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Exploring Radical Pedagogies: Utopia (H) As The Future In Architectural Education

Inês Nascimento

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Abstract:

For architects, mere spatial visualization has ceased to suffice. They are now mandated to formulate fresh narratives pertaining to pioneering modes of engagement within novel sociocultural contexts. In turn, Architectural education, responsible for training the future builders of the world, plays a significant role in response to these demands and in creating a more sustainable, equitable, and fair built environment. However, mismatches between existing educational structures and evolving needs signal the necessity for reevaluating teaching practices.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the proximity between the concepts *radical* and *utopia* to Architectural education led to pioneering pedagogical experiments, representing a significant innovation in the field. The importance of their revival has found resonance in recent theories, sowing the seeds of future pedagogical ecologies at a time when the future of pedagogical radicalism faces new challenges. Thus, and at a time when Architectural education faces a significant crisis, this article strives to (re)unite the concepts of radical and utopia, which have drifted apart from the academic realm, underscoring the necessity of their rooting in Architectural training and practice by understanding and validating their potential.

When delving into the topic of radical pedagogies in Architectural education, by superficially analysing the process behind their construction, a cohesive framework of criteria that underpin these initiatives can be inferred: their critical, revolutionary, reformist, and transgressive nature as well as the nearly symbiotic presence — varying in degrees of intensity and with rare exceptions — of utopia at their core. In this context, the present study reveals the definition of a qualitative “Utopian Lens” towards the production of a taxonomy, built from a comprehensive review of published case studies.

This reflection, with a specific focus on eagle-eye the presence of utopia at their core, highlights fundamental elements within the structure of these approaches, allowing a categorized reading of the corpus of analysis, showcasing recurring patterns within the scope of the ongoing research. This process provided a collection that shows that utopia can be conveyed through radical pedagogies as a (1) Drive, across various types of (2) Thought, taking on multiple (3) Forms while embracing a wide array of diverse yet complementary (4) Principles.

Keywords: Utopia; Utopian Imagination; Radical Pedagogies; Architectural Education; Analytical Lens.

Inês Nascimento is an architect, hailing from Lisbon, where she was born and raised. She completed her master's degree in Architecture at ISCTE-University Institute of Lisbon, culminating in a thesis exploring the interconnection of Utopia, Architecture and the city, more specifically Lisbon. Presently, Nascimento is a PhD candidate in the Doctoral Programme in Architecture of Contemporary Metropolitan Territories at ISCTE-IUL. She is as a researcher at DINÂMIA'CET and has participated as a member of the COST Action "European Middle Class Mass Housing". Nascimento's primary research centers on Architectural Education, primarily within the Portuguese context. Her focus delves into the potential of Radical Pedagogies and the implementation of Utopia as a method.

1. Crisis in Architectural Education : Proximity Between Radical and Utopia, a Possible Answer?

*"(...) yesterday's problems are still today's problems, with one significant difference: in the 1970s, there was hope, there was a sense of future (...)."*¹

Contemporary Academia is seeking for innovative students and architects capable of reshaping the future of the profession.² Yet, Architecture is clinged to traditional, static methods, mirroring market-driven practices while restricting exploration.³ Consequently, especially in an era marred by crises, Architecture loses critical relevance, emphasizing utopia as a method to assess the present and shape the future.⁴ Within this context, true reform requires upending conventional notions of Architecture, fostering an "utopian drive" that challenges teaching practices⁵ by empowering radical and utopian imagination in creating subversive spaces of collective study. The need for experimentation and innovation in Architectural education must be (re)considered,⁶ and radical pedagogies, dormant yet powerful, await a resurgence.⁷

During the 1960s and 1970s, Architectural education underwent a revolutionary shift where protest and revolt were a pedagogical tool, bridging the gap between academia and practice.⁸ This era saw the proximity between the concepts *radical* and *utopia* to Architectural education, sparking groundbreaking pedagogical experiments that marked a significant innovation in the field. However, similar to the fate of Architectural utopias, radical pedagogical experiences stagnated post-1970s, fading from both Architectural education and practice.⁹ Despite their apparent separation today, the reemergence of their proximity has proven itself valuable, suitable, and crucially necessary.

1. Pedro Bandeira and Nuno Faria, *Escola Do Porto : Lado B. 1968–1978 (Uma História Oral)*, ed. Nuno Faria, 1st ed. (Porto: A Oficina, CIPRL & Sistema Solar (Documenta), 2014), 193.

