

AR-402(b)

Studio MA2 (Gugger)

Gugger Harry

Cursus	Sem.	Type
Architecture	MA2, MA4	Obl.
Mob. AR	E	Opt.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	13
Withdrawal Session	Unauthorized Summer
Semester	Spring
Exam	During the semester
Workload	390h
Weeks	14
Hours	6 weekly
Lecture	2 weekly
Project	4 weekly

Number of positions

It is not allowed to withdraw from this subject after the registration deadline.

Remark

Inscription faite par la section

Summary

laba's focal theme is Urban Nature. Due to the scale and character of today's territorial expansion, the definition of the urban becomes more diffuse and complex. laba's didactic method takes students through design scales ranging from the territorial to the architectural in a year long course.

Content

In the turn towards the 20th century the growing industrialization of the Western world set the stage for neocolonial and imperial expansionist agendas based on the White man's burden and his civilizing mission. The infamous scramble for Africa disrupted an entire continent introducing new cultural, economic, political and educational systems, with enduring repercussions.

These thrusts propelled nationalist feelings and geographical conflicts over previously inexistent borders, with Morocco - standing at a geographical crossroads between Sub-Saharan Africa, the Maghrebi Arab-Muslim world and Mediterranean Europe - struggling to withstand the deriving cultural clashes.

Post-independence Arabization tried to tackle issues of identity, but the clear Westernization of its cities and the new guise of economic imperialism - with the old colonial powers still dominating the trade balance - showcase an ongoing and unresolved conflict between past and present.

Morocco's recent development poses an additional threat: across the Arab world, the richest countries are the ones where traditional knowledge and urban heritage have been more quickly forgotten or entirely destroyed, fueled by an elite who still relies on western references as an alleged indicator of higher culture and education.

The choice of Fez as a case study stems from its peripheral condition which explains its resistance to the liberal democratic transformations witnessed in other major cities. Fez's medina – the vastest contiguous pedestrian area in the world – has managed to keep its physical conformation and original craft-based functions, continuing to be a productive habitat and the commercial center of the city. This is a showcase for how a self-built environment can still be used as a way to cope with modern life.

The growth of the city and its new clusters furthermore allow us to investigate the difference between market derived urban poverty and rural poverty, demarcating the perennial validity of spatial values and vernacular construction techniques based on intuition (of which the courtyard house is the most prominent example).

Fez's case will be used to tackle the themes of ecology, semi-rural settlements, the privatization of land use, forms of production and the importance of typology as a way to create stable means of human association and community.

Alongside a growing stream of large-scale international investment and the enticement of tourism, we are looking for tiny cues, nagging doubts and signs of the fusion between form and life, raising questions about identity, authenticity, tradition, the globalization of culture and the use of local resources.

Keywords

Portugal, architecture, landscape, contextualism, climate change, territory, cartography.

Learning Prerequisites**Required courses**

Spring Semester at laba is a mandatory follow-up to previous fall semester. laba takes yearly subscriptions only.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Create and follow a project through the various design phases: feasibility study, schematic design, design development and presentation documentation.
- Conduct field research including the survey and documentation of a site.
- Present the project through various media: drawings, models, text descriptions, photography, as well as through oral presentations.

Transversal skills

- Use a work methodology appropriate to the task.
- Continue to work through difficulties or initial failure to find optimal solutions.
- Manage priorities.
- Take feedback (critique) and respond in an appropriate manner.
- Make an oral presentation.
- Access and evaluate appropriate sources of information.

Teaching methods

In the Spring semester laba students must write their own project brief (site + program + spatial intention) that leads to the development of an architecture project based on the territorial reading carried out in the first semester. Each student is asked to critically appoint a site and program, and then the project design unfolds in a sequence similar to the official phases: feasibility study, schematic design, design development, presentation documentation. Lectures on the subjects of context, structure, façade, building services, and fit-out provide inputs to each phase accordingly. This procedure can be seen as a dress rehearsal for the master thesis project. Students work individually or in pairs.

Assessment methods

Each review (both intermediate and final) will be assessed by the laba staff and an appointed guest jury.

Supervision

Office hours	Yes
Assistants	Yes

Resources**Bibliography**

Attached to the course booklet.

Notes/Handbook

Each student will receive a course booklet. You find more detailed information on our teaching

methododology and what we expect from our students by visiting our website < laba.epfl.ch >

Websites

- <http://laba.epfl.ch>

Prerequisite for

Projet de Master