

Multidisciplinary colloquium

Call for papers

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Conferences
January-March 2021
Colloquium
21-22 April 2021

profession ? architects

Deadline for
applications :
11 January 2021

Trade, profession or vocational stream,
between permanence and instability forms
of architectural practice :

**how to think the relationships between the different
actors of the architecture's field ?**



Profession ? **Architects**

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**Keywords : architect, trade, profession, practice, professional identity
and status.**

This colloquium's purpose is to analyse from an interdisciplinary perspective the architects' practices by questioning their inter-professional, «intra-professional» and pedagogical relationships. The aim objective is to improve the dialogue between the different actors involved in the architecture's field: practitioners, theorists, teachers, researchers. Thus, contributions from all disciplines involved in architectural practice and research are encouraged and welcomed. We hope that this pluralism will allow the emergence of constructive encounters and exchanges, hence unveiling key outlooks on the dynamics driving the architectural field.

This project questions a professional group—the architects—by clarifying its tensions, contradictions or cooperations. A variety of practices grows around the architect's title. Which status to give to the people?

For this call, we have made a semantic choice. We use the notion of «architects» in the broader sense. It includes all agents—men and women—, working in the architecture's field, who have received an architectural training. Nevertheless, one of the purposes of this project is to question this differentiation between the holders of the title and all the actors trained or working within architecture's schools.

**Following the colloquium, in one of the next editions of the periodical
Les cahiers du LHAC will be dedicated to this project. Speakers may
be invited to rework their papers in order to be published.**

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Organizing committee

- Cécile Fries-Paiola (architect DE, lecturer in humanities and social sciences at ENSA-Nancy)
- Mirjana Gregorcic (sociologist, doctoral student at University of Lorraine)
- Mélanie Guenot (architect DE, doctoral student in LHAC and AMUP, ENSA-Nancy, ENSA-Strasbourg and INSA Strasbourg department of Architecture)
- Somia Merriout (architect DE, doctoral student in AMUP, ENSA-Strasbourg and INSA Strasbourg department of Architecture)
- Mathilde Thiriet (architect DE, doctoral student in LHAC, ENSA-Nancy)

Scientific committee

- Gauthier Bolle (architect DPLG, lecturer in history and architectural culture at ENSA-Strasbourg)
- Emeline Curien (architect DE, lecturer in theories and practices of architectural and urban design at ENSA-Nancy)
- Franck Guêné (architect ENSAIS, lecturer in Architecture at INSA-Strasbourg)
- Lionel Jacquot (sociologist, professor of sociology, University of Lorraine)
- Pascale Marion (architect DPLG, contract teacher in theories and practices of architectural and urban design at ENSA-Strasbourg)
- Barbara Morovich (archeologist, anthropologist, lecturer in humanities and social sciences at ENSA-Strasbourg)
- Hélène Vacher (historian, professor emeritus in history and architectural culture at ENSA-Nancy)
- Gwenaëlle Zunino (architect and urban planner, associate lecturer in town and territory at ENSA-Nancy)

Terms and conditions for contribution

Proposals for papers must be sent by **Monday 11 January 2021** to the following address:

colloque-profession-architectes@nancy.archi.fr

They must include a 2500 characters communication's summary – spaces and footnotes included, optional bibliography not included. For their communications, the participants must specify the topic of research. Communications in English and German are allowed.

The participants will be informed of the scientific committee's decisions in February 2021. **The colloquium will take place in April 21 and 22, 2021 at the Ecole nationale supérieure d'architecture de Nancy.** Because the sanitary procedures might change, the last details of the event's organisation will be communicated few weeks before the due date, in accordance with the applicable health protocol.

Argument

Architects seeking an institutionalization of current debates.

In the 19th century, architects were involved in a struggle for institutional recognition of their identity (Epron, 1987). Who is an architect? Who can say he is an architect? What are their specific knowledge and skills? How can they be acquired? In professional associations, architects conduct various battles to establish themselves as a professional entity – the reform of education, the creation of a professional diploma, the access regulation to the title, the definition of the different forms of practice or the redaction of the profession's ethic codes. The creation of «l'Ordre des architectes» on 31 December 1940 was the completion of these long debates. How has it been a sufficient answer to the demands of the 19th and 20th centuries architects? How have architects adapted to this progressive institutionalization?

Nowadays, this profession is still questioning its identity in order to face both endogenous challenges – modalities and forms of practice – and exogenous challenges, such as environmental ones (Chadoin, 2013). Over the years, the jobs entrusted to architects have become more and more complex and diversified (Biau, 2020). Moreover, the representations associated with the profession – either the way it perceives itself or the image it reflects – are becoming more complex, combining representations of the past, social perception, defended strategic posture(s) and realities experienced by architects. The many representations of the architect's figure and their many practices cause some authors to mention a splitting and fragmentation of the traditional mission (Moulin et Lautman, 1978), an identity in negotiation (Tapie, 2000), or even a deprofessionalization (Champy, 2001). All contributes to maintaining confusions, considered by some as thriving, around the architects' own identity. Who are today's architects? How are they different from yesterday's ones? Should we continue the research into the characterization of the architects' professional identity? Should we reflect more about the relations between the different actors involved in the architecture's field?

The issues of professional and cultural identities were raised (Epron 1987, Parsons, 1955 ; Goode, 1957, Bucher et Strauss, 1992 ; Monjardet, 1994 ; Dubar 2003 ; Karpik 2003 ; van Zanten, 2003), the institutionalization's history of the profession is written (Decommer, 2017). Our contribution to this work is ensured by studying the notion of identity from the relationships' perspective. Indeed, the architecture's field is the

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social world in which pressures and tensions are exerted (Bourdieu, 1988; Biau, 1996, 2000). In this way, we propose to question the ties between the actors—in relation to the architecture's field—through the segmentation's phenomena and the will to become one—between diversity and singularity.