2. Kirill Jedenov and Filipe Afonso, "Crisis as the New Normal: Preparing Architecture Students for Uncertainty in Social, Economic and Ecological Dynamics.," *Charrette* 4, no. 1 (2017): 40–57.

3. Mark Côté, Richard Day, and Greig de Peuter, "Utopian Pedagogy: Creating Radical Alternatives in the Neoliberal Age 1.," *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 29, no. 4 (2007): 317–36, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714410701291129>; Jana Culek, "Utopia as a Critical Method.," *Archined*, 2020.

4. Culek.

5. Gadanho, "Back to Life, Back to Reality: The 'New Normal'".

6. Harriet Harriss and Daisy Froud, *Radical Pedagogies : Architectural Education And The British Tradition*, ed. Harriet Harriss and Daisy Froud, 1st ed. (Newcastle: RIBA Publishing, 2015).

7. Beatriz Colomina et al., "Radical Pedagogies in Architectural Education." *The Architectural Review – Thinkpiece.*, September 2012.

8. Beatriz Colomina et al., *Radical Pedagogies*, ed. Beatriz Colomina et al. (MIT Press, 2022).

9. Culek ; Colomina et al., "Radical Pedagogies in Architectural Education."

While debated in recent decades, utopia hasn't shed all its negative connotations. There's a cautious acceptance of utopian thinking, with some advocating for a balanced approach to avoid being labeled as "unrealistic" idealism.¹⁰ Conversely, others strongly leverage utopia's potential, seeing it as a powerful tool in Architectural practice and education, empowering students to break free from conventional thinking and innovate solutions for real-world issues.¹¹ Similarly, the concept of radical is reemerging as a valuable pedagogical tool,¹² and radical pedagogies of the 1960s and 1970s – blending sciences, arts, and humanities –, are being reconsidered as a remedy for contemporary challenges in Architectural education.¹³ This return serves as a reminder of the impact of bold pedagogy, provoking a call to action in today's more risk-averse educational settings.

This resurgence in educational discourse highlights that utopia, much like radical pedagogies, challenges the status quo, which is in direct need of an active challenge.¹⁴ Within radical pedagogies, utopia challenges the notion that Architecture is solely meant to serve capital by encouraging a more innovative and interdisciplinary approach in Architectural education, questioning established structures, and exploring new possibilities.¹⁵ Academia needs to rekindle its desire for utopias¹⁶ by raising students' awareness "so that the possibility of alternatives – beyond novel form making – can be imagined as real".¹⁷ Failing to do so might confine students to merely mirror the status quo.

Radical pedagogies underscore the need for a drastic overhaul of the education system and teaching practices, considering pedagogical measures and solutions as means for achieving this transformation.¹⁸ Although these radical approaches already aspire to challenge dominant

10. Darren Webb, "Where's the Vision? The Concept of Utopia in Contemporary Educational Theory," *Oxford Review of Education* 35, no. 6 (December 2009): 743–60, 744, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054980903371179>.

11. Nathaniel Coleman, "Utopic Pedagogies: Alternatives to Degenerate Architecture," *Utopian Studies* 23, no. 2 (2012): 314–54, <https://doi.org/10.5325/utopianstudies.23.2.0314>; Tim Waterman, "Making Meaning: Utopian Method for Minds, Bodies, and Media in Architectural Design," *Open Library of Humanities* 4, no. 1 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.16995/olh.109>; Selay Yurtkuran, Gözde Kirli, and Yavuz Taneli, "An Innovative Approach in Architectural Education: Designing a Utopia," *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* 89 (2013): 821–29, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.08.939>.

12. Danah Abdulla, "Radicalise Me," in *Modes of Criticism 4. Radical Pedagogy*, ed. Francisco Laranjo, 1st ed. (Porto: Onomatopée, 2019), 5–11.

13. Harriss and Froud; Colomina et al., *Radical Pedagogies*; Ayşe Zeynep Aydemir, "Experiments, Practices and Positions in Architectural Design Studio" (PhD, Istanbul Technical University, 2017).

14. Webb.

15. Coleman; Culek ; Coté, Day, and de Peuter.

16. Rogério Bianchi Araújo, "Os Estudos Sobre a Utopia Como Referência Para Os Estudos Sobre a Sociedade," in *Pensar o Futuro, Preparar a Mudança. Livro de Atas Do 1.º Encontro de Prospetiva*. (Évora: CICS. NOVA. UEVORA, 2017), 193.

17. Nathaniel Coleman, "Cities and Buildings: Educating Utopia," in *Concrete Utopias: An Education of Desire*, ed. Nathaniel Coleman and Amy Butt, vol. 1 (The Leverhulm Trust, 2017), 12.

