

AR-659

Minoring architectural research

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Cursus	Sem.	Type
Architecture and Sciences of the City		Opt.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	2
Session	
Exam	Written & Oral
Workload	60h
Hours	56
Lecture	12
Exercises	24
Practical work	20
Number of positions	12

Frequency

Only this year

Remark

Cancelled

Summary

A theoretical and practical reflection on the possibilities, positions and methodologies of a minor approach to architectural research will reveal key concepts and tools to establish a critical position, build a situated architectural investigation and produce research materials otherwise.

Content
**Minoring architectural research:
ecologies, materials, and practices for operative research**

Minor architectures are an open repertoire of spatial practices and know-hows based on the immanent differentiating agency of bodies. They feed on the circumstantial and experimental, operating in the narrow margins and blind spots of major languages, structures and knowledge, unsettling them and creating other worlds. While minor architectures work with and within materially limited spaces, tools and conditions, they enlarge the world through forms of plural material entanglement. Minor architectures have been studied by different authors and under different names in the last few decades, from Gordon Matta-Clark's and Robin Evan's parallel *anarchitectures* to the work of Jennifer Bloomer or Jill Stoner. These practitioners have sought ##to unveil those practices affecting the organization of our everyday space - how bodies interact, how environments mediate. From those origins, we seek to conceive within this doctoral course what a minor architectural research could mean and bring to our practice.

Departing from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari initial use of the term to read anew Franz Kafka's literature, we will describe and frame this notion as a way of working with the living and material core of architectural practices, as well as its relations with the major practices and languages of the discipline and its institutions. We will consider the relation between that living and material core and political agency, to reframe the relation between spatial practices and the imaginaries and actions of the multitude around our living together. To do this we will contemplate the potentialities of studying, both in historical and operative terms, the conflict of the spatial forms and practices of the major languages and those of minor practices.

We will also consider a different genealogy of the architectural body, against (and beyond) the Vitruvian man and the ideal of a singular, male, able, white body and its ensuing geometries and decisions, we will follow the many (other)-bodies of spatial practice, from the non-male and racialized body to the overflowing body, the plural body, the formless body, and a long etcetera. Around them, we will define a series of notions, from individual and plural spatialities, touch, traces, dispositions and ecologies of signs. This exercise will help us articulate a minor vocabulary able to analyze material practices and conflicts from an architectural lens. Furthermore, we will frame bodies as part of our research

instrumental working with performative techniques to frame our research materials otherwise.

Alongside, we propose to explore the uneven relations of architectural research to temporalities both in its objects and subjects of knowledge. Effectively, the minor enables us to reconsider the proximities and distances of plural temporalities to our worlds, questioning the presents, pasts, futures, future pasts and past futures and their a/effect on the actual, and how they are produced and reproduced. It unveils in which way the past as an epistemological category has been used as an imperialist instrument of relegation and subjugation of practices and knowledge, and how the minor, as a contact zone, invites us to dissolve Time in plural temporalities to work with.

From that minor framework, we will then consider its consequences for architectural research and develop a series of considerations, explorations and tools to propose a minor conceptualisation of architectural methodologies of research. The participants in this doctoral course will be invited to apply them in a case study corresponding to their ongoing PhD thesis that will be worked upon throughout the duration of the course. The participants' outcome will be this minor analysis, a preliminary outline of a minor research plan to follow up on their initial findings and a critical reflection on the notion of methodology in architectural research. For students who don't have a situation of analysis (or not yet), one case study will be provided to develop their minor analysis.

Participants

The PhDs students from architecture, urban sciences, sociology, geography and other disciplines related with spatial practices, spaces, its materialities and temporalities are welcomed. We are addressing students from the EDAR, from ETHZ, and invite international students if they manage to join physically for the duration of the course.

Personal work

To join the course, PhDs students should submit a short description of their PhD research question(s) (300 words) to lucia.jalonoyarzun@epfl.ch and effectuate the preliminary readings. During the seminar hours, architectural research will be problematized from a minor key, and on the workshop hours every afternoon, students will produce cartographies and exercises oriented toward a minor analysis of a given situation and how it performs with their research methodologies. Finally, they will be asked to produce a preliminary outline of a minor architectural research plan to follow up on their initial findings, and a critical reflection on the notion of methodology in architectural research today. All that will be commonly discussed and explored in the final session.

Guests

Anne-Sylvie Henchoz, Artist and performer.

Victor Cano Ciborro, Architect and researcher.

Note

PhDs students from architecture, urban sciences, sociology, geography and other disciplines related with spatial practices, spaces, its materialities and temporalities are welcomed. We are addressing students from EDAR, ETHZ and other Swiss universities as well as international students.

- The course will take place on site at the Lausanne EPFL Campus.

- The course will take place at the end of October.

- The first three days of the course (Mon 23rd to Wed 25th) will start with three hours each morning to ground concepts and relations through lectures and discussions around the provided reading list. Each afternoon, four hours of workshop will provide the basis to test practical tools in the production of mappings and a minor architectural research plan.

On Thursday 26th and Friday 27th, the students will work on their final submission with the possibility of personally consulting with the course instructors if they wish so.

On Monday 30th, there will be a joint discussion on the submitted work with orientations towards their future applications.

- Participating students are asked to read before the start of the course the basic reading list, as the theoretical sessions will be built around these texts.

Keywords

minor architectures, situated research, ecologies, plural temporalities, drawing, mapping, agency, materialities, repertoire, information

Learning Outcomes

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

- Establish a critical research position towards a situation of study.
- Build an architectural situation as a dynamic ecology of agents.
- Use techniques of drawing and mapping in an ecological way, describing complex situations and producing new materials for spatial research.

Resources

Websites

- https://www.zotero.org/groups/4732801/minoring_architectural_research/library (in progress)