POLITECNICO DI TORINO
Repository ISTITUZIONALE

Roots of Architecture: Ways of Research

Original
Roots of Architecture: Ways of Research / Vigliocco, E. (SPRINGER SERIES IN DESIGN AND INNOVATION). - In: School of Architecture(s) - New Frontiers of Architectural Education / Barosio M., Vigliocco E., Gomes S.. - STAMPA. - Cham, Switzerland : Springer Nature Switzerland, 2025. - ISBN 9783031719585. - pp. 185-186 [10.1007/978-3-031-71959-2_21]

Availability:
This version is available at: 11583/2993415 since: 2024-10-15T12:39:55Z

Publisher:
Springer Nature Switzerland

Published
DOI:10.1007/978-3-031-71959-2_21

Terms of use:

This article is made available under terms and conditions as specified in the corresponding bibliographic description in the repository

Publisher copyright

(Article begins on next page)

14 October 2026

Roots of Architecture: Ways of Research

Elena Vigliocco(✉)

DAD Department of Architecture and Design, Politecnico di Torino, Turin, Italy
elena.vigliocco@polito.it

Can Architecture be produced without an architect? Yes. It has always been like this. The historic centers of our cities are the result of designs whose authors are often unknown, not because they are not essential but because they are unnecessary [1]. The interest of architects, but not only in authorship, dates back to the nineteenth century, a period of excellent building ferment in which incredible urban transformations sanctioned the idea of the house as a consumer good [2].

If today, we ask ourselves whether Architecture belongs to the architect who designed it or to the community of its users, it makes us understand how much the importance of authorship was a parenthesis that lasted just over a century. The weakening of the theory of knowledge (weak thinking) [3] is closely linked to the weakening of the subject (the architect, who is de-responsibilized) and to the weakening of being (the discipline, considered porous, contradictory, polycentric, devoid of univocity) [4]. Therefore, it is logical to ask whether architecture schools should be configured as places of experimentation aimed at building new hypotheses for the future rather than service-oriented places according to the demands of communities and the market.

To try to contribute to the debate actively, it may be helpful to highlight the trends and changes taking place in the architectural research sector, broken down according to three key issues: themes, methods, and tools.

Concerning the themes, research increasingly tends to investigate the topics that concern civil society [5–7]. Climate change, concerning energy issues rather than the impact of human settlements on ecological systems, and the fragility of territories, conceived as a response to natural rather than social and economic disasters, are some of the investigated topics that lead Architecture to question itself on the civil role it is capable of assuming.

Regarding methods, the research approach is increasingly multidisciplinary and trans-scalar. The complexity of the systems investigated requires both the involvement of other and new disciplines, capable of analyzing the areas that Architecture does not reach and reasoning at multiple levels of in-depth analysis to increase the effect of the research results [8, 9].

Lastly, the tools are increasingly sophisticated and require researchers/teachers and students to update their skills continually. In a world that has become increasingly smaller, traditional research tools are being superseded by digital applications (an example for all is represented by AI), which open new research opportunities by simplifying routine operations.

© The Author(s) 2025
M. Barosio et al. (Eds.): EAAE AC 2023, SSDI 47, pp. 185–186, 2025.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-71959-2_21

Concerning these considerations, a complex and highly challenging picture emerges in which Architecture Schools must question themselves and, above all, renew their practices.

References

1. Rykwert, J.: The Idea of a Town. The Anthropology of Urban Form in Rome, Italy and the Ancient World. Princeton University Press, Princeton (1976)
2. Londei, E.F.: La Parigi di Haussmann. Kappa, Bologna (1982)
3. Vattimo, G.: La fine della modernità. Garzanti, Milan. Translation by John R. Snyder (1991). The End of Modernity: Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Post-modern Culture. Polity Press (1985)
4. Borradori, G.: "Weak Thought" and postmodernism: the Italian departure from deconstruction. Soc. Text **18**, 39–49 (1987). https://doi.org/10.2307/488689
5. Space10: The Ideal City. Exploring Urban Futures. Gestalten, Berlin (2021)
6. Lokko, L. (ed.): The Laboratory of the Future. Biennale di Architettura di Venezia, Venezia (2023)
7. Farrell, Y., McNamara, S. (eds.): Freespace. Biennale di Architettura di Venezia, Venezia (2018)
8. Segapeli S (ed.) Vous Avez Dit Espace Commun? (2022)
9. Bruxelles, P.L., Marzo, M., Ferrario, V., Bertini, V.: Between Sense of Time and Sense of Place. Siracusa, LetteraVentidue (2022)

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.