18. Olga Fedotova and Elena Nikolaeva, "Radical Pedagogy: Theoretical Concept and/or Alternative Practice?," *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* 186 (2015): 785–89, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.04.010>.

paradigms as well as empower individuals by primarily emphasize interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary methodologies/research to tackle complex problems or challenges – which included spatial investigations, critical thinking, social, cultural, and political engagement¹⁹ –, the inclusion of utopian imagination introduces a visionary element to them, grounded in the present but future oriented, inspiring not only new modes of thinking but also acting.

However, not all pedagogies inherently embody utopia within their DNA, being distinguished by their (en)vision of the future. Pedagogies fueled by utopian imagination aim for societal transformations across socio-political, ideological, and economic dimensions, challenging norms and exploring possibilities.²⁰ Conversely, those lacking utopian imagination emphasize critical analysis within the current framework, focusing on present reconstruction rather than envisioning or idealizing.²¹ In this regard, and with utopia considered “a key concept within radical pedagogy”, albeit “elusive”²², this study aims to subjectively identify fundamental pedagogical and methodological values shared by these experiments within their coexistence with utopian imagination.

2. Utopia or Utopian Imagination, a Boundless Concept

“Radical utopianism confronts ‘realism’ with possibility. (...)

The role of the teaching of desire is to make change conceivable, while the role of educated hope is to believe that it is possible.”²³

2.1. Utopia (H)as Hope, Desire and Imagination

Utopia, or is it hope? Utopia presents a vision where potential alternative futures are seen as seeds of hope, deeply rooted in the present and capable of transforming reality through imagination and the potential for change.²⁴ They exist within imagination and the future, as an integral part of reality rather than outside it.²⁵ Their potential gains strength through planning and practical application, being empowered by realization which depends on “scientific and imaginative study”.²⁶ Thus, utopia isn’t an optimistic notion, but a critical and political one,

19. Aydemir.

20. Webb.

21. John Storey, *Radical Utopianism and Cultural Studies: On Refusing to Be Realistic*, 1st ed. (Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2019.; Routledge, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315201580>; Coté, Day, and de Peuter.

22. Webb.

23. Storey, *Radical Utopianism and Cultural Studies: On Refusing to Be Realistic*, 1–5.

24. Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope*, 3 Vols. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1986); David Harvey, *Spaces of Hope* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000); Craig A. Hammond, *Hope, Utopia and Creativity in Higher Education. Pedagogical Tactics for Alternative Futures*, *Education Review*, 1st ed., vol. 26 (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019).

25. Bloch.

26. Henri Lefebvre, *Le Droit à La Ville*, ed. Anthropos (Paris, 1968), 127.

as it involves analysis of the present, seeking to address fundamental societal problems by imagining and constructing possible alternatives.²⁷

Utopia has been associated with the education of desire, emphasizing that imagining a different society involves envisioning a different version of ourselves.²⁸ However, architects seem to have abandoned this idea, suggesting that "utopia must remain estranged from Architecture" until reconciled with desire.²⁹ Hence, within the realm of Architectural education, there must be a distinction between Architectural "vision" and "desire", utopian "program" and "impulse",³⁰ once the second one challenges traditional Architectural education, paving the way for a more socially conscious, context-sensitive, innovative, and interdisciplinary education delivery.

Reintroducing utopia into Architectural education as both a subject and an object can disrupt prevailing neoliberal discourse and empower Architecture with new capacities, activating architects' utopian aspirations while fostering connections that can bring transformative changes to the world.³¹ Nevertheless, this isn't a panacea for solving all problems as it doesn't provide ready-made solutions, but rather a space for reflection and dialogue about what is possible and desirable in Architecture. Therefore, anchoring utopia in a comprehensive understanding is crucial for its viability and relevance. Architects must acknowledge that utopia empowers them to shape the future and impact society through Architecture, responding to the profound social desire it embodies – the driving force behind utopia. Our profession should wholeheartedly embrace utopia as a powerful tool to build a fairer and significantly better future for all, without exceptions.

