

Aldo Rossi's Migration Through Analogies. From the Postwar European to the Postmodern

Introduction: Rossi's two analogies

Some European architects achieved universal success in the Postmodern era by shifting their centers of activity from their native countries to America, where they acquired the status of star-architects and could find gateways to a global audience. A representative case of such migration is Aldo Rossi. The American positive reaction to him was due to one of the fundamental characteristics of the Postmodern era in architecture: curiosity about architects' lives. From the 1970s onwards, American star-architect culture began to search for European architects, whose personal poetics and private lives were sufficiently attractive. This matched Rossi's tendency toward introversion, represented by his drawings, and especially his second book, *A Scientific Autobiography* (1981). For the American audience, Rossi's *Autobiography* appeared, "[d]espite its title, [...] more poetic than scientific".¹

In order to understand the meaning of the strange coexistence of academic description and personal reflection that the book title indicates, we need to investigate in detail the process of his migration. Clarifying what continued and altered in Rossi's thought before and after the expansion of his activity to America will shed new light on one of the identities of the Postmodern as adaptations of the original motives of European architects to American culture. This paper explores Rossi's transition by paying close attention to his unique discourse about the notion of analogy, which in America was regarded as "Rossi's most important apparatus"² and transformed him into one of the most important Postmodern architects.

Rossi's thoughts about analogy have been investigated almost entirely through critiques of two panels produced in the 1970s and both entitled *Analogous City* (*Città Analoga*), in addition to a few texts relating to them.³ However, a more accurate and deeper understanding requires identifying the original context in postwar Italy, to pursue its development throughout the 1970s and in Postmodern culture. This will reveal different functions of Rossi's analogy from explanation for his designs.⁴

1 Lerup 1983: 56.

2 Eisenman 1982: 8.

3 Recent studies also show this tendency (see Ruhl 2006; Szacka 2017; Mozzato 2018; McEwan 2020), while a few consult a wider range of Rossi's texts (see Savi 1976; Chupin 2012; Schnell 2019). Some studies regard other works as versions of "Analogous City" such as *Teatro del mondo* (1979) (Szacka 2017), the drawings for the Modena cemetery project and his city drawings in the 1980s (Chupin 2012).

4 Eisenman evaluates Rossi's sketches as "analogous drawing" (Eisenman 1982: 10), Chupin sees in the panels "a method of project" (Chupin 2012: 140), Lampariello defines the concept of analogy as "possibility of evoking the configuration or the characteristic of buildings, monuments and the city" (Lampariello 2017: 176) and Schnell regards the panels as showing a "generalizable method of project" (Schnell 2019: 153).

5 The investigation of the material, cultural and institutional aspects of Rossi's migration has been provided by Fabbrini (2020), while this paper focuses on its theoretical dimension.

6 They are Eraldo Consolascio, Bruno Reichlin and Fabio Reinhart, who had already collaborated on the occasion of Rossi's teaching at the Zürich school (*Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich*) in the academic years of 1972/73 and 1973/74. On this collaboration, see Reichlin 2000 and on the iconographic analysis of the panel, see Chupin 2012: 140–43; Rodighiero 2015.

7 It is extracted from Gianfranco Caniggia, *Letture di una città: Como*, Roma: Centro studi di storia urbanistica, 1963 (See Rodighiero 2015).

8 The difficulty of definition of the notion of *Centri Storici* has been discussed (see Argan 1990), and it remains ambiguous because each of the Italian historical districts has different situations and difficulties (see De Pieri 2012: 94). For understanding the background to Rossi's discussion, it is enough to point out the historicity of historical districts that dates back to the preindustrial periods and the carelessness that they suffered in the postwar age.

Fig. 1 Aldo Rossi, Eraldo Consolascio, Bruno Reichlin and Fabio Reinhart, *La città analoga*, from Lotus.

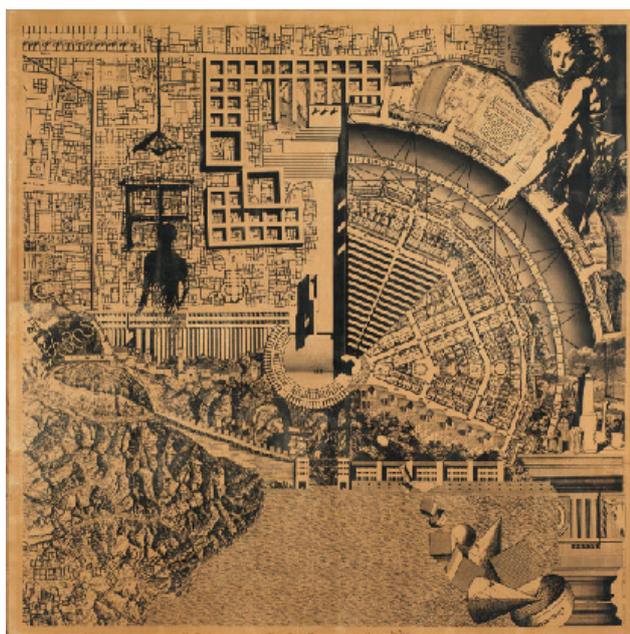
To articulate and evaluate the development of Rossi's thought, this paper proposes a hypothesis that his concept of analogy had two different motives from different origins, which were finally unified. They can be found in the distinction between his two terms "analogous city" and "analogous architecture." In addition to the obvious difference in scale between city and architecture, the uses of the word "analogy" have different contexts, motivations, and objectives. The transition of the two analogies will explain the process of Rossi's migration from postwar Italy to Postmodern America.⁵

What surprises us is the wide, sometimes heterogeneous, range in which Rossi uses the word "analogy", and related words, in addition to their semantic ambiguity or vagueness. Rossi, while not explicitly giving a special meaning or definition to the notion of analogy, seems to rely on its conceptual ambiguity which enables associations to be made between heterogeneous things. Therefore, this paper aims not to define or explain strictly the word's meaning or its effects on Postmodernism, but to clarify how Rossi uses them and thus crosses conventional borders.

The problem of historical districts in postwar Italy

Of the two panels which Rossi titled *Analogous City*, the second one was produced with his Swiss collaborators for the Venice Biennale in 1976.⁶ (fig. 1) In his comments on it, he gives little explanation for the concept of the analogous city, although we can see a clue for deeper understanding in the upper left of the panel, where the partial map of the historical district of the Italian city of Como is inserted as the background.⁷ It is the topic of the urban historical districts called *Centri Storici* that led Rossi to develop his argument about the "analogous city" in the 1960s.

The problem of *Centri Storici*, the historical districts at the centers of cities,⁸ had been the central topic for heated disputes among Italian architects,



urbanists, and others in the postwar period. Rossi's first book, *The Architecture of the City* (1966), as well as his idea of the analogous city intended to take a position in these disputes.⁹

The historical districts began to attract much attention in the 1950s, when the central state and local communes were dealing with the problems of postwar reconstruction, such as housing shortages and urban destruction, while preparing for urbanization and industrialization. However, their administrative policies and legal instruments were mainly focused on suburban developments and proved to be too careless of historical districts to prevent private speculation and a consequent sudden rise in land prices there.¹⁰ On the other hand, for the purpose of their preservation, many restrictive rules were imposed on construction in the historical districts, which only promoted the museumization of the old cities. Subsequently, urban historical districts were in two opposite extreme situations in the 1960s: in the cases where economic interests were dominant, urban developments and renewals erased every trace of the original characteristics of historical districts, while the areas lacking any economic stimulus were completely abandoned and hollowed out¹¹.

