

A DEBATE
about RE-
SEARCH in
ARCHITEC-
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SIGN

DE- SIGN-DRIVEN RESEARCH

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Architectural research meets the general criteria of originality, significance, and rigour. It produces forms of output and discourse that are proper for disciplinary practice, making it discussable,

communicable, and useful to relevant audiences. It is validated through panels of experts who collectively cover the range of disciplinary competencies addressed by the work.

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REFLECT-
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ON RE-
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IN ARCHI-
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Alessandro Rocca

PREMISES
AND CHAL-
LENGES IN
A TWELVE
YEARS DOC-
TORAL STO-
RY

Gennaro Postiglione

THIS IS AR-
CHITECTURE

Luigi Cocchiarella

ARCHITEC-
TONICS – SO
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Giovanni Corbellini

SITTING ON
THE SHRINK
COUCH

Andrea Di Franco

WHAT TER-
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Pierluigi Salvadeo

THE ARCHI-
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SEARCHER

Ilaria Valente

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PREMISES AND CHALLENGES IN A TWELVE YEARS DOCTORAL STORY

Alessandro Rocca

AUID yearly Milestone in the atrium of the School of Architecture, Politecnico di Milano, October 2022.

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The Architectural Urban Interior Design (AUID) Ph.D. Program promotes research on architectural design, with studies and projects aiming at different scales, contexts, and finalities. Research activities are based on the critical analysis and development of design processes and techniques in dynamic relationships with the urgent questions related to the urban and rural environment, questions related to energy and comfort, cultural and social factors, processes of change in technology, social habits, and domestic lifestyle.

The Immediate Future

In the wake of the economic opportunities offered from 2021, by the Italian National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), the doctorate expanded and diversified its offer through the activation of numerous partnerships with private companies and public bodies. Twenty doctoral students are admitted to the 37th cycle, supported by scholarships from different sources: PNRR, CSC, Italian and foreign governments, and foreign universities; in the 38th cycle, the presence of PNRR grants doubles to six units, and overall, the number of doctoral students, those admitted and those currently being accepted, is again around twenty.

The doctorate, therefore, has been changing profoundly in recent years. After a long time, the program was essentially supported thanks to grants financed by the Italian government and provided by the Politecnico di Milano; today, the proportions among the grants available have entirely changed, with a very high presence (about 75% of the total) of PhD students financed by third parties, Italian and foreign, academic, public, and industrial. It is difficult to predict the lines of development in the long term; however, it is evident that in the short and medium term, the doctorate assumes a much greater dimension, in numerical words, and a more composite

nature where the non-academic presence acquires a new role and where the international network, both for resources and candidates, becomes a crucial component even if not the majority. The changes in the political framework, both internal and foreign, have had immediate, very significant, and positive repercussions on the composition, resources, and scientific physiognomy of the doctorate. From now on, in an overall framework dominated by uncertainty, the qualities, experiences, and skills we have acquired will support us in facing the challenges posed by the subsequent scenarios. If, indeed, the variables are too many to have a specific look at the future, however, we can count on the great assets of the ongoing partnerships, alliances, and cooperation with a diversity of subjects belonging to the most diverse parts of the social body located in many different places, mainly in Italy, Europe, Asia and South America. The last cycles saw an impressive growth of the candidates' number. They were 8 in the 33rd and 34th cycles; 20 in the 35th; 16 in the 36th, 17 in the 37th; 32 in the 38th, 28 in the 39th. In future, the AUID doctoral program seems oriented to continue its international, multidisciplinary track, pursuing multiple directions and aims. The first one is strengthening the reflection in the specific field of architectural design,

Relevance Originality Rigour

contained between the two scalar borders, the interiors and the urban, and questioning the mutual relationship between theory and practice. In this sense, the scenario of design-driven research helps open multiple horizons that are all strictly related to architectural design.

Architectural Design

Architectural design today finds itself in a transition phase in which very different cultures, objectives and methods coexist. On the one hand, a culture linked to the techniques of composition resists, which is the educational and identity basis of the generation that practices professorship today. A culture that appears essential, linked to the essential knowledge and skills for practising architectural design, but which at the same time finds it difficult to compete in the open field of scientifically ambitious research. One of the most effective ways of updating this culture is the ethnographic way, that is, approaching the themes of architecture through the analytical study of what

architects have done and do. The study of the exercise of the project remains a substantial factor of penetration into the architectural material, perhaps unparalleled, and today appears not to be sufficiently valorised. The recent past probably played an unfavourable role in the publishing market, which was populated by monographs of a traditional nature, concentrated on the figure of the author and the results of his work. Today, this attention to the author becomes of great importance when the analysis of the results, which remains necessary and central, is accompanied by the investigation of the processes, methods, modalities, and frictions accompanying the architect's work. Through this gaze, open to ethnography and the cultural and social impact of material conditions, from techniques to policies, the analysis of architecture develops a further degree of complexity and relevance that enriches the interest of the formal fact. The recent research by Atelier Bow-Wow, Christ & Gantenbein, Pier Vittorio Aureli, Pier Paolo Tamburelli, and others, makes clear the vitality and importance of an approach capable of carefully reading the project within an ample critical discourse.

In the contemporary scenario, topics related to interior design appear to be of great relevance and can offer less obvious interpretations compared

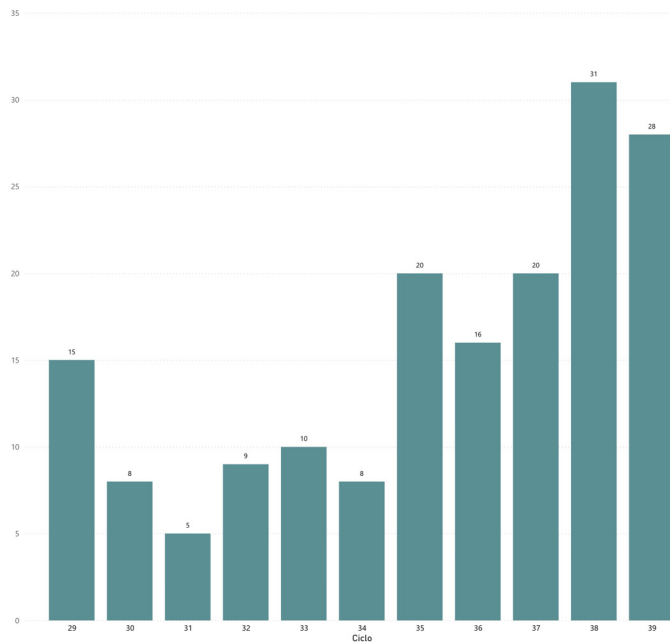
to major contemporary themes. Investigating domestic space, urban and rural living, and the characteristics of workplaces and social gatherings can lead to important results by moving on terrain less conditioned, compared to larger scales, by pre-established schemes. Whether and how to use these greater freedoms is not a simple task, and sometimes, the academic approach seems too rigid to deal with highly topical themes and issues. There is a need for a constant effort to renew and personalize research methods. Pre-established formulas appear less and less effective, while new techniques, such as AI, require us to move fundamental factors, such as originality, onto another terrain. If the Internet era has completely revolutionized access to information, dissemination and sharing tools, and the use of sources, artificial intelligence has already profoundly affected the ways of writing and drawing, introducing a further technological level that must be incorporated and calibrated within the research, without trying to obscure tools which, due to their effectiveness, have already become indispensable.

Landscape Architecture

Despite the increase in interest aroused in Italy by this field in recent decades, the scientific field linked to landscape continues to oscillate ambiguously

between different scales and codes, struggling to find its own precise and recognizable position. The inevitable overlaps with other disciplines, often more rooted and structured in the academic field, such as architecture and urban planning, make this path fraught with contaminations that are not always beneficial. Sometimes, multidisciplinary enriches the research tools but frequently produces an epistemological and instrumental weakness that does not favour research based on this cultural platform. A further, inevitable point is facing the contemporary ecological end energetic challenges that directly impact architecture, looking for a new balance between the sustainable mantra and the most profound nature of architectural history, theory, and practice. The ecological question, which covers a broad spectrum ranging from climate change to sustainability, tends to dominate the architectural discourse and pushes research towards quantitative approaches. It happens above all when subjects who tend to lack architectural culture enter the field of research and who, through the measurability of phenomena, think that the figure of the generalist architect is an outdated figure, destined to be replaced by scientists and specialist technicians capable of detecting winds, solar radiation and

Number of enrolled candidates from 29th to 39th cycle (2013-2023).



