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Exploring UNESCO and UIA: Histories of Architecture and Bureaucracy in Development Contexts

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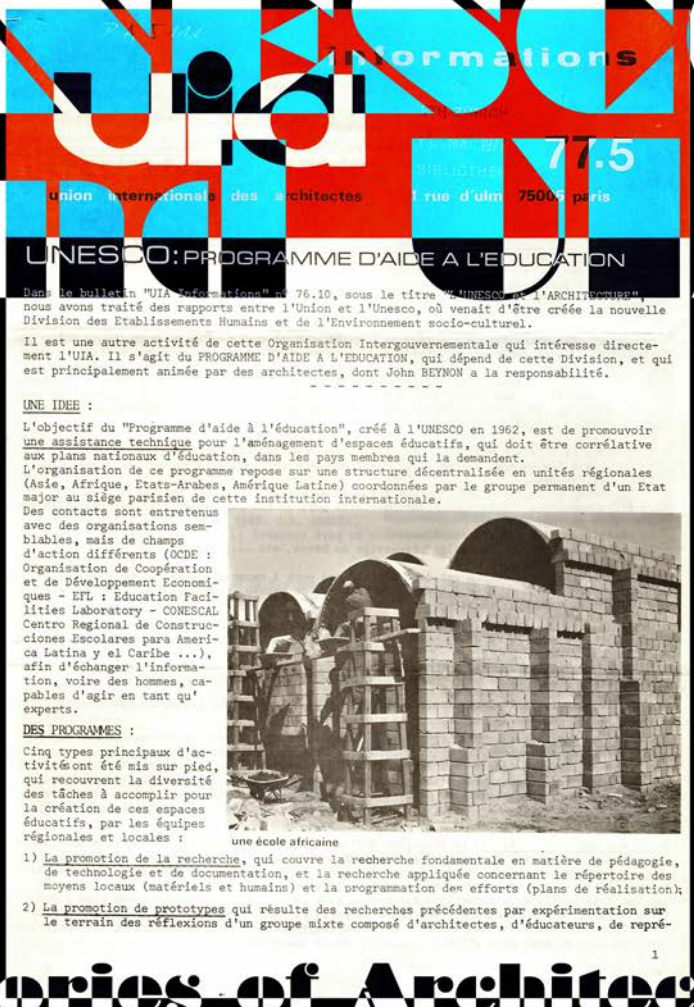
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25 November 2026

Exploring UNESCO and the UIA



uia informations

77.5

Union Internationale des Architectes 1 rue d'Ulm 75005 paris

UNESCO: PROGRAMME D'AIDE A L'EDUCATION

Dans le bulletin "UIA Informations" n° 76.10, sous le titre "L'UNESCO ET L'ARCHITECTURE", nous avons traité des rapports entre l'Union et l'Unesco, où venait d'être créée la nouvelle Division des Etablissements Humains et de l'Environnement socio-culturel.

Il est une autre activité de cette Organisation Intergouvernementale qui intéresse directement l'UIA. Il s'agit du PROGRAMME D'AIDE A L'EDUCATION, qui dépend de cette Division, et qui est principalement animée par des architectes, dont John BEYNON a la responsabilité.

UNE IDEE :

L'objectif du "Programme d'aide à l'éducation", créé à l'UNESCO en 1962, est de promouvoir une assistance technique pour l'aménagement d'espaces éducatifs, qui doit être corrélative aux plans nationaux d'éducation, dans les pays membres qui la demandent.
L'organisation de ce programme repose sur une structure décentralisée en unités régionales (Asie, Afrique, Etats-Arabes, Amérique Latine) coordonnées par le groupe permanent d'un Etat major au siège parisien de cette institution internationale.
Des contacts sont entretenus avec des organisations semblables, mais de champs d'action différents (OCDE : Organisation de Coopération et de Développement Economiques - EFL : Education Facilities Laboratory - CONESCAL Centro Regional de Construcciones Escolares para America Latina y el Caribe ...), afin d'échanger l'information, voire des hommes, capables d'agir en tant qu'experts.

une école africaine

DES PROGRAMMES :

Cinq types principaux d'activités ont été mis sur pied, qui recouvrent la diversité des tâches à accomplir pour la création de ces espaces éducatifs, par les équipes régionales et locales :

1) La promotion de la recherche, qui couvre la recherche fondamentale en matière de pédagogie, de technologie et de documentation, et la recherche appliquée concernant le répertoire des moyens locaux (matériels et humains) et la programmation des efforts (plans de réalisation);

2) La promotion de prototypes qui résulte des recherches précédentes par expérimentation sur le terrain des réflexions d'un groupe mixte composé d'architectes, d'éducateurs, de repré-

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Histories of Architecture and Bureaucracy in Development Contexts

21 & 22 November 2024 – ETH Hoenggerberg, HIL E 71.1

International Workshop,
gta Institute, ETH Zurich

Exploring UNESCO and UIA

Histories of Architecture and Bureaucracy in Development Contexts

Organized by Frederike Lausch
and Andreas Kalpakci

21 November 2024 – start 13:00 | ETH Hoenggerberg, HIL E 71.1

Keynote Lecture 18:45

22 November 2024 – start 9:00 | ETH Hoenggerberg, HIL E 71.1

Introduction

International organizations had a profound impact on the global architectural culture of the Cold War period. Two of them stood out: UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, an intergovernmental organization) and UIA (the International Union of Architects, an international association of architectural societies). Their respective roles in the institutionalization of heritage conservation and in the promotion of the architectural profession are well documented. Rather, this workshop places particular emphasis on the relationship between UNESCO and UIA. This relationship began in the formative years of both bodies in the immediate post-war era and continues to this day in areas such as architectural education and international architectural competitions.

> Exploring the relationship between UNESCO and UIA builds on recent scholarship that links bureaucracy to architecture's involvement in development contexts, defining practices, directing information flows, and mediating legitimacy. Both organizations have been engaged in development contexts, from the 1963 UIA congress on "Architecture in Countries in the Process of Development" to the work of the UNESCO Division for Human Settlements and the Socio-Cultural Environment, established in 1976. How did they interact with each other in terms of cooperation, competition, and interdependence? How did they provide training, knowledge transfer, and technical assistance to so-called "developing countries"? How did they mediate architecture in these contexts, contributing to nation-building and international exchange?

This workshop aims to explore critical histories of the multifaceted relationship between UNESCO and the UIA in development contexts. It will address different aspects of their partnership, from environmental initiatives to school building programmes, and from international networking to media strategies. It will also serve as a platform for the exchange of research methodologies, archival sources, and historiographical perspectives.

Thursday

13:00 **Introduction**
By Frederike Lausch and Andreas Kalpakci

13:25 – 14:35 **Panel 1 – Data for Development**
Moderation by Giulia Boller (ETH Zurich)

13:25 **"The Pursuit of Global Architectural Expertise: UNESCO and UIA's Collaboration for an International Information System for Architecture"**
Michael Moynihan (University of Texas)

13:50 **"Monument or Data? 'Science Statistics' and UNESCO's Cybernetic Fortification of the 1970s Bengal Delta"**
Pritam Dey (University of California, Los Angeles)

14:15 Discussion

15 min Break

14:50 – 16:00 **Panel 2 – Professionalization of Architecture**
Moderation by Andreas Kalpakci (ETH Zurich)

14:50 **"Yugoslavia's Policies of International Collaboration: The Case of the UIA and the Association of Architects Societies of Yugoslavia"**
Tamara Bjažić Klarin (Institute of Art History, Zagreb)

15:15 **"Investigating Jai Rattan Bhalla's Presidency of the UIA and the Council of Architecture in India: Impacting the Architectural Profession in the 1980s"**
Neha Korde (SPA New Delhi), Prachi Patel (Nirma University), Shalini Sheoran (DLCSUPVA)

15:40 Discussion

30 min Break

16:30 – 18:15 Panel 3 – Foreign Expertise and National Interests

Moderation by Frederike Lausch (ETH Zurich)

16:30 **"Building in the Sahara: UNESCO's Arid Zone Program and the End of French Colonization"**
Paul Bouet (ENSA Paris-Est)

16:55 **"The Emergence of a UIA Expertise for UNESCO in the Postwar Context: The Role of Michel Écochard's Cross-Cultural Practice"**
Fatima Zohra Saaid (National School of Architecture, Rabat), Najoua Beqqal (National School of Architecture, Rabat)

17:20 **"Was it Coloniality by Advisory? Vilhelm Wohlert, UNESCO and Architectural Procurement in Development Contexts"**
Angela Gigliotti (ETH Zurich)

17:45 Discussion

30 min Break

18:45 – 19:45 Keynote Lecture

Moderation by Laurent Stalder (ETH Zurich)

"Jewel, Equipment, *Cadre*: Three Architectures of Internationalism and the Musée Dynamique de Dakar, 1966–1982"
Lucia Allais (Columbia University)

Friday

9:00 – 10:45 Panel 4 – Heritage Preservation and Tourism

Moderation by Tom Avermaete (ETH Zurich)

9:00 "The Polish Origins of World Heritage: Polish Architects in UNESCO"
Kyrill Kunakhovich (University of Virginia)

9:25 "Internationalization of the Yugoslav Periphery: UN Development Programs in the Socialist Republic of Montenegro (1967–1988)"
Danilo Bulatović (Polytechnic University of Turin)

9:50 "Work to Rest, Rest to Work: UIA, the International Competition for the Touristic Development of Side, and the Politics of Leisure in Inter-coup Turkey"
Burcu Köken (TU Delft)

10:15 Discussion

30 min Break

11:15 – 13:00 Panel 5 – Critiques of Development Discourse

Moderation by Daniela Ortiz dos Santos (Goethe University Frankfurt)

11:15 "UNESCO and UIA from Athens to Beirut: Minnette de Silva at the East-West Crossroads"
Anooradha Iyer Siddiqi (Barnard College, Columbia University)

11:40 "The Development Discourse Under Scrutiny: Brazilian Perspectives on the UIA and UNESCO"
Paula Dedecca (Escola da Cidade, São Paulo)

12:05 "Young Architects' Social Concerns as Architectural Culture: UNESCO's Mediated Image of Latin America Informed by Dissidence at UIA's Students and Young Architects Meetings in the Late 1960s"
Cristina López Uribe (National Autonomous University of Mexico)

12:30 Discussion

60 min Break

22 November 2024

14:00 – 15:30 gta Archive Lecture and Thematic Tour

14:00 **"'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly': Colonial Hybridities in the gta Archive Collections"**
Irina Davidovici (ETH Zurich), Sabine Sträuli (ETH Zurich)

14:30 **Thematic Tour Periscope and gta Archive: "Export Architectures: Decolonizing the Archive"**
with gta Archive team and guest input from Sebastiaan Loosen

15 min Break

15:45 – 18:05 Panel 6 - School Buildings and Development through Education

Moderation by Sebastiaan Loosen (ETH Zurich)

15:45 **"Buildings for Education and Development: Relations between the UIA School Construction Commission and UNESCO, 1950s to 1970s"**
Susanne Rick (Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)

16:10 **"Transnational Architectural Meetings: UNESCO and School Construction in Asia 1960–1972"**
Ning de Coninck-Smith (Aarhus University)

16:35 **"The Construction of the Mohammadia School of Engineers: UNESCO and UIA in Post-Independence Morocco"**
Amine Mohamed Bajji (National School of Architecture, Rabat)

17:00 **"Prefab Spaces for Education: Alfred Roth and UNESCO Strategies in the Gulf"**
Roberto Fabbri (Zayed University)

17:25 Discussion

18:05 – 18:30 Closing Remarks

Thursday *21 November 2024*

13:00 **Introduction**
By Frederike Lausch and Andreas Kalpakci

13:25 – 14:35 **Panel 1 – Data for Development**
Moderation by Giulia Boller

15 min Break

14:50 – 16:00 **Panel 2 – Professionalization of Architecture**
Moderation by Andreas Kalpakci

30 min Break

16:30 – 18:15 **Panel 3 – Foreign Expertise and National Interests**
Moderation by Frederike Lausch

30 min Break

18:45 – 19:45 **Keynote Lecture**
By Lucia Allais
Moderation by Laurent Stalder



Image taken in the gta Archive at ETH Zurich.