Even in such difficult situations, some Italian architects achieved successful interventions in historical districts by reconciling the troublesome legal instruments,¹² although most of them complained about and criticized the administrative policies. Rossi also discussed the problem of historical districts in book *The Architecture of the City*, though he indicated them with the word *ambiente* (environment), and only later began to use the term *Centri Storici*.¹³ His evaluations of the common policies were almost always negative. Taking as an example the city of Milan, he deemed the administrative actions for its historical district as lacking “a serious and authentic plan”, which caused the “massacre” of the historic center of Milan which had survived the bombings of the war.¹⁴ The most critical point to him was the preservationist tendency represented by “the conservation of the facade and the pseudo stylistic restoration”.¹⁵

Rossi's criticism comes from the position of the architect, to whom matters the specific question of how to confront the urban historicity when intervening in the city with his architectural projects. To understand his criticism correctly, we should keep in mind Rossi's basic conception: the city is always continuing to grow and develop through time. This assumption, which is most evident in his *The Architecture of the City*, however, can hardly be regarded as a developmentalism. As is well known, this book insists that for the growth of the city, certain historic elements play an important role. Rossi distinguishes two groups of urban elements: fixed elements, mainly represented by monuments, and variable elements, equivalent to residential housing. The former continue to be present and at the same time maintain their architectural forms from the past, while the latter are exposed to drastic changes depending on the lives of inhabitants at different times. The development of the city is dependent on the “tension” between these two elements¹⁶, as demonstrated by two pictures of the city of Arles attached to the

9 In 1960s and 1970s Italy, some critics pointed out the relationship between Rossi's theory and the problem of historical districts (see Ballardini 1969; Savi 1976, especially note 1 of chapter IV). By contrast, after his idea of the analogous city gained recognition as his design method, less attention was paid to this relationship.

10 Therefore, in a closer consideration, both situations of suburban areas and central historical parts should be investigated at the same time and correlated, although this article can focus on only the latter. For a detailed account of the urban policies in postwar Italy, see Micali (1998).

11 Samonà 1962: 73.

12 We can take for example the project for Assisi (1958) by Giovanni Astengo, under whom the Gubbio charter (1960), a first manifesto for the protection and renewal of *Centri Storici*, was decided.

13 It should be noted that around that time *Centri Storici* was just one of several words indicating the urban historic districts that had not become a dominant term within the debate until the second half of the 1960s. The other word *ambiente* (environment) had been equally used or more often, like in the Gubbio charter (1960), in the Venice charter (1964) and in the planning law of number 765 (1967). On the other hand, the fact that in the English edition of Rossi's *The Architecture of the City* the Italian word *ambiente* was translated as “context” have led readers to miss the original specific context behind Rossi's argument and has sometimes caused certain confusion. Some previous studies mistake for Rossi's target Ernest Rogers, his master who developed the concept of *pre-esistenze ambientali* (for example see Forty 2004: 133–34; Daglioglu 2015: 273).

14 Rossi [1972] 2012: 449–50. All English texts quoted from non-English sources, including Rossi's, have been translated by the author, unless otherwise indicated.

15 His criticism extends also to the city's development plan (*Piano Regolatore Generale*) that is accused of being incapable of “indicating or directing the development of the city” (Rossi [1972] 2012: 448).

16 Rossi [1966] 2011: 91.



Fig. 2 “The amphitheater [of Arles] in an engraving of 1686,” from Aldo Rossi.



Fig. 3 “The view of the area of the theater and the amphitheater [of Arles],” from Aldo Rossi.

17 Rossi [1966] 2011: 54; 1968b: 42.

18 Rossi 1968b: 41.

19 Rossi [1966] 2011: 54. In passing, Rossi also subdivided the group of permanent elements into two types from the viewpoint of contribution to city growth (Rossi [1966] 2011: 54). The monuments that do not contribute to it are called “pathological”. Though these are isolated from the urban development, they are not completely negative but recognized for their certain role inside the urban constitution, like the Alhambra in Granada. The conservation of historical districts is criticized because it tries to make invariable the originally variable.

20 Rossi 1968b: 41–42.

21 Rossi [1966] 2011: 142.

22 Rossi 1968b: 42.

23 Rossi [1966] 2011: 131.

24 Rossi 1970a: 424.

book, where the Roman amphitheater, as a fixed element, and the residential buildings constructed inside/around it are connected in different modes at different times (fig. 2 and 3).

According to Rossi, the discussion on conservation and restoration of urban historical districts at that time refers basically to residential housing¹⁷. In the framework of Rossi’s urban theory, historical districts are variable urban elements and therefore he argues against their protection. In other words, the conservation of historical districts is tantamount to the romanticist nostalgia for the past that tries to keep their lives “stopped in the time”¹⁸ and that goes “against the real dynamic process of the city”.¹⁹ As far as architects aim at contributing to the growth of the city, their approach to the city should not be based on the conception of historical districts, which urban dynamism destructs and renews inexorably, and which we have to “abandon” to their destiny²⁰. In contrast, it is monuments through which architects can intervene in the city, as shown by the title of a chapter from *The Architecture of the City*: “Monuments: Critique of the concept of *ambiente*”²¹.

Rossi’s argument intends not just to criticize the preservationism but to overcome the simplistic dichotomy between preservation and destruction, by showing that in the reality of urban growth there can be coexistence and correlation of these two, as a dialectic between monuments and residential housings. Architects should not be urged to select between “the old city” and “the new city” but integrate these to assume the task to “conserve old monuments and construct new monuments” at the same time, that is, “the construction of the city through monuments”²².

There is one more characteristic of Rossi’s urban theory worthy of note here: the complexity or the diversity of urban elements. This pluralism is not reduced to the relation between monuments and residential housing but can be found between monuments either. The city grows also through the tensions between monuments themselves. This thesis of pluralism and confrontation inside the city constitutes another reason for his criticism of the conservation of historical districts as well as the urbanistic attitude that he calls “town design”, based on the same conception of the city as “homogeneous, coordinated, continuous [...] with the coherence as one scenery”²³.

Analogy and the ideal persistence of the city

Against the preservationism of historical districts or the town design based on the same conception of a homogeneous environment, Rossi proposes the idea of the analogous city as “the true way of projecting the city”²⁴.

His insistence on the pluralism within the city appears to give us an easy interpretational access to the panel works of the analogous city. The panel in 1976 for the Venice Biennale presents this pluralism as the collaboration of several authors and the diversity of historical references. However, the panel reduces the urban complexity, which is developed over time, to the apparent spatial collage on the canvas and diverts our attention from another important momentum: the temporality or the long time span which the city re-



Fig. 4 Canaletto, *Capriccio: a Palladian Design for the Rialto Bridge, with Buildings at Vicenza, circa 1750*, Courtesy of Galleria Nazionale di Parma.

quires for its development.²⁵ From this viewpoint we have to dig deeper into the meaning of the growth of the city to which architects aim to contribute through monuments. When Rossi explains the idea of the analogous city as “a mediation between the real city and the analogous city”²⁶, what kind of temporality links the real and the analogous or imaginary?

A useful starting point is Rossi’s discussion of the city of Venice. For him, Venice represented a locus of special importance, as it was where he was engaged in teaching activity while writing the draft for *The Architecture of the City*. The specificity of this city has created a number of its outstanding representations, one of which provided him with the model for his idea of the analogous city: Canaletto’s caprice painting with Palladian architecture (fig. 4), to which Rossi refers several times when discussing “analogous Venice”.²⁷ He explains that what makes Venice interesting and attractive for many scholars was its “idea of the city” that “imposes on us a series of organic questions which go beyond its urban reality”²⁸. The idea of Venice or “analogous Venice” suggests the analogy as connecting two dimensions of the city: the actual reality in front of us now and the ideal beyond it. Here, it is important to comprehend this ideal dimension of the city in terms of temporality. If we would think only about architectural design, the analogous association seems directed no more than to the future of the city. In contrast, when we pay careful attention to Rossi’s statement that how to “operate” on the city and how to “understand” the city are “not much different”²⁹, the analogy proves to extend to the past, too.

