



International PhD Seminar – *Invention of Carouge*, Fifty Years after: crossing history, theory and urban ethnography

Genève 21,22,23 May 2019

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Issue

The Phd Seminar *Invention of Carouge, Fifty Years after* is organized on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the book by Swiss historian of art, architecture and urbanism André Corboz that was published in 1968. Focused on the study of the new town of Carouge (planned and built by the Savoyard state in the 18th century near Geneva and later incorporated as a borough of the latter), *Invention of Carouge*, was an ambitious attempt to combine a historical case study, urban analysis and planning theory. The topic of the book also represented a vector of cultural exchange between Turin and Switzerland in the following years, most notably on the occasion of the exhibition on Carouge organized by Turin's State Archives in the mid-1980s.

The course aims at revisiting the 1968 book, assessing its legacy and discussing whether the analytical instruments deployed by Corboz remain valid, or what may since have changed in our understanding of the mutual links between urban history, design analysis and ethnography. It will include common fieldwork to test various tools and perspectives related to the study of Carouge.

Four axes will be developed through the students' fieldwork, jointly producing an interdisciplinary workshop in order to emphasize the need of a collaborative approach:

Integrating the history of architecture into urban history

Invention de Carouge was a study that postulated the existence of a close relationship between the history of architecture and the history of urbanism and which for that very reason initiated an implicit dialogue with much urban research of the twentieth century, based both on a historical study of architectural objects and their interpretation as elements of an urban context. Several questions will be raised: Which methods were put in place for this purpose in the 1968 book? What other techniques of observation and analysis could be used today to test the validity of this approach and thus renew fieldwork approaches to the history of urbanism?

Observing everyday practices of local inhabitants

Heightening the focus on the observation and participant observation, this axis will highlight the presence of researchers in the field. By reflecting on anthropological and methodological considerations, it aims to look at different local communities or social groups living in Carouge. It also intends to study the evolution of some neighbourhoods by examining their identity markers through the narratives and practices of involved stakeholders. Specific attention will be drawn to the expression of social, historic, cultural, economic or political

identities in the public spaces and to the dynamic of boundaries between social groups (marks of their presence, displacement or even disappearance).

Mapping the Palimpsest

How to understand