2.2. Utopia (H)as Project, Method and Pedagogy

Utopia is integral to the creative process in both Architectural training and the profession. It involves imagination, planning, and radical exploration, stirring awareness, prompting action, and fueling discussions. Realizing utopia's possibilities demands an Architectural framework, as both utopia and Architecture revolve around "how individuals and groups appropriate space".³² So, transitioning from Architecture as "utopia" to "utopian" offers a conceptual depiction of utopian ideals within a project rather than attempting their physical creation.³³ Thus, utopia becomes an Architectural expression encompassing institutional and ontological aspects, envisioning, and constructing a better world.³⁴

Moreover, while all Architecture speculates and aims for a better future, utopian projects go further by proposing potential futures through societal structural changes.³⁵ These multi-layered counter projects incorporate new technologies, societal shifts, and scientific discoveries to shape space and investigate on their consequences, merging "fact and fiction, past and future,

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the possible and the impossible".³⁶ They employ "the full creative potential of Architectural discipline" to envision novel prospects,³⁷ representing the closest contemporary Architecture can be to utopia as a method.³⁸

In the context of education, utopia takes on the role of a transformative methodological approach capable of shifting paradigms. This approach aims to create a safe space for students to explore their own horizons of possibility and question the prevailing "'there is no alternative' mindset".³⁹ When employed as so, it "takes the process of questioning, participation and dialogue as an end, not as a means".⁴⁰ Suitably, it can be effectively incorporated within the studio environment – which includes utilizing utopia as an opportunity of exploration to foster creative thinking skills – as well as a conceptualization by exploring their relationship with Architecture – examining their potential impact on Architectural practice and discourse.

At Uludağ University, Selay Yurtkurana, Gözde Kırılı, and Yavuz Taneli use utopias as educational resources to nurture creativity and multidimensional thinking, engaging students with the creation of utopian scenarios, enhancing collaborative and leadership skills, cultivating open-minded individuals.⁴¹ Likewise, at Newcastle University, Nathaniel Coleman's utopian pedagogy embraces the radical potential of utopian thought to challenge the architect's role in capitalist spatial practices by encouraging students to imagine alternatives beyond present limitations, fostering "radical, reformist, or utopian" rather than "conformist, conciliatory, or complicit" works.⁴²

3. Radical Pedagogy, a Bound-breaking Experiment

Jolene: "I'm gonna be a radical."

Beth: "Didn't know that was a career choice."

Jolene: "It will be."⁴³

Radical pedagogies provocatively challenged the established norms across various scales, persistently scrutinized educational institutions, probed presuppositions inherent to Architectural practices, and endeavoured to perturb Architecture's relationship with societal dynamics. These

36. Culek.

37. Culek.

38. Nathaniel Coleman, "Project Brief: Rhythmanalysis of Concrete Utopias," in *Concrete Utopias: An Education of Desire*, ed. Nathaniel Coleman and Amy Butt, vol. 1 (The Lerverhulm Trust, 2017), 84–87, 87.

39. Coleman, 344.

40. Webb, 753.

41. Yurtkuran, Kırılı, and Taneli, 821.

42. Coleman, 87.

43. Scott Frank, *The Queen's Gambit (Episode 7)* (United States: Netflix, 2020).

radical approaches collectively recognized that a novel *modus operandi* within the discipline necessitated the interrogation, destabilization, or even elimination of existing traditions.⁴⁴ In turn, urgent concerns precipitated radical disruptions within academic establishments, while forward-looking pedagogical initiatives engendered alternative paradigms for the discipline. Radical pedagogies, as experimental of engaged learning involving protest against inert ideas, provided a platform for students to cultivate a positive and unique way of thinking, designing, and living by methodologically employing a problem-posing approach, challenging concepts that may have become ingrained, practices that may have solidified, or ideas that may have been considered unquestionable.⁴⁵ Therefore, education positioned itself as a vehicle for subversive actions and the promotion of new alternative visions to be generated through progressive pedagogical initiatives.⁴⁶

These educational movements sought to change the institutions they were part of. The 1968 protests at Unité Pédagogique No 6 in Paris and the burning of Yale School of Art and Architecture in 1969 reflected dissatisfaction with traditional teaching methods. Similar movements occurred globally, like in Valparaíso, Chile, due to blurred lines between learning, work, and life. The Architectural community reconsidered teaching through events like the 1972 'The Universitas Project' symposium at MoMA. New approaches to education, such as Giancarlo De Carlo's decentralized university and Cedric Price's innovative academic designs, aimed to reshape learning environments, while experiments like Global Tools challenged established structures.

Amid this change, Architecture itself was questioned. Architects like the Texas Rangers and John Hejduk focused on the artistic language of Architecture. At the University of Essex, Joseph Rykwert and Dalibor Vesely explored new philosophical ideas, impacting the global Architectural community. Fresh methods, like linguistics, became tools for Architectural ideas, and sociology found its way into design studios, as seen in teachings by Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Charles Moore at Yale.

