. This design solution is a reflection of the architect's competition entry for the medical centre in Dubrovnik.

Longitudinal blocks typical for her work in the 1960s are changed in the 1970s to complex cross-shaped structures.

From the design point of view the cross-shaped volume is characterized by strip windows articulated with the profiled colour verticals. These projections show the author's intention to provide daylight and a plastic facade articulation which she here solves by positioning the toilet facility of each room as a three-storey bay window on the facade. By alternating the projections the architect provides an accent on the third floor.

The building is painted in light earth tones.

The prefabricated horizontal ribbon windows are brown.

The second phase of the project (tall volume in the western zone) was not realised according to the original design. After her death Šobot architects realized the low western annexes, characterised by different heights and colors of gray. Near the hospital, in the eastern part of Koprivnica, a number of other public buildings were realised (such as the police building, the contemporary high-school and the sports hall).<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> In "rooming in" maternity room newborns are placed next to their mothers. The problem of this positive staying is the fact that the rooms are multi bed room, with, for example 3 mothers and newborns.

<sup>28</sup> In 2009 architects Toma Plejić and Lea Pelivan won Mies van der Rohe Award - Emerging Architect Special Mention.

## 2.5. Medical centre in Ogulin (1975-1981 1<sup>st</sup> stage, 1978-1981 2<sup>nd</sup> stage)

Construction of the new Medical Center was initiated due to the insufficient capacity of the existing hospital accommodating only 6 hospital wards with 210 beds. The aim was to provide healthcare service for approximately 50,000 inhabitants of Ogulin municipality, and the villages of the neighboring municipalities Vrbovsko, Slunj, Duga Resa and Otočac.<sup>29</sup> The architect designed various projects for the Medical centre in Ogulin in the period 1958-1969, but they have never been built. The existing land of an old hospital along the road Oštarije - Ogulin, was planned for the construction of the new hospital building as an extension of the existing one towards the southeast.<sup>30</sup> The architect Zoja Dumengjić said: *“The urban-planning solution maximizes the use of modest possibilities of the selected site, starting from a clear basic idea of the layout plan. Parts of the new complex are hospital wards, medical facilities and service units... patients’ bedrooms were designed to take maximum advantage of south orientation.”*<sup>31</sup> The newly built hospital area was 25 000 m<sup>2</sup>.<sup>32</sup>

The hospital was built during two phases by the Zagreb-based construction

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<sup>29</sup> Mladen Balen, “Nova bolnica - ponos Ogulina / New Hospital – the Pride of Ogulin” *Vjesnik*, December 23, 1978, 12.

<sup>30</sup> The land was not appropriate for extension due to its small size, bad terrain configuration with a hill on the south side, as well as high density of buildings.

<sup>31</sup> Zoja Dumengjić, “Projekt Medicinskog centra Ogulin / Design of the Medical Centre Ogulin”, *Arhitektura* 152-153 (1975), 65.

<sup>32</sup> The hospital ward with the capacity of 419 beds was realized in two phases with the following units: surgical, gynecological-labor, TBC and pulmonary diseases, intensive care, internal, infectious, ocular, ORL, paediatric and neuropsychiatric, and central surgery and sterilization

company *Industrogradnja*. They used prefabricated elements in order to speed up the construction process. The funds were provided by the local citizens.

The Modernist hospital complex in Ogulin was Zoja Dumengjić's last project which is closely associated with the above mentioned Medical centre in Koprivnica due to its design, i.e. a perpendicular wing with a vertical communication core. New elements were triangular bay windows designed with the aim to provide better insulation and views. The Ogulin Hospital was built with a series of compromises regarding the site, the adjacent existing structures and phased construction. It is presently in its original condition. However, it requires some renovation works.

## 3. Conclusion

Long lifetime of architect Zoja Dumengjić (1904-2000) covers almost the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century, and professional activity the period from 1928 to 1981. Based on continuity of work she is unique figure not only in Croatia, but in former Yugoslavia as well. She specialized early in within the field of health service architecture, and her projects and realization marked this specific segment of complex architectural production.

In the period that is the subject of this conference (1969-1989), the architect Zoja Dumengjić completed her complex oeuvre. Her final projects designed and realized in the period between 1969 and her retirement in 1975, mostly focused on health care facilities design. In the period between 1974 and 1981 she realised even three hospital complexes in Karlovac, Koprivnica and Ogulin. Due to limited financial resources of the local community, a specific concept of citizens' participation in funding the construction

was introduced. Upon a local referendums in several cities and settlements, Croatian citizens contributed 1-5% of their income over several years to hospital construction. For this reason and based on such experiences, the architect Zoja Dumengjić focused in the 1970s on the most rational and economical solutions, i.e. disposition of wings that intersect at a central vertical core (with staircases and elevators).<sup>33</sup>

She insisted on the most important component of any hospital that would be of great benefit to the patients. At one point in her career, she rose against ridiculous competition requirements regarding the limited height of the building according to Dubrovnik's town-planning policy: "It is unacceptable that the patient is deprived of everything that can help his treatment, while healthy tourists are provided with all amenities"<sup>34</sup>. She particularly stressed the importance of a "humane approach to the patient."

She was a consistent Modernist architect over a long period, refusing to accept influences of post-war Socialist Realism and Post-modernism after the 1970s. Her work and influence played therefore a significant role in the continuous development of Croatian Modern architecture in 20th century.

Besides her professional work, she also formed a rich bibliography.<sup>35</sup> In the period from 1950 to 1975 she published many summaries of the projects,

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<sup>33</sup> Cross-shaped plans characterise Dubrovnik and Ogulin hospital projects.

<sup>34</sup> Zoja Dumengjić's letter upon the architectural competition for the Medical Center in Dubrovnik, 20th July 1970, Legacy of architects Dumengjić, Zagreb City Museum, Zagreb

<sup>35</sup> Detailed list presented in: Z. Barišić Marenčić: "Arhitektica Zoja Dumengjić – Osobitost djela u kontekstu hrvatske moderne arhitekture /Architect Zoja Dumengjić - The Remarkable Features of Her Oeuvre in the Context of Croatian Modern Architecture", PhD diss., University of Zagreb, 2007.

competitions and realizations in professional journals (Zagreb architecture and town-planning magazine "Architecture and Urbanism" i.e. "Architecture" and Belgrade's "Architecture - Urbanism"). Projects of health buildings designed by the architect Zoja Dumengjić were published in the Russian monograph dedicated to architecture in Yugoslavia written by the author Belousov: Contemporary Architecture of Yugoslavia, Moscow, 1973.

Her projects and realizations were presented at numerous exhibitions, and especially in the period between 1969 and 1989 (Zagreb exhibition organized by prof. Tomislav Premerl, PhD: Zagreb's Modern architecture between the two wars (held in the Museum of City of Zagreb, 1976-1977), and at the retrospective exhibition of the most significant architectural realisations in Croatia 1945-1985 by prof. Neven Šegvić, PhD. Both retrospective exhibitions in Croatia resulted in publications, i. e. the book by Tomislav Premerl: *Hrvatska moderna arhitektura između dva rata – nova tradicija (Croatian Modern Architecture between the Two Wars - a New Tradition)*. Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice Hrvatske, 1989 and in the special issue of Architecture magazine edited by Neven Šegvić, *Arhitektura 196-199 (1986)*, with his contribution: *Stanje stvari, jedno viđenje, 1945-1985 (Situation in Architecture, a Point of View, 1945-1985, pp. 118-280)*. In 1984 she received the Charter of the Split General Hospital in recognition and gratitude for her outstanding contribution to the development of the Split General Hospital.

The architect Zoja Dumengjić received "Viktor Kovačić" Life Achievement Award given by the Association of Croatian Architects in 1975 and in 1995 the Life Achievement Award "Vladimir Nazor" in the field of architecture given by the Parliament of

the Republic of Croatia. She was the winner of the top professional awards for lifetime achievement, and the first female architect laureate in Croatia marking her pioneering role and contribution.

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## Paola Salmoni in Modern Italy (1951-2003)

### Politics in action

Monica Prencipe

#### Paola Salmoni (1921-2003) and the female role in the Faculty of Architecture in Rome

In Italy, the difficult economic situation left by the end of World War II, had brought to the national mobilization of all active forces for the reconstruction of the country.

If we look to the data available on the University of Architecture in Rome<sup>1</sup> – the first founded in Italy in 1919<sup>2</sup> – it is clear how the new social settlement had provided a relevant opening up for young women in search of a fruitful occupation (**Tab.1**). In fact, if the women coming out from the faculty since 1925 can be considered isolated cases, it is in 1950 that their percentage arrived close to 24% to rapidly increase in the following decades<sup>3</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> The data are taken from: Luigi Vagnetti and Graziella Dall'Osteria, *La Facoltà di Architettura di Roma nel suo trentacinquesimo anno di vita: anno accademico 1954-55* (Rome: Facoltà di Architettura, 1955), 200-231. The book was a celebrative publication of the first thirty-five years of the University of Rome and contained the general information on the number of students (enrolled and graduated) and the list, with names and votes, of all the graduated students. On the other hand, there are no available information on the women that presumably enrolled and never graduated.

<sup>2</sup> After Rome, other schools were soon established throughout Italy. In order, they were in Venice in 1926, in Turin in 1929, in Florence and Naples in 1930 and, last but not least, in Milan in 1933.

<sup>3</sup> In 1982, the protagonist of this essay, Paola Salmoni, was invited to share her personal experience as an architect, active since 1951. Her

as average, in Rome between 1921 and 1954, every one hundred graduated architects, only five were female.

However, the capitol city – traditionally against progressive positions of the 'weak gender' – had several underestimated records on the topic: not just was the first Italian city to have opened to women the faculty of Architecture, but it was also the birthplace of the first female designer ever recorded in modern history. It is the case of Plautilla Bricci (1616-1696), who worked in the seventeenth century for the Barberini family as both a painter and an architect.<sup>4</sup>

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essay started with an analogous analysis on the situation of women in the Faculty of Architecture and in the professional world. In that 1982, she reported that the enrolled students in the Faculty of Rome were 400 and 70 of them were women, still a percentage a little lower than 20%. On the other hand, the female presence in the independent professional work did not exceeded 10% or 20%. Paola Salmoni, *Atti del Convegno-Laboratorio Europeo sul tema «Donna: dimensione nuova nella cultura e nella politica»* (Milan: Movimento femminile repubblicano milanese, 1982), 197.

<sup>4</sup> The 'architette' Plautilla Bricci, was the daughter of the multi-tasked artist Giovanni Bricci and she became acquainted as an architect between 1663 and 1680 for the project of a villa outside Porta San Pancrazio for the French ambassador Elpidio Benedetti as well as for design of the Chapel of Luigi in the Church of 'San Luigi dei Francesi' in Rome. The study on this new figure are very recent: the first was Olivier Michel, "Plautilla Bricci," in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. XIV (Rome: Treccani, 1972), 223-224; on the recent studies see Yuri Primarose, "Nuova luce su Plautilla Bricci pittrice e 'Architette'," in *Studi di Storia*

This very long history of strong female figures, on the edge between emancipation and social prejudice, had continued between the two World Wars thanks to pioneers like Attilia Travaglio Vaglieri (1891-1969)<sup>5</sup> and Elena Luzzatto Valentini (1900-1983),<sup>6</sup> followed by other important names, today almost completely forgotten (with the only exception of Lina Bo Bardi<sup>7</sup>) by the Italian

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dell'Arte 25 (2014), 145-161 with the related bibliography.

<sup>5</sup> Attilia Travaglio Vaglieri, a little older than Elena Luzzatto, graduated at the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome and she also married the architect Umberto Travaglio. The two probably had been working together in many occasions. She was mentioned as one of the most relevant female Italian architect in the seminal Anna Maria Speckel, "Architettura moderna e donne architetto", in *Almanacco della donna italiana*, year XVI, n. VIII, (1935), 121-134.

<sup>6</sup> Elena Luzzatto Valentini (1900-1985) was the first woman to hold a degree in Architecture in Italy in 1925 and the first to enrol in the National Board of Architects in the country. By change, Elena Luzzatto and Paola Salmoni shared a series of common features: they were both related to a Jewish family, they all suffered the persecutions of the racial laws after 1938 and, finally, they were related to the city of Ancona, in central Italy, where Elena was born in 1900 and where Paola worked for all her life. See Monica Prencipe, "Elena Luzzatto Valentini, the first Italian woman Architect. Towards a biography," in Helena Seražin, Katarina Mohar, Caterina Franchini, Emilia Garda (eds.), *Women Designers, Architects and Engineers between 1946 and 1968* (Lubiana: Založba ZRC, 2017).

<sup>7</sup> Lina Bo graduated from the faculty of Rome in 1940 and she soon moved to Milan where she married Pietro Maria Bardi, to move again to Brasil in 1946. Far from a repressive country like Italy, in South America she soon became one of the most important names in Architecture. In Italy her role has been rediscovered only recently: see Laura Miotto, Savina Nicolini, *Lina Bo Bardi: aprirsi all'accadimento* (Turin: Testo & Immagine, 1998); *Lina Bo Bardi architetto*, ed. Antonella Gallo (Venice: Marsilio, 2004), Exhibition catalogue; Luciano Semerani, Antonella Gallo, *Lina Bo Bardi: il diritto al brutto e il SECS-fàbrica da Pompéia* (Naples: CLEAN, 2012); Alessandra Criconia, Francesca Romana Castelli (eds.), *Lina Bo Bardi*

History of Architecture. Only to mention the most relevant, we can list Maria Emma Calandra (1912-2004),<sup>8</sup> Valeria Caravacci (1915),<sup>9</sup> Uga de Plaisant (1917-2004)<sup>10</sup> and Margherita Roesler Franz (1915-1974),<sup>11</sup> all graduated before 1945 and all leading figures in the different fields of the project: from restoration, to the exhibition design, to the architectural education.<sup>12</sup>

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*1914-1992: una architetta romana in Brasile. Celebrazioni per il centenario della nascita* (Rome: Prospettive, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> Maria Emma Calandra graduated in 1934 and she was the daughter of the head of the Faculty, Enrico Calandra (1877-1946) and the sister of Roberto Calandra (1915-2015), leading architect and friend of Frank Lloyd Wright. She had a chief position at the Soprintendenza of Rome and she took part to a fruitful series of collaboration, like the ones with Giuseppe Samonà. She was one of the founder of the APAO (Association for Organic Architecture) and of the INU (National Institute of Urbanism), both with the help of Bruno Zevi. See Maristella Casciato, "Chi semina ricordi raccoglie storie," in *Controspazio 2* (March-April 2001), 24-31; Paola Barbera, Maria Giuffrè, *Archivi di architetti e ingegneri in Sicilia 1915-1945* (Palermo: Caracol, 2011), 78-9.

<sup>9</sup> Valeria Caravacci graduated in 1938. She was an exhibition designer and one of the first to work with Adriano Olivetti in his publishing office. Her work is still completely unknown, beside a small description in Augusta Lupinacci, Maria Letizia Mancuso, Tiziana Silvani, *50 anni di professione 1940-1990* (Rome: Kappa, 1992).

<sup>10</sup> Uga De Plaisant was a relevant architect and a professor in 'Technical drawing' at the Roman Faculty, and her early career started with the participation, still as a student, to the project for the famous memorial for the Fosse Ardeatine in 1944, a year before her graduation. See Margherita Guccione, Daniela Pesce, Elisabetta Reale, *Guida agli archivi di Architettura a Roma e nel Lazio* (Rome: Gangemi, 1999), 100.

<sup>11</sup> Margherita Roesler Franz was the general secretary of the central magazine *Metron*, directed by Bruno Zevi, and the wife of Cino Calcaprina, protagonist of the Italian Neorealism in architecture, both emigrated in Argentina in 1948.

<sup>12</sup> For the graduated female students between 1945 and 1950 we can also add the names of Giuliana Genta (1922-2005), active architect for the INA Casa throughout Italy, and Hilda Selem (1923-2006), future teacher of interior

However, a definitive route change arrived in 1950: this was in fact the graduating time for students who had enrolled around 1945, right after the end of the war, called by the new needs of a postwar society and the hope for a female working position, not merely related to education.<sup>13</sup>

In this specific panorama we can set the active role of another Italian protagonist, Paola Salmoni (Ravenna 1921-Ancona 2003), who took her degree in that same 1950<sup>14</sup> and soon became a reference figure as an architect in the Marche region,<sup>15</sup> but also, since the mid-1970s, as the national leader of the Feminist Republican party.

Her close companions at the Faculty in Rome were names like Carlo Aymonino (1926-2010), Carlo Chiarini (1925-1996)

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design and the first Italian female to win a scholarship of six months in Sweden between 1951 and 1952 to study Nordic architecture.

<sup>13</sup> Even if the possibility to enter to all universities was slowly given to women at the beginning of the twentieth century, this fact did not avoid the spread of a serious social concern on the possible use of such education. In fact, in Italy the number of women that actually worked as a technician or a designer, after the university, was far lower than the one that graduated. Moreover, the percentage of student that abandoned the University of Architecture in Rome, between 1921 and 1954 was very high, with an average of 92%. Only 8 on 100 students finished the University. If we speak about women, the comparison was far worse: every 1000 students only 3 would be graduated women. Source from: Vagnetti, Dall'Osteria, *La Facoltà di Architettura*, 200.

<sup>14</sup> She graduated on July 29 with a vote of 100/110. In Vagnetti and Dall'Osteria, *La Facoltà di Architettura*, 227.

<sup>15</sup> The 'Studio Salmoni Architetti Associati', originally founded by Paola and her brother Claudio in 1951, is today active and the two nephews of Paola Salmoni lead it: Vittorio and Giovanna, which both worked with their aunt respectively since 1981 and 1985. Paola instead never married and she never had any children. Monica Prencipe, Interview with Vittorio Salmoni (Ancona, August 30, 2016).

and Carlo Melograni (1924-),<sup>16</sup> but also women like Marinella Ottolenghi<sup>17</sup> and Luisa Anversa (1926-)<sup>18</sup> both future teachers at that same faculty, while other masters like Ludovico Quaroni (1911-1987) and Gaetano Minnucci (1896-1980), a little older than Paola, would also become project partners in several future occasions.

After her degree, in 1951, Paola proudly entered the local Board of Architects with the number 34.

She recalled these moments many years after, in 1982, in occasion of an International workshop dedicated to the 'Modern woman in culture', where she was invited to share her personal experience as an architect: '*we certainly paid –she said– a higher price, speaking of personal, private sacrifice: our colleagues looked at us with mistrust and ironic suspicion. In the meantime, at the beginning we had to look for males support. We worked twice as much as men and got very poor acknowledgments*'.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand she recognized her fortune, since, '*after the second world war the choice of university studies not leading to traditional teaching was an élite choice, usually made within high income family*'.<sup>20</sup>

It was really the case of her family: originally from Ravenna, and then transferred to Ancona because of their Jewish relatives and their wealthy chemistry industry. Then in 1938, due to

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<sup>16</sup> Vagnetti, Dall'Osteria, *La Facoltà di Architettura*, 226-227.

<sup>17</sup> Nota su Marinella Ottolenghi. Marinella Ottolenghi, "Istantanee da un viaggio negli U.S.A.," in *Metron* 47 (December 1952), pp. In cui riporta le impressioni del North Lake Drive apartments.

<sup>18</sup> Nota su Luisa Anversa. Si frequentano per il progetto di restauro dell'ISTAO del 1993, diretto con il nipote Vittorio Salmoni.

<sup>19</sup> Paola Salmoni, *Atti del Convegno-Laboratorio*, 200.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 199.

the racial laws,<sup>21</sup> during Paola's last year of high school, she was expelled and forced to complete her education privately. Between 1940 and 1942, always because of her race, Paola moved to Milan to study chemistry in a Jewish school, while her brother Claudio (1919-1970) was taking his degree in Civil Engineer in Rome.<sup>22</sup>

After coming back, hidden in a farm close to Ancona, on 20 September 1943 she experienced one of the most traumatic events of her life: the threats of the Nazis troops outside her house and the deportation of her uncle Giacomo and her young cousin Sergio.<sup>23</sup>

Paradoxically, she was raised in a completely laic family, in accord to the ideas of the Italian Republican Party,<sup>24</sup> and

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<sup>21</sup> The Italian dictator Benito Mussolini presented the Italian Racial Laws against the Jewish for the first time in 1938 on 18 September. The first ones were No.1381 and No.1390, approved on 7 September. On 17 November followed the last racial law (No.1728), the "Law for defending the Italian race". On the Italian Racial Laws: Alberto Cavaglion, Gian Paolo Romagnani, *Le interdizioni del duce: le leggi razziali in Italia* (Turin: Claudiana, 2002).

<sup>22</sup> Ilaria Zacchilli, *Claudio Salmoni. Ingegnere e politico. Guida all'archivio* (Ancona: Il lavoro editoriale, 2008), 5.

<sup>23</sup> These early biographical information are taken from M. Crociati, "Paola Salmoni 1921-2003: una professione per la città e la società" (Thesis diss., Università di Bologna, Facoltà di Architettura "Aldo Rossi", 2008), 341-3. This paragraph is based on Paola Salmoni's private diaries, today hold by her nephew Giovanna.

<sup>24</sup> The Republican Party is one of the first founded in Italy in 1895, with solid bases in the theoretical position of founding fathers like Giuseppe Mazzini and Carlo Cattaneo. An important trademark was its deep laic tradition. During the fascist decades, the party moved to Paris and started to gravitate around the 'Giustizia and Libertà' movement and it also took part to the active Resistance. After July 2, 1946, when Italy had finally voted in favour of the Republican institutional form, the Party entered, as a minority, in the coalition with the 'Democrazia cristiana' party. See Alessandro Spinelli, *I repubblicani nel*

the universal principles of individual liberty, political democracy and social justice.

### **Paola Salmoni. Architecture and politics as a life project**

The purpose of the essay is of course not to report a full record of more than fifty years of work (counting almost 200 projects),<sup>25</sup> but it is indeed an occasion to analyse a study case of the binomial 'Politics and Architecture' from a peculiar perspective: a feminist and an influential local technician.

As Paola Salmoni reported in a 1982 national congress on the topic 'Women and Europe', she did not feel to be 'inside' the political power, but more likely 'aside', with the possibility of fully criticizing it.<sup>26</sup>

She did not militate in politics in her young age, but she was forced to be more and more involved with it after the death –in 1970– of her close brother Claudio, planner and engineer in their studio, but also a national level Republican member. After 1970 however, Paola continued the planning work of her brother and, from there, she was naturally led to political militancy.

However, besides the family connections, why she decided to lead the Feminist faction of the Republican party?

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*secondo dopoguerra (1943-1953)*, (Ravenna: Longo, 1998).

<sup>25</sup> On the base of a recent list, her work as an architect counted almost 200 elements between projects, buildings and planning practice. This essay became an important chance for the studio, interested in deepening the role of Paola Salmoni. In fact, after this occasion, the work on this new figure is currently becoming a full book, to be published between 2017 and 2018 by *Quodlibet*.

<sup>26</sup> Paola Salmoni, *Volontà e impegno per la parità tra uomo e donna nella nuova Europa* (Rome: Movimento Europeo, 1983), 213.

In the beginning of the 1970s, Italy was undergoing through serious social changes, especially due to the battles for women: right of abortion, divorce, laws of equality and reform of the family legislation, all –for Paola– necessary steps towards a ‘more open and just society’.

However, in the everyday life, the practical applications of these ideas was still a far horizon: even after the strong economic growth of the country after 1945, the percentage of women accessing new professional positions did not increase proportionally with the population.<sup>27</sup> For this, after the crucial political reforms of the 1970s and 1980s, a new age of social engagement had to start, in order to educate the so-called ‘weak gender’ on her own new possibilities and the male-counterpart on a new necessary attitude.

Therefore, her political involvement was directed to spread the participation of women in society; for Paola, female ‘occupation’ was not merely a ‘symbol of redemption’ but also the clear sense of a more equal society, especially if directed towards traditionally-male fragments, like Politics, Technical areas (Planning, Engineering, Construction) and public administrations.<sup>28</sup>

Inside those practises moreover, the modern woman needed to ‘*refuse the separate fields of common logic*’: for example, paediatrician and interior designer were not the only chances for a

woman that wanted to be a doctor or an architect... Instead, in order to maintain a feminine diversity, women ‘*should introduce in the independent professional work, logic behaviour different from the usual ones: seriousness, commitment, refusal of exasperated antagonism and – more than any other– solidarity*’. Solidarity with other women but also towards all other sensitive social groups, like the younger generations.<sup>29</sup>

As we can see, her social involvement was not only a general humanitarian need, but it was also associated to a specific ‘work ethic’. Moreover, thanks to numerous interventions in public conferences, it is possible to highlight four specific elements (at least), in Paola Salmoni’s architecture, conceived as concrete actions of her political and ethical beliefs: the pragmatic analysis of the context without any ‘a-priori’ idea; the central role of social services and especially of education for a more equalitarian society; the high value given to local heritage and, last but not least, the promotion of the young generations in architecture.<sup>30</sup>

### **Schools buildings. Designing the ideal community**

The reform of education and the features of the modern school building were of course common questions to the

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<sup>27</sup> Paola Salmoni, “Perché un movimento femminile repubblicano,” in *L’informatore repubblicano* 33 (1980), 3. In Italy, the first law on abortion was approved in 1970, but it was assured by a popular referendum only in 1981; the one on divorce was ratified in 1978; the principle of equality of the two parents was approved in 1975. On the topic see recent: Fondazione Nilde Iotti (ed.), *Le leggi delle donne che hanno cambiato l’Italia* (Rome: Ediesse, 2013).

<sup>28</sup> Paola Salmoni, *Volontà e impegno*, 213-14.

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<sup>29</sup> Paola Salmoni, *Atti del Convegno-Laboratorio*, 200.

<sup>30</sup> These ideas are all consciously expressed in different conference where Paola was involved as national secretary of the Feminist Republican party: see Paola Salmoni in *Convegno Nazionale degli Amministratori Repubblicani* (ed.), *Il Cittadino protagonista nel disegno repubblicano per le autonomie locali* (Rome: Edizione della Voce, 1979), 179-182; Paola Salmoni, “Una proposta per la scuola,” in *L’informatore repubblicano* 33 (1980), 5-6.

entire postwar generation,<sup>31</sup> and Paola Salmoni managed to build almost 20 schools throughout her career (the first in 1952). Her ideas passed through a series of changes along the years and these were also influenced by the work of her master, Ludovico Quaroni.

After meeting at the faculty of Architecture, they worked together in several occasions and, even if the most known is probably for the bank extension of the 'Cassa di Risparmio' in Ravenna (1963-69),<sup>32</sup> another interesting project was certainly the one for a school in the same city, between 1958 and 1963.

In the Studio Salmoni Archive it is possible today to see the evolution of the design: the first sketch was in fact a cross shaped project, with separated functions (administrative, classroom and gym) in different branches. This traditional scheme was soon overcome by an articulated central court, with a 'windmill' design that Quaroni had already used in the Canton Vesco's school in 1955.<sup>33</sup>

The project was a strong evolution of Paola Salmoni's previous educational project, if compared, for example, with the Benincasa elementary building, finished in that same 1958 and still conceived as an architectural homage to the previous functionalistic generation.

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<sup>31</sup> Other architects had already been involved in a first analysis of the topic: like the 1936 'Scuole' by Gaetano Minnucci, linked to European rationalist examples (Milan: Hoepli) and the monographic number of *Domus* (June 1947, number 220) that -under the illuminated direction of Ernesto Nathan Rogers- presented to the Italian architects the most innovative international schools in Europe and USA.

<sup>32</sup> The project is today considered a masterpiece in Ludovico Quaroni's career and one of the most relevant examples in the 1960s Italian Architecture.

<sup>33</sup> Manfredo Tafuri, *Ludovico Quaroni e lo sviluppo dell'architettura moderna in Italia* (Milan: Edizioni di Comunità, 1964), 136-137.

Contemporary to the Ravenna school, Paola was also in charge of a small elementary school in the countryside of Ancona, in Montemarciano. The project was again a new interpretation of a rather intimate space, with dimensions thought for their users, in order to specifically 'avoid those effects of intimidation and apprehension provoked by a monumentally declared buildings'.<sup>34</sup>

Both, the plan for Ravenna and for Montemarciano conceived in 1958, denied the school building as a succession of classrooms and the reduced height of the common spaces (the lobby was less than four meters) intended to favor the student intimacy and free self-development as well as avoid rigid hierarchies.

The school in Ravenna took to the extreme consequences the educational thought shown in the smaller case of Montemarciano: if in this last project the central court intended to favor the relationships of the entire community, the geometric modulation of the grid in the school with Quaroni, exponentially multiplied the possibilities of meeting in smaller spaces.

The importance of educating the younger generation to a modern equalitarian society, to avoid hierarchical differences and to promote self-consciousness, was often stressed out in Paola Salmoni's speeches as a concrete action in relation to the battle for the women rights, since it was in school that many of the social limitations were created at first.<sup>35</sup> The design of the school

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<sup>34</sup> Paola Salmoni, *Relazione di progetto*, September 1958, in Studio Salmoni Archive, Ancona, Box 41C.

<sup>35</sup> 'A me sembra del tutto prioritario il discorso sull'educazione, (...) l'importanza di arrivare ai giovani. Non dobbiamo tanto guardare a noi, ai pochi risultati personali, agli scarsi risultati collettivi, quanto dobbiamo guardare come la nostra battaglia per la parità ha inciso sulle nuove generazioni'. In Paola Salmoni, *Volontà e impegno*,

building as an 'ideal community' in small scale, occurred in Paola's work in several occasion, as shown for example in design of the local High school for the Arts (1962-67) and in the late Elementary school in Castelfidardo (1983-84).

### **Heritage. Designing the landscape as common memory**

After the early public housing complex (INA casa or IACP), the first important planning commission for Paola Salmoni arrived in 1955, with the competition for the new general plan of the city of Ancona, after the end of the old Reconstruction Plan.<sup>36</sup>

The city jury proclaimed two winning groups: the first led by Giovanni Astengo (1915-1990),<sup>37</sup> one of the most important

Italian planner, and the second with the two Salmoni brothers, both based on an accurate analysis of the existing context and on a deep foresight for future needs. The final solution, approved first in 1958 and then in 1963, was a difficult combination of the two proposals, conceived with many of the most modern features, that only after the 1967 'Legge Ponte' would become minimum requirements in the Italian legislation: a detailed zoning with different building densities, services provisions and territorial infrastructures up to different levels, from neighborhood schools to the location of an industrial area far from the city.<sup>38</sup>

A specific part of the plan –a direct responsibility of Paola Salmoni and Mario Coppa (1923-1999), planning professor at the Faculty in Rome<sup>39</sup>– took in consideration the needs of the historical center, in large part destroyed or abandoned by the war.

The problem of updating the historical contexts for the modern needs is of course very ancient in Italy, but it was seriously taken in consideration by the whole scientific community only after the 1960 with the Chart of Gubbio and the one of Venice in 1964. For this reason, the initial plan, concluded in 1960, was one of the first of its kind: based one hand on a careful social-economic analysis of the inhabitants and, on the other, on the application of the modern idea of

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216; see also Paola Salmoni, "Una proposta per la scuola," in *L'informatore repubblicano* 33 (1980), 5-6.

<sup>36</sup> After a devastating bombing in 1943 and 1944, almost 2/3 of the city were completely destroyed and the city included in the Italian places in strong need of a reconstruction plan. Claudio Salmoni, with the city technical office, directed the plan with the supervision of Gaetano Minnucci, engineer already active in Rome in the fascist decades but born in Macerata, close to Ancona. The plan showed a great analysis of the existing elements and showed great awareness of the future impellent problems of the city. See G. Bellucci, "Gaetano Minnucci. I progetti marchigiani" (PhD diss., Università Politecnica delle Marche, 2012), 87-96.

<sup>37</sup> Giovanni Astengo is considered one of the most important modern Italian planner. After his degree in Torino in 1938 with the supervision of Giovanni Muzio, in 1948 he became one of the leader of the INU (National Institute for Urbanisme) Institution together with Adriano Olivetti. The bibliography on his work is very wide. See the fundamental Paola Di Biagi, "Giovanni Astengo. Un metodo per dare rigore scientifico e morale all'urbanistica," in Paola Di Biagi, Patrizia Gabellini (eds.), *Urbanisti italiani: Piccinato, Marconi, Samonà, Quaroni, De Carlo, Astengo, Campos Venuti* (Rome: Laterza, 1992).

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<sup>38</sup> See Franco Balletti, "Dal Piano di Ricostruzione al Piano Regolatore," in *Rivista di Ancona* 2, 1 (1958), 3-5; Giovanni Astengo, "Ancona, città difficile. Aspetti originali del Piano Regolatore generale," in *Rivista di Ancona* 4, 1 (1958), 14-16. The plan was approved for the first time on 17 September 1958 and finally on 22 February 1963. The plan for Ancona is today kept in the 'Giovanni Astengo' Archive in Venice.

<sup>39</sup> *AAA Italia*, 13 (2014), 35-36.

restoration on an historical group, and not to a single monument.<sup>40</sup>

The plan was also an opening step towards a new interest in the role of heritage. In particular the three most relevant projects of Paola Salmoni's life are related to this topic: the Monument dedicated to the WWII Resistance (1965), the renovation of the eighteenth century 'Muse' Theatre (1987-2002) and, finally, the restoration of the local 'Campo degli ebrei' (Jewish monumental cemetery, 1996-2005), all located in her hometown Ancona.

The project for the local theater was particularly complicated, since the complete loss of the original interiors, and she was selected to supervise the choices of Danilo Guerri (1939-2016), sensitive designer for architectural details and local building constructions.<sup>41</sup> The result was a modern interior, rich of traditional and classical allusions and shaped as the external square, similar to the proposal by Aldo Rossi, Ignazio Gardella and Fabio Reinhardt for the 'Carlo Felice' theater in Genova (1981-1991).

Differently, the resistance Monument was located in a natural landscape, on a hill facing the city center: the memorial was designed as a slow path, a combination of sudden turns, steps and

high and lower walls, defining an ideal – and laic– 'via crucis'. And exactly like in a path of redemption, along the way were spread the different stations, represented by sixteen burnished steel plates, recounting the tale of Liberation through the partisans' original letters to their families. The monument was not conceived in a unity of place, but rather in a distended time, along the slope of the hill, evoking itself the struggle of Resistance and of its protagonists.<sup>42</sup>

Many years later, at the beginning of the 1990s, Paola would have the chance to work again on another evocative element of the local heritage: the old Jewish cemetery. As a survival of the Holocaust herself, she felt the project strongly and responded with a 'minimal design': at first, she relocated all the broken and damaged stems and then built a series of new pathways along the border of the area, leaving the original space almost untouched. The project ended in a high 'belvedere' with the possibility to admire simultaneously the cemetery,<sup>43</sup> the sea and the oldest parts of the city, recollecting in one place the fragmented elements of local history.

One common elements to these projects was their close relationship with Paola Salmoni's personal experiences, and she responded with solutions dealing with its objective reality rather than with transcendent ideals of liberty and

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<sup>40</sup> In 1963, the plan did not find the necessary political support, but still it was awarded with the IN/Arch national prize and, only after a big earthquake in 1972, it became again a base for a second plan, finally approved in 1974. Gilberto Bagaloni, "I piani particolareggiati di Capodimonte e Guasco-San Pietro," in *Rivista di Ancona* 5, III (1960), 2-14. For the second 1974 plan see Comune di Ancona, *Ristrutturazione del centro storico 1/Documenti di lavoro* (Ancona: Litografia Carletti & C., 1974).

<sup>41</sup> Danilo Guerri was the most important architect in the Marche region. Danilo graduated at the Faculty of Rome in 1962 and then started to work with the TAU Studio in Rome. See Francesco Leoni, *Danilo Guerri maestro di spazio* (Macerata: Quodlibet, 2016).

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<sup>42</sup> On the project see: "Il monumento alla Resistenza nell'Anconitano," in *Rivista di Ancona* 3-4, VIII (1965), 3-13; Luciano Galmozzi, *Monumenti alla libertà. Antifascismo, resistenza e pace nei monumenti italiani dal 1945 al 1985* (Milan: La Pietra, 1986), 194; Flavio Venturelli, "Una «triste ricostruzione»? Gilberto Orioli, Paola Salmoni e l'architettura monumentale di Ancona," in Valentina Orioli (ed.), *Gilberto Orioli, Dall'Urbanistica al disegno di dettaglio* (Faenza: Edit Faenza, 2014), 63-72.

<sup>43</sup> Lorenzo Ciccarelli, *Guida all'architettura nelle Marche 1900-2015*, (Macerata: Quodlibet, 2016).

democracy. She felt the places to be evocative in themselves as common memory, and worked in order to highlight the meaning and the possibilities hidden behind those spaces. A peculiar form of 'empiricism', which Paola often saw as a characteristic trait of the female activity, alongside a strong opposition towards the 'domestic' role often associated with women in the field of architecture.<sup>44</sup>

### Some conclusions

The work of Paola Salmoni throughout more than fifty years of activity (1951-2003), was signed by a conspicuous number of minor constructions, together with some intense moments, especially related to her projects for education and for the celebration of the common heritage. As mentioned, she was protagonist of the first Italian Postwar reconstruction, together with the other male protagonists of her time, and then of the following decades until today, thanks to her work to promote and teach the younger generation.

For example, after she had started to her profession their nephews Vittorio and Giovanna (today in chief of the office), they all cooperated, in occasion of an housing complex in Ancona for 122 homes (1993-2002), with several of the most promising future architects of the country, like Aldo Aymonino, Cino Zucchi, Alberto Ferlenga and Pippo Ciorra.<sup>45</sup>

The work of Paola Salmoni however can be highlighted not only for her architectural results or her historical

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<sup>44</sup> Paola Salmoni, *Atti del Convegno-Laboratorio*, 200.

<sup>45</sup> See Paolo Pasquini, Paola Salmoni, "Il quartiere Q1," in *Urbanistica quaderni, INU* (1998), 47-55; Paolo Rossi, Cino Zucchi, "Residenze al quartiere Montedago," in *Costruire in laterizio* 109 (2006), 40-43.

fortune, but also for her 'silent industriousness' and 'work ethic': 'silent' because she never wrote about Architecture but, on the contrary, she tried to give real shape to her battle for civil rights in her projects. For these reason, her political beliefs and the questions raised in her designs, must be seen as complementary, in order to understand the logic behind a generic 'neorealist' or 'organicist' resemblance.

The planning practice, the school building's design and the heritage protection were conceived as important field trials for new architectural composition, undermining gender issues or racial differences.

A 'laic militancy' of hers, where it was sometimes difficult to distinguish between civil stance and political favour, typical characteristic perhaps of a certain Postwar local technician.

Undoubtedly, we still live too close to her actions and this is not the moment to give a proper historical judgement of a recently re-discovered figure.<sup>46</sup>

It is instead an occasion to reflect upon a sensitive study-case, emblematic of a definite interpretation of Architecture as a complex '*manifestation of the human activity, intended to provide men with internal and external spaces necessary for the exercise of their institutional and vital functions*'<sup>47</sup> and not just as a piece of individual art.

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<sup>46</sup> The traces of a scientific interest towards her activity are, up to these days, a master degree thesis in 2008 with the supervision of Maristella Casciato, which highly contributed to the first understanding of the available archival material, after its legal declaration of 'public interest' in 2003. M. Crociati, "Paola Salmoni 1921-2003: una professione per la città e la società" (Thesis diss., Università di Bologna, Facoltà di Architettura "Aldo Rossi", 2008).

<sup>47</sup> Ludovico Quaroni, *Progettare un edificio. Otto lezioni di architettura* (Milan: Mazzotta, 1977), 13.

## Architect Bianca Ballestrero in Tuscany and Her Partnership with Gae Aulenti

Daniela Turazza and Chiara Santi

I have heard of Bianca Ballestrero for the first time in 1995 when I worked in Florence with Professor Enrico Baroni, in charge of structural design for the layout of the square way off of former Leopolda railway station. Gae Aulenti, already considered an archistar, was in charge of architectural project, Bianca Ballestrero standing for Aulenti's studio in Florence. Unfortunately, in that occasion I did not have the opportunity to meet Bianca Ballestrero, since I was not taking part in that assignment.

The opportunity to interview her arrived 22 years later in 2017. I was looking for her details in the Architects' register in Florence, hoping it was still in business: "Bianca Ballestrero, born in Pisa, graduated in Florence in 1961, enrolled in the Architects's Order since 1962, number 459. At first, I could not reach her by phone, subsequently I sent a mail: "I would like the opportunity to arrange an interview within the MOMOWO Women's Creativity project since the Modern Movement the goal of which is to make the contribution of women in architecture and design fields"; a few days later I received a phone call saying: "I'm Bianca Ballestrero's secretary, I am transferring you through. Inevitably the emotion charged of the first interview with a celebrity. I've tried to give the most detailed explanations possible, saying my prayers to provide me with the material urgently. From the very first words, the impression is of a very private but direct and very professional person: "I will do as I can, you are giving me only few days and I

am very busy at this time." By a date I was given a chronological record; I had no doubt it would have happened.

BB (Bianca Ballestrero) allowed an appointment at her home studio in Grassano, in the hills above Bagno a Ripoli (Florence), still today she continues her activity; we go to the gate with the reverential fear of those who are aware that they will be admitted after a few moments in the presence of an important person. "Good morning. I have little time to spare; we have urgent deliveries" said BB, giving a little apprehension for the consciousness that we would have to overlook some topics.

Question: "Let's start from the beginning: how did you desire studying architecture?"

Since the High School I had a passion for Art History (my professor was a great poet, Attilio Bertolucci); the art historian, understood as a craft, I did not want to become, so I decided to try architecture studies. The choice didn't meet the approval of my parents because it was outside of the family tradition: males all doctors or lawyers, females destined to become teachers. Design was never my strength and I had abandoned that subject after the Middle school because I did the Classical studies; then I had to put a hard work to learn it and to deal with other new subjects: geometry and mathematical analysis. I grew up in Rome and started the university in Rome, then completed in Florence. I graduated in Florence, my thesis with Prof. Libera and Prof. Quaroni;

it was the first group thesis in absolute; I was in the group with Loris Macci and Pierluigi Cervellati; the theme was the design of an European University site in Florence; we had chosen the Girone area, close to the river, as a site for the European university, a hot topic at the time (then it began to move the first steps); later it was realized in Fiesole.

Immediately after graduating I had a brief experience as an unpaid 'volunteer assistant' - I was Prof. Libera assistant. I quickly realized that I was not made for the academic career; it was obvious, though, that I was suited for liberal profession; my husband [the prof. Piero Paoli, already a professor at the Faculty of Architecture in Florence] was pursuing his university career; one was enough in the family! I suppose the profession was easier then: it was planned, there was more work; there were no absurd obstacles; the public body would have called us because there was 'trust'. There were also contests, which, like today, were banished and then often did not lead to a realisation; I was tied to my husband, to Loris Macci and Giovanni Bartolozzi: a design contest was made – as fresh graduates (late 1960s) - for the High School of Imperia, a large complex, a high school and gym and another college; the contest was won and the project was then realized and the buildings are still in place. Another opportunity was the assignment in Val di Fassa [Trento's Province - Solaria Tourist Center in Mazzin di Fassa, 1972-76]; we were young and fortunate enough to be at a time

when they offered us great opportunities.

Q: "When did you meet with Gae Aulenti?"

The meeting with Gae Aulenti took place in the occasion for Theater Laboratory in Prato (the second half of the 1970s),<sup>1</sup> a space dedicated to architecture and territory; from the experience of the three years of laboratory it turned out a relationship of friendship and collaboration. I'd known Luca Ronconi for a long time; research on the territory was seen as the 'ultimate moment'; Ronconi came from the experience of 'Utopia', a great show<sup>2</sup>. During my stay at the Laboratory we prepared the materials for a new show, 'The Cross Sign', which would have to go through but remained unfinished, never went on stage.

Q: "In addition to the 'Laboratory' in Prato, Gae Aulenti was assigned to Palazzo Pretorio".

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1 The Scenery Laboratory in Prato (1977-79) was founded by the theater director Luca Ronconi (1933-2015) in mid-1970s in Metastasio theater; the contribution of Gae Aulenti was a new definition of 'stage' that finally led to Fabbricone, a real 'invention' by Ronconi, where for the first time he used as a stage an abandoned warehouse. For the play The Tower by Hugo von Hofmannsthal Gae Aulenti rebuilt the Würzburg Royal Palace inside Fabbricone; there were a continuous change of scene to the purpose of disorient the audience; for Calderón, by Pasolini, the scene had been extended from the stage to the stalls of Metastasio, while the audience had been sitting in the boxes. The activity of Ronconi in Prato lasted just a few years, due to political obstacles, by invoking economical reasons and blaming him for performances elitist.

2 'Utopia' was a show put on inside a shipyard in Giudecca Island (Venice), a degraded place then restored by Venice Biennale; the shows derives from five plays by Aristofane and the scenery was elaborate and chaotic made by a great jumble of objects.

The Commune of Prato decided to restore and transform Palazzo Pretorio and called Gae, who came from the renovation of Palazzo Grassi in Venice (she had not yet realised the Gare d'Orsay preparation); Gae called me and asked me if I wanted to work with her. Later, we collaborated in a position for the State Railways [FS]. At that time the FS deliberated to carry out a reconnaissance of its national patrimony (abandoned buildings and areas) throughout Italy formulating hypothesis of requalification; Gae and I were in charge for Florence. From this work analysis came our idea of making a municipal theater at Porta al Prato. The Compartment of Florence - FS were divided into Compartments - when there was funding received for 'Italy 90' [Football World's Cup] called us for the arrangement of 'Platform16', which was originally the track for the Royal Train: they needed a second access to the Santa Maria Novella station [from Piazzale Montelungo, adjacent to the Medicean Fortezza da Basso, an exchanger parking] and a general redevelopment of the area; it was 1989, it was a fast-paced task. Only a year after the delivery the spaces had already been ruined by acts of vandalism: our projects should always be photographed right away, just completed! For Santa Maria Novella we were entrusted by the FS also the setting up of reception and catering area: the Superintendence made us struggle because of restrictions; it wasn't easy. The dining room had a flooring of one meter for one meter of Carrara's statue [marble] and to realize the new restaurant, we

thought to make an extension of the paved marble area, replacing a worthless 'pavement', but the Superintendence hindered us, arguing that there was historically the 'Third Class *Restaurateur*' here! They did all the sampling to find the original paintings; at the end, the deeper layer was of a 'shocking pink' color, which of course was not re-proposed.