Panel 1

Data for Development

13:25 – 14:35

Moderation by

Giulia Boller

ETH Zurich

Giulia Boller is a Lecturer and Postdoctoral Researcher at ETH Zurich, trained in engineering and architecture. She holds an award-winning doctorate from ETH Zurich and gained professional experience at Renzo Piano Building Workshop. Giulia's research focuses on the intersection of history, architecture, and civil engineering in the 20th century. Among the editors of the forthcoming book *Heinz Isler: Built Experiments – Entrepreneurial Networks* (gta Verlag, 2025) and the journal special issue *Heinz Isler and His Legacy in Digital Design* (Archi, 2024), Giulia has contributed to numerous conferences, journals and edited books in both the fields of architectural history and structural design.

The Pursuit of Global Architectural Expertise: UNESCO and UIA's Collaboration for an International Information System for Architecture

13:25 – 13:50

Michael Moynihan

University of Texas

In 1975, fearing the architectural profession was in a sharp decline, the UIA contracted UNESCO to help develop a global international information system called ARKISYST. ARKISYST was intended to strengthen the profession and supply practicing architects with real-time information needs (what they called "global architectural expertise"). By 1978, national governments had a considerable interest in funding and hosting regional ARKISYST centers. The UIA congress on "Architecture and National Development" in Mexico City, for example, was scheduled to coincide with the opening of the first regional information center in Mexico, called the "Centre for America."

In this paper, the ARKISYST project is used to situate architectural practice within the complex institutional framework of development aid and is reflective of the global treatment of the Global South in the 1970s, where reconnaissance, mapping, data gathering, and counterinsurgency projects were aimed at standardizing information about geographies and populations so that professional practitioners could work unfettered by the friction of local nuances. I also argue that this isn't the only way to think about the project. Because of the unique organizational structure of the UIA, the project was conceived through a hospitality to the diversity of disciplines working in architecture and focused on a larger collaboration and interchange of information

amongst countries typically excluded in international debates, such as through UIA council meetings held in New Delhi, Acapulco, Manila, Kuala Lumpur, and Cairo. This aspiration for inclusion and parity amongst the world's architects is significant in understanding why the project was conceived and how the ambitions of the UIA changed during the 1970s. In this way, ARKISYST is a lens to understand how the term internationalism shifted in the 1970s and how government officials in different countries tried to position themselves within international relations and global development politics.

Michael Moynihan

Michael Moynihan is the Land, Space, and Identity in the Americas Fellow at the University of Texas. He has a PhD in the History of Architecture and Urban Development from Cornell University and a master's degree from the Bartlett, UCL. His research focuses on the global history of housing during the Cold War and broader questions about politics, technology, and expertise in architectural practice.

Monument or Data? "Science Statistics" and UNESCO's Cybernetic Fortification of the 1970s Bengal Delta

13:50 – 14:15

Pritam Dey

University of California, Los Angeles

In 1962, the Pakistani military government commandeered 600 acres of agricultural experiment station land in Dacca to construct Louis I. Kahn's National Capitol complex, which President Ayub Khan hailed as a "cosmic phenomenon" in East Pakistan's postcolonial history. Bangladeshi historians would call this event cataclysmic for agricultural research in the deltaic country as the site was the principal research facility to conduct field experiments on rice mutagenesis by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute.

By 1972, following Bangladesh's liberation from Pakistan, these agricultural experiment stations would resurge as part of a bigger agro-meteorological fortification of the delta. Under a pro-agrarian socialist banner, the new regime formed under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was charged with securing the newly formed nation-state against war-torn infrastructure, political insurgencies, and tropical cyclones. My paper traces how Mujib's bureaucratic model transformed the Bengal Delta into a vast environmental data-pooling system, conjoining aggregate life, climate science, and food security as foundational pillars of nation-building, aiming to generate security and value by negotiating degrees of climatic and environmental precarity. Diametrically opposite to Kahn's monumental

"political citadel," an infrastructural (and architectural) production through "science statistics" and data was guided by a cybernetic system, prepared by UNESCO while assessing the "delta's potential" in 1973 and 1974 along with the Bangladeshi Planning Commission, as their bilateral partnership drafted the nation's first five-year development plan. For UNESCO, the stakes were equally high as they were charged with formulating a standardized international survey framework that could aid other post-colonial governments in "measuring" the national "experimental and research potential."

This paper will investigate how the model translated bureaucracy into a feedback system of energy and information/signals, with the laboratories acting as valves through which the deltaic context was read, analyzed, and transformed. The scientific survey and data project, I argue, was part of the modernist dogma for creating a development model in the delta without capital and was a way to insinuate the longevity of infrastructural projects in the decades to come.

Pritam Dey

Pritam Dey is a PhD Scholar in History of Architecture at the University of California, Los Angeles. His research interests lie at the intersection of biological science, systems theory, and developmental discourses of mid-20th century South Asia. His dissertation examines ways the Bangladesh delta was engineered within a broader network of Cold War geopolitics, war, and national identity causing the "crisis of ideological hegemony" to clash with the "crisis of development." At UCLA, Pritam is a Teaching Fellow for critical history courses. He was an Urban Humanities Initiative fellow at UCLA, the Center for India and South Asia fellow (CISA), and a recipient of the Erasmus Mundus Scholarship in 2022.

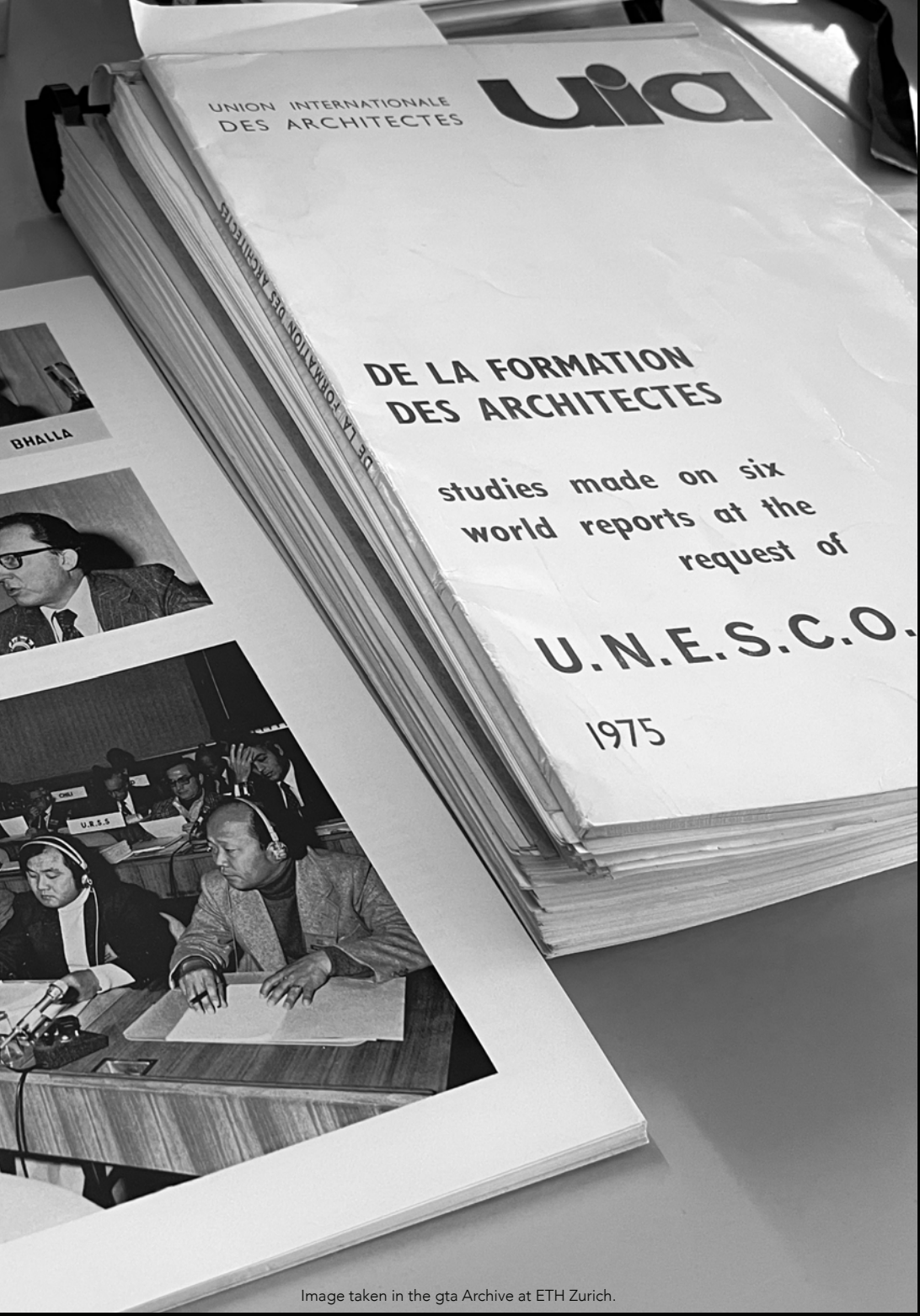


Image taken in the gta Archive at ETH Zurich.

Panel 2

Professionalization of Architecture

14:50 – 16:00

Moderation by

Andreas Kalpakci

ETH Zurich

Andreas Kalpakci is an architectural historian working on architecture, media, and international organizations in the 20th century. He is Lecturer and Head of Research at the Chair of the Theory of Architecture at ETH Zurich. His research on the UIA has been published in *Radical Pedagogies* (2022) and *East West Central* (2017), while also informing a recent essay in *Grey Room* (2023) and his doctoral dissertation, "Making CIAM: The Organizational Techniques of the Moderns, 1928–1959" (ETH Zurich, 2017). He is currently researching building industrialization initiatives between the UIA and the United Nations, 1945–1978 (2022 MSCA Seal of Excellence).