These groundbreaking approaches went beyond Architecture, affecting politics, economics, and technology. Buckminster Fuller's workshops addressed global issues, and institutions like the Architectural Association in London became hubs for innovation. The Eames introduced design programs in India for industrial growth. Technological advancements, like MIT's Architecture Machine Group experimenting with cybernetics, emerged. Institutions like the Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm combined various disciplines. Meanwhile, places like the College of

44. Colomina et al., "Radical Pedagogies in Architectural Education."

45. Sérgio Xavier, "Radical Education: A Pathway for New Utopias and Reimagining European Democracies.," in *Youth Partnership*, 2022, 20.

46. Colomina et al.

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Environmental Design at Berkeley empowered architects as societal influencers, aligning with Giancarlo De Carlo's view of Architectural education as a form of activism emphasizing ethics and socio-political awareness.

4. Utopia within Radical or Radical Within Utopia?

"The concept (utopia as radical) is built upon reformist ideas of making change from the roots up".⁴⁷

Contemporary utopianism is often seen as realistic, involving radical experimentation, and rooted in participatory processes. This radical experimentation, "idealistic in the dream (radical), but pragmatic in the action (in experimentation)", may be the reason why today's utopia is "committed to experimenting, in 'real time,' the emancipatory ideas it carries".⁴⁸ Thus, the current functioning of utopianism relies on a collective discussion process that leads to its experimentation, followed by an evaluation of its outcomes, generating needed knowledge for defining new and future horizons.⁴⁹

Similarly, radical pedagogical experiments opened the path to architects and educators explore the city as a learning resource and a transgressive place of discussion, while giving importance to imagination and experimentation with the empowering potential of education.⁵⁰ By reconnecting with the real world, architects and future architects faced their responsibility towards society, fostering innovative relations between architects, students, political entities, and the people, reshaping the understanding of the Architectural discipline until today.

In this context, radical pedagogy aligns with utopia by embracing experimentation and realistic methods to bring gradual changes within the current system. They comprise a dynamic and transformational process that blends visionary ambitions with tangible reforms to effect significant societal change, bridging idealism with pragmatic solutions. These transgressive bottom-up processes engage students' voices and experiences, mobilizing practical visions grounded in real-life situations, imagination, and desire to uncover hidden utopian aspirations. But although radical and utopian approaches are complementary in transforming society by working together within the existing structures/institutions to bring about change, they differ in their approach.

47. Coleman, 87.

48. Fátima Vieira, "Utopias Realistas Para a Construção Social Europeia," in *Utopias Europeias: O Poder Da Imaginação e Os Imperativos Do Futuro* (Porto: Serralves, 2021), 41–53, 46.

49. Vieira.

50. Isabelle Doucet, "Learning in the 'Real' World: Encounters with Radical Architectures (1960s–1970s)," *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 49, no. 1 (2017): 7–21, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220620.2017.1252735>.

Utopian realism accepts the present circumstances, whereas radical pedagogy critiques "neoliberal hegemony", relying on utopian ideals for opposition and possessing a well-defined understanding of what constitutes utopia: "a design, plan, image or model of a different way of living".⁵¹ Utopia inspires imagining a better future and offers guidelines for what could be possible, while reformist ideals within radical pedagogies offer the necessary space for these experiments to flourish, focusing on making incremental changes within the existing system by addressing immediate issues to move towards the utopian vision. Together, they create a dynamic and transformative process in Architectural education that can lead to meaningful societal change. This dynamic holds the potential for a pedagogy that is relevant to local and global communities, fostering spaces for resistance, transgression, dream, desire, experimentation, reconstruction, (r)evolution and, above all, hope.

5. Root of Utopia in Radical Pedagogies : Analytical Lens Towards a Taxonomic Reflection

*"Utopia must be considered experimentally, studying its implications and consequences in practice. That might come as a surprise."*⁵²

Giroux asserted that "radical pedagogy needs a vision — one that celebrates not what is but what could be, that looks beyond the immediate to the future and links struggle to a new set of human possibilities".⁵³ Perhaps, being radical today, within the context of contemporary Architectural practice and education, means going back to the roots of the experiences from the 60s and 70s. And at its root lies utopia.

To find utopia within radical pedagogical practices, and by qualitatively analysing the case studies featured in *Radical Pedagogies* (2022)⁵⁴, it proved fitting to separate the study according to two different lenses— Panoramic Lens and Utopian Lens (Fig.1) —, as it allows to gain an overview of their general features, and an isolated perspective of their utopian components. This reflection allowed a categorized reading of the corpus of analysis, showcasing recurring patterns shared by these radical pedagogical experiments within the coexistence of utopian imagination. Due to the focal theme of this publication's issue, this article will focus solely on the content and definition of the Utopian Lens.