Q: "Today, these reception spaces no longer exist. The project has been distorted"

I do not know, it's a long time since I haven't been there.

Q: "How did you come to Leopolda Station's commission?"

Leopolda came from a different commissioner, the Commune of Florence, who called Gae, who called me. It had to be a complex project, including the renovation of the entire area of the former Leopolda Station: the square was meant as a continuation of the aisles of the building; then the administration changed their minds, probably for costing reasons, and decided to leave the station as it was, limiting their assignment to the access area; <sup>3</sup> Pitti Immagine<sup>4</sup> immediately urged the closure of the square and we made the gate; unfortunately these spaces cannot always be kept accessible to the public due to vandalism. In any case, the initial project was reduced to the bone; among other things, the element of water was eliminated.

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<sup>3</sup> The current fitting out of Leopolda is largely known in Florence: a 'temporary place' since more than twenty years, with a roof made by scaffold steel structures, used for performances and exhibitions.

<sup>4</sup> A factory in Florence that organizes international fashion events.

Q: "The structural project was entrusted to Enrico Baroni".

Enrico Baroni, I like his work very much, he has a lot of creativity; I worked with him for the Leopolda station and then again for Palazzo Pretorio.

Q: "In 1998 an invitations contest to the Uffizi new Gallery's Exit".<sup>5</sup>

I remember mentioning a photographer, charged by the Uffizi Director, who showed us Isozaki's photos: suddenly I had a perception and I said to myself: Here is the winner!; It was specifically forbidden in the ban the pedestrian ramp to be removed but Isozaki's plan was showing that; obviously, he could. Even other designers allowed themselves to eliminate it, while our project was made according to rules required.

Q: "Palazzo Pretorio in Prato, tell us about it".

We [Gae and I] followed all the renovation from the planning stage to the execution of the works; Gae should also have done the interior design but then she became ill and the set-up was made with a new competition, won by Natalini. A thirty-year long project, the first lookout we did in 1986; then followed a long reconnaissance period, both of the architectural complex and the collections - as is logical in approaching such an intervention and scope. It had to be a 'pharaonic project': there was the bad habit of putting design to the point before having the costing

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<sup>5</sup> The contest on invitations for the new exit of Uffizi Museum in Florence, won by [Arata Isozaki](#) and Andrea Maffei was held in 1998, participating [Mario Botta](#), [Norman Foster](#), [Gae Aulenti](#), Hans Hollein and [Vittorio Gregotti](#). The target was the extension of the exhibition area and the creation of a new exit inside the back façade.

cover.<sup>6</sup> Again there was the Superintendency intervention: an external lift, which had been thought of by us as a quotation of the chimneys of Prato; the name of Aulenti was in the middle, so Superintendency instead of declining it immediately did as Pontius Pilate did: sent the project to the Ministry, who asked for integrations and then gave reason to the Superintendency; so everything stopped. They called for a review for costing reasons and the plan was restricted to Pretorio and Addossato - initially the project included the former Carceri [prison], Valentini Palace, the Addossato building and the former Monte Pegni [bank]; the Region provided two funding later in two different spending chapters, with grotesque limits: getting into the budget was not easy and the money had to be spent within the time limits with enormous difficulties in managing the construction site. Fortunately, at least the museum was set up, which was previous a 'black hole' inside the city; as the lift was eventually built inside, hitting the vaults.

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<sup>6</sup> In 1986 the Municipality entrusted to Gae Aulenti and Bianca Ballestrero a great plan for a museum pole, costs estimated €4.39m. The target was strongly reduced and in 1998 the museum was closed to begin some restoration of the bearing structures; the art works were carried away (The third floor had been closed since 1983 due to the renovation of the roof). Works were carried on facing many difficulties till in 2009 the project was modified by the Municipality who brought back the entrance to the main front towards the square. The last works consisted in restoration of the interior decorations like Podestà crests, frescoes and the painted wooden ceiling, while the whole building has been completely renovated.

Q: "What difficulty did you encounter in your profession as a woman?"

As a woman, I had no 'gender' difficulties, perhaps because for a long part of my professional life and from the beginning I worked in a group with male colleagues; in the following period, in which I worked with Gae, perhaps the gender difficulties were now overcome.

You have a clear feeling - listening to Bianca's words - that the question has not been whether or not a 'gender issue' exists but that she has spent her entire life practicing the profession in a profitable way and with satisfaction, without ever feeling discriminated as a woman; that she never asked herself the meaning of expressions such as 'reconciling family life with professional activity' or 'having less prestige at social level or less facilitating work than men colleagues. Perhaps she is right when she says that the biggest problem in Italy is the shortage of work for new generations of architects who inevitably end up penalizing women more than men.

Q: "Do you know how many women were enrolled at the Architects' Order in Florence when you enrolled in 1962?"

I do not know how many women were in the Architect's Order list - at Villa Giulia in Rome [Architecture Faculty] - we were about 500 students; when I came to Florence we were still less.

Q: "How was the atmosphere at the Faculty of Architecture in Florence?"

There were new winds, there was a situation of innovation, a faculty where one had to deal with important people: Quaroni, Libera, Ricci, Arcangeli (to Construction Science), all people who had

knowledge in the world of great engineers and architects, who organized many seminars with great characters: it was just a 'university'.

Q: "Was there any other participation in other contests?"

Contests were in the early period of my activity, it was a way of being able to emerge, but then we still had some challenging assignments: in the field of urban planning and landscape the task for the Landscape Plan of Ticino Pavese, together with Macci and Bartolozzi [70], by the Pavia administration that co-ordinated with that of Milan; a wonderful experience. Taking care of landscape was not easy; we managed to 'anticipate' some strategies, for example how to work in synergy. The Plan was born because there was a desire on the part of coastal administrations to valorize a wonderful river (apart from mosquitoes), to provide accommodation that could make it economic and tourist point of view, working on the conservation of a rather fragile habitat, even with precious rainforest; to break down beautiful vegetation to plant poplar for the paper mill meant destroying the landscape but those who had invested did not want to give up the grip; it was not easy to find a balance. A study of the territory was done: morphological, geological, botanical (we collaborated with the University of Pavia), in short, multidisciplinary; the group, when it is a tested group, works well. Cerasi<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Maurice Cerasi (1932-2015), architect, born in Istanbul, graduated in Florence in 1964, led an office in Milan dealing with residential buildings and town parks; in his early years he collaborated with Gio Ponti and Giovanni Michelucci. Professor in Architectural Composition at University in Milan and Genova.

led the group of Milan; we also had clashes, we had different views. It was an innovative experience at the time in Italy.

Q: "How did you select assignments?"

The type of assignment was mainly due to the offer. Recently I have also been involved in urban planning as a councilor in Prato (1995-97). There was a new Regulatory Plan (PRG) to be done; had been named as a professional Bernardo Secchi. Mayor Mattei wanted me in his Junta as he wanted to have a technician to join the Secchi group, who could mediate between the proposals of the Plan and the interests of the municipal administration. It was a very laborious and tiring period and, during my stay, I found myself in conflict with the Junta several times. It was a trade that I did not belong to, the one of the politician is a short-range mentality: prediction, programming does not know what it is, politicians only concern actions that are temporarily within the terms of their mandate. It was evident that the industrial area, still of considerable importance, was undergoing changes: commercial centers began to be established; I defended the Secchi Plan, which in my opinion contained interesting and innovative elements, to the unbending. I'm not going to see the Prato territory destroyed by sacrificing the Sacchi Plan to the interests of the great textile properties. I closed with politics; never again.

## Projects

**Hotel Center 'Solaria' in Fassa Valley (Trento) 1972-76** (with Loris Macci, Piero Paoli)

"The vast area, on the slopes of a wood, among snow capped peaks, has been highlighted becoming the first feature of the touristic development. The consequence is the design of the sections of the blocks falling down to the valley.<sup>8</sup>"

"The three blocks, each with different use (hotel, residence, apartments), created to 1300 persons, are linked by the backbone of the facilities (bar, restaurant, shops, auditorium; nursery, ski school), lined up on the internal road."<sup>9</sup> "The volume appears broken in many pieces, articulated each other according to an unification intent [...]; The architecture of Solaria could be regarded just a little as 'brutalist', in spite of the reinforced concrete facades<sup>10</sup>. "

**Touristic apartments in Cugnana Verde (Olbia) 1976** (with Loris Macci, Piero Paoli)

"On a hill overlooking the Gulf of Cugnana, in the earth of Gallura [Sardinia], the touristic center to 4000 people, consists of apartments, residences, hotels with commercial and sport facilities and is situated at the edge of a nature park 90 hectares large.

The compositional solution is based on the ground morphology, generating an angle open and descending to the sea; the result is an unitary configuration

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8 G. K. Koenig, "Centro alberghiero in Val di Fassa/Holiday centre in the Val di Fassa", *L'architettura. Cronache e storia* 331 (1983), 337

9 Bianca Ballestrero notes.

10 Fabio Fabbrizzi, *Opere e progetti di Scuola Fiorentina 1968-2008*, 295

(intentionally alternative to the devastating spreading of touristic buildings down the coasts of Sardinia) characterised by a strong identity, accentuated by plaster facades, painted in the colors of the earth and the Mediterranean forest ".<sup>14</sup>

#### **Villa in Punta Asfodeli (Olbia) 1978**

"Situated on the seaside, among the granite rocks and the Mediterranean forest, the building tries to fit in the landscape without camouflaging; dug in the ground deviates upstream, like a path of patrol, open downstream with views towards the sea. The facades have a covering of dry stone walls, respecting local tradition. The top terraces are connected to the ground through stairs which strongly characterize the architectural composition." <sup>14</sup>

#### **Dwelling complex in Strada in Chianti (Florence) 1985-87 - IN ARCH prize 1989 (with Piero Paoli)**

"Located in a steep slope area, this cooperative housing block of flats is characterised by a double series of parallel steps divided by a central gallery and surmounted by some pedestrian bridges, which connect on one side to the road and on the other to the green areas. The brick walls enhance the unitary image" <sup>14</sup>.

#### **New access to Santa Maria Novella railway station in Florence (with Gae Aulenti) 1989-90**

Santa Maria Novella is the central station in Florence and the current buildings were built in the 1930s according to the design of the so-called

'Toscano Group' headed by Giovanni Michelucci, following the design contest for 'Fabbricato Viaggiatori' (1932); by the time at the center of many controversies, today an undisputed monument of modern architecture. The project also included the 'Royal Palace' by Michelucci, destined for the temporary stay and temporary residence of the King and the Court, a building with neoclassical stylistic references; from the inside of the Palazzina you can directly access the 'Royal Binario', the current 'Binario 16', without going through the Travel Factory. The intervention, which was carried out at the 1990 World Football Championships, was aimed at connecting the 'Fabbricato Viaggiatori' with a parking space in Piazzale Montelungo, overlooking the Fortezza Da Basso, in order to decongest the area from vehicle traffic (Fig. 4); "The ramp passes the traffic axis and, reached the plane of the station, extends into a large parking space covered by a skylight sloping and delimited to the sides by the tall twin towers that support the bridge reticulated beam"<sup>14</sup>. The features of the project - towers and brickwork - are clearly dictated by the site's pre existence: the Medicean Fortezza da Basso (16th century), the border walls and the railway warehouses (Fig. 5). The design was extended to the detail of Piero Castiglioni lighting solutions, with recessed luminaires along the ramp walls and ceiling fixtures in the area covered by the skylight; the cotto flooring and handrail tailor made, designed by Adolfo Natalini. Today, after 25 years, degradation and neglect have already heavily marked these works.

**Restoration of the dining area reception rooms in Santa Maria Novella railway station in Florence** (with Gae Aulenti) - 1989-93

“This project was born as part of the program of upgrading of the Santa Maria Novella railway station, promoted by the Florence FS Compartment; it consisted of the restoration of the original dining room decorated by Ottone Rosai frescos, by adding a self service restaurant and the creation of a new waiting room inside spaces currently disused.”<sup>14</sup>

**Underpass and urban crossing for Lucca railway station** (with Gae Aulenti) 1991

“This project was part of the program of upgrading of the railway station and allowed the connection between two parts of the town, previously separated by the tracks. The brick walls refer to the town walls; the steel beams and the skylight over the entrance declare its membership to railway architecture.”<sup>14</sup> (Bianca Ballestrero)

**Renovation of the access square to Leopolda former railway station in Florence** (with Gae Aulenti) 1995-98

“The realization of the access square intended to anticipate the project of restoring the former railway station; an entrance space to have rest (110 square metres) which carries outside the marks of the interior [a nave 15 metres large and 240 long, with a roof made by scaffold steel structures]. The partition made by the central steel columns continues and underlines the longitudinal axis creating a huge trellis together with the structures on either side. The design of the gate is

referred to the ancient gates of the station”.<sup>14</sup>

**Shopping center and culture facilities in Galcetello Nord (Prato)** 1995

“The target of this project was to create a place for social gathering and sewing up in the middle of industrial suburbs. The key element is the pedestrian tunnel, covered by a skylight roof; the tunnel, crossing by the whole complex, makes a connection to the main road and to the green hills; many facilities are available down the way: shops at the ground floor, private and public services at the upper floor, reachable through a balcony distribution. An easy plant marked by some emergent elements: the skylight, supported by the double rows of steel columns highlights the central tunnel; a semicircular structure covers the wide hall for the railway facilities; the flat coverings at different levels underline the building of the supermarket.”<sup>14</sup>

**Enlargement of municipal cemetery in Poggio a Caiano (Prato)** 1998

“The facade of the cemetery, by the time included in a residential area, had been completely redesigned; the public space in front of the cemetery had been renovated, creating a square with trees and a parking area.”<sup>14</sup>

**Renovation and Restoration of Palazzo Pretorio in Prato for creating the Town Museum** with Gae Aulenti (1986-2013)

“The operation has been only lately completed (with the interior arrangement by Natalini), after a 20 years long way

littered with bureaucratic, political and financial obstacles. In the original project it was planned to create a big museum pole, by aggregating to Pretorio Palace the adjacent building of the previous Public Schools, previous jails and Monte dei Pegni bank but it had been abandoned due to costing reasons; consequently the restoration has been interested only Pretorio Palace and the small next building [the Addossato].

Anyway some important issues had been saved: the opening from the ground floor to the Bacchino square; the role of 'hinge' played by the inner courtyard; the creation of a new square, opened towards Datini Palace by the demolition of the ex public restrooms; the location of reception facilities inside the Addossato building.

The project had been preceded by a long time of historical and architectural analysis and included the renovation of technical installations and structural works." <sup>14</sup>

#### **Invited contest for the new exit of Uffizi Museum in Florence (with Gae Aulenti) – 1998**

"Our proposal consisted of regular rows of columns, supported by an inclined pavement that linked the exit to the public street, giving back its continuity previously interrupted. A fragmentation of the space on different levels would have altered the relationship among the museum and the surrounding buildings". <sup>14</sup>

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## Maria Teresa Parpagliolo: The Kābul Experience 1970-1972

Lucia Krasovec Lucas

Maria Teresa Parpagliolo Shepard, born in Rome (1903–1974), approaches from the beginning of his carrier in an innovative way to architecture, gardening and landscape issues: she was the first Italian woman landscape architect. She participated in international conferences of European landscape architects (Paris 1937, Berlin 1938), and contributed regular articles for specialist magazines such as *Domus*, *Il giardino fiorito*, *Landscape and Garden*, *Journal of the Institute of Landscape Architects*. In 1938, she joined the planning team for the *Esposizione Universale* in Rome (E42), and in 1940 became head of the exhibition's *Ufficio Parchi e Giardini*. In 1946 Parpagliolo married Ronald Shephard, and moved to London starting to work on projects with Sylvia Crowe (1901–1997). From 1950, with Frank Clark (1902–1971) she designed for the *Festival of Britain* and the grounds of several primary schools in the south of London. In 1954, the *Società Generale Immobiliare* commissioned her many projects for private and public gardens, parks and open spaces.

In Parpagliolo's idealist vision, the healthy landscape consisted of functional natural systems and integrated social communities, and it provided the cultural meanings to support human life: landscape architecture is a work of synthesis. The innovative idea of domestic gardens and parks was that of a natural landscape, where beautiful and functional green scenography becomes an aesthetic expression of practical land-use, looking to

an innovative spatial qualities of the city. Parpagliolo well explained her idea of garden architecture, thus affecting the readers and professionals on this issue then underdeveloped in Italy, highlighting the fact that the garden and the landscape are part of the same picture. For Parpagliolo, this was the central point in the cultural debate in the twentieth century.

In her first part of professional experience, Parpagliolo's communication skills activated a break with tradition to experiment new forms in garden design, parkways and community gardens, as well as she contributed as a pioneer to establish the landscape architecture as a new specific discipline.

As her European colleagues, Parpagliolo Shephard was involved in the exploration of new ideas, through a strong innovative research of materials and construction techniques, supporting the *Modern Movement* in landscape architecture.

During the sixties, she designed two very interesting project: the patio of the of RAI Headquarters and the park of the Cavalieri Hilton Holtel, both in Rome. As for the first, it reveals the international experience of Parpagliolo Shephard and how she was opened to experiments and receptive to new trends in landscape design: the geometrical organisation of plants and paths highlights the influence of Japanese gardens, which had a substantial interest from the members of ILA, and Parpagliolo's endeavours to employ cross-cultural references and contemporary design in her works. The second one, it is characterized by a

serpentine drive, now the trade entrance, which snaked up through the grounds to the entrance circle, and two artificial hills on the top: allowing a quieter experience on the terraces and rooms looking over the gardens and city, the new construction camouflages itself into the green and the Monte Mario skyline.

In her introduction to the report on Bāgh-I Bābur, Maria Teresa Parpagliolo Shephard wrote that the place is “to-day not only a place for pilgrimage to the Emperor’s tomb, but it is also one of the public parks of Kābul. This double aspect explains why Afghan Authorities were anxious to restore the site, not only as a shrine, but also as an added amenity for the benefit of the growing population of the town.”<sup>1</sup> It was 1972, and few years before the Italian Archeological Mission, sponsored by the Institute for the Middle and Far East (IsMEO), restored the Shāh-Jahān’s Mosque. At time, prof. Giuseppe Tucci, President of the institute, would started the complete restoration of the whole site and he was suggested from De Angelis d’Ossat to contact Parpagliolo because she had already been asked twice by the Rome International Centre of Unesco to give lectures on the restoration of ancient gardens.

In 1945, when war in Europe had just ended, Italy’s position on the international scene was, to put it mildly, extremely uncertain<sup>2</sup>. As a former enemy and a too recent co-belligerent of the winners, Italy had enormous problems to solve and, apparently, very little hope of taking her place again among the

European powers, especially for her two traditional areas of interest, Europe and Mediterranean area. In such an unpromising situation, it is rather surprising that the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was already making plans for a comeback in the middle-east. At time, Italy was a “clay vessel” among iron pots and therefore great prudence was required in any move but, at the same time, Italy should not underestimate her chances.

The first step was the simplest: sending representatives to the Arab countries, establishing contacts with the local leaders and trying to understand what was happening. Pietro Quaroni (1898-1971), brother of the architect Ludovico, one of the ablest Italian diplomats, added a few finishing touches and explained that liabilities could become assests, provided one was clever and daring. He was also president of RAI from 1964 to 1969, and it is for sure that he met Parpagliolo when she designed the patio of the Headquarter building.

When Parpagliolo Shephard went in Kābul to see the Bāgh-I Bābur, in October 1970, it was also a great occasion for Italy: she was going to lose her colonies, nevertheless she could play whatever cards she had by establishing economic and cultural ties with these countries, forging new relationships and new foundations on which to build, in time, a real political role.

Parpagliolo Shephard met a new country that was looking to progress and imitating the Europe and USA. She noted that the site of the Bāgh-I Bābur was very much changed and how it had lost its original character through many alterations: the only authentic features of the ancient Moghul garden where the Emperor’s grave and those of some of his relatives, the Shāh-Jahān’s Mosque, and the three remaining very old chenars. But

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1 Maria Teresa Parpagliolo Shephard, *Kābul: Bāgh-I Bābur, a Project and a Research into the Possibilities of a Complete Reconstruction* (Rome: IsMEO, 1972), 1.

2 Maria Grazia Enardu, *A different role for Europe in the Middle East: Italy’s experience*, (A. Varsori editor, Europe 1945-1990, Palgrave Macmillian, a division of Macmillian Publishers Limited, 1995), 198-199.

the most striking impression was given by the total lack of water: the consequences was a derelict dusty site where older trees were dying, and newer one struggled to keep alive. As described in the schetch of the ideal reconstruction of a garden of Samarkand, from Wilber's research based primarily on accounts and drawings by European visitors and some standing remains, the pavillion and palace were placed on the central hill, the garden had an enclosed geometrical layout, avenues with trees planted "à la ligne", channels of waters and square pools on two sides<sup>3</sup>.

Bābur in his lifetime planted and built several gardens at Kābul or in its sourroundings, and all belong to the Persian garden tradition that he saw at Samarkand and Heart. In the past, Bāgh-l Bābur had all the elements of a Persian enclosed paradise: the shady trees, the channels of water and the jet springing out of the pools, the awnings and tents, the platforms where to erect them and where to spread the carpets to sit upon, the Pavillion in the centre and the magnificent gate at its entrance. All these features were composed on a strictly geometrical pattern on sloping ground, the central axis enhanced by canals flowing from terrace to terrace with waterfalls into the larger pools generally in front of a Pavillion. The geometrical and axial lay-out was still that of the Hellenistic tradition of earlier times, but taken over by the Mohammedans in their conquests through Asia Minor<sup>4</sup>. The need of irrigation dictated the whole plan and

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3 The schetch probably represents the Gul-Bāgh or Rose garden, based on the descriptions of Ruy Gonzales and published in D.N. Wilber, *Persian Gardens and Garden Pavillions*, (Rutland, Vermont, 1962. Washington, D.C., 1979), 61.

4 The new conquerors in Asia Minor evolved their own style on preceding gardens. The influences were from Mesopotamia, Iran, Rome and North Africa. See: E. Hyams, *A history of gardens and gardening*, London, 1971, Ch. 6.

arrangement, but it derived also from the Paradise garden of the Koran. The ground being divided into eight terraces with the four rivers flowing crossways through them, forming a pool sometimes very large in the middle, and other pools receiving the waterfalls gushing from one level to the other. All these pools were square in shape, full to the brim, and jets of water by gravity spouted up into the air so high that the falling sprays resembled masses of diamonds. Architecturally, these gardens were very simple, but enclosed by serrated battlements, they created, in the murmur of the running streams, the spalsh of the jets, the sweet smelling herbs and rose bushes, the trees, willows, planes, cypresses, a truly peaceful paradise, shut out from the turmoils of the ever changing world of conquest and battles.

When the twenty years old Bābur (1483-1530), the first Mughal emperor, descended from the mountains of the Hindu Kush<sup>5</sup>, he took with him the everlasting memory of Samarkand. Being from the beginning not only as a conquering chief<sup>6</sup>, but also as a man of culture, he knew that he was bringing into a new land, new ideas, a new culture, a new civilized way of life. As a modern garden lover he prides himself to have brought the Ālū-bālū, the wild cherry of the north into Kābul, and he had always a keen perception of the essential elements of a climate, a region, a landscape<sup>7</sup>.

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5 It was through the high passes of the Hindu Kush, a great mountain system of Central Asia extending c. 500 mi west form the Pamir Knot into the nord east Afghanistan and Pakistan, that invaders from central Asia brought their Indo-European language. The name derives from the Arabic for "Mountains of India".

6 Babur was the direct descendant of Turco-Mongol conqueror Timūr Barlas (1336-1405) trough his faher, and also a descendant of Genghiz Khān (1162-1227) trough his mother.

7 C.M. Villiers Stuart, (London: Gardens of the Great Mughals, 1931), 94.

The natural landscape was central to the life of Bābur's court, as he had an acute eye for natural beauty<sup>8</sup>. When he moved to India, to remind himself of the lands he had left behind, Bābur began a process of creating exquisite gardens in every palace and province, where he would often sit shaded from the fierce Indian sun. He tried as far as was possible to recreate the gardens of Kabul, which he believed were the most beautiful in the world. Almost thirty pages of Babur's memoirs are taken up describing the Fauna and Flora of his Hindustan. Though he wished to be buried in his favourite garden in Kabul, first he was buried in a Mausoleum in Agra and only nine years later in Kabul, where is his tomb on which is the following inscription in Persian: "If there is a paradise on earth, it is this, it is this, it is this". Among his successors, both Jahangir (1569-1627) and Shah Jahan (1592-1666) commissioned works on this site, in honour of Bābur.

Accounts of nineteenth century travellers suggest that the garden subsequently fell into disrepair, and its perimeter walls were reportedly damaged in an earthquake in 1842. Repairs were carried out at the turn of the century, during the reign of Amir Abdur Rahman Khan (1844-1901), who constructed a complex for use by his family within the garden.

The Parpagliolo's research on the origins of the Kābul gardens wished to well understand the evolution of the gardens since the Moghul's times, showing how Bābur bringing Persian ideals into the country, became a starting point, a bridge between the Hellenistic Islamic tradition of the geometrical irrigated

enclosure and India, where it flourished into the most magnificent achievements absorbing also local trends and ideals. At the end of the seventeenth century, European travellers had discovered China and a new philosophy of life and its relation to the physical world<sup>9</sup>. This change in feelings and objectives was promoted by innumerable descriptions of travellers, ambassadors and missions visiting China. This conception was based on a different outlook, more on visual perceptions of nature in its own rights, and less on mathematical certainties. The outside space, the gardens, was planned not on a relation of determined numbers, but more on the effect on the eye of the beholder of first planes, middle planes and background: the pictorial qualities of a natural landscape. This new idea arriving in Europe while the gardens in the great manner of Louis XIV were reaching their utmost possibilities at Versailles, Marly, St. Cloud and St. Germain, created in the realm of ideas a complete cesura, which started in England a new development, the English Landscape Park, and became in Europe le Jardin Anglo-Chinois of the eighteenth century. In Europe, it led to gardens of the utmost romanticism losing, in the research for sentiments, the real balance of what belongs to nature and what derives from man in disrupting the logical sequence of shapes and forms.

The garden of Babūr was modified several times, and the whole conception of the pools, the pathways and the central parterre became European instead of Islamic. Further transformations took place during the twentieth century, when European-style elements were introduced into the landscape and a swimming pool and greenhouse were built on an upper

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<sup>8</sup> Bābur describes several gardens in his memoirs, as in *The Babur Nama*, (translation of J. Leyden and W. Erskin, London and Edinburgh, 1826), and *The Memoirs of Babur*, (translated by A.S. Beveridge, London, 1917-21).

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<sup>9</sup> Charles Masson, (London: *Narrative of various journeys in Belochistan, Afghanistan, the Panjab and Kalet during a residence in those countries*, 4 voll., 1844).

terrace. A very serious problem for the garden was always related to his maintenance and water supply. After a journey in 1925, Pernot said that in the garden “havoc has been perpetrated amongst the trees, (...) of the 15 terraces, which had been described by travellers in rapturous words, there are only some fragments of canals in ruins and a few old trees”<sup>10</sup>.

In the light of the historical research and of the state of garden in 1970, Parpagliolo Shephard understood the evident increasing decay of the site: only some years before, for example, it was possible to see better the parterre, the still existing walls of the Karavanserai at the bottom, and more trees. At her time, most of the beds of the central parterre were missing, and the Karavanserai was only present in its outer walls. Even the trees were far less, most still standing but dead, and mulberry seedlings, historically associated with beauty, had sprung here and there. She did, helped for drawings by Elena Martini (1936-2015), an accurate survey showing the few traces of the past and the situation in 1970, for the project she aimed to start a complete reconstruction of a lost environment, and to bring back the Bāgh-i Bābur to its former splendours. Only by bringing back the grove of magnificent trees, the murmur of water falling from terrace to terrace it may hope to achieve that something which made Bābur choose this site as his last resting place. For Parpagliolo this approach would also benefit the tradition, transforming the garden in a place for pilgrimage and a holiday resort for the people of Kābul, as it has been so from times immemorial<sup>11</sup>.

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10 M. Pernot, *Afghanistan*, (Paris: L'inquietude de l'orient: en Asie Musulmane, Hachette, 1927, 24).

11 C. Masson, op. cit. Vol. II, 241

The point she considered in the project, included the water and the reafforestation of the site that were the real problem to solve, were the later additions like the Queen's Palace and the Pavillion: they have a great weight in the general composition, so with the tombs and the Mosque they are the main structural elements which had to be restored and rendered functional for the modern needs of the Kābul citizens. The same it was to be considered for the swimmingpool and the upper reservoir, though less important in the general plan. Even if they were derelict and incongruous, Parpagliolo Shephard was sure that they must become an integral part of the design. By these considerations, Parpagliolo presented two solutions.

The first plan had an open parterre in front of the pavillion, where the water channel, the pools and the terracing correspond to the description of the Badshah Nama. The alternative proposal was a reconstruction based on the descriptions of the nineteenth century travellers and on the detailed description of Charles Masson, when seen in 1838: this project gives more importance to the Avenue and the presence of the magnificent trees, as showed in the section. Observing the site during the survey, she had also analyzed several aspects as canals, waterfalls and pools, especially from the aerial photograph of the Afghan Authorities. Parpagliolo Shephard also discovered the foundations of a wall which length was about 100 m running parallel to the central parterre on the right of it looking up towards the pavillion. There were, under the actual level, in the centre of the lower square and in front of the Karavanserai, rests of foundations probably of a pool. She thought that if this will be proved, than Shāh-Jahān's canal, pools and waterfalls were on the central axis of the modern

parterre. At time, there were still people in Kābul who remembered from their youth three square pools: one below, one in the middle, one on the terrace immediately under the Pavillion. And this may be confirmed by the photograph of Major Cleveland's residence in the Pavillion.

But even so, doubts still remained for two reasons: what it possible that the lay of the land in older times was on a different angle to the modern one? Most descriptions speak of the waterfall as beside the Mosque, not below it? Parpagliolo Shephard tried to reconstruct graphically the different possibilities, about the position of the canal: starting from the 12th terrace beside the Mosque; a cascade beside the Mosque, parallel to the direction of the Mecca; in the central of the line to the Mecca direction (similar to present situation); canals of water derived from the tank were conducted parallel to the course of the road, the water falling in cascades over the descent of several terraces (as in the description of Charles Masson in 1832-38). In the last description we have: the Avenue ran along the waterfalls, but was separated from them by lines of cypress trees, so that the ascent was on the right of cascades; the tank was in the middle of the chenars at the top and therefore the waterfalls were on the central line of the grounds. Though it is not the symmetrical lay-out one would expect from a garden so close to the Persian tradition, yet the whole asymmetry gives a perfectly balanced composition so well adapted to the site, that Parpagliolo Shephard presented it as an alternative for a possible restoration and evidently as a less expensive one. She considered that the four attempted reconstructions has been done to clear as much as possible the conflicting factors that beset in this case, where the situation of her times were so different from the

descriptions and the orders given in the past. But, she concluded, only a systematic and more detailed search will give the right answer on which to made a proper plan of restoration.

In his work, Parpagliolo Shephard explained the primary elements to take in account for the design of the reconstruction of the place, as: where to find water; the rehabilitation of Queen's Palace, in that times it belonged to the Afghan Army as a depot and storage place, with new destinations as Museum, Cultural Centre, halls for concerts and conferences, etc; keep as a separate enclosure from the rest of the garden of the Shrine – Mosque and Tombs, in the same spirit of the Giardini Segreti of the Renaissance; the Entrance Gate and the Karavanserai to reconstruct as a square patio open towards the cascades. The squallor of the garden, wrote Parpagliolo, depends not only on the lack of water and of trees, but also on the fact there are no constructive lines to hold together the whole composition, especially from the 10th terrace downwards.

The boundary wall should be redesigned, at least the one at the bottom near the Karavanserai. In the proposed reconstruction of the garden, she introduced even a swimming-pool and a sport-grounds that should be shut away from the rest of the garden by a screen of trees and shrubs, to give fun and leisure to the citizens of Kabul. About planting, Parpagliolo Shephard said that it was a question of a proper reafforestation to bring back, in time, to the Bāgh-I Bābur to that state of venerable grove all visitors of the nineteenth century speak of. The description they give of the beauty of the trees, their masses, the variety of the flowering shrubs is rapturous. In the replanting of the garden therefore, the double aspect of tall shady trees (grove) and of flowering ahrubs and fruit trees has

to be kept in mind. The rose, especially, was so important in the Persian world of gardens that *gul* meaning rose, also means a garden, and this is probably the reason of the Bābur's poetic ideal to convert the world into a rose garden, as for plant very many gardens.

Parpagliolo Shephard also aimed to add to the trees, the flowers of the land in which Bābur delighted but, unfortunately, she became seriously ill in 1972, and she died after two years.

For this reason, she could never begin to develop and realize her project.

By the time fighting broke out in Kābul in 1993–94, the character of Bagh-i-Bābur was much altered and the site was in a poor state of repair. Finally, in 2002 an agreement for the rehabilitation of the eleven-hectare garden was signed between the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) and the Transitional Afghan Administration. In parallel with clearance of remaining unexploded ordinance, work began in 2003 on conservation of Babur's grave enclosure, which had been significantly altered over time. Based on marble fragments found in the grave area, it was then possible to erect a replica of the marble enclosure around Bābur's grave, inside the walled area. The war-damaged marble mosque dedicated by Shah Jahan in 1675 was re-roofed with lime mortar and cracked marble elements were replaced, while the mihrab wall was refaced with marble in 2004. Among other historic buildings subsequently restored were the nineteenth-century Garden Pavilion and the Queen's Palace, both now in use for public functions. Excavations in the western end of the garden in 2003 revealed stone foundations of a seventeenth century gateway, around which was constructed a Karavanserai complex, using traditional forms and techniques, which now houses an

interpretation centre and other facilities. Archaeological excavations in 2004–05 revealed sections of a marble-lined water channel, yet discovered by Parpagliolo Shephard, and a series of water tanks along the central axis, which provided the basis for the design and reconstruction of a system that again allows water to flow the length of the centre of the garden, as it did in Babur's time. The landscaping aims to restore the character of the original garden, through the reintroduction of flowing water and the grading of adjoining terraces that have been replanted as distinct orchards. Stone pathways and stairs have been laid on either side of the central axis, which is flanked by an avenue of plane trees, interspersed with pomegranates, apricots, apples, cherries and peaches. Outside this zone, the terraces have been planted with mulberry, apricot, fig and almond trees, with copses of walnut along the reconstructed perimeter walls.

The Parpagliolo Shephard's work was probably the first project of renovation of a such important historical garden in Middle East. At the same time, it was probably even the first scientific approach to a survey, considering a lot of different topics and levels of knowledge: history, literature, religion, geography, politic aspect, measures, that she has displayed in drawings and sketches, with a lot of informations, not only metric but also qualitative and useful to become a proper project for the reconstruction.

The study and the proposal of Parpagliolo Shephard was only a beginning, as she wrote:

“it needs taste and deep knowledge in all fields: architecture, archaeology, and specialized techniques, a team of experts is needed. “Paradise is the eternal abode of Bābur Bādshāh” is written on his tomb. Befitting his memory the place of his everlasting rest, should

gradually become again the Paradise on earth he loved”.

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## **RESEARCH AND INDUSTRIES**

# An Architectural Scanning: Women Abundance between 1969 and 1989

Beste Sabir

'... The line it is drawn. The curse it is cast. The slow one now, will later be fast. As the present now, will later be past. The order is rapidly fading and the first one now will later be last. For the times, they are a-changing.'

Bob Dylan

## Introduction

From 1969 to 1989, the world faced with many societal and politic breakpoints that reflected to urban life and architecture. Undoubtedly, practicing as a woman architect in these intense times of change was a challenging responsibility. Aura of the period reflected directly to city culture and architectural productions. In this paper, firstly, the societal changes will be discussed; the main realm and key points of the period will be clarified. Later, in the light of keywords such as; socialism, eco-socialism, collectivism, environmentalism and nature, women pioneers and architects who produced with these perspectives will be mentioned. Their major projects, efforts and struggles will be linked to the main societal conditions and reflections of the period.

## 1.Societal and Political Background from 1969 to 1989

Environmental catastrophes started in 1960s and Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*<sup>1</sup> affected American public consciousness in a deep level. People started to think broadly about the connection of their environment with ecology, industry and technology and started to link the destruction of modern developments with the nature. Beginning of modern environmentalism blossomed as environmental activists encouraged people to raise the public awareness and to support environmental issues such as; human waste, pollution, protection. They used the methods of sit-ins, events, students' silent protests, raising funds for the cleanup and protection of the earth. Many acts have been created in late 1960s and 1970s to protect the nature. In addition, Buddhism and eastern philosophies led to environmental movements. 1960s generated ideas about recycling and protecting the environment that we consider today. 1950s people were urged to be the same and they were staying with the crowd. As the 1960s counter culture grew; fashion, music, arts and many social levels of the society changed, they developed essential new

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<sup>1</sup> *Silent Spring* provoked conservationists, ecologists, biologists, social critics, reformers, and organic farmers to join in the American environmental movement and the book helped to transform the previous and insufficient conservation movement into more comprehensive and ecologically informed environmentalism. Environmental and Green movements raised through worldwide.

values influenced by spiritual experiences such as Zen Buddhism, socialism<sup>2</sup> and environmentalism. The New Left contributed peaceful protests like sticking flowers into the soldier's gun as these practices called non-violent civil disobedience<sup>3</sup>.

Social progressive values that began in 1960s kept on growing in 1970s. The hippie culture started in the latter half of the 1960s. Large amount of protests began to grow with the Vietnam War<sup>4</sup>, people that were opposed to war they were called hippies, anarchists. After nuclear meltdown in 1979, hundreds of thousand people protested nuclear power in New York. In 1970 people started to realize the limits of nature more deeply, apart from the first Earth Day in 1970, Mohandas Gandhi in India organized people to hug trees<sup>5</sup>. We may also call this period as environmental revolution and an alternative way of activism.

With the second wave feminism<sup>6</sup>, people started to talk about gender issues, sexuality, workplace, reproductive rights, and legal inequalities. Many of these protests ended with some changes such as divorce law, integration of women to sports activities, women's shelters etc.<sup>7</sup>

"A woman's place is in the home' has been one of the most important

principles of architectural design and urban planning in the United States for the last century. An implicit rather than explicit principle for the conservative and male-dominated design professions, it will not be found stated in large type in textbooks on land use. It has generated much less debate than the other organizing principles of the contemporary American city in an era of monopoly capitalism, which include the ravaging pressure of private land development, the fetishist dependence on millions of private automobiles, and the wasteful use of energy. However, women have rejected this dogma and entered the paid labour force in larger and larger numbers. Dwellings, neighbourhoods and cities designed for homebound women constrain women physically, socially, and economically. Acute frustration occurs when women defy these constraints to spend all or part of the work day in the paid labour force. I contend that the only remedy for this situation is to develop a new paradigm of the home, the neighbourhood, and the city; to begin to describe the physical, social, and economic design of a human settlement that would support, rather than restrict, the activities of employed women and their families." (Hayden, 1980) As Hayden mentions about developing new paradigms that can link employed women to everyday life. Thus, 60s and 70s movements support these ideas, and women gains lot of rights in their daily lives especially in second wave of feminism.

The protests, against to the nuclear arms continued in 1980s. In the late 80s cold war came to an end. 1980s movements were less vibrant and small scaled than 1960s, even the protest music of the sixties had nothing on the music of the 80s.

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<sup>2</sup> The New Left was a social activist group in 1960s wanted to reference Marxist movements represented mostly by students' democratic society.

<sup>3</sup> These practices influenced by Herbert Marcuse, founder of the New Left.

<sup>4</sup> US bombed North Vietnam, Cambodia and Lao.

<sup>5</sup> Tree hugger term coming from this event.

<sup>6</sup> First wave feminism was focusing on legal issues like the right to vote.

<sup>7</sup> [Despina Stratigakos](http://www.metropolismag.com/architecture/architecture-new-feminist-activism-tackles-profession-gender-bias/), "Architecture's New Feminist Activism Tackles the Profession's Gender-Bias", <http://www.metropolismag.com/architecture/architecture-new-feminist-activism-tackles-profession-gender-bias/>, (accessed September 5, 2017).

## 2. An Architectural Scanning

Parallel to socio-economic and technological changes all over the world, people started to feel the urge of nature. In this paper, it is tried to be scanned the period between 1969 to 1989 with the lenses of socialism, environmentalism through the projects of women pioneers from all over the world. The image connects the women architects that this paper will discuss, with their characteristics, conditions and social structures related to their countries.

In 1364 Christine de Pizan, a French writer wrote a book in Venice about women in society and started dreaming about how a city life should be for the women. Edward Soja (1996) mentions about this book of Pizan in Third Space<sup>8</sup> and expresses that it has been started to be discussed the situation of women in society not only in modern times, but even in 1364.

Women began to be accepted to Architectural Studies in 1870s. *Cincinnati Enquirer* was recommending in an article in 1880 for the women to use their skills on improving kitchens, servants' rooms and closets. This male dominant strategy continued to be promoted for a century, until the gender movements followed by the legal and institutional reforms of 1970s. Briefly, we can call three waves that supports the women in architecture area. First wave was in 19<sup>th</sup> century, second one in 1970s and third wave continued into the 1990s.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> E. Soja, 1996, Third Space  
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<http://www.metropolismag.com/architecture/architecture-new-feminist-activism-tackles-profession-gender-bias/>

### 2.1 Yasmeen Lari and Her Collectivist Approach

Yasmeen Lari (1941, Pakistan) is the first woman architect of her country. After receiving her architectural degree from Oxford Brookes University in 1963, she aimed to create solutions for Pakistan's socio-physical conditions. She was operating in a place that is industrially less-developed, with poverty, booming urban centres also, with major disasters. These conditions were making her work more challenging. During her life, she faced with many challenging conditions due to practicing as a woman architect in the male dominated world. Especially workers at the construction sites was a challenging issue for her.

Pakistan's socio-political background during her period shows that, there was not a stable condition in the country. Free elections have been held in 1971 to establish a democratic government. By that time, the country had been under military rule for thirteen of its twenty-five years of existence. Also, Pakistan was involved in war with India, clearing the way for the establishment of Bangladesh from 1965 to 1970s. Thus, during an unstable and patriarchal condition in her country, Lari managed to open herself a space for an inspiring career.

She established Lari Associates, Architects and Urban Designers in 1964 and took on the challenges as an architect dealing with issues in an industrially less developed country – from mud buildings, low-income housing and improvements in spontaneous settlements to state of the art buildings. She worked there until 2000, designing many state-of-the-art buildings for the upper class while simultaneously working to create low-income housing and vernacular technologies for lower classes. She was elected Member of Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in

1969, as President of Institute of Architects Pakistan (IAP) and first chairperson of Pakistan Council of Architects and Town Planners. She has always had an interest on cultural heritage preservation thus, she founded the non-profit, humanitarian Heritage Foundation of Pakistan with her husband in 1980 for to document and conserve the traditional and historic environment of Pakistan's diverse architecture and art.

Lari's aim has never been ended up with doing many projects, but being able to do different kinds of "things". Lari practiced architecture with the lenses of social design and humanitarian perspective and her designs usually have driven by the users of the buildings. As she states, she has been influenced mostly by Egyptian architect Hasan Fathy and Le Corbusier. One of her early achievements includes the study of slums and squatter settlements of Karachi, her important projects included housings, such as the Anguri Bagh Housing (1978), [Taj Mahal Hotel](#) (1981), the Finance and Trade Center (1989), and the Pakistan State Oil House (1991) in [Karachi](#). Especially one of her publications called "Slums and Squatter Settlements - Their Role and Improvement Strategy" supports her collectivist ideas and projects.

In Anguri Bagh Housing project (1978) that won The Aga Khan Award for Architecture, she built it with the cheapest local bricks in Karachi while still maintaining the quality of the building. The projects attempt to provide large number of low-cost, one- and two-room housing units based on the living pattern of the urban poor of Lahore. 787 low-cost dwelling units arranged in 14 clusters of single, two and three-storey blocks providing large number of low-cost one and two room housing units for the urban poor of Lahore, Pakistan. First category consists of a room, a covered veranda, and

an enclosed courtyard; second, one consists of two rooms, a veranda, and a courtyard. In both cases, the kitchen forms an enclosure within the veranda, the WC, and bath open onto the courtyard. Materials are produced locally such as: Reinforced concrete cast in site, wooden window frames. All materials are produced locally, except steel, which is imported, and rolled locally.

## 2.2 Sheila Sri Prakash and Social Responsibility

Sri Prakash (1955, India) graduated from Architecture & Planning Department of Anna University in 1977. After graduation, she founded Shilpa Architects in 1979. Sri Prakash's work of architecture has always been focusing on environmental-friendly designs with socio-economically sensitive consciousness. She introduced vernacular architecture and *indo-centric* design techniques to her works. In her understanding, indo-centric design evolves from empirical understanding of our culture, family values and lifestyle and these are crucial issues for her sensitive understanding on design process.

Socio-political background of India in that period was male dominated in every level. Riots between Hindus and Muslims were going on; in 1984, assassination of the Prime Minister Gandhi made the confusion worst and chaotic. In 1971 India entered to a war with Pakistan for the independence of Bangladesh. IMF programs and industrial and agricultural developments during the 1980s, made some impact on the wellbeing of the people and urbanization of the cities. She had many obstacles during her practices in male-dominated profession. It is to say,

there was a chaotic and unstable period to practice as a woman architect.

Prakash has researched on the impacts of space design and planning on society and she called this field as "spaciology". She applied this *concept* to healthcare and the leisure, wellness and hospitality industry, linking the built environment to human behaviour through sociology, urban design, architecture and sociology. Basically, spaciology was tracing how the space design influences society and how it creates linkages between architecture practices and our environmental perception. She was always connected to performing arts as a Bharatanatyam dancer, musician, sculptor. Dance has influenced Sheila's approach to architecture, as architecture and dance are both relying on lines, rhythm and harmony within a space. 1987 was the year of shelter for shelter less as World Bank and HUDCO announced, and with invitation she designed an award-winning low-cost home.