Design-Driven Research Architectural Theories Architecture & Society

temperatures and to bring pre-established technical schemes into the project. This design is destined to be defeated but, in the meantime, it fuels in some researchers the illusion of mastering and solving complex phenomena without deeply penetrating the knowledge necessary to imagine and design the form of architecture.

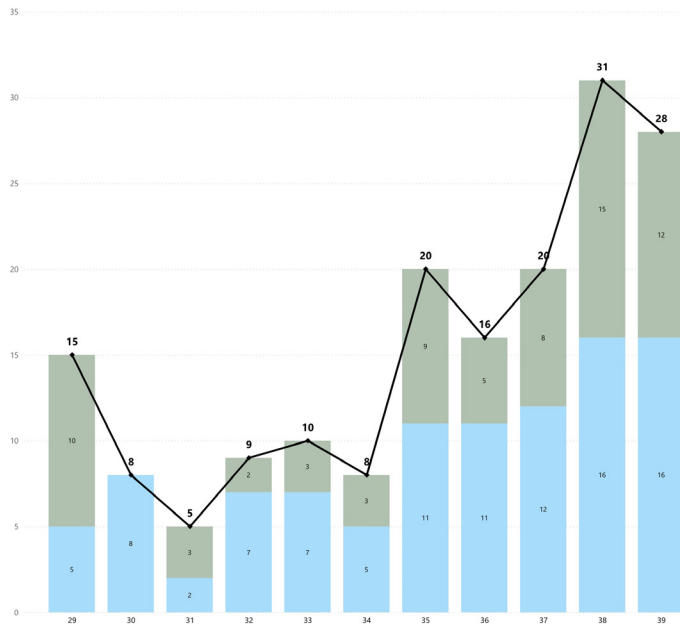
Courses, Seminars, and Workshops

In the twelve years of the program, there were many courses, mostly kept from Polimi professors, and it is difficult to report all of them here. In the first six years of the programs, 2013-18, the educational project was based on some stable pillars: a course on museography given by the program's head, Luca Basso Peressut, and a course on Contemporary Tendencies in Urban Studies, by Carlos Gabriel Garcia Vazquez (Sevilla University). Various professors led a series of design workshops: Guya Bertelli, Antonella Contin, Andrea Di Franco, Pierfranco Galliani, Michele Ugolini, and Fabrizio Zanni. Other

courses were held by professors Pier Federico Caliari, Simona Chiodo, Andrea Gritti, Imma Forino, Lorenzo Giacomini, Luca Molinari, Gianni Ottolini, Simona Pierini, Gennaro Postiglione, Raffaele Pugliese, Pierluigi Salvadeo, Gianni Scudo, and Ilaria Valente. The theory workshop "Critiche e pratiche del progetto architettonico contemporaneo" (2018), held by Alessandro Rocca with Marco Bovati and Andrea Gritti, was developed in cooperation with the doctoral program of Politecnico di Torino and based on an interdisciplinary cooperation with the ethnographer Albena Yaneva.

In the second phase of the program, 2019-2024, the courses were initially based on this plan: one course on research methods, one course on funded research, one research workshop preparing a research application, and one design workshop. In 2023, the plan changed, introducing a course on basic research methods by Alessandro Rocca, a course on publishing by Simona Pierini, and a course on architectural criticism by Pierre Alain Croset. Around these pivotal courses, there were other educational initiatives more oriented towards specific areas, like Architectural Theory (by Stamatina Kousidi), Representation of Architecture (by Luigi Cocchiarella), Writing on Architecture (by Luigi Spinelli), and Environmental Design (by

Gender balance from 29th to 39th cycle (2013-2023):
in light blue the female percent.



Internationalism Cooperation Networking

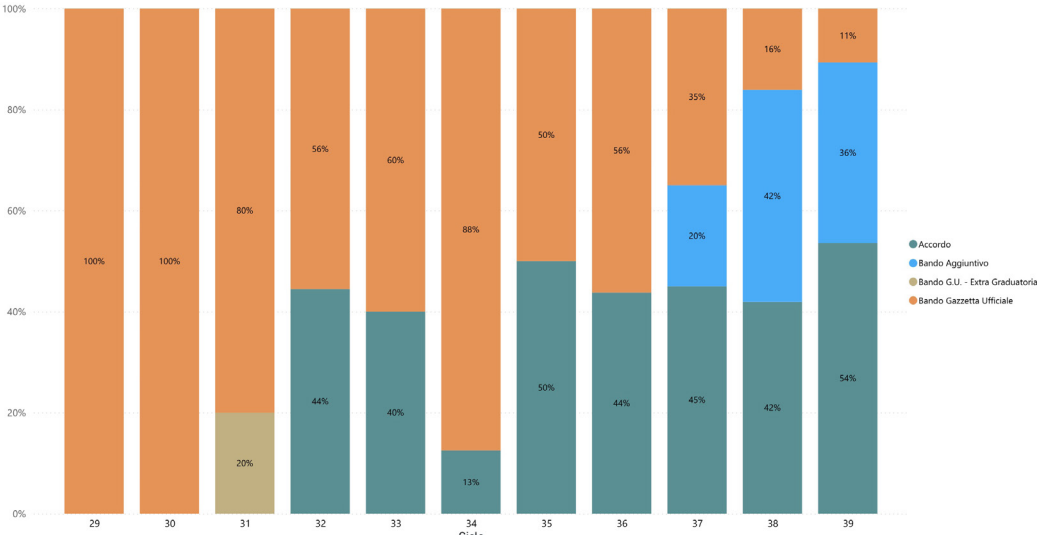
Luca Fabris). Other optional courses and workshops were activated to introduce specific areas of study. The design was largely present, being at the centre of some workshops. In 2020, Emilia Corradi guided a design workshop in the town of Sulmona; in 2021, a studio on recovering fragile urban areas. In the same year, Fabrizia Berlingieri and Giulia Setti held a workshop on “Design Processes for Transition”, focusing on the adaptive urban spaces. To the ordinary plan, the program added other international courses led by European professors like Jo Van den Berghe and Thierry Lagrange from KU Leuven and Andreas Lechner from TU Graz. In the following years, we count some initiatives that created a discontinuity, offering innovative methods, topics, venues, and outcomes. For example, we cite the workshops managed by Fabrizia Berlingieri in Prato (2023), José Garcia Fuentes in Tivoli (2023), Alessandro Rocca and Giulia Setti in Cres (2021), Gennaro Postiglione (2021) and Alessandro Rocca at the Venice

Biennale (2023), Jacopo Leveratto and Marco Navarra in Sicily (2023). This large number of activities *extra moenia* was another occasion to activate new relations with other Italian and foreign institutions and offered our candidates remarkable possibilities of experiencing new kinds of research and design approaches and networking.

The International Network

The AUID program started and developed in a decade when the development of an international attitude was the first strategic point for Politecnico di Milano. Polimi was expanding the educational offer in English, attracting thousands of international students, creating new positions for foreign professors, implementing the quantity and the quality of the international network, and signing hundreds of agreements for students’ exchange, double diplomas, and joint doctorates. This climate had a direct and robust effect on AUID in multiple ways. For example, the agreement between Polimi and the Chinese Scholarship Council pushed many Chinese students to apply for the AUID program; some are Polimi alums and others directly come from the best Chinese universities. Individual initiatives were taken to cooperate with foreign universities, professors and

Scholarship source from 29th to 39th cycle (2013-2023): in orange the governmental that, gradually, decrease their percent in favor of other funds.



Doctoral Histories EAAE Charter Italian PhD Cycles

candidates from other countries and continents, such as the Middle East and South America. Other effects originate from general agreements Polimi signed with other institutions, such as Tianjin, Ada (Uzbekistan), and Qatar Universities.