Yugoslavia's Policies of International Collaboration: The Case of the UIA and the Association of Architects Societies of Yugoslavia

14:50 – 15:15

Tamara Bjažić Klarin

Institute of Art History, Zagreb

The involvement of the Association of Architects Societies of Yugoslavia (SDAJ) with the UIA mirrored the broader shifts in Yugoslavia's policies. After its 1948 break with the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia developed its self-managed socialism through three reforms in 1950, 1963 and 1972, while also aligning its foreign policy around United Nations principles that emphasized peace, national independence—particularly for nations in the Global South—sustainable development, and international cooperation. In the 1950s, Yugoslavia's membership in international organizations was a matter of gaining international recognition and proving that there was an alternative path to Soviet socialism. The state generously funded architects' participation in the UIA since the 1951 Congress in Morocco, while the SDAJ promoted Yugoslavia by organizing exhibitions of contemporary architecture abroad as part of cultural collaborations established in bilateral agreements. In the 1960s, as Yugoslavia emerged as a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement and shifted towards market socialism, funding was redirected to associations and architectural studios, resulting in a decline in UIA-related activities. This issue was addressed by a new generation of architects, leading to the formation of the SDAJ's Commission for Active Liaison with the UIA after the 11th Congress in Varna in 1972. The peak of this re-established collaboration occurred at the 14th Congress in Warsaw in 1981, for

which the SDAJ published a special trilingual issue on Yugoslavia's architecture of the 1970s.

The paper will examine the extent to which the UIA influenced SDAJ's professional discourse in architecture, urban planning, and spatial planning, specifically focusing on how its policies were integrated. By providing the first comprehensive overview of the cooperation between the SDAJ and the UIA within the evolving professional context of Yugoslavia, this paper will contribute to ongoing research on the implementation of international organizations' policies in the activities of federal, local, and professional bodies—a practice that appears to have been widespread.

Tamara Bjažić Klarin

Tamara Bjažić Klarin is a Senior Research Advisor at the Institute of Art History in Zagreb. Her field of expertise is 19th and 20th century architecture and urban planning with a focus on the processes of modernization, knowledge exchange, professional organizations and architects' public engagement. She authored the awarded books *Ernest Weissmann: Socially Engaged Architecture, 1926–1939* (2015) and *"For the better and prettier city of Zagreb!" – Architectural and Urban Planning Competitions in the Interwar Zagreb, 1918–1941* (2020). She was an expert adviser for the exhibition *Toward a Concrete Utopia: Architecture in Yugoslavia, 1948–1980* (MoMA, 2018–2019). She has received grants from the French Government and the SNSF.

Investigating Jai Rattan Bhalla's Presidency of the UIA and the Council of Architecture in India: Impacting the Architectural Profession in the 1980s

15:15 – 15:40

Neha Korde, Prachi Patel, Shalini Sheoran

SPA New Delhi, Nirma University, DLCSUPVA

Joseph Allen Stein's partnership with Jai Rattan Bhalla (1922–2016), who held influential positions in national and international professional organizations, contributed greatly to the development of the architectural profession in India. Together with Balkrishna Doshi, the trio formed an inter-regional association, their practice, Stein Doshi Bhalla. Bhalla's efforts and contributions included the drafting of the Architects Act of 1972, which was passed by Parliament and for the first time legislated at the national level the legal entitlements and ethical obligations of the discipline as a self-governing profession. During his presidency of the UIA, he was actively involved in the establishment of three organizations: the Architects Regional Council Asia (ARCASIA), the Commonwealth Association of Architecture (CAA), and the Council of Architecture (COA). The statutory body COA was constituted by the Government of India in support of the Architects Act of 1972 and was also headed by Bhalla.

The paper examines the significance of Bhalla's tenure as UIA and COA president for the Delhi region, especially after 1975, and how the UIA and COA influenced each other. The study explores how the formation of these different professional organizations at both national and international

levels has impacted as a bureaucratic step the architectural profession and education and played a substantial role in shifting the cultural identities in the region. The launch of *Architecture + Design (A+D)* in 1984 and "Vistara: The Architecture of India" in 1986 marked the arrival of the first homegrown periodical and a traveling exhibition whose impact on Indian architecture lasted for almost three decades. The study also explores the extent to which the UIA played an important role in establishing a stage to showcase the architectural identity that evolved after the 1980s at the international level.

Neha Korde

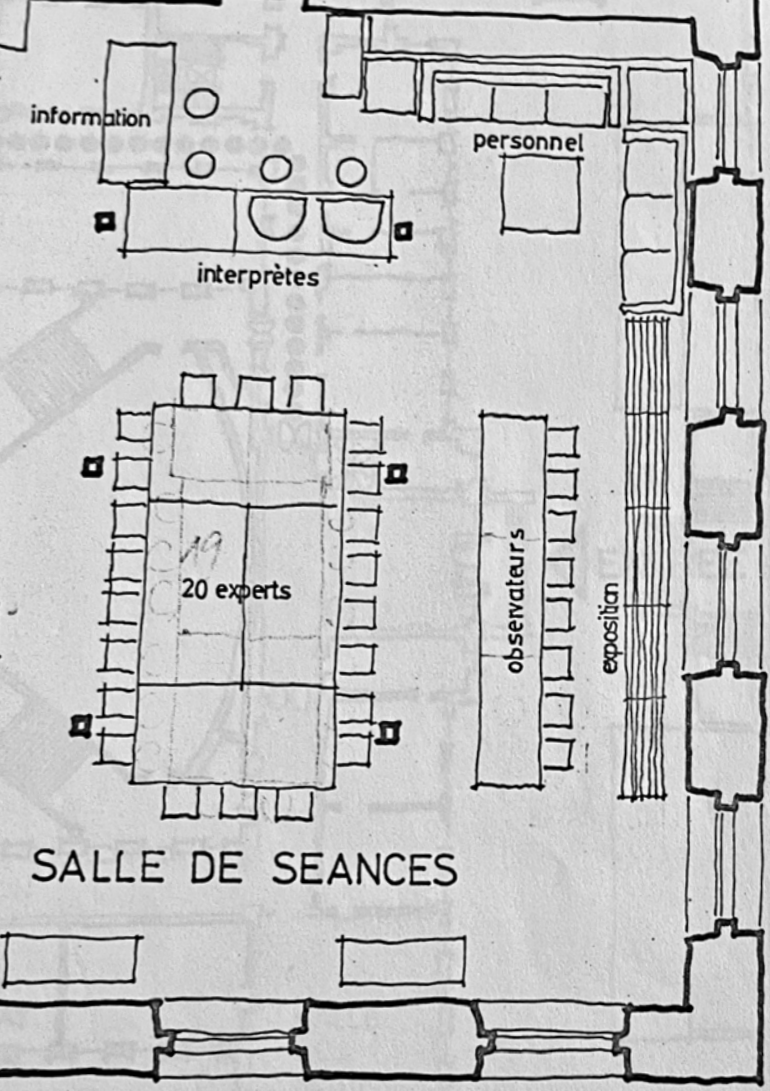
Neha Korde is an Assistant Professor at the School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi. Her areas of research are design methods, phenomenology and sensory architecture. As a Young Urban Designers and Architects Program (YUDAP) Fellow under the collaboration of the Indian Government and the French Embassy, Neha Korde worked with Martin Duplantier Architectes in Paris (2021). Her work in the Advanced Studies in Integrated Urban Development (ASIUD) program at CANactions School was well received by GIZ, Ukraine. Previously, she worked with Sangath under architect B. V. Doshi and HCP Design and Management Pvt. Ltd. Ahmedabad on institutional projects like IIM Udaipur and Gandhinagar Secretariat.

Prachi Patel

Prachi Patel works as Assistant Professor (contractual) at the Institute of Architecture and Planning, Nirma University and is also pursuing her PhD in Urban Design and Built Environment. She has taught in various architecture schools in Gujarat. She has 5 years of academic and 6 years of professional experience in the field. As a Research Assistant under Prof. Utpal Sharma, she is part of the CEPT Research Development Unit (CRDU) and has worked on the CEPT Campus Development Plan and Draft Development Plan of Kalyan Dombiwali Taluka, Mumbai. She believes in exploration and experiment as a form of learning.

Shalini Sheoran

Shalini Sheoran is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Architecture, Gurugram University and DLCSUPVA Rohtak. She has more than thirteen years of experience in teaching Architectural Design, Theory of Design, Basic Design, Vernacular Architecture Studio, and Graphics. An architecture graduate from CRSCE Murthal (MDU Rohtak), she has also completed post-graduate studies in Theory and Design from CEPT University, Ahmedabad. Her interests range from design, architecture, arts and crafts, cultural narratives, photography, and landscape.



SALLE DE SEANCES

REUNION D'EXPERTS DE L'UNESCO

SALLE DE SEANCES ECHELLE 1:100

ECOLE POLYTECHNIQUE FEDERALE, ZURICH, LE 20/5/70

Image taken in the gta Archive at ETH Zurich.

Panel 3

Foreign Expertise and National Interests

16:30 – 18:15

Moderation by

Frederike Lausch

ETH Zurich

Frederike Lausch is an architectural historian, co-founder of the Center for Critical Studies in Architecture (CCSA) and Visiting Lecturer for the Theory of Architecture at ETH Zurich. Her research focuses on the political implications of architectural discourses and theories in the 20th century; particularly the reception of radical French Theory in the 1990s (transcript 2021) and the German post-war discourse on architecture under National Socialism (mbooks 2021; HPA 7/2021). She is currently researching the Communication Centre of Scientific Knowledge for Self-Reliance (ABE 21/2023) and the UNESCO Division for Human Settlements and the Socio-Cultural Environment.

Building in the Sahara: UNESCO's Arid Zone Program and the End of French Colonization

16:30 – 16:55

Paul Bouet

ENSA Paris-Est

In 1950, the newly created UNESCO launched the "Arid Zone Program." With the goal of developing a transnational research project, the international research institution focused on the world's deserts, a climatic and geographic entity that transcended the East-West and North-South divides. By supporting scientific research, technological innovation, and educational programs, UNESCO aimed to transform what were considered unproductive and inhospitable lands into spaces that could fuel global postwar modernization. Meanwhile, France was consolidating its colonial rule over the Sahara, especially its Algerian parts, where large reserves of fossil fuels were discovered. A major research effort was undertaken to analyze the ecology of the world's largest desert and to create extractive settlements adapted to human habitation. Scientists, engineers, architects, urban planners, medical doctors, and military experts worked together to develop strategies for industrializing the desert. Special attention was given to the harnessing of solar energy as a means of air conditioning dwellings, the use of prefabricated transportable habitats, and the psychological requirements for desert worker settlements.