### **2.3 Agnes Denes and Her Environmental Art**

Agnes (1931, Hungary) is a Hungarian born American conceptual artist working in a wide range. Agnes Denes was raised in Sweden and educated in the United States. She produced complex diagrams (which she expresses as visual philosophy), sculptures and installations mainly constructed on environmental issues. She is a pioneer of several art movements focusing on science, linguistics, music, history, poetry, philosophy and engaging her works with socio-politic ideas of her time.

She has reflected the socio-political background of her time with her works, as a pioneer of environmental art, she expressed with her works the 1968

movements' ecological concerns. She produced in an interdisciplinary area of architecture, urbanism, art, land art and supported these works by researching on science, philosophy, geography and mathematics. She is the author of six books and is featured in numerous other publications on a wide range of subjects in art and the environment.

*Wheatfield - A Confrontation: Battery Park Landfill (1982) in Downtown Manhattan* is her best-known work which has been created during a four-month period in the spring and summer of 1982 when Denes, with the support of the Public Art Fund, planted a field of golden wheat on two acres of rubble-strewn landfill near Wall Street and the World Trade Centre in lower Manhattan (now the site of Battery Park City and the World Financial Centre). The work is criticizing the massive urbanization tendencies and focusing on nature in the cities. It is one of the first examples as an environmental art that relates to urbanization.

### **2.4 Maya Lin's Tranquil and Minimal Approach**

Maya Lin (1949, China), one of the most important public artists, studied Bachelor of Arts degree in 1981 and a Master of Architecture degree in 1986 at Yale University. Lin's art and architecture inspired from environment and landscape, she is mapping socio-spatial relations in the urban environment. She takes micro and macro views of the earth, sonar resonance scans, aerial and satellite mapping devices and translates that information into sculptures, drawings and environmental installations. She produces projects that focus on environmental issues with social responsibility and for the usage of sources in a sustainable manner with an artist awareness. These works

address how we respond and relate our environment. She also links her works to history, time, language and boundaries between two and three-dimensional space. These works have strong environmental messages crossing beyond the aesthetic preferences. Lin's works have been effected by the social and environmental issues of her period. They simply show how nature can be incorporated in the urban forms and their development and for the advantage of ecology, industry and common health. Lin's works bring awareness to minimal thoughts and texturally rich minimalism with the usage of simple, organic and tranquil forms and flows -making a place for individuals within the landscape.

She won a public design competition for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (1980-82) in Washington, D.C during her undergraduate studies, with her winning proposal, she designed a V-shaped wall of black stone etched with the names of 58,000 dead soldiers. Visitor's reflection can be seen with engraved names in building façade, this effect brings past and present together in one space. The building design has a rich creative process in the background, full of sketches linking users and landscape, past and present times to each other.

## **2.5. Itsuko Hasegawa and Her Naturalist Approach in Post-war Japan**

From 1945 to 1960s Japan's post-war atmosphere effected many socio-physical sides of everyday life. From the sixties through the mid-eighties politics were more stable. Liberal Democratic Party maintained a solid majority and economy started to grow in seventies especially in heavy industry sector and in advanced technology. Parallel to these events, country started to face with

pollution problems as most of the post-industrial societies face through. ([http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/timelines/japan\\_modern\\_timeline.htm](http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/timelines/japan_modern_timeline.htm)).

Technological and industrial growth separate people from nature and effects the urbanization models in cities. Some group of people started to choose the new nature but also after this big gap between nature and people, some architects started to develop and connect house and building forms reconnected with environment. They started to argue the relationship with society and nature.

As cartoon sector started to grow, concept of "second/new nature" started to be discussed. This new nature - including cars, televisions, computers, machines- opposing the real nature started to affect the urbanization and architecture models in a way of postmodern, hi-tech and next-modern movements. Society started to relate technology to every detail of the urban life.

Contrary with these tendencies, Hasegawa (1941, Japan) used technology to redesign and implement the nature to developing cities of Japan. By using the real nature patterns, she tried to combine architectural design with technologic developments and with men made nature. Thus, we may see in her works green roofs and facades, insulated pools in the centre of the cities, organic forms dedicated to nature and new topographies. In Byhouse project (1985, Tokyo) she combines the nature with the building façade by using technologic developments of the time.

She describes one of her sensitive project called Shonandai Culture Center (1990, Tokyo) with the words 'back to the nature by a different route'<sup>10</sup>. She

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<sup>10</sup> An article by Hasegawa, Architects' Journal, vol.192, no.12, September 1990 / p.56-59, 'Back to nature by a different route'

designed this space as Tokyo's leisure and communal life center as the city needed this function abundantly. This project holds significant communication and feedbacks from the inhabitants. Also, the concept 'architecture as the second nature' guides the design in environmental and socialist ways. Marble shell and glass facades comes together with the silver and metal trees by a manmade river in between. The landscape that she designed for the space is called as a special space that we can hear the enchanting music of the universe.

### 3. Conclusion

It is tried to scan the period between 1969 to 1989 with the lenses of socialist and environmentalist approaches in design, also lenses of gender issues of the period. It can be added more to the women pioneers that have been explained above such as: Brinda Somaya (India) is an architect and urban conservationist worked with cultural and historic environment, supported Zonta International, which is an organization that aims to enhance the status of women around the world. Also, she is the founder trustee of HECAR Foundation that is focusing on heritage, education, conservation, architecture and restoration. She worked on women empowerment thus on the sites of the buildings she cooperated with the women labor. Jane Drew (1911, England) was one of the leading exponents of the Modern Movement in London. Much of her work was carried out in collaboration with Maxwell Fry. Their most important projects were in West Africa and India, they worked on empowerment of the communities, she worked with Le Corbusier on development of Chandigarh - the Punjab's new capital. In the 1980s, she

became the first woman to be elected a full professor at Harvard and MIT and was the first woman to be elected president of the AA and to sit on the RIBA council. Dolores Hayden, Susana Torre and Ada Louise Huxtable produced on criticism and theoretic approaches. They produced theories and books on gender issues, feminist designs, ethnicity and urban history. Some of Hayden's books in our scanning period: *Seven American Utopias: The Architecture of Communitarian Socialism, 1790–1975* (1976); *The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods, and Cities* (1981); *Redesigning the American Dream: The Future of Housing, Work, and Family Life* (1984).

It can be noted that the social realms and background of the period between 1969 to 1989 underline main keywords and movements that influence architectural productions. The women pioneers that have been mentioned above are both related the aura of their own period and produced with the main sensitivity of their times. These movements of 60s, 70s and 80s have stable and strong roots in today's present realities. And these roots are forming and bringing new ways of searching and analysis. Diagram of the main terms that have been generated and practiced in the period have been shown in the image. We can refer this diagram and scan the period's main concepts that relates to architectural production of the women pioneers.

From 1970s to 1990s we face with the rise of environmentalism and engagement with Marxism and actually, existing socialism. 1990s onwards, these key points have been combined with the present time's conditions and turned into new realities. Socialist design and environmentalist approaches formed a

new term: Eco-Socialism<sup>11</sup> which brings together insights of ecology with the rich tradition of socialist thought and action. It is a critical of many past and existing forms of both [Green politics](#) and socialism of 1970s. Briefly, it is an anti-globalization movement engaged with the Eco socialist Manifesto with the vision of transforming society in harmony with nature, directed toward alternatives to all socially and ecologically destructive systems, such as patriarchy, racism, homophobia and the fossil-fuel based economy.

These approaches still, continue and evolve in our present time. We are still in search of healthier urban forms with the less and balanced usage of natural sources plus we have an urge for the resilient cities for the conditions of tomorrow. Thus, we notice with this paper the roots of the socialist and environmentalist movements and how they shaped the women pioneer architect works. Hopefully these scanning research linking the main terms of 70s and 80s movements with the architectural searching and realizations of the period gives us an understanding and enthusiasm for to continue searching and creating on tomorrows cities with the deep understanding of green socialism.

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<sup>11</sup> Green Socialism, Socialist Ecology or Deep Ecology.

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# Contribution to Research of Modern Architecture in Croatia (1969-1989)

Zrinka Barišić Marenić, Marina Bertina and Neda Mrinjek Kliska

## 1. Introduction

Modern architecture has been developing in Croatia since 1928, the year that saw first accomplishments by young architects educated at the Architectural Department of the Polytechnic in Zagreb who had fresh views and inclinations. Works of established architects who had received education in other European cities also contributed to its formation.

In the 1930s, a high quality of architecture, especially residential, was achieved owing to influences exerted by Bauhaus, Le Corbusier and the Dutch De Stijl movements. The majority of architects were left-oriented and they frequently warned about growing social issues in their public statements and exhibitions. Through their work, they tried to provide high quality spaces such as housing, schools, hospitals and workers' insurance offices that could cater for a wide range of people. Architects active within the so-called Zagreb School of Architecture adopted tenets of functionalism, though as Prof. Šegvić<sup>1</sup> stresses, their interpretations of typically pure and strict forms were subtly imbued with regional elements, primarily through their choice and treatment of building materials. Continuous activities of the architects who formed their architectural language in the 1930s, together with a sound theoretical basis, contributed to a further development of modern

architecture in Croatia even in the period after the Second World War within political circumstances of a new socialist republic.<sup>2</sup> Despite certain pressures from the east, or more specifically Belgrade, Croatian architecture managed to resist the socialist realism of the late 1940s.

In the late 1960s, the Croatian architectural scene was, in addition to established architects, increasingly marked by the work of a younger generation of architectural professionals<sup>3</sup> who were closely connected to modernist architects active in the interwar period. They made their contribution by working in different types of organisations such as governmental institutions or independent architectural design studios. A great number of them also worked in big building companies whose influence and strength peaked in the 1970s.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> In [World War II, the](#) Yugoslav Communist Party organized and united anti-fascist forces into a widespread resistance movement. At the end of World War II, a new communist government was established. Croatia was one of the six republics that constituted former Yugoslavia. Although communist in its ideology, it held an independent position in relation to the Soviet Union, i.e. the Eastern Bloc.

<sup>3</sup> Boris Krstulović, Igor Emili, Andre Čičin-Šain, Zdravko Bregovac, Radovan Nikšić, Ninoslav Kučan, Miroslav Begović, Mladen Vodička, Lovro Perković

<sup>4</sup> The early 1970s saw dramatic political developments in Croatia, that is, attempts to gain political autonomy from Yugoslavia, which did not have any substantial influence on architecture

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<sup>1</sup> Neven Šegvić, "Stanje stvari, jedno viđenje, 1945-1985," *Arhitektura* 196-199 (1986), 118-280.

In the mid-1970s and during the 1980s, Croatia was dominated by the architecture that was grounded in modernism<sup>5</sup>. Only several individual architects showed inclination to rationalism<sup>6</sup> while a few cases appeared with elements of a certain neo-expressionism<sup>7</sup> and structuralism<sup>8</sup>. There were also examples whose features were internationally called neo-vernacular while in Croatia they were, according to Prof. Maroević<sup>9</sup>, recognized as traits of local heritage<sup>10</sup>.

Owing to the deeply rooted modern architecture, postmodernism did not leave any considerable resonance in the country. Its influence was partial and criticism of its tenets present from the very beginning. In 1980, Prof. Neven Šegvić critically observed that the country *“will participate in a general architectural history only through its idiosyncratic expression”*.<sup>11</sup>

In the course of the 1970s, urban planners focused on creating spatial plans, with a particular emphasis on the area along the Adriatic coast that witnessed a growing number of tourism-related building projects. Dominant characteristics included a formation of new estates on urban peripheries and extensive housing projects. In terms of urban growth, the state considerably invested in the construction of educational facilities, cultural institutions and hospitals.

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<sup>5</sup> Architects Jelinek, Posavec, Knežević and Marinović-Uzelac.

<sup>6</sup> Architects Odak, Paulić, Tajder, Crnković and Kožarić.

<sup>7</sup> Architects Šosterič, Emili, Filipčić and Šerbetić.

<sup>8</sup> Architects Bregovac and Kušan.

<sup>9</sup> Maroević, “Arhitektura sedamdesetih,” 47-5.

<sup>10</sup> Architects Rožić, Rošin, Kranjc, Siladin and de Luca.

<sup>11</sup> Neven Šegvić, “Postmoderna arhitektura - okrugli stol,” *Arhitektura* 172+3 (1980), 24.

Somewhat less funding went to sports facilities.<sup>12</sup>

The 1980s were a harbinger of the economic crisis and widespread economic stagnation. The focus shifted to city development and a restored formation of unique urban functions with the enhancement of the existing urban morphology. Decreased investment allowed for exquisite accomplishments in interior design and the construction of buildings that were low in number but high in quality.

Esteemed examples of architecture, accomplished in the period after the Homeland War, were strongly based on modernism, sound architectural education<sup>13</sup>, theoretical framework and insights into contemporary tendencies in architecture.

Croatian female architects were professionally active in all the aforementioned periods, in all segments of the architectural practice. Their influence in the 1970s and 1980s has here been analysed from the point of view of their architectural schooling and their role in architectural education and practice.

## 2. Overview of Architectural Education in Croatia Regarding Rates of Female Students<sup>14</sup>

The education of architects in Croatia dates back to 1919 when the

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<sup>12</sup> An analysis of professional awards in the period shows that the buildings for commercial, sports and public health purposes were the least awarded

<sup>13</sup> Nicola di Battista (ed.) “Europe’s Top 100 Schools of Architecture and Design 2014,” *Domus* 975 (2013), supplement 118-119

<sup>14</sup> Percentages of graduates from the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb can be found in: Mladen Obad Ščitaroci (ed.), *Sveučilište u Zagrebu Arhitektonski fakultet 1919/1920–1999/2000* (Zagreb: Sveučilište u Zagrebu – Arhitektonski fakultet, 2000), 313-30.

School of Technology was established in Zagreb.<sup>15</sup> By the beginning of the Second World War there had been 18 female graduates from the School's Department of Architecture (10% of all graduates<sup>16</sup>), and the same number of women graduated in the period 1940-1945 (32% of all graduates).

Early post-war years saw the change of power and socio-economic system in Croatia, with intense attempts to overcome shortages of housing and to plan industrial development, that is, a general modernisation of the country and its economic growth. There was a tangible shortage of all sorts of engineers, including architects. This shortage resulted with a considerable increase in the number of students of the Faculty of Technology. These years were marked by an encouragement of social and gender equality.

After having been mobilised in the Second World War, women assumed a significant role in the socio-political sphere, and they lived in the circumstances that supported emancipation and a free choice of life styles. The number of female architecture students increased significantly, so the predominantly "male" studies started losing this attribute by the process of gradual gender segregation. At the end of 1970s, the number of female students at the Faculty of Architecture started to exceed the number of male students,

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<sup>15</sup> The name of the institution gradually changed from School of Technology (1919-1926) to Technical Faculty of the University of Zagreb (1926-1956), to the Faculty of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy (1956-1962) and finally to the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Zagreb (since 1962).

<sup>16</sup> Students who graduated in this period included Zoja Nepenina (married Dumengjić, graduated in 1927) and Ksenija Grisogono (1934).

which has progressively continued to the present day.<sup>17</sup>

The growth trend in the number of female students at the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb corresponded to the trends at other Croatian universities, and taking the lead in the 1980s.<sup>18</sup> However, few female architects managed to gain recognition in the professional arena even in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Women have evidently had the primacy among the population of architecture students in Croatia. Today, the ratio between male and female students is 40% to 60% in favour of female students (contrary to the ratio in the 1960s).

### **3. Overview of Female Contribution to Architectural Education in Croatia (Before 1989)<sup>19</sup>**

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<sup>17</sup> Among the graduates from Zagreb's Faculty of Architecture, there was 40% of women in the 1960s and 48% in the 1970s. The 1980s saw an increased rate of female graduates in relation to male graduates 42% vs. 58%, while the ratio shifted even more in favour of women, 36% vs. 64%, at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>18</sup> Ever since the 1970s, the percentage of female graduates at the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb has been bigger when compared to the total percentage of the female graduates at the faculties of other Croatian universities. In the 1970s, the ratio was 48% to 44.6%, in the 1990s it was 64% to 55.6, and in 2015-16, it was 64% to 61%, which is very indicative especially since architecture is a technology-based field. The total percentage of the universities includes data collected from the faculties with exceptionally high percentage of female students such as those in the fields of humanities and social sciences, biomedicine and health care. The average percentage of female students at technical faculties of all Croatian universities is 37%.

<sup>19</sup> The information about the teaching staff of the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb can be found in: Šćitaroci (ed.), *Arhitektonski fakultet*, 313-30 / The information about the teaching staff of the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb can be found in:

Women, female architects, lecturers, educators in a challenging field of spatial development and planning were not active within the architectural studies in Zagreb<sup>20</sup> before the period after the Second World War. The first female assistant employed at the Architectural Department of the Faculty of Technology in 1946<sup>21</sup> was Sena Sekulić Gvozdanović.<sup>22</sup> It was only in the late 1950s that new positions opened for female architects and the percentage of employed lecturers at the Faculty of Architecture reached 10% in the 1960s.<sup>23</sup> In the early 1970s, the percentage rose to 18%. The same period saw the rejuvenation of the teaching staff with the employment of a considerably big number of research and teaching assistants, including women.<sup>24</sup> By the end

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<sup>20</sup> Recently in Split and Osijek as well.

<sup>21</sup> Even 27 years after the establishment of the Faculty.

<sup>22</sup> She was followed by Božena Ostrogović, Melita Viličić and Dragica Crnković Očko.

<sup>23</sup> This percentage includes Olga Vujović, Aleksandra Zimperman, Tea Ložnik, Nada Jurković, Jasna Štampar and Vera Marsić.

<sup>24</sup> The Department of Architectural Design employs, among others, the following architects: Ljerka Biondić, Renata Waldgoni, Ljiljana Šepić, Anamarija Babić Poljanec and Marija Rendić Miočević. The staff of the Department of Urban and Physical Planning and Landscape Architecture includes Marija Perak and Željka Ružić. The Department of Architectural Technology and Building Science employs Jasenka Bertol Vrček, Branka Rosandić, Branka (Bek) Salaj, Marija Rebec and Marta Sulyok Selimbegović. Melita Viličić was a professor at the Department of History and Theory of Architecture.

In the period 1969-1989 the teaching staff of the Faculty also included the following architects: Vera Marsić, Olga Vujović, Nada Jurković, Doroteja Ložnik, Gordana Žaja, Ariana Štulhofer, Aleksandra Zimpermann, Eva Vaništa, Božena Ostrogović (Božica Janeš Ostrogović) and Mira Molnar.

Ljiljana Šepić, MSc, included into the curriculum (in 2000) a new elective course, Industrial Archaeology, which dealt with the timely topic of regeneration and research of technical heritage as a widely defined category. **Sonja**

of the 1980s, the gender ratio of the teaching staff had been 73% to 27% in favour of male population. Today this ratio is 60% to 40%<sup>25</sup>, which is inversely proportional with the gender ratio among architecture students.

All female research and teaching assistants were employed as fully formed young architects or exceptional students of the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb. Most of them have continuously built their careers within the formal frames of the institution, proving themselves equally competent in the architectural practice and research. The most remarkable and energetic of them have actively contributed to the formation of educational policies and Sena Sekulić Gvozdanović and Hildegard Auf Franić participated as deans in the highest administrative bodies of the Faculty.<sup>26</sup>

#### **4. Female Architects in Croatian Architectural Profession (Before 1989)<sup>27</sup>**

In the period before 1989, architects worked within various organisations, such as governmental bodies, ministries, conservation departments, educational

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**Jurković** affirmed herself as a professor, town planner and landscape architect. The Maksimir Park was the topic of her book (1992, co-authored with Olga Maruševski). <http://www.ulupuh.hr> (accessed September 5, 2017). Her design of the Sports Centre in Poreč was shortlisted for the participation in the World Architecture Festival in Barcelona (WAF 2009), <http://www.ulupuh.hr> (accessed September 5, 2017)

<sup>25</sup> The average gender ratio at the faculties of all Croatian universities is 51% to 49% in favour of men

<sup>26</sup> Among 56 faculty deans with the background in architecture, Sena Sekulić Gvozdanović and Hildegard Auf Franić were the only women.

<sup>27</sup> The female architects mentioned do not represent the full list of similar architects but this paper aims give an overview of the developments during the period in question.

institutions and especially successful civil engineering companies. The majority of women worked within the same system on an equal footing with their male colleagues, without bringing themselves to public attention. In fact, the system was effective due to their dedicated work and commitment to architecture. Yet, they were rarely awarded or promoted to leading positions.

During the period, only a few most progressive female architects asserted themselves within the fields of health care and educational architecture, interior design, horticulture, but also in education and scientific work, history of architecture, etc.

The first female architect and winner of the life achievement award was **Zoja Dumengjić**<sup>28</sup>. In many aspects, she played a pioneering role since she graduated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation of architectural engineers in Zagreb (1927) and gained a professional reputation as early as the 1930s. She was the first woman to realise the five-year plan within the architecture of socialist Croatia in the post-war period and the first female architect to set up her own firm, the Dumengjić Architectural Design Studio, in 1954. Additionally, she was the first female architect in Croatia

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<sup>28</sup> Recent papers focusing on her work were presented within the MoMoWo Conferences by Zrinka Barišić Marenčić. The titles include Remarkable Public Health Service Architecture by Architect Zoja Dumengjić in Croatia presented at the 2016 Women Designers, Architects and Engineers between 1946 and 1968 Conference in Ljubljana, and Modern Hospital Complexes by Architect Zoja Dumengjić in Croatia (1969-1981) presented at the 2017 Women Designers, Architects and Engineers between 1969 and 1989 Conference in Oviedo. Architect Zoja Dumengjić's oeuvre is the theme of Zrinka Barišić Marenčić's doctoral thesis titled „Arhitektica Zoja Dumengjić – Osobitost djela u kontekstu hrvatske moderne arhitekture” (Architect Zoja Dumengjić - The Remarkable Features of Her Oeuvre in the Context of Croatian Modern Architecture), University of Zagreb, Faculty of Architecture, 2007.

who was awarded with the Viktor Kovačić (1975) and the Vladimir Nazor (1995) Awards for life achievement. She specialised in health service architecture, with significant theoretical support provided by her husband Selimir Dumengjić. In addition to 188 works of architecture, she designed hospital complexes in Split, Karlovac, Koprivnica and Ogulin.

Other female architects who were active in the period after the Second World War remained in the shadow of their successful male colleagues or architect husbands (Kazimir Ostrogović and Božica Janeš-Ostrogović, Ivan and Nada Vitić, Marijan Haberle and Minka Jurković<sup>29</sup>). Published monographs that well present dominant architects have until now omitted female architects. Only recently the female role in Croatian architecture is being studied more intensively. Good examples are Lidija Butković Mićin's exhibition and the accompanying catalogue dedicated to Rijeka's female architects Ada Felice and Nada Šilović.<sup>30</sup> In the concluding words in the catalogue, she noticed that if a focus is placed on contemporary women's (un)equality in the architectural practice, it must be recognized that even nowadays the pervasive imbalance prevails between the number of female graduates and those who achieved a successful career as independent architects, although their presence is self-evident and unquestionable.

**Nada Šilović**<sup>31</sup> (1924-2009) and **Ada Felice Rošić**<sup>32</sup> (1922-2013) started their

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<sup>29</sup> The spouses designed the Vatroslav Lisinski Concert Hall in Zagreb (with Tanja Zdvorak, 1958-1973; 1974 City of Zagreb Award and 1974 Zagreb Salon Award).

<sup>30</sup> Lidija Butković Mićin, *Ada Felice-Rošić i Nada Šilović, ženski trag u arhitekturi Rijeke*. (Rijeka, 2014).

<sup>31</sup> In 1948-1957, she worked in Rijeka, Istria and Šibenik.

careers in the post-war period. As employees of the Architectural and Engineering Design Institute in Rijeka, they designed a number of contemporary apartment buildings in Rijeka in the early 1950s.

From 1958, **Ada Felice Rošić** worked at the office of the Primorje construction company in Rijeka. Her most prominent works from that period include the Trade School, Korzo Department Store, and the residential towers in F. Prešern Street and A. Kovačić Street, all in Rijeka. Korzo is the first department store in the city opened in 1970. As a symbol of social progress, it was built in an important and complex location in the city's historical centre. On the other hand, the residential towers in F. Prešern Street and A. Kovačić Street form the entrance to the city. The X-shaped floor plan, which enabled better flat arrangement, was a source of controversial interpretations in the context of the Law on Construction in Seismic Areas. Over time, these towers have become landmarks that define the city skyline.

From 1963, **Nada Šilović** worked at the Town Planning Office in Zagreb. By then, the social action had largely been focused on town-planning issues. One of numerous urban design competitions held at that time was the competition for the new city quarter of Sopot in Zagreb in 1965 and Nada Šilović's team was one of four architects and/or teams invited to participate in it. During her career as urban planner, she created many urban plans including the plan for Črnomerec, or more specifically the areas Fraterščica – Kvaternikova Street, Bijenik – Šestinski dol, Zelena magistrala – Ponikve, Podsused and Špansko.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> In 1975-1977, she worked as building inspector in Rijeka.

<sup>33</sup> Andrej Uchytíl, Zrinka Barišić Marenčić and Emir Kahrović, *Leksikon arhitekata Atlasa hrvatske*

**Dragica Perak (1917 – 1998)** was a co-architect of the prominent building project of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia's Presidency Building in Belgrade, Serbia (1947, 1954-1959, with V. Potočnjak, Z. Neumann, A. Ulrich, adaptation M. Janković; today Palace of Serbia) and she designed numerous office, educational and public buildings.<sup>34</sup>

**Dragica (Daša) Očko Crnković (1918)** worked as teaching assistant at Faculty of Technology in Zagreb. She headed her own projects as well as collaborated on Prof Zdenko Strižić's projects. Between the 1950s and 1980s, many Yugoslav specialists were employed by the state as technical or other assistance in third world countries, which was a result of Yugoslavia's non-aligned foreign policy<sup>35</sup>. This was significant for her career since her husband was several times engaged in the projects as an expert. She lived in Ethiopia (1958-1960)<sup>36</sup>, Zambia (1966- 1970), Swaziland (1970-1972) and Sierra Leone (1972-1974). While in Ethiopia, she had her own clients and worked as independent architect. In other countries, she participated in European architectural practices. Her design is based on modern architectural vocabulary integrated with contemporary tendencies.

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arhitekture XX. stoljeća (Zagreb: Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Arhitektonski fakultet, 2009)

<sup>34</sup> She designed new commercial, health care, educational and public buildings in Zagreb (medical centre, 1960; Kemoboje administrative building, 1962; Youth Hostel, 1962; Tekstilpromet Department Store, 1968) and reconstruction and adaptation of several hotels (Intercontinental, Palace and International).

<sup>35</sup> Former Yugoslavia was one of the founders of the Non-Aligned Movement, rejecting association with either of the confronting blocs in the Cold War period.

<sup>36</sup> Although she was still formally employed at the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb and was active as theoretician. From 1960 to 1966, she lived in Zagreb. Afterwards she resigned from the Faculty of architecture.

She applied the same procedure in her later works, yet adapted it to the African context by merging the influences from Croatian modern architecture and Sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>37</sup>

Within the field of interior and landscape design women gained substantial recognition. Works of two female landscape designers are significant for this period. Both of them were spouses of successful architects and often worked together on complementary projects.

**Silvana Seissel** (1912-2010) is a laureate of the Vladimir Nazor Life Achievement Award in 2000 for architecture and town planning. She was married to architect Josip Seissel with whom she designed many projects (Dotrščina Memorial Park in Zagreb, 1966-1967, with Vojin Bakić, Angela Rotkvić and Josip Seissel; today designated as a cultural-historical complex). She designed the Presidential Park in Zagreb (with Angela Rotkvić), which is a regulated landscape unit from the 1960s, the parks of Duke Branimir and King Držislav in Osijek (1950, 1956) and many other horticultural achievements.

**Mira Halabek Wenzler** (1929) one of the most renowned landscape architects in Croatia, *well known for* horticultural design of the area surrounding Zagreb's Town Hall (1955-1960, Kazimir Ostrogović). She collaborated with her husband, Fedor Wenzler, an urban planner, on the Jarun Sports and Recreational Park (1987). This popular area in Zagreb was developed for the 1987 University Games (Univerzijada). The conversion and regulation of former gravel pits into a system of lakes and rowing tracks, transformed this peripheral area of Zagreb into the recreational and residential area of Jarun. According to

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<sup>37</sup> Mojca Smode Cvitanović, Marina Smokvina and Andrej Uchytíl „Dragica Crnković Očko,” *Prostor* 1(2016), 90-101.

Snješka Knežević, a high ethical charge of serving citizens, the aspiration to aesthetic utopia based on the synthesis of nature and art are the foundations of her rich oeuvre.<sup>38</sup>

**Olga Pavlinović** (1927-1982) was the architect of the modest, yet impressive Andrija Kačić Miošić Square (1970-1971). By subtle urban intervention in the heart of Makarska, a new model has been created with a very clear, yet rich and complex space design. A thousand-year-long tradition, a new example of a Mediterranean public space was designed allowing all forms of movement, interruption, encounter, and stay, or moreover, inducing them.<sup>39</sup>

In the late 1970s and in the 1980s the interest in town planning grew stronger. The concept of social property of apartments was replaced with private or state ownership. As apartments had become trading goods in 1958, construction companies started to look for profit. The demand for economically viable large building plots led to urbanisation of large areas at the outskirts of cities. New systems of prefabrication designed in former Yugoslavia were applied. The main characteristics of the period were standardization, prefabrication and mass production. Large construction companies employed architects and other types of engineers. Female architects worked in teams alongside their male colleagues. One of frequently published works is the Office and Residential Complex in Gruška Street

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<sup>38</sup> Snješka Knežević, at <http://www.ulupuh.hr/hr/straniceclanova.asp?idsekcije=14&idclana=641> (accessed September 5, 2017)

<sup>39</sup> Željka Čorak, “Kačićev trg u Makarskoj arhitektice Olge Pavlinović (prilog poznavanju hrvatskih trgova),” *Život umjetnosti* 31 (1996), 44-51, [https://www.ipu.hr/content/zivot-umjetnosti/ZU\\_58-1996\\_044-051\\_Corak.pdf](https://www.ipu.hr/content/zivot-umjetnosti/ZU_58-1996_044-051_Corak.pdf), (accessed September 5, 2017).

in Zagreb, designed in 1971 by **Lidija Grečko** and Miroslav Stella, employees of the Tempo building company that completed the complex in 1973.<sup>40</sup>

In terms of their public work, female architects were also actively engaged in advancing the profession. Dragica Crnković Očko served as presidents of the Zagreb Architects' Association, while Hildegard Auf Franić was president of the Croatian Association of Architects.

As an educational institution, the Faculty recruited the best students or affirmed professionals to be serve as teaching staff. Excellence, talent, diligence, perseverance, keenness are only some of their characteristics, or criteria for successful advancement. The following chapters will focus on most prominent female professors and their professional achievements.

**Sena Sekulić Gvozdanović, PhD** (1916 – 2002) was the first woman employed by the Department of Architecture at the Faculty of Technology in Zagreb (1946), the first female dean (1979-1981) and first female professor emeritus (1998). Her primary field of specialization was history of architecture and the protection of architectural heritage, within which she built her educational, scientific and professional career.<sup>41</sup> At the time when it was very important to have information about international trends, Sena Sekulić Gvozdanović translated several books authored by James Maude Richards,

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<sup>40</sup> Šegvić, "Stanje stvari," 224.

<sup>41</sup> Conservation, restoration and adaptation designs for the Sisak Historic City (1954, first awarded competition entry, realisation of the project was entrusted to Denzler), Music Academy in the Upper Town in Zagreb (1964-83, cooperation with A. Albini).

After Mladen Kauzlarić's death, Sena Sekulić Gvozdanović and Zvonimir Vrkljan completed the design for the buildings of the Archaeological Museums in Zadar (1964-1972) and Split (1954-1976).

Herbert Read, and Walter Gropius. She participated in numerous international conferences, taught at universities abroad and published a number of scientific and professional papers. From 1983, she had actively participated in conferences of the International Union of Women Architects. In 1973, she published articles in professional magazine *Čovjek i prostor* (Man and Space) focusing on the historical female position in architecture. In 1998, she published the book "*Žena u arhitekturi – tragom žene kreatora i žene teoretičara u povijesti arhitekture* (Women in Architecture – Following the Steps of Female Creators and Theoreticians in Architectural History)".<sup>42</sup> In addition to numerous prizes, she received the Viktor Kovačić (1983) and the Vladimir Nazor (1997) Lifetime Achievement Awards.

**Hildegard Auf Franić, PhD** (1941) worked in her formative period individually and/or with various architects, and participated and won awards at architectural competitions.

In her search for urbanity and humanisation of city spaces she approached architectural tasks in a critical and innovative way, which can be discerned in the competition entry for Francuske Republike Square (1976),

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<sup>42</sup> The author of the book based her research on archaeological findings, old manuscripts and contemporary historical interpretations. She "revealed a feminine sensitivity in structural particularities of architecture, in the iconology of ornamentation and individual architectural elements, in structural and decorative materials, and, finally, in the substantive identity of buildings in individual civilizational and cultural periods, in harmony with or opposition to the "male" features of architecture and features of architects". She stresses the need to create and protect the balance achieved by the acceptance of complex values, including the female and male prototypes that supplement each other.

Olga Maruševski, "Predgovor" in Sena Sekulić Gvozdanović, *Žena u arhitekturi* (Zagreb: PSEFIZMA, 1998), 6

designed in collaboration with B. Silađin, which won the Grand Prix Award of the 14th Zagreb Salon Exhibition (1979). The design *“shows achievements of an architectural gesture that does not stop at the borders of the competition guidelines, but approaches the city and reinterprets it in a visionary way, by creating links between its parts methodologically, substantially and interpretively”*.<sup>43</sup>

She designed the Mostar Cathedral (1975, with I. Franić) and the 5<sup>th</sup> Pavilion of the Faculty of Agriculture in Zagreb (1979, with B. Radimir and L. Pleština)<sup>44</sup> marked the first in a series of accomplishments in the field of educational architecture that would characterized her professional and academic body of work. She also designed a secondary school complex (1979) and a kindergarten and nursery (1980) in Imotski and a primary school in Aržan (1982). The 1990s saw the beginning of her most fruitful period in which she created numerous educational buildings, from nurseries to faculties, which were either nominated for or awarded with a number of professional and national architectural awards. Among others, she also won the Vladimir Nazor (2013) and the Viktor Kovačić (2015) Lifetime Achievement Awards.

**Ines Filipović** (1936 – 2001) completed numerous architectural projects, competition entries and interior design projects. In the period 1956–1980, she participated in numerous competitions with her husband Nikola Filipović. They designed the reconstruction of Dubrovnik Hotel and the new Dubrovnik II Hotel (receiving in 1982 the

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<sup>43</sup> Sandra Križić Roban, „Reasserting the City,” *Život umjetnosti* 82 (2008), 70.

<sup>44</sup> Zrinka Barišić Marenić, „Paviljonski sklop Poljoprivredno-šumarskog fakulteta,” *Prostor* 13 (2005), 55-65.

Viktor Kovačić annual award)<sup>45</sup> whose “structural glass envelope creates a counterpart to the environment within a modified historical city centre [...] forming a new spatial situation, hitherto unusual for the most central part of the city.”<sup>46</sup> The couple also designed a residential building in Zamenhofova Street (1976) and the INA-Naftaplin office building in Šubićeva Street in Zagreb.

However, she made a particular contribution to Croatian architecture with her interior designs that became outstanding public places in Zagreb, such as Charlie Cafe (1985), Argentina Cafe (1988) Velvet Cafe (1993), Harmica Cafe (1995) as well as interiors in the public area of Dubrovnik II Hotel, and many others.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, she was the first autonomous female architect and a laureate of the annual Vladimir Nazor (1988) and Viktor Kovačić (2000) Lifetime Achievement Awards.

There are few female architects engaged in architectural criticism. The first among the few was **Antoaneta Pasinović (1942-1985)** who wrote numerous architectural reviews, organized exhibitions and directed documentaries about architectural problems.<sup>48</sup>

This overview concludes with **Branka Kaminski (1956-2002)**, an architect known

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<sup>45</sup> She was a rare female architect working in the field of tourism-related architecture in this period, which was a fruitful period for the development of this architectural field in former Yugoslavia.

<sup>46</sup> Ivo Marojević, “Zagrebačka arhitektura osamdesetih godina,” *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti* 16 (1992), 239

<sup>47</sup> Interior design became a topic of interest to other prominent architects as well, for example, to Nenad Fabijanić (5<sup>th</sup> Magazin in Pag) and Ivan Crnković (Karas Gallery and Cabinet Wine Bar in Zagreb).

<sup>48</sup> Sandra Križić Roban, <https://www.geni.com/people/Antoaneta-Pasinovi%C4%87/6000000040875963118>, (accessed September 12 2017).

in Croatia not so much for the buildings she designed but for her fantastic hand drawings. She won the second award at the Architectural Review Centenary Drawing Competition in 1996 for the perspective view of the city of Pula with the Arena in the foreground.

In the late 1980s and the early 1990s, a number of female architects graduated and became active in the profession. Their work was later recognised by numerous award-winning competition entries, and realised projects awarded with a great number of professional and national awards.

It was in the war period or immediately after the war<sup>49</sup> that many of them graduated and started their respective careers abroad. **Helena Paver Njirić** (1965) returned in 1992 to Zagreb from Graz, Austria and pursued her remarkable career first as partner in njiric+njiric with her husband Hrvoje Njirić, and from 2002 in her own office HPNJ+. From 2008, holding the position of assistant professor, she taught courses at the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb, and was a visiting or affiliated professor at various European faculties. **Zoka Zola**, on the other hand, built her renowned international career abroad, established her own studio and is currently teaching at the Illinois Institute of Technology.<sup>50</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

Experiences of “being” a woman in different time periods of the Croatian architectural practice are very different and dependent upon numerous factors,

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<sup>49</sup> The more prosperous republics of Slovenia and Croatia aspired to having decentralized and democratic governance. In 1991, Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence to Yugoslavia, the act that led to war.

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.zokazola.com/aboutus.html>, (accessed September 12 2017).

among which the most prominent are social and institutional contexts and gender stereotypes, or more specifically, imposed „gender differences“. The public is not very familiar with female architects, whose architectural practice and academic work has considerably advanced the profession and enriched the Croatian space. This makes every encouragement for researching their body of work positive and welcome.

For women, the entering into the field of architecture in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was not an easy endeavour and it did not occur under the same circumstances as it did for men. Women could not study architecture abroad and could receive formal education only after the establishment of the School of Technology in Zagreb (1919). However, only exceptional female architects such as Zoja Domengjić managed to overcome socially imposed limitations and marginalised position in society and the profession.

Immediately after the Second World War, the Croatian social policy was characterized by a fundamental commitment to introduce equality between women and men in all segments of life and work, including the architectural profession.<sup>51</sup> A growing number of women enrolled in the Faculty of Architecture and after graduation, they participated in the work of architectural studios, very often being comparably involved in all segments of architectural practice, including education of new generations of architects.

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<sup>51</sup> Women were legally given the right to vote in 1946. Female emancipation was an important objective of the communist revolutionary project. The socialist authorities granted women many political, civil and economic rights, including the right to abortion, maternity leave, free nursery and kindergartens, equality in marriage and economic independence.

The progressive socialist project whose goal was to create “a new woman” weakened in the 1950s with the emerging discrepancy between the ideal, new progressive woman and everyday life. Unequal labour division in private lives negated the ideologically constructed image of female equality, and the slogan of the equivalent, shoulder-to-shoulder work of women and men steered women into particular professions, which did not include architecture. A small number of women held leading positions, and the public exposure of female architects whose work stood out among others’ was “silenced”.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the influence exerted by female activist groups and feminists led to a transformation of female identity and a redefinition of the social position of women.<sup>52</sup> From the perspective of women's position within the architectural profession, the shift was significant. There was an increase in the number of women among students, within the academic community and practice. This period was characterized by a gradual “feminisation” of the architectural profession, at least in terms of numerical prevalence of women, which has continued to the present day. On the other hand, the architectural practice is still largely dominated by men.

The legacy of these positive social processes has been felt in the last 30 or so years. In the early 1990s, the privatisation process helped transform former state-run architectural offices into a number of small private enterprises. The number of female architects who have been running studios independently, with other female colleagues or, most commonly, with male partners and colleagues, has increased, as

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<sup>52</sup> In 1979, Yugoslavia signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted by the UN General Assembly

well as the number of those who have received professional awards and recognition for their work. In spite of that, the ratio between men and women in leading positions is still greatly disproportionate when compared with the data that place Croatia among few European countries where more than half of all certified architects are women.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, the percentage of female architectural graduates in relation to their male counterparts is even bigger.

The increasingly improving status of women in the Croatian architectural arena owes much to the female architects who gained esteem with exquisite accomplishments and whose overall activities paved the way for new generations of women. Each of them, a distinctive creator, deserves thorough research of discourse and creative habitus and an honourable presentation.

Dividing women and men into binary categories could bring new quality to the profession if the “*dualism is replaced with versatility, and consensus with diversity*”.<sup>54</sup> In that context, a gender diversity of architects should be asserted for the wellbeing of architecture.

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<sup>53</sup> In 2016, 2200 architects worked in Croatia, among whom 59% were women. At the level of the European Union, the percentage of female architects is 38%. More in: “Architects Council of Europe: The architectural profession in Europe 2016”, Architects Council of Europe, <http://www.ace-cae.eu>, (accessed August 18, 2017).

<sup>54</sup> Mirjana Abramović, *Žene i društvena moć* (Zagreb: Plejada, Institut za društvena istraživanja, 2001), 68.

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<http://www.zokazola.com/aboutus.html>

## Rosalia La Franca

### Thought and operative practice

Starlight Vattano

#### Introduction

Rosalia La Franca was born in 1947. She graduated in Palermo in 1970 with Leonardo Urbani and eight years later she obtained the teaching of 'Drawing and Survey' and 'Interior Design' at the 'Approach to the figuration and design section' of the Faculty of Architecture of Palermo. In this field, she carried out an experimental and theoretic teaching linked to research about representation and figuration in architecture. She interested in the study of historic centers of Sicily through an analytical approach of knowledge of urban systems. For many years, she worked with Giuseppe Caronia at the urban planning of historic centers collaborating with Sicilian Administration on the issues of architectonic reuse and recovery.

Reasoning on the role of the figuration and on the ways of representation the urban environment Rosalia La Franca tried to trace the autonomy of the figurative act through the tools of architecture discipline, recognizing in the urban environment 'a space where stay and from where starting for a new appropriation'. Inside the complexity of the modern, she felt a lack of identity, which 'removes the differences' moving away what she defined 'the necessary risk of the project'. She defined four ways of proceeding, as in the case of the four images of city proposed for the design competitions

between 1970 and 1975 where she acted an autonomy of the drawing that, albeit interconnected with the project, it holds both the signs and the meanings.

#### On the drawing/project

Her research turned the drawing of the architectural object on the knowledge, transcription and body, reaching the dimension where shaping the condition of representation. According to Rosalia La Franca the drawing constitutes an independent element with respect to the architecture that has still arise and which finds, in it, the true expression.

Geometries and harmonies become graphic elements contributing to the didactic research of the project, both in the case of the analysis at the building and urban or landscape scale. Her critical and pragmatic way of proceeding, is often accompanied to iconographic apparatus characterized by sketches enriched by notations, schemas and geometric matrices determining the graphic skeleton of her research, through which it is possible recognize the path that from time to time Rosalia La Franca followed to identify the 'investigative value of the knowledge'.

«As researchers on the representation of the artifact/natural environment we are interested in the project and built environment, we are involved in thinking and classifying the

physical around and its reasons»<sup>1</sup>. These words give a vision of the meaning of the Drawing that Rosalia La Franca stressed to the integration with parallel and adjacent research fields as the epistemological, the art history, the esthetic, the architecture history, and the project according to several passages of scale in relationship to the different specificities. In that space of the mind, theoretic model to which the Sicilian architect referred in her work, we find the interconnected relations between a drawn culture and an oral one in a fading of signs which question on the contribute of research in architecture. In the uncertainty and rarefaction of the historic condition, Rosalia La Franca read a city in parts, a box of symbolic aggregations where she recognized a plurality of messages in the settled space. A chaos of elements representing an alternative form of order. We could think to the 'great moment of disorder' described by Paul Valéry as «a huge, violent degradation, the general unloading, a rapid disruption in which perspective the most weak things, precious or not, perish, the most delicate and detailed images but superficial and limited deform themselves, become unrecognizable, disintegrated in a myriad of elementary and transposed reflections in movement [...] A mirror never troubled doesn't see itself as a mirror. It doesn't feel itself, it feels to be that other thing it always has only reproduced»<sup>2</sup>, an inevitable process of transformation for parts that contribute to define the new images of the city.

Searching for the contemporary city, place of differences the architect states

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<sup>1</sup> Rosalia, La Franca et al, *Identità/Differenza/Fraintendimento: le proposte del Disegno* (Palermo: Flaccovio Editore, 1991), 220.

<sup>2</sup> Paul, Valéry, *Quaderni. Volume quinto* (Milano: Adelphi edizioni, 2002), 10.

that «the scientific attention for the notion of Identity can contribute to trace borders where parts and assemblies reobtain roles and functions connected to the dignity of shapes and structures for sure not the same but individuals, recognizable, flexible, available to the declination and understanding and only for this acceptable for use and role today that is still role in becoming»<sup>3</sup>.

Talking about the concept of memory, according to Rosalia La Franca in the disorder of the complexity it is possible to recognize a sort of spatial reorganization of the environment where the misunderstandings can structure roles and meanings in a coherent way from the formal point of view and with faithful disenchant towards the hypertext help given by the specialized languages of the contemporary city. She denounced a total absence of quality as expression of the relationship between nature and artificial through which the demiurge-architect, today overpassed, defines the disaggregation of the urban condition. At the same time, she asked if the temple, even if not yet the place of panathenaic processions, it still measures the landscape because far away from the real, or as it became another time an archetype.