What does it mean to approach the past as well as the future of the city by means of analogy? This was argued in *The Architecture of the City*, specifically in the section from its third chapter that Rossi devotes to a discussion on the concept of “the collective memory” presented by Maurice Halbwachs. His reference to Halbwachs’ concept is well known but little attention has been paid to why he introduced it at all. Just after criticizing the view of historical

²⁵ The technique of collage often intends to represent the temporal diachrony overcoming the spatial synchrony, though most previous studies of this panel have been limited to the latter. For example, McEwan’s study focuses on the panel’s spatial characteristics and points out the political meaning of the panel as “the locus of the multitude” (McEwan 2020: 10). Moreover, it can be said that the temporality which Rossi’s analogy tries to follow goes far beyond the one represented by collage.

²⁶ Rossi 1970a: 424.

²⁷ Ibid. On Rossi’s reference to Canaletto’s painting, see Savi 1976: 105ff; Chupin 2012: 160ff; Lampariello 2017: 272ff; Schnell 2019: 142ff.

²⁸ Rossi 1970a: 423–24.

²⁹ Rossi 1970a: 424.

30 Rossi [1966] 2011: 144–45.

districts as homogenous environments and before introducing Halbwachs' concept, Rossi distinguishes two temporalities of the persistence of the city: one relating to the "city as a material artifact", and the other to "the idea that we have about the city as a synthesis of a series of values"³⁰. The former has its traces in the physical forms of urban elements. These elements are mainly represented by monuments, even if presumably including historical districts, that are unwillingly conserved against urban development. In contrast, the latter mode of ideal persistence of the city hardly has physical signs, because what matters here is the city as an idea that goes "beyond" the physical permanence or form of the city and its monuments. Rossi insists that this ideal persistence of the city is comprehended through "the collective imagination"³¹, and presents further considerations in the three following sections. There he discusses the ideal persistence of Milan and Rome, namely how these cities' identities continue beyond their physical time span. Venice is not referred to in the argument though the same might be true of "analogous Venice".

31 Rossi [1966] 2011: 145.

It is in this context of the ideal time span of continuity of the city and its identity that he introduces Halbwachs' concept of the collective memory. This is surprising because his reference to the concept is far away from the traditional interpretation of it.³² Halbwachs is generally thought to present the collective memory as the memory which is shared by social groups and which can be accessed, among others (e.g. rituals), through physical architectural spaces. Yet, this understanding is overlapped with Rossi's discussion about the first, physical temporality of the city. On the other hand, he regards the collective memory as "the consciousness of the city"³³, therefore the concept of the collective memory is rather germane to the second, ideal persistence of the city. Moreover, in this manner of presence, the city would appear or be comprehended as the subject of its own memory.

32 Roveri (2010: 129) also points out the strangeness of Rossi's interpretation.

33 Rossi [1966] 2011: 150.

Here, in addition to the pluralism of urban elements, we can find another motif of Rossi's criticism against the debates on historical districts: when architects try to operate on the city, according to Rossi they have to conceive their project not on the material time span of the development of the city, on which the preservationism of historical districts is also based, but on the ideal time span which could be accessed through the analogy. The analogy means the human ability to grasp "the unity between the past and the future" of the city in its

Fig. 5 Arduino Cantafora, *Città Analoga*, 1973, from *Aa.Vv. Architettura razionale: XV Triennale di Milano—Sezione Internazionale di Architettura*.



ideal persistence³⁴, to conceive the future for the city based on the comprehension of its past. The idea of the analogous city requires architects making projects for the future city to jump over the current physical presence of the city, to reach its ideal, no more physically existing identity. The original aim of Rossi's analogous city was to raise an objection against the cultural ideology of preservationism of urban historical districts. It does not show any specific procedure or his distinctive design method that can be read in his designs but an alternative way of comprehending the city as an architectural project.

34 Rossi [1966] 2011: 150.

Theory, teaching and personality in architectural projects

The first panel work with the title "Analogous city" (fig. 5) was drawn by Arduino Cantàfora, Rossi's ex-pupil and colleague, and published on the occasion of the 15th Milan Triennial in 1973, where Rossi directed the exhibition for the international section of architecture, taking his first steps toward worldwide recognition.

However, despite its title, this panel makes us hesitate to apply to it the previous discussions on urban historical districts and the analogous city. The panel does not show the urban dynamism created by human vitality and urban buildings but a certain atmosphere of suspension,³⁵ like Renaissance paintings of *Città ideale*, or De Chirico's metaphysical ones. Moreover, the buildings drawn there can hardly be deemed "the architecture of the city", which should be rooted deeply in the urban *locus*, but seem rather arbitrarily compiled from Rossi's personal references.³⁶

35 The lack of people in the panel is pointed out by Szacka (2017: 267).

36 Lampariello explains this panel as showing the "genealogy" of his architecture (Lampariello 2017: 324).

These considerations lead us to think that the panel in 1973 had a motive different from the debate on historical districts, and this is confirmed by the fact that Rossi's commentary on the panel in 1976 with the title "The analogous city: panel" makes no reference to the preceding panel³⁷. The panel in 1973 finds a more appropriate explanation in another article by Rossi, entitled "The analogous architecture", where he refers to "an album of illustrations" of "my projects"³⁸ and actually explains some of his projects and tells anecdotes about them. Moreover, in the article he distinguishes between the analogous city and the analogous architecture, by stating that "this concept of the analogous city has been developed [...] towards the concept of an analogous architecture"³⁹. On all these grounds, it is reasonable to assume that until that time at least, Rossi recognized another function of the analogy distinct from the idea of "analogous city", which was conceived as an alternative to the problem of urban historical districts.

37 Rossi 1976b.

38 Rossi 1975: 10.

39 Rossi 1975: 8.

After presenting the methodology for urban analysis in *The Architecture of the City*, Rossi undertook serious action to construct an "architectural project theory" in the field of teaching. He complained about "the misery" of the Italian architectural culture at that time, whose main problem was "the rarity of existence of project theories", and so tried to counter it by constructing a theory. This task was imposed in the field of teaching, as "the first objective of an architectural school before all other researches"⁴⁰.

40 Rossi 1968a: 123.

One year after the book's publication, he completed the Italian translation of the book, *Architecture. Essays on the art (Architecture. Essai sur l'art)*, written by the French neoclassical architect, Étienne-Louis Boullée. Although neoclassical architecture had been the focus of his interests since his 1950s undergraduate days, Rossi in 1967, engaged in teaching, saw Boullée as “a teacher of architecture” and tried to learn from his theory “the way to teach the architectural projection”⁴¹.

41 Rossi 1967: 9.

42 Rossi 1967: 7.

43 On the interpretation of Rossi's theory from the viewpoint of transmissibility or teachability, see Matsui (2018).

44 Rossi 1967: 13.

45 Rossi 1968a: 123.

46 From this viewpoint, Rossi distinguishes between two rationalisms: the “conventional rationalism” trying to derive the whole process of design from the logical principles, and the “exalted rationalism” recognizing the necessity of personality as a non-logical element (Rossi 1967: 9). Incidentally, in 1968, this personality in architectural project became germane to the concept of tendency, namely the problematic of politics in the sphere of architecture, although this question is beyond the scope of this study. On Rossi's thought at this time in relation to contemporary political theories, see Aureli 2008.