The presentation will first explain this convergence of interests regarding the Sahara between UNESCO's development agenda and the last French colonial episode in Algeria, until independence in 1962. I will also focus on the collaborations of actors and

the transfers of knowledge and technologies between scientific research on climate and design strategies. Finally, I will analyze some of the projects designed in this context and examine the legacies of this attempt to industrialize the Sahara.

Paul Bouet

Paul Bouet is Assistant Professor of Architectural History at the École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture Paris-Est, Université Gustave Eiffel. He was trained as an architect and historian of science and technology before obtaining his PhD in architectural history. His work explores the environmental history of architecture in the 20th and 21st centuries. He is preparing a book on the history of solar energy experiments in postwar France, forthcoming from gta Verlag and Éditions de La Villette. He is also working on a new project on the air-conditioned settlements built by the French to extract fossil fuels in the Algerian desert, which he started during his Eiermann Postdoctoral Fellowship at the gta Institute, ETH Zurich in 2022–2023.

The Emergence of a UIA Expertise for UNESCO in the Postwar Context: The Role of Michel Écochard's Cross-Cultural Practice

16:55 – 17:20

Fatima Zohra Saaid, Najoua Beqqal

both from National School of Architecture, Rabat

In 1951, an "improvised" second congress of the UIA, originally scheduled for Warsaw, was held in Morocco. The congress brought together 26 countries to debate the role of architects in the face of the paradigm shift in society following the critical post-war context, and to define new architectural and urban practices in favour of the process of rebuilding nations. Still under French protectorate, the Moroccan contribution, affiliated to the North African section of the UIA, presented the work of the French architect and urban planner Michel Écochard (1905–1985) and his team from the Service de l'urbanisme to solve the crucial issues of slums facing Moroccan cities in the colonial context.

In parallel to the post-war architectural and urban debates that took place after the dissolution of the CIAM organization, and the well-known place that French architects within the Team Ten group held in the promotion of new architectural paradigms, particularly on the issue of habitat, Écochard and his team were actively involved in the UIA and UNESCO, which contributed to the formation of a contextualized expertise by these French architects on Moroccan soil and its promotion as a transnational expertise.

By examining unpublished archival sources from a new historiographical perspective, this paper explores the beginnings of the relationship between

the UIA and UNESCO, arguing that the UIA congress in Morocco was a key event for both organizations to initiate the exchange of expertise and knowledge that was exported to several "underdeveloped" African countries, as well as to European and Middle Eastern countries. The paper focuses on how Écochard, as an international expert, contributed to the development of urban toolkits and architectural solutions for housing programs on behalf of the UIA and UNESCO. The paper then examines how these solutions, along several others, were disseminated as interesting models that helped to shape a program of educational infrastructure and policies for "underdeveloped countries."

Fatima Zohra Saaid

Fatima Zohra Saaid is an architect and holds a PhD from the National School of Architecture of Rabat, Morocco, in the field of History and Theory of Architecture. Her thesis deals with the patio house typology and the genesis of a theory of social urban planning in the Moroccan colonial context (1946–1964). She is also Head of Department at the Ministry of National Planning, Urban Planning, Housing and Urban Policy of Morocco.

Najoua Beqqal

Najoua Beqqal is an architect and currently pursuing a doctoral research at the National School of Architecture of Rabat, Morocco, in the field of History and Theory of Architecture. She is researching the post-earthquake reconstruction of the city of Agadir. She is also Head of Service at the Ministry of National Planning, Urban Planning, Housing and Urban Policy of Morocco.

Was it Coloniality by Advisory? Vilhelm Wohlert, UNESCO and Architectural Procurement in Development Contexts

17:20 – 17:45

Angela Gigliotti

ETH Zurich

Vilhelm Wohlert (1920–2007) is rarely known beyond Denmark's national borders. However, at home, he is remembered as the architect of national museums. This is not because he designed many but rather due to his deep commitment to one: the Louisiana Museum of Art, in Humlebæk 40 km north of Copenhagen. Together with Jørgen Bo, he followed for 33 years the building from the first sketch to the seven extensions that followed its opening in 1958. For this life's task, and for many other restorations of royal and state buildings, he was awarded with the highest national architectural recognitions.

However, both domestically and internationally, his position of trust as UNESCO advisor in Afghanistan (1974–1975), Yemen (1976), Morocco (1977) and Turkey (1984) is often overlooked. Specifically, seldom scholars addressed how this position secured him many commissions in development contexts that one could claim that his dedication on the Louisiana Museum was a mere diversion. Furthermore, the Wohlert's long-lasting relationship with UNESCO passed on to his son, as evidenced by the many projects in Bahrain well after the father's advisory.

Wohlert's tasks in fact were not limited to traveling in the Middle East and North Africa region and compiling bureaucratic reports. He also laid the groundwork for how to build transnational architecture. But how did such projects—often

commissioned and promoted by UNESCO—really mediate the incomer and local building techniques? And could his service to a supranational bureaucratic body like UNESCO have mirrored the well-established procurement strategy among his colleagues at home under the Danish welfare state?

This paper questions Wohlert's architectural production in development contexts within UNESCO's progressive agenda and it argues about the establishment of a coloniality "by advisory." It does that by reviewing paradigmatic articles and interviews published by the Danish professional magazines *Arkitekten* and *Arkitektur* (1947–1991) and Wohlert's reports accessible in the UNESCO Archives.

Angela Gigliotti

Angela Gigliotti is an architect, educator and researcher. She investigates professionalism, diplomatic architecture and transnational modes of production, under instances of Danish Welfare State and Swiss coloniality. She authored the PhD thesis "The Labourification of Work" (Aarhus Arkitektskolen, 2020). Along that, she was Visiting PhD Candidate at the Architectural Association, School of Architecture, UK (2018). She is currently HM Queen Margrethe II's Distinguished Postdoctoral Fellow at the Danish Academy in Rome with the research project "Unheard workers" (Carlsberg Foundation 2021–2024) affiliated with the Chair of the History and Theory of Urban Design at ETH Zurich. She has been External Lecturer and Research Faculty at DIS Copenhagen since 2016.

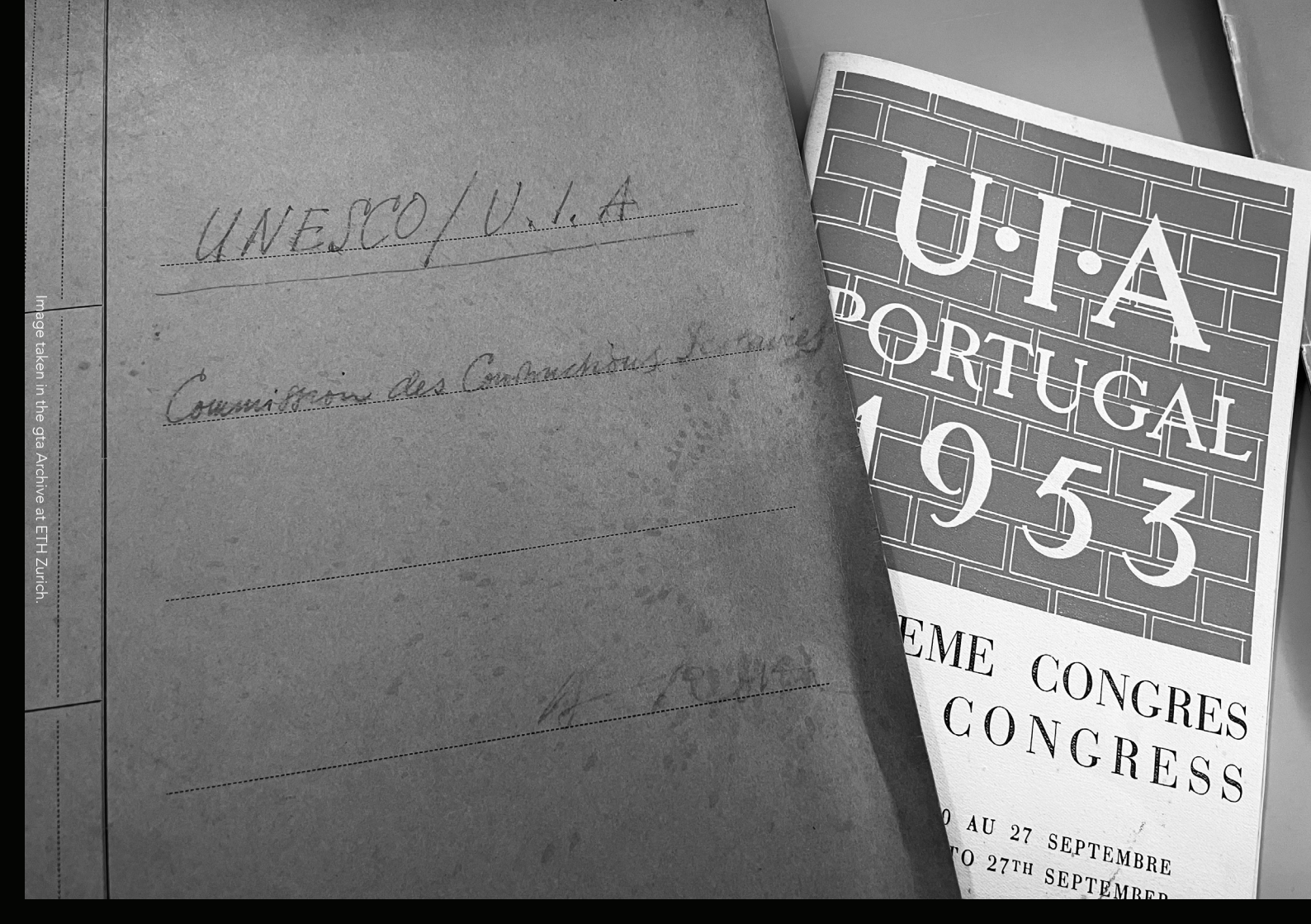


Image taken in the gta Archive at ETH Zurich.

Keynote Lecture

18:45 – 19:45

Moderation by

Laurent Stalder

ETH Zurich

Laurent Stalder has been Professor for Architectural Theory at the gta Institute since 2006, and was its head from 2017 to 2021. In 2009, he was a Visiting Scholar at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and in the fall semester of 2019, he was Guest Professor for "Architectural Behaviorology" at the Department of Architecture and Building Engineering, School of Environment and Society at the Tokyo Institute of Technology. The focus of his research and publications is the history and theory of architecture from the 19th to the 21st centuries, where it intersects with the history of technology. Recent or upcoming publications are: *Architekturethnografie* (ed., *ARCH+*, 2020), *Un dessin n'est pas un plan et autres essais* (Caryatides, 2023), *On Arrows* (MIT Press, 2025).