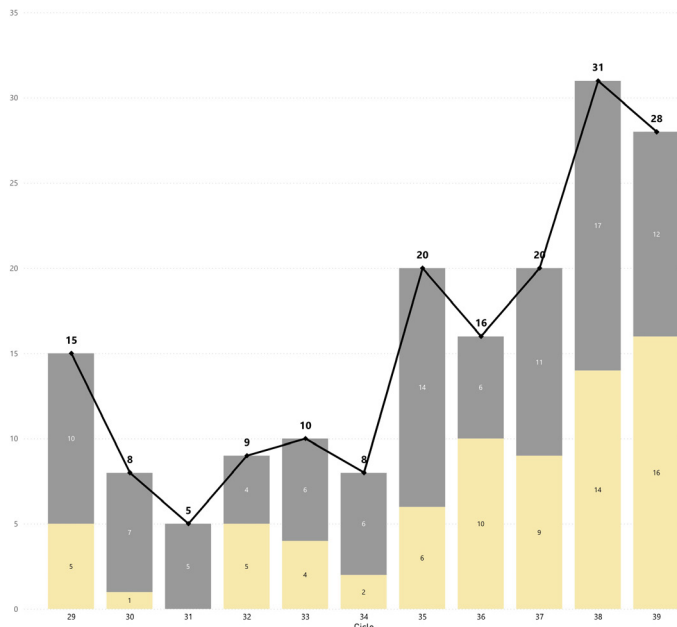
A particular impulse in international networking comes from the AUID’s participation in the Ca2re consortium, which links many top-level European universities in a calendar of semestral milestones focused on the students’ research. Since 2017, this cooperation has been a powerful trigger for activating double-degree tracks, joint supervisions, external reviews, and international juries. Thanks to Ca2re, AUID stands permanently in an open debate on the contents, methods, and aims of the research in architectural design. The ca2re discussion took form from the methodology of the design-driven research, an approach that AUID supported as the main guideline for all research; a methodology open to various interpretations but very

clear in considering the relationship with design an indispensable and fundamental component of our research. This cooperation was led by AUID professors Alessandro Rocca, Gennaro Postiglione, Fabrizia Berlingieri, and Jacopo Leveratto. They made it possible to have, from 2018 to 2022, seventy-seven presentations of AUID Candidates, who collected valuable comments and suggestions from the Ca2re panellists and met hundreds of doctoral candidates from other European universities.

The Program’s Historical Background

The AUID doctoral program takes as an essential reference the declaration reported in the EAAE Research Charter (2012): “Architectural research is an original investigation undertaken to generate knowledge, insights, and understanding based on competencies, methods, and tools proper to the discipline of architecture. It has its own knowledge base, mode, scope, tactics, and strategies.” Research by design is defined as “any kind of inquiry in which (...) the architectural design process forms the pathway through which new insights, knowledge, practices, or products come into being. It generates critical inquiry through design work.” The relationship with the design activity is a crucial point for the program. In particular, the program aims to

Candidates' citizenships from 29th to 39th cycle (2013-2023): in yellow the Italians, in grey the non-Italians.



Prehistory

investigate the potentiality of research by design and/or design-driven research (DDR).

Research by design is a broader concept that includes “practice-based research” and “practice-led research.” This concept is our starting point, which can lead mostly to applying two kinds of research methodologies: “research through practice” and “research about practice.” The design-driven Research approach has been intensely investigated together with the Ca2re Community for Artistic and Architectural Research (ca2re.eu/), which considers design the primary and leading environment for doctoral research in architecture.

The AUID program sprang up in 2013 due to a reorganization of some previous programs in resource optimization. Looking back at the beginning of the doctoral studies at Politecnico di Milano, we see that the first programs were activated with the VIII national cycle in 1992-93. The first, in architectural studies, was “Progettazione Architettonica e Urbana”

(Architectural and Urban Design), from 8th to 28th cycle, initially headed by Ernesto D’Alfonso, then by Ilaria Valente (2007-12) and Pierfranco Galliani (2013-15). The “Arredamento e Architettura degli Interni” (Furnishing and Architecture of Interiors) program, from the XIV to the XV cycles, was headed by Cesare Stevan and was later renamed “Architettura degli Interni e Allestimento” (Interiors and Exhibit Design). The program ‘Composizione Architettonica,’ head Daniele Vitale, is active from 2000 to 2012; the program ‘Architettura, Urbanistica, Conservazione dei Luoghi dell’Abitare e del Paesaggio’ (Architecture, Urban Planning, Preservation of Housing and Landscape) goes ahead from the 18th to the 28th cycle (2012-2013).

Except for “Conservazione dei Beni Architettonici” (Preservation of Architectural Heritage) head Luigia Binda, which started in XIV cycle and is still alive, under the guidance of Maria Cristina Giambruno, all the others terminated with the XXVIII cycle in 2012. Other related programs were “Tecnologia dell’architettura e dell’ambiente” (Technology of Architecture and Environment) headed by Guido Nardi, and “Innovazione Tecnica e Progettazione nell’architettura”, by Valerio Di Battista; both were actives in cycles XIV and XV.

Internationalism

The Polimi frame of the programs is revised in 2013-14, 29th cycle, when spring up “Progettazione architettonica, urbana e degli interni” (PAUI), in English: “Architectural Urban Interior Design” (AUID), and “Architettura Ingegneria delle Costruzioni e Ambiente Costruito / Architecture, Built Environment and Construction Engineering” (ABC). These programs and the Preservation program represent the Polimi Doctoral School’s architectural branch, which gathers twenty programs, including Urban Planning, Design, and all the main Engineering fields.

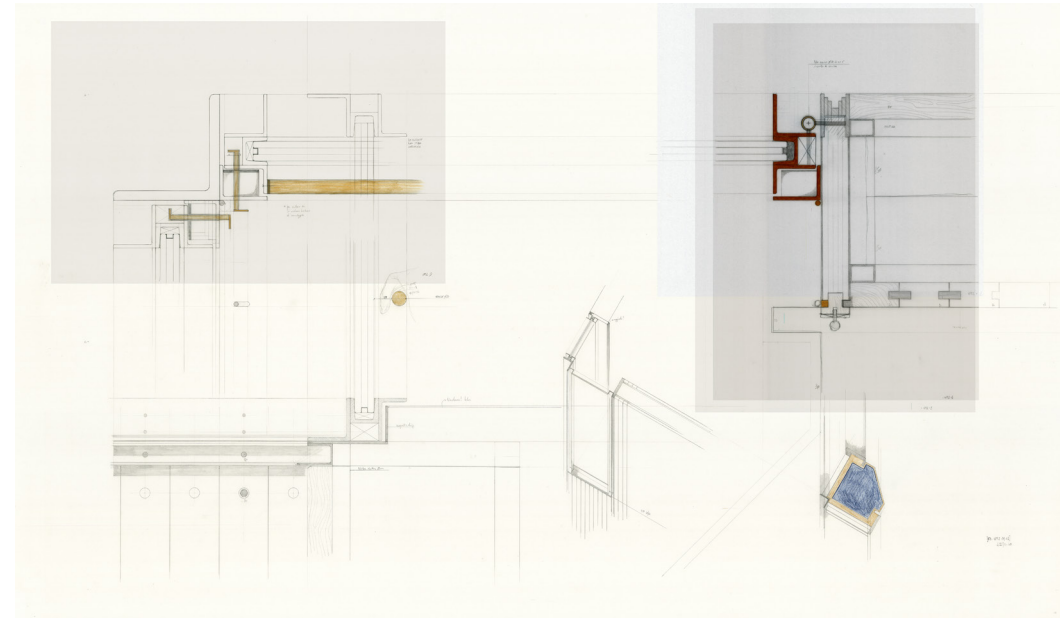
The PAUI/AUID program started under the guidance of Luca Basso Peressut, who was head for two three-year mandates until 2018. From 2019, Alessandro Rocca assumed the headship and is currently in charge with a second mandate until the end of 2024.