47 Rossi 1968a: 124.

48 Rossi 1967: 8

49 Roussel [1935] 1995: 3.

50 Rossi 1970b: 123–24.

The method Rossi adopted from Boullée was to base the architectural project on “the development of a series of propositions”, that is, to appeal to “rationality”⁴². Here “rationality” means not the modernist functionalism nor any taste for certain architectural forms but the transmissibility from teachers to students.⁴³ One of the originalities of Boullée—or Rossi's interpretation of him—lies in not to exclude what seems to be outside of the rational or logical system but is at the same time most critical for architecture as an art: that is, the “personal moment”⁴⁴ or “subjective element”⁴⁵. Rossi claims that teachers should provide students with what is rational and transmissible, though at the same time not excluding the personal elements from the architectural teaching.⁴⁶

Then, how should we treat or discuss personality in architectural projects? Rossi's discussion appears quite different from the common belief that architects' personal character would or should be reflected in their designs. His answer to this question was to write an “autobiography”. He touches on the theme of autobiography for the first time in his lecture at the Venice school in 1966, the year of the publication of *The Architecture of the City*. It was part of a series of lectures of guest teachers organized under the title of “Theory of architectural projects”. In the lecture, he insists that all those who try to theorize their architectural project have to state, “how I created certain of my architectures”, referring to the essay written by the French novelist, Raymond Roussel, “How I wrote certain of my books”⁴⁷. In addition, he professed that he himself had a plan to write an autobiography.

Note again that the topic of autobiography was introduced in the field of education and that it focused on the problem of “the transmission of the experience”⁴⁸. Roussel, who in his essay reveals his procedure for writing novels, also explains the motivation of writing it as “the feeling that writers of the future may perhaps be able to exploit it fruitfully”⁴⁹. In the context of architectural project education, Rossi distanced himself from the teaching method of Walter Gropius at the Bauhaus, who reduced the architect's personality in design to the concept of “the genius, the exceptional personality” and regarded the architectural invention as “the jump” from the rational, logical system by the genius⁵⁰. In contrast to Gropius, Rossi searches for a possibility to understand the status of the architect's personality, independent from the idea of an exceptional genius, and in the context of a rational system of architectural project theory.

Architect's life, autobiography and analogous architecture

Even though Rossi's approach models after Roussel, the specific content of the former's autobiography is strikingly different from the latter's, which lays out his "procedure" of how to write novels. For Rossi, the architect's autobiography is neither more nor less than a project theory, and this "is not a method for construction nor a practical manual nor an educational course"⁵¹. An architect's personality comes from "something that expresses already in complete form a universe of aspirations he intends to follow" and to which he therefore "in his life [...] refers to"⁵². In other words, the architect's autobiography consists of a series of his references for design, namely, what we call simply "a corpus" of architecture⁵³. Given Rossi's statement that the project theory is "the construction of an order of reference for the activity of the architect"⁵⁴, the autobiography can be said to overlap with the project theory. These references or the components of the architectural corpus as autobiography are mainly chosen from monuments of the past, such as the Cathedral and Baptistry at Pisa for modern artists or the gothic cathedrals for Le Corbusier. It is for this reason that he mentions "the formation of architects" by means of the "study of monuments"⁵⁵. In his lecture at the Venice school in 1966, Rossi presented a drawing composed of several monuments (fig. 6). Rossi's emphasis on the importance of reference to past monuments suggests his original understanding of architectural history. Citing Ernst Gombrich's discussion on the historical point when the arts began to "be derivative" and to "have its history"⁵⁶, Rossi accounts for this derivation as "a definition of the rationalism, [...] the new sense of construction that we want to give to architecture"⁵⁷. The reference to past architecture in his autobiography signifies the historical sense typical of the rationalist architects.

With respect to the autobiography as a construction of a reference corpus, there is one more thing to add. It does not set as its final goal the creation or justification of any single building and its design or form. We should not overlook that Rossi's autobiography contains "certain" of his projects, because this plurality denies any possibilities to understand Rossi's autobiography as explanation or supplementation of each single project. The autobiography should be written not on a single project but across several ones.⁵⁸ Beyond the single project, an architect establishes gradually his project theory as a reference corpus in his life. On these grounds, it can be said that the true object of architectural project theory as the architect's autobiography resides in his "life" itself. The project theory is "the theory of the life of each man"⁵⁹, namely, the logical organization of his legacy as an architect.

When Rossi started to argue the theme of autobiography in the second half of the 1960s, this was yet to be associated with the notion of analogy. In Rossi's lecture as guest at the University of Palermo in 1970, he used the words "analogous" and "analogy" in the context of the architect's autobiography, not as a technical term, but in a common sense⁶⁰, without any further explanation, while the following part of the lecture discussed the analogous city.

51 Rossi 1970c: 7.

52 Rossi 1968a: 130.

53 Rossi 1967: 8; 1970c: 5.

54 Rossi 1970c: 7.

55 Rossi 1968a: 130.

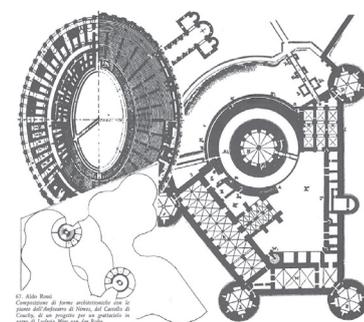


Fig. 6 Aldo Rossi, "Composition of architectural form with the plans of the amphitheater of Nîmes, the castle of Coucy and a project for a glass skyscraper by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe".

56 Gombrich 1967:50.

57 Rossi 1970c: 6.

58 With respect to the word "certain (*certe*)" or "some (*alcuni*)" used by Rossi and Roussel, Lucking emphasizes the process of selection (Lucking 2019: 151).

59 Rossi 1970c: 7.

60 Rossi 1970c: 9.

61 Rossi 1975: 8.

62 Ibid.

63 Rossi 1975: 9.

64 Rossi 1975: 10.

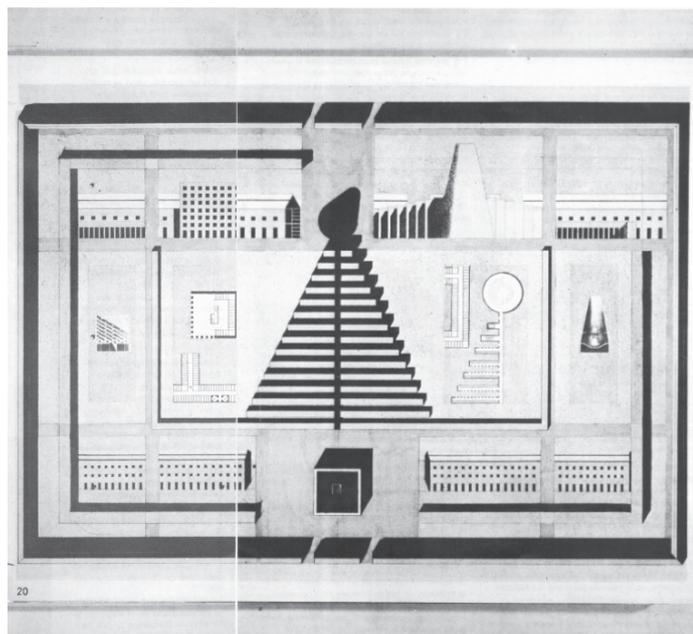
65 Elsewhere, he emphasizes the superiority of “tendency (*tendenza*)” over “the chronological succession of facts” (Rossi 1969a: 7). On closer consideration of “the time of analogy”, see Eisenman 1982: 8ff.