Jewel, Equipment, *Cadre*: Three Architectures of Internationalism and the Musée Dynamique de Dakar, 1966–1982

18:45 – 19:45

Lucia Allais

Columbia University

The exhibition "L'Art nègre" which took place in Dakar in 1966 is recognized as a pivotal event in the history of global postwar art and culture, but the architecture of the Musée Dynamique built for this occasion remains to be fully parsed. How did this simple building achieve its complex aesthetics, conveying classicism, cosmopolitanism, and modern pan-africanism all at once? How does the history of its collaborative design and chameleonic afterlife complicate conventional narratives of 20th century architecture, whereby new nation-states adopted modernism to express their independence? A composite portrait of the building can be gleaned from literature that has tended to emphasize that the building's design was based on a number of pre-existing models, including that of the eponymously named Musée Dynamique in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. Yet to read the Musée dynamique only as a variation on an international model or type fails to capture how its construction intervened in the proliferating internationalisms surrounding African modernism, in the political career of Léopold Sédar Senghor's notion of *négritude*, and in the charged urban dynamics of the francophone post-colony. Based on new historical archives and revisiting existing sources, this lecture offers an alternate story to suggest that even as a bespoke jewel, the building of the Musée Dynamique belongs in a continuum with the architecture of colonial "equipment" in Dakar. In

the wake of the *Loi-cadre* of 1956, the building and its associated urban planning became less an emblem of decolonization than a frame for its unfolding: a cultural service through which to appropriate and adjust the soft-power structures the French were leaving behind.

Lucia Allais

Lucia Allais is an architectural historian who works on architecture's relation to culture, technology and politics in the modern period and on the global stage. She is Associate Professor and Director of the Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture at Columbia University. Her 2018 book *Designs of Destruction* is in its second printing. Allais has received a number of grants and prizes for her work, most recently the Sarton Medal for the History of Science from Ghent University. Allais is a founding member of the Aggregate Architectural History Collaborative and an editor of the journal *Grey Room*.

Friday *22 November 2024*

9:00 – 10:45 Panel 4 – Heritage Preservation and Tourism
Moderation by Tom Avermaete

30 min Break

11:15 – 13:00 Panel 5 – Critiques of Development Discourse
Moderation by Daniela Ortiz dos Santos

60 min Break

14:00 – 15:30 gta Archive Lecture and Thematic Tour

15 min Break

15:45 – 18:05 Panel 6 – School Buildings and Development through Education
Moderation by Sebastiaan Loosen

18:05 – 18:30 Closing Remarks

RICARDO
VERGES - ESCUIN



UNESCO - U.I.A.
établissements humains et environnement socioculturel

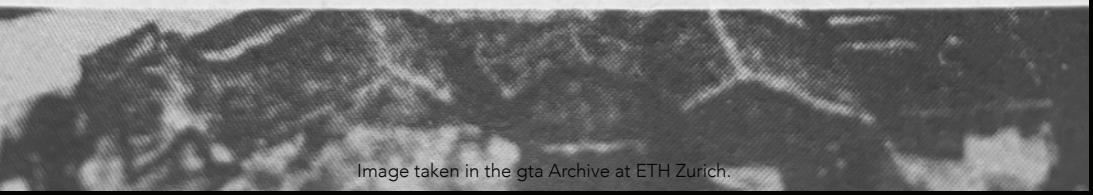


Image taken in the gta Archive at ETH Zurich.

Panel 4

Heritage Preservation and Tourism

9:00 – 10:45

Moderation by

Tom Avermaete

ETH Zurich

Tom Avermaete is Full Professor of the History and Theory of Urban Design at ETH Zurich. His research focuses on changing roles, approaches and tools of urban designers from a cross-cultural perspective. Recent book publications include *The New Urban Condition* (with Medrano and Recaman, 2021), *Urban Design in the 20th Century: A History* (with Gosseye, 2021), *Agadir: Building the Modern Afropolis* (with Zaugg, 2022) and *The Global Turn: Six Journeys of Architecture and the City, 1945–1989* (with Sabatino, 2024). Avermaete is on the editorial board of *OASE Architectural Journal* and co-editor of *Bloomsbury Studies in Modern Architecture* (with Gosseye).

The Polish Origins of World Heritage: Polish Architects in UNESCO

9:00 – 9:25

Kyrill Kunakhovich

University of Virginia

One of the first entries on UNESCO's World Heritage List was also one of the most contentious: the Old Town of Warsaw, inscribed in 1980. Razed by the Nazis at the end of World War II, the Old Town was rebuilt almost wholesale during the 1950s. Many within UNESCO considered this reconstruction inauthentic, and indeed the formal inscription warned against "inscribing in the future other cultural properties that have been reconstructed." Old Warsaw's listing was thus an exceptional case—and yet, in other ways, an emblematic one. Like all the entries on UNESCO's list, Old Warsaw was inscribed not for its age or beauty but rather on account of its contemporary "value." This emphasis on an emotional connection to the past helps differentiate today's notion of heritage from older concepts like monuments and antiquities. And Polish architects, I suggest, were among its foremost promoters.

This paper focuses on two men: Stanisław Lorentz (1899–1991) and Jan Zachwatowicz (1900–1983). Coming of age in interwar Poland, they trained as architects and architectural historians and, after World War II, spearheaded the country's reconstruction projects. Both were also active on the world stage, in the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), and UNESCO. They played key roles in major conferences and agreements on historic preservation, from the 1954 Hague Convention to the 1964 Venice Charter to the

1972 World Heritage Convention. Through the lens of these two architects, I trace how the Polish experience of postwar rebuilding shaped international structures and norms. In doing so, I highlight how the communist Second World influenced both the West and the Global South.

Kyrill Kunakhovich

Kyrill Kunakhovich is Associate Professor of History at the University of Virginia. He is the author of *Communism's Public Sphere: Culture as Politics in Cold War Poland and East Germany* (Cornell University Press, 2022). He is also co-editor, with Piotr Kosicki, of *The Long 1989: Decades of Global Revolution* (Central European University Press, 2019). In April-September 2024, he was a visiting fellow at the Käte Hamburger Kolleg *Inherit: Heritage in Transformation* at Humboldt University Berlin.

Internationalization of the Yugoslav Periphery: UN Development Programs in the Socialist Republic of Montenegro (1967–1988)

9:25 – 9:50

Danilo Bulatović

Polytechnic University of Turin

The paper seeks to present two related missions to the Socialist Republic of Montenegro, the "least developed" federal republic within the former Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, involving the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR), the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and UNESCO. The first mission under the UNDP guidance resulted in the Regional Development Plan for South Adriatic (1967–1971), while the second one, under the supervision of UNESCO, was the consequence of the 1979 catastrophic earthquake resulting in the new Spatial Development Plan (1979–1985). The objective of the research is to evaluate the contribution of the UN technical expertise to the progressive economic expansion of the coastal part of Montenegro as a tourist destination, following the knowledge transfer between the local agents of the Republic Institute for Urban Planning and Design and the UN development agencies.

The importance of examining of the South Adriatic plan and its subsequent revision lies in the overlapping bureaucratic dynamics both within both the UN and the Montenegrin planning entities and, more importantly, the transformation of the design approach informed by local factors. In the first case,

the paper highlights the close cooperation between UNESCO and UNDP in the selection of experts in tourism, economics, transportation and heritage preservation, and their matching with local counterparts (part of the Yugoslav branch of the UIA). Second, by attracting two major UN-sponsored projects within a time span of just under one decade, Montenegro offers a unique opportunity to follow a compressed evolution of the UN planning methodology, whereby socialist economy and natural circumstances radically shifted its development strategy.

By uncovering new circuits of knowledge and the complex institutional patterns through which the globalizing tendencies coupled with the process of hybridization of the socialist planning culture, the paper will hopefully open new avenues for examining the interdependent relationship between the local and the global contexts of Cold War development diplomacy.

Danilo Bulatović

Danilo Bulatović is a PhD Candidate in the Architecture, History and Project program at the Politecnico di Torino. He holds an MSc in Architectural Design and History from the Politecnico di Milano and an MA degree in Architecture from the University of Westminster. His recent works include the book *Let's Develop: Potentials, Challenges and Possible Approaches to Activate the Cultural Heritage of Montenegro on the EuroVelo 8 Route* (UNDP, 2024), as well as scientific articles in the journals *Prostor* and *AGG+*. As a Davis Center Fellow at Harvard University (2024–2025), Bulatović examines the agency of the UN in Yugoslavia during the Cold War.

Work to Rest, Rest to Work: UIA, the International Competition for the Touristic Development of Side, and the Politics of Leisure in Inter-coup Turkey

9:50 – 10:15

Burcu Köken

TU Delft

In August 1968, the Ministry of Tourism and Promotion of Turkey, in collaboration with the Chamber of Architects of Turkey and the UIA, announced the International Competition for the Touristic Development of Side, Antalya. The competition aimed to initiate Turkey's economic and cultural development by transforming its Mediterranean coast and placing the country within the broader map of the emerging geography of mass tourism. As the first collaboration with the UIA, the competition was also considered an opportunity to introduce Turkish urban professionals to their international counterparts and support knowledge exchange.

The design of Side as a resort town was envisioned as a model for the future tourism plans of other Mediterranean cities, and indeed it became a blueprint for a tourism master plan. The jury, composed of national and international experts, including Georges Candilis, selected a young team of Turkish architects from among many international participants. Their proposal included relatively minimal intervention to the land, with major protection strategies for the archaeological site and the forest area. In the years that followed, however, Turkey's Mediterranean coast underwent a major

transformation that included massive environmental interventions to support the growth of the tourism industry. Against this rising threat, Atilla Yücel, in the report he prepared on behalf of Turkey at the 11th UIA Congress held in Varna on the theme of "Architecture and Leisure," warned that the industrialization of tourism is a "false idol" rather than an opportunity for "developing countries."

This paper looks at the rise and fall of the tourism industry as a "false idol" in the context of Turkey placing the Side Competition at its center, and studies the exchange between the Chamber of Architects and the UIA by critically analyzing the emerging post-war concepts of mass tourism, leisure, and free time. It will use the content published about the UIA in the Chamber's journal, *Mimarlık*, as the main resource to examine how modernization and development theories were circulated in professional networks.

Burcu Köken

Burcu Köken is a PhD Candidate at TU Delft in the Architecture and Democracy program jointly run by the Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam and TU Delft, and is currently a PhD fellow of the Gerda Henkel Foundation. Her research focuses on the Turkish architectural journal *Mimarlık* during the inter-coup period in Turkey between 1960 and 1980.

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ARQUITECTURA CU

La contribution des pays
hautement industrialisés
à l'architecture des pays
en voie
de développement

par
J.-P. Vouga, architecte DPLG, FAS, SIA, président du Comité
de liaison des Commissions de travail de l'UIA,
Lausanne.

orient-occident

PROGRAMME MAJEUR DE L'UNESCO
RÉUNION D'EXPERTS A ATHÈNES - MA

MAJOR PROGRAM OF UNESCO
MEETING OF EXPERTS AT ATHENS -



Image taken in the gta Archive at ETH Zurich.