In its first cycle, the 29th, according to the calendar of the national system, the research topics indicated in the call were divided into four primary

lines: housing, buildings and public spaces, museography, and landscape and infrastructure. A comprehensive spectrum was based on the combination of theory and design. The program admits fifteen doctoral students, five foreign citizenships: Iranian (two), Lebanese, Saudi, and Algerian, supported by scholarships from the Italian government. An important presence that, as a first consequence, leads to the extensive adoption of the English language for seminars, meetings, and exams. This first foreign contingent was well qualified, and all five candidates obtained the title. It should be noted that, unfortunately, among these, only one doctoral graduate has maintained a relationship with the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies (DASTU) and the Polimi School of Architecture.

In the second cycle, the 30th, among the eight doctoral students we found only one foreigner, a candidate of Iranian nationality who had undertaken a double doctoral program with TU Munich and obtained the title in 2021. The dropouts were from two units. In the 31st cycle, there are five candidates, all with Italian citizenship, of which two have dropped out, one was excluded from the doctorate, and two obtained their degree in 2020. The first double doctorate, organised and supervised by Ilaria

Enrico Miglietta. 2024. *Re-reading Form through the Agency of the Joint. The Archaeological Attitude of Design Driven Research*. Supervisors Gennaro Postiglione, Politecnico di Milano, Johan Van Den Berghe, KU Leuven; co-supervisors Annalisa de Curtis, Politecnico di Milano, Thierry Lagrange, KU Leuven.



Cycles and Candidates

Valente, is registered in this cycle and is carried out with the Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

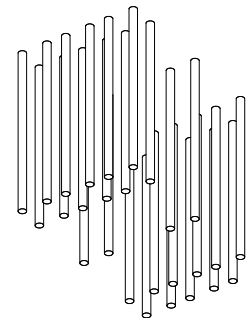
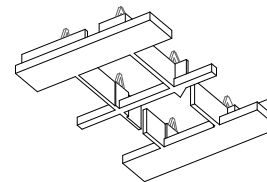
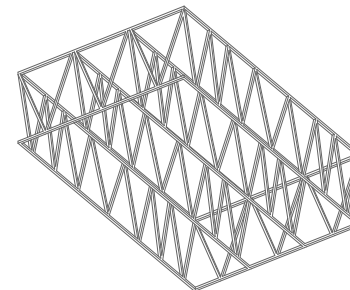
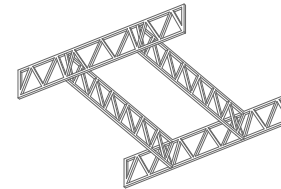
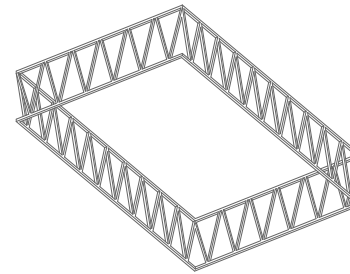
The 32nd cycle sees a larger class, with nine candidates, including five of non-Italian nationality. Among these, four fellows from the China Scholarship Council (CSC), one of which was subsequently excluded, and a Romanian candidate who obtained the title, with honours, in 2020. The 33rd cycle sees nine admitted candidates: three with CSC scholarships, an Iranian student, and an Italian student enrolled in a double doctorate in agreement with the University of Rennes2. The 34th cycle counts six doctoral students: five Italians and one Iranian national, supported by an interdisciplinary scholarship.

A double doctorate is activated with the University of Paris-Saclay, the departmental program “Territorial fragility” founds a scholarship, and there is a co-tutored candidate enrolled in the Ecole National d’Architecture et Urbanisme de Tunisie (Enaut).

The 35th cycle, the first under the

headship of Alessandro Rocca, sees the enrollment of twenty doctoral students, to which, for a few months, a visiting researcher affiliated with Dokuz Eylul University in Izmir is added. Among the doctoral students, there are three scholarships funded by the DASTU Department of Excellence “Territorial Fragility,” two CSC scholarships, a double doctorate in agreement with Université de Paris (promoted by Imma Forino), and three Executive contracts with Latin American universities managed by Andrea Gritti, in partnership with the Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja (Ecuador) and the Universidad Nacional de Colombia. There is also an industrial partnership with the company Branding Srl. Three PhD students are supported by ITN Marie Curie European projects: two by the Soloclim, led by Valentina Dessì, and one by Tack, led by Gennaro Postiglione.

The 36th cycle has sixteen PhD students, including ten non-Italians: seven CSC fellows, one Colombian, one Ghanaian, and one Pakistani. As the program becomes more and more international, the supervisors and the board are called upon to deal with distant thematic and geographical areas. The CSC partners prefer research synchronized with the strategic objectives of the Chinese government. This determination produces a selection among the



Gino Baldi, 2024. *Invisible form. Narratives of form and structure through foundations*. Supervisor: Carles Muro.

Candidates and Supervisors

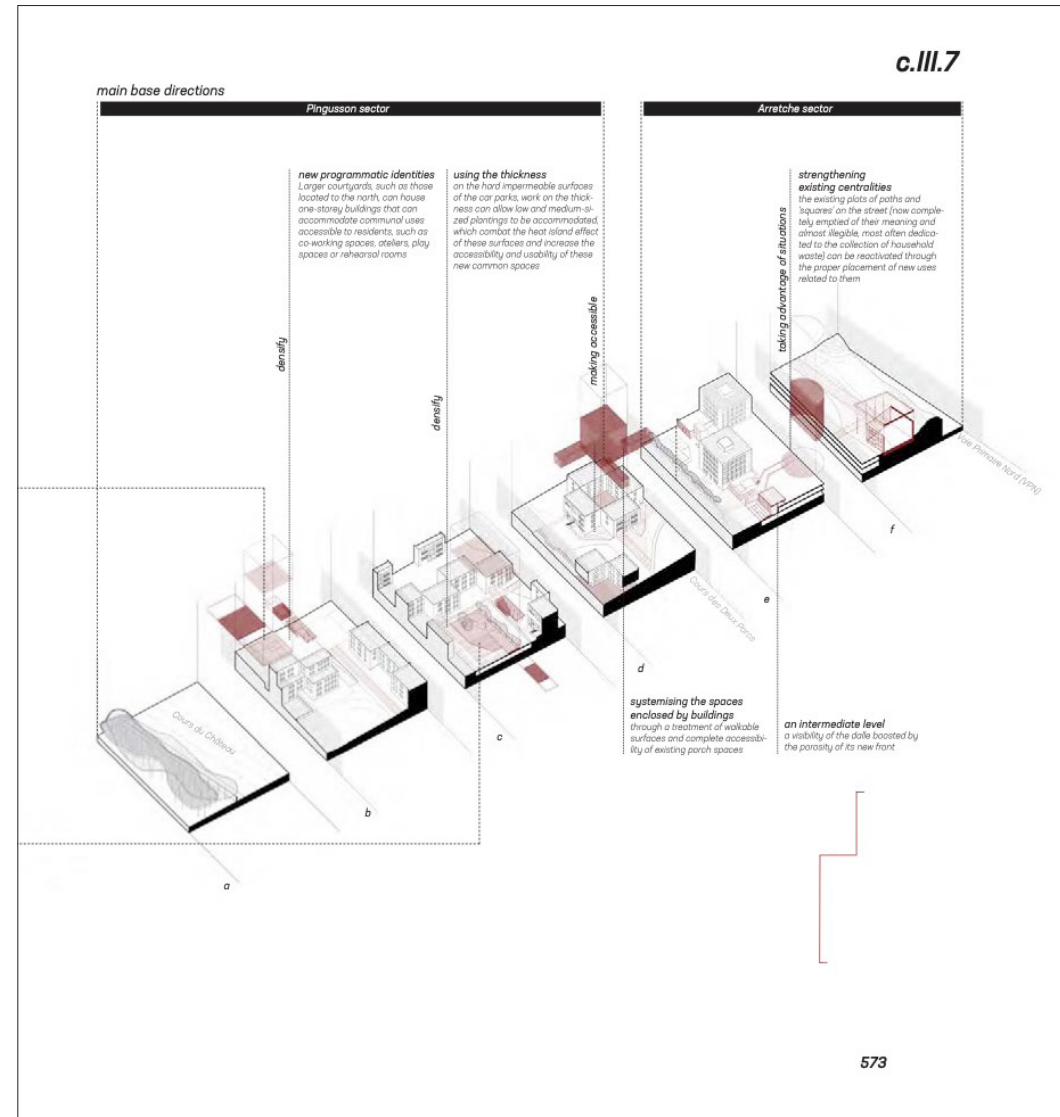
candidates, favouring attention to rural areas, vernacular architecture, and the recovery and regeneration processes of related buildings and settlements to rural culture and economy. Among the university scholarships, there are also two interdisciplinary proposals: “Urban regeneration through nature-based solutions for an environmental resiliency to the climate change,” proposed by Ilaria Valente and Monica Lavagna, and “Smart city: new tools for the sustainable development of the future city. Advanced technologies, environmental sustainability, and participatory processes”, by Pierluigi Salvadeo and Dario Zaninelli, in cooperation with the Doctoral Program of Electrical Engineering. The 37th cycle, which begins the activities in November 2022, welcomes seven candidates in the first phase and four other doctoral students selected through two additional calls generated by the National Resilience and Rebirth Plan funding. In the summer of 2021, the Italian government offered the