It is Rossi’s article “The analogous architecture (*La arquitectura análoga*)”, published on the pages of the Spanish architectural journal in 1975 that draws the connection between the notions of autobiography and analogy for the first time. It is mostly composed of descriptions of his own works, like his autobiography, where he mentions a shift in his design from “the purism of my early works” to “this actual research of more complex references”⁶¹.

In this context, the notion of “analogy” is the way with which “I behold my architecture”⁶². With this view, Rossi describes his projects by providing his references for design, such as the traditional Milanese housing for the Gallarate housing project or the cupola of the University of Zürich for the competition proposal for a regional administrative center in Trieste, furthermore he adds remarks on his occasional state of mind or emotions, and some episodes on the design process. These accounts suggest one of the unique characteristics of his notion of analogy that regards not only historic architecture, but also his own work biography as references for his future design. For instance, the description of the Modena cemetery project confronts the final design with one of the early sketches (fig. 7) and attributes to the latter “a complete autonomy with respect to the original project”⁶³. The project for the student residence in Chieti is explained as “a point of union between the project for the casa Bay [...] and the Gallarate building”⁶⁴, that is, as a fusion of two of his designs. In the autobiography as the construction of a reference corpus of the architect’s life, historical architecture and his own projects are put on the same level. There we can find a kind of anachronism, where the free association surpasses the exact time order.⁶⁵

What enables the architect to juxtapose historical and personal architecture is identified by Rossi in the “affection” that he has for them. The historical references and the architect’s projects could be treated in the same manner through his emotions, namely, by being “objects of affection”. Thus,

Fig. 7 Aldo Rossi, “Architectural composition with elements of cemetery of Modena”.



they become “autobiographic” elements constituting his “memory”, that is, the history of himself as an architect⁶⁶. It is difficult to consider the personal “affection” as a trigger for analogical thinking because the analogical architecture, as the architect’s autobiography, departs from his will to write and transmit it. Still, personal affection plays an essential role for the analogical architecture in that it, though being an occasional emotion, enables him to consider the individual works as repeatable references by including them in his historical narrative.

66 Rossi 1975: 8–9.

Primarily, Rossi, even though recognizing the importance of architects’ personalities, emphasized the theoretical, rational, logical aspects of the autobiography. On the other hand, his arguments around analogous architecture, where the two notions of analogy and autobiography are closely tied to each other, lead him to say that his investigation in architecture is no longer “general research”, but its application “in a specific field”⁶⁷. This does not mean a turn from rationality or scientific means to non-rational subjectivity or the private field, but his concentration on specific exercises of his theory with his own works.

67 Rossi 1975: 8.

The article attracts our attention also because it provides his understanding of the structure of the architect’s life. As the foundation for the idea of analogous architecture, he cites Walter Benjamin’s passage, “I am unquestionably deformed by relationships with everything that surrounds me”,⁶⁸ and then rephrases it, “the deformation of the nexus between things that surround the central artifact”.⁶⁹ Based on Rossi’s concept of analogous architecture and the content of the article, it can be said that the central artifact, which is the architect himself, is formed and surrounded by his own projects as well as by historical architecture referred to by him in his design. These are defined as “objects that are always fixed and rigid”. On the other hand, through the architect’s life, these fixed elements experience “the superposition of meanings”, specifically, his occasional affections or emotions and the related episodes, that can be called the variable elements in the architect’s life. From the above discussion results that analogous architecture means not any design method aiming at some new architecture, but the methodology of description of the architect’s life that continues to change and to be deformed while holding historical architecture and past projects as fixed references.

68 Cited from the English translation of Rossi’s article (Rossi 1976a: 74).

69 Rossi 1975: 8. English translation: “The deformation of the relationships between those elements surrounding, as it were, the main theme” (Rossi 1976a: 74).

Here we can find the surprising essence of Rossi’s discourse about analogy. The life of the architect and the growth of the city have a common structure in that both consist of two groups of components: the fixed and the variable. His two ideas of the analogous city and analogous architecture do not correspond to the difference in scale between the city and architecture. The place occupied by the city in the former theory is distributed to the architect in the latter theory. Here, Rossi’s analogy works not between the city and the architecture but between the city and the architect.

Two plans of books on analogy in the first half of the 1970s

It appears that the two ideas of “analogy” were investigated by Rossi separately,

both with the intention of publication. Around 1970, Rossi conceived a book on the analogous city and began to write its draft. His personal notebook (*I Quaderni Azzurri*) of the very beginning of the year mentioned “organization of the writings” for the planned book⁷⁰. The book was entitled *The analogous city. Essays on architecture (La città analoga. Saggio sull’architettura)*, and its table of contents was already defined as follows:

- 1) The architecture of the city
 - 2) Typological form of housing
 - 3) Urban analysis and project making
 - 4) Project theories
 - 5) The socialist city
- Projects illustrations

Although the notebook has no further description of the content, the table suggests that the book was planned to consist of the combination of two antecedent books, *The Architecture of the City* and *Urban analysis and architectural projects*.⁷¹ While the second edition of the former was published in 1970 and in the preface Rossi still recognized its validity⁷², the latter is a result of his teaching activity at the Milan school and contains the documents of his lectures on the historical survey of modern architectural project theories and on the idea of the socialist city.

Thereafter, throughout the next year, Rossi continued to polish the draft, yet on 4th November 1971, he suffered a severe trouble: the suspension of his teaching activity in Italy, which was possibly caused by his political activity at the school,⁷³ and, more importantly, kept him away from the book project for a while. At that time, he poured forth his feeling that he could not write the book “in the mind of doubt” and needed to “be silent”⁷⁴. Furthermore, the notebook also suggests some changes of direction in his research from “a certain, forever definitive solution” to what is important “for the life and for the art”. This leads us to presume that his focus shifted from the fixed points in the process to the dynamic process itself as well as from the growth of the city, to the transition of his life.

Still, the opportunity to return to the teaching field came shortly afterwards, though at this time, from the architecture school at Zürich in Switzerland. In January 1972, a letter to recommend Rossi as a design teacher was sent to the department of architecture at the Zürich school⁷⁵, and in the following month an exposition of some of Rossi’s projects was held at the school gallery. On this occasion he presented a lecture without mentioning politics or ideology⁷⁶ and convinced the Zürich professors who were worried about any political tendency being introduced into the school, with “his profound knowledge of architectural history and his artistic drawings and designs”⁷⁷. At about that time, he also went back to the project of writing the book on the analogous city, with the intention to show “more indications than in *The Architecture of the City*” with respect to project theory⁷⁸.

70 Rossi 1999: Book 4, 28/1/1970.

71 Aa.Vv.: *L’analisi urbana e la progettazione architettonica: contributi al dibattito e al lavoro di gruppo nell’anno accademico 1968/69*, Milano: Clup.