Panel 5

Critiques of Development Discourse

11:15 – 13:00

Moderation by

Daniela Ortiz dos Santos

Goethe University Frankfurt

Daniela Ortiz dos Santos is Assistant Professor of Architectural History at the Goethe University Frankfurt and Scientific Coordinator of the Center for Critical Studies in Architecture. She holds a degree in architecture from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and a PhD from ETH Zurich. Her research, teaching, and curatorial activities on the intersection between transatlantic architectural history and historiography have been published in the *gta Papers, CRITIQUE D'ART, ARCH+*, and *LC: Revue de recherche sur Le Corbusier*. Her current project works at the intersection of UNESCO and intellectual migration while exploring Latin America as a category and the architectural historiography of the region during the Cold War era.

UNESCO and UIA from Athens to Beirut: Minnette de Silva at the East-West Crossroads

11:15 – 11:40

Anooradha Iyer Siddiqi

Barnard College, Columbia University

This paper examines careerlong engagements with UNESCO and UIA by Minnette de Silva (1918–1998): one of the first women in the world to establish an architectural practice, a significant cultural figure in Sri Lanka and South and Southeast Asia, and an advocate for environmental and labor justice and the Arts and Crafts movement. De Silva's yearslong research into Asian architectural heritage and ecologically rooted architectural design began in the early 1960s with support from UNESCO, which she first engaged through the World Congress of Intellectuals in Defense of Peace in 1948, where she spoke before the assembly. In 1963, she undertook the study "A Comparative History of Indian and South-East Asian Architecture" at the Graduate School of Ekistics in the Athens Technological Institute, which she extended from 1965 onward as "A Comparative History of South and South-East Asian Architecture." She presented this research in two meetings convened under UNESCO and organized by the UIA: in Athens in 1963 ("The Reciprocal Influences of the Orient and the Occident on Urban and Architectural Forms and Structures") and in Beirut in 1966 ("The East-West Colloquium"). This paper examines her research into Indian architecture at the "East-West Crossroads" within broader international contexts during a period of incipient globalization, as her erstwhile anticolonial activism transformed into transnational solidarity action (presaging the Non-Aligned Movement that would become meaningful in Sri Lanka). By

examining UNESCO and the UIA from the perspective of an architect consolidating an "East-West" practice, this paper foregrounds lesser known histories in regions negotiating the asymmetries of the Cold War, illuminating relations between then-head of UIA in Paris, Pierre Vago, the celebrated satellite figure Constantinos Doxiadis, and Minnette de Silva, who worked from a "periphery" but whose research into the East-West interface grounded a significant strand of the UIA's activity and UNESCO's concerns.

Anooradha Iyer Siddiqi

Anooradha Iyer Siddiqi is an architectural historian at Barnard College, Columbia University, and author of *Architecture of Migration: The Dadaab Refugee Camps and Humanitarian Settlement* (Duke University Press, 2024), on the spatial politics, visual rhetoric, ecologies, and long colonial traditions of the UNHCR-administered camps at Dadaab, Kenya. Siddiqi is the co-editor of *Feminist Architectural Histories of Migration and Spatial Violence*. Her book manuscript *Ecologies of the Past: The Inhabitations and Designs of Anil and Minnette de Silva* analyzes the politics of heritage environments through the work of Sri Lankan architect Minnette de Silva and art historian Anil de Silva-Vigier.

The Development Discourse Under Scrutiny: Brazilian Perspectives on the UIA and UNESCO

11:40 – 12:05

Paula Dedecca

Escola da Cidade, São Paulo

The Brazilian Institute for Education, Science, and Culture (IBECC), founded in 1946, was established as Brazil's national UNESCO commission with the aim of managing its projects at the local level, involving various professionals, including architects. A few years later, in 1950, the newly founded UIA welcomed three new members—Brazil, Argentina, and Colombia—and expressed its joy at the end of South America's absence from the institution's framework. For Brazilian architects, this marked the beginning of long-standing institutional dialogues led by the Instituto de Arquitetos do Brasil, which created significant opportunities for the exchange of ideas between the national and international professional spheres, intertwining universal ambitions, transnational operations, and specific local appropriations.

Nonetheless, this dialogue was not without conflicts. Especially during the 1960s, a critical attitude towards the UIA and UNESCO emerged, associating them with a colonialist and Eurocentric perspective, at the very moment when Latin American identity and solidarity were beginning to challenge the uses of the development discourse and became a basis for advocacy in international institutional dialogues. Indeed, this discourse crystallized into a set of techniques, strategies, and disciplinary practices that reframed political and cultural issues in seemingly scientifically neutral terms. This was particularly rooted in the universalist utopia of technical

rationality and staged development, weaving a network of power and knowledge through travels, working commissions, publications, circulars, architectural competitions, events, and more.

In bringing this debate to the forefront, the paper aims to discuss the Brazilian perspective on two UIA events held in 1966, at a time when Brazil was entering a period of military dictatorship and restrictions on civil liberties: the East-West Colloquium, held in Beirut on behalf of UNESCO, and "Habitat in Developing Countries," held in Bucharest, which featured Brazilian architect Joaquim Guedes—a member of the UIA Habitat Commission since 1963. In Brazilian critiques, both events were noted for their positive contributions, but also for how they highlighted disagreements about how poor countries should be understood, described, and intervened upon. These critiques help us reflect on how the UIA and UNESCO were implicated in a mechanism that rendered development—understood here as a historically constructed discourse—an active and real force.

Paula Dedecca

Paula Dedecca is Professor of Architectural History at Escola da Cidade in São Paulo. She holds a PhD in History and Theory of Architecture from the University of São Paulo. Her doctoral thesis examined the history of the Instituto de Arquitetos do Brasil from 1920 to 1970, exploring the national and international institutional networks of dialogue it fostered. Her recent articles, "UIFA, UIA, IAB: Transnational Dialogues about Women Architects (1960–1967)" and "An Event and Some Tugs-of-War: The International Seminar on the Creation of New Towns, 1958," explore some of these reflections on the UIA-UNESCO and are available online.

Young Architects' Social Concerns as Architectural Culture: UNESCO's Mediated Image of Latin America Informed by Dissidence at UIA's Students and Young Architects Meetings in the Late 1960s

11:40 – 12:05

Cristina López Uribe

National Autonomous University of Mexico

UNESCO's 1975 book *America Latina en su arquitectura*, edited by Roberto Segre, was the final stage of the institution's program for the study of the architecture and urbanism of Latin America. It was part of an ambitious project outlined in Lima in 1967 for the study of Latin America, understood as a united entity, and its cultural expressions.

The publication's contents, methodology, aims and authors were decided at a reunion of experts organized in Buenos Aires in 1969. The location and date of the celebration were perfectly timed to coincide with the 10th UIA World Congress of Architects and the International Meeting of Architecture Students. A first student meeting had been celebrated in Havana in 1963 and was soon infused with the political climate of the Cuban Revolution. Due to the political context in Argentina in 1969 during the dictatorship, the students took the opportunity to protest, and the meeting ended up being celebrated as two parallel events, one of which was organized by them in rebellion. The discussions were fruitful and the resolutions called for a greater involvement of architects in social housing, their own education and the need to overcome dependency. Similar conclusions were gathered one year before (1968) in Mexico City at the Young Architects

International Meeting, which was part of the Olympic Games in Mexico. Organized by Ruth Rivera Marín of the Union Internationale des Femmes Architectes (UIFA) with UIA's support, the event was celebrated in the immediate context of state repression and marked a change in architectural education that called for a greater involvement of architecture with the demands of society.

This paper seeks to understand UNESCO's publication as a response to, or expression of, the discussions held by the students in rebellion and the concerns expressed by the young architects at the events mentioned in the context of Cold War tensions and political dissent in the region.

Cristina López Uribe

Cristina López Uribe is an architectural historian and PhD Candidate in the Theory and History of Architecture at the Universitat Politécnica de Catalunya (UPC). She is Professor of the History of Architecture and member of the Laboratorio Editorial at the School of Architecture of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) where she acted as Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Bitácora Arquitectura* (2013–2020). She assisted MoMA curators in Mexico for the exhibition "Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955–1980" and worked as advisor for the LACMA exhibition "Found in Translation: Design in California and Mexico, 1915–1985." She is co-editor of *Living CU 60 Years* (UNAM, 2014) and author of an essay in *Radical Pedagogies* (MIT Press, 2022).

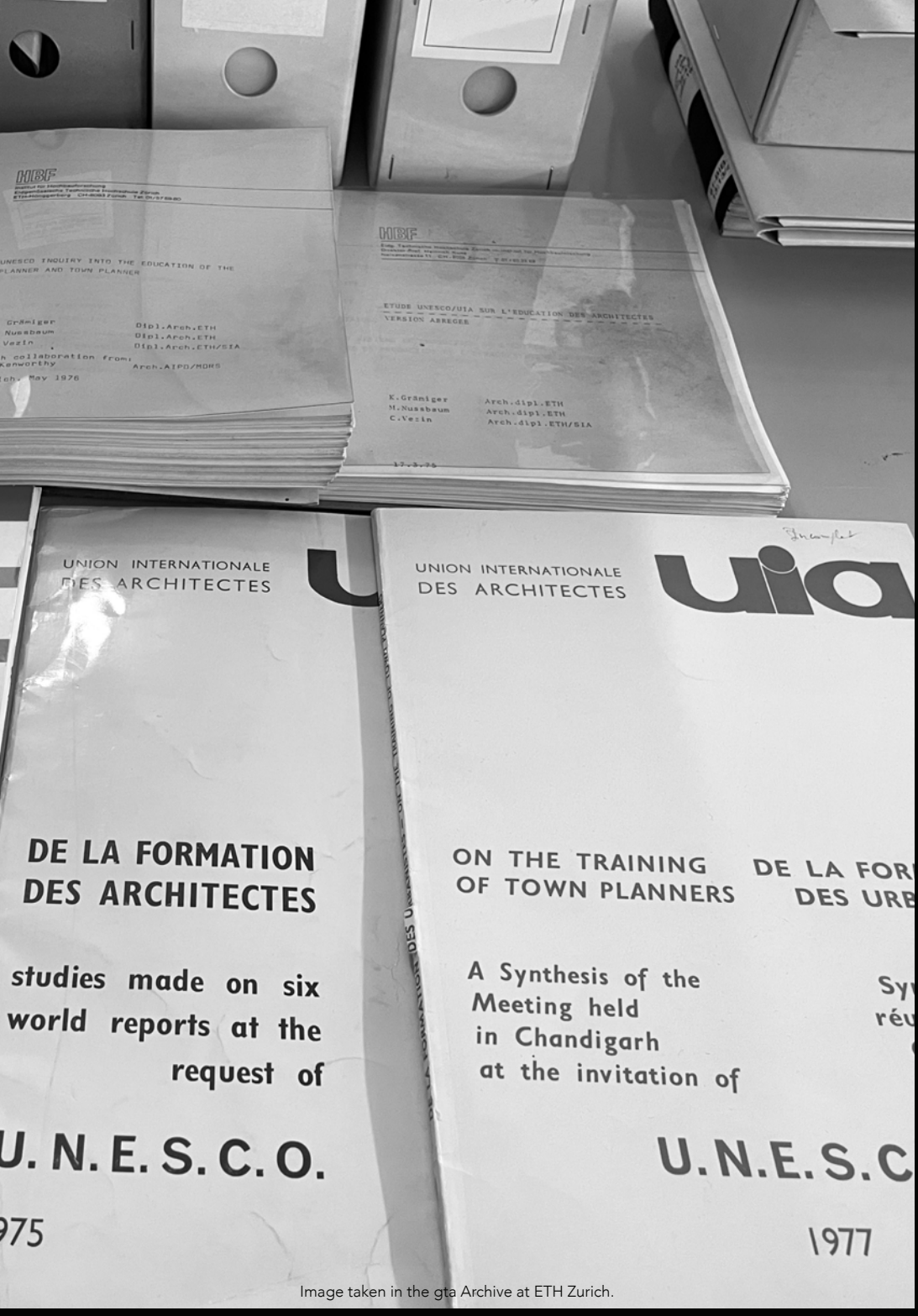


Image taken in the gta Archive at ETH Zurich.