universities substantial funding for research projects related to the “Green” and “Innovation” themes. AUID obtains three additional calls dedicated to “Green” themes: “Engines of sustainable development: architectures for highway service areas,” proposed by Andrea Gritti; “Metropolitan farms: design-oriented research for sustainable agri-food systems,” by Filippo Orsini; “Formal/informal. green communitarian developments in the global south” by Camillo Magni; the third call, also of a governmental nature, refers to “Territorial Cohesion” and the research project proposed by Emilia Corradi is awarded the amount for an additional doctoral scholarship. The 38th cycle sees a large composition of different resources again, considering the National Resilience and Rebirth Plan, with six scholarships, three co-founded; the Chinese Council Scholarship, with nine potential candidates; an interdisciplinary scholarship, promoted by Sara Protasoni, in partnership with the Polimi doctoral program of Electrical Engineering.

The Research Fields: Architecture, Urban Design, Interior Design, Museography, and Landscape

The research framework is broad and composite; it mirrors the historical changes of recent years and the

Valerio Sorgini, 2024. *Stéréotomie urbaine. Methodological exploration of mass housing base*. Supervisor Ilaria Valente.



Research Fields Research Topics

coexistence of very diversified cultures and origins.

The first works concluded in 2017 are “Museum is / and territory. The widespread museum as a device for the cultural infrastructure of places. The case of the Libyan coast road” by Alessandro Raffa, supervisor Gian Luca Basso Peressut; “Undergrowth urbanism. Spontaneous practices in the contemporary city. Towards a methodology of analysis and intervention in the informal city” by Valentina Mion, supervisors Laura Montedoro and Jose María Ezquiaga (ETSAM); “Metaphors of performative-oriented architectures. Exhibitions, installations, interventions” by Ayman Kassem, supervisor Pierluigi Salvadeo; “Intra-structures. Urban densification scenarios for mobility in transition. The case of the A20 ring road of the city of Rotterdam” by Gianluca Ferriero, supervisors Luca Molinari and Dirk van den Heuvel (TU Delft); “From the Medina to the Metropol. New integrative approach for the sustainable revitalization of the historical center

in the metropolitan cities” by Hamza Benacer, rapporteur Antonella Contin; “The evolution of museum exhibition in Arabia. A qualitative study of the exhibition design and identity in Saudi Arabia” by Abeer Alsobahi, supervisors Gian Luca Basso Peressut and Oli Ali Hassem. In this first round, there is a strong interest in non-Italian situations, such as Rotterdam, Brazil, and Arabia, and the museographic line led by the coordinator, Basso Peressut, is denoted. In 2018 the thesis “Advancing toward water-sensitive cities in Iran. Public spaces as sustainable water management measures in Lahijan, Caspian climate zone, Iran ” by Masoumehsadat Mirsafay Moqadda, supervisor Alessandro Rogora, inaugurated a line of research on a technological basis and aimed at environmental sustainability issues; “Sprawlification: a new method to analyze periurban space” by Arian Heidari Afshari, supervisors Ilaria Valente and Richard Ingersoll, explores informal urbanism in developing countries; “Ruins of contemporaneity: concepts, strategies and design methodologies for the transformation of abandoned places” by Dario Giordanelli, supervisors Guya Bertelli and Carlos Garcia Vazquez, analyzes “new paradigms, linked to new materials and conditions, are the centre of the architecture project in the

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Claudia Mainardi, 2024. *Attitudes Beyond Style: Investigating the 21st Century Post-Exuberance Architecture across Biennials/Triennials and Everyday Practice*. Supervisors Gaia Caramellino, Gennaro Postiglione, Christoph Grafe.



Part III

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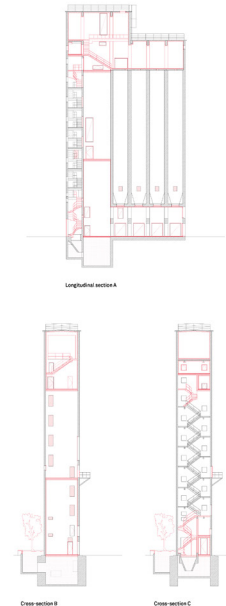


Figure B7a, B7b, B7c
Longitudinal and cross sections: Brandhuber +
Gang Gae, Nilsa van Rossum, Christoph Grafe,
San Geronimo Lohmberg, Berlin, 2010-2021.
Drawings: 0-1.

Part III

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Architecture Interiors Environment Landscape

current transition phase”; Re-inhabit modern utopias. History and design for the renovation of post-war large public housing estates “ by Michele Gerli, supervisor Pierfranco Galliani, investigates post-World War II European housing. Public space is the topic of “La Terza Città. The Right to the City: urban regeneration strategies through autonomous and creative practices of space production” by Simona Galateo, supervisor Luca Molinari.

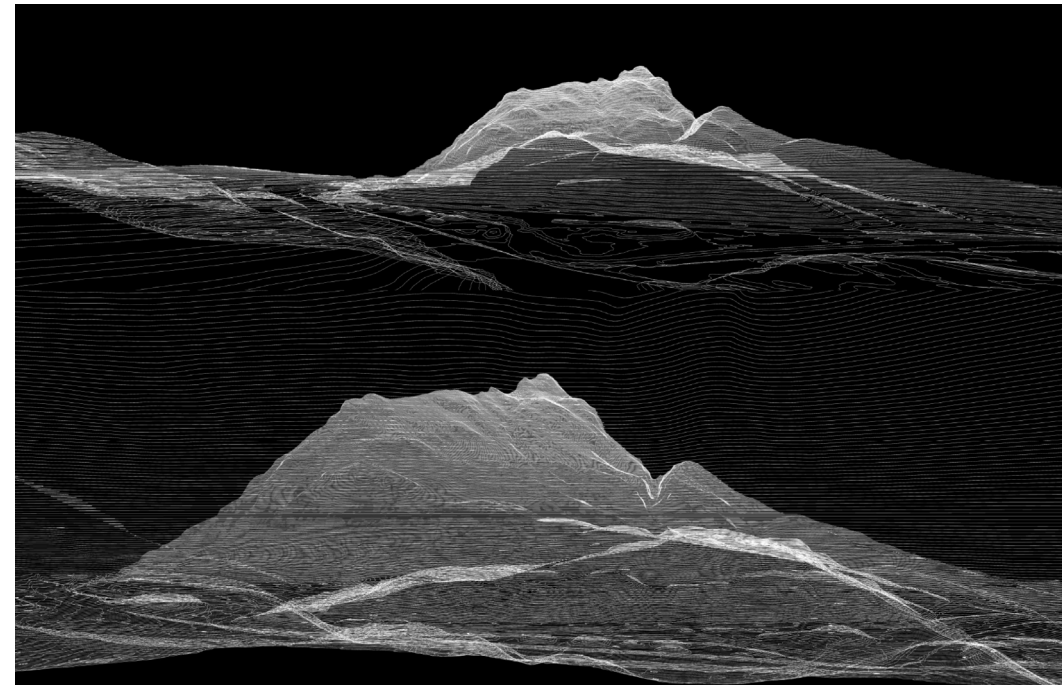
“Museums of narration, between words and projects. Communicative models for today’s exhibiting spaces” by Marcella Camponogara, supervisors Gian Luca Basso Peressut and Federico Bucci, continues the museographic research line.