The proposal of Rosalia La Franca is that of a memory, which realizes the sense of living not so much proposing again the past models, but those ones that lead to the building «In the current uncertain terms, the sense of the sure living»<sup>4</sup>. Memory as experience of the moving forward an evolutionary process for the acquisition of information through the declination of misunderstanding as a unit of measure for the 'deviance of the norm'

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<sup>3</sup> La Franca et al., *Identità/Differenza/Fraintendimento: le proposte del Disegno*, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem, 29.

which confers the significance to the drawing from the survey of the real.

That origin of the city's idea containing the mythical value of the settlement principle sinks its meaning into the memory of places recognizable for different languages that represent the quality of the lived space by variables in continuous change.

It is a matter of recognizing the spatial values at a multi-level communication outlining the plot of historically determined places through which to obtain the traces of the modern project.

In this regard, Rosalia La Franca, within the 'Department of Representation, Knowledge, Figuration, Transformation of the Built/Natural Environment' of the University of Palermo<sup>5</sup>, carried out researches related to the quality of the Mediterranean features, from the island of Sicily to the North Africa, from the forms of the Greek and Islamic cities to the landscape of coastal reserves, tracing a language of contemporary architecture through the evolution of the concept of style into the various meanings and declinations of space and time. Resuming the question of broad dialectic between context and subject, in an architecture conceived for parts, fragments, changes, the quality of lived space assumes for the architect from Palermo substance through the method of 'survey of places'.

«Will the physical environment that contains us still, and under what conditions, be the depository of the traces that the quality of the settlement has established on it in the slow deployment of gestures and signs of life? And what set-up is possible if not from the deepest

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<sup>5</sup> For more information about this research see: Rosalia, La Franca. *La forma dell'insediamento umano tra natura e storia* (Palermo: Stampa Luxograph, 1992).

reasons of the historical space?»<sup>6</sup>. These questions lead Rosalia La Franca to face the search with "method samples" in order to structure a methodological path of study on the forms of settlement in Sicilian territory, reading the identity traces of Mediterranean architecture in the archetypes of building sites.

Further research put in contact the University of Palermo and the 'Judaica Italy Association' in 1989, when Rosalia La Franca participated in a project of national relevance that addressed the study of a specific culture of urban analysis through the interpretation of Jewish settlement phenomena. The research deepened the question of the Jewish places in Sicily sinking «into the documentary privilege of the history of the built environment to retreat the fundamental field of understanding of physical places for consolidation of built memory and transformations of the surrounding»<sup>7</sup>.

In Jewish figurative tradition, she found a correspondence between representation and reality proposing a dynamic thought between the hosted community and the established one, which leaves trace of a mobile tension and no longer fixed.

The issues posed dealt about the quality of the places where the Jewish presence established and the idea of a city formed before their expulsion taking a temporal image of Jewish memory that Rosalia La Franca recognized in the 'ucronic spiral' of history, in a relationship between ritual and architecture that after the destruction of the Temple imposes the displacement of the models «from the

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<sup>6</sup> Rosalia, La Franca. *La forma dell'insediamento umano tra natura e storia* (Palermo: Stampa Luxograph, 1992), 2.

<sup>7</sup> Rosalia La Franca, "Ebraismo, sito, memoria dei luoghi", in Rosalia La Franca et al. (eds.), *Architettura judaica in Italia: ebraismo, sito, memoria dei luoghi* (Palermo: Flaccovio Editore, 1994), 19-20.

physical place to the absolute place of the mind»<sup>8</sup>.

#### Four design competitions 1970-1975

The architectural images offered under the four design competitions were marked by a fate of unrealizability, according to Rosalia La Franca, who already recognized in the design and qualifying phase of the competition ideas. The geographical characterization and therefore the spatial dimension, together with the functional one, constituted the projective act of the project proposals. At the same time, the most interesting aspect according to the Sicilian architect approach was the methodology for parts of a wider discourse than the mere recovery of specific occasions, through the synthetic-analytic motivation dictated by the architectural drawing that, according to Rosalia Franca, constitutes 'the first of the parts', in reference to the thesis on the architectural-urban unit of the LeCorbuserian memory.

The four draft proposals submitted included the 'National Competition for the neighborhood to be built in Palermo - Northern Expansion Zone Cardillo', the 'National Competition of Ideas for the General Plan of the Municipal Territory of Agrigento', the 'National Competition IN/ARCH. S.I.R.: Proposals for an industrialization building initiative' and finally the 'International Competition for Urban-Environmental Restoration of the Rioni Sassi'.

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<sup>8</sup> Rosalia La Franca, "Ebraismo, sito, memoria dei luoghi", in Rosalia La Franca et al. (eds.), *Architettura judaica in Italia: ebraismo, sito, memoria dei luoghi* (Palermo: Flaccovio Editore, 1994), 22.

#### **National Competition – Northern Expansion Zone Cardillo, 1970**

The first design theme concerned the construction of a subsidized housing district for 15,000 people in the zone of Cardillo of Palermo, an area once characterized by an expanse of vegetation and the curtain of mountains bordering the so-called '*piana dei colli*', overwhelmed by the urban extension and until the eighteenth century almost completely free from buildings, that were only nearby the sea. Rosalia La Franca addressed the issue of the uncontrolled development of Palermo in its hinterland, suggesting in such dynamic complexity the possibility of future hypothesis. She took into account the need for integration and communication of polyfunctional organisms. On this occasion, the architect proposed to replace the short vision of the urban project, projected no more than 10-20 years later, with a mental attitude in terms of a meta-program through which it becomes possible to move in a timeless dimension with reference to the parameter of mobility taken as a starting point. The thematic levels concern the infrastructure one, the socio-cultural and the economic ones linked to the use of the soil, from the perspective of a possible territory «whose parameter is mobility: a mobility of men and economies, cultural stratifications and settlements, history and intervention policies, and whose poles are mutually within a single interconnected circuit in multiple and multi-faceted opportunities over time and in management by geography and men»<sup>9</sup>.

The design reasoning is carried out according to a grid obtained following the morphological analysis of the site in which

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<sup>9</sup> Gangemi Giuseppe and Rosalia La Franca, *Sistema urbano e progetto. Quattro concorsi di progettazione* (Palermo: Vittorietti Editore, 1979), 26.

two narrow passages are distinguished between the Gallo and Pellegrino Mountains. The modularity of the grid allows you to identify the layering by which to place the block of the residence, raised over the terrain to connect them to the service terminals. Both the grid texture and the blocks of the residence are the result of the combination of the two 'order elements' that Rosalia La Franca tracks in the coexistence between the mountains and the passages they generate orographically.

The first drawings explicitly show these arguments through schematic graphical synthesis shapes that give annotations about the site's features and the first design elements: drawing is the primary project form. Its abstractness identifies the meaning of the idea. The question raised is that of expressiveness and communicability through the project drawing of continuous confrontation and dialectical control generated by the interpretation and translation of architectural poetics in the reading of specific realities over time: environmental, dimensional and functional elements therefore represent the solution of the project. The dwelling, conceived as a service tool, becomes «the last capillary of the movements network involving man's actions, the term in which at certain times of the day man stops and regains the sense of himself in the rest and privacy»<sup>10</sup>.

The initial diagrams are characterized by a nodal element in an eccentric position with respect to the drawing from which three directions arise, towards Palermo, Terrasini and Mondello, identifying the modularity of the grid and then the layout of the residences. The equipped platform from which the connections start with collective services

and housing facilities is part of the integrated system between the mobility of the subway and the stasis of the dwelling. Project and experimentation find in this context an opportunity of manifestation through an open research regarding the use of plastic material also in view of a rethinking of the Sicilian industrial process and the use of prefabrication. By exploiting the technological and physical possibilities of plastic materials, Rosalia La Franca proposed a type of building consisting of horizontal elements formed by the aggregation of self-supporting modules mounted on reinforced plastic plates, aggregated through interlocking and individually replaceable.

Signs thicken in the description of neighborhood equipment and services in the area where residences are doubled. The 'reticular spine of the civic center' is the filter between the two systems. In this way, the natural elements of the site are combined with the sign of the project in the abstract code of thought, according to an analytical procedure for networks and 'neighborhood living rhythms'.

Posthumous reflections on the same schemas show some perplexity of the same architect about the feasibility of the proposal and the relationship between drawing and design, «nature without an architecture that adheres to it with lime and cement is guaranteed in its integrity, or perhaps the superimposed drawing, unplugged of the plastic macrostructure is just what can mortify it? Now, looking at the signs of almost 10 years ago, beyond the limit of achievability, the problem has presented no questions and is closed. It is better that architecture is not against the mountain but below it. That sign, today and rightly seems to be a violent way of

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<sup>10</sup> Gangemi Giuseppe and Rosalia La Franca, *Sistema urbano e progetto. Quattro concorsi di progettazione*, 28.

representing an overbearing architecture»<sup>11</sup>.

Rosalia La Franca put these arguments into the sixty-eight cultural climate in which technological utopia and macrostructural readings, new materials, and prefabrication processes were the form of rethinking urban peripheries.

### ***National Competition for the General Plan of the Territory of Agrigento, 1972***

The second theme of competition on the Agrigento General Plan showed reflections on the urban characteristics and the morphological complexity of the territory characterized by the sea to the south «how can be that blue one of Sicily when it is a sunshine mirror»<sup>12</sup>, from the medieval city on the rock to the north and from the valley of temples developed between these two territorial systems<sup>13</sup>. The project proposal developed to the north, starting with the study of all those reliable data that characterize the natural and morphological structure of the site, surveys, valleys, crops, historical, architectural and environmental emergencies and infrastructures.

The study schemes dealt with the issue of the summary drawing code for the representation of natural and design elements, according to a will of maximum integration between the signs of nature and architecture shaping within the drawing frame.

These are drawings based on a 'spatial grammar of points and lines and zones' determined by the convergence of activities with the settlements of social

groups; the resulting structure is mainly related to the variability in time and the presence of multiple spaces and physical artifacts. Once again, the use of the grid goes back to the tracking directions, the sinuousness of the ground, the formal structure and the Greek element, resulting into the organization of a scenario of wills declined in the appropriation of landscape reality.

The general plan project is structured following the graphic data identified and represented in the diagrams within a structural grid conceived for the new urban intervention to the limits found in the graph-cognitive phase. Rosalia La Franca inserted the graphic traces of the new intervention: the hospital system, the residential system, the civic center and the spatial equipment for leisure. Annotations and numerical values characterize the project drawing at an evolutionary stage of the new expansion by integrating with the green together with the identification of the hinges of services at neighborhood, urban and territorial scales. The analysis of the site graphically carried out in the territory of Agrigento emphasizes the structure of the space model towards the north by tracing into the symmetries that element of compositional force that the architect recognized as a logic intervention. Based on the particular ancient topographical configuration, the structure of the design actions has been obtained, ensuring a buffer zone around the archaeological site to be valued along with a number of natural and landscape heritage of considerable importance. The aim was therefore to structure an integrated system of parks developed around the valley, along the coast and slopes of the rocky ridge on which the medieval city lies, articulating the design grid with the existing city according to a metropolitan and territorial service character. The infrastructure system was

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<sup>11</sup> Gangemi Giuseppe and Rosalia La Franca, *Sistema urbano e progetto. Quattro concorsi di progettazione*, 10.

<sup>12</sup> Idem.

<sup>13</sup> The project proposal for the General Plan of Agrigento, with the motto M.I.S.U.R.A. won the first place of the competition.

conceived in relation to the existing roadway by integrating it with new connection functions.

Taking into account the nodes of the historical-naturalistic apparatus, «the line opens, softens, accommodates the wide rugged expanse of the valley and re-reads in transparence the paths of the orthogonal system of *cardines* and *decumans* of the settlement, still unexplored, but of which there is sure trace in a few meters of depth under almond crops. The Drawing therefore as an element of knowledge of the existing and perception of the natural; but drawing also as a representation of the design idea in all its connotations of oriented sign to the new arrangement or to be subjected to the previous arrangement of which a harmonic order key has to be found»<sup>14</sup>.

### ***National Competition IN/ARCH. S.I.R., 1973***

Compared to the constraints proposed in the IN/Arch. S.I.R. competition Rosalia La Franca faced the theme from what she defined as a 'producible element' to be tested in mounting, assembling and repetition at various scales.

The reference is to the minimum living dwelling, of which she conceived the structure through the advanced prefabrication technology integrated in three different steel types. An idea of dwelling as a social service able to propose a transformation of the industry and its relationship with the production cycle. Because of the absence of constraints and spatial indeterminacy of the competition, «the drawing [...] must be all contained within the object in the machinist logic of

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<sup>14</sup> Gangemi Giuseppe and Rosalia La Franca, *Sistema urbano e progetto. Quattro concorsi di progettazione*, 12.

the workpiece to be produced and assembled»<sup>15</sup>. This concreteness on the representation of the idea in the available space determines the necessary elimination of little useful details in favor of a direct communication of the project adapted from time to time to the conceived and measured dwelling module on the possible user.

Unlike the approaches adopted in the previous two competition themes, in this case, she no longer worked with natural passages, but with typological abstractions for the realization of repeatable and realizable standards at different scale of intervention. Utilitarian worry over space, cost, aggregation, and reproducibility took shape in architectural representation through a game of balance between modules and living cells, resulting in multiple combinatorial configurations that can be adapted to different urban contexts, «an abstract drawing and falsely concrete. Abstract because falsely autonomous from the physical context of the place: everything is possible everywhere; concrete, but still falsely, because it has fallen into itself within the limits of the cell and the gap between the micro-environment and the urban space that should contain it»<sup>16</sup>. The two goals set by Rosalia La Franca concern the need for organization and management of public intervention and industrialization of the building sector, tracing in the new design approach a differentiated operational control at different levels of the building process to meet the need for immediate use.

The Sicilian architect addressed the issue of housing on the building type, as it happens during European rationalism, through a personal interpretation both

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, 13.

<sup>16</sup> Gangemi Giuseppe and Rosalia La Franca, *Sistema urbano e progetto. Quattro concorsi di progettazione*, 14.

from the technological and the social point of view, with a design intent aimed at the artifact as a place where the whole cycle of living obtaining the blend of light prefabrication and typological standardization between structural operations and formal operations. The competition thus constituted an opportunity to verify and compare the existing typologies to study aggregating potentialities in favor of a technological use of plastic material; an analysis of the current legislation then follows in relation to the existing types according to the perspective of transformation of the distribution grid. Each hypothesis was conceived with its own matrix of technological elements according to aggregate criteria for different design hypotheses (multi-story, stepping, multi-story building with balcony access house) by elaborating a reorganization of the surfaces and creating a continuum bed/living/dining in which the different functions are disengaged from small fitted passages.

Again, the project is as an opportunity to offer new technological and functional possibilities to design a compositional freedom based on the choice of components of the construction product, taking into account the reasoning on the variability of use destinations, technological obsolescence and on market mutations. It is therefore a transfer from ideas to images according to a biunivocal process between hypothetical and real.

### ***International Competition for the environmental-urban recovery of the Rioni Sassi, 1975***

The case of the competition of the Sassi di Matera district, in line with the approach adopted for Agrigento, raises the question of the primacy of the context

according to a plan project increasingly linked to the site. In fact, the proposal is about an integrated park system with the hypothesis of total reuse of the constituent types of the Sassi «the project is suggested by the existing but not so easy to understand. You have to go and go back and measure and stay inside»<sup>17</sup>.

The complexity of the thematic area constitutes the privileged place of a making of a city once expression of the intellectual struggle on the rethinking of an agricultural land with a community management and subsequently emptied reality by its inhabitants. Rosalia La Franca feels the architectural value of the place in the contradictory coexistence of the myth and the 'asphyxiated development' of the city as a specific problem for the development of the region.

The graphic study of the territorial and building system permits to recognize the essential elements in terms of accessibility, environmental quality and functionality. The analytical drawing shows the gradual recognition method of the elements that characterize the site already adopted in the previous cases, but with a scalar synthesis, that puts together the territorial system and the building system into a single graphic elaboration.

The methodological criterion is developed by areas and functions, taking into account the role that the city plays in the southern and national economic spheres and the significance of the place within the processes of marginalization of the inner areas, manifestation of the demographic regression and physical obsolescence in the countryside.

The project proposed by Rosalia La Franca suggested a process of 'productive and social reconstruction' taking into account a re-naturalization of the Sassi

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<sup>17</sup> Gangemi Giuseppe and Rosalia La Franca, *Sistema urbano e progetto. Quattro concorsi di progettazione*, 15.

area, the remediation of the entire surrounding area through a system of urban and territorial parks.

Two areas are the 'cave park of Sassi' with the function of services of territorial importance and the 'park of urban services and residences'. In both cases, the proposal for the revitalization of the Sassi accounts for the processes of recovery of living and compliance with the hygienic, physical and static requirements of the site. In a general context, the nature of the proposal is an anthropic landscape enclosed by aggregations for neighborhood units and homogeneous areas by using road penetration systems for integration between the system of dwellings by level and the potential relationship with the city.

## Conclusions

A constant search for the sublime, of the classical notion of measure, a process of inference of architectural logic through which the trace of the real is in the physical sign of the graphic language, «in essence, if the Drawing of belonging (survey/revelation) is quality meter for differences and not per unit, the project, putting into service, must return to risk, and no longer absolute, uniform, compact, maximizing, long-lasting, eternal program. It must return to be adapted to a building that makes explicit the belonging, which forms the first end: the living»<sup>18</sup>. A codified methodology for the research of the principle of architectural, urban and territorial identity characterized Rosalia La Franca's practice and thinking through the determination of a fragmented contemporary consciousness characterized by the harmony of the

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<sup>18</sup> La Franca et al., *Identità/Differenza/Fraintendimento: le proposte del Disegno*, 221.

antithesis (order/disorder, rule/exception, one/many, etc.). Her reflections on the intimate relationship between the temporal flow and the signs of tradition, the denial of models and the search for unrepeatable archetypes until the denial of evolutionary concepts of style and character lead to the search for a meaning of the architectural language that defines the experimental characterization.

Her methodological approach led her to develop «considerations which, with great attention to the signs studied, always allow to reconstruct the construction of the real (and hence its project) to the knowledge of what already is (to the history) through representation of what is going to be»<sup>19</sup>.

Her work constitutes a hermeneutical process of interpretation of the modern in the transcription of architectural issues and in their formulation, according to a critical vision of deconstruction and redefinition of meaning, «it is therefore to continue to argue that I interrupt this discourse»<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Rosalia La Franca, "Presentazione", in Giuseppe Pagnano (ed.), *La difesa virtuale. Progetti inediti di fortificazioni per Palermo e Taormina in età sabauda* (Catania: Istituto Italiano dei Catselli Cuecm, 1992), 5.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, p. 222.

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## In front of and behind the Mirror

### Women in Italian Radical Design

Elena Dellapiana and Annalisa B. Pesando \*

#### Introduction

In the history of Italian feminism, some dates are crucial: the universal suffrage, obtained in 1945 together with the new republican Constitution, the divorce (1970) and the abortion laws (1975), the definitive version of both was the results of popular referendums, and the reform of the family law (1975) meant to reduce discrimination in social and work environments<sup>1</sup>.

The politic and social movements which struggled for that had their roots in left-wing groups, mainly consisting of students and intellectuals trained during the early years of contestation and counterculture and grown in high schools, universities and political circles. It should have allowed young women, following the pioneers, to make themselves more and more independent and aware of their possibilities in professional fields, especially after the university

transformation that became, from 1968, a mass-educational system<sup>2</sup>.

In Italian universities meetings and congresses about the “hot topics” were organized with the self-convocation formula, without the support or even against the official academic institutions. Among the others, the Architecture Faculties were the first in which urban development, in relationship with social inequalities, pollution, cultural heritage and environmental preservation, were the debated issues, and where the number of girls enrolled as students was growing.

At the end of Fifties squatting, demonstrations, protests began and became frequent from 1963<sup>3</sup>, but the crucial phase was in 1968, the year of student mobilizations worldwide.

#### The feminine presence in groups

The “historical” Radical groups, founded around 1966 and 1971, highlighted nevertheless a limited presence of women in the original groups.

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\* The paper is the result of a continuous match between the authors. In particular it is to Elena Dellapiana the Introduction, the second and third paragraphs and the conclusion, to Annalisa Pesando the fourth paragraph. The authors want to thank the interviewed architects and designers who have been generously available to speak not only about professional events but also about personal feelings.

<sup>1</sup> Miguel Malagrecá, “Lottiamo ancora: Reviewing one Hundred and Fifty Years of Italian Feminism”, *Journal of International Women's Studies* 4 (May 2006), 68-89.

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<sup>2</sup> Giovanni Genovesi, *Storia della scuola italiana dal Settecento a oggi*, (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1998).

<sup>3</sup> First squatting were in Venice (1958 and 1960) and Turin (1959) to protest against the introduction of some restrictive rules; Francisca Insulza, *Studenti, architetti, città: da facoltà d'élite a università di massa*, PHD Dissertation, “Storia e valorizzazione del Patrimonio Architettonico, Urbanistico e Ambientale”, Politecnico di Torino 2009, sup. G. Montanari.

The Florentine 9999 (1967), Ziggurat (1968), Superstudio (1966) and the Turin Strum (1971) were totally male while in UFO (Florence, 1967) we find Patrizia Cammeo; Lucia Bartolini entered the Archizoom (Florence, 1966), in 1967 and Athena Sampanitou, later joined by her sister Angelica, was one of the founding members of the Studio 65 group (Turin 1965).

The different groups included in the “Radical”<sup>4</sup> category, all dislocated eccentrically with respect to Milan –the “mecca” of Good Design- were affected by the cultural and artistic influences of their respective cities of origin. In Florence the courses held by Leonardo Ricci and Leonardo Savioli<sup>5</sup> criticized the mega structural widespread trend, proposing a more human and social scale for both architecture and objects, and the architecture and art historian Lara Vinca Masini pointed her attention on the post-avant-gard art<sup>6</sup>. On the contrary in Turin the academic courses were still traditional and even the entrance of Achille Castiglioni as professor of “Progettazione artistica per l’industria” (“Artistic design for the industry”, from 1969 to 1982), sounded alien to the ongoing experimentations influenced by the politic spurs and the artistic researches<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Germano Celant, “Radical Architecture”. In Emilo Ambasz (ed.), *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape. Achievements and Problems of Italian Design* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1972), 380-387.

<sup>5</sup> Fiorella Bulegato, Rosa Chiesa, “Note sull’insegnamento della storia del Design in Italia: 1950-1990”, in Pier Paolo Peruccio, Dario Russo (eds.), *Storia hic et nunc. La formazione dello storico del design in Italia e all’estero*, (Torino: Allemandi, 2015).

<sup>6</sup> Laura Lombardi, “Lara-Vinca Masini”, in Maura Pozzati (ed.), *Artiste della Critica*, (Mantova: Corraini, 2015).

<sup>7</sup> Elena Dellapiana, “Da dove vengono i designer (se non si insegna il design)? Torino dagli

Furthermore Lara Vinca Masini<sup>8</sup> who saw in the Radical groups a way to “open” Florence, folded on its Renaissance past, towards an international artistic future, favoured the contacts between the young architects and the most international personalities of the moment: for example with Fernanda Pivano, journalist and translator of American novelists and poets belonging to the Beat Generation, and Ettore Sottsass, architect and designer, art-director, from 1957, of the Tuscany furniture firm Poltronova<sup>9</sup>. After the flood that hit Florence in 1967, they attempted to collect works of all the contemporary Pop artists to establish an international museum of contemporary art, becoming the core of a huge networking action in which two women, Lara and Nanda, were pivotal figures.

However, the women in the groups were really few: Patrizia Cammeo was one of the original members of UFO group<sup>10</sup>. Patrizia remembers an atmosphere of great competition between the guys and tolerance toward her due to her prettiness and her bond with Riccardo Foresi, her future husband: “I was the nice girl who was the model in the photo shootings and despite the fact that we were revolutionary, the women touched only the most “domestic” topics”. In the UFO *Superhappening* in San Giovanni Valdarno (1968), for example, she was charged to create the costumes and her own feeling was not to be much important. On the contrary, when she and Riccardo had a

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anni Trenta ai Sessanta”, *QUAD. Quaderni di Architettura e Design* 1 (2017), forthcoming.

<sup>8</sup> Interview collected on 13.07.2017.

<sup>9</sup> Francesca Balena Arista (ed.), *Poltronova Backstage. Archizoom, Sottsass and Superstudio. The Radical Era 1962 - 1972* (Miami: Fortino Editions, 2017).

<sup>10</sup> Stefano Pezzato (ed.), *UFO STORY Dall’architettura radicale al design globale*, (Prato: Centro Luigi Pecci, 2012); interview collected on 20.09.2017.

baby and Patrizia left the group, the group itself crashed as if the only female figure was its glue, and, after the end of the Radical season, the couple continued their common work on the topics of urban planning as a result of their previous researches on social themes<sup>11</sup>.

In 1967 Lucia Morozzi and Dario Bartolini, who will marry in 1969, joined the Archizoom group<sup>12</sup>, collaborating to all the collective projects, but with a later specialization, especially by Lucia, on dressing design.

Since the beginning the group's work was affected by the cultural and habit changes, particularly by the "sexual revolution", traces of which were founded in many of their projects as the *Scroto* (scrotum) furnishing (1969) and the *Manhattan skyscraper* (1969), both in phallic shape, or the double room *Dream Beds* and the *Gazebo project* (1967)<sup>13</sup> which, with their quoting of American visual and musical counterculture (rainbows, arrows, animalier fabrics, folksingers portraits), or with their transparencies and indeterminacy of spaces, pushed the audience to imagine hot nights and informal uses in contrast with the bourgeois schemes. These first experimentations were spread by the countercultural magazine "Pianeta fresco" created and directed by Pivano, with Allen Ginsberg as deputy director (irresponsible director) and her husband Ettore Sottsass jr. as art director (head of the gardens).

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<sup>11</sup> She started, aged 53, her collaboration with the Vittorio Gregotti firm, in the garden and urban park design.

<sup>12</sup> Roberto Gargiani, *Dall'onda pop alla superficie neutra. Archizoom Associati 1966-1974*, (Milan: Electa, 2007).

<sup>13</sup> About the magazine *Pianeta fresco*: Mario Maffi, *La cultura Underground*, (Bologna: Odoja, 2009); Martina Spalla, *Le Origini della sostenibilità ambientale nel progetto italiano. Dibattiti ed esiti tra il dopoguerra e la crisi energetica*, Degree dissertation, Politecnico di Torino, sup. Elena Dellapiana, a.a. 2016-17.

Their researches developed from pieces of furniture to the large scale of the *No-stop city* (1970-1971) and on this ground grew the idea of a global design that also included clothing items. The reflection on the supply of objects for life in anti-urban sites came to the proposal of a *Rational clothing system* (1970) followed by the *Dressing design* (1972). Based on the idea of the user's participation in the finishing and on the use and declination of neutral dresses, the *Dressing Design* was far from a stylists' approach and focused on production systems and new materials development. Lucia Bartolini, with her sister Nicoletta Morozzi, later Andrea Branzi's wife, was the most active in this line of research, even if, as Lara Vinca Masini states "after the very beginning, she was mainly occupied in the care of her children, home and husband". The improvement of experimental fabrics used for basic garments as the *Overall* or the *Body* –unisex and combinable- produced in joint venture with the Fiorucci brand and published on *Vogue*<sup>14</sup>, highlighted once more how the design in relationship with fashion was one of the opportunities open to women as a traditionally feminine field and able to define their roles in project. Indeed, in 1974, two different projects were published on "Casabella"<sup>15</sup> and "Domus"<sup>16</sup>, showing the proposals for the competition for the Libyan national costume by Lucia and Dario Bartolini and by Nanni Strada and Clino T. Castelli (couples in real life). In both cases the aim was to claim for design the fashion

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<sup>14</sup> The shooting is by Oliviero Toscani, the models are Donna Jordan and the architect Benedetto Gravagnuolo, for *L'Uomo Vogue* 19 (aug- sept. 1972) 68-73; Archizoom, "Dressing design", *Casabella* 373 (january 1973), 17-22.

<sup>15</sup> N. 510 (may 1972).

<sup>16</sup> "Vestirsi Arabo", *Domus* 537 (august 1974), 22-25; "Abitare l'abito", *Domus* 510 (may 1972), 33-38. Nanni Strada, *Lezioni. Moda-design e cultura del progetto*, (Milan: Lupetti, 2013).

stylism, using the common spurs – industrial production, seriality, material experimentation- and mixing those with liminary disciplines, as semiology, following Roland Barthes writings<sup>17</sup>, anthropology and ethnology in the direction traced by Bernard Rudofsky<sup>18</sup>. Clothes easy to wear, informal, interchangeable, practical, economic were the results of this renovation research which remained anchored to the design method but switched to a field traditionally feminine, considered, during the years of contestation, at the frivolous limit. While Nanni Strada continued her activity as fashion designer, Lucia Bartolini didn't appear in further professional occupations.

In Turin, due to the social turmoil typical of the workers' cities, the design debate was oriented towards a more political approach. In 1969 a huge conference, organized by the “volunteer assistant committee” took place. Titled *Architettura: Utopia e/o Rivoluzione* (Architecture: Utopia and/or Revolution)<sup>19</sup>, the conference collected reports by the most international innovative firms as the French Architecture Principe, Yona Friedman,

<sup>17</sup> Roland Barthes, *Système de la Mode*, (Paris: Ed. Du Seuil, 1967).

<sup>18</sup> The MoMA exhibition edited by Rudofsky, “Are the Clothes Modern? An essay on contemporary apparel” is dated 1944; MoMA Archives, New York, <http://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/3159?locale=en> accessed September 6, 2017; Elena Dellapiana, “Case e sandali. Bernard Rudofsky dalle isole del Mediterraneo al mito dell'anonimo”, in A. Maglio, F. Mangone, A. Pizza (eds.), *Immaginare il Mediterraneo. Architettura arti fotografia*, (Naples: Paparo, 2017), 205-214.

<sup>19</sup> The conference held from 25 (anniversary of the liberation from Nazi-fascism in Italy) to 27 April 1969, in the historical site of the Faculty of Architecture, the Castello del Valentino. The scheduled speeches and the debates are published in the magazine *Marcatre* 50/55 (February-July 1969), 6-133.

Utopie, the British Archigram, the Italian Archizoom and the elder Italian born active in USA Aldo Gurgiola and Paolo Soleri<sup>20</sup>.

In the organizing committee, named U e/o R, we find, among the seven members, three women, Graziella Gay Derossi, Adriana Ferroni and Elena Tamagno, and, among the younger participants – still studying or just graduating- Angelica Sampanitou and Maria Schiappa.

Some of them gathered in the local Radical group, as STRUM (male exclusive group), or Studio 65<sup>21</sup>, founded by Franco Audrito, with his wife Angelica –Nanà-Sampanitou, Franco Tartaglia, later joined by Adriana Ferroni (born Garizio). Nanà tells of meetings to prepare contest projects<sup>22</sup> – a seat in fibreglass, the *Omoteca*<sup>23</sup>- mixing the social themes and the design of items and architecture. She states that women were quite numerous at meetings –the “chat time”- but a few in professional life. She remembers how to be a pretty woman helped her and her own group in making contacts with firms and beginning the successfully professional career which followed with the design of some of the most iconic pieces of Radical design as the *Bocca* couch (1970) or the *Capitello* seat (1971) in collaboration with Gufram company.

The “Gufram Track” which involved other designer as the Strum group and Giuseppe Raimondi allowed the group to

<sup>20</sup> Alicia Imperiale, “Utopia e/o Rivoluzione, Politecnico di Torino 1969”, in B. Colomina (ed.), *Radical Pedagogies*, Princeton, 2013-2014, <http://radical-pedagogies.com/> Accessed September 7, 2017.

<sup>21</sup> Franco Audrito, Maria Cristina Didero, *Il mercante di nuvole*, (Milan: Skira 2015).

<sup>22</sup> Interview collected on September, 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Turin.

<sup>23</sup> A kind of chaise-loungue obtained with the mold of the figure of a person lying down, never realized except in the form of a prototype.

meet the artistic milieu, thus characterizing the Turin mood as the most artistic in Italian outline. The collaboration with artists as Piero Gilardi and Ugo Nespolo, the attending of the post-avant-garde galleries<sup>24</sup> and the involvement in design-driven exhibition as EuroDomus<sup>25</sup>, turned away from the social themes the projects and the groups raised on these challenges. Furthermore, the radicalization of the social struggle melt the dichotomy “Utopia and/or Revolution”, discussed in 1969. On one hand somebody from the original groups turned in the armed struggle in the following dramatic decade, on the other hand the initial optimism about changing the goals of the architect's work ceased and many had to emigrate or switch field of action and, regarding women, interrupting the work when babies were born, “a vacation from the tension of work competition”, says Nanà<sup>26</sup>.

The greater presence of women occurred in the groups created by Alessandro Mendini, the most influencing architect, following Gio Ponti, in organising crews, creating and directing specialized magazines and events<sup>27</sup>. He was the director of “Casabella” from 1970

to 1976, of “Modo” from 1977 to 1979 and then of “Domus”, and he involved several women in the different newsrooms, or in groups as Global Tools (1973) the multidisciplinary self-design and self-build workshops. Lidia Prandi, Mendini's wife, Ines Klok, wife of the musician Davide Mosconi and musician herself, were Global Tools members and appeared as co-protagonists and background of their partners' performances (for example the Gufram polyurethane seat, 1974, with Gilardi, or the *Sitting woman performance*, 1976, with Mosconi or the *Costume for woman and harp* 1977). Mendini tells that they were “an help”<sup>28</sup> and almost always, after these early experiences, they turned to different occupations: journalism (Prandi) and music (Klok). Even in groups where they were many, women played roles of “order” in editorial and organizing staffs and when they started solo careers they did that as journalists, critics, curators and artists. This is the case of the “Modo” editorial staff: Nives Ciardi editor and later child psychoanalyst, Claudia Donà curator, Cristina Morozzi, architect Massimo Morozzi's wife<sup>29</sup>, journalist, Barbara Radice, the daughter of the painter Mario Radice journalist and curator, Patrizia Rizzi, illustrator and artist, Daniela Puppa fashion designer. The same thing happened with the former “Domus” collaborators under Mendini's direction: Lisa Licitra Ponti, Ponti's daughter, curator, Marianne Lorenz historical editor of the magazine, Maria Grazia Mazzocchi chief publisher, Rosa Maria Rinaldi journalist and artist, Patrizia Scarzella journalist. As designers they collaborated, e.g. in the Alchymia group (1979) mainly

<sup>24</sup> The Galleria Sperone opened in 1964 initiating collaboration with Ileana Sonnabend, introducing American Pop Artist in Italy and Italian artist in New York, Luca Massimo Barbero, Cecilia Widenheim (eds.), *Time & Place: Milano-Torino 1958-1968*, Moderna Museet, (Stockholm: Steidl Verlag, 2008).

<sup>25</sup> The first edition of the fair-exhibition promoted by the magazine Domus held in Genova in 1966, the second and the fourth in Torino in 1968 and 1972. Elisa Argenta, *Decorare, arredare, abitare. Tre decenni di design per la casa nelle pagine di Domus*, Degree dissertation, Politecnico di Torino, 2009, sup. E. Dellapiana.

<sup>26</sup> Adriana Garizio was arrested in 1976 for her belonging to the “Brigate Rosse” group. The couple Nanà and Franco Audrito (Studio 65), went to Arab Emirates in 1975.

<sup>27</sup> Peter Weiss, *Alessandro Mendini. Cose progetti costruzioni*, (Milano: Electa, 2000).

<sup>28</sup> Interview collected on September 18<sup>th</sup> 2017, Milan.

<sup>29</sup> Cristina Morozzi, *Il design non è una cosa seria. Memorie di una ragazza radicale*, (Milan: Rizzoli 2017).

on the topics of decoration, clothes, fabrics.

### The solo careers

Just in few cases, from the group and the couple or family dynamics, some women started their own careers. Paola Navone, graduated in Torino with an early dissertation on Radical Architecture (1973)<sup>30</sup> that was published the next year in the “Documenti di Casabella” by Mendini’s decision, and involved in many initiatives, became an important sign of Italian design, also as art director of several design companies<sup>31</sup>. She states that one of her luck was not having children. This allowed her to travel in far countries, to know cultures and situations from which to get ideas and projects always new<sup>32</sup>.

The absence of a family is one of the critical points highlighted by Nanda Vigo<sup>33</sup> too. She, after graduating in architecture from the École polytechnique de l’Université de Lausanne, and a work experience in the United States, started her interest in relationship between architecture, art, and design. Piero Manzoni’s partner during the Sixties, after 1959 she worked on interdisciplinary projects – art, standard production pieces, interior and exhibition design-, that explored the relationship between space and light which became the unifying

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<sup>30</sup> Paola Navone, Bruno Orlandoni, *Architettura “radicale”*, (Milan: Documenti di Casabella, 1974).

<sup>31</sup> Spencer Bailey, *Tham Ma Da: The Adventurous Interiors of Paola Navone*, (New York: Pointed Leaf Press, 2016).

<sup>32</sup> *Sing of Design, Paola Navone*, Televisionet, 3 March 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLIStdNjOeU> Accessed September 8, 2017.

<sup>33</sup> Interview collected on July, 24<sup>th</sup> 2017; Barbara Pastor, *Nanda Vigo interni ‘60-‘70*, (Milan: Segesta, 2006).

characteristic of her work. She was interested in women approach, as shown in a collective exhibition held in Brescia (Castello di Oldofredi, 1976) titled *Magma* edited with the art critic and Enzo Mari’s wife Lea Vergine<sup>34</sup> (who in turn will edit the gorgeous exhibition “The other avant-garde half” in 1980)<sup>35</sup>, but, she states, “the womanhood as to tend to family and reproduction, was the obstacle the women themselves set on their own way, they did not want to leave the old road for a new one”. She remembers also to have been twitted by colleagues for her eclecticism and for her relationship with elder people belonging to the “old guard” as Gio Ponti. Nanda Vigo, once again, represented the crossover and overlapping attitude between different fields –architecture, design, art, curatorship, critic- which was typical of women in those year in which was objectively difficult to play masculine roles as the traditional architect or designer.

Even in the professional relationships with companies, often the alternative ones asked the collaboration of these borderline designers: Gufram, Poltronova, Fiorucci, which worked with the radical groups, or Simon-Gavina who produced in 1971 the “Ron-ron” seat by the Romanian born artist Marion Baruch or the table “Traccia” by Meret Oppenheim, included in the series *Ultramobile* (1971-1973), addressed to dialogue with surrealist artists and not only with “traditional” designers<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Francesca Alfano Miglietti, “Lea Vergine, la signora della body-art”, in Maura Pozzati (ed.), *Artiste della critica*, (Mantova: Corraini, 2015) 108-125.

<sup>35</sup> Lea Vergine, *L’ altra metà dell’ avanguardia 1910-1940: pittrici e scultrici nei movimenti delle avanguardie storiche*, (Milan: Mazzotta, 1980).

<sup>36</sup> Elena Brigi, Daniele Vincenzi (eds.), *Atlas Dino Gavina*, (Mantova: Corraini, 2010).

## Women as mean of Radical communication

Architects, designers or artists, women were anyway a strong mean of communication for the Radical design items, in turn icons of social, cultural and artistic changes.

Especially the photography became one of the preferred means to express this need for a change and women were the protagonists -symbol of these reforms- both as favourite subjects to be photographed and as photo reporters and photographers<sup>37</sup>. The great number of artist-photographers who worked in the 1970s magazines shows how photography was a profession appreciated by the female universe in which observation and communication through a medium -the camera- became an expression of their identity and working dignity. This remains in fact a challenge that was not resolved by the contesting season, even if intellectuals and critics fueled the discussion on the women role between 1969 and 1975<sup>38</sup>. The social changes that had to overwhelm the traditional Italian family were interpreted, among others, by Pier Paolo Pasolini interviewed in the Rai Uno tv-show "Donna Donna" in 1974. He stated that an epochal change was underway in which "we no longer need the family"; in his opinion the family,

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<sup>37</sup> Pierre Lannoy, "L'usine, la photographie et la nation. L'entreprise automobile fordiste et la production des photographes industriels", *Genèses* 80 (2010), 114-133; more generally Mario Piazza, "La grafica per il 'Made in Italy'", <http://www.aisdesign.org/aisd/la-grafica-per-il-made-in-italy>. Accessed September 10, 2017.

<sup>38</sup> Ilaria Bussoni and Raffaella Perna (eds.), *Il gesto femminista. La rivolta delle donne: nel corpo, nel lavoro, nell'arte*, (Rome: Derive Approdi, 2014); Carla Lonzi, *Sputiamo su Hegel*, (Milan: Scritti di rivolta femminile, 1970 1°ed).

understood as the original social code of Italian rural life, was going to be replaced by consumer groups linked to a new technological civilization<sup>39</sup>. His speech, that was a part of the more general Pasolini's reflection on the "mutation of anthropology" in Italy, told about a new woman, emancipated and free from the role of mother and from the codes of the paternalistic society (*pater familias*), but also under the thumbs of the new laws of consumption carried out by bourgeois society<sup>40</sup>. So house, with its equipments and decorations, become the perfect stage on which playing both the social role and the transformation of goods system one.

The feminist historian Lea Melandri (1941) wrote: "It is no coincidence that women gather in homes, it may look like regression, a step backwards in their path of emancipation, but in reality they touch on issues that have always been considered marginal and non-political"<sup>41</sup>.

Among the several interesting pictures of that period, that became very iconic, there is the black and white portrait depicting *Superonda*, the couch made of foam blocks designed in 1968 by the Archizoom group and produced by Poltronova. On the *Superonda* stands voluptuous pose Florinda Bolkan (Florinda Soares Bulcão 1941), a Brazilian actress noticed by Luchino Visconti who in 1969

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<sup>39</sup> Videos aired on September 21, 1974, <http://www.teche.rai.it/2015/02/intervista-a-pasolini-su-donna-e-famiglia-21091974/> Accessed August 21, 2017.

<sup>40</sup> Enzo Golino and Pier Paolo Pasolini, *il sogno di una cosa: pedagogia, eros, letteratura dal mito del popolo alla società di massa*, (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1985); Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Saggi sulla politica e sulla società*, (Milan: Mondadori, 1999).

<sup>41</sup> *Storia del movimento femminista in Italia - Gli anni Settanta* <http://www.lastoriasiamonoi.rai.it/puntate/storia-del-movimento-femminista-in-italia/739/default.aspx> Accessed September 5, 2017.

was awarded with the David of Donatello price as the protagonist of the film *Metti una sera a cena* by Giuseppe Patroni Griffi. The shoot author was Elisabetta Catalano (1941-2015)<sup>42</sup> who had immortalized a generation of artists as a portraitist in the fashion and cinema world. Catalano's career began in the 1960s as the partner of the photographer Fabio Mauri in the Roman cultural setting, where, with other artists and intellectuals, they carried on visual experimentations that would to overcome the post-war Realism in order to reach "picture reported" formulas. Her monochrome studies fascinated Federico Fellini who consequently chose her for the photo shooting of his movies.

The "Superonda/Bolkan" picture became a symbol of a creative and cultural women claim: a lady is the creator and subject of the photo; the *Superonda* sofa was an household but nonconformist item which subverted the rules of sitting and rest as well as those of space; the model, Florinda, interpreted the feminine beauty, the freedom from the social conventions as an independent actress to whom the Sapphic partnership with the film producer Countess Marina Cicogna (1934), added sensual charm and sexual uninhibitedness claims typical of this period<sup>43</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> Barbara Martusciello, "Elisabetta Catalano, fotografa di una generazione pionieristica, bellissima principessa per sempre", January 7, 2015 <http://www.artapartofculture.net/2015/01/07/elisabetta-catalano-fotografa-di-una-generazione-pionieristica-bellissima-principessa-per-sempre/> Accessed August 31, 2017. <http://www.archivioelisabettacatalano.it/> August 31, 2017.

<sup>43</sup> Mario Cirrito, Il mondo dorato di Marina Cicogna in mostra a Roma: "Che anni felici con la Bolkan", *Queer Blog*, May 27, 2009. <http://www.queerblog.it/post/5362/il-mondo-dorato-di-marina-cicogna-in-mostra-a-roma-che-anni-felici-con-la-bolkan>. Accessed on September 2017.

Similarly, Cristiano Toraldo di Francia (1941) – one of the Superstudio founders and also the group "official" photographer - immortalized their *Onos* bed produced by Giovannetti (1968) along with two black women. The image conceived for the market, caring the colours and the arrangement of the subjects with the bed in foreground - highlighted a delicate social theme as the racial segregation.

The irreverent and nonconforming design object created and communicated by the radical groups became therefore the main subject of artistic choices to reach broadened public not only for commercial goals but also to stimulate deeper interpretations and social challenges.

The same approach characterized the communication for the *Bazaar* armchair, a rugged polyester resin seat with double-curved fiberglass shell and acrylic fur produced by the Tuscany firm Giovannetti (1968)<sup>44</sup>.

Toraldo di Francia made the shoots series for this 'pumpkin' seat too<sup>45</sup>: idyllic arcadic scenery with young ladies dressed vestals playing the flute (and drinking Coca Cola) or nude on the pink fausse-fourrure chair; hippy scenarios set on the brown peluche *Bazaar* with blond models or a cheerful black model dressed in red. It is interesting to note that the marketing choice proposed by the "Domus" magazine, which in January 1970 (No. 482/1970) devoted a page to Superstudio's pumpkin, opting for the white armchair and brown beaver fabric with family setting scenes (a woman alone

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<sup>44</sup> Giuseppe Lotti (ed.), *La fabbrica bella: design toscano. Storia e Prospettive*, (Florence: Alinea, 2003).

<sup>45</sup> Toraldo di Francia was the author of almost all the photo shooting for catalogues Guerrieri, and Poltronova; Francesca Balena Arista (ed.), *Poltronova Backstage. Archizoom, Sottsass and Superstudio. The Radical Era 1962 – 1972*, (Miami: Fortino Editions, 2017).

or with a young girl) or at the very least with a quiet hippy mood. The pumpkin is so transformed into a protected environment and in a context anchored to the bourgeois tradition rather than to the series of Radical transgressive objects.