72 Rossi 1969b.

73 On the situation of the Milan school and Rossi’s activity, see Biraghi 2009.

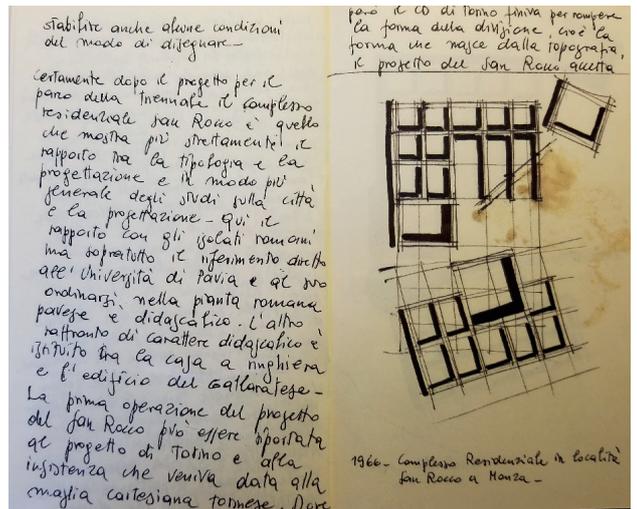
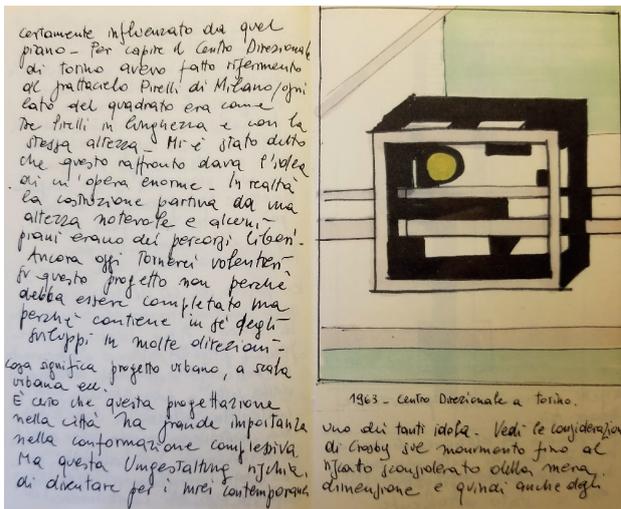
74 Rossi 1999: Book 10, 22/11/1971.

75 Reichlin and Reinhart 2011.

76 Rossi 1972.

77 Schnebli 2011: 49.

78 Rossi 1999: Book 11, 1/3/1972.



The important fact is that at Zürich his drawings and projects rather than his theory attracted attention from the professors as well as from the students, which led Rossi to plan another book. In May 1972, given the proposition from Massimo Scolari, his Milanese ex-pupil, to publish a book on his architecture, he set up a notebook for it, which began with his comment that “the interests and often the puzzle of the Zürich students for my architectural projects push me to write this notebook” and more interestingly, with the mention of the “utility” of the book that would respond to the “necessity to illustrate the references”⁷⁹. The others’ concerns for Rossi’s projects brought closer to the reality the possibility of his idea of autobiography that had already germinated in the 1960s. In fact, the planned book was entitled *My certain architectures*, that reminds us of Roussel’s book, the model for Rossi’s idea of the autobiography, and was to contain descriptions and drawings of some of his projects (fig. 8 and 9).

Although this book seems to have been conceived independently from the one on the analogous city that Rossi had already started, they were combined six months later, when he set up another notebook for a book entitled *Analytic architecture—analogous city*⁸⁰. Despite the change in the title, the notebook began with a reference to Roussel’s book and defined the notion of analogy as an “element of reference to already known forms”, therefore we can see two motives of analogy, the analogous city and analogous architecture, unified clearly. Rossi defines his writing style of “an analytic theory of architecture” as “independent from the conditions [that are] historical, functional, economical etc.”⁸¹, and the book also contains several drawings with descriptions (fig. 10, 11, 12 and 13). This suggests that the specific concerns about the historical city as the original context for the idea of the analogous city were gradually being altered by the intention to establish his own project theory. Nevertheless, this theory would not be abstract nor metaphysical but connected closely to his actual life as an architect.

Some of my projects (Alcuni dei miei progetti)

The suspension from domestic teaching activity in 1971, the arrival at the Zürich

Fig. 8 (l) Aldo Rossi, “1963—Centro Direzionale in Turin”.

Fig. 9 (r) Aldo Rossi, “1966—Residential Complex in the community of San Rocco in Monza”.

79 Rossi 1999: Book 11, 21/5/1972.

80 Rossi 1999: Book 14, 5/11/1972–31/12/1972.

81 Rossi 1999: Book 14, 31/12/1972.

Fig. 10 (l) Aldo Rossi, "Fig. 1 San Carbone, monument and city".

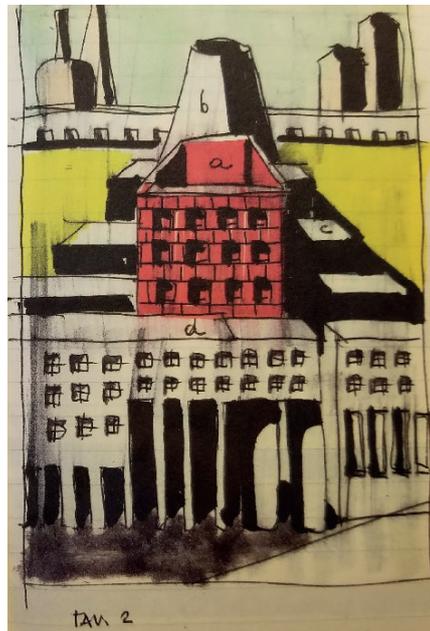
Fig. 11 (r) Aldo Rossi, Description of "Fig. 1".



TAV. 1.
 a - la statua architettonica del San Carbone di Arona ha un'analisi: ho altre volte tentato come macchina architettonica e presente in molti miei disegni a partire dal 1968. A parte le possibili implicazioni simboliche essa rappresenta soprattutto questa macchina architettonica che si manifesta nell'evidenza data alla sezione e nel contrasto tra l'aspetto costruttivo (muratura) della sezione e il rivestimento in lamiera nella forma

Fig. 12 (l) Aldo Rossi, "Fig. 2 City quarter".

Fig. 13 (r) Aldo Rossi, Description of "Fig. 2".



TAV. 2.
 Qui si tratta dell'unione di diverse architetture e si fa un tentativo di costituire una città; o una nuova architettura. La serietà degli anni di Modena acquista più chiaramente il senso di un quartiere con un preciso orientamento delle case. Questi edifici potrebbero essere la ripetizione dei corpi del Gallaratese. Anche l'edificio a precede

82 Aa.Vv., *La costruzione del territorio, uno studio sul Canton Ticino. Saggi di architettura*, Lugano/Milano: Fondazione Ticino Nostro/CLUP, 1986. This was originally published as two separate books in 1979.

school in 1972 and the international exhibition at the 15th Milan Triennial in 1973 represent Rossi's gradual escape from the boundaries of postwar Italy and his advance to the more global scene. From the second half of the 1970s, his activity began to extend outside of Europe, although during that time he had two experiences that, even though part of his emergence on the international stage, sent him back to the postwar Italian context. They represented the opportunity to test his urban theory based on the idea of the analogous city with specific urban surveys. One was the collaborative urban research on the region of Canton Ticino between Italy and Switzerland that he conducted at the Zürich school, and its result was published in 1986 as a book with the panel work of the analogous city used on its cover.⁸² Another was the first international sem-

inar of architecture at Santiago de Compostela in 1976, which under the direction of Rossi, set as its theme the historical district of the Spanish city. Here again, Rossi had to struggle with the significance of the urban historical parts that had led him to conceive the idea of the analogous city.⁸³

Around the same time as the seminar, Rossi completed the draft for the planned book described above, whose cover page says, “text for the translation in Spanish and in English” (Rossi undated),⁸⁴ with the introduction to its Spanish edition written in 1978⁸⁵. At this time, the book was given again a new title, *Some of my projects (Alcuni dei miei progetti)*, which remains similar to Roussel’s book. The draft, probably because of the preparation of the seminar in Spain, gets back to the problem of urban historical districts that already had been removed from his autobiographical draft at that time. Moreover, in comparison to the version of 1970, the table of contents was drastically changed as follows:

1. The analogous architecture
 2. The fabrication of the city
 3. The Housing
 4. The Monuments
 5. The project and the abandonment
- Description of some projects

As indicated in the table, the contents still include the urban theory based on *The Architecture of the City*, with the division into two urban components, monuments and residential housing, although the part of the project theory appeals more clearly to the idea of analogous architecture or autobiography as a project theory.