51. Webb, 751.

52. Lefebvre, *Le Droit à La Ville*, 109–110.

53. Henry Giroux, *Theory and resistance in education* (London: Heinemann, 1983), 242, quoted in Darren Webb, *Where's the vision? The concept of utopia in contemporary educational theory* (Oxford: Taylor & Francis, Ltd, 2009), 753.

54. *Radical Pedagogies* is a multi-year collaborative research project led by Beatriz Colomina with a team of PhD students at the School of Architecture of Princeton University.

5.1. Utopian Lens

As described above, the underlying reflection within this study alerts to the importance and need of facing the potentiality of the utopia. In the context of this study, it turned imperative to grasp that utopia can be conveyed through radical pedagogies as a (1) Drive, across various types of (2) Thought, taking on multiple (3) Forms while embracing a wide array of diverse yet complementary (4) Principles.

The concept of utopia can manifest itself as an utopian (1) Drive, not only for its transformative power and ability to promote hope, empower desire or foster imagination through an Action or Movement, but also when faced as a project, method, or pedagogy – Project, Process or Programme.

Utopia can also be taught through four modes of (2) Thought, namely Prospective – which encourages imagination and action, where the future becomes an object of desire and gives meaning to the present –, Critical – when hypotheses undergo validation processes, requiring an analysis of their impartiality, substance, accuracy of data, relevance, and only then can the result assume the status of truth –, Holistic – with an awareness based on the systemic functioning of societies, testing hypotheses within this framework –, and Creative – by promoting the consideration of alternatives, testing multiple hypotheses, and thus escaping the mere replication of knowledge.⁵⁵ In the realm of education, the concept of Complex thought is also highly relevant, once it serves to fulfil the reconnection of knowledge by embracing various types of thinking.⁵⁶ In pedagogical contexts, this approach enhances Interdisciplinarity, Multidisciplinarity, Supradisciplinarity and Transdisciplinarity, being rooted in the categories of Complexity, Planetarity and Sustainability, demanding the practice of Transversality.⁵⁷

Utopia can also be manifested in various (3) Forms, displaying a versatile nature adaptable to pedagogical needs. These definitions provide distinct paths to stimulate students' creativity and critical thinking, emerging as Concrete – focusing on anticipatory notions, avoiding unrealistic ideals, promoting innovation, and collective efforts for tangible advancements in the present, aiming to surpass current limitations through human imagination –,⁵⁸ Realistic – grounded in practicality, striving for feasible, progressive changes within existing structures, devising realistic strategies for a fairer society, even if not perfect –,⁵⁹ Critical – which serves as a framework

55. Fátima Vieira, "The Four Modes of Thinking Framed by Utopian Discursivity. Or Why We Need Utopia.," in *Utopias: Worlds and Frontiers of the Imaginary* (London: CRC Press, 2016), 27–33.

56. Edgar Morin, *Introdução Ao Pensamento Complexo*, ed. Luis Gomes, 5th ed. (Editora Sulina, 2005).

57. Araújo.

58. Bloch.

59. Erik Olin Wright, "Guidelines for Envisioning Real Utopias," *Soundings* 36, no. 36 (2007): 26–39, <https://doi.org/10.3898/136266207820465778>.

capturing innovative aspects of utopian imagination, shaping utopian ideals, revealing traits of an envisioned society, and challenging conventional narratives to explore multiple plausible futures –,⁶⁰ Dialectical – offers radical analysis across space and time, recognizing flaws in current systems, advocating continuous questioning, and seeking alternatives addressing injustices –,⁶¹ Experimental – employs controlled imagination to create practical, innovative concepts, referencing real-world issues, avoiding empirical oversights, and encouraging a more creative approach to envision alternative futures –,⁶² and Pragmatic – promotes sustainability and harmonious human coexistence with the natural world, bridging utopian ideals with practical reality while balancing pragmatism and idealism.⁶³

Lastly, four clusters of main (4) Principles that embrace the coexistence of utopia within radical approaches where defined, including Vision – which encompasses approaches involving Idealization as a Conceptual Base, Futuristic Vision, Imaginative Exploration and Creative Expression, or Manifestos and Visionary Goals –, Responsibility – covering concerns that include the broad recognition of commitments, namely Historical and Cultural Care, as well as Critique, Reflection and Reform, or Viability and Pragmatism –, Consciousness – focusing on dynamics, exchanges and actions taken to achieve Social Transformation, Inclusion and Diversity, or Sustainability Exploration and Global Awareness –, and Connection – when addressing subjects on a multi-level dimension through Participation, Engagement and Empowerment for Action, Cross-Disciplinary Communication, Collaboration and Co-Creation, or Experimentation and Innovation.