In widespread imaginary - thanks to advertising and happening - Radical design alternated reassuring images with others more subversive with regard to the customers' common behaviours. For example the *Pratone* seat produced by Gufram (Strum Group des.), denied through the model's posture, the idea itself of outdoor/indoor space as well as the conventional seating arrangements and dimensions. In the case of the pvc *Blow* Inflatable Chair (Jonathan De Pas, Donato D'Urbino, Paolo Lomazzi and Carla Scolari des., Prod. By Zanotta in 1967<sup>46</sup>), in the advertising campaign the comfort of the living room is shifted outdoors, for all and no place in particular, and nice middle class ladies, pearl necklace and well combed - "rebuild" family environments on meadows, on the sea, in the city streets. To this "reassuring" catalogue picture, the photographer Veronique Bucossi<sup>47</sup> - among the most entertaining artists who handed down the image of the sixties and seventies - immortalized on *Blow* in 1968 a sensual Jane Birkin. She had just appeared in a somewhat scandalous scene in *Blow-up* (1966, dir. M. Antonioni) and was going to interpret the famous song *Je t'aime ... moi non plus* (1969).

The *Sacco* chair designed by Piero Gatti, Cesare Paolini and Franco Teodoro in 1968 (prod. Zanotta) mean the search for a new comfort and adaptation to any form and place. It was the embodiment of relaxes, fitting for a new generation that

can sink, fall asleep and immerse itself in the new offbeat furniture. The picture to be published in magazines showed a sophisticated model conveniently lay on the "Sacco", in an image between the market's compromise and Pop's trends of the period.

Among the radical products that attracted more publicity and criticism was the *Up* series, designed by Gaetano Pesce and produced by Cassina and Busnelli (C & B) in 1968. The series made of polyurethane foam combined searches of harmonic shapes, flexibility of use and transport thanks to the vacuum packaging. The most aware of the series was the *Up5* chair titled *Donna* for evoking the female shapes emulating a wraparound womb; this was often together with the *Up6*, a spherical footrest. In Pesce's mind the *Up5* and *6* were the symbols of woman's imprisonment, victim of male bias<sup>48</sup>, but the item also lend itself to more free and sensual interpretations, especially by photographic shootings.

For example, Sean Connery -as James Bond- sitting on *Donna* and photographed by Terry O'Neill in 1971 in Las Vegas on the *Diamond Are Forever* set, gets an ambiguous meaning and a strong sensual connotation. On the other hand the producing company (C & B) conceived a descriptive advertising - with a coordinated image designed by Enrico Trabacchi - focused on the functional features of the chair, its transportability and friendly use. Anyway is a woman - black-dressed as a mime - the user who illustrated the steps for transporting and assembling the *Up5*. The effectiveness of the image lied in the contrast between the large and seemingly heavy object, and the typically feminine weakness.

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<sup>46</sup> Zanotta Archives, Nova Milanese.

<sup>47</sup> David Wills, *Switched on: women who revolutionized style in the 60's*, (Weldon Owen: Blue Streak, 2017).

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<sup>48</sup> Domitilla Dardi, Gianni Mercurio (eds.), *Gaetano Pesce: il tempo della diversità*, Catalogue of the Exhibition, Rome, MAXXI (Milano: Electa, 2014).

Similarly, one of the most sensual and provocative pieces of the Radical period, the Studio 65's *Bocca* couch (produced by Gufram 1971), inspired by the surrealist Salvador Dalí's lounge with Mae West lips (1935) and by the provocative Hollywood stars' red-hot lips, was published on "Life magazine" along with "The Girl of the Seventies" - Marisa Berenson (1947)<sup>49</sup>, actress, model and Dalí's muse. Once again, Richard Avedon<sup>50</sup> (1923-2004) mixed radical object and female icons.

Poltronova published on "Domus" an advertisement rather unconventional of Archizoom's *Safari*: an 'imperial' sofa, with Fiberglas structure and faux leopard finish, fabric or leather. The image portrays a thoughtful woman and an observing child both sitting on the modular couch, and a sobering caption in twin languages (English and Italian) says: "An imperial piece in the dreariness of your domestic walls. A piece that's finer than you. A very beautiful piece that you would not deserve. Clear your sitting-room! Clear even your life!" ("Domus" 510, 1972).

This ambivalence between provocative photography and the need to adhere to the market rules, although mainly related to Radical items, also invested other kind of objects of this period in particular those produced by the company Busnelli, which was investing in advertising with its marketing director, the photographer Gianni Sassi (1938-1993) who founded the semi-annual corporate magazine *Kaleidoscope*. The chosen

<sup>49</sup> Leonetta Bentivoglio, "Marisa Berenson", *La Repubblica*, May 17, 2009; Chiara Caputo, "Marisa Berenson: icona di stile e bellezza", <http://d-art.it/moda/marisa-berenson-icona-di-stile-e-bellezza/20074>. Accessed September 17, 2017; Marisa Berenson, *A life in Pictures*, (Milan: Rizzoli, 2011).

<sup>50</sup> Jane Livingston, Adam Gopnik, *Evidence 1944-1994*, (New York: Random House, 1994).

language and authors were anyway more or less the same: for the Mario Bellini's *Bambole* the photos for the advertising campaign were realized by Oliviero Toscani, who made a series of disinhibited shots of the androgynous model Donna Jordan, a Pop icon who inspired Andy Warhol too. Among the various provocative shots, however, only one of the softer was chosen: the model showed only a flash of naked breasts and assumed a fairly composite posture, ambiguously at the limit of the promises of love in the advertising slogan "... Dolls who go away on dolls who remain".

The provocative uses of women body in visual communication, as a manifesto of the countercultural design, and the radical design itself were, as we have seen, somehow controlled and clean by the magazine editorial board, almost entirely composed of women.

This is the case for the magazine "Abitare" directed by Piera Peroni (1929-1974)<sup>51</sup>. Particularly in the number 82 (1970), devoted to the living room furnishing and titled "Less pieces furniture, please"<sup>52</sup> despite the author did not appreciate the radical exaggerations defined "at the limit of the paradox"<sup>53</sup> and in some cases completely rejected<sup>54</sup>, she

<sup>51</sup> Marco Sammiceli, "Piera Peroni e il talento senza gender", in Raimonda Riccini (ed.), *Angelica e Bradamante. Le donne del design*, (Padova: Il Poligrafo: 2017) 95-102; Annalisa B. Pesando, *Design and women through the pioneering magazine Stile Industria (1954-1963)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> MoMoWo Conference-Workshop, Ljubiana, 2016, Forthcoming.

<sup>52</sup> Piera Peroni, "Meno mobili per favore", *Abitare* 82 (1970), 2-3.

<sup>53</sup> Ead. .5.

<sup>54</sup> Piera Peroni, "No, no questo poi no", *Abitare* 92 (1971), 191-198. Without comments, Piera Peroni put on a "NO" written background a series of images of homewares considered unacceptable, including the Ettore Sottsass's mirror *Ultrafragola*, the Studio 65 group's *Pratone*, etc.

spend ample space just to radical productions, considered as well innovative and worthy of attention. In a long article of 34 pages, the magazine opened with a double page dedicated to the Archizoom's *Mies* chair. Piera Peroni recognized the innovative and imaginative value of the Archizoom sitting system, compared to the "often sterile" variations on the theme of the armchair. She appreciated its essential and geometric taste, the shape of the rubber seat, which thanks to its elasticity accommodates the body, bends to all the movements and then returns perfectly in line. Presented with the title "let's lie on the hypotenuse", the article was provided with 5 photos by the Dance + Dance studio, founded by Aldo Ballo (1928-1994) - brother of the art historian Guido Ballo - and Marirosa Toscano Ballo (1931), another pivotal woman - daughter of the *Corriere della Sera* photo reporter Sergio Fedele Toscani and Oliviero Toscani sister<sup>55</sup>. In the captions only Aldo Ballo was mentioned, while the acknowledgment of the their common work will only be later.

Piera Peroni's article explored then Gaetano Pesce's *Up* Series and about the *Donna* chair she preferred to underline its "maternal image", its "almost prenatal" relaxation that protects from daily fears<sup>56</sup>. For the *Bazaar* she exalted its "temple" image, devoted to daily life, alone or gathered together in a somehow

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<sup>55</sup> Giovanna Calvenzi and Salvatore Gregoriotti (eds.), *Il linguaggio dell'oggetto attraverso le fotografie di Aldo Ballo e Marirosa Toscani Ballo*, (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana Editoriale, 2009); Ilaria Defilippo, Catturare su pellicola l'essenza del design italiano. Conversazione con Marirosa Toscani Ballo, 24.03.2017, <http://www.alleyoop.ilsole24ore.com/2017/03/24/catturare-su-pellicola-lessenza-del-design-italiano-conversazione-con-marirosa-toscani-ballo/> Accessed September 5, 2017.

<sup>56</sup> Piera Peroni, "La balia sottovuoto", *Abitare* 82 (1970), 6-7.

traditional living room<sup>57</sup>. Even the *Sacco* by Gatti, Paolini and Teodoro was described as "a return to the origins" told as a light sitting-shelter for children and women<sup>58</sup>. This will to transform the revolutionary trigger of the Radical items into more reassuring products for everyday life reveals both the commercial aim, and the general need - of which many women were interpreters- to bring the politic struggles back to the safer household.

Similarly, "Domus" focused on the radical production enhancing its innovative and non-conforming aspects, although the choice of those images was oriented to a commercial improvement using a "reassuring" visual communication with mannequin who resembled mothers and sisters in a bourgeois approach<sup>59</sup>.

"Casabella" directed by Alessandro Mendini (from 1970 to 1976) as one of the main radicalism amplifiers, dedicated instead extensive chapters to "Interplanetary Architecture", told as a method of comprehensive and all-scale project, dealing indeed very little specifically with objects.

As in previous examples, women were the authors of most of these reports<sup>60</sup> highlighting once again the roles they have played as critics, storytellers -in words and images-, sorters, "groups glue" and problem solvers.

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<sup>57</sup> Eadem, "Chiacchiere nella conchiglia", *Abitare* 82 (1970), 8-9.

<sup>58</sup> Eadem, "Lasciati mettere nel sacco", *Abitare* 82 (1970), 12-13.

<sup>59</sup> E.g., the magazine *Domus* dedicated an article to Archizoom's products presented by Ettore Sottsass. *Domus* 455 (1967), 26-31.

<sup>60</sup> E.g., Daniela Puppa "Molti mobili ma per chi" (*Casabella* 361 (1972), 56-62); another character to be studied is Aurelia Raffo (1948), photographer and graphic designer, who was charged in recording Ugo La Pietra's cinematic experience and urban performances.

## Conclusions

While this very first overview raises the tangential nature of women roles in the design world, in spite of the social changing and costuming trends, on the other hand, it is possible to identify the Radical phase as the one in which the disciplinary division, or rather, the exclusive design management by architects, ceased, somehow thanks to women. Indeed, their liminary works, chased to remedy the closure of the "male" project, their educations and careers as artists, psychologists, journalists and critics have made possible to melt the project, making it increasingly complex and made of different, new contributions, of which women are often the engine and the main promoters.

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## Experience of the real: Franca Helg 1951-1989

Cristiana Eusepi

“Our architectural culture and our design power are based on observation, carried out with penetrating curiosity of things ...”.<sup>1</sup>

According to Franca Helg, architecture is to be considered an ‘experience of the real’ rooted in a solid cultural basis: this depth towards the space and the things that inhabit the city has allowed Franca Helg to share her activity as an architect with Franco Albini; in this way, she gained the opportunity to play roles that erase a different attribution of an idea or of a result in design.

The abstraction of this statement stems from Franca Helg’s biography, which begins in the 40s, when she enrolls in the Department of Architecture at the Politecnico of Milan, a context still far from recognizing a role to a female presence. Here, the young student stands out for her inclination towards architecture that allows her to be hired in the Banfi-Belgiojoso-Peressutti-Rogers (BBPR) studio.

Graduated in 1945, Franca Helg takes part in the discussion originated by the *VIII Triennale di Milano* in 1947, which pledges to have a “permanent, experimental and living exhibition of

modern architecture”<sup>2</sup>. Precisely in this context, with Anna Ferrieri Castelli<sup>3</sup>, Franca Helg wins the design competition dedicated to the creation of single-family dwellings for veterans. The project proposal then is built in the QT8 experimental district conceived by Piero Bottoni.

In this same period, Franca Helg becomes a member of the *Movimento Studi Architettura* that includes known architects as Franco Albini, Lodovico Belgiojoso, Piero Bottoni, Ignazio Gardella, Ernesto Nathan Rogers, but also promising recent graduates as Giancarlo De Carlo, Marco Zanuso and Franca Helg herself.

In this atmosphere of stimulating opportunities, Franca Helg is both protagonist and careful observer able to grasp the tensions that fuel the discussion inside and outside of the academic institution: her awareness resides in the fact of belonging to a laboratory of excellence engaged in the reflection on the architectural components of a hoped-for renovation of her Country.

The Venetian experience ends with Franca Helg’s return – alongside with Lodovico Belgiojoso – to the University of Milan. This occasion marks the beginning of the professional partnership with the Albini studio, and of Franca Helg’s

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<sup>1</sup> Franca Helg expresses this idea in many contexts. The most complete collection of her essays and articles is edit by Pierfranco Galliani in: Antonio Piva and Vittorio Prina (eds.), *Franca Helg. La gran dama dell'architettura italiana* (Milano: Franco Angeli, 2006), 129-202.

In this essay, all translations from Italian to English have been edited by Stefania Piccialli, BA in English Literature and Communications.

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<sup>2</sup> P. Bottoni, “Il nuovo programma della Triennale di Milano”, *Metron* 3 (1945), 40.

<sup>3</sup> As Franca Helg, Anna Castelli graduated at the Politecnico of Milan. She was student of Franco Albini and Ernest Nathan Rogers. She worked with Ignazio Gardella until 1973. In 1949 she co-founded *Kartell*, a pioneering Italian factory that continues, at present, to produce plastic objects of daily-use.

teaching career at the Milanese Department of architecture, initially as Belgiojoso's assistant and then as a professor of Architectural composition.<sup>4</sup>

In academia, distancing herself from a dogmatic attitude that was not usual of her, Franca Helg builds the *corpus* of her teaching through a skillful method – a link between operative and didactic activities - aligned with her personal way of conceiving and doing architecture; her students are stimulated to continuous tests<sup>5</sup> while her approach to design is founded on sound cultural premises and rooted in the real and concrete experience of architecture.

In Franca Helg's own words, the belonging to a rational ideology is to be considered in the same way as a method that understands, every time, the condition and context of a project and that adjusts reasonably the proposals to effective concrete needs.

On this path, the architectural project is developed through:

a firm understanding of the quality, substance and needs of the theme;

... an authentic cultural honesty in taking problems on without any preconceptions, and at the same time, a civil maturity regarding the support of precise addresses of choices;

... an attitude of patient, rigorous and tenacious work in

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<sup>4</sup> More information can be found in: Lodovico Belgiojoso, "Ricordo di Franca Helg come assistente e docente universitaria", *Controspazio* 1 (1990), 48-49.

<sup>5</sup> Franca Helg affirms that "students must find a way in themselves ... I solicit every student to build a continuous clear critical ability to understand the complexity of reality, influencing it through their own architectural project", in: Maria Luisa Dagnino et al., "Le ragioni del progetto", *Controspazio*, cit., 55.

'trying and trying again' - with hypotheses, verifications, counter-hypotheses - to reach the most satisfying architectural proposal.<sup>6</sup>

The 50s and the 60s represent a period of experimentation for Franca Helg regarding her work as architect. Starting from 1951, Franca Helg's presence in the Albini studio grows in importance and her relationship to design and to the construction site becomes fundamental. Her fruitful dedication is rewarded internationally through the pages of the *Zodiac* magazine: here, Francesco Tentori underlines that the enormous workload carried out by the Albini-Helg studio between 1955 and 1965 is "quasi-miraculous" in relationship to the dimensions and to the organization of the facility.

According to Tentori, the studio's industriousness reached in only a decade of work is a characteristic that has a lot to do with Franca Helg's presence. As Tentori affirms, Franca Helg's collaboration with Franco Albini, establishing a relationship of congeniality and synergy in planning, seems to have galvanized the productive energies of the studio.<sup>7</sup> The creations and buildings of the museum of Palazzo Rosso, of Saint Lorenzo's treasure, of the museum of Saint Augustine, of the Town hall offices in Genoa, of the INA building in Parma, of the Exhibition of Italian contemporary Art in Stockholm, of the Montecatini stand at the Fiera Campionaria in Milan, of the Exhibition on the Venetian Eighteenth century at Palazzo Grassi, of the Olivetti shop in Paris,

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<sup>6</sup> Franca Helg, "Alcune riflessioni sull'esercizio della professione", in Antonio Piva and Vittorio Prina (eds.), *Franca Helg. La gran dama dell'architettura italiana*, cit., p 199.

<sup>7</sup> More information can be found in: Francesco Tentori, "Opere recenti dello studio Albini-Helg", *Zodiac* 14 (1985), 94-127.

of the La Rinascente department store in Rome, of housings and social housing, of villas, furniture, temporary set-ups and of numerous other proposals belong to these years.

In the different projects, the reflection is focused on specific and concrete themes – the historical and environmental contexts, the innovation of architectural typology, the attention for detail and construction – developed through a syncretic process that ties the study of the city to the internal and technical components of architecture. In perfect accord with Franco Albini, this is the specificity that Franca Helg claims, against every overspecialized attitude: architecture, interior design, industrial design and set-ups are all different expressions of a unitary demeanor that nonetheless requires awareness concerning the field in which the single projects are developed.

In this respect, Franca Helg navigates with ease the context of the city as well as the most insignificant architectural detail, rejecting every distinction among different kinds of projects. According to Franca Helg, the integration of the numerous components of a project confirms the comprehensive meaning of the architecture: the studies of public and interior space, form, volumes, proportions, of the whole and of single elements, of structures, chiaroscuros, chromatisms, of functional or expressive reasons – in every work, of every age, of every civilization – constitute the elements that are worthy of being studied to be rebuilt with renovated means. An interpretative tool provided by this attitude is the interest in drawing, considered by Franca Helg as the principal device of performing architecture. According to the architect, the movements of the hand constantly accompany the thought and thus

transversally cover the different design scales, while the structural and formal details sink down in the overall drawing, modifying it:

Through drawing it's possible to verify the connection between space and space, between volume and volume, their proportions, their expressive values, their functional effectiveness. Let's remember how dimension is implicit in proposals of great utopias. Which would have been the sense of the Algeri Plan of Corbusier if it was not its length of many kilometers?

Depending on each scale, there are different problems and levels of detail. The general organization of the project will realize itself through large scale studies and many drawings: in fact, the first drawing (or the first series of drawings) will be, at the same time, the interpretation of the environmental context and of the intent of the project.

The large scale will allow to link the interpretation of environmental context and of project to a more wide situation.

The situation of the environmental context - its sense, flows, convergences of interests and activities - will be showing in the same drawing, or in a set of drawings, while the solutions to any problem will emerge through conventional and evocative signs that will verify and will link the logic of thinking to the

specific project. Then, the general drawing, or at large and medium scale, will be confirmed by probe-samples and more detailed analysis.

To complete the idea of the project, everything will have to be in the form of drawing: purposes, trend lines, intensity of the traffic, size and nature of the different paths, localization of particular elements, mapping of urban connectives and of typologies, organization of interior and exterior spaces of buildings, details of finishes and technologies.<sup>8</sup>

Franca Helg, capable builder architect aware of the expressive centrality of materials, distrusts nonetheless the use of technology. The technical adequacy - the possibilities of which, united to the professionals' expertise affect the quality of the product - measures the effectiveness of the chosen planning solutions. Again in harmony with Franco Albini, Franca Helg reflects on the possibilities of construction in relationship to different materials: wood, metal, glass and many more. In architectural design the question is not of reaching 'virtuosity' with exercises of style, but rather it is of being aware that every building belongs to a precise theme and to the way in which the latter is expressed and narrated in its meaning.

Moreover, considering her architectural experience, Franca Helg valorized tradition as the expression of a sensibility that shows the need of searching for 'rules of the arts',

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<sup>8</sup> Franca Helg, "Alcune riflessioni sull'esercizio della professione", in Antonio Piva and Vittorio Prina (eds.), *Franca Helg. La gran dama dell'architettura italiana*, cit., 201.

constructive tools that develop through a collective recognition of permanent cultural values.

The uniqueness of the Albini-Helg – later with Antonio Piva and Marco Albini<sup>9</sup> – studio's method has allowed it to develop solutions dedicated to specific contexts, employing them, in different scales, in a museum, in an exhibition, in a house, in a piece of furniture and *vice versa*. In this context, the planning of the architectural element of vertical connection assumes a great relevance; its characteristic persistence and variability crosses all of the planning themes, periods and dimensions: as central core of the building, as a complex urban path, as a corner solution between main and secondary road, as a closed external volume, as a simple linear element, as a band hanging from thin ropes or anchored to a sunburst beam structure, as a variation in numerous buildings, museums, apartment complexes, villas, offices, big department store, designed and created by the studio in a forty-year time frame.

Franca Helg reiterates in many occasions that design is a constant application of study and research. Her heritage is the affirmation of a comprehensive idea of architecture, in which designs are the sublimation of a personal way of being and thinking.

The meticulous research in design – actualized in many Italian cities – accompanies Franca Helg in the exploration of realities that are deeply different from the previous ones: in Egypt, in order to design the museums in Alexandria and in Cairo, and then as an expert for the Commission of the International Campaign for the Institution of the Nubian Museum in Assuan; in Saudi Arabia to conceive new cultural and

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<sup>9</sup> Antonio Piva joined the Albini-Helg team in 1962 . Marco Albini in 1984.

commercial centers, offices and the Law Court in Riyadh. The opportunity of acting on the transformation of this last environment constitutes a reflection centered on urban forms, however the way of proceeding essentially returns to usual methods and cities: to Venice and to Genoa, which due to architectural ubiquity, appear again as eastern cities.

The different project contributions, substantially, are well comprehensible in the contingency of our day:

“In the renovation project of the center of Riyadh, the reflection on the urban form has been prevailing ...; in the traditional Muslim cities of the Middle East, of Asia Minor and of North Africa, the urban structure, branched off in walkways, shows efficient knowledge ... The dense urban tissue, made up of repeated typological elements in a complex and varied morphology, the deep knowledge of the climatic and environmental opportunities ... Surely analogies in material needs and expressions can be found, under all the kinds of skies and with all the kinds of weather, and human roots common to all cultures ... then, instead of seeking a ‘curtain wall’, more or less insulated, we have preferred to research in ancient matrixes ... spaces, tissues, light, which are inherent to a tradition of a ‘warm country’ and with a conception of life based on the structure of family, but that however comes from a world in heightened technological advancement. Our considerations on the urban

aspects, on the conditions of use, on the character of the image, and on construction techniques fluctuate between the Arab-Islamic Middle Ages by now already invaded by ugly and small international style skyscrapers and the uncertain composite dissatisfaction towards the European culture that is based on the continuity of tradition...

Among the many experiences outside of national borders, in Latin America, Franca Helg works as a UNESCO consultant. In Peru, she actively takes part in a vast recovery program of the main archeological sites of the country and in the training of architects specialized in the valorization of historical districts and of public spaces. In this context, Franca Helg, as a “tireless and curious enquirer visited all the regional sites”. The recollection of Sylvio Mutal, director of the Lima development and cultural Project, renders Helg’s approach to architecture self-evident one more time.<sup>10</sup>

There are a lot of other pieces of evidence on Franca Helg's thinking and work, for example, the one of Marina Waisman, who focuses on the importance of the teachings imparted during her lectures at the University of Cordoba in Argentina:

The first lesson refers to achieving an harmonious balance between the respect of the past and the affirmation of the present, as living without the values of the past can inhibit the power or even

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<sup>10</sup> Sylvio Mutal, “Franca Helg e L’America Latina”, in: Antonio Piva and Vittorio Prina (eds.), *Franca Helg. La gran dama dell’architettura italiana*, cit., 40-43.

boldness of contemporary expression.

The second lesson is very important ... the method of Franca in the case of a different culture from her own – an approach concerning the project of the urban centre of Kasr-El-Hokm, Riyadh – is not a simple stylistic imitation but a careful study on the cultural origins of the architecture of the Region ... In this way, the relationship with the site is authentic, without false folklore, it's different from usual ideas of European projects in far Countries ...

The third lesson is about the architect's humbleness and his or her respect for the city. The current trend of the architect's craft is to leave an important testimony of his or her work by introducing alien elements to the original fabric of the city so no one can forget his or her passage from there ... Franca Helg's project in our Institute in Cordoba ... was critical - implacable and understandable – dedicated to correcting this defect and to leading the design along reasonable paths. During her speeches, one of the points of view that struck local architects was her high professionalism, her deep respect for the profession of the architect, her idea about a slow and industrious process for every project ...<sup>11</sup>

In a final summary, according to Franca Helg, architecture remains a 'wise game' and a patient research among infinite struggles; it is desire to seek, to try and to try again; it is to know how to see the past in order to accept the present.

For her colleagues and for everyone who has had the opportunity of sharing working moments or slices of life with her, for Franca Helg, making architecture was a matter of a simple smile as well.

For who writes, Franca Helg's research represents the awareness of imagining architecture by observing the world with a piercing curiosity.

Franca Helg carries out her professional and cultural engagement until 1989.

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<sup>11</sup> Marina Waisman, "Quattro insegnamenti di Franca Helg", *Controspazio* 1 (1990), 104-125.

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# The gender bias on craftsmanship and industrial production in Dutch ceramics (1960-1980)

Ilja S. Meijer

The history of Dutch ceramics in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is relatively well-documented and provides a good representation of women professionals working in this field. In several exhibitions and publications from the 1970s and 1980s – when ceramics as a craft and art was in high esteem – the amount of included women ceramic artists is equal or slightly bigger than the amount of male artists.<sup>1</sup> A simple statistic such as this presents the idea that women were equally regarded as men and that a gender bias was absent. In contrast, other exhibitions and publications focusing on industrially, mass-scale produced ceramics and modern tableware show a completely opposite picture, with women making up about a fifth or less of the complete selection of ceramic designers.<sup>2</sup>

This observation raises questions on gendered assumptions surrounding women and ceramics as a craft, an art and an industry. The experimental phase of Dutch ceramics from the 1960s onwards, as well as the well-established historiography of this period, provides the perfect context to investigate the

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<sup>1</sup> Ratio of included ceramic artists in several exhibitions and books: 36 women and 43 men (Spruit-Ledeboer 1976); 42 women and 36 men (Spruit-Ledeboer 1985); 50 women and 35 men (Keramiek 1986); 8 women and 7 men (Berkhof 1988).

<sup>2</sup> Ratio of included industrial designers working with ceramics in several exhibitions and books: 8 women and 10 men (Spruit-Ledeboer 1981); 5 women and 30 men (Bogaers 1988); 5 women and 24 men (Simon Thomas 2008).

existence and composition of a possible gender bias within modern ceramics. The evolution of the general conception of women as linked to nature/earth/craft, to women who understand industry/technology/rationalism is an important theme in the process of professionalization of women designers, as already recognized in the historical period prior to WWII.<sup>3</sup>

This paper hopes to answer the question on how the place of professional women ceramists has been different with respect to the craft, art and industry practice in the Netherlands in this period. Were women limited professionally in any of these (blurred) areas of ceramic production by stereotypical role patterns, or did they have the possibility to go beyond basic, home-based practices to become independent and individual designers or artists in their own right? It will do so by analysing the work of a couple of women ceramicists within the historical context, with special attention to the used techniques – handmade or machine – and glazing, the scale of production – large-scale industry, serial or one-of-a-kind – and the attributed creative and historical value of the works. To properly analyse this, I want to shortly discuss some of the tensions I encountered: women and craft; women and industry; and women and art.

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<sup>3</sup> Groot 2007, pp. 243-244, and p. 248.

## Women and craft (nature)

An all-encompassing list of all researches and publications covering the topic of either gender and handcraft, or specifically gender and ceramic craft, would be immense and coming from a wide range of different disciplines.<sup>4</sup> From the anthropological and archaeological perspectives for example, many local, indigenous or ancient communities worldwide have been investigated. From a design historical perspective there have also been various efforts to create a historical narrative of female artisans and incorporate them in the (male-dominated) grand narrative. More than in architecture, art or product design, women have been able to claim a place in this field of research and historiography: the field of handcraft, artisanship, the 'arts and crafts', of decorators.

Consciously or not, many researchers take the assumed connection between handcraft and women as their starting point, and see their assumptions confirmed. The association is widespread and finds its origin partially in another widespread belief that goes back for centuries: the belief that women are closer to nature than men. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, for example, most of the enlightened philosophers reason in what Levi-Strauss called 'wild' thinking: the woman is part of nature, man is part of culture. There's such a tight connection between woman and nature, that metaphorically speaking, nature is gendered female.<sup>5</sup> The connection of women with nature means that they're accounted with an inferior and more negative role in the production of culture,

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<sup>4</sup> For this paper, only a small selection of these publications with a more general scope or design related perspective have been incorporated.

<sup>5</sup> DUBY 1992, p. 187.

as Marjan Groot remarks in her book *Vrouwen in de Vormgeving in Nederland 1880-1940* (2008). She further elaborates on the tension fields of culture-nature and rationality-emotionality in the work of craftswomen and women designers prior to WWII.<sup>6</sup>

Pottery and ceramics, as coming from the earth, is one such craft that is traditionally associated with women in line of this argument. 'Composed of weathered rocks and rainwater, clay has an earthy quality as an art material. The Earth has long been understood as "a formidable reservoir of female power"'.<sup>7</sup> Commonly, women are believed to be the first makers of clay objects and the first potters.<sup>8</sup> Because of their biological traits and their social role as mother and nurturer, women are also generally positioned in the context of the home, the place where clay objects have been used the most.<sup>9</sup>

These historical conceptions persist and can still be recognized in more recent times, including perceptions of ceramics as 'an exclusively female activity' or 'naturalized activity linked to females'.<sup>10</sup> To elaborate, Courtney Lee Weida focuses in her book *Artistic ambivalence in clay* (2011) on the 'tension between the ways in which womanhood is broadly linked with ceramics, and yet individual women may be excluded' from historical research. She frames this and other binaries – subject/object, self/other, and male/female – with the term ambivalence, which she finds particularly fitting for the 'contradictions in social associations with women, women's bodies, pottery, and clay itself'.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Groot 2007, pp. 243-244, and p. 248.

<sup>7</sup> Weida 2011, p.18, citing Classen 1998, p.86.

<sup>8</sup> Weida 2011, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Groot 2007, p. 244; Weida 2011, p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> Vincentelli 2000, p. 15.

<sup>11</sup> Weida 2011, p. 1-4.

As quoted from Isabelle Anscombe's book *A Woman's Touch* (1984):

'Women are traditionally associated with nature rather than culture, a division which, in design terms, has placed them in fields where manual dexterity, a feel for texture, a familiarity with natural materials – such as clay or vegetable dyes – and small home-based workshops take precedence over man-made materials, large-scale machine production or an eye for three-dimensional form.'<sup>12</sup>

This quote summarizes the starting point of this research, since it not only describes the relationship of women with nature and craft, but more importantly it implies women's juxtaposition to synthetic materials, industrial production, technical science, management of large scale manufacture and the artistic genius. Here are two underlying assumptions that have framed my research: firstly, that women are not or less capable of rational industry on a large-scale and technology; and secondly, that women are not or less capable of being 'a creative genius', thus aren't able to create 'great art' – or great design, or great architecture, or basically anything extraordinary and admirable.

### **Women and industry (technology)**

The relationship of women with industry is related to the tension field of emotionality versus rationality as recognized by Groot, because industry is generally seen as a rational way of production and organisation more suited to men than women.<sup>13</sup> During the

industrial revolution and rise of industrial capitalism, an increased separation of work and home coincides with a growing separation between public and private spheres. Men's work and social life is situated increasingly away from home, while women's domesticity and role as a mother is emphasized. This is also recognizable in the production of ceramics: whenever pottery becomes a specialization or a large-scale production at a specific time and place, pottery usually becomes a male activity practised away from the home.<sup>14</sup> Although women continue to produce goods within the setting of the domestic industry – and girls and (unmarried) women often work in factories as well – their contribution and economic value is overlooked as a relevant work force and producers of goods.

The industrial ceramic factories have a clearly gendered labour division: women mostly paint and apply pottery decors or do other less skill-full work; only rarely women manage to work explicitly as a designer of pottery shape and decoration. Cheryl Buckley refers to the pottery industry in her book *Women Potters and Paintresses* (1990) – covering British women pottery in interwar years – as a true patriarchy, where '[m]en monopolised skilled jobs and controlled access to these through the apprenticeship system.'<sup>15</sup> Buckley also states that women's presence in the domestic tableware production is often legitimised because women can design 'for the ladies from a ladies' standpoint, for she designs first and foremost to please herself'. As in other trades, women's participation is only welcomed for their intuitive understanding of domestic matters. In larger factories producing modern ceramics, the roles of women designers are more rigidly defined

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<sup>12</sup> Anscombe 1986, pp. 13-14.

<sup>13</sup> Groot 2007, pp. 243-244, and p. 248.

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<sup>14</sup> Vincentelli 2000, p. 53.

<sup>15</sup> Buckley 1990, p.4.

compared to smaller, more flexible companies. As noted by Buckley and Groot, it is possible, but rather unusual that a woman gets promoted from decorator to designer, or can work from an independent design studio on a freelance basis.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, Buckley observes that despite successful and professional individuals and a growth of independent small studios, the stereotypes and gender division in the ceramics industry still prevail after WWII.<sup>17</sup>

The division between the individual, high-skilled working woman in a craft trade – predominantly practiced at home – and a low-rank working woman in a large-scale industrial production is a long-standing universal fact.<sup>18</sup> But influences from, for example, the Scandinavian pottery industry in the interwar years demonstrate that craft and industrial methods of production don't have to be mutually exclusive. High quality pottery is created within a mass-produced context, but with respect for craft processes. Buckley argues that this approach enables women to design both shape and decoration.<sup>19</sup> She recognizes the accessibility for women professionals in this craft-like approach to industrial production.

To further explain women's relation with industry, Vincentelli argues in *Women and ceramics: Gendered vessels* (2000) that gender roles are constructed by and expressed in ceramic technology. 'Handbuilding, burnishing, painting and bonfiring are never exclusively women's techniques, but they are predominantly so. [...] The use of the wheel accompanied by the adoption of kiln firing is almost

always associated with male potters."<sup>20</sup> When women studio potters take up throwing in the 20th century, 'there is good evidence that women had to fight for their rights to have access to wheel technology'. Wheel-thrown pottery can be said to require a level of specialisation, mobilisation of capital and technical knowledge. Despite our western vision of 'evolution by technology', new technologies are not always better than traditional ones.<sup>21</sup> But based on this vision, by excluding women from certain technologies, men have been given a great privilege and advantage over women in practicing a ceramic profession. Besides wheel-throwing, there is also documentation of women's exclusion from glaze and kiln technologies, profit and credit for their own ceramic work, and acknowledgement as leaders of the field in studio ceramics that confirm the existence of such limitations.<sup>22</sup>

### Women and art (creative genius)

Elsewhere in her book, Anscombe comments more directly on the limited capability of women to create art, stating that:

'[the] decorative arts – delicate, painstaking, refined – were thought by the Victorians to be peculiarly suited to female talents and, indeed, natures, whereas the fine arts, which required ambition and strength and purpose of vision, were only suited by to men'.<sup>23</sup>

She continues:

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<sup>16</sup> Buckley 1990, pp. 97-99; Groot 2007, p. 249.

<sup>17</sup> Buckley 1990, p. 157.

<sup>18</sup> Groot 2007, p. 250.

<sup>19</sup> Buckley 1990, pp. 134-135.

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<sup>20</sup> Vincentelli 2000, p. 34.

<sup>21</sup> Vincentelli 2000, p. 48-49; women used wheels for trimming and turning, but not throwing.

<sup>22</sup> Weida 2011, p. 2.

<sup>23</sup> Anscombe 1986, pp. 11-12.

‘Decorative art, in the hands of women, was considered to be the more successful for gracefully accepting its limitations, in seeking only to enhance the home, where women guarded love, sanctity and honour against those very elements of challenge and contention so praised in men’s art.’<sup>24</sup>

These quotes are related to women’s domesticity on the one hand and to their lack of a creative genius on the other.

Besides Anscombe, most authors writing on women and crafts – or women and ceramics, or within material gender studies in general – make the same observation: in the hierarchy of the arts, men are associated with fine arts as the highest form of art and with this creativity, ambition, genius etc.; crafts practiced by women or perceived as feminine, for example pottery, textiles and embroidery, are almost universally lower in ranking and often concerned with objects belonging to the home. As Buckley formulates: ‘Women were generally supposed to have a biologically determined facility for colour co-ordination, the arrangement of interior and domestic spaces, and the design of products for these.’<sup>25</sup> This is a repetition of the arguments mentioned above, regarding women-versus-craft and women-versus-industry, but here it refers to the inherent exclusion of women from the creation of great art and from the grand narrative of history.

Although feminist art history is a full-grown discourse in itself – too extensive to discuss here – I would just like to mention how Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock in

their book *Old mistresses: Women art and ideology* (1995; reprint 2013) observe how the concept of creative genius and greatness is itself gendered masculine throughout (art) history. As they write: ‘Men are the true artists, they have genius; women have only taste.’<sup>26</sup> Although women can be artists, they are not thought to be capable of greatness and are therefore neglected within historiography. For every outstanding individual woman whose work and career is portrayed in either art or design history, countless others who designed textiles, decorated tableware, painted murals, designed furniture, etc. have been forgotten.<sup>27</sup>

### ‘Feminine characteristics’

Because historiography is focused on the production of men – even within the crafts and design – the production of women has become the deviant. As Groot formulates it: ‘The work of women is defined as differing from the silent norm, the ‘masculine’’. This masculine norm is rarely made explicit, but has led to a set of differing, stereotypical characteristics that are perceived as feminine and an expression of the female nature.<sup>28</sup> For the applied arts and ceramics specifically, these include: decorativeness (flowers/figurative; either incised, scratched, painted or other); soft and subtle colour ranges or colourfulness in general; detailed, intricate and delicate, but also raw and primitive; sometimes weakness of form; intuitive and emotional opposed to rational; handmade instead of

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<sup>24</sup> Anscombe 1986, pp. 11-12.

<sup>25</sup> Buckley 1990, p. 129.

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<sup>26</sup> Parker 2013, p. 13.

<sup>27</sup> Anscombe 1984, pp. 11-12.

<sup>28</sup> “The qualification of feminine is always based on a stereotype and is not exclusively applicable to the work of women”, freely translated from: Groot 2007, p. 217.

machine; small-scale home or studio production instead of large-scale industrial production; domestic and nursery ware instead of autonomous art; natural materials instead of synthetic (man-made); nature versus culture.<sup>29</sup>

### History of Dutch ceramics and some women ceramicists

The above-mentioned stereotypical assumptions, generalizations and tensions related to the topic of women and ceramics, will function as a pair of (pink-)coloured glasses in the analysis of the history of Dutch ceramics in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Two publications by Mieke Spruit-Ledeboer – the first covering the period 1900-1970; the second covering the period 1975-1985 – are influential in its well-established historiography and function as a database for this research.

Since 1885 the Dutch ceramics industry of functional wares experiences a wave of innovation with a great number of newly established ceramic factories. Slip-casting – already discovered in the 18<sup>th</sup> century – is used to create a new modern language, very suitable for large-scale production and the use of porcelain.<sup>30</sup> Later, directly after WWII, there is a flourishing of the industrially produced tableware, helped by governmental obligations to produce a stipulated amount of domestic goods to cater to the enormous demand. All potteries resort to pre-war models at first, with one exception: the company Fris (meaning *fresh* in English). After its success, other manufacturers soon follow by employing

leading designers (who were all male) to create new modern designs.<sup>31</sup>

In the 1970s functional ceramics can be roughly divided in two main trends: one is inspired by old ceramic traditions, for example from East Asia, with simplicity, asymmetry and earth-like glazed colours; the other is invented as a contemporary style, inspired by De Stijl and the Bauhaus, with geometrical and elementary forms, an eye for functionality and made industrially, wheel thrown or by casting.<sup>32</sup>

One of the few known women who designs industrially manufactured tableware in this period is **Lucie Quirina Bakker** (1915-2003), who can be placed within this first trend. After studying at the art academies of Rotterdam and Amsterdam in the 1930s, she opens her own studio on an Amsterdam attic in 1938. Her work includes a lot of one-of-a-kind pieces in a simple, craft-like design with a focus on the glaze. Around 1950 she starts to produce serial tableware for economic reasons, and with success; at the end of the 1950s she employs four workers and has representatives to do her distribution. From 1968 to 1979 the Royal Tichelaar factory in Makkum produces her designs in semi-craft manner, such as the Quirina tableware: meanwhile, Bakker works on singular pieces in her private studio in Haarlo.<sup>33</sup>

Caused by international concurrence from East-Europe and Japan many factories have to close down entirely – such as Fris in 1970 – or shut down their domestic department – such as Sphinx-Ceramique in 1969. In the 1980s there is practically no ceramics industry at all. Surviving potteries produce simple tourist

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<sup>29</sup> These characteristics are extracted from the statements already discussed and the researched literature in general.

<sup>30</sup> Spruit-Ledeboer 1976, p. 21.

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<sup>31</sup> Staal 1987, p. 174.

<sup>32</sup> Spruit-Ledeboer 1981, pp. 5-13.

<sup>33</sup> Lucie Q. Bakker has always been able to pay for her own life support and works until 1990; Groot 2007, p. 457.

ware, bathroom equipment, tiles and hotel china. This situation offers little prospects for potters in industry; freshly graduated ceramic artists go abroad to gain experience and find work, for example at the companies Rosenthal, Arzberg and Arabia. Illustrative is one exhibition on domestic ceramics in Galerie Binnen in Amsterdam at the end of 1986, which is appropriately called *These 15 designers are in search of an industry*.<sup>34</sup>

At the same time, ceramics art becomes one of the most flourishing branches of art in the Netherlands. From the late-1950s, there is an explosion of creativity in the field of studio-pottery as well as other crafts, partially as a reaction of artists against the technological and consumer-driven society.<sup>35</sup> Ceramics develops into an autonomous art form: from the confinement of making objects for domestic use, the ceramist wants to unfold and develop freely, without functional restrictions. Instead of being called *pottenbakker* (potter), they prefer the name *keramist* (ceramicist). As Spruit-Ledeboer explains, this flourishing art form includes one-of-a-kind-pieces (*unica*), handmade in a private studio or in the communal studio of several co-operating artists. She distinguishes three different types of studio pottery: pottery, ceramic sculptures and architectural ceramics. While pottery serves a utilitarian function, ceramics sculptures are seen as autonomous works of art, and architectural ceramics include wall pieces and tiled decors. Parallel to the development of ceramics into a respected autonomous art form, studio pottery takes over the production of functional ceramics

from the industry, but on a much smaller scale.<sup>36</sup>

One exemplary studio potter and producer of small-scale functional ware, is **Petra (Nirdosh) van Heesbeen** (1949). In 1970 she establishes studio 'Ronding' together with her husband and ceramic artist Joop Beekwilder, after which she starts her study at the art academy in Den Bosch. She exhibits from early on and begins a collaboration with Beekwilder and two other artists called 'Grèskompagnons BV' in Den Bosch after her graduation. She mostly creates functional pottery – mostly wheel thrown and made from clay (grès) and porcelain, sometimes with incised or pressured decoration – but in later years also works on ceramic sculptures.<sup>37</sup> The traces of fire from her self-built gas and wood ovens have remained important in her work, including or similar to the Japanese raku technique popularized around 1980. In 2014, she celebrated her 40-year work anniversary with an exhibition and documentary.<sup>38</sup>

Because of the growing interest of the galleries, museums and other collectors or enthusiasts and ongoing technical progress, the working- and living-situation of the studio-potter improves a great deal after 1960.<sup>39</sup> By the 1980s there is more technical knowledge available, more independently working ceramicists and more different styles of ceramics than in any period before.<sup>40</sup> 'The technical equipment of the studio-potter has undergone a tremendous evolution in the course of the century, mainly due to the development of electrical equipment. The approach to the material (clay and

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<sup>34</sup> Rosalie Begeer, Pauline Wiertz and Yvonne Kleinveld were three of the participating designers; Staal 1987, p. 176.

<sup>35</sup> Simon Thomas 2008, p. 186.

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<sup>36</sup> Spruit-Ledeboer 1976, pp. 121-124.

<sup>37</sup> Spruit-Ledeboer 1981, pp. 16-17.

<sup>38</sup> Documentary: *Vuur en Vorm* (translated: Fire and Form).

<sup>39</sup> Spruit-Ledeboer 1976, pp. 121-124.

<sup>40</sup> Spruit-Ledeboer 1981, pp. 5-13.

glazes) has become more scientific,' as recognized by Spruit-Ledeboer.<sup>41</sup> Synthetic materials like polystyrene are mixed with the clay to achieve lighter material or a specific surface structure, while others – like pottery De Moerbeij (*mulberry* in English) – focus on the sole use of natural materials and natural processes.<sup>42</sup> There is a renewed interest in hand-building techniques and the application of decoration, for example drawings scratched into the unbaked clay or finish layer, and stamped textile reliefs. In the 1960s there is more interest in form and monochrome glazes, resulting in very clean and abstract designs.<sup>43</sup>

Pottery with engraved decoration reaches its peak in the years 1956-1962 at the newly founded Experimental Studio of factory *De Porceleyne Fles* in Delft, where young ceramic designers are invited to experiment with pottery, architectural ceramics and other related practices.<sup>44</sup> Over the years, many women work in this department, but **Lies Cosijn** (1931 – 2016) can be regarded as one of its leading designers. She is born in Indonesia, moves to the Netherlands and studies at the art academy in Amsterdam in the 1950s. Just after graduation she starts working at De Porceleyne Fles. Since 1959 she starts moving from pottery to ceramic sculptures and wall pieces, which soon after becomes her only focus. After 1963 she moves on to become an independent artist. Decoration is important in her work: mythological scenes, biblical and phantasy figures, animals and people are carved out of the clay or applied in a different way. She works mostly by hand and is inspired by primitive and non-western cultures in many ways.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Spruit-Ledeboer 1976, p. 124.