A specific focus on metropolitan Mozambique informs a series of works: “Metropolitan frameworks of civic robustness. Mapping and designing for East African urbanism” by Alessandro Frigerio, supervisor Antonella Contin; “Spaces for primary education in cooperation projects.

Schools in developing countries: the case of Mozambique” by Luca Faverio, supervisor Michele Ugolini, Dwellings and Settlements in Pemba. A Typo-Morphological Field Study in a Changing Urban Environment” by Corinna Del Bianco, supervisors Michele Ugolini and Michael Turner.

The thesis “Devoid of Any Style. Problems and Perspectives of Architecture in the Age of Post-Consumption “ by Francesca Zanotto, supervisor Alessandro Rocca, addresses the paths of the architectural debate around sustainability issues. “The Architecture of Motorway: Infrastructures Between Maintenance and Preservation. The A22 and the Territory of Mantova “ by Claudia Zanda, supervisor Andrea Gritti, deals with the design of the motorway infrastructure, its impact on territories and the landscape; “Landscapes and Forms of Modification: The Contamination as a New Paradigm of the Contemporaneity” by Martina Sogni investigates the relationship between architectural design and the landscape dimension following the contamination processes and contradictions; “Architecture and Creative Transformation. Creative Urban Practices in London” by Giuliana Bonifati, supervisor Carlos Maria Vazquez (Universidad de Sevilla), explores the changes in public space in a

Chiara Pradel, 2022. *Monumental Ground. Infrastructures, Construction Sites, Landscape.* Supervisor Alessandro Rocca.



History Criticism Drawing

creative district of London.

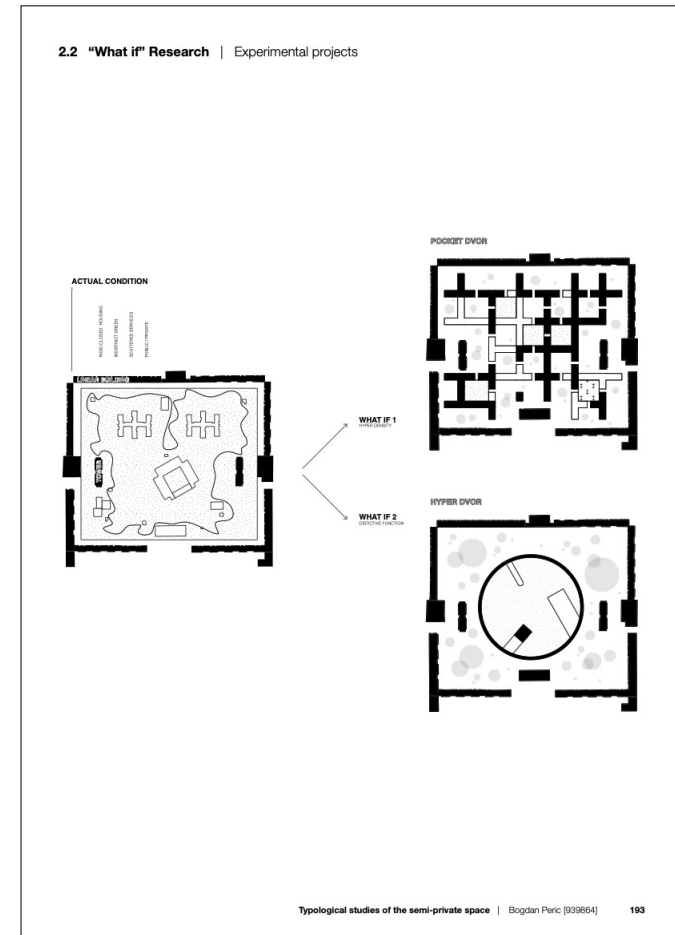
In 2019 no thesis was presented; in 2020, two Chinese theses were presented, which were out in cooperation with the professors at Shanghai Jiao Tong University: “Rural Revitalization in Chinese New Era. Design Challenges in a Village of Fujian Province” by Gerardo Semperbon, a double Polimi-SJTU doctorate, supervised by Ilaria Valente, Luca M. F. Fabris, Ma Wenjun, and Huang Jianyun; “The Shapes of Water: A Discourse around Heritage and Design for a Landscape Reactivation in the Fujian Province” by Francesca Berni, supervisors Ilaria Valente, Marco Bovati, and Ma Wenjun. Museological studies were focussed on in Maria Mikaelyan’s thesis: “Dissonant Memories in the Post-Soviet Space: Comparative Analysis of Newly Established Museums of Political Histories in the Post-Soviet Countries (1991-2016), supervised by Gian Luca Basso Peressut and Francesca Lanz. “Compositional Studies on Luigi Caccia Dominioni” by Veronica Ferrari,

supervisor Luigi Spinelli, is one of the few theses directly related to Milanese architectural culture; the theses “Opening a Lexicon of the New Social Spaces” by Madalina Roxana Ghibusi, supervisor Pierluigi Salvadeo, and “Publicness in Transition” by Jingwen Shan, supervisors Laura Montedoro and Marco Bovati, return to focus on public space.

In April 2021, Vazira Parisi obtained the title, a joint degree with the Technical University of Munich, with a thesis titled “Rethinking the Architecture of the Renewable-energy Power Plants: Potential Stations to Transform the Social Flows” supervisors Guya Bertelli and Sören Schöbel (TU München). Other theses include “The Lean City. Design, Experience, New Media for Millennials and Generation Z” by Federica Marchetti, supervisor Pierluigi Salvadeo; “Design the Possible. Experiencing Devices for the Modification of Marginal Contexts” by Gianfranco Orsenigo, supervisor Andrea Di Franco; “Virtual Experience in Augmented Exhibition” by Tan Shilong, supervisor Luigi Cocchiarella.

In 2022, Maryam Khatibi, with the thesis titled “Adequate Urban Housing: Case Studies of Novel Settlements of Housing Cooperatives in Zurich, Switzerland. Intermediate Spaces: Enablers of Social Connection”, supervisor Alessandro Rogora, obtained honours. In the same

Bogdan Peric, 2023. *Typological studies of the semi-private space. Design challenges of the Soviet Moscow dvor experiment.* Supervisors Alessandro Rocca, Camillo Magni, Yuri Grigoryan.



Double PhD Programs

session, two candidates supported by the Chinese Scholarship Council also obtained the title: Luyi Liu's thesis focused on the comparison between Chinese and European cultures in the field of representation of space and landscape: "The Accessible Frame. Research on ancient Chinese Landscape architecture", supervisor Luigi Cocchiarella; Xin Xu's thesis "The architecture of contemporary art museum in Shanghai: from the inside to the outside", supervisor Pierluigi Salvadeo, explored the architecture of the new exhibition spaces with a focus on the rapid recent mutations of the Chinese scenario.

