

AR-657

Modern City and Contemporary City Facing the Transition

Mantziaras Panos, Ortelli Luca, Viganò Paola

Cursus	Sem.	Type
Architecture and Sciences of the City		Obl.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	1
Session	
Exam	Project report
Workload	30h
Hours	24
Courses	9
Exercises	15
Number of positions	20

Frequency

Only this year

Remark

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Summary

The Laboratory of Urbanism, Habitat Research Center EPFL and the Brailard Architectural Foundation, in the framework of The Eco-Century Project®, organise conjunctly the 4th Bernardo Secchi Working Seminar .

Content

The 90th anniversary of La Sarraz Declaration¹ would have gone unnoticed if Bernardo Secchi were still with us. Not because of nostalgia, and not to prolong a battle against an enemy to be definitively destroyed. Rather, it is an occasion for critical reflection on the distances, the inadequacies, the abuses, or on the contrary, the trajectories and continuities between the Modern City and the Contemporary City that remain open in a time of ecological, economic and social transition.

Following on the reflections dedicated in Première leçon d'urbanisme to the passage from Modern Architecture and Urbanism (their project, space, form, theory), to the stratification and the multiplicity of spaces in the Contemporary City, the 4th JBS will confront these two positions from the perspective of several new challenges of the present moment. In view of this foundational moment for the 20th century avant-gardes, the Working Seminar intends to focus on our own transition characterised what Bernardo Secchi ten years ago described as an “absence of clear and integral vision of the urban future, leading to incoherent choices regarding new design projects”: the context in which issues of ecological compatibility, sustainability and resilience oblige architects, planners and stakeholders to question anew the main principles of contemporary design.

Modernity, or Neuzzeit, encompasses in a single word the temporal framework between the Renaissance and the present, within which the Western cultures developed an unprecedented humanist project. This was often reimagined, notably in the 1920's, with the appearance of “modernism”, that artistic, cultural and social movement that has shaped the ways of life of urban dwellers up to present. Our standards, visions, tastes and preferences were defined at this historical turning point in ways that have been both exalted and decried. If architecture and planning took over this restarting phase in order to conceive the material framework corresponding to a new social vision, they also seized the opportunity to reconstruct themselves as disciplines. It is this very reconstruction that was marked by the creation of the Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne, whose 90th anniversary we celebrate this year.

A near-century has passed since that very significant moment for the shape of cities and territories. It is urgent today to revisit it for all that it means in terms of historical dynamics and life cycles, both individual and collective, as well in terms of views and criticism of a world in transition.

Note

The detailed program of the seminar will be published in the website (see below)

Keywords

Urbanism, design oriented knowledge, action-oriented design

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, the student must be able to:

- Elaborate critical approaches on innovation as a design prerequisite
- Integrate the resource factor in design and planning at different scales
- Understand the function of indivi and/or collective expectation in the design

Resources

Websites

- <http://www.brillard.ch>