This text is defined as a presentation of “some of my projects inside a theoretical framework of my thoughts on architecture”, and this framework is considered as possible to “apply to a general vision of the significance of life”⁸⁶. Thus, it confirms Rossi’s urban and project theories conceived in the 1960s with reference to more recent projects. In other words, his life as an architect evidences his theory.

The first chapter has the almost same content as the namesake article already discussed here, even though it is more blurred on the boundary between the growth of the city and the transition of the architect’s life. These two processes center commonly in architecture as “the world where we are growing up and which we continue to construct”⁸⁷. Here again, with regard to architecture, the distinction of two dimensions is introduced: the “metaphysical” one, which represents the “absolute, constant and invariable”, and the “naturalistic”, which are equivalent to “object[s] of affection” and also found to be “unrepeatable”. At this point, fixed-ness and variability in the developmental process are reinterpreted as repeatability and onetime-ness.

On the other hand, the title of the second chapter, “the fabrication of the city” suggests a certain change in Rossi’s view on the urban elements. “Fab-

⁸³ This seminar was also published as Aa.Vv. *I Seminario Internazionale de Architettura. Progetto y ciudad Histórica*, Santiago de Compostela: C.O.A.G, 1976.

⁸⁴ To my knowledge, the only previous study that consults the draft is Gutiérrez’s one (Gutiérrez 2015). I found the document in Aldo Rossi Papers at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles, while the text that Gutiérrez found in the archive of Aldo Rossi at the National Museum of 21st Century Arts in Rome seems to be the same. The former is undated, but Gutiérrez reports that this draft was written around 1975 and that the book was planned to be published in several countries with different languages (Gutiérrez 2015: 102). Lucking also refers to Rossi’s planned book entitled “Alcuni dei miei progetti,” though without consulting the above draft but just his notebooks (Lucking 2019: 151).

⁸⁵ Rossi 1999: Book 22, 6/1978

⁸⁶ Rossi 1999: Book 22, 6/1978

⁸⁷ Rossi undated: 1.

88 Rossi 1982: 18.

rication” is the word to rephrase “the architecture of the city” with emphasis on “man’s construction as it continues over time”⁸⁸, in other words, on the long timespan through which the buildings in the city persist. This rephrasing means that Rossi began to see them with more focus on their actual lives in the city, including their constructions, (re)utilizations, abandonments and finally destructions, rather than on the previous, somewhat abstract framework of their contributions to the development of the city.

89 Rossi 1968b: 42.

From this viewpoint emerges as a central theme a notion that had attracted less attention. In the last chapter Rossi mentions the problem of historical districts, but the term ‘analogous city’ does not appear. Instead, he focuses on the phenomenon of “abandonment”. We have already seen this word used in the context of urban historical districts, which Rossi says we have to “abandon” to their destiny⁸⁹, though with no further explanation. By contrast, in *Some of my projects*, this phenomenon is discussed at length with a consideration of the “destined destruction” in the city, which he reinterpreted as the development of the city. The physical change accompanying urban growth has an inevitable destructive tendency and the war-related destruction only accelerated it. He refers to his experience on the survey in Canton Ticino, where he found many constructions left as they were and “returning to nature”. Based on these discussions, he claims that if we would like to intervene in such old poor cities, we have to do it with a clear intention to “deconstruct consciously” what is being abandoned⁹⁰. Rossi’s focus on the phenomenon of the abandonment of buildings in the city as a precondition for their destined destruction does not only reaffirm the criticism against the preservationism of urban historical districts, but also means a more profound investigation of the temporality or the *longue durée* of the city and the extension of his thought from the specific debate on historical districts in postwar Italy to the more general problem of the urban phenomenon. Finally, citing the American immunologist Ivan Roitt, he proposes an authentic urban “immunology” based on the principle of analogy as “the cognition of the strange, of ‘non self’ through memory”⁹¹. We can understand this ‘non self’ as not-yet-coming future urban projects.

90 Rossi undated: 40.

91 Rossi undated: 41ff.

His planned book, *Some of my projects*, shows the generalization of his idea of analogy independently from the postwar Italian context that seems to have been promoted by the extension of his activity at the international level. However, despite the fact that its draft of main texts and introduction had already been completed in 1978 at the latest, the book remained unpublished. The reason for this is not certain, although an opportunity to realize his project of autobiography came once again, which this time he grasped firmly.

Into the Postmodern with *A Scientific Autobiography*

At the turn of the 1970s, Rossi took a definitive step in his global expansion, that is, towards America. His first contacts with this new frontier were mediated by other critics, who introduced his works to a larger audience, such as Manfredo Tafuri and Rafael Moneo who published on the pages of the legendary Amer-

ican Postmodernist journal *Oppositions*⁹². Thereafter, Rossi himself began to develop his activity in America, teaching at several American universities and collaborating with The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies (IAUS).

What first attracted the American audience was once again his projects and drawings rather than his words, just as in Switzerland. The IAUS held two expositions focusing on Rossi's works in 1976 and 1979, which were later published as a book, *Aldo Rossi in America*, including his article "My Designs and Analogous Architecture"⁹³. In addition, he participated in the exhibition at The Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University held in 1980, where his drawings were put side by side with those of other Postmodernist architects, including Peter Eisenman, Mario Botta, Mario Gandelsonas and Oswald Mathias Ungers.⁹⁴ Thus, he was hailed as an architect or designer rather than as a theorist.

In Rossi's notebook during this period, he often described his impressions of America. What interests us above all is that in the American cities he found "the objects of affection" and explained them as what ultimately would become "only the lost, abandoned objects"⁹⁵. The phenomenon of abandonment, which emerged as a central theme in the context of the problem of urban historical districts and the analogous city, became associated with the idea of the object of affection, a key notion for his theory of analogous architecture, where it plays a role in putting historical architecture and the architect's works in the same dimension, namely considering both as repeatable references. The association between affection and abandonment not only verifies the unification of two analogical thoughts, but also shows Rossi's profound insight that the converting process requires a subtle coexistence of two opposite vectors of bringing near and moving away, because of the analogy in the development of the city's growth or the architect's life that has to move beyond fixed points. What brings this to Rossi's attention is the temporality of the American cities, namely, "the brevity that consumes" things in contrast to the long time span of persistence of the European cities and their buildings. This consumption overlapped with abandonment was regarded by Rossi as the essential characteristic of the American urban culture. Elsewhere in the notebook, in 1977, he points out that in New York, "the consumption is also one form of interest, of appropriation" while the Italian and European cities always maintain "a sense of moderation"⁹⁶. He concludes that in New York the "urban beauty" means not "fruition [...] of the citizen" but "a touristic beauty" represented by "post-cards". This American tendency to consume everything including "persons" would prove inevitable for Rossi himself and his products, too.

On the other hand, the American cities also gave some inspiration to Rossi as an architect. He found in them the "confirmation" of his urban theory presented in *The Architecture of the City*⁹⁷, and this country provided him with "a grand creative will and also again, a notable interest for architecture"⁹⁸. America welcomed Rossi as an architect and at the same time boosted his awareness of being an architect.

92 Tafuri 1974; Moneo 1976.

93 Rossi 1979.

94 This exhibition is reported in the issue of "Autonomous architecture" of *Harvard architecture review* in 1984 (Anker, Kessler and Clark 1984).