5.2. SAAL Process : A Portuguese Case Study

The Local Mobile Support Service (SAAL) in Porto was a response to the Housing Crisis post the April 1974 Carnation Revolution, offering a new framework and a feasible solution involving various stakeholders. This utopian endeavor expanded into a radical pedagogical process, defining Architecture's role in politics, society, and the city. SAAL aligned public policy with funding, fostering social Architecture, engaging students as mediators between local organizations and Architecture. Dialogue among school, architects, and residents was crucial to impart knowledge and understanding of spatial function. SAAL's ideals reshaped ESBAP (School of Fine Arts of Porto) students led by Álvaro Siza Vieira, perceptions of architects' roles, encouraging collaboration and a real approach to Architectural practice, marking a pivotal moment where Portuguese Architecture met evolving social paradigms through Academic involvement.

60. Tom Moylan, *Demand the Impossible: Science Fiction and the Utopian Imagination* (Methuen, 1986).

61. Harvey, *Spaces of Hope*.

62. Lefebvre.

63. Davidya Kasperzyk, "Pragmatic Utopias: Planning With Nature," *Living Together. Sustainable Community Development* 29 (1991): 44; Bjarke Ingels, *BIG. Yes Is More: An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution*. TASCHEN GmbH, 2009., ed. Taschen, 2009.

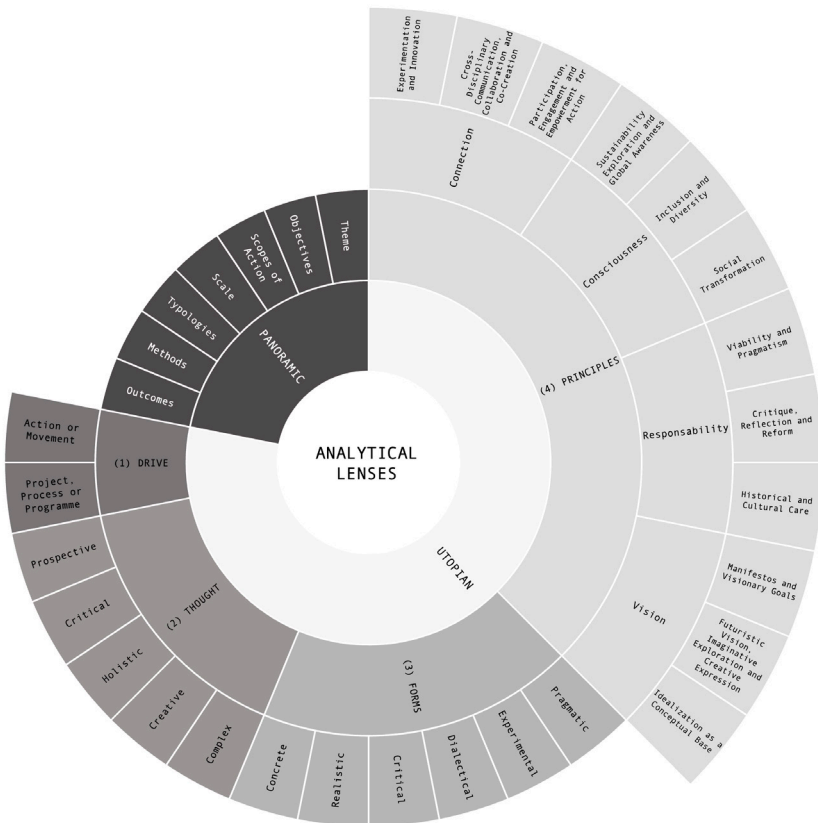


Fig. 1 Diagram of Analytical Lenses and Parameters (Source: Author).

6. Final Considerations: Empowering Oxymorons (H)as the Answer

*"I don't think you can teach Architecture. You can only inspire people."*⁶⁴

The cry for a profound transformation echoes loudly. In a time where the foundations of Architectural practice and education need re-evaluation to address contemporary challenges and raise new questions, radical pedagogies and utopia as a method emerge as a viable answer, since they aim to blur the frontiers between disciplines and expand the horizon of Architecture. However, architects, accustomed at translating conceptual ideas into tangible forms, "became frustrated by the near comic certainty that the closer utopian achievement seems, the more

64. Alain Elkann, "Zaha Hadid at the Royal Academy of Arts," Alain Elkann Interviews, February 25, 2015.



Fig. 2 Diagram of the SAAL case study through the Utopian Lens. (Source: Author).

certain it is that it will forever remain just out of reach".⁶⁵ However, utopia – an oxymoron by nature – surfaces emancipatory aspirations that require realization in the present,⁶⁶ while radical pedagogy, also an oxymoron, can be perceived as a transitional phase that needs renovation.⁶⁷ Much like utopia, radical pedagogies are always putting the horizon line one step further.