In short, we want to question the way in which collaborations and segmentation dynamics define the architecture's field, its social representation but also its practices and its future.

Contributions may focus on the issues—preservation of a title, protection of a practice scope, etc.—values—social commitment, confraternity, etc.—standards—career path, practices, etc.—and strategies—networks, official associations, etc.—that animate and govern the architecture's field. Collaboration between agents with different postures and the places of friction will be privileged study areas.

Therefore, the communications must be in compliance with the different research topics defined below. In order to adopt a comparative approach, the speakers will be able to extend the questions to other geographical and professional situations.

Research topic 1/ Instruct, teach, train, pass on: from the first patrons to the teachers.

The training received in schools is designed to prepare the students for their future tasks. The relationship between education, professional practice and academia has always been a matter of debate—from the educational reforms of 1863 and 1968 to the current strikes in architecture's schools. Sometimes, it is a question of criticizing the teaching's content considered outdated, indicating the dichotomy between the knowledge and know-how and the practice realities; sometimes it is a question of the relationship between schools and the university.

All these debates contribute to the creation of new places of training and to divide the architecture's actors.

- > How to prepare architecture students for the task varieties that they may be confronted with? What professionalization's level should be achieved in architectural studies?
- > How does the profession perceive the content taught in schools? How is it involved? What opposition is revealed within schools? How are they manifested?
- > How should the knowledge's transmission be conducted?
- > What roles have schools on the relationships between the different agents in the architecture's field? Do they allow inter-knowledge?

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Research topic 2/ What makes (the) profession, from the development of the corporation to the birth of a vocational stream.

For this second topic, we propose to study the «internal relations» between architects. From the first Grand Prix de Rome to the new forms of canonical career (Biau, 1998), the architect's figure has constantly imposed itself as a unique representation. However, in the face of the noble or «pur» exercises (Chadoin, 2013), many other practices are involved. By their doctrines, postures or access to order, architects aren't a homogeneous group. This is illustrated by the creation of many professional associations, starting from the second half of the 19th century, or by today's gatherings around common values – frugalité heureuse et créative, région architecture, etc. Within these places of expression and recognition among colleagues, architects ask questions about the fundamentals and uniqueness of a profession, currently shaken by many controversies and differences.

Therefore, we would like to question the heterogeneity of this professional group, from the first associations to the current professional and associative structures. Furthermore, in the present case, the communications can be focus on a study about the profession's perception, beyond the limits self-imposed by the group.

- > Do architects form a professional entity? How do they drive this group of confreres? With what goals? Which subsets rise? Around which topics do they meet?
- > How does the gathering of architects around common values act on the dynamics specific to the field of architecture?
- > What are the modes of regulation of this profession?
- > What is the image of the architect? How does society perceive him?
- > What is the impact of contemporary societal issues on the profession and how is the profession dealing with it?

Research topic 3/ Occupations related to the field of architecture, between positions, collaborations and controversies.

The following axis proposes to question the collaborations of architects with other actors whose missions are related to the field of architecture. These other actors are working within various structures such as design offices, Architectural, Urban Planning and Environmental Councils, Regional Natural Parks, etc.

The protection of the intervention perimeter has always been the core of architects' preoccupations. Faced with engineers and contractors, architects have made certain claims to acquire the monopoly of architecture, highlighting specific knowledge and skills. These struggles over professional prerogatives continue today. However, the reality of practices—site management, major projects—makes collective action necessary. The multiplication of expertise involved in architectural design—design offices, construction economists, crafts, sociologists, etc.—forces architects to think about their practices in collaboration. Between the protection of a territory, the transformation of practices and the conquest of new missions, the relationships between the different agents are to be questioned.

- > What are the details of collaboration between architects and other actors in the field of construction?
- > How do collaborative experiences nourish the different practices of architects or other experts? Can they limit them?
- > How can certain assignments generate new professional groups? What empowerment processes do they engage in (project management assistant, programmiste, economist, urban planner, etc.)?
- > How do polemics occur? Positioning strategies? Withdrawal movements?

Research topic 4/ Research and profession, from architectural treatises to doctorate.

Public policies encourage closer bonds between sciences, technologies and society. Therefore, it is necessary to think the elaboration of new knowledge and expertises at the service of social and societal issues. The different ways to contribute, to constitute and to transmit them raise questions. The incentive public policy on architectural researches and reforms, have certainly allowed fertile initiatives to emerge, or materialize, but they have also fueled controversies. Architecture research did not wait for its institutionalization to initiate a rich production. Hybrid postures, mixing written productions and architectural practices, have been for a long time a characteristic of recognized architects. The diversity of works and the institutionalization of new postures, integrating university reference – doctorate in architecture, teacher-researcher, doctorate through validation of experience, etc. – mean that the previous and the future productions as well as the specificities of the architectural research is questioned. Its first particularity is about the way to consider the practice or, more commonly named, its link to the project.

Within this last axis, the objective is to question the relationships between research(es) and practice(s) specific to the field of architecture. The expected contributions can analyze the nature and conditions of relationships within collaborations, whether fruitful or abrogated, between researchers and practitioners. We also welcome questions about the postures that we qualify as hybrid, for which the different practices – professional and research – are dealt with the same agent.

- > What relationship have architectural researchers and practicing architects? What collaborations have emerged? What fears persist?
- > How high is considered the architectural research by the architects? How is it useful for the profession?
- > Do the new research paradigms challenge the specificities of architectural research? Have they modified research practices within the field of architecture?
- > How and why do architecture graduates go into research?

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- > What research themes and issues are being investigated? How do they make a connection with the practices deployed everywhere (including the teaching ones)?

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