<sup>42</sup> Spruit-Ledeboer 1976, p. 72 and p.116.

<sup>43</sup> Spruit-Ledeboer 1976, p. 117.

<sup>44</sup> Spruit-Ledeboer 1976, p. 122.

<sup>45</sup> Spruit-Ledeboer 1976, pp. 162-163.

By the end of the 1970s and in the 1980s, many exhibitions on Dutch and international ceramic art – and sometimes functional ware – take place and various publications are published. Galleries and museums argue over hosting particular exhibitions and many of them try to purchase the newest and best ceramic works to their collections. This peak of interest also marks the end of this flourishing period in the history of ceramic art; the public interest dies down, but many ceramicists continue their work outside the spotlight. Nowadays, Dutch ceramics is reinvented and has become a highly valued discipline again with (re)new(ed) women artists and designers, such as Wieki Somers, Hella Jongerius, Nynke Tynagel (Studio Job), Nadine Sterk and Lonny van Ryswyck (Studio NL), Babs Haenen, Simone van Bakel and Barbara Nanninga.

### **Analysis of their works**

Based on the general history of Dutch ceramics in the 1960s-1980s, statistics of organized exhibitions and published books, and the highlighted careers of ceramicists, it can be stated that women were active as ceramic professionals and that many of them were successful, recognized and could make a living out of their ceramic work. But to answer this paper's leading question – *how has the place of professional women ceramists been different with respect to the craft, art and industry practice in the Netherlands in this period* – it's necessary to also analyse the used techniques – handmade or machine – and glazing, the scale of production – large-scale industry, serial or one-of-a-kind – and the attributed creative and historical value of the works.

Among all three highlighted examples – and other encountered women artists in general – a craft-like approach is the norm. They are inspired, for example, by traditional ceramic practices or want to revolt against mass-production and industrial products. They work in small studios, apply wheel throwing and various hand building techniques, and experience the process of creation very directly. Petra Heesbeen, as an archetypical studio potter, is exemplary of this. In an exhibition catalogue, Spruit-Ledeboer describes a lidded box of Heesbeen as sturdy and robust of shape, with a beautiful, shimmering, dark brown reduction glaze (partially uncovering the clay) and perfect sitting lid. Inspiration from the Far East is obvious, with Korean/Japanese cornered shape and Chinese/Japanese temmoku glazing.<sup>46</sup>

This craft-like approach is not only practiced by women, but is the norm for most of the ceramic artists and – in this period in particular – has a very scientific and innovative nature. This can be seen in the experimentation with different glazes (synthetic or natural) and baking methods and equipment, ranging from the use of electrical ovens to high-fire wood-burned stoves. All of the new techniques and technical knowledge are accessible for women. Still, almost none of the women ceramicists use the more industrially method of slip casting (with porcelain) and almost none of them collaborate with industrial manufacturers – which can only be partially attributed to the general low in ceramics industry. Lucie Q. Bakker is an exception and possible the only women ceramicist from this period who is acknowledged as an industrial designer. In a 1939 newspaper, Bakker's early work is described as 'showing fresh originality [...] In her forms as well as her glazes she creates something singular, without being

immodest'. Spruit-Ledeboer places Bakker among the artists that replace the high-polished pre-war glazes with opaque earth-coloured glazing and direct the attention more to form and material than colour and decoration.<sup>47</sup>

It's difficult to determine if this is a result of the lack of opportunities given to women by industrial manufacturers, or that women themselves prefer to work on a smaller scale and choose to become an 'artist' instead of 'industrial designer'. It can be considered stereotypical that the only industrial tablewares designed by women, are created with respect to craft processes and with the earth-like colours so appreciated in studio pottery at that time.

With respect to form, decoration and use of colour – elements that have been very perceptive to feminization – the works created by women are very diverse and therefore more difficult to interpret as a whole. Only few women artists use abstract-geometric forms and clean, even-coloured surfaces. These clean surfaces are mostly obtained by slip casting porcelain or wheel throwing. Later in the 1980s, abstract forms are also applied within postmodern work. Possibly linked to the advent of postmodernism is the invention of new dynamic shapes – centralizing the process of creation instead of the glazing or final form – and the experimentation with colours, sometimes unprecedented bright and in contrast to the earth-like glazes of earlier years. Several women ceramicist stand at the forefront of these later developments.

In general, women are respected for the quality of their work instead of their supposed feminine characteristics. Although in some texts, the work of their women colleagues is called 'soft', or 'emotional', this is not necessarily

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<sup>46</sup> Spruit-Ledeboer 1981, pp.

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<sup>47</sup> Groot 2007, p. 457; Spruit-Ledeboer 1985, p. 31.

different than what is written on the work of men. And the other way around, many women (like the examples) were admired for their technical experiments, monumentality and powerful imagery. Lies Cosijn is rather the exception than the rule, with her work being valued for its powerful, but also highly emotional and expressive character. Cosijn is called one of the greatest artists of post-war Dutch ceramics and very influential in its development. Cosijn becomes internationally renowned for her unique style. The owner of one of her art pieces says: 'the brutal beauty of this sculpture is also reflected in the earth-coloured clay-glazes, that have been poured over the rough surface in wild action.'<sup>48</sup>

## Conclusions

For the period 1960-1980, I think it's clear that the gender bias surrounding **women-craft** was still existing within Dutch ceramics: the focus on craft in ceramics made it easier and more accessible for women to create functional ware and make a living out of it. I also think that the bias on **women-art** was present, because from this bias it's only obvious that women created autonomous art based on ceramics and pottery (and other crafts such as textile), instead of a traditionally more masculinized practice like painting. In these decades more female artists were acknowledged in these autonomous 'craft-arts' than any other fine art. More complicated is the gender bias on **women-industry**: women created functional ware and did have access to basically all materials and techniques, but in large-scale industry there was no room for them.

One problem I faced in this research, is the unclear and much disputed

definition of ceramics: is it a discipline or just a material? When is it called art and when design? When is a ceramicist best called a *pottenbakker*, an autonomous artist or an industrial designer? These questions have remained unanswered, but hopefully have not impaired the main argument and proof of the existence of this gender bias.

Lastly, to end with a thought-provoking quote, Buckley argued that by working on singular pieces in small studios, women potters after WWII could 'undermine the hierarchical and gender-specific divisions in the arts by producing work which can be labelled **neither craft (women's) nor art (men's)** [emphasis added]'.<sup>49</sup> Maybe a next research topic on gender and ceramics should incorporate queer theory as well.

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<sup>48</sup> Spruit-Ledeboer 1976, pp. 162-163.

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<sup>49</sup> Buckley 1990, p. 157.

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## The Archives of a Professional: Maria Luisa Spineto, Civil Engineer and 'Thorough Designer'

Roberta Spallone

### A female civil engineer between atelier and building site

In Italy in the 1950s, civil engineering was practiced almost entirely by men.

Certainly is a singular case the professional affirmation of a woman who lived and worked in a hilly town with fewer than 5000 inhabitants, Arquata Scrivia in the province of Alessandria, on the slopes of the Ligurian Apennines and along the road link between Alessandria and Genova.

Personal skills and reputation, familial and individual, surely contributed to the establishment of a mainly private, strong and loyal clientele, but also to the recognition of authority and competence that allowed her to lead the building-site, direct the workers, and interact with the contractors and the craftsmen that created technological elements, decorative details and complementary furnishings, on her drawings.

Maria Luisa Spineto was born in Arquata Scrivia in 1926 and prematurely died in 1989.

Following classic studies at the Liceo Classico in Novi Ligure ended in 1944, she graduated in 1950 from the University of Genova in Civil Building Engineering. In a course of forty-one students, only three were women. Among these three women, she would be the only one to practice the profession.

The training course included a biennial in Engineering, common to the various subsequent specializations and continued, in her case, with the three-year

Civil Engineering course, in the Building subsection.

During the three last years the disciplines related to the project - Building Science, Building Technology, Architectural Composition, Building Physics - and those aimed at professional practice - Real Estate Evaluation, Legal Subjects - composed the *corpus* of the Civil Engineer's knowledge in the Post-War period. This program according to the study regulations and Italian laws allowed practicing the profession of Civil Engineer and signing projects in the field of the structure calculation such as architectural project.

Two final dissertations were submitted by Spineto; they concern the report to the structural project of a school building in Arquata Scrivia, and the evaluation for the division of a farm.

A short curriculum, dated 18 November 1966, along with other archive sources, allows reconstructing the first steps of her professional activity.

During the first years after graduating she worked for the engineering firm of Adriano Bagnasco in Genova.

Among the works by Bagnasco, already President of the Order of Engineers and Professor of Building Technology at the University of Genova, it could remember that designed with the architect Luigi Carlo Daneri: the complex of high houses in Genova-Foce (1934-1958), realized answering the announcement of an architectural competition for the setting of the new Piazza della Foce.

One of her first independent works was the competition entry for the reconstruction of Margherita Theater in Via XX Settembre in Genova (1955). It is one of the few documented works that includes sketches and colour perspectives and demonstrates a particular quality of tracing and a fitting use of drawing for spatial conception. It was a building for theatrical performances of revue and opera. Among the competitors, engineer Spineto, who was only 29, was the only woman.

The failure of the competition, motivated by the Selection Board with the incompleteness of her proposal, that was in any case considered deserving of the cost contribution, probably contribute to induce her to resort to engagements with private or construction firms' commitments.

In the Archive there is an article published in the *Corriere mercantile* of Genova in May 1955, titled 'Engineers and architects wearing the skirt that work in studios and construction sites'<sup>1</sup>. It contains some interviews with young professionals, including that with Maria Luisa Spineto. In the text emerges that the other interviewees have stopped working when they have had a child, or have devoted themselves to teaching, or were employees. The chronicler asks to Spineto whether, when she will marry, she will give up her professional career and if technical and scientific skills have some utility in domestic activities. No questions about a woman's position in an engineering firm or on her role in the building site; the interviewer merely points out that she is dealing mainly with residential buildings and not with road infrastructures. 'Drive securely everywhere', she sarcastically concludes.

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<sup>1</sup> "Ingegneri e architetti in gonnella al lavoro negli studi e nei cantieri", *Corriere mercantile*, 29 May 1957.

Maria Luisa Spineto, who did not marry, drove the car and had an intense social life, as evidenced by the pictures of dinners and snow holidays with her circle of friends, left the Bagnasco firm in 1957.

In the following years, she collaborated with the same firm until the death of the holder in 1964, and at the same time she carried out her work as an independent professional, dealing with architectural project and works direction.

In 1956 she was a member of the Register of Experts of the Order of Engineers of Genova: in the categories of Civilian Buildings and Reinforced Concrete Structures, Topography and Real Estate Evaluation there were 3 women out of 268 members, in the category Ordinary Roads, women were reduced to 2.

In the Engineer's Register of Genova of 1964 that included about 1600 members, she was one of the 11 women, and the others mostly were teachers or employees.

Among the public assignments there was the participation in the Building Commission of the Municipality of Arquata Scrivia, on appointment of 12 May 1963.

In the curriculum dating 1966, she remembered, among the independent assignments, the project and the direction of the works of: eight apartment buildings ranging between 20000 and 30000 mc in Arquata Scrivia and Novi Ligure; some smaller condominiums and villas close to the city and in Marina di Bibbona; some buildings for a farm. Among the most demanding and prestigious assignments is the static testing of the Genova Sampierdarena skyscraper, identifiable in the so-called 'hospital's skyscraper', in Via Giovanni Battista Botteri 3, a 18-storey and 70-meter high building, built in 1957 by the construction company Vicari.

Her atelier was in a wing of the family home in Arquata Scrivia, where she also had an apartment.

In 1957, she joined the A.I.D.I.A., holder of the card no. 59.

Since 1979 she was a member of the Soroptimist of Alessandria, of which she also had the role of Secretary.

She was a versatile designer: in 1987, together with a friend, she drew and patented an industrial model of articulated eye-glasses.

Subsequent assignments, contracted by private clients and construction companies, mainly involved residential projects, condominiums, villas, and funerary architectures; although work for schools, cinemas, farms and industries was also done.

The scope of these projects extended from her hometown, to Novi Ligure, Genova, and Livorno.

From the early years of independent work, Spineto combined the architectural design to the calculation of structures; the latter task in some cases engaged her exclusively as a structural designer.

Carrying out the calculation of the reinforced concrete through the slide rule, she applied the principle of the use of the maximum of steel and used a particular strictness in the building site during the checking of the concrete's composition and the laying of the steel armor.

The end of the 1960s, in full economic boom, was the time of several realizations in which Spineto reconciled the architectural and structural project, to the design of technological elements (windows, roofs,...), finishes (coatings, railings,...), and furnishing details (lamps, handles,...).

The Engineer's Register of the Province of Alessandria in 1971 is a further testimony to how rare professional women were: among 267 members, only 4 are women. The other three, beyond Spineto, were younger than her and their father was an engineer.

In the early 1970s she abandoned the structural calculation, as documented a letter dated 11 September 1974 to Domenico Debenedetti, who had commissioned the family tomb: 'The calculations and the direction of the reinforced concrete works must be entrusted to another professional since I have for years ceased to be interested in this activity. On the other hand, I will be happy to follow and direct the architectural work if you like it'.

Over her last few decades, she worked on shop outfitting and interior furnishings. The clients' names recur, thus demonstrating their satisfaction and loyalty.

It is a sector of professional activity that she had been practicing since the beginning, as in the furniture of Casa Bellini in Arquata Scrivia, of which she was also author of the architectural project, dating back to 1958.

This was one of the first cases in which Spineto dealt with a 'thorough design', ranging from architectural composition, structural calculation, design of technological details, and furnishings.

Many years later, in November 1981, the interiors of Casa Bellini were published in the magazine *Modo*, in a monographic article by Nives Ciardi entitled 'Camere d'abitazione' ('Housing Rooms'). The author of the article puts readers the question of which is the key to poetically living. In the following, comparing the concept of dwelling in Heidegger's and Hölderlin's thoughts, she conducts an ideal visit inside the home, described as a 'memory house', and retraces the events remembered by the stratification of the family objects.

The interior furnishings in the Spineto's drawings - great color perspectives, traced with remarkable

accuracy - are still recognizable in the published photographs<sup>2</sup>.

In the same field, she received other significant awards, such as the second prize awarded ex-aequo in 1989 by the Chamber of Commerce of Genova under the Competition 'Antico è bello' (Antiques are beautiful) for the restructuring and enhancement of the environment of the historic center, through the renovation and the furnishing of a clothing store in Genova.

Forty years of intense work are described by the copious iconographic and textual materials collected in her Archives and preserved by her family. An analytical report is currently under review, but it can be anticipated that it should include about two hundred projects.

### **Among archival documents: selection of some emblematic projects**

The documents found in the private Archives of Maria Luisa Spineto, generally in good condition, consist of iconographic materials: drawings, mostly China-inked on tracing paper, blueprint copies, in a few cases coloured by pastel or watercolour, bills of armor, photographs ..., and textual materials: letters, notes, technical reports...

As in most professional Archives, the preserved drawings relate to the final and executive phase of the project<sup>3</sup>. The

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<sup>2</sup> Nives Ciardi, "Camere d'abitazione", *Modo* 5, 44 (1981), 23-27.

<sup>3</sup> On the characteristics of archival drawings of professionals in the twentieth century see:

Piero Albinetti, Laura De Carlo (Eds.), *Architettura disegno modello. Verso un archivio digitale dell'opera di maestri del XX secolo* (Roma: Gangemi, 2011).

Fulvio Irace, Graziella Leyla Ciagà, G. L. (Eds.), *Design & Cultural Heritage. Archivio Animato / Animated Archive* (Milano: Electa, 2013).

ideation drawings, the physic models, the photographs that the designer used checking alternative solutions and studying the building in the context in which it was to arise, were generally eliminated. In fact, in the Spineto's Archives there are very few works in which the technical strictness gives space to the expressive representation.

As we have seen, the residential architecture, consisting of the high condominiums of the Sixties, and the single-family villas, is one of the recurring typologies of Spineto's work.

The Condominio Libarna, in Viale IV Novembre 7 in Arquata Scrivia, is an H-shaped eight-storey building, plus a mansard. Set on a trapezoidal lot, the oblique side is solved with a stepped façade in correspondence to the interior spaces. The plot owner was the Marquis Rodolfo Saporiti. Spineto was concerned with architectural and structural design.

The first design drawings date back to 1967; the building was completed in 1972. The first technical drawing in the presentation dossier, as usual in the materials she produced, is a three-dimensional view, in this case a two-points perspective, traced in China ink.

The ground level, presumably originally intended for offices, is covered by ashlar-worked stone, to create a

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Carlo Mezzetti (Ed.), *Il Disegno dell'architettura italiana nel XX secolo* (Roma: Edizioni Kappa, 2003).

Roberta Spallone, Francesca Paluan, "Contemporary design drawings as cultural heritage: interpretation and communication. Towards a digital archive of Rosani's industrial projects", in Carmine Gambardella (Ed), *Heritage and Technology. Mind Knowledge Experience* (Napoli: La scuola di Pitagora, 2015), 283-292.

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diversified design that distinguishes the pilasters and architraves. The other levels are covered with gres tiles, as in the fashion of those years, while the top one, in which the mansard windows open, is plastered.

The main façade, on the Piazza dei Caduti, is articulated by the deep recess of the central body which has a different façade layout than the two symmetrical wings.

In the middle of this façade one of the two atriums opens, the other faces the side street. The interest in such halls, which 'will be particularly attentive to the choice of materials and finishes', as the Technical Report states, is highlighted by the drafting of a central perspective that previews its spatiality and denotes the particular attention of the designer for choosing and matching materials and for designing the lamps.

The atrium is set on a strict symmetry and has a red granite floor, while the side walls are partly opaque and covered with pink marble slabs, partly semi-transparent and equipped with the access doors to the vertical distribution systems. The background wall is covered in the middle by large ceramic tiles from Albisola with motifs in relief; in the sides by wooden panels with vertical slats. On the side walls there are iron and glass appliqué, artisanally crafted on a design.

Also the Villa of Doctor Ballestrero, located in Via Martiri della Benedicta in Arquata Scrivia, and built between 1968 and 1971, sees Spineto's commitment as a architectural designer, director of works and designer of wrought-iron works, windows, fireplaces, stairs, and fixed furnishings.

The building, a large two-storey with mansard house, which each floor measures approximately 250 square meters, houses on the ground floor some

medical studios, including that of the owner.

The façades have a strictly symmetrical scheme, while the interiors freely respond to the different functions. Above a basement covered by stone from Luserna, the façades are plastered. Luserna stone also emphasizes the central bodies, protruded on the ground floor, and frames the windows. The roof is slate-covered and supported by Douglas's wooden corbels among which stand out the coffers, designed to fit. Wrought iron fences and parapets are also crafts on design.

In the interiors the same accuracy appears in the selection and matching of materials, and in the design of furniture. As detailed in the technical report, the large living room on the ground floor has a terracotta tiled floor with decorations, while the walls alternate the white plaster, the stone and brick fireplace, the English-style Douglas wooden doors, and the libraries in the same wood. Few materials, carefully chosen and combined, give the house the image of a sophisticated country residence.

The project of funerary chapels is another of Spineto's recurring assignments.

The Cemetery of Arquata Scrivia houses at least five, for which the engineer dealt with the architectural composition, up to the design of the customized lining.

Among these tombs, the Tomba Lasagna, committed by Angelo Lasagna and built in 1969, is distinguished by the rupture of the symmetrical scheme of façade present in the other (De Paoli, Spineto, Debenedetti-Ottonelli, etc.).

The design phase was rather long: among the dated drawings, the first one was signed in December 1967; the final drawings were drawn up in May 1969.

Over ten different solutions, developed through large-scale technical drawings, testify to the various configurations assumed during the design process that shows, in its evolution, the increase in the available plan surface, while the height remained constant.

Following is an ideal reconstruction of the sequence.

The 1967 drawings start from a rectangular plan of 2.80x2.50 m, and the main façade is on the long side.

Three hypotheses propose a volume with a symmetrical façade covered by a pitched roof. Two of these have a tripartite façade, with a wider central part; the first one presents a classical style solution, with thin Doric columns and arches, the other one is composed by a trilithon made up by pilasters and architrave, and has two statues flanking the entrance. In the third hypothesis, the tripartition of the façade through the pillars disappears: it is the glazed surface that is divided in the two fixed lateral parts and in the openable central part, while the architrave is lowered to contain the sculptural apparatus that looks like a pediment decoration.

Five other hypotheses have a flat roof and different schemes of façade maintaining the symmetry. The first one takes the idea of putting a large transparent surface between the two side walls and placing the sculptures above the architrave. The other four hypotheses resort again to the tripartition of the façade: the first one, through corinthian pilasters and a moulded architrave; the second one, placing the tombstones at the sides of the entrance; the third one, using the relationship between opacity and transparency where the two walls at the side of the glass entrance become the background of two statues; the last one, putting the statues on corbels and having a moulded architrave.

A further hypothesis breaks down the symmetry: on the right, an oblique wall lets space to a statue, on the left, the glass is connected to the side wall. Asymmetric steps emphasize the new compositional choice.

Another drawing dated 29 April 1968, documents the expansion in length of the plan: it measures 2.80x3.10 m and the façade is now on the short side.

The search for symmetry seems to have been abandoned and the project approaches what will be the ultimate solution through the splitting of the façade plans.

The part of the façade on the left of the glazed to full-height entrance is opaque, that on the right is transparent and is separated by a pilaster that creates a kind of niche for the statue. The architrave with listels is a modern version of a moulded architrave.

All the hypotheses above described were drafted up to the executive level to testify, probably, an active role of the client in the final choice. A letter sent to Angelo Lasagna by the firm that carved the statue underlines this role: it stated that the face of the Virgin Mary is not Nineteenth-century, but modern, as requested by the clients.

The final project is a clear evolution of the previous one, as the drawings dated 29th May 1969 evidence.

It has a particular movement of planes and a succession of full and empty, which constitute the box-volume of the artefact. The vertical walls stay on a two-step podium and completely close the two sides, but terminate on the façade in two different planes. The left wall protrudes in respect to the right and an orthogonal wall inserts in it forming the background of the statue of the Virgin. The right wall ends before and has a small flap in which a thin glass, delimited on the opposite side by a pilaster aligned to the left wall, is inserted.

In the center there is the entrance of the tomb, made by a hardened crystal glass wall.

At the back, above an altar, a large window opens up to the ceiling, contributing to the inside natural lightening. The flat roof features a refined three-listels motive that inserts into the walls with an offset of planes. The top part of the roof also has listels. The pavement, the opaque walls, and the vertical surface of the roof are covered by slabs of a grey stone called 'Serizzo' placed with vertical joints that give a plain colour to the outside. The statue of the Virgin, placed on a pedestal of the same material, stands out in the dark background thanks to the whiteness of Carrara marble in which it is carved. The internal walls are also coated in square slabs of Carrara marble with alternate joints. The contrast between the white interior and the dark gray outside emerges. The ceiling, which goes beyond the façade, is covered by a mosaic of blue tiles, as if to evoke the night sky. Such ceiling coating is used in other works, such as the Spineto's tomb in the same Cemetery.

Among the shops, the Boutique Maria Luisa managed by Mrs. Maria Luisa Scalabrino Cottone, in Via Girardengo in Novi Ligure, was designed in 1973. The shop was much admired so that the owner bragged that it was made by a French architect!

The set-up was removed in the past years, but the accurate drawings remain.

Spineto, for the barrel vaulted interiors, drew boiseries, doors and wrought-iron frames to which pulls together furnishings, mirrors and lamps.

Likewise, the drawings for the showcase and mainly those for the entrance door are subject to numerous studies and variants. Indeed the entrance door in the intentions is behind the façade

plan and has oblique sides that accentuate the prospective effect.

Wrought iron columns with stylized architectural orders, boiseries, English-framed glass doors, characterize the different solutions.

## Conclusion

What value can assume the discovery of the Spineto's Archives and what can we learn from a case study like this? What generalizations can we aspire to?

I started this research encouraged by Caterina Franchini who, in one of our first meetings, told me that were very few female civil engineers operating in the second half of the twentieth century in Italy of which they had been known and studied the activities and the works.

Probably there are several other female civil engineers, not many, given the data of the professional Registers of those years, which may be interesting to investigate the stories. These stories can help us to understand their role in the studies, in the firms, in the building site; their way of working, autonomous or in group, their relationships with other professionals, and to highlight their real contribution to the territorial and urban transformation.

As a scholar of the history of design drawings, in my opinion the documents found represent a case embodied by a woman, in which the drawings and the archival materials testify to the role of 'thorough designer' assumed by Spineto.

Indeed, in a period when the specialization of knowledge tends not only to differentiate between the roles of the architect and the engineer, but also to influence the relationships between professionals devoted to architectural composition, structural calculation,

project of technical equipment, she dealt with distribution and functional design, structural calculation, and the large scale design of finishing and decorative elements to be artisanally crafted.

### **Acknowledgment**

I would like to thank Mrs. Mariapaola Desimone Spineto for the warm hospitality and Professor Natale Spineto for the information, the tales, the help and the attention to the reconstruction work done.

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## **EDUCATION AND PUBLISHING**

# Women in Slovenian Civil Engineering from 1970 to 1990

## Education and Academia

Barbara Vodopivec

### 1. Introduction

As of yet, scientific research has not focused on women in Slovenian civil engineering. This paper is the first attempt to shed light on this thus far neglected topic. Therefore, it was necessary to limit the scope of our research; this paper addresses women in Slovenian civil engineering in higher education and academia between 1970 and 1990. We touch on the periods before and after this time frame in order to facilitate the understanding of certain processes and to introduce comparative perspectives, yet the comprehensive study of the history of women in Slovenian civil engineering in the twentieth century is beyond the reach of this paper. Research into women in the business sector and industry is only done sporadically, and detailed research into this important subject still needs to be done. Equally, some important comparative perspectives with the former Yugoslavian republics are to be explored by further steps of the research.

Even though the civil engineering sector was still firmly in male hands at the end of the 1960s, the first female PhD in civil engineering, which was defended in Ljubljana in 1976, and a larger number of female graduates in civil engineering, which can be traced at the University of Ljubljana particularly in the 1980s, suggest that this traditional men's fortress has started to open up for women more noticeably precisely in the period under observation. The purpose of this paper is to investigate more in-depth this

phenomenon and to contribute to the understanding of the position and role of women in Slovenian civil engineering education and academia in the 1970s and 1980s.

Our pioneering research was based on primary sources from the archives in educational institutions and on our analysis of the *Gradbeni vestnik (Journal of Civil Engineering)*, which was since 1951 pivotal civil engineering Slovenian journal. Survey is based on the analyses of representation of women among graduates, masters and PhD holders in civil engineering at the University of Ljubljana and University of Maribor, and of the representation of women in the civil engineering academic world: among employees at the Faculty of architecture, civil engineering and geodesy of the University of Ljubljana (UL FAGG), among the authors of original scientific articles in *Gradbeni Vestnik* and among editors and members of the journal's editorial board.

The results of the quantitative analysis of women, who studied civil engineering at the University of Ljubljana and the University of Maribor are presented in the first chapter. The second chapter presents the results of the quantitative analysis of editors and authors of scientific and professional articles in the *Gradbeni vestnik* journal and of women employed as research and teaching staff at the UL FAGG. Our findings are summarised in the final chapter.

## 2. Contextual Framework

A broader context of gender studies and of European, Yugoslavian and Slovenian social, political and economic history after 1945 (such as enrolment of the baby-boom generation to faculties),<sup>1</sup> including the development of civil engineering field and education,<sup>2</sup> is the contextual framework in which results of analyses are placed.

In order to understand the role and position of women in Slovenian civil engineering in the observed period, it is important to point out that *The Constitution of the FLRJ*, adopted in 1946,<sup>3</sup> laid legal foundations for the equal treatment of men and women; thus, women in Yugoslavia had equal access to education and employment. The social system introduced a number of incentives for women in order to ease their time of employment and the demanding coordination of one's professional and family life, such as child allowances, paid maternity and sick leave, and the establishment of kindergartens. Ivan T. Berendt explains that these measures, which largely followed the Soviet example, were introduced primarily to mobilize the female work force following a general lack of any working force after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World

War and to raise fertility, which as a result of growing urbanization and proletarianization in countries with centrally planned economies, began to decline soon after the war:<sup>4</sup> '20%–30% of married women were employed in 1960, whilst in 1980, that increased to 50%–75% in a number of countries. The highest rate of 87% was reached in the Soviet Union.'<sup>5</sup>

To set up a contextual framework in which we observe the emergence of women in Slovenian civil engineering in higher education and academia after 1945, we will derive from the following summarized statement: 'In the second half of the twentieth century a model of women as mothers and housewives still persisted in the West, where endeavours for women's rights were led by women's organizations. In socialist countries the women's equality movement was taken over by the state. It granted them a number of rights, yet in turn it required them to participate actively in economic and political life. Thus, the scope of their duties increased significantly.'<sup>6</sup> This development, along with the slow male-oriented mentality shift, defined by gender studies literature as a "glass ceiling of mental structures", <sup>7</sup> indicates why women's penetration in professions, especially those traditionally dominated by men, was rather slow despite formally given equal rights.<sup>8</sup>

Periods of recession and conjuncture in the Slovenian construction sector after

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<sup>1</sup> Tony Judt, *Povojna Evropa 1945-2005. Prva knjiga* (Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> Marta Verginella, *Ženska obrobja* (Ljubljana: DELTA, 2006); Milica Antić Gaber (ed.), *Ženske na robovih politike* (Ljubljana: Sophia, 2011). Peter Vodopivec, *Od Pohlinove slovnice do samostojne države* (Ljubljana: Modrijan, 2010). Aleš Gabrič, »Od moškega do unisex šolstva,« in Aleksander Žižek (ed.), *Ženska skozi zgodovino* (Ljubljana: Zveza zgodovinskih društev Slovenije, 2004).

<sup>3</sup> Mateja Jeraj, 'Ženska naj bo mati in delavka (Vloga in položaj Slovenk v socializmu, s poudarkom na 1945-53),' in Aleksander Žižek (ed.), *Ženska skozi zgodovino* (Ljubljana: Zveza zgodovinskih društev Slovenije, 2004), 368.

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<sup>4</sup> Ivan T. Berendt, *Gospodarska zgodovina Evrope v 20. stoletju* (Ljubljana: ZRC SAZU and Modrijan, 2013), 189.

<sup>5</sup> Berendt, *20. stoletju*, 190.

<sup>6</sup> Mateja Jeraj, 'Ženska naj bo mati in delavka (Vloga in položaj Slovenk v socializmu, s poudarkom na 1945-53),' in Aleksander Žižek (ed.), *Ženska skozi zgodovino* (Ljubljana: Zveza zgodovinskih društev Slovenije, 2004), 367.

<sup>7</sup> Verginella, *obrobja*, 127.

<sup>8</sup> Mateja Jeraj, 'Ženska v slovenski politiki v socializmu,' in Milica Antić Gaber (ed.), *Ženske na robovih politike* (Ljubljana: Sophia, 2011): 78.

the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War were cyclical and changed to above four to ten years.<sup>9</sup> After a temporary decline in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 1960s, the construction sector began to recover. Investments were still mostly directed at heavy industry, as well as at transport facilities, housing and objects of social welfare. Between 1969 and 1975 the sector thus reached a second peak (the first one lasted from 1955 to 1964), which was also strongly influenced by activities abroad and developing countries, where the industry shifted, especially due to stagnation in housing construction.<sup>10</sup> As a result of global crisis, this deepened decisively after 1973; the period was followed by stagnation and recession, which became evident after 1981 in Yugoslavia.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> M. Marksel, 'Vpliv svetovne finančne krize na gradbeništvo s poudarkom na Sloveniji' (BA thesis, Univerza v Mariboru, 2011), 15.

<sup>10</sup> Saša Skulj, 'Gradbeništvo včeraj, danes, jutri,' *Gradbeni vestnik* 31/11 (1982): 196. More: Vladimir Čadež, 'Osnove za perspektivni program razvoja gradbeništva in industrije gradbenega materiala 1964–1970,' *Gradbeni vestnik* 13/8–9 (1964): 149–62. Jožica Glažar, 'Gospodarski položaj gradbeništva in IGM Slovenije v preteklem in tekočem srednjeročnem obdobju,' *Gradbeni vestnik* 37/4–6 (1988): 58–61. Maks Megušar, 'Program dolgoročnega razvoja v gradbeništvu,' *Gradbeni vestnik* 19/11 (1970): 312–17. Resolucija o razvoju gradbeništva v SR Sloveniji v prihodnjem obdobju (Skupščina SR Slovenije, 19. 10. 1964). *Gradbeni vestnik* 13/11 (1964): 197–99. Desanka Spasojevič, 'Vloga, ekonomski pomen in mesto našega gradbeništva v zadnjih letih,' *Gradbeni vestnik* 23/5 (1974): 142–48 and *Gradbeni vestnik* 23/6–7 (1974): 186–89. Jože Valentinčič, 'Poročilo o problemih in pogojih za razvoj gradbeništva v SR Sloveniji,' *Gradbeni vestnik* 13/10 (1964): 188–92.

<sup>11</sup> More: Berendt, 20. stoletja and M. Štor, M. 'Največje ekonomske krize in njihov vpliv na svetovne kapitalske trge,' (BA thesis, Univerza v Ljubljani, 2002).

### 3. Education

The subjects of our quantitative analysis were women, who graduated from selected study programmes, with an emphasis on the period between 1970 and 1990. In order to place our data in the context of a longer time period, we introduced some comparative aspects with periods before and after.<sup>12</sup>

Civil engineering and geodesy<sup>13</sup> graduates at all levels of study at the University of Ljubljana and the University of Maribor were included in our research, while the field of architecture was omitted.<sup>14</sup> The analysis covered engineers (college-level), university engineers (university-level), masters of science (MSc) and doctors of science (PhD). The Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Study Programme of Spatial Planning and Urbanism (IPŠPUP), which was launched at UL FAGG in the study year of 1974–75, brought together the fields of technical, natural and social sciences.<sup>15</sup> Even though it is not purely a civil engineering study, the programme is included in our analysis, since it reflects the extension of the construction field to spatial planning, urban planning and environmental

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<sup>12</sup> Vlasto Zemljič. 'Študij gradbeništva skozi 70 let,' *Gradbeni vestnik* 39/10–11 (1990): 198–205.

Davorin Žitnik, et al. (ed.). *Sto let gradbene šole v Ljubljani in gradbenega šolstva na Slovenskem* (Ljubljana: Srednja gradbena šola Ivana Kavčiča Ljubljana, 1989). Ludvik Trauner. '30 let študija VTO gradbeništvo,' *Gradbeni vestnik* 39/1–2 (1990): 2–4.

<sup>13</sup> Geodesy is included in the study because it was an integral part of the UL FAGG.

<sup>14</sup> Education in architecture see Helena Seražin: *First Generations of Women in Architecture and Design at University of Ljubljana; in the press.*

<sup>15</sup> Andrej Pogačnik (ed.), *25 let Interdisciplinarnega podiplomskega študija prostorskega in urbanističnega planiranja (IPŠPUP) na Fakulteti za gradbeništvo in geodezijo Univerze v Ljubljani* (Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, 1998), 2.

protection, and in particular, a greater proportion of women graduates is recorded, especially at the level of the MSc.

### 3.1 The University of Ljubljana

Civil engineering was a field of study from the establishment of the University of Ljubljana in 1919 on.<sup>16</sup> After the Second World War the field was a subject of numerous institutional changes. In 1945 the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geodesy became an independent member of the University of Ljubljana; three study programs were established: structures, hydro engineering and transport. From 1950 to 1954 the faculty was part of an independent Technical High School in Ljubljana. After 1954 the faculty became the Civil Engineering and Geodesy Department of the newly established Technical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana. In 1957 the Technical Faculty was reorganized into several autonomous faculties, one of which was UL FAGG. Postgraduate study programmes were introduced in the study year of 1959–60. In 1995 the faculty split into two separate faculties: the Faculty of Architecture and the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geodesy (UL FGG).<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Before, students from Slovenian lands studied at the universities abroad, mostly in Vienna, Graz, Prague, Zagreb. However, the tradition has been retained to the certain extent also after the establishment of the University of Ljubljana.

<sup>17</sup> Bojan Majes (ed.). *Fakulteta za gradbeništvo in geodezijo: 1989-2009: jubilejni zbornik ob devetdesetletnici Fakultete za gradbeništvo in geodezijo Univerze v Ljubljani* (Ljubljana: UL FGG, 2009), 491–509. Vladimir Brezar, Miran Saje and Florjan Vodopivec, 'Faculty of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy,' in *75 years of continuous work of the University of Ljubljana 1919–1994*, edited by Mojca Repež, 40–45. Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, 1994.

Quantitative analysis of data on UL FAGG graduates reveals that a number of significant milestones in education were reached precisely in the period under observation.

In 1976 Darinka Battelino<sup>18</sup> successfully defended her PhD dissertation at the UL FAGG and thus became the first female Doctor of Science in civil engineering in former Yugoslavia. The first woman to gain a PhD in the IPŠPUP programme was Branka Berce Bratko in 1990 and the first woman, who won PhD from geodesy, was Andreja Borec in 2000.<sup>19</sup>

Darinka Battelino was also the first woman to defend MSc degree in civil engineering in 1969. Due to the system of rotation between UL FAGG and the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering Battelino had to defend her thesis on the latter faculty.<sup>20</sup> Further milestones happened much later; the second female MSc in civil engineering was awarded to Duška Tomšič in 1989. However, in the same year all together six out of nine masters were defended by women. The first woman to defend her MSc thesis in the IPŠPUP study programme was Marija Nose Cerkvenc in 1977 and the first geodesy MSc degree was awarded in 1986 to Vesna Ježovnik.<sup>21</sup>

The first female civil engineer with a university degree in Slovenia was Sonja

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<sup>18</sup> Barbara Vodopivec, 'Battelino, Darinka,' in *Novi Slovenski biografski leksikon, B-Bla*, edited by Barbara Šterbenc Svetina, 179–180. Ljubljana: ZRC SAZU, 2017.

<sup>19</sup> The first male PhD in civil engineering at the University of Ljubljana was awarded in 1935, the first male PhD in geodesy was awarded in 1965 and the first male IPŠPUP doctoral degree was awarded in 1986

<sup>20</sup> Jože Stropnik (ed.). *Fakulteta za strojništvo. 65 let začetka študija strojništva, 40 let visokošolskega študija strojništva v Sloveniji* (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za strojništvo, 1985), 93.

<sup>21</sup> Archives of the UL FGG. The first male MSc degree in civil engineering at UL FAGG was awarded in 1963.

Lapajne Oblak (1906–1995) in 1932,<sup>22</sup> seven years after the first male student graduated from the programme. However, the first woman to graduate from university as an engineer after the Second World War was Carmen Jež Gala in 1952.

Table 1 indicates that during the period under consideration the ratio in favour of women is best among graduates of the geodesy engineer study program, and women are least represented among doctors of science. Geodesy accounts for a greater proportion of women than civil engineering, especially after 1990, however this does not apply to the period before 1969. In the 1980s a significant increase in the number of female engineers can be observed in all study programs. The number of female university-graduated geodesy engineers, for example, exceeds the number of male engineers for the first time in 1985.

Compared to the first period (1935–69) women are represented in all observed study programs in our considered time period (1970–90). The number of graduated female civil engineers doubled, however the largest increase was recorded in geodesy engineers. In the two decades after our considered time period (1991–2008), the number of female doctors and masters of science increased significantly, the number of university-graduated geodesy engineers almost doubled, while the number of geodesy engineers remained approximately the same. Following a marked increase in the number of female university civil engineers after 1970, their number increased only slightly after 1990.

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<sup>22</sup> Archives of the UL FGG; Barbara Vodopivec, 'Gimnazija Bežigrad High School,' in *Momowo. 100 Works in 100 Years. European Women in Architecture and Design 1918–2018*, edited by Ana Maria Fernández García, et al. 56–57. Ljubljana, Turin: ZRC SAZU, Momowo, 2016.

A larger increase was recorded among engineers.

Considering the entire period between 1935 and 2008, one may observe that women are best represented among geodesy graduates, which can be attributed to the large increase of graduates after 1970, while they are also well represented among Masters of Science, which is most likely the result of the joint treatment of civil engineering, geodesy and IPŠPUP programs in this field of study. From the beginning of the IPŠPUP program until 2008, 54 students have been awarded the title of MSc, of which 26 were women (48%), which is the highest percentage among all of the programs observed in this survey. The percentage of women in this program rose from 12% in the 1972–73 academic year to 26% in the early 1980s and then stabilized at approximately 45% in the middle of the decade.<sup>23</sup>

The percent of female civil engineers over the entire period ranges between 16% and 18%, although a drop in the number of graduates can be observed between 1970 and 1990.

### 3.2 The University of Maribor

Civil engineering studies in Maribor were made available in 1959 at the Technical College, and students were able to continue their studies at the University of Ljubljana. In 1973 a Higher Technical School with a Department of Civil Engineering was established, which became an independent member of the newly established University of Maribor in

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<sup>23</sup> Andrej Pogačnik (ed.), *25 let Interdisciplinarnega podiplomskega študija prostorskega in urbanističnega planiranja (IPŠPUP) na Fakulteti za gradbeništvo in geodezijo Univerze v Ljubljani* (Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, 1998), 14–15.

1975. Postgraduate studies were introduced in the 1981–82 academic year.<sup>24</sup> In 1985 the Technical faculty was established, which was divided into four faculties in 1995, among them the Faculty of Civil Engineering. In 2015, the faculty was renamed the Faculty of Civil Engineering, Transportation Engineering and Architecture (UM FGPA).<sup>25</sup>

There was no civil engineering PhD or MSc awarded to a woman before 1990; the first female PhD was defended in 1999 and the first MSc in 1991.<sup>26</sup>

In 1963 the first woman became a civil engineer and the first female university graduate civil engineer completed her studies in 1978.<sup>27</sup> In all there were 1781 graduates from all of the undergraduate programmes (college and university level), of which 436 were women, which represents 24% of population. In the Civil Engineering and Construction Operation university program which was implemented only in Maribor, 260 students graduated between 1970 and 1990, of which 77 were women which represent 30% of the population.<sup>28</sup>

Women represented 25% to 30% of graduates from undergraduate programs at the University of Maribor and were not represented among the graduates of higher-level study programs.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Gabrič, Aleš. 'Univerza v Mariboru,' in Enciklopedija Slovenije, vol. 14, edited by Alenka Dermastia, 55–57. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2000; Fakulteta za gradbeništvo, prometno inženirstvo in arhitekturo: [www.fgpa.um.si](http://www.fgpa.um.si) (accessed 5. July 2017); Battelino, Darinka and Bleiweis, Janko. 'Gradbeniško šolstvo,' in Enciklopedija Slovenije, vol. 3, edited by Alenka Dermastia, 354. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 1989.

<sup>25</sup> More: <https://www.fgpa.um.si/eng/Pages/default.aspx> (accessed 8. August 2017)

<sup>26</sup> Archives of the UM FGPA.

<sup>27</sup> Archives of the UM FGPA.

<sup>28</sup> Archives of the UM FGPA.

<sup>29</sup> Some undergraduate study programs of the University of Maribor, aimed at already

#### 4. Academia

The next step of the quantitative analysis was identifying the proportion of women in the civil engineering academic sphere. It was done on the basis of UL FAGG annual reports, which revealed the emergence and proportion of female employees in the observed period (teaching and research staff), and by identifying the emergence and proportion of female authors in the *Gradbeni vestnik* journal, which is available online. Since 1951,<sup>30</sup> *Gradbeni vestnik* has been a pivotal civil engineering journal, publishing original scientific and professional articles, reports on major construction activities and projects, news, and other contributions, which is why it was chosen as our case study.<sup>31</sup> It is a remarkably rich source not only of construction issues, but also of the history of urbanism, transportation, energetics, tourism, environmental protection, spatial planning, architecture, cultural heritage preservation, and the relation between the respective politics and the profession. Issues of *Gradbeni vestnik* published between 1951 and 1990 were analysed.

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employed civil engineers, were held in Maribor, Kranj, Celje, Murska Sobota, Novo mesto, Postojna and Velenje. The purpose of those programs was to comply with the new legislation and to raise a level of education of, above all, construction site managers. As Darinka Battelino pointed out in an interview with the author of this paper, the percentage of women in those programs was below 1%, what indicates a small proportion of women employed in the construction industry.

<sup>30</sup> Bubnov, Sergej. 'Gradbeni vestnik,' in Enciklopedija Slovenije, vol. 3, edited by Alenka Dermastia, 358. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 1989. *Gradbeni vestnik*: <http://www.zveza-dgits.si/gradbeni-vestnik> (accessed 5. July 2017).

#### 4.1 Female Employees at the UL FAGG

There are more data on the employees of the UL FAGG available for the second decade of our researched period, which is the period between 1980 and 1990.

A booklet issued for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of civil engineering studies in Slovenia, published in 1979, is the most comprehensive source we can rely on for the period between 1970 and 1980.<sup>32</sup> A list of lecturers is published in the booklet, starting in 1919 and ending in 1979. The list reveals that the first woman employed at the UL FAGG was assistant Carmen Jež Gala in 1952. In 1965 she became the first female assistant professor,<sup>33</sup> but she died in an accident in the same year.<sup>34</sup>

In 1964 Darinka Battelino was employed as an assistant,<sup>35</sup> and in 1987 became the first female associate professor at the UL FAGG. In 1993 she obtained professorial position at the University of Trieste, where she was mentor to Nelly Zanette, who in 2000, as the first woman at the university, defended her dissertation in the soil mechanics field. Battelino was also strongly dedicated to establish

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<sup>32</sup> Vlasto Zemljič (ed.), *Fakulteta za arhitekturo, gradbeništvo in geodezijo 1919–1979. Ob šestdesetletnici visokošolskega študija arhitekture, gradbeništva in geodezije v Ljubljani* (Ljubljana: UL FAGG, 1979), 183.