95 Rossi 1999: Book 19, 2/1976.

96 Rossi 1999: Book 21, 28/7/1977.

97 Rossi 1982: 13; [1981] 2009: 109.

98 Rossi [1981] 2009: 109–10.

99 On this collaboration, see Lucking 2019. On the other hand, the relationship in contents between *I quaderni azzurri*, the unpublished book on analogy and *A Scientific Autobiography* remains debatable. On this, See Poletti 2011; Gutiérrez 2015.

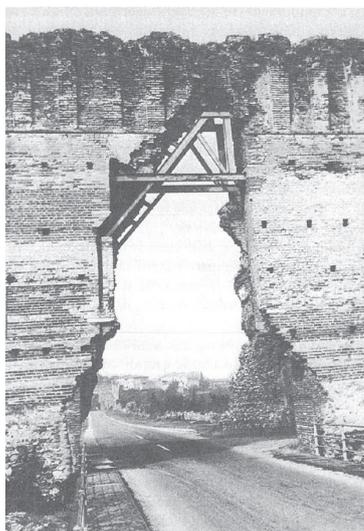


Fig. 14 Aldo Rossi, "Bridge over the Mincio river".

100 Rossi [1981] 2009: 42.

101 Rossi [1981] 2009: 42.

102 Rossi [1981] 2009: 83.

103 Rossi [1981] 2009: 83.

104 Rossi [1981] 2009: 117.

Thus was laid the base for Rossi's migration that led him to consider the possibility of publishing his autobiography in America, though it required a full transformation of its contents through the editorial process in collaboration with the American staff, including rewriting, translation etc.⁹⁹ After this collaboration, his English language book *A Scientific Autobiography* was published in 1981. The fact that in America this preceded the publication of his actual first book *The Architecture of the City*, whose English version saw the light of day only a year after, shows the interest of the American audience for his personality rather than his theoretical thought. *Autobiography* presents some definitive changes in its structure and elements compared with the draft for *Some of my projects*: first of all, *Autobiography* sees no clear articulations with chapter structure and therefore gives the impression of a patchwork of incoherent passages without any logicity or scientificity. However, on closer inspection there appears to be the persistence of some motives related to the notion of analogy, even though they cannot help being modified for their adoption to new Postmodern contexts.

In several parts of *Autobiography* there are arguments on analogy connected to the phenomenon of abandonment, although they are no longer associated with the problem of urban historical districts as their original context, and the abandonment is reinterpreted more profoundly than ever. Rossi illustrates this phenomenon with the example of the ruins of the Ponte Visconteo in Valeggio sul Mincio (fig. 14), which he saw as returning to "nature" and called "analogous architecture"¹⁰⁰. However, his following discussion does not insist on the necessity to consider the possibility of its physical destruction and disappearance but presents a completely new approach to the phenomenon of abandonment. He maintains that in the process of analogy the abandoned objects "have acquired the point of reference, and together, of conclusion"¹⁰¹. In other words, the analogy leads the abandoned objects to the end point, where they become references for future projects. Here the significance of the abandonment shifts from the inevitability of the destined destruction in the city against the conservatism of historical districts, to the process through which past projects shake off any affections or events originally associated with them and become references for other, future projects. The abandonment is also rephrased to "forget the architecture"¹⁰². The end point of a project where we forget represents a starting point for another project and the transformation of past projects into references causes the chronological succession to lose its sense; as he says, "it is difficult to conclude the preceding and the following"¹⁰³, so that historical architecture and past works of the architect are put in the same dimension.

The reinterpretation of analogy and abandonment means a more general change in the objective of Rossi's project of autobiography as a project theory. He explains that his research began with a purpose to "reestablish the discipline" and arrives at "the final result of dissolving or forgetting it"¹⁰⁴. As already shown, the original purpose of the autobiography resided in the construction of an architectural theory in the field of teaching, with an emphasis

on its transmissibility. *Autobiography* keeps the motive of transmission as an intention for “the nexuses between autobiographies”¹⁰⁵, while its focuses are moved “to conclude my architecture and my work”¹⁰⁶. Hence, *Autobiography* can be said to aim at forgetting Rossi’s own past projects and at transforming them to references for his future projects. At this point, his autobiography as a logical description of his own life as an architect got so involved in his life that the description and its object interact reciprocally.

105 Rossi [1981] 2009: 119.

106 Rossi [1981] 2009: 112.

The mutation of the autobiography’s function appears to have been triggered by the changes in the conditions of his activity as an architect. America welcomed Rossi not as a theorist or a teacher but as a talented architect who could produce attractive drawings and designs, while Rossi also took some creative stimulus from the American cities, where he would complete some projects. His migration led him to get more involved in practical activity, resulting in his autobiography project being transformed from a theoretical approach to the personality in architectural project into a practical instrument for his further projects.

Conclusion: Analogy between the city and the architect

The fusion of two distinctive motives, analogous city and analogous architecture, means a superposition between two temporalities, or two lives, of the city and the architect. What makes this possible, notwithstanding their difference in time span, is their common dualistic structure, consisting of fixed though repeatable elements and variable though one-time-only elements. The development of the city is promoted by the tension between monuments and residential housing, while the architect continues to make always different projects with references to the historical architecture or his past projects. In fact this structural similarity was suggested in the last passages of *The Architecture of the City*, where Rossi says, “the complicated structure of the city [...] is exactly the same as the rules that regulate the life and the destiny of each man”¹⁰⁷. His preface to the American edition of the book cites those passages and then clearly states that such an “overlapping” of the city’s and the architect’s life led him to the notion of analogy¹⁰⁸. The notion finally arrived in the book *A Scientific Autobiography*, which describes one architect’s career as if it were the development of one city. It could be interpreted that after leaving the Italian or European city, Rossi internalized his city, in other words, Rossi himself became the city.

107 Rossi [1966] 2011: 189.

108 Rossi 1982: 18.

By regarding *Autobiography* as the extension of Rossi’s argument on analogy it becomes possible to understand its “scientificity” or theoretical aspect. From the very beginning, Rossi’s autobiography project was conceived as a project theory in the field of teaching. If we read it from the viewpoint of Rossi’s design method, *Autobiography*’s scientificity becomes obscure because its explanations of each of Rossi’s projects are not rational or logical in themselves. Rossi’s autobiography means “a systematization of his own formation”¹⁰⁹, namely, a logical description of his life as an architect modeled after the growth of the city that his urban theory argues. Its scientificity resides

109 Rossi [1981] 2009: 120.

110 Rossi [1981] 2009: 73.

111 Rossi [1981] 2009: 104.

112 Rossi [1981] 2009: 109.

in this description of the architect's life, and based on this, we can understand better Rossi's affirmation, "the life itself is the exalted rationalism"¹¹⁰. *Autobiography* is not an "autobiography of the work"¹¹¹, an explanation of his projects that we can find only in the work itself. The object of its description is not the work but the architect's life. Still, this description presupposes a scientific and logical understanding of the structure of the latter, so that *Autobiography* is not "a personal autobiography"¹¹² that presents his private life behind his activity as an architect and turns off the scientific autobiography.

However, when *Autobiography* was first published in America, what was expected seemed to be "a personal autobiography", and the "person" of Rossi himself appeared to be exposed to the culture of "consumption" that he said is typical of the American cities. Here we can see two opposite views of the architect's life: the postwar Italian or European, which was formed in the cities persisting in the ideally long time span and centered on what is invariable and permanent in their lives, and the Postmodern American, based on the cities that consume everything with temporal brevity so that they have a tendency for the one-time-only and unrepeatable. Nonetheless, these two views seem complementary rather than exclusive, like two poles of the dualism of Rossi's analogy theory between the invariable and the variable. The success of his migration from postwar Italy to Postmodern America might be owed to the dialectic between these two views of life.

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