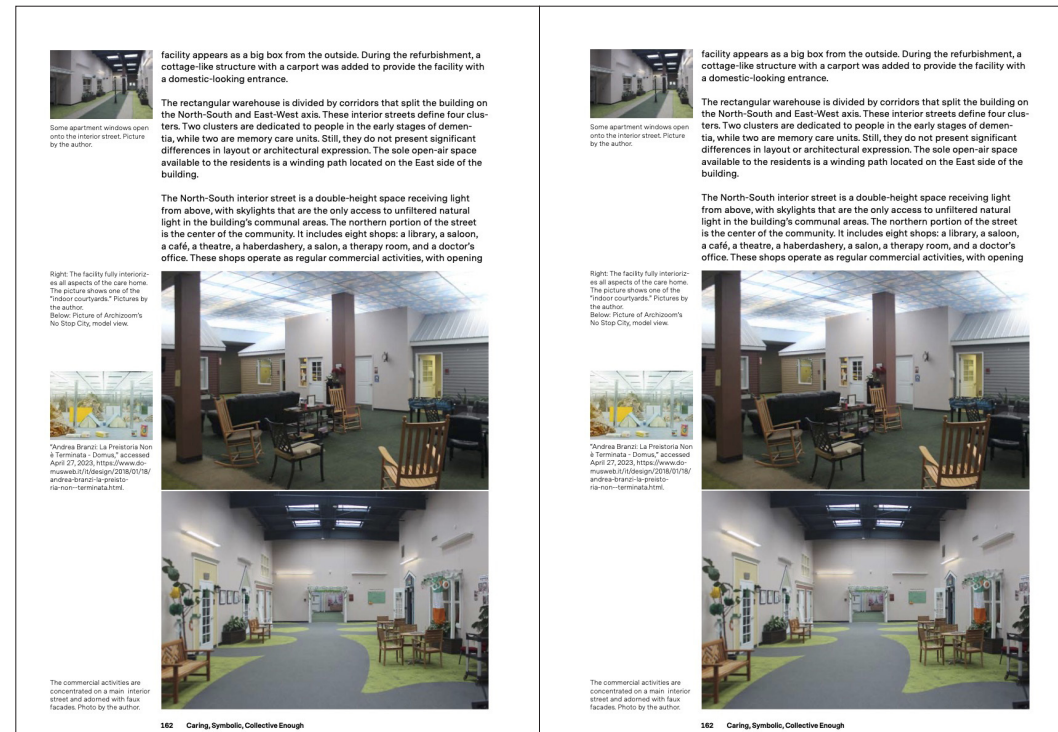
In the second session of 2022, Greta Allegretti graduated with the thesis "Architecture and UNESCO buffer zones. The architectural project as a tool for the archaeological sites in fragile territories. From safeguard planning to the development of design models for the enhancement of heritage ", supervisor Pier Federico Caliarì (Politecnico di Torino); Chiara Pradel graduated

with the thesis "Monumental Ground. Infrastructures, Construction Sites, Landscape", supervisor Alessandro Rocca.

In 2023, there were eight graduates, two with double doctorates: Carola D'Ambros with the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Paris Versailles studied the Milanese architecture of interiors between 1948 and 1972, supervisors Imma Forino and Annalisa Viati Navone; Alessandro Benetti researched, with the Ecole d'Architecture de Rennes2, on the coastal post-war developments in France and Italy, supervisors Marco Biraghi and Hélène Jannière. Bogdan Peric studied the Moscow soviet courtyards, under the guidance of Alessandro Rocca, Camillo Magni, and Yuri Grigorian; Alberto Petracchin produced research on the Ark archetype, supervised by Sara Marini (IUAV) and Alessandro Rocca; Wenying Song, supervised by Ilaria Valente, studied the urban form of the city of Quanzhou; Qian Zhang researched on urban microclimate, driven by Alessandro Rogora; Beatrice Balducci studied the safe spaces for extraordinary events, under the supervision of Alessandro Rocca.

In 2024, Enrico Miglietta, a double doctor from Polimi and Ku Leuven supervised by Gennaro Postiglione, Annalisa de Curtis, Johan Van Den Berghe, and Thierry Lagrange, presented

Alberto Geuna, 2024. *Caring, Symbolic, Collective Enough. Reading the Dementia Village as a Non-healing Utopia*. Supervisor Pierre Alain Crosset.



Research Tracks and Shifts

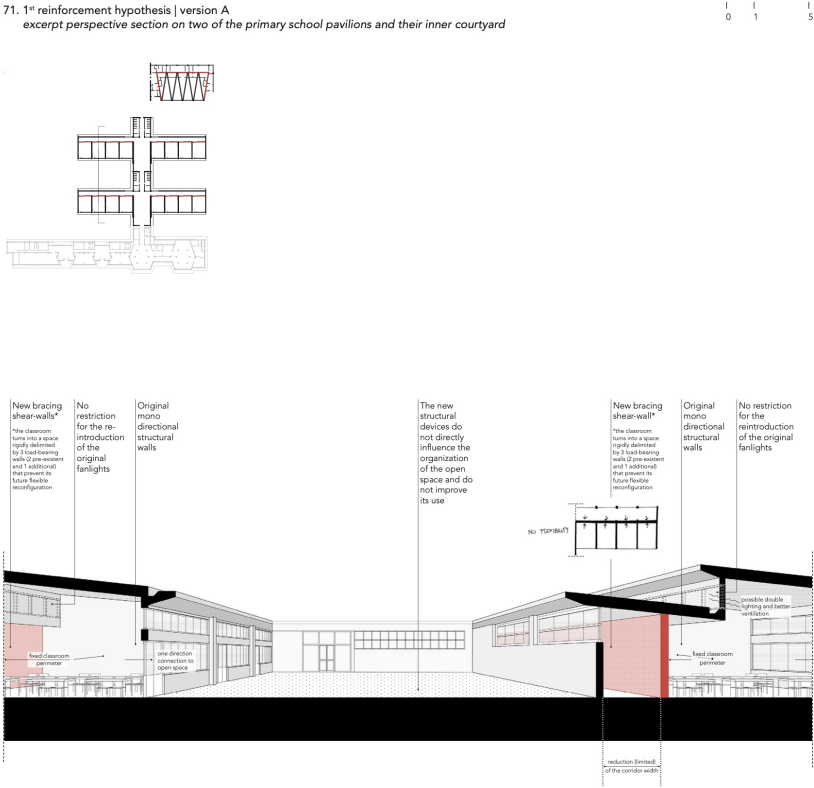
his research in an unusual venue at the University of Valencia, Spain, on April 11th. A good number of other candidates are now ready to defend before the end of the year 2024: Gino Baldi, Pietro Brunazzi, Amath Diatta, Alberto Geuna, Sara Ghirardini, Chiara Lionello, Claudia Mainardi, Adrian Moredia, Valerio Sorgini, and Greta Taronna.

The Topics’ Shifts

Considering the chronology of the AUID program, it is evident that many points of interest varied and intruded into different fields. The oldest theses are primarily directed towards the scalar extremes of the discipline, the interiors (Raffa 2017, Kassem 2017, Alsobahi 2017, Camponogara 2018) and the urban and territorial studies (Mion 2017, Ferriero 2017, Benacer 2017, Moqaddam 2018, Afshari 2018, Giordanelli 2018, Galateo 2018, Frigerio 2018, Zanda 2018, Bonifati 2018). The urban studies stand as a constant reference for the works of Federica Marchetti on the “Lean City” (2021), Greta Allegretti’s study

on the “Unesco Buffer Zones” (2022), a topic studied even by Sara Ghirardini’s “UNESCO tools to tackle heritage-related territorial fragility” (2024). Alessandro Benetti and Wenying Song developed historical studies respectively on the coastal urbanization in France and Italy (2023) and the “Quanzhou Urban Morphology” (2023); Chiara Lionello explores the urban condition through “The Interior Attitude of Contemporary Space” (2024). Urban interiority is also the topic of Amath Diatta’s “Underground Hubs” (2024). The studies on interior design are the focus of Xu Xin’s “Art Museums in Shanghai” (2022), and the Carola D’Ambros historical investigation on the “Interiors and Synthèse des Arts” (2023). Chiara Pradel’s “Monumental Ground” (2022) introduced, for the first time, a point of view that is based explicitly on landscape architecture, also adopted by Silvia Mundula in her ongoing research on “Contemporary Planting Design” (2024). In 2018, the graduates’ research focused on architectural topics: Michele Gerli studied the “Design for the renovation of post-war large public housing estates”; Luca Faverio investigated the design for the new schools in Mozambique; Francesca Zanotto studied “Architecture in the age of the post-consumption”; Martina Sogni reflected on “The

Greta Maria Taronna, 2024. *Re-active schools. Methods and design actions for the school heritage within seismic Italy.* Supervisor Ilaria Valente.