<sup>33</sup> Vlasto Zemljič (ed.), *Fakulteta za arhitekturo, gradbeništvo in geodezijo 1919–1979. Ob šestdesetletnici visokošolskega študija arhitekture, gradbeništva in geodezije v Ljubljani* (Ljubljana: UL FAGG, 1979), 100.

<sup>34</sup> 'In memoriam Carmen Jež Gala,' *Gradbeni vestnik* 14/10 (1965): 193.

<sup>35</sup> Vlasto Zemljič (ed.), *Fakulteta za arhitekturo, gradbeništvo in geodezijo 1919–1979. Ob šestdesetletnici visokošolskega študija arhitekture, gradbeništva in geodezije v Ljubljani* (Ljubljana: UL FAGG, 1979), 101.

cooperation between faculties in Slovenia, Austria and Italy.

At the Department of Geodesy UL FAGG, the first two women employed were assistants Majda Čuček Kumelj and Vesna Ježovnik in 1977.

An analysis of the UL FAGG reports, which have been available since 1981, revealed that the percentage of women employed on the civil engineering and geodesy departments of the UL FAGG in the decade of 1980 to 1990, ranged from 14% to 20%; the percentage started to noticeably increase after 1988. The greatest increase in the number of female employees can be noted among young researchers. Starting in the mid-1980s, the number of young researchers, male and female, increased rapidly, that is undoubtedly linked to the introduction of a national program for young researchers in 1985.<sup>36</sup> In 1989 there were 41 young researchers at UL FAGG, of which 11 were women.<sup>37</sup>

At the beginning of the 1980s, women occupied lower positions than men at the UL FAGG. In 1983 there were two women holding PhDs, one of whom was appointed as an assistant professor and the other as an assistant. 1987, when the first associate professor was appointed, and 1989 were important turning points, when the number of female masters of science increased

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<sup>36</sup> József Györkös and Tina Glavič Novak (ed.). >30. Več kot 30 let programa Mladi raziskovalci (Ljubljana: ARRS, 2016). Available at: [https://www.arrs.gov.si/sl/analize/publ/inc/ARRS\\_MR30\\_zbornik.pdf](https://www.arrs.gov.si/sl/analize/publ/inc/ARRS_MR30_zbornik.pdf) (accessed 25 July 2017). By subsidizing employment for doctoral students the national program eased entry into academic world to a number of young researchers; women were well represented among them.

<sup>37</sup> Jože Koželj and Vlasto Zemljič (ed.). *Fakulteta za arhitekturo, gradbeništvo in geodezijo 1979–1989. Jubilejni zbornik ob sedemdesetletnici Univerze v Ljubljani in Fakultete za arhitekturo, gradbeništvo in geodezijo v Ljubljani. Gradbeništvo in geodezija* (Ljubljana: UL FAGG, 1989), 117.

significantly as a result of the larger number of women among young researchers. UL FAGG had no female dean, vice-dean or department head in the observed period; the first woman to be appointed vice-dean and thus the first female member of the faculty's Senate,<sup>38</sup> was civil engineer Maruška Šubic Kovač in 2001. The first female full professor at the UL FGG was appointed in 2011 (Tatjana Isaković, b. 1960).<sup>39</sup> Today, there are 44 full professors at the same faculty. Nine of them are women: three are full-time employed and six work as external collaborators.<sup>40</sup>

#### 4.2 The *Gradbeni vestnik* Journal

So far there has been no female editor of *Gradbeni vestnik*. The first female member of the editorial board was chemistry engineer Branka Zatler Zupančič, appointed in 1983, the 32<sup>nd</sup> year of the journal being published. Zatler Zupančič was a board member until 1992.

The first female author to publish a contribution in *Gradbeni vestnik*, was civil engineer Carmen Jež Gala in 1956. It was an original scientific article.<sup>41</sup> The same author published two original scientific articles in the same journal issue a year later,<sup>42</sup> which was an achievement that an

individual female author did not repeat until the end of the period under review. In the 1959/60 academic year, she studied at the University of Cambridge, and in 1964 she lectured at the third-level study program of the Sarajevo Civil Engineering Faculty. She started to work at the Institute of Metal Constructions (IMK) in 1949, when she was still a student, and was active there till 1965. She was also a head of IMK's documentation centre and president of the study commission of the civil engineering department at the UL FAGG. Altogether, her opus comprises 13 scientific and professional articles in domestic and foreign press. In 1965 she died in an accident. The obituary, published in *Gradbeni vestnik* following her death, proves that she was a top expert and an excellent teacher. In her short career she achieved exceptional results, also from the point of view of promoting women in the construction sector. It can be justly assumed that the milestones of women in the construction sector would have happened much earlier, if fate had not interrupted her scientific career so soon.<sup>43</sup>

In 1963, civil engineer Neža Excel published an original article. She prevailed both as an author of original articles and as the author of articles in the journal supplement *Informacije ZRMK* (Information on the Building and Civil Engineering Institute, ZRMK), up to 1977. The *Informacije ZRMK* supplement was first published in *Gradbeni vestnik* in 1967 and contained news on the institute's innovations and achievements. Female authors appeared more often in

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plastostatike pri jeklenih konstrukcijah,' *Gradbeni vestnik* 6/47–50 (1956–57): 159–171.

<sup>43</sup> 'In memoriam Carmen Jež Gala,' *Gradbeni vestnik* 14/10 (1965): 193; Janez Logar (ed.). *Univerza v Ljubljani. Biografije in bibliografije univerzitetnih učiteljev in sodelavcev. Knjiga 2.* (Univerza v Ljubljani: Ljubljana, 1969): 327.

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<sup>38</sup> Matjaž Mikoš and Romana Hudin (ed.). Poročilo UL FGG za leto 2001 (UL FGG, 2002), 3.

<sup>39</sup> Archives of the UL FGG.

<sup>40</sup> Faculty of Civil and Geodetic Engineering of the University of Ljubljana, list of employees: <https://www.en.fgg.uni-lj.si/list-of-employees/> (accessed 3 November 2017).

<sup>41</sup> Carmen Jež Gala. 'Prispevek k računanju nosilcev na klasični podlagi,' *Gradbeni vestnik* 5/39–40 (1955–56): 113–117.

<sup>42</sup> Carmen Jež Gala. 'Današnje stanje raznih predpisov o stabilitetnih problemih pri jeklenih konstrukcijah,' *Gradbeni vestnik* 6/47–50 (1956–57): 129–136. Carmen Jež Gala. 'Uporaba

*Informacije ZRMK* than in *Gradbeni vestnik* itself in the observed period, which allows for the assumption that they were relatively well represented among employees of the research institute ZRMK. One of the pioneers was Eda Sovinc. She graduated from the Department of Civil Engineering in 1956. Already in 1949 she was employed as a student at the Institute of Civil Engineering (current ZRMK), where she worked all her career until 1978, eventually as a head of the Geomechanical Laboratory. However, women at the ZRMK, as well as in the economic sector, still needs to be further researched.

Table 6 shows how the number of authors in *Gradbeni vestnik* changed from 1970 to 1990. A breakthrough happened in 1985, when for the first time female authors outnumbered male authors in the section of original articles.<sup>44</sup> 1989 was also a strong year, which is attributable both to contributions in the segment of articles and reports by ZRMK.

## 5. Conclusion

In the 1970s and 1980s an increased enrolment of students and hence number of graduates can be observed in all UL FAGG study programs. Women were gradually more and more represented, which was a consequence of several social, political and economic factors. Access to education and women-friendly social policies affected women's participation in the civil engineering higher education and, consequently, in the academic side of the field. Additional factors, such as baby-boom generation effect, the boom in the construction industry and, hence, the greater attractiveness of the profession, which

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<sup>44</sup> Four out of seven original articles were written by female authors; *Gradbeni vestnik*, 34/10–11 (1985).

ensures reliable and safe employment, should be taken into account. Namely, economic crisis, which was evident in Yugoslavia already at the beginning of the 1980s, affected education with at least a decade of delay.

During the researched period (1970–90), civil engineering and IPŠPUP gained their first female PhDs, and all three study programs, civil engineering, geodesy and IPŠPUP, received their first female Masters of Science. The percentage of women in the observed period was 5% among PhD graduates, 15,8% among MSc graduates and 23,8% among graduates of all undergraduate study programs at the UL FAGG.

At the end of the 1980s, about 20% of the teaching and research staff at the UL FAGG were women, but they still held significantly lower positions than their male colleagues; in 1990 there were only two women among 33 doctors of science at the UL FAGG. Equally, in the 1980s, female authors became a constant both among the authors of original scientific articles in *Gradbeni vestnik* and among the authors of *Informacije ZRMK*. Both are consequences of a larger representation of women among graduates and are closely related to a national program for young researchers, which was introduced in the mid-1980s, and which facilitated entry into academia to many young scientists, among whom women were well represented.

The results of the quantitative analysis presented in this article confirm that civil engineering witnessed a breakthrough of women precisely during the period we researched, both in education and academia. However, the process was complex and challenging; it took another 10 to 20 years for women to begin to achieve high positions comparable to those held by men. Yet, differences in management positions both

in business sector and in academia and higher education persist; after all, we are still waiting for the first female dean of the UL FGG.

### Acknowledgements

Research for this paper was carried out as part of the MoMoWo –Women’s Creativity since the Modern Movement project, financed by the Culture 2007–13 EU program. The author acknowledges the financial support from the Slovenian

Research Agency (research core funding No. P6-0061, conducted at the France Stelè Institute of Art History ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana). We greatly acknowledge the professional advice and support in searching for relevant material and information by Darinka Battelino, Primož Banovec, Roko Žarnić, Teja Japelj, Elizabeta Adamlje, Jelka Rovanišek (all related to the UL FAGG), Simona Kosi and Tatjana Rojs (University of Maribor), Borut Bundara (IMK), Darja Grum Maček, Andrej Sovinc and by colleagues from the France Stelè Institute of Art History ZRC SAZU.

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## The Choice of Design. The Production of Anna Maria Fundarò between Project and Graphic Expression<sup>1</sup>

Viviana Trapani and Vincenza Garofalo

### Anna Maria Fundarò

Anna Maria Fundarò was the first professor of Industrial Design, a chair instituted in 1971 in the Faculty of Architecture of Palermo on the initiative of Vittorio Gregotti. She taught in Palermo from the '70s to the late '90s. Her extraordinary commitment as a scholar and teacher has started the institutional and scientific foundation of a "Sicilian design school", oriented to the idea of sustainable territorial development not just from the environmental point of view, but also for the social and cultural aspects. A challenge that Anna Maria Fundarò has conducted not only as a professor, but also as a "militant" architect, taking all the opportunities to confront with her city, places, institutions, and the conditions of the Sicilian territory.

Anna Maria Fundarò enrolled at Faculty of Architecture of Palermo in 1954. She was a student and then assistant to Gino Levi Montalcini<sup>2</sup>, teacher in Palermo

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<sup>1</sup> In the sharing of the contents expressed in the paper, which is the result of common elaborations, the paragraph *Anna Maria Fundarò* was written by Viviana Trapani, while the paragraph *Attention to the drawing* was by Vincenza Garofalo.

<sup>2</sup> Luigi Lèvi-Montalcini, (Milan 1902 - Turin 1974), architect, exponent of the first rationalist Italian architecture: among his most appreciated works the interior of Palazzo Gualino, 1928, with Giuseppe Pagano, and villa Caudano, 1935, both in Turin. In the post-war period he

of "Interior Architecture" from '56 to '64, who transmitted - according to her own testimony - aptitude to methodological rigor in declination of the different components of the project.

The presence of Vittorio Gregotti at the Faculty of Architecture of Palermo in the '70s determines the activation of the chair of industrial design, which was entrusted to a young Anna Maria Fundarò. That was a moment of profound revision of university teaching and Gregotti proposed to restore through Design a continuity with a tradition of architectural, artistic and productive excellence that had characterized Sicily at the end of the eighteenth century, especially around the figure of Ernesto Basile, master of modernist European architecture, but also designer ahead of his time.

Anna Maria Fundarò found in Ernesto Basile's thinking and activity a paradigm for a new Sicilian design, catalyst of 'a participatory way of building a physical environment' able to overcome the division between manual and intellectual work, between major arts and minor arts, giving impulse to the development of an 'original material culture'<sup>3</sup>.

However, a past rich in excellence was contrasted with a present condition characterized by a weak and discontinuous industrial production, apparently devoid of that tension to productive, technological and typological innovation which instead supported the success in the world at that time of Italian Design, whose productions and

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taught at the Universities of Palermo, Padua and Turin.

<sup>3</sup> Anna Maria Fundarò, "Palermo: Le attività artigianali nel centro storico", in Anna Maria Fundarò et al., *Laboratorio universitario di Design. Il lavoro artigiano nel centro storico di Palermo* (Palermo: Cooperativa Centro Stampa Siciliana, 1981), 5.

expressions were concentrated in the Milan area.

According to Anna Maria Fundarò, was therefore necessary to carry out a theoretical elaboration and design experimentation that finally opened the way to a "modernity" never fully realized in Sicily, and at the same time began a concrete dialogue with a territory still defender of knowledge and craftsmanship.

Anna Maria Fundarò started a systematic and detailed work that, from the beginning of the 1970s to the late 1990s, produced researches, ideas, experiments, national and international relations, also through the commitment and cohesion of a group of young architects<sup>4</sup> that from the beginning, helped her to build a "Sicilian way to design".

And also the student's subscription to the studies of industrial design was numerous and enthusiastic, and in 1981 contributed to the activation of an "experimental address" in Industrial Design in the Faculty of Architecture of Palermo - the first one together with Milan - and an autonomous Institute<sup>5</sup> and in 1991 a School of Specialization and a Doctorate in "Design, Visual and Applied Arts" directed by Anna Maria Fundarò.

For Anna Maria Fundarò the condition of handicrafts is a measure of the social and environmental disintegration of the southern city, but also tells a precious

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<sup>4</sup> Michele Argentino, Marilù Balsamo, Anna Cottone, Alfonso Porrello, Antonio Martorana were the first and the closest collaborators of Anna Maria Fundarò; a historical nucleus that in the 1990s was enriched by many other figures of young researchers, following the establishment of the PhD.

<sup>5</sup> In 1981, the Institute of Industrial Design and building construction was established, and in 1987, following a split from the technological area, the Industrial Design Institute (1987-98), both directed by Anna Maria Fundarò.

heritage of manual skills, passed down knowledge, and micro-environmental structures that characterize urban space. Thus, a great widespread survey of the craftsmanship of the historic center of Palermo was started, involving hundreds of teachers and students in a choral experience of "territory teaching", with which the project culture returns to dialogue with the "Know how" still existing in the town.

The research was published in the volume "Il lavoro artigiano nel centro storico di Palermo", an extraordinary encyclopedic atlas of crafts which pull together drawing, historical documentation, narration and that concerns the city, work spaces, objects, tools, people. The research was presented at the XII Compasso d'Oro at the Triennale in Milan in 1981, receiving awards in various national and international contexts.

The same research was replicated after about 15 years and reissued in 1997 in a new volume with the same title; in the introduction, Anna Maria Fundarò noted how the context was changed a lot, as the oldest crafts of a pre-industrial way of life have been extinguished, while new young craftsmen, sometimes graduates, arrived, closer to design to new experiments.

Another aspect of the research developed by Anna Maria Fundarò concerns the proto-industrial and industrial Sicilian productions; it refers to a historical-critical point of view that considers design as an integral part of industrial culture<sup>6</sup>, but also to the research of the motives of that "interrupted process of modernity"<sup>7</sup>, which

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<sup>6</sup> Vittorio Gregotti, *Il disegno del Prodotto industriale. Italia 1860-1980* (Milano: Electa, 1986); Siegfried Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948).

<sup>7</sup> 'The process of modernity in Sicily has been interrupted. The starting paleoindustrial situation was certainly brighter than today or at least was comparable to that of the rest of Italy. Despite the increased focus on Neapolitan, the

in Sicily had become more and more evident after the first decades of the century, betraying the expectations created by the great season of art and architecture of Palermo and Sicily at the end of the eighteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Also on these issues Anna Maria Fundarò's school carries out a huge research work, of which we mention only the research on productions of Ceramica Florio<sup>8</sup>, patents in Sicily<sup>9</sup>, Shipyard, foundries and manufactures in Palermo, territorial systems such as saltworks and railways, on the productions of furniture and objects, among which is the excellence of the Ducrot factory, that produced furniture and furnishing designed by Ernesto Basile.

But Anna Maria Fundarò was also very attentive to the contemporaneity and experimentation of the new Italian Design, which had been attracting international attention since the 1970s.

In 1982 she called to teach in Palermo, Ettore Sottsass and Andrea Branzi, who were already well-known in

the most experimental and radical area of Italian design. They were theorists of a broad and "anthropological" approach to the project, which, by accepting craftsmanship in contemporary productions as a "privileged industry lab", could contribute to the definition of a cultural design line with "an original role from the specific material and productive situation" of Sicily.

Until the end of the 1980s different figures moved to Palermo with the contracts "for clear fame" like Alessandro Mendini, Paolo Deganello, Ugo La Pietra, Giotto Stoppino, Clino Castelli, Denis Santachiara. The testimony of the fervor of those years remains in the publications produced by the Industrial Design Institute, still significant documents in the Italian design culture.

"Design for Development" is the title of a series of lectures organized in Palermo in 1982 and a book (1988)<sup>10</sup>, which designed a broad and transversal map of the Italian design culture at a time when discipline had not still acquired a full didactic autonomy within the Italian University. Ettore Sottsass, Michele De Lucchi, Andrea Branzi, Enzo Mari, Alessandro Mendini, Filippo Alison, Roberto Mango, but also Gillo Dorfless, Vittorio Fagone, and many others, art historians, anthropologists, psychologists, filmmakers, economists and industrialists, brought their experiences and ideas to Palermo's classrooms, confronting the possibility of balanced and sustainable development for Sicilian territory and cultural specificity.

"Design for Development"<sup>11</sup> will become an expression that, then repeated

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Borbons had left an entrepreneurial and productive fabric that was vital and very articulated on the merchandise level [...]. It is not by chance that Palermo in 1891-92 became the location of a Great Exposition where all its productive capacity, its artistic and design talents, all its cards, in short, are played at the highest level. But it is the beginning of a involutory process that will develop over the course of several decades and that before becoming macroscopic and dramatic, will leave unforeseeable traces of vivacity and cultural and productive vigor'. Anna Maria Fundarò. "Il processo interrotto della modernità", *Nuove Effemeridi* VIII n. 31, (1995): 13.

<sup>8</sup> In July 1985 Anna Maria Fundarò with Anna Maria Ruta organized the exhibition *Ceramica Florio*, Villa Zito, Palermo. The materials were published in the volume: Vittorio Fagone et al., *Ceramica Florio* (Palermo: Novecento, 1985).

<sup>9</sup> The research on patents in Sicily from Unification of Italy in 1945 was published in the article: P. Giarratano, *Brevetti per modelli industriali*, *Nuove Effemeridi* VIII n. 31, (1995): 71-7.

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<sup>10</sup> Alfonsa Cannella, ed. *Design per lo sviluppo. Quaderni di ADS Annuario di Design in Sicilia* 1, (1988).

<sup>11</sup> 'The work that the design team was interested in over the years has been looking for a strong motivation to place the project in an international setting in the wake of two texts

at other times and by other protagonists of the school, will synthesize a cultural line that has in many ways anticipated themes today at the center of the disciplinary debate: the design for the territory, practiced with constant attention to the exploitation of resources, traditional activities, historical environmental assets, identified in the connection of places, history, productions, abilities.

In subsequent writings of the '90s Anna Maria Fundarò lucidally analyzes the limits of the didactic experiments undertaken on the wave of radical tendencies, in an involvement 'mainly for an inclusive ideology and not rigidly oriented towards a broad and standardized production'<sup>12</sup>; she expresses distance from the predominantly formal outcomes of those experiences in student projects, while emerges again the need to return to "a truer discourse on the applied arts" in continuity to a craftsmanship of great quality that in Sicily had interrupted in the '30s.

Anna Maria Fundarò, who died early in 1999, leaves a solid and appreciated academic experience, which will lead in 2002 to the establishment of a Bachelor Degree in Industrial Design.

The most precious part of her work remains the great patrimony of her research on the identity of a territory that, in comparison with contemporaneity, needs to be constantly explored and interpreted in

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considered indispensable: Victor Papanek's "Design for the Real World" and Gui Bonsiepe's "Theory and Practice of Industrial Design", with ethical-political orientations aimed at seeking development that we would now call sustainable, and which we called Design for Development' Michele Argentino. "Design per lo sviluppo", in Anna Catania (ed.), *more E less / nuovi stili di vita e di consumo*, (Palermo: Flaccovio, 2009), 15.

<sup>12</sup> Anna Maria Fundarò. "Presentazione", in Giovanni Ragonesi (ed.), *Giotto Stoppino. Dalla natura dei materiali al progetto. Quaderni di ADS Annuario di Design in Sicilia* 6, (1994): V.

its historical, artistic, and anthropological components.

More than ever actual is the research for that experimental, open, relational project that can be achieved mainly in handicraft production or small series<sup>13</sup>. The ability of design to deal with historic spaces, narratives and city experience, is relevant, though with completely new registers and tools. This ability Anna Maria Fundarò intensely explored and interpreted.

### Attention to the drawing

'Representing an object means seeing it, cataloging it, relating it to the subject who sees it'<sup>14</sup> Margherita De Simone said at the "Design per lo sviluppo" conference cycle, conceived, planned and organized at the Faculty of Architecture in Palermo by Anna Maria Fundarò between 1982 and 1983.

Anna Maria Fundarò's approach to representation is functional for communicating all aspects of the project, whether it is architectural space or the design object.

In her academic didactic work she has always given great importance to the drawing for the representation of objects. This attention can be seen in her impressive work towards the recovery of local identity and Sicilian material culture, done through a vast campaign of survey and reconnaissance of spontaneous design, of which we first talked about. This operation, directed at the end of the '70s

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<sup>13</sup> As Richard Sennett has demonstrated, maneuverability, aptitude to solve practical problems, relate to people and sensitive aspects, are also today conditions that produce thought processes, forms of knowledge, and innovative hypotheses.

<sup>14</sup> Margherita De Simone, "Modi di rappresentare l'oggetto", *Design per lo sviluppo. Quaderni di ADS Annuario di Design in Sicilia* 1, (1988), 152.

within the Chair of Artistic Design for Industry of the Faculty of Architecture in Palermo, was published in the aforementioned volume "Il lavoro artigiano nel centro storico di Palermo". In it the craftsmanship, at times still in the historical center of Palermo, is represented through the planimetric location of its workshops, the survey and representation of the working environment with the tools necessary for the production process (tools, machines, utensils), the objects of artisan production and, in some cases, techniques and production phases. 'The first problem is knowledge, that is, survey as a method with the aim of describing the existing one'<sup>15</sup>.

Physical contact with objects, through direct survey, generated the student's the understanding of its size and shape in space; the redesign developed the ability to illustrate a product and describe its constructive, morphological and dimensional features. Knowledge of object-making techniques also approached the student to understand the production process. These drawings, true tools of analysis of the existent, also constituted preparatory exercises for the project.

Surveyed objects and environments were studied and represented in all their parts and redesign allowed their understanding. Student drawings document and explore objects exhaustively through plans, sections, front views, details. In other cases, in the exploded axonometric view, 'the object shrinks in all its parts, and with extreme clarity denounces its dimensions and its

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<sup>15</sup> Anna Maria Fundarò, "Palermo: Le attività artigianali nel centro storico", in Anna Maria Fundarò et al., *Laboratorio universitario di Design. Il lavoro artigiano nel centro storico di Palermo* (Palermo: Cooperativa Centro Stampa Siciliana, 1981), 3.

coordinates with regard to projection planes, easily reconstructed even in relation to the space it refers to'<sup>16</sup>. These drawings also allow us to understand the assembly processes of the represented objects.

The representation way is functional for transmitting the surveyed object data and for understanding its function or processing process that it needs to get it. This is the case for the production of cane objects: a sequence of two-dimensional woven patterns explains in detail all phases of processing the base of the "fascidda", a container used to make cheese. 'The interweaving of the base starts with the "cross" form (the number of threads in the "cross" depends on the size that the container must take). [ ... ]. A further weave allows radially arranged wires to assume an orthogonal position with respect to the base'<sup>17</sup>.

In the drawings, realized in china, according to the use of time, the perceptual representation of materials or shadows is obtained by dotted technique. The light and dark thus obtained allows to make the shape of the represented object more evident, as in the case of the table concerning the production of a metal craftsman. In it the objects are represented in plan and front view, in a direct correspondence, together with the tools used for metalworking.

Survey is a recurrent knowledge tool in Anna Maria Fundarò's university courses. In the 1980's, students of the Decoration course surveyed the production of Empire-style furniture. This exercise, a real design lesson, is an

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<sup>16</sup> Margherita De Simone, "Modi di rappresentare l'oggetto", *Design per lo sviluppo. Quaderni di ADS Annuario di Design in Sicilia 1*, (1988), 162.

<sup>17</sup> Anna Maria Fundarò et al., *Laboratorio universitario di Design. Il lavoro artigiano nel centro storico di Palermo* (Palermo: Cooperativa Centro Stampa Siciliana, 1981), 285-6.

opportunity to read a piece of furniture (in its form, structure and decoration) that represents the testimony of an era in which the culture of interior and living played a decisive role. The representation of the object borrows, sometimes, a language of other artistic forms. This is the case, for example, of the survey of a folding chair that is part of the materials for a decorative arts museum in Sicily (fig. 8). The chair is represented in lateral view in its closing motion by simultaneous overlapping of three positions (opening, closing, and intermediate). A dynamic and at the same time synthetic composition of the movement, which brings together and freezes three consecutive views, as in a review of an Etienne-Jules Marey chronophotography experiment<sup>18</sup> or as in Giacomo Balla's "Dinamismo di un cane al guinzaglio" picture.

The professional activity of Anna Maria Fundarò has often focused on the interior design that, as she has stated, allowed her to practice the profession of architect with that experimental attitude often denied to the great architectural intervention<sup>19</sup>.

In these cases, architecture and architectural space are represented as objects and the use of axonometry allows penetration within the project, inspecting and analyzing it, to make spatial complexity comprehensible.

Depending on the choice of point of view, or the way in which Cartesian axes are oriented in space, the representations of the physical environment are different and express precise "cultural tensions".

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<sup>18</sup> Chronophotography was a photographic method experimented to fix the movement through successive shots. Cfr. Étienne-Jules Marey, *La Chronophotographie, nouvelle méthode pour analyser le mouvement dans les sciences physiques et naturelles*, (Paris: Georges Carrè, 1891).

<sup>19</sup> Anna Maria Fundarò, "L'interno: strategie di progetto", *ADS Annuario di Design in Sicilia 1983* 2, (1984): 88-91.

So, in the case of the axonometry of the Foyer of the Teatro Biondo in Palermo, the emphasis is on the set-up of the scenic instrument which is shown in its entirety and in relation to the architectural partition of one of the long sides of the space. A window opens on the two-dimensional surface of the sheet of paper: the scenic space is shown through a frame, which represents, in continuity, the plan and the section of the environment. In this case a "special" axonometry<sup>20</sup> was chosen, like those made by John Hejduk in the 60s to represent some houses, which almost appear as a frontal representation. The adoption of this axonometry allows to focus attention on the elements that exalt the formal features of the space and occupy the entire drawing: the two symmetrical terraces forming the scenic instrument, the double head stairs and the flat central platform that constitutes the scene. The reference to architectural space is the ceiling design and the partition of the back wall, marked by five openings, spaced by pairs of pilasters.

In the case of the axonometry of the contact lenses laboratory in Palermo, space, vacuum is represented as if it were a transparent solid. The focus is on the articulation of volumes and space, full and empty. So in the sections and in the axonometry the space is represented as an object, out of context and without any reference to the thickness of the walls or its location. The only references are provided by the writings *negozio di ottica preesistente - piano terra* (pre-existing optician shop - ground floor), *'tunnel di collegamento'* (link tunnel), *nuovo reparto lenti a contatto* (new contact lenses

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<sup>20</sup> In this type of axonometry the plan and the front view do not deform: the first moves vertically and the second is parallel to the plane of projection. The directions of the y and z axes coincide and they are both orthogonal to the x axis (so only the elements of the drawing lying on planes parallel to the xy and xz planes are visible).

department). The definition of red coating material for the back walls, the floor and the staircase is entrusted to the dotted.

The oblique axonometry of the contact lenses laboratory, in the choice of language, recalls the axonometries of the Ettore Sottsass jr. *Furnishing Concept* (multi-purpose cabinet system) or the *Habitation Unit* of Studio Zanuso (Marco Zanuso and Richard Sapper) for the *New Domestic Landscape* exhibition by Emilio Ambasz, organized in 1972 by MOMA in New York<sup>21</sup>.

The work of Anna Maria Fundarò has always shown her great attention to the theme 'of drawing as a moment "for", "toward" the project'<sup>22</sup>. Such attention has certainly been manifested in her designer work, but, more so, in her teaching activity.

The representation, for Anna Maria Fundarò, was functional to the testimony of the represented thing, whether it is in embryo (project) or it comes from tradition (survey). In the second case, the great value of this testimony lies in having historically fixed the story of a handicraft that has largely disappeared today.

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<sup>21</sup> Emilio Ambasz (ed.), *Italy: The new domestic landscape: Achievements and problems of Italian design* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, NY, 1972), 161, 164, 165, 191.

<sup>22</sup> Anna Maria Fundarò, *Design per lo sviluppo. Quaderni di ADS Annuario di Design in Sicilia* 1, (1988), 150.

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# Women Architects in Gipuzkoa

Enkarni Gómez, Izaskun Aseguinolaza, Itziar Rodríguez and Koldo Telleria

## Hypothesis

The aim of this article is to show the results of an empirical research carried out among women architects in Gipuzkoa, and with the purpose of seeing what is the relation between women and different aspects related to architecture. More precisely, we<sup>1</sup> try to figure out what kind of relation has been built in Gipuzkoa during the last decades between women and architecture in different spheres: studies, work, motherhood, and architectural projects.

## Methodology

On the one hand, two meetings were arranged with women architects from Gipuzkoa. Each of them brought together 5 women architects from different age groups. We tried also that young students could take part in these meetings which were informal and lasted approximately one hour and a half.

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<sup>1</sup> We are a group of professors from the School of Architecture in Basque Country University (UPV-EHU), Enkarni Gomez Genua, Koldo Telleria Andueza, Itziar Rodríguez Oyarbide and Izaskun Aseguinolaza. We and another woman from the administration department (Ana Reboredo) are members of the Equality Commission of School.

The last academic year some students made up a group who wanted to promote feminism between them, it was called FEMISTARK. They asked for help and also showed the interest for participation with the Equality Commission so all together prepared some activities for this academic year. Between this activities is this, taking part of MOMOWO. So this is the beginning of a work we think needs to be done in our School of Architecture.

In order to have the information arranged and to make them more dynamic, we prepared a survey divided in two parts. The aim of the first part of the survey was to obtain some objective and basic information about the women we were going to interview, for example: age, where they have studied, where do they work, if they have children, if their partner is an architect, etc. The second part of the survey was focused in questions related to gender and architecture. It is possible to examine the survey in a document attached to this article.

We considered these two events as qualitative information and we will use it in this way.

On the other hand, we realized that only interviewing a few women architects we could risk to obtain biased results. Then we also prepared the survey in digital format, in order to send it by email to all women architects who are members of the Basque Navarre Official Association of Architects (COAVN) in Gipuzkoa. In this Official Association of Architects, in Gipuzkoa, there are 1127 members, among them, 418 are women architects. The contact database from the Association of Architects made us possible to get 413 email addresses and the survey was sent to all of them.

In order to see how the youngest generation lived these topics we also sent the survey to the girls of 3rd year of the Bachelor's Degree in Architecture who study in University of the Basque Country and are from Gipuzkoa. All of the girls asked answered, they were 6.

We got 77 answers. Nevertheless some of the answers were not considered valid as they were not filled with relevant

information or there was some information unfilled. Finally, we have studied 72 answers. As we send the survey in Basque and also in Spanish, we got answers in both languages, specifically we got 32 in Basque and 45 in Spanish.

We could get from this mailing quantitative and qualitative information, because we use the same questions we had used in the two personal meetings.

### Results. Quantitative results

As a first approach to the topic studied in this research, and as we have told previously, we have selected all women architects from the contact database from the Basque Navarre Official Association of Architects in Gipuzkoa. At the beginning this selection had one only aim: to obtain the email address of each woman to make them receive our digital survey. But, while we were doing this work we could realize how the ratio of women and men joining the Association of Architects has changed over the years.

We have decided that this event could be relevant as a starting point to analyse the data received through the digital survey. We have to say that although the first man architect joined the Association in 1958 there was not until 1971 any woman joining the Association, and during that year two women joined the Association (Raquel Martínez de Ubago in 1971 and María Amada Celaya in 1971). At that time, there were 38 men. During the next decade, until 1990, 13 more women joined the Association and 147 men. The amount of women joining the Association increased during the last decade of the 20th Century. Between 1991 and 2000, 66 women and 159 men joined the Association. The bigger increase of women joining the Association happened during the 21st century. Here,

we have 337 women and 374 men inscriptions.

Since we have received the information from the Association of Architects in order of enrollment we have analyzed the ratio of women/men every 100 enrollments. In the following graphic we can appreciate the relation of women/men inscriptions. It is significant the increasing of the amount of women during the XXI century, specially considering that not all the new architects decide to join this Association, on the contrary of the situation during the 60s, 70s and 80s, when all the architects felt the interest in joining this Association.

The analysis of the digital surveys, specially the first part of it<sup>2</sup>, give us the profile of the women architects that answered it. As we have already mentioned we have analyzed 72 answers. Most of the answers (33) are from women aged between 41 and 50 years. Women between 31 and 40 are also abundant (26). Even if we have to take into consideration that women architects above 50 are not common, results from these women above 50 were very few, 3. About the youngest women architects, younger than 30, we have to say that these answers are also few, specially considering that among 10 only answers 6 are students.

Women who answered are fundamentally from San Sebastian<sup>3</sup>. There

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<sup>2</sup> The part in which we ask for the age, where they live, where they have studied, where do they work, if they have children, if their partner is an architect, if they have familiar referents in architecture, when did they start and finish their studies, which are their references in architecture or which has been their professional itinerary.

<sup>3</sup> San Sebastian is the biggest city in Gipuzkoa, it has got about 180.179 inhabitants.

San Sebastián metropolitan area includes 10 towns (Rentería, Hernani, Lasarte-Oria, Hondarribia, Pasajes, Andoain, Oiartzun, Urnieta, Lezo, Usurbil, Orío and Astigarraga, between which Rentería is the biggest with 39.905 inhabitants),

were exactly 35 from San Sebastian, 20 living in San Sebastián's metropolitan area, 17 in towns of Gipuzkoa and 2 living abroad (Holland and London).

Two thirds of them are mothers, while one third is not.

Most of the women that answered the survey studied in San Sebastian, the rest studied in different cities of Spain and only three studied outside Spain.

Nearly all of them don't have a familiar referent in architecture, and the few ones (12) that do, in general it is a man architect (father, grandfather or brother).

About their architectural references we can say that are mostly men as we can see in the following graphic. References of women architects are few, among them we can find direct mentions to: Zaha Hadid, 6 times mentioned, Kazuyo Sejima, Edith Girard, Anne Tyng, Zaida Muxi, Isabela Velazquez and Jane<sup>4</sup> Jacobs , mentioned once. There are other mentions to women architects through

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with 324.511 inhabitants, data from last year, 2016, from EUSTAT Instituto Vasco de Estadística [http://www.eustat.eus/bancopx/spanish/id\\_2212/indiceRR.html](http://www.eustat.eus/bancopx/spanish/id_2212/indiceRR.html).

Gipuzkoa's inhabitants are nearly 710.699, data from last year, 2016, from EUSTAT Instituto Vasco de Estadística [http://www.eustat.eus/bancopx/spanish/id\\_2212/indiceRR.html](http://www.eustat.eus/bancopx/spanish/id_2212/indiceRR.html). San Sebastián's metropolitan area is the most populated area but we can also find big towns with more than 10.000 inhabitants as Eibar (27.158 inhabitants), Zarautz (23.040.011 inhabitants), Mondragón (21.903 inhabitants), Tolosa (19.041 inhabitants), Hondarribia (17.902 inhabitants), Bergara (14.905 inhabitants), Azpeitia (14.812 inhabitants), Beasain (13.863 inhabitants), Azkoitia (11.852 inhabitants), Elgoibar (11.481 inhabitants), Oñate (11.275 inhabitants).

<sup>4</sup> Jane Jacobs is not an architect, she was an American-Canadian journalist and activist best known for her influence on urban studies, sociology, and economics. She has been one of the best influences introducing everyday urban life issues into a urban design concepts by her book "The Death and Life of Great American Cities" (1961).

their professional group's name: SANAA, RCR, MVRDV, Smithson, Atelier BOW BOW, Lacaton&Vassal, Eames. This way Kazuyo Sejima from SANAA, Carme Pigem from RCR, Nathalie de Vries from MVRDV, Momoyo Kaijima from Atelier BOW BOW and Anne Lacaton from Lacaton&Vassal got 1 mention each. We have to say that 35 different men architects are mentioned, among those Mies Van der Rohe, Alvaro Siza, Le corbusier, Alvar Aalto, Frank Lloyd Wright and Moneo in that order are the most mentioned.

The figure has been done giving tipografic scale as many times those names are mentioned. The color shows the gender of the architect.

The table and graph below summarizes the number of architects mentioned and how many times they have been mentioned.

Finally, the survey asked 'Where do you work?'. Answers to this question has been given in different senses, some answered relating to the city they worked in, and some other understood the question in a different way so they answered which area was the one they are working in (administration, studios, so on). So we have only considered the ones relating to the town they work in, and most of them work in San Sebastian, the capital city of Gipuzkoa.

About their professional profile we can say that they mostly develop their profession in studios, shared (25) or as directors (26), only a few ones (6) work in the administration, 5 don't have a job, and very few work for a construction company (2) or in education (1).

## Results. Qualitative results

The second part of the digital survey we sent gives as qualitative information

together with the contents got in the dialogues in the work-cafes we arranged. To express this results we will relate to different items in other to organize the information got: studies, work, motherhood, state of the profession and their opinion about feminist proposals.

### Studies

If we analyze the discourse of the women during their studies, they show different opinions depending on their age and time in which they studied.

All the women interviewed, report sexist comments from some professors while attending classes. But while those that started earlier (early 60s and 70s) think they did not suffer any discrimination during their studies and take away this comments, those that started later (80s and 90s), find these comments are unacceptable.

We reproduce here some of the comments they heard while they were studying:

‘...architecture is not for women’<sup>5</sup>;

‘... don’t know what for I Am going to explain this... you are not going to understand’<sup>6</sup>;

‘... you come to look for husband’<sup>7</sup>.

These results are reinforced taking into account the opinion of the women that answered the online survey. Some of the sexist comments they write are:

‘Machismo coming from teachers was obvious and sometimes offensive’<sup>8</sup>;

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<sup>5</sup> “...la arquitectura no es para mujeres”

<sup>6</sup> “... no se para que os voy a explicar esto... no vais a entender”.

<sup>7</sup> “... venis a buscar marido”.

<sup>8</sup> “El comentario del profesor en las primeras clases de primero: "yo generalmente

‘During the first classes the teacher's comment was: generally women pass this subject as I can't see a woman crying’<sup>9</sup>.

‘On the other hand, the situation that a friend suffered when she went to tutoring project correction of final project of her degree, where they (the teachers) made more comments about her flowerish painted nails than about her project. Absolutely, outrageous’ Another question they underline is that during their studies they did not have any woman professor, or had only 1 or 2, and all architects referred to in class were men. So all references were male architects and professors. Some say they missed to have more women to share with.

### Work

Even if the study time is lived in a different way by older and younger women, they all agree that they really felt discrimination when they started to work as architects. Most of the women interviewed report discrimination and sexist comments in a way or another. They feel the building site is very masculine and a woman has to prove their capacity the double than a man. For example while they are pregnant or showing themself masculine and with a strong character. Most of the building workers show reticences to work with women, prefer male interlocutors, and when a woman architect and a man architect go together to meetings the woman is considered to be the secretary or the decorator

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apruebo a las mujeres porque no puedo ver a una mujer llorar”.

<sup>9</sup> “Por otra parte, la situación que vivió una compañera cuando fue a una tutoría a corregir un proyecto de fin de carrera, donde le hicieron más comentarios sobre sus uñas pintadas con flores que sobre el proyecto. Indignante. “

The comments during the interviews are:

‘... it had to be a woman’<sup>10</sup>.

These feelings and opinions are also reinforced by the women that took part in the online survey.

‘They started paying me a 10% less than two other man workmates who started working at the same time’<sup>11</sup>;

‘...but what I felt was that my colleague was better received than me just because he was a man’<sup>12</sup>.

They also observe paternalist attitudes

‘the first real job I got, I think it was because I am a woman, by a kind of paternalism of the boss, that thought it was easier to control us, he always used to hire girls that just had finished studies’<sup>13</sup>.

Most of the women that answer the survey declare that when working with a man in the studio, they both share and do the same work even if it is not recognized outside the studio (construction, building workers, even clients...) so they feel in this way there are not differences, meanwhile they mostly

agree that women have a different sensibility to create more inclusive spaces and think more about people that cares.

### **Motherhood**

Motherhood, becoming mothers, is a question that appears very often during the interviews and survey. It is a key question for the women architects. Most of the women interviewed are mothers, so they haven’t resigned to have children. Only one says she had resigned because her priority was to open an own studio.

Women who are mothers live motherhood as a problem in their professional development. First of all they find discriminatory that they are asked about their intention about having children during the interviews when looking for a job, while their male mates are not asked. Once they have a job, or open their studios (alone or with partners) they find a lot of difficulties in combining work and breeding. Those that share studio with husbands report less difficulties that the ones that work for a company or alone, but anyway find motherhood and fatherhood is not the same, and that their couples (or husbands) had it easier.

### **Profession**

Another aspect women point out and agree, in all cases, is that they feel that the profession of architect has been devalued during the last decades. They find nowadays is worst paid and architects are not as well considered as before. Moreover, they think that architects now have to do ‘everything’ in a project while some decades ago they were much more respected.

They also felt discriminated because colleagues used to organize meetings in places and times where they could not assist (only men clubs, for example, or too

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<sup>10</sup> “...mujer tenía que ser”.

<sup>11</sup> “Me empezaron pagando un 10% menos que a otros dos compañeros hombres que entraron a la vez que yo”.

<sup>12</sup> “...pero sí vi que era mejor recibido mi socio por ser hombre.

<sup>13</sup> “...“En mi primer trabajo de verdad, creo que lo conseguí por ser mujer, por una especie de paternalismo del jefe, que pensaba que era más fácil controlarnos, siempre contrataba chicas recién salidas de la carrera”.

late in the evening when they had to be home with children.)

As mentioned before most of the women think profession has changed in the last decades to worst and that the profile of architect society needs now is not taught in the architecture schools. They think it is necessary to reflect about what an architect should be nowadays and rebuilt the profession skills.

‘I think it has to be reinvented and updated ... it is still based on the same models’<sup>14</sup>.

Some of the women mention the case of couples both being architects and working together that the one who enrolls the Architects Association or contract the civil insurance<sup>15</sup> is the man in order to have less expenses. in a couple work they also mention that the clients use to speak money matters with the man and decoration matters with women.

### **Feminist proposals**

Nearly the half (%45) of the women interviewed find that proposals coming from feminist movement are necessary and important for a better development of the architectural work, a better design of the spaces and taking into account a major diversity of population. These comments reflect in a way that feminist proposals are not only good for women but for all the society:

‘Absolutely needed.  
Architecture as part of the

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<sup>14</sup> “Creo que tiene que reinventarse y actualizarse...sigue basándose en los mismos modelos”.

<sup>15</sup> Enrolling the Architects Association and the Social Security and contracting a Civil Insurance are necessary to build in Spain.

society must face social injustices’<sup>16</sup>.

‘Of course, they are necessary. They provide another point of view about function and uses of spaces’<sup>17</sup>.

‘Yes. Women live things in a different way and that can be reflected in architecture and urbanism’.

It is specially mentioned the relation between public space and the different knowledge about it that both genders have or develop. The knowledge of the space depends on the experiences people have in it, that means activities done and time spend in it; they mention that historically, women have taken care of the family, children and old people, and this means they spend more time and in a different way in the public space.

‘Yes, I think that there is often a difference in the design of public space, we know better the public space because we use it more frequently that is why we can improve the needs and shortcomings.’<sup>18</sup>

‘They are very necessary. The cities in which we live would be very different if they

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<sup>16</sup> “Totalmente necesarias. La arquitectura como parte de la sociedad tiene que hacer frente a las injusticias sociales”.

<sup>17</sup>“Por supuesto que son necesarias. Aportan otro punto de vista sobre la función y usos de los espacios”.

<sup>18</sup> “Bai. Uste dut askotan espazio publikoa diseinatzerakoan badagoela aldea, batez ere emakumeok sarriago erabiltzen dugulako espazio publikoa eta horregatik hobetu dakigulako zeintzuk diren beharrak eta gabeziak.”

they would have been thought and designed by women'<sup>19</sup>.

We can also find some of them those that think feminism and architecture are not related

'I can't see the relation between feminism and architecture or urbanism'<sup>20</sup>.

'Don't know... I don't know rather I understand that feminism needs to make specific proposals... we are people making projects.'<sup>21</sup>

Or also some women think that in reality we must make only differences between good and bad urbanism and architecture, and not whether these proposals come from feminism or not.

'In my opinion good architecture or good urbanism is not something related to gender. Rather men or women can design quality spaces. There are good architects and bad ones, regardless of gender.'<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Son muy necesarias. Las ciudades en las que vivimos serían muy diferentes si hubieran estado pensadas y diseñadas por mujeres.

<sup>20</sup> "No veo la relación entre feminismo y arquitectura o urbanismo".

<sup>21</sup> "No se... No se si veo que el feminismo tenga que hacer propuestas específicas...somos personas proyectando".

<sup>22</sup> "En mi opinión la buena arquitectura o el buen urbanismo no son cuestión de género. Tanto hombres como mujeres pueden diseñar espacios de calidad. Hay arquitectos buenos y malos, independientemente del género."