gta Archive Lecture and Thematic Tour

14:00 – 15:30

"The Good, the Bad and the Ugly": Colonial Hybridities in the gta Archive Collections

14:00 – 14:30

Irina Davidovici, Sabine Sträuli

both from ETH Zurich

Thematic Tour Periscope and gta Archive: "Export Architectures: Decolonizing the Archive"

14:30 – 15:30

gta Archive team, Sebastiaan Loosen

Despite the gta Archive's collection focus on the built and planned architecture of Switzerland, closer inspection offers multiple and ambivalent connections with coloniality. Their existence raises procedural questions related to the identification, treatment, and visibility of archival artifacts related to colonial and postcolonial contexts. Such colonial entanglements are most readily recognizable at the interfaces with non-Western actors and cultures. Travelogues, travel photography, and correspondence collections, as well as the estates of Swiss architects and engineers who built abroad, offer productive entry points for decolonizing archival practices.

This lecture and thematic tour apply the concept of "hybridity" as a critical lens to examine the export of architectural expertise and construction systems from North to South. We argue that a certain ambivalence arises from the application of a double perspective on items and products related to colonial or postcolonial contexts. On the one hand, "export" practices have used developing economies as laboratories for testing prototypes and innovative construction methods or imposing Western values through—or alongside with—religion and colonial education. On the other hand, the extractive logic of many such endeavors was balanced by attempts at welfare and infrastructural aid, whether in the form of social, cultural, transport, health provision. The cross-cultural exchanges arising before, during, and following processes of design resulted in colonial hybridities at formal, programmatic, and technological levels.

This lecture and thematic tour explore how the gta Archive only recently began to identify, describe, and render visible such hybridities. It is aimed at the articulation of inventory and description procedures that might contribute to alternative and expanded histories of modernity, aligning archival material to the current research demands. In reading against the grain, it is committed to detect gaps in its collections and thematize inequalities. Case studies of three Swiss architects' estates and their built projects abroad serve as an entry point to discuss different positions and to evolve further questions and research: Zurich-based post-war architect Justus Dahinden (1925–2020) with buildings and projects in Uganda and Iran, Jesuit missionary and architect Bernard Jobin (1924–2020) with churches as well as civil infrastructure buildings in Burundi and Rwanda, and André M. Studer (1926–2007) with his iconic and already well-described Habitat Maroccain. In all three cases, photographs, drawings,

and notes by the architects help contextualize their travels and building activities.

The Thematic Tour Periscope and gta Archive includes a guest input from Sebastiaan Loosen on colonial dimensions in the work of Walter Custer (1909–1992).

gta Archive

Since the founding of the gta Institute at ETH Zurich in 1967, the gta Archive has been collecting and archiving original documents on architecture, urbanism, civil engineering, design and landscape design from the mid-19th century to the present. Around 350 lifetime and posthumous bequests, association archives and other holdings represent more than 150 years of standpoints that are essential to Swiss Baukultur as well as internationally significant. Today, the gta Archive team consists of Estelle Balet, Luca Can, Marco Cascianelli, Irina Davidovici, Almut Grunewald, Afra Häni, Sabine Sträuli, Daniel Weiss, and Alex Winiger.

Irina Davidovici

Irina Davidovici is an architect and historian, Privatdozent and Director of the gta Archive at ETH Zurich, with research focus in housing studies and Swiss architecture. She is the author of *Forms of Practice: German-Swiss Architecture 1980–2000* (gta 2012 and 2018) and *The Autonomy of Theory: Ticino Architecture and Its Critical Reception* (gta, 2024). Her book *Common Grounds: Comparative Studies of Early Housing Estates* will be published in 2025.

Sabine Sträuli

Sabine Sträuli is an art and architecture historian working at the gta Archive since 2015, where she has contributed to several archive-based publications and exhibitions. Previous research includes studies on female architects (Trix Haussmann, Elsa Burckhardt-Blum), institutional histories (Swiss national bank, gta Institute) and architecture exhibitions (world and national exhibitions). Since 2024, she represents the gta Archive in the Decolonization Working Group of the ETH Collections and Archives.

Sebastiaan Loosen

Sebastiaan Loosen is Senior Lecturer and Postdoctoral Researcher at the Chair of the History and Theory of Urban Design at ETH Zurich. His current research focuses on the 1960–80s agenda of foreign aid and the knowledge economy fostered by it. This ranges from the role of architectural schools in Europe in developing training programs and research projects to the emergence of new housing expertise, such as the so-called "sites-and-services" approach. A recent outcome of this research is a co-edited double theme issue of *ABE Journal. Architecture Beyond Europe* on "Architecture in the Foreign Aid-Funded Knowledge Economy" (2023).

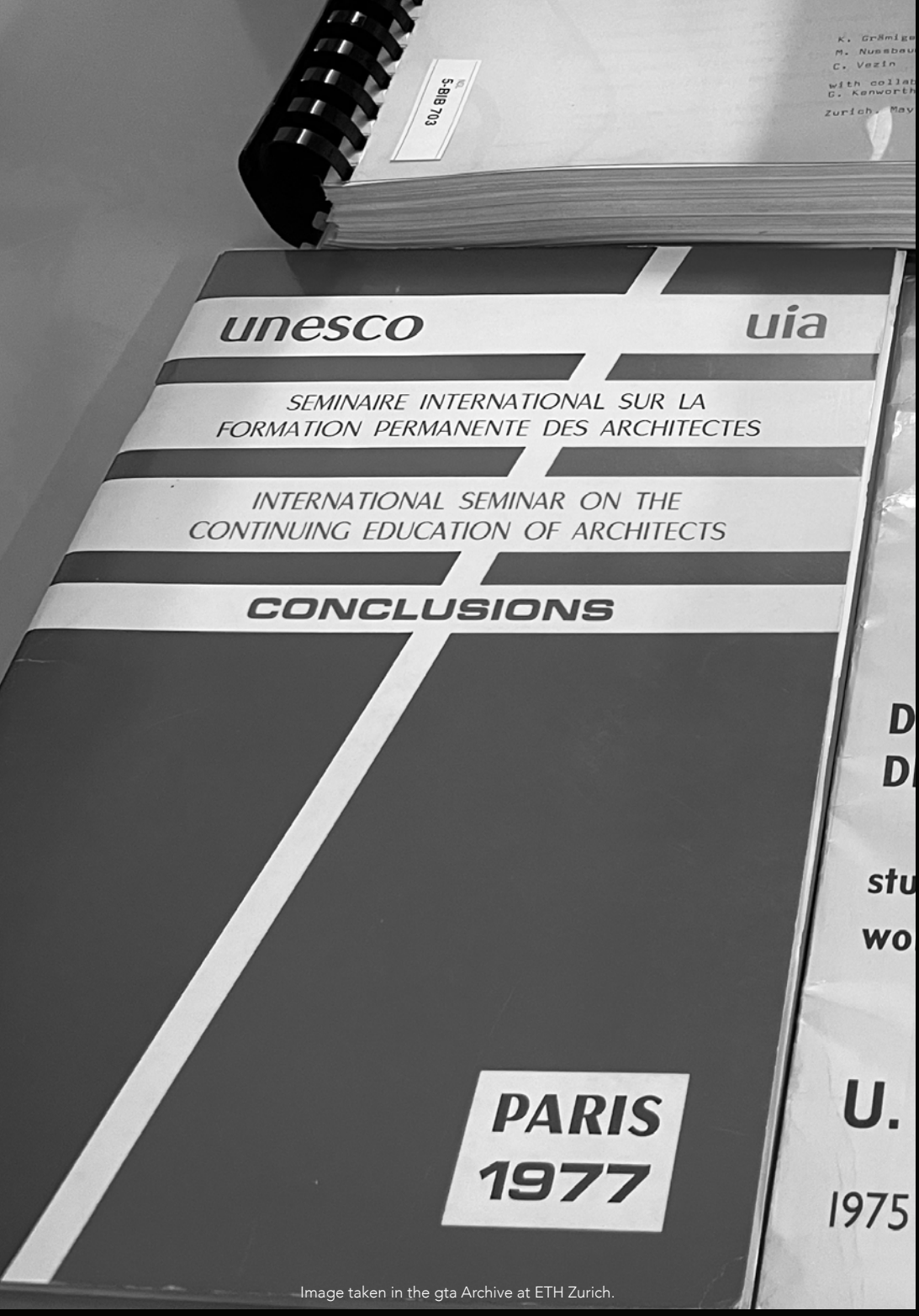


Image taken in the gta Archive at ETH Zurich.

Panel 6

School Buildings and Development through Education

15:45 – 18:05

Moderation by

Sebastiaan Loosen

ETH Zurich

Sebastiaan Loosen is Senior Lecturer and Postdoctoral Researcher at the Chair of the History and Theory of Urban Design at ETH Zurich. His current research focuses on the 1960–80s agenda of foreign aid and the knowledge economy fostered by it. This ranges from the role of architectural schools in Europe in developing training programs and research projects to the emergence of new housing expertise, such as the so-called "sites-and-services" approach. A recent outcome of this research is a co-edited double theme issue of *ABE Journal: Architecture Beyond Europe* on "Architecture in the Foreign Aid-Funded Knowledge Economy" (2023).

Buildings for Education and Development: Relations between the UIA School Construction Commission and UNESCO, 1950s to 1970s

15:45 – 16:10

Susanne Rick

Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

After World War II, when education was promoted as a crucial tool for peace and development, the construction of school infrastructure emerged as a global priority. Founded in 1951, the UIA Commission on School Construction (CSC) formed a strategic alliance with UNESCO, complementing UNESCO's mission to promote universal access to education by providing specialized knowledge on educational infrastructure. In the 1960s, when, at the height of decolonization, school construction in newly independent states became a dominant issue in international education debates, and UNESCO established its own school construction division with research centers in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the CSC and UNESCO followed different paths, pursuing their own distinct approaches to school construction in what were then called "developing countries," without close cooperation.

