

POLYTECHNIC OF TORINO
FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE
Degree in Architecture
Honors theses

Experiences of argentinian architecture from the fourties to the seventies: the Tucumàn campus, the National Library, The Auditorium of the city of Buenos Aires

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The thesis analyzes the specifics of 3 projects elaborated in Argentina; the project for the campus of Tucumàn (1949-52), the projects presented at the *National Library* competition (1961-62), and the projects presented at the competition for the Auditorium of the City of Buenos Aires (1972).

Due to their relevance, this 3 projects allow to reconstruct an history of Argentinian architecture from the post second world war period to the beginning of the military dictatorship known as *Proceso de Reorganizaciòn Nacional* (1976-83). The 3 projects have in common their failure, meant as their non-realization, or, for the Library, a too prolonged chantier (30 years).

To every project two chapters are devoted: the first, a presentation, try to reconstruct the conditions under which the project had been elaborated and illustrates the features, the second, historiographic, analyzes the different positions of the Argentinian critic concerning the project. Ayarding the Library, I add a chapter that refers briefly the happenings of the construction site.



The student residence of the Tucumàn campus, at today

The project of the Campus of Tucumàn is the result of the rationalist and organicist contributions given by a heterogeneous group of Argentinian and Italian architects - among the seconds Rogers, Calcaprina, Tedeschi, Nervi e Piccinato-. This experience comes from the innovating element of a group of architects close to the group Austral and to the magazine *Tecnè*, that wanted to push, starting from 1939, national architecture beyond rational mannerism. The italian contribution comes in the post war period, by a group of architects close to the magazine *Metron*. This

heterogeneous group of architects elaborates the project for the Campus That was meant to be built on a hill close to the town of San miguel de Tucumàn. It's a proposal strongly ideological and it has an innovative methodology in the projectuality (thanks to this, the school became an international reference).

Started in 1949, the constructions stops in 1952, due to the economic recession and the political crisis that characterized the second Perón government.

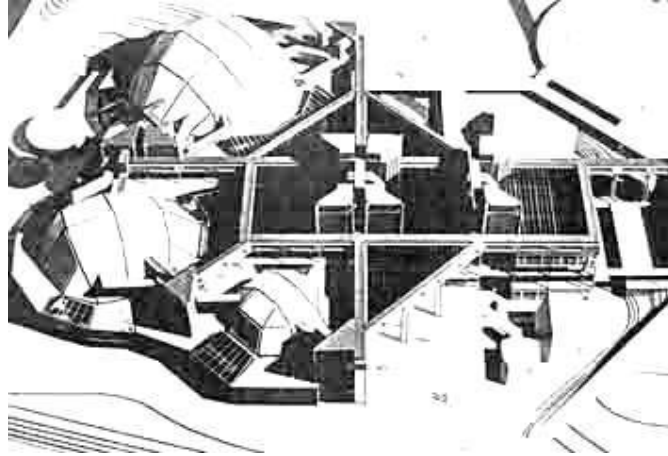


Francisco Bullrich, Clorindo Testa, Alicia Cazzaniga: National Library

The competition for the Library is opened under similar conditions: a big group of intellectuals was fighting for the development of a national architecture, against international functionalism. This claim is combined with the propaganda antiperonist intentions of the *desarrollista* government and with the promotion of the competition instrument brought about by the *Sociedad Central des Arquitectos*, in harmony with the new liberal model.

Really interesting is the character of Francisco Bullrich, winner of the competition together with Clorindo Testa and Alicia Cazzaniga, that is both a designer and a historian, publishing in 1963 a fundamental book: *La arquitectura argentina contemporanea*.

The competition gives prizes to the projects which are able to propose a new monumental representativity to the new political power, but after the initial enthusiasm, the chantier of the Library follows the political and economic situation of the country.



Baudizzone, Diaz, Erbin, Lestard, Varas:
Auditorium of the city of Buenos Aires, first prize: view of the model

The competition for the Auditorium is under the architectural circumstance of a more opened internationalism. The first character of the debate is technology whose possibilities were well illustrated by the Osaka exhibition in 1970.

Promoters of the competition and critics are all agree in trying to demonstrate that technologically complex buildings are feasible in Argentina. This utopia dies soon, showing the gap between the country and the industrialized world, that, after the golpe of 1976, becomes evident also for the social political context.

The final chapter leave the historical discipline to enter in the critic one reflecting to some contemporary experiences of Argentinian architecture in the globalization age.

The materials for this reflection were given by the *Biennale de Arquitectura de Buenos Aires*, that I could visit when I was staying in Buenos Aires. I analize mainly two big projects of urban transformation actually in construction in Buenos Aires: the transformation of the Abasto area and the enlarge of Puerto Madero.

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