## Discussion

### Studies

Women that nowadays are around 40 years old are much more aware, and were aware also during their study time of the discriminative attitudes of professors towards them than the women around 60-70 years old. Our hypothesis is that for the later, the fact of being able to reach university studies, and specially architecture studies, in a society in which university studies were not so widespread among the population, and the architect profession was a well recognised profession and very few women chose it, made that these women felt in a way privileged comparing to the rest of the population<sup>23</sup>.

In contrast, the women that are now around 40, studied in a more egalitarian environment not only if we consider that the number of men and women studying architecture was around 50%, as it is shown in the graph below, but also because in the 80s and 90s to do university studies was more common in the area (Gipuzkoa) we are studying. Moreover, the feminist claims had echo in these women probably, and sexist comments in the classroom would not be tolerated.

We can see how, the first step to become an architect is not easy for women in any case. If we analyze the

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<sup>23</sup> Agudo Arroyo, Yolanda, et al."Construyendo un lugar en la profesión: trayectorias de las arquitectas españolas", FEMINISMO/S Revista del Centro de Estudios sobre la Mujer de la Universidad de Alicante, no. 17 (2011): 161.

María Antonia García de León también trata esta cuestión en las dos siguientes referencias: García de León, María Antonia, *Élites discriminadas: (sobre el poder de las mujeres)* (Barcelona: Anthropos, 1994) y García de León, María Antonia, *Herederas y heridas: sobre las élites profesionales femeninas* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2002).

opinion of the women in order of the study time we can see how this first step in the way to become an architect is not done in a very welcoming environment for women.

### **Work**

If we analyze the experiences that women architects have while developing their profession we observed that in this aspect there is not that much difference between women of all ages. Or we could probably say that changes happen slower that at the university.

It is also worth pointing out that crisis and massification of the profession has supposed a devaluation of it in a moment when much more women are becoming architects, so the devaluation of the profession happens in a moment when more women are choosing architecture as profession. The devaluation of the profession of course is not due to the entry of more women, but it is important to see how men disappear looking for better opportunities, while women remain. From our point of view this could be a topic that needs more research in the area of architecture.

### **Motherhood**

Motherhood is lived as a difficulty. Not only pregnancy but also breeding and taking care of children. It is worthy pointing out that many women interviewed think that men and women are genetically different and this should be something positive but claim for more inclusive politics to help mothers in their daily life. That means that they don't share care-work in an egalitarian way with their husbands and in a way think it is not only a social problem but a personal problem of the women themselves. Some of the comments were:

'We are the ones who have to go ahead'<sup>24</sup>.

'We are the ones who need to change'<sup>25</sup>.

### **Profession**

The fact that when in a studio of architects (married or not) only the man enrolls the Architects Association means that even if women work like men do they are not the ones signing the projects, this supposes invisibility for these women or leaving away opportunities to build a proper cv usable in the future.

This reminds when Mileva Maric (first wife of Einstein, and mathematician) use to say for her was not necessary to sign the papers together because they were Ein-stein (one stone in German) but she never was mentioned in the work of Einstein nor in the novel prizes. We could conclude that women give up easier because they don't feel professional prestige is so important in their lives<sup>26</sup>.

### **Feminist Proposals**

As it is known we can find lots of bibliographic references<sup>27</sup> claiming for

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<sup>24</sup> "somos nosotras las que no damos pasos adelante".

<sup>25</sup> "Tenemos que cambiar nosotras".

<sup>26</sup> Trobuhovic-Gjuric, Desenka, A la sombra de Albert Einstein: la trágica vida de Mileva Einstein Maric (Barcelona: La tempestad, 1992).

<sup>27</sup> "...Algunos colectivos sociales nos parece que requieren una atención especial y, por lo tanto, es necesario hacer emerger sus aspiraciones. Las mujeres, en primer lugar, con sus demandas de accesibilidad o de iluminación, como también respecto a su horario laboral, y tantos otros aspectos que se escapan a los "responsables masculinos". (Borja-Muxi.2000, 40).

"... las teorías urbanísticas del siglo XX han querido imponer un orden semejante al que impusieron las religiones, separando lo sagrado de lo profano, la verdad de la falsedad, para crear una realidad en la que el hombre es la verdad y el centro, y la mujer es "lo otro", la alteridad." (Anna Bofill 2013, 423).

women protagonism in architecture and urbanism. Some Gipuzkoan women architects are also aware about men protagonism in those disciplines but we find their opinions are contradictory.

Even if we can see that some are very conscious that women need to be taken into consideration when designing the city or a building, and think that feminist claims and proposals are not only necessary but important for the personal lives and for their development, most of the woman declare not to suffer discrimination or take away the discriminative or sexist comments they have suffered.

It seems that in a way they have what we have called a 'hidden discourse', that means that consciously they say one thing but it is contradictory with what they have lived and think about architecture issues.

### **Conclusions and future goals**

The fact that not many women over their 60s did not answer to the survey could mean they are not really interested in the issues of feminisms or think the profession goes beyond feminism. From our point of view this could also be a reflection of the interest this topic has among the women architects of different ages, and how the time they lived in influences their thinking.

We can also conclude that women in Gipuzkoa talk about equality but don't accept that there is discrimination even if with their comments show that there is clear discrimination. As we have seen their comments reflect sexism and a big lack of total equality.

Younger women are conscious about the discrimination and the injustice this means. Nevertheless they all fell bothered with the feminist discourse, the non-sexist

language and the equality vindication and they also make fun about gender perspective of urbanism or architecture. This attitude can also be understood as a way of self defense as Agudo and Madariaga report in their analysis.

It seems necessary to introduce a gender issue in our private and public spaces as most architects have told. This means to change not only the point of view, but also the beginning point to re-design a scenario that guarantees equal use and enjoyment of all the spaces. It is important in one hand to begin from our universities, eradicating and denouncing any discriminatory attitude, and in the other, to change the way we analyze and teach architecture as objective and deconstruct the false idea of objectivity of the male model as neutral and universal. The plurality of models, the differences, the nuances, and the subjectivity must be valued.

This article wanted to be a tribute to Gipuzkoan women architects as this 2017 has been the 50th anniversary from which women became member of the Basque Navarre Official Association of Architects<sup>28</sup>.

We wanted to achieve two goals: the first one was the visualization of women architects in Gipuzkoa and the study of the evolution of their presence in the Gipuzkoan architecture. As we have seen still work needs to be done for developing these goals: visualization needs to be done and also work needs to be done to reach equality.

As a working a group in University, we (Equality Commission and FEMINISTARK)<sup>29</sup> have detected the need for building a gender consciousness between students, professors and administration workers of our School of Architecture in the Basque Country. This

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<sup>28</sup> See footnote number 1.

<sup>29</sup> See footnote number 2.

will be our next goal. So, all together, we have prepared some activities for this academic year. Among these activities is this, taking part in MOMOWO. So this is the beginning of a work we think needs to be done in our School of Architecture.

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## Female Architects in Spanish Architecture Magazines An Analytic Research (1973-1990)

Lucía C. Pérez Moreno and Penélope Santamera

Currently, parity in Spanish Schools of Architecture is a reality. Inés Sánchez de Madariaga's research points that more than half of the students in the first-degree courses in architecture are feminine since 2007. At the same time, several studies remark the lack of women in Spanish architecture culture, which leads to an invisibility of the professional work done by female architects.

The end of Franco's Regime (1939-1975) was a turning point for female education in Spain. For nearly four decades, women were not educated similarly than men. Fortunately, the following decade was characterized by a profound political and cultural change that involved women rights. The increase of female architects is one of the facts that singularized these years; however, it is not easy to establish neither the numbers nor the names of these pioneer women. This paper proposed an approach to study the visibility of female architects in Spanish architecture culture. By analysing the presence of women in a selected group of architecture magazines it would be possible to create statistics that examines the way they worked (alone, in pair, in teams...), the specialization they focused (building, landscape, urban planning, editing,...), and, in parallel, to propose a genealogy of female names whose work was outstanding, so that, they would need further research.

### Education & Political Context: Women in Architecture Studies in Spain

The first woman to finish her architecture studies in Spain was Matilde Ucelay, in Madrid in 1936, at the same time as the end of the Second Republic and therefore, the beginning of the Civil War (1936-1939). Her status as the first Spanish female architect has been the subject of various academic studies that have rediscovered her life and work, and contextualized it within the architectural currents of the era<sup>1</sup>. Just three other women studied architecture in Madrid before the Civil War. They were: Lali Úrcola, who never finished her studies and, Cristina Gonzalo and Rita Fernández-Queimadelos, who graduated in 1940 and 1941 respectively. In the two following decades only five women studied architecture: Margarita Mendizábal graduated in 1945, María Eugenia Pérez Clemente in 1957, and Elena Arregui<sup>2</sup> in

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<sup>1</sup> Inés Sánchez de Madariaga, *Matilde Ucelay. Una vida en construcción* (Madrid: Ministerio de Fomento, 2012); Javier Vílchez, *'Matilde Ucelay. Primera mujer arquitecta en España'* (Tesis doctoral, Universidad de Granada, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Yolanda Agudo Arroyo, Inés Sánchez de Madariaga, 'Construyendo un lugar en la profesión: trayectorias de las arquitectas españolas', *Feminismo/s* 17 (2011): 159.

1958, all in Madrid. In 1962, the Architecture School in Barcelona issued its first degree to a woman, Margarita Brender. At the end of the decade, coinciding with Spain's economic development, the number of female architects increased to around forty, with the inclusion of a new school in Seville, which opened its doors in 1958. However, although the numbers were growing, they were still very low in comparison with the numbers of men. In 1974, the magazine *Triunfo* published a study on 'The work of women in Spain'<sup>3</sup>, which showed that the percentage of women in technical colleges in the year 1970-71 was 1.2% compared with 43.3% for men; that is just 2.8% of the students of engineering and architecture were women.

This lack of equality in the academic world extended to the work environment. Several social history studies on gender all indicate that the ideology promoted by the Franco Regime, with the support of the Catholic Church and the Falange women's organization, promulgated a discriminatory education for women, constraining them from entering university and finding jobs. One of the first acts of the Franco Regime was to repeal those laws passed by the Second Republic designed to promote and advance equal rights and the legal status of women.

In 1977, with the Regime finally finished, the magazine *Vindicación Feminista* dedicated its tenth issue to reviewing what had constituted women's education in the preceding years. With the title 'Women's Education: The Great Swindle', the Spanish historian Amparo Moreno stated that what had been the unspoken reality during the Regime, was that 'to analyse the education of women was to consider the most important, relevant and damaging experience that she suffered. From birth, and throughout

her life, the woman [was] subjected to an education process whose purpose [was] to make her accept, as something natural, the role that a capitalist and patriarchal society [gave] her: as housewife, that is, wife and mother at the service of the man'.<sup>4</sup>

This situation meant that equality at work between men and women was non-existent. Roles with greater responsibility remained barred to women; the most obvious being that of head of state. Women were also excluded from the defence forces, military careers, and the Merchant Navy. In addition, professions considered being male domains, such as architecture, engineering, and the legal professions<sup>5</sup>, were dominated by men. This psycho-social idea remained fixed within a great number of families in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, and even, in certain parts of the country in the 1970s and 1980s. Although the numbers of women enrolling in universities increased constantly -in the year 1960-61 there were 13,788 women which by 1970-71 had increased to 55,066<sup>6</sup>-, the majority of women chose to study professions considered to be more suitable for females, such as teaching or nursing; for example, in the year 1970-71, 56.5% of student teachers were women and also 84.9% of those training to be nurses. The study of architecture in technical schools was confined to a minority, normally from the few families during the period that retained liberal ideas.

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<sup>4</sup> Amparo Moreno, 'Educación de la mujer: La gran estafa', *Vindicación Feminista* 10 (1977): 29-37.

<sup>5</sup> Women were barred from becoming magistrates, judges or prosecutors, except in the legal jurisdictions of minors and the work place. This exclusion was finally repealed on 28 December 1966, although prejudices remained.

<sup>6</sup> Data from the National Institute of Statistics.

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<sup>3</sup> *Triunfo* 609, June 1, 1974, 32-37.

## Social & Political Context: The 'Transition' as a Turning Point

In 1975, with the end of the Regime, came renewed hope to construct a democratic and egalitarian Spanish society, resulting in a continuous struggle for women's rights and their entry into the work place<sup>7</sup>. There had already been critical voices against the oppressive situation of women, essentially linked to resistance movements to the dictatorship, and conscious of the work of American and European feminists. The Spanish historian Ángeles Larumbe pointed out two principal focal points for demands for women's rights at this time: academic research and newspaper articles<sup>8</sup>. One of the pioneers in analyzing legal, social and anthropological aspects of the woman's situation during the Franco regime was Lidia Falcón, leader of the Partido Feminista de España (PFE), director of the magazine *Vindicación Feminista* (1976-1979), and author of numerous studies like: *Los derechos civiles de la mujer* (Civil Rights for Women) (1963), *Los derechos laborales de la mujer* (Labour Rights for Women) (1964) and *Mujer y Sociedad* (Woman and Society) (1968), among others. Other authors that protested against the oppression of Spanish women were Aurèlia Capmany, Ángeles Durán, and many others, with titles such as *De profesión mujer* (The Woman's Profession) (1975) and *El trabajo de la mujer en España* (The work of women in Spain) (1972). Cultural magazines of the period

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<sup>7</sup> Lucía C. Pérez-Moreno, 'The 'Transition' as a turning point for a female agency in Spanish Architecture', in Ruth Morrow, Harriet Harris, James Brown, and James Soane, *A Gendered Profession* (London: RIBA, 2016), 108-115.

<sup>8</sup> María Ángeles Larumbe, 'Los primeros pasos', in *Las que dijeron no. Palabra y acción del feminismo en la Transición*, (Zaragoza: Prensas Universitarias de Zaragoza, 2004), 45-62.

were also committed to the cause and some such as *Cuadernos para el Diálogo* and *Triunfo*, published issues concerned with examining the life of women and the conditions they suffered; for example the December 1965 issue of the former, and the April 1971 and the already mentioned July 1974 issue of the latter. At the same time, Spanish translations were published of the canonical texts of feminist literature such as *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan and *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir, both published in 1966<sup>9</sup>.

In parallel, the number of women studying architecture continued to rise. The first generation of architects educated in the last years of the late Franco era and during the 'Transition' were the first to be able to practice their profession in a democracy. In spite of the sexist nature of their education -since the architecture schools of those years were still filled with male teachers and the architects of reference were all men (and unfortunately continue to be so)-, these female architects were the first who could make their career in a society whose values were evolving towards equality.

## Architecture & Media: New Spanish Architecture Magazines

Along with political, social and cultural changes, new architecture magazines began to be published, which greatly expanded the publishing market dominant during the Regime. In Spain, there were two main cultural focal areas, emanating from the provinces of Madrid and Barcelona. This stemmed from the predominance of the two Spanish schools of architecture with the greatest tradition,

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<sup>9</sup> María Ángeles Larumbe, *Una inmensa minoría. Influencia y feminismo en la Transición* (Zaragoza, Prensas Universitarias de Zaragoza, 2002), 167.

the first in Madrid, founded in 1844, and the second in Barcelona, founded in 1875. The cultural polarisation between these two provinces was sharpened during the Regime by the most notable specialist architecture magazines of the respective cities. In Madrid, the journal *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura* (later *Arquitectura*) was the official monthly magazine of the Madrid College of Architects and became the promotional organ for modern Spanish architecture. In Barcelona, *Cuadernos de Arquitectura* (later, *Cuadernos de Arquitectura y Urbanismo*, and *Quaderns d'arquitectura i urbanisme*) had a similar purpose. Other relevant architecture journals were *Hogar y Arquitectura*, the journal of the Obra Sindical del Hogar (OSH) – a state body responsible for the construction of subsidized housing-, *Nueva Forma*, a private journal associated with the patronage of the Huarte family, and *Informes de la Construcción*, a publication associated with the Technical Institute of Building and Cement –the two former disappeared after the Regime whilst the last one continues until today.

Since the mid-seventies, new magazines with different editorial policies and scopes appeared, such as *Arquitecturas Bis* (1974-1985), *2C Carrer de la Cità* (1975-1982), *CAU* (1975-1982), *Nuevo Ambiente* (1975-1976) and *Jano* (1975-1978), all of them based in Barcelona, and *Ciudad y Territorio* (1975-ongoing) based in Madrid, as Figure 1 shows. Some years later, and established in Madrid, appeared other ones that still continue publishing nowadays –with high international relevance-, such as *Av Monografías* (1987-ongoing), *Arquitectura Viva* (1988-ongoing) or *El Croquis* (1988-ongoing). These magazines served as the platforms to reflect on the architectural culture of the time, and to disseminate the

work done by male and female architects in all the country.

### **Architecture & Media: Women in Spanish Architecture Magazines**

As a first statistical approach to the theme, six architectural journals of particular relevance have been selected to be analyzed: the two most traditional ones, *Arquitectura* and *Cuadernos de Arquitectura y Urbanismo*, both linked to the Official College of Architects of Madrid and Barcelona; and four of recognized cultural impact, *Arquitecturas Bis*, *AV Monographies*, *Arquitectura Viva* and *El Croquis*. The chronology of this analysis has been limited to the articles published in each of them between 1973 and 1990, the years of the political 'Transition' to democracy (1973-1982) and its consolidation (1982-1990)<sup>10</sup>.

As Figure 1 exposes<sup>11</sup>, along with the seventies the presence of architecture work and (or) writings done by female authors was almost nonexistent; visibility ranges from 2% to 9%. These results seem to correspond to the political and socio-cultural context of the time. The low number of women in the Schools of Architecture corresponds with a low percentage done by female professionals. This slow (but increasing) visibility along the 1980s is related to the fact that more women were involved in the architecture profession. Since 1985, the percentage of female authors increases to 12% and maintained a slightly upward trajectory

<sup>10</sup> Usually, for cultural studies 1973 is considered the beginning of the 'political transition' in Spain, when Luis Carrero Blanco died - he was a Spanish politician close to Francisco Franco.

<sup>11</sup> Penélope Santamera, 'Análisis de la obra y escritos de arquitectas en las revistas especializadas españolas (1973-1990)' (Degree diss, Universidad de Zaragoza, 2017).

until 1990, where the percentages of visibility reach 23% in the journal *AV Monographs*.

Once analyzed the data from a global perspective, it is important to examine the results according to other parameters. Thus, the articles with female authorship are classified within the different ways of women were able to work: alone, in pair with a male professional, and as part of a team. In parallel, the authorship is differentiated between being the author of an architectural (or urban planning) project or the writer of the texts published in the magazine<sup>12</sup>. Regarding the last one, it is also important to set apart articles written by women with texts written about female architects and urban planners. All in all, it could be possible to have a better understanding of the role of women involved in the architecture profession.

It is important to notice that during these years female architects had a high presence in architecture magazine as critics, especially in the journals *Arquitectura*, *Arquitectura Viva* and *Cuadernos de Arquitectura y Urbanismo*. In terms of overall results, articles written by female architects (12.7%) and articles written by women in collaboration with male architects (6.2%) reach a higher percentage than any other working models. In addition, according to the data, women usually publish more writings alone (12.7%) than in collaboration with a group of male professionals (1.5%). As it could be predicted, articles that show the work done by women are practically non-existent. In fact, it is not until 1976 when the first article dedicated to a female architect was published, and she was not Spanish; she was Eileen Gray, in the journal *Arquitecturas Bis*.

As a result of the analysis, more than 200 female names appeared. Although

this number seems to be high, most of the articles with their authorship were done in collaboration with male professionals. Thus, only twenty of them saw their name published more than three occasions. Table 2 shows the list of the fifteen women with more articles.

Of all of the different female names, the Catalanian architect Carme Pinós highlights. She graduated in 1978 from the Barcelona School of Architecture, but her successful career has been eclipsed and over-shadowed for years by the name and greater recognition given to her partner and professional colleague from the beginning of the 1990s Enric Miralles. She was the first female Spanish architect to be awarded the FAD (Promotion of Art and Design) prize for her project for the 'Cemetery of Igualada' in 1991 - the award was shared with Miralles, co-author of the project. However, it is noticeable that a considerable amount of writing about the joint work of Miralles-Pinós has tended to leave her in the background. This situation worsened when she began to work for herself. As she herself states, it was thanks to the support of foreigners like Wolf Prix and Thom Mayne that she managed to re-establish herself after her professional separation, giving classes in Austrian and American universities. In addition, her decision not to have a family was critical in being able to dedicate herself fully to being an architect.

The second female name that pointed out is Roser Amadó. She studied also in Barcelona finishing her studies in 1968. Her professional career is linked to that of Lluís Domenech Girbau, with whom she shares an architectural office. Their work was published in all the journals studied, although the magazine of the Official College of Architects of Catalonia was the dominant. It is important to remark that Roser Amadó is the first female Spanish architect that

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*.

comes out in texts on Spanish Architecture history; Antón Capitel, highlights her name in the seminal book *Arquitectura Española del siglo XX*<sup>13</sup>.

Of the rest of the names, there are several linked to writing, and architecture critic. Marta Cevelló collaborated in the magazine of the Official College of Architects of Catalonia between 1986 and 1991, Sara de la Mata did it in the magazine *Arquitectura* between 1986 and 1992. Therefore, the female name that outstands as critique is María Teresa Muñoz. She graduated in 1972 in the School of Architecture of Madrid, and continued her education at the University of Toronto in Canada. On her return to Spain, she translated into Spanish the book *Meaning in Architecture*<sup>14</sup>, by George Baird and Charles Jencks, and published several articles in the magazine *Arquitecturas Bis*, thus initiating a long career as one of the foremost architecture critics on cross-cultural relations between Spanish architecture and the British and American English speaking world. Towards the end of the 1970s, with a group of architect colleagues, she edited the magazine *Arquitectura* for a period of two years, being the first woman to participate actively in the management of such a prestigious magazine. After a career that produced more than twenty books and scientific articles, in 2008 she became the first woman to be awarded the FAD prize in a new category that focus on criticism.

On top of the this, the analytical research presented in this paper drives us to three ideas: firstly, most of the women involved with architecture magazines pointed out as architecture critics;

secondly, landscape started to appear as a field for women, mainly in Barcelona; and, finally, any women was working alone during the years studied.

### **Ideas for further research**

It is clear that a deeper study on the way female architects started to highlight in Spain architecture culture is necessary to create new models for young architect students. The six magazines studied do not represent completely the architecture scene of the time. It would be necessary to expand this research to other magazines that were important in these years, such as *Jano* or *Ciudad y Territorio*, among others shown in Table 1. Thus, the research should be completed with other parameters. Despite architecture magazines reflect architecture culture they are not equivalent so that it would be important to study the presence of women in exhibitions, national and international awards, and other relevant recognitions. Nevertheless, this analysis provides us clues for an approach to this time from a gender perspective.

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<sup>13</sup> Miguel Ángel Baldellou and Antón Capitel, *Summa Artis : Historia General del Arte. Vol. 40, Arquitectura española del siglo XX* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1995).

<sup>14</sup> George Baird and Charles Jencks, *Meaning in Architecture* (New York, G. Braziller: 1969).

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# The influence of the Architectural Association on Zaha Hadid's early career (1972-1988)

Nuria Álvarez Lombardero

## Introduction

Since its foundation in 1847, the Architectural Association (AA) has always been an independent school. Originating as a 'reaction against the prevailing conditions under which architectural training' was taught in Britain in the mid-nineteenth century<sup>1</sup>, the school's curriculum was not controlled by any institution or university. This allowed the school a great deal of freedom when defining its pedagogic agenda.

Over the years, the school had evolving visions on how to teach architecture in an open-minded manner with a very diverse environment, where foreign students, men and women were studying together. The first three female students enrolled in 1917 and now make up more than half of the student body. This environment of openness changed the life of some female pioneers who influenced the practice in architecture and urbanism with their work. Among many others, some women architects can be highlighted, such as Jane Drew (1929-34), Denise Scott Brown (1952-55) and more

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Bottoms, "Introductory" (paper presented at the Archives for London & the Twentieth Century Society, London, United Kingdom, February 20, 2010). <http://www.aaschool.ac.uk/AASCHOOL/LIBRARY/archiveonlineresources.php> (accessed July 20, 2017).

recently Zaha Hadid (1972-77)<sup>2</sup>. These three women, in particular, have stated at multiple occasions the benefits of studying at the AA. Despite the fact that each of them were enrolled in the school during a different decade, all highlighted the importance of the open environment and diversity of perspectives to their studies and later career development.

Reviewing these women architects' background are equally exciting investigations. However, this paper will particularly review this institution environment and education system in the 1970s that allowed Hadid to develop a distinct way of understanding space and its representation.

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<sup>2</sup> In his lecture on Jane Drew, scholar Iain Jackson mentions how she enjoyed the 'company and camarade at school' in a reduced unit group environment. Meanwhile Denise Scott-Brown mentions in an Architect's Journal magazine interview that she 'found her identity as both an architect and a woman there'. Iain Jackson,

"From Croydon to Chandigarh: Jane Drew and the Creation of Tropical Modernism" (paper presented at the Architectural Association, London, United Kingdom, April 28, 2015) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKDAZILS3G0> (accessed September 1, 2017); Emily Booth, "Denise Scott Brown: 'The best women architects get is student life'", *The Architects' Journal*, March 22 (2013) <https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/home/denise-scott-brown-the-best-women-architects-get-is-student-life/8644587.article> (accessed September 1, 2017)

## Finding herself: A student in the 70s at the AA. (1972-77)

Since her childhood, Zaha Hadid was surrounded by an open environment. She grew up in Baghdad in the 1950s and 1960s, during which Iraq was building a new identity closer to Western culture. Modern and ancient architecture were coexisting in her city and society was open to Western ideas of modernization. Women had a place in this vision<sup>3</sup>; in fact, there was already an older generation of female architects practicing in Baghdad when she was a child, there were many girls of her age who wanted to become architects as well. This atmosphere moved Hadid and her family to embrace new ideas and strive for the most progressive and innovative education. This aim moved her to apply in the AA among other influence international schools at that moment. In 1972, Hadid travelled to London to study at the AA School of Architecture.

Unfortunately, the British architectural environment at that moment was not the most ideal for a student with an aim of building her new ideas in architecture. The building sector was in crisis and society was very critical of poorly-built post-war constructions. In opposition to this building crisis, the AA became the place of progressive ideas and innovation. In British architect Nigel Coates' words, the school was a 'house of creativity' where new proposals were discussed and drawn in what was defined

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<sup>3</sup> In an interview, Hadid mentions that there was already an old generation of women architects practicing in Baghdad when she was a child. Actually, in her generation, there were many women who wanted to become an architect. Alan Yentob and Roger Parsons, "Who Dares, Wins, Zaha Hadid" (BBC Documentary, 2013) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9n0EQBa7dQI> (accessed July 22, 2017)

as 'paper-architecture'<sup>4</sup>. This particular situation was possible because of its visionary director at that moment, Alvin Boyarsky, who allowed differences in visions for education within the school.

In this unstructured and diverse environment, Hadid found her own interests from the beginning. As early as her first year, she joined a group of students who were interested in designing architecture. In her own words, the school at that moment was for an 'anti-design' in a 'movement of anti-architecture'<sup>5</sup>. Her initiative to talk to the school director and ask for more architectural content within the AA helped her to survive in that chaotic environment and find her own path. Initiative was one of the main school pedagogic agenda basis at that time. Therefore, following her request of designing buildings, Boyarsky allowed her to organize some seminars on architects and buildings with her classmates, starting a shift from 'metaphysical working' to building within the school.

Her choices of mentors in the following years at the school demonstrate this interest in designing buildings. In her third year, she entered Leon Krier's design studio Unit 10, which was the closest brief to architecture of all the options at the Intermediate studies level<sup>6</sup>. Following that brief, 'Project on the City: Cities versus Megalopolis', whose research and design goal was to 'challenge the one-dimensional zoning policy by complex

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Zaha Hadid, "Zaha Hadid in Ideal Practice: Architecture and Education" (lecture at the Architectural Association, London, United Kingdom, June 20, 1996) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bpyw-IB3B3k> (accessed July 22, 2017)

<sup>6</sup> Intermediate studies correspond to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year at undergraduate level in the Architectural Association. *The Architectural Association. AA Projects review 1974-75* (London: AA Publications, 1975) 28-40.

architectural proposals', Hadid proposed in the longest brief a U-shaped enclosed block defined by terraced walls as an urban nucleus over a railway. For Hadid, this year was an opportunity for her to confront the urban scale<sup>7</sup>.

A year later, for her diploma studies in her fourth and fifth years, she decided to join Unit 9, taught by Elias Zenghelis and Rem Koolhaas, being for the latter his first years teaching at the AA. Both tutors were renowned figures of the radical architecture at that moment. As such, their brief was aiming to 'rediscover and develop a form of urbanism to the final part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: new types of architectural scenarios that exploit the unique cultural possibilities of high densities' resulting in a critique to 'Metropolitan lifestyle'<sup>8</sup>. For that purpose, they introduced abstract compositions by Gerrit Rietveld, Kazimir Malevich, and Russian Suprematists to their students. Specifically, they showed three-dimensional models done by Malevich from 1923 to early 1930s, called *arkhitektons*<sup>9</sup>. Afterwards, the exercise

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<sup>7</sup> Alvin Boyarsky, "Alvin Boyarsky interviews Zaha Hadid", in Zaha Hadid, *Planetary architecture two*, (AA Publications, London: Architectural Association, 1983)

<sup>8</sup> *The Architectural Association. AA Projects review 1975-76*. (London: AA Publications, 1976) and *The Architectural Association. AA Projects review 1975-77*. (London: AA Publications, 1977)

<sup>9</sup> From 1923 to the early 1930s, Malevich produced several three-dimensional models called *arkhitektons*. These assemblages of abstract forms white plaster models made up by several rectangular blocks added one another 'sought to demonstrate the timeless laws of architecture underlying the ever-changing demands of function (...) (and) resemble early De Stijl compositions in which ornament is non-figural and 'form' and 'ornament' are differentiated only by scale. These studies are purely experimental and the buildings have no function and no internal organization." Drawings accompanying the construction of the models were called *planits*. Alan Colquhoun,

consisted in taking a segment of the *arkhitektons* to be superimposed on the urban fabric.

After this brief, Hadid proposed for her fourth-year design a horizontal composition departing from a Malevich's sculpture, placing it over the Thames River. Later, following her interest on how to radically transform the city of London with architecture<sup>10</sup>, the tectonic object became an inhabitable bridge with a hotel and a social condenser or workers' club<sup>11</sup>.

The relation between art—in this case a sculpture—and architecture established by the design studio brief, allowed Hadid not only to freely compose her proposal out of functionalist architecture, where a certain composition or typology was straight-related to a program, for the first time, but also to acquire a strategy when confronting a new project. In the project description by her tutors, they describe how:

[She] undertook in her horizontal tektonik the task of handling the "mutation" factor for the architectural and programmatic requirements of the project single-handed. Ignoring the rules, she designed the whole thing, discovering in Malevich's apparent random composition "a method" for meeting his demand: this method was called *tic-tic*<sup>12</sup>.

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*Modern architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) 123.

<sup>10</sup> Zaha Hadid, "Zaha Hadid and Suprematism" (interview at Tate Modern Talks, London, United Kingdom, October, 2014) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GF\\_qPKnrrHo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GF_qPKnrrHo) (accessed July 21, 2017)

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Elias Zenghelis, and Rem Koolhaas, "Malevich's Tektonik London, 1976/77" in Zaha Hadid, *Exhibition catalogue: projects 1977-81* (London: AA Publications, 1981), 1.

These words anticipate a methodology used later by Hadid in her building proposals as a practitioner to represent those elements that had potential for motion in the composition<sup>13</sup>. In this manner, what was initially a student exercise about breaking the rules imposed by Malevich's sculpture became the origin of a work field in Hadid's later career.

A year later, Hadid continued the ideas and representational techniques explored in her final thesis: "The Museum of Nineteenth Century in London". This time, she needed to design with more 'correspondence with its historical and cultural context'<sup>14</sup>. To achieve this aim, she needed to add more definition to the proposal, as a technique to calibrate better the building relation to existing context. In her words:

I tried to draw things which presented the idea even if they were not always realistic. I think that through a set of drawings one discovers certain things which otherwise would not have been possible. You look at a project in so many different ways that it begins to unveil certain things. Drawing is not only about the final product<sup>15</sup>.

In this exploration on how to draw a proposal as a design technique, Hadid again found new tools to build her later work methodology, like the 'collapsed

section' on site to represent the proposal interiority<sup>16</sup>.

Furthermore, she looked again to Neoplasticism and Suprematism paintings to expand previous exercise on volumes to work, this time with layers. For this purpose, she started slicing the proposal vertically and horizontally and separated these layers in the space. This can be observed in the site plan for the latest bridge proposal. There, the initial volumetric composition is scattered in different planes that form the bridge. The plans show rotated planes that contain different programmatic elements. This decomposition of planes will be a key element in her later work, allowing her to design unthinkable architectural compositions at that time.

Right after her graduation from the AA in June 1977, Hadid started collaborating with her mentors, Zenghelis and Koolhaas, in their newly founded Office of Metropolitan Architecture. Following their teaching agenda at the AA, the office was focused on experimentation and creation of visions for the city. In addition, graphic representation of their ideas was fundamental for their work. The contribution of the two other foundational members: artists Madelon Vriesendorp and Zoe Zenghelis, was key to this.

Hadid's first collaboration at the office that year was the competition for the Dutch Parliament Extension in The Hague The Netherlands. This period of training allowed her to develop her work in two ways. On the one hand, she got to know the graphic work of Vriesendorp and

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<sup>13</sup> Hadid, "Zaha Hadid and Suprematism"

<sup>14</sup> Elias Zenghelis, and Rem Koolhaas, "Museum of 19<sup>th</sup> century London, 1977/78" in Zaha Hadid, *Exhibition catalogue: projects 1977-81* (London: AA Publications, 1981), 20.

<sup>15</sup> Boyarsky, "Alvin Boyarsky interviews Zaha Hadid"

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<sup>16</sup> Despite Zaha mentions in different interviews this process started in her fourth year, we can recognize from the AA archives that the graphic exercise was fully developed in her fifth year. The images captured from the AA 1977-78 Projects Review witness a change in representation techniques. *The Architectural Association. AA Projects review 1977-78.* (London: AA Publications, 1978)

Zenghelis, working the former in full-coloured paintings for the competition. The intensity of their drawings at that moment prompted Hadid to take new steps, moving from black and white drawings to large-scale contrasted coloured drawings<sup>17</sup>. On the other hand, her contribution to the competition panels, an exploded drawing of layers, allowed her to represent all the interior components of the proposal in a non-diagrammatic way<sup>18</sup>.

### Hadid's First Works

After her experience in the office, Zaha founded her own architectural practice in 1979. At the same time, she also started teaching in the AA alongside her mentors. In these first years as a practitioner, research-through-drawing was the major focus of her work<sup>19</sup>. Her first solo project was a proposal for the Irish Prime Minister's House and State Guest House competition, whose main aim was, in Hadid's words:

...to create a weightlessness, a freedom from the stress of public life. (...) The forms of the plan are designed to induce a feeling of freedom from gravity, a feeling of liberation from bureaucratic

<sup>17</sup> As Zaha admits, despite Madelon Vriesendorp was not her teacher *per se* in the school, she was 'obviously around when Mad[elon] was doing the great acrylic painting for OMA'. Shumon Basar, and Stephan Truby (ed.) *The world of Madelon Vriesendorp: paintings, postcards, objects, games* (London: AA Publications, 2008) 68.

<sup>18</sup> Her drawings were included in an exhibition of this project at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Hadid, "Zaha Hadid and Suprematism".

<sup>19</sup> Mohsen Mostafavi, "Landscape as Plan. A conversation with Zaha Hadid", in Zaha 1983-2004, *El Croquis* 103 (2004) 34.

and stressful aspects of political and public life<sup>20</sup>.

For this purpose, the two programmatic pieces, or houses, are separated into two entities, but connected by a covered walkway in an 'exclusive use of adjacency' with a spatial organisation that 'has been abandoned in favour of spatial interpenetration<sup>21</sup>.' Volumes are here intersected by planes combining those design tools developed in her formative years at AA with Krier, Zenghelis and Koolhaas. Additionally, she wanted to push both 'the notion of explosion in architecture (...) to a certain limit where it doesn't become ridiculous', where she was 'much in control, and it erupts where it is possible<sup>22</sup>', and the idea of carving. The former took the form of an erupted triangular shape intersecting the guest house, shaped by the latter with an interior courtyard to maintain the privacy of the inner rooms. This is the first time that Hadid worked with an 'artificial landscape', a design concept that would later be repeated in later proposals and briefs<sup>23</sup>.

Despite the fact that this proposal did not win the competition, which her mentors from OMA also participated in, it had an impact in London architectural scene. Boyarsky, who was still director of the AA, was impressed by this proposal and organized an exhibition at the school

<sup>20</sup> Zaha Hadid, "Taoiseach's Residence, Dublin, Ireland" in Brett Steele and Francisco Gonzalez de Canales, ed., *First works: emerging architectural experimentation of the 1960s & 1970s* (London: AA Publications, 2009) 246.

<sup>21</sup> Patrick Schumacher, "Commentary" in Brett Steele and Francisco Gonzalez de Canales, ed., *First works: emerging architectural experimentation of the 1960s & 1970s* (London: AA Publications, 2009) 254.

<sup>22</sup> Boyarsky, "Alvin Boyarsky interviews Zaha Hadid"

<sup>23</sup> Mostafavi, "Landscape as Plan. A conversation with Zaha Hadid", 6

to recognize 'the power of Zaha's project<sup>24</sup>.' From the institution, and especially with Boyarsky as director, there was a support for those students and tutors who were starting their professional practice that usually combined research and design. This first exhibition in 1980, that later went to Van-Rooy Gallery in Amsterdam, helped Hadid not only to introduce herself as an architect in London, but also to start being known as the most radical one.

In these early years, Hadid was also working on two or three commissions, like the conversion of a three floors house for her brother in 59 Eaton Place, London. As it was more an interior design, in this proposal 'each object was seen as a piece of architecture. The objects were designed as if they were buildings<sup>25</sup>.' For this purpose, all drawings explored how to show all interior spaces and their impact on the building exterior. These drawings, mostly deep perspectives, were used here both as a means of representation and a design technique to define all surfaces. This radical design concept broke with the conventional way of understanding architecture in the 1980s in a British architectural environment still dominated by Post-Modernism. In 1982, the proposal was awarded with the Gold Medal Architectural Design (AD) British Architecture Awards and exhibited at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), bringing her even more attention.

However, her most acknowledged work of these early years in practice was the competition entry for the Peak International Club in Hong Kong, 1983. This proposal was to create a building, a club, to be the architectural landmark of Hong Kong city. Located on the top of a mountain, the brief demanded certain

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<sup>24</sup> Schumacher, "Commentary", 254

<sup>25</sup> Boyarsky, "Alvin Boyarsky interviews Zaha Hadid"

'programmatically inventiveness as well as an overwhelming significance in relation to, and as a relief from, the congestion of the city itself<sup>26</sup>.' This relief was defined by Hadid as a zero-gravity situation in which the buildings could float over the landscape. However, this flotation was only possible with the thrust of some elements onto the site. Vertical and horizontal elements, *slabs* and *beams*, were embedded into the landscape, like a 'knife cutting butter, devastating traditional principles and establishing new ones, defying nature but not destroying it<sup>27</sup>.' This composition was creating, like at the Irish Prime Minister's residence, an artificial landscape inserted into the natural one<sup>28</sup>.

The challenge for Hadid was to describe this proposal through drawings. She mentioned later that some drawings were more than illustrations of the building, while some others had a story related to her real design intentions<sup>29</sup>. Drawings were used to tell a story, a narrative, like:

...the exploded isometric of the Peak, shows the evolution of the building, with the landscape as a backdrop; the beams appear from nowhere and intersect the landscape, ending up with a finished object, which is the building itself. (...) the slabs, which shows the context of the entire Hong Kong scene,

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<sup>26</sup> Alvin Boyarsky, and Arata Isozaki, Arata, *Zaha M. Hadid* (Tokyo: ADA Edita, 1986) 66.

<sup>27</sup> Boyarsky and Isozaki, *Zaha M. Hadid*, 66.

<sup>28</sup> Mostafavi, "Landscape as Plan. A conversation with Zaha Hadid", 12.

<sup>29</sup> Boyarsky, "Alvin Boyarsky interviews Zaha Hadid"

changed to suit (...) a superimposition on that city<sup>30</sup>.

Drawings were composed of static elements and dynamic ones that were visible thanks to both a deconstruction of its volumes into layers and the disturbing eighty-nine degrees perspective point. Her idea was to blur distinctions between the city and the building. For this purpose, she fragmented both elements into layers and scattered them into the landscape. This graphic deconstruction allowed her not only to bring all these parts into the same level, but also to better design them.

Hadid's entry won first prize. Japanese architect Arata Isozaki, who was part of the competition panel of jurors, commented that her work was so unusual and different from all other proposals that it was not selected by the group. However, the 'uniqueness of its expression and the strength of its logic' in the few drawings submitted allowed him to convince the rest of the jurors to select it as the winning proposal among 600 entries<sup>31</sup>. Although it was never built, it became an opportunity for Hadid to be acknowledged internationally and to put her in the international spotlight. Following this success, the Boyarsky decided to do a retrospective exhibition of her work in the AA under the name "Planetary Architecture two" in 1983. This time, the AA was not only supporting her again, but also allowed her to show all research on drawing and real building developed in her first years of practice to colleagues and students, at the same time she was teaching there<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> Some of the proposal drawings were scenes of the project narrative, like "The divers" or "Day view from Courtyard".

<sup>31</sup> Boyarsky and Isozaki, *Zaha M. Hadid*, 7.

<sup>32</sup> Zaha Hadid, "Zaha Hadid in Ideal Practice: Architecture and Education"

## Reaffirming her practice agenda, teaching at the AA. (1977-87)

Another important aspect related to education and the first years of Hadid's practice is her teaching at the AA. Right after graduating, she started collaborating with her mentors Zenghelis and Koolhaas in Diploma Unit 9. For three years, Hadid taught with them, learning their educational method of relating research with design and a great interest in future conditions of architecture in Metropolitan cities. In 1980, Hadid starts teaching by herself, following this previously developed agenda.

In general terms, her main ideas were related to a creative process in which drawings were 'a mean of investigation (...) done throughout a process<sup>33</sup>.' They were the ultimate tool to design and bring information about different design aspects. Drawing was a tool to 'travel through the project and understand the result<sup>34</sup>.' These can be perceived when reviewing Projects Review pages that summarized Diploma Unit 9's work throughout her teaching years (1980-87). A collection of linear black and white drawings showed design intentions, giving very little space or importance to the text explaining ideas behind.

Despite her mentors' strong legacies, Hadid started introducing her main interests and methodology previously explored in early works, such as the previously mentioned *tic-tic* method, the decomposition of volumes into planes or the idea of an artificial landscape. For Hadid, these years were 'very instrumental<sup>35</sup>', as she could develop these interests with students to build her

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<sup>33</sup> Luis Rojo, "Conversation with Zaha Hadid" in *Zaha 1983-1995, El Croquis*, 1995.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Zaha Hadid, "Zaha Hadid in Ideal Practice: Architecture and Education"

practice agenda more consistently. During her first year of teaching, she introduced the idea of producing newness by ‘exhilarating dynamic architecture’ for the future twenty-first century<sup>36</sup>, a common obsession in all studio briefs. Two years later, she continued asking the students to explore ‘randomness’ as for her it ‘has an inherent logic<sup>37</sup>’. To that end, she looked to a very well-define typology, the Russian fortress, to play with it formally. We can also highlight the idea of ‘artificial landscape’ in her last year teaching at the AA, a concept that propelled her Prime Minister’s Residence and Peak proposals<sup>38</sup>. In this case, the restructuring in layers of this artificial landscape shaped the basis of the project as an urban form in the industrial wasteland located on the northern side of the Royal Docklands of London<sup>39</sup>. Curved lines and floating geometries could be identified in all students’ work as a way of defining space. One of her more advanced students at that time was Ben van Berkel, who explored this later in his office UN Studio, and would soon start his development of digital graphic tools.

## Conclusions

In 1987, Hadid decided to end her teachings at AA, as she felt the school did not support her as strongly as it used to. From then on, she looked for other platforms to expand her design research interests, and that opportunity came through the “Deconstructivist in

Architecture” exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York in 1988. Curated by Phillip Johnson and Mark Wigley, the exhibition was to ‘mark a different sensibility, one in which the dream of pure form has been disturbed’, and thus, ‘form has become contaminated<sup>40</sup>’. Hadid’s Peak proposal drawings were exhibited along with works from Frank Gehry, Daniel Libeskind, Rem Koolhaas, Peter Eisenmann, Coop Himmelblau and Bernard Tschumi. All had in common an evolution from Russian constructivists and Suprematism languages, by using pure forms ‘to produce “impure”, skewed geometric compositions<sup>41</sup>’. However, after this short review of the origins of her work, it can be presumed that she was through her intuitions the very originator of what was later called the Deconstructivist movement in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as none of these architects were following this path in the 1970s at her early years as a student at the AA, where it all started.

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<sup>36</sup> *The Architectural Association. AA Projects review 1980-81.* (London: AA Publications, 1981)

<sup>37</sup> *The Architectural Association. AA Projects review 1982-83.* (London: AA Publications, 1983)

<sup>38</sup> She also explores this in her proposal for Competition La Villette Park for the twentieth-first century in Paris 1982.

<sup>39</sup> *The Architectural Association. AA Projects review 1986-87.* (London: AA Publications, 1987)

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<sup>40</sup> Mark Wigley, “Deconstructivist architecture” in *Deconstructivist architecture exhibition catalogue*, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1988)

<sup>41</sup> Wigley, “Deconstructivist architecture”

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Wigley, Mark: "Deconstructivist architecture" in *Deconstructivist architecture*

Kataložni zapis o publikaciji (CIP) pripravili v Narodni in univerzitetni knjižnici v Ljubljani

COBISS.SI-ID=297170944

ISBN 978-961-05-0136-7 (pdf)