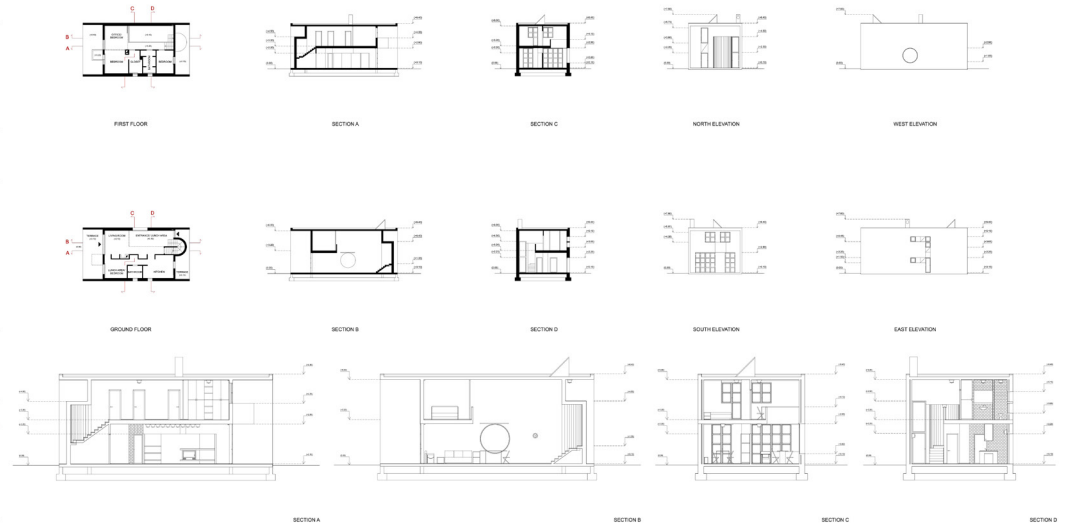
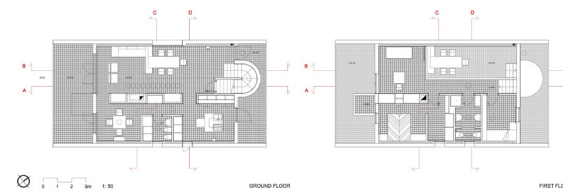
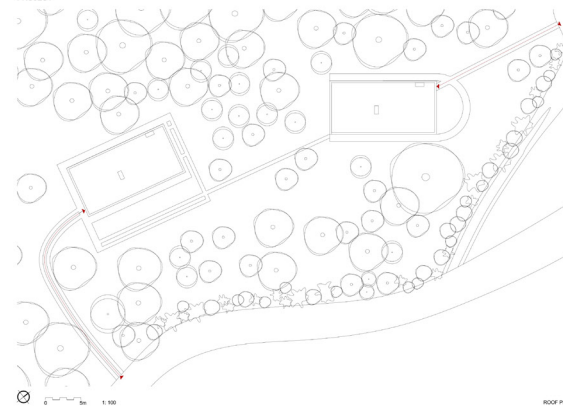


The Disciplinary Asset New Autonomies New Paradigms

contamination as a new paradigm of the contemporaneity”. Philological is the approach of Veronica Ferrari’s work on the architecture of the Milanese architect Luigi Caccia Dominioni (2020). Some theses overlap design and representational questions, like Shilong Tan’s study on “Virtual experience in augmented exhibition” (2021), and Luyi Liu’s research on “Ancient Chinese Landscape Architecture” (2022). Gianfranco Orsenigo follows the “research by design” method, studying some “devices for the modification of marginal contexts” (2021). Later, Maryam Kathibi graduated with a study on the “Housing Cooperatives in Zurich” (2022). Architecture remains at the focus in Alberto Petracchin’s “Ark Architecture” (2023), and Bogdan Peric’s “Semi-private Spaces in Moscow” (2023). A deep investigation of archival materials was conducted by Enrico Miglietta, who led extensive research “by drawing” on some projects by Carlo Scarpa, Sigurd Lewerentz, and Juliaan Lampens (2024).

Carola D’Ambros, 2023. *Interiors and “synthèse des arts”: a Critical Investigation Methodology. Architects of Milanese culture, between French and Italian artistic and architectural Influences (1948-1972)*. Supervisors Immacolata Concezione Forino, Annalisa Viati Navone.

3.1. ALBERTO SALVATI-AMBROGIO TRESOLDI • VILLE GEMELLE • TOSCOLANO MADERNO (1970-1971)
PROJECT

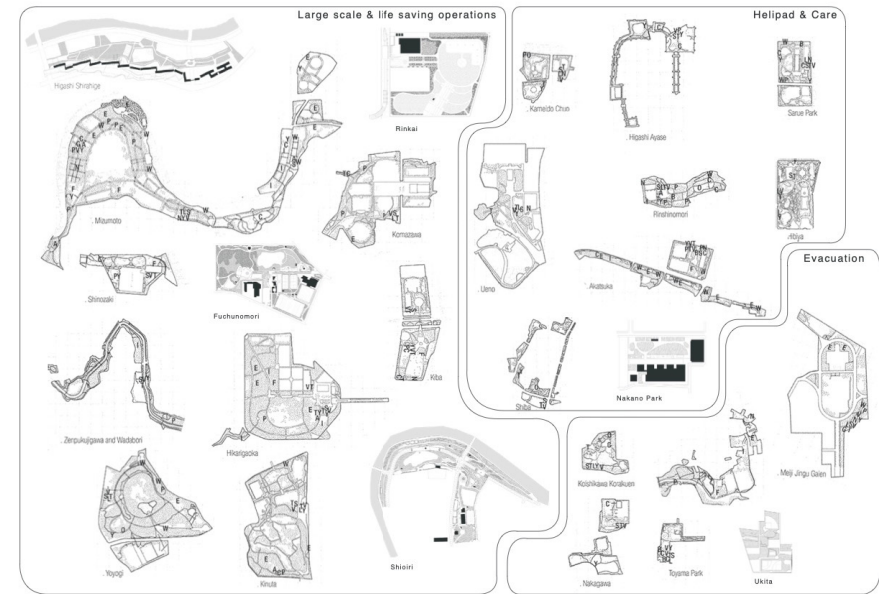


Housing Climates Nature-inspired Design

Architectural design is at the centre of research by Valerio Sorgini on “Social Housing Districts” (2024) and Greta Taronna on the recovery of “The School Heritage within Seismic Italy” (2024). Alberto Geuna develops a study on the “Dementia Villages” (2024). Moreover, architectural issues are researched by Gino Baldi on the “Reasons of form in structural components” (2024) and Pietro Brunazzi’s “Projects of Reconstruction” (2024). In 2020, some interdisciplinary-oriented theses appeared, widely open towards other cultural, historical, and geographical horizons. Maria Mikaelyan studied “Newly Established Museums of Political Histories in the Post-Soviet Countries”; Gerardo Semprebon studied “Design Challenges in a Village of Fujian Province”; Jingwen San studied “Public Spaces in Private Developments”; Roxana Madalina Ghibusi crossed urban analysis with social studies investigating the “New Social Spaces”; Francesca Berni developed a “Discourse around Heritage and Design for a Landscape

Reactivation in the Fujian Province”. In 2021, there is an opening towards more technological aspects, a route that will be implemented further in the following years, with the Parisa Vaziri thesis on “the Renewable-energy Power Plants: Potential Stations to Transform the Social Flows”, a double doctorate in partnership with TU Munich. This reflection on the overlapping of technical, social, and infrastructural paradigms is the frame of Beatrice Balducci’s research on the “Safe Spaces” (2023) and Kevin Santus’ research on “Nature-Based Solutions” (2024). Clearly embedded into a technological culture are the research by Qian Zhang on “Microclimate Oriented Architectural Design” (2022) and Adrian Moredia on “Innovative Water-Based Cooling Systems” (2024). They pioneer a line that puts a difficult question, the set-up of a fertile common ground between physics, engineering, and architectural design.

Beatrice Balducci, 2023. *The Safe Space. Ordinary Architecture for Extraordinary Conditions*. Supervisor Alessandro Rocca.



The three categories of boussai-koen established by the Japanese Institute of Landscape Architecture

Alessandro Rocca (editor)
A Debate about Research in Architectural Design

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