Concerning the presence of utopian imagination within radical pedagogical experiments (Fig.1 and Fig.2), this study highlights fundamental elements in the construction of these approaches, allowing a categorized reading of the corpus of analysis, showcasing recurring patterns within the scope of the ongoing research.

65. Coleman, "Modern Architecture and the Peculiar Adventure of Utopia.", 106.

66. Vieira, "Utopias Realistas Para a Construção Social Europeia."

67. Beatriz Colomina, "Towards a Radical Pedagogy Lecture" (Moscow: Strelka Institute for Media, Architecture and Design, September 12, 2014).

UTOPIA

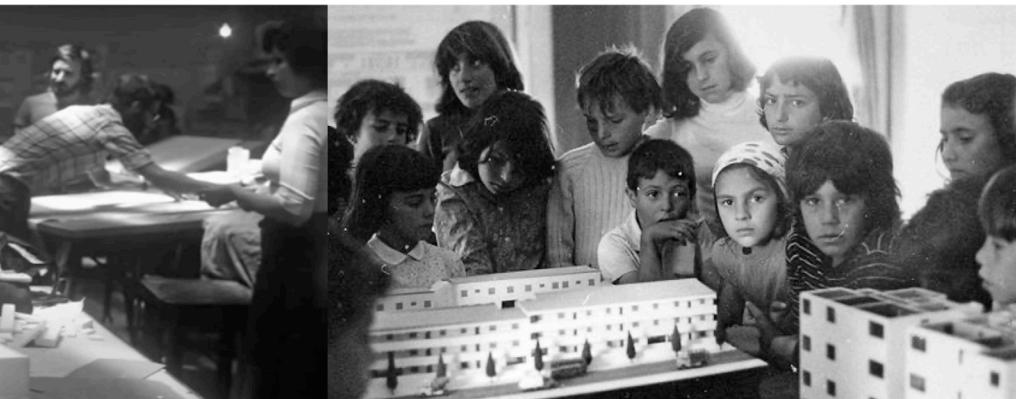


This process, which provided the collection of the overall parameters shared by relevant case studies, make it now possible to create a new pedagogical matrix that could embrace not just a sample of scattered elements, but its whole. This new structure can contemplate utopia as a (1) Drive – an Action or Movement as well as a Project, Process or Programme –, different types of (2) Thought – Prospective, Critical, Holistic, Creative and Complex –, multiple (3) Forms – embodying the potential of Concrete, Realistic, Critical, Dialectical, Experimental and Pragmatic Utopias –, and complementary (4) Principles – embracing the need of a Vision, Responsibility, Consciousness and Connection in the process. In another words, a new pedagogical body may have room to develop within Academia where utopia has its roots and radical power manifests itself.

In summary, this exploratory investigation provides an insight into how utopian thinking and radical pedagogies can bring about real change, contributing to the rekindling of the often-forgotten social and political promise made by architects and Architecture. Thus, the proximity between *radical* and *utopia* to Architectural education holds the potential to provide the much-needed answers that Academia seeks. By contemplating utopia, architects can expand the horizon of Architectural education and practice, unlocking their capacity to explore the potential it offers for conveying and contributing to improved ways of existence,⁶⁸ while the reformist nature of radical pedagogies can effectively navigate them through the intricacies of the present moment effectively.

68. Butt, 2.

Creation of models for project presentation to the community (Source: Alexandre Alves Costa Archive).



When I was born, over thirty years ago, utopia was declared "moribund".⁶⁹ Today, utopia still lies on the horizon, and the horizon beckons realization.⁷⁰ The urgent search for mechanisms to be adopted in Architectural education to respond to the current concerns arises as a possible incorporation of "realistic utopias" within "radical experiments" in the curriculum of Architectural courses, driven by the contemporary radical utopians need to "experience the future in the present".⁷¹

In conclusion, the practice of radical pedagogies carries the seed of utopia, nurturing the possibility of cultivating a new paradigm in Architectural education qualified to shape a new generation of architects capable of changing the world.

69. Webb, 743.

70. Lefebvre, 125.

71. Vieira, 46.