This paper traces the relationship between the CSC and UNESCO in the 1970s, when the two organizations worked more closely together, holding joint seminars in Vienna, East Berlin, Athens, Dakar and Washington and sharing their complementary expertise. Drawing on archival sources, including meeting minutes and correspondence, this research examines the intersection of expertise, resources, and professionals between the two organizations. This paper argues that despite the CSC's efforts to

diversify its membership, including more voices from the Global South, organizational variables of the UIA's bureaucratic and budgetary structure, but also the CSC's reliance on UNESCO's resources and contacts in newly independent countries, complicated its efforts to achieve membership diversification.

Susanne Rick

Susanne Rick studied art history at the University of Vienna and at University College Dublin. She is a Doctoral Candidate at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Her dissertation project examines the transnational activities of Austrian architects in the Middle East, Asia and Africa between 1955 and 1979 in the context of decolonization and post-independence development. Since 2021 she is an Associate Researcher at the Architekturzentrum Wien (Az W), where she worked on the research project "Transnational School Construction." She is also a Predoctoral Fellow in the research project "Ambivalences of Modernity: The Architect and Urban Planner Roland Rainer between Dictatorship and Democracy."

Transnational Architectural Meetings: UNESCO and School Construction in Asia 1960–1972

16:10 – 16:35

Ning de Coninck-Smith

Aarhus University

In the 1960s, UNESCO established three school building research centers in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The focus of my paper is the Asian Regional Institute for School Building Research (ARISBR, 1962–1972), its director David Vickery, and the experts. For the first four years of its existence, ARISBR was located in Bandung, Indonesia. When the country opted out of the United Nations in response to the recognition of Malaysia as an independent nation—and aggression against anything related to Britain (which was thought to have played an important role in the process) grew—the employees had to flee and after some negotiations and a stopover in Bangkok, the Institute was relocated to Colombo, Sri Lanka, until it closed in 1972.

From a small beginning, with three experts and a chief secretary, the institute grew to six experts and a local staff of about 50 employees paid by the government. They worked as drawers, drivers, carpenters, technical assistants, stenographers, typers and library assistants. On top of this came international or regional scholars on shorter visits and consultants for specific projects, such as Danish furniture designer Jørgen Gammelgaard, who designed school furniture.

In my study of ARISBR, I have been exploring how the knowledge that its staff brought with them from the West was transformed in the light of encounters with postcolonialism and the Cold War. Inspired by Karen Barad's entanglement of materiality and

meaning, a micro-historical perspective shows how the idealism and the visions of a school in the scale of the child were interpreted both creatively and pragmatically. One reason was that the world was changing, with a growing population and mounting postcolonial tensions between East and West. Another was the encounters with local building customs and different understandings of modernity among the authorities in the region. A third contributing factor was internal organizational challenges and divergent perceptions of the institute's task among the architects, planners and educators who were employed as experts at ARISBR.

Ning de Coninck-Smith

Ning de Coninck-Smith is Professor of the History of Education at the Department of Education at Aarhus University. She is co-chief editor of the six-volume *A Cultural History of Higher Learning*, to be published by Bloomington in 2026. Her paper is based on an article from 2019 on "Transnational arkitektoniske møder" [Transnational Architectural Encounters]. She has written two other papers on Danish architects' collaboration with UNESCO, one on Hans Henning Hansens and his UNESCO mission to Yugoslavia in 1956 to advise on school planning and architecture (Dansk Pædagogisk tidsskrift, 2019), and another on the furniture designer Jørgen Gammelgaard and his UNESCO Mission in 1968 to advise and design school furniture in Asia and Africa (Architectura, 2024).

The Construction of the Mohammadia School of Engineers: UNESCO and UIA in Post-Independence Morocco

16:35 – 17:00

Amine Mohamed Bajji

National School of Architecture, Rabat

After independence, Morocco found itself with an increased shortage of technical staff to support the country's economic and industrial transition. Faced with this situation, the first five-year plan (1960–1964) adopted by Morocco set three fundamental objectives: industrialization, agricultural development, and the training of technical staff. To achieve these objectives, the government decided to build the first school of engineering in independent Morocco: the École Mohammadia d'Ingénieurs (EMI). A member of UNESCO since 1956, Morocco benefited from the financial and technical assistance of the United Nations Special Fund for the construction of the EMI, as well as the support of UNESCO experts for defining its curriculum, and the determination of its human and technical needs, but also the definition of its future development in terms of strategy and infrastructure.

The history of the construction of the EMI is closely linked to the fate of the architects Claude Verdugo and Jacques Marozeau. As members of the UIA Commission on School Construction (CSC), the two were able to immerse themselves in international school architecture practices, inspired by the UNESCO guidelines. In 1958, just one year before the construction of EMI, the CSC held a meeting in Rabat to discuss the foundations of an international

program of action for school construction based on standardization and prefabrication.

In this context of decolonization and development aid, I attempt to analyze in this paper the agency of UNESCO and the CSC of the UIA as "contact zones" that influenced the implementation of the first architectural nucleus of the EMI in the 1960s, up to the expansion of its campus in the 1970s and 1980s and its transformation into a polytechnic school modeled on the French system.

Amine Mohamed Bajji

Amine Mohamed Bajji is an architect who graduated from the National School of Architecture of Rabat in 2014. In 2021, he obtained the Advanced Diploma in Heritage Architecture, jointly awarded by the École de Chaillot in Paris and the ENA Rabat. A PhD Candidate at the ENA Rabat since 2022, Amine currently holds the position of Architect for the Sustainable Development Program of Ksour and Kasbahs, a program carried out jointly by the UNDP and the Ministry of Housing of Morocco.

Prefab Spaces for Education: Alfred Roth and UNESCO Strategies in the Gulf

17:00 – 17:25

Roberto Fabbri

Zayed University

Since the beginning of the nation's journey to modernization, Kuwait has consistently invested in free public education. With a population growth of 140% in the mid-1960s, the need for educational spaces prompted the construction of an extraordinary amount of schools, which in their number, size, and distribution have contributed largely to shaping the urban landscape of the modern city.

At the 1960 UNESCO First Regional Conference of the Ministers of Education of Arab States in Beirut, the need for educational planning in Islamic countries was declared urgent. Kuwait was among the few that had a strategy and some initial results. The emerging Gulf state welcomed the support of UNESCO to educate new cosmopolitan citizens in state-of-the-art facilities that represented the new modern state fueled by the oil industry.

On this common ground, the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education (MOE) and UNESCO established a long-term development plan that brought several missions to Kuwait between the 1960s and the 1990s. This cooperation focused on various cultural and educational subjects ranging from teacher training to adult education, English language teaching, the establishment of the university, and finally technical support for building 100 new schools. Within the framework of this collaborative effort, architect Alfred Roth (1903–1998), head of the UIA Commission on School Construction in the 1950s, was appointed to

assess existing spaces and to design prototype schools in alignment with the new educational programs.

Informed by in-depth archival research of Roth's documents in the gta Archive at ETH Zurich and by several years of on-site analysis of modern architecture in the Gulf, the present text investigates the works of Alfred Roth as a UNESCO representative and in connection with the 1948–1958 UNESCO resolutions on "Fundamental Education." It also examines the consequences of these plans on the Kuwaiti cultural and physical environment during the modernization era up to the present day. Presenting UNESCO/MOE/Roth's effort as a case study, the text touches on the role of UN agencies in shaping the Gulf. Approaching notions like locality, tradition, and modernity in this essay offers the opportunity to debate the diffused narrative that reads modern architecture in the non-West as a one-directional process more than a bijective exchange.

Roberto Fabbri

Roberto Fabbri is an architect, Associate Professor and Chair of Design at the College of Arts and Creative Enterprises at Zayed University, Abu Dhabi. As a UNDP consultant, he contributed to heritage rehabilitation projects in Kuwait and is currently a member of the Modern Heritage Technical Committee in the UAE. He is the 2024 Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture Fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His research interests focus on urban development, architecture, and heritage in Gulf cities and the non-West and often revolve around the notion of narrative spaces. He co-authored *Modern Architecture Kuwait 1949–1989* (Niggli, 2016 and 2017), *Urban Modernity in the Contemporary Gulf* (Routledge 2021), and "Impatient Cities of the Gulf" (HPA 2022).

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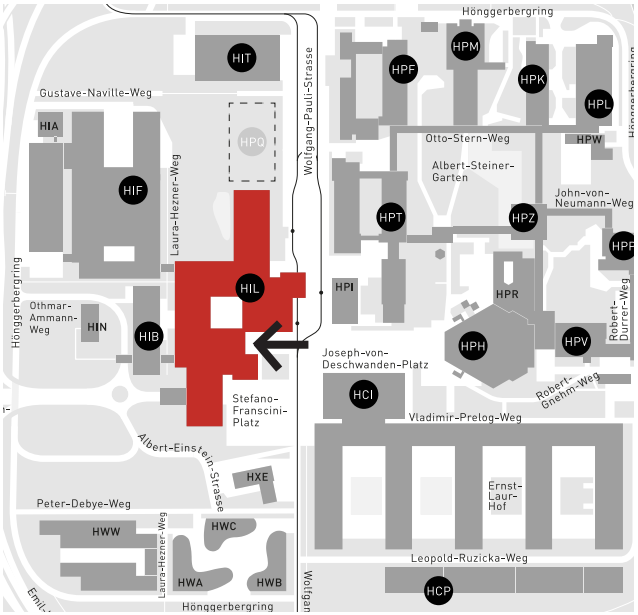
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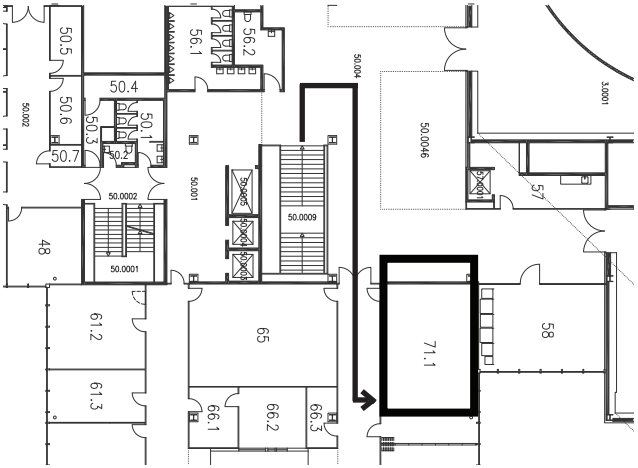
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Organizers

Dr. Andreas Kalpakci

Chair of the Theory of Architecture, Prof. Dr. Laurent Stalder
Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture
ETH Zurich
andreas.kalpakci@gta.arch.ethz.ch

Dr. Frederike Lausch

Visiting Lectureship for the Theory of Architecture
Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture
ETH Zurich
lausch@arch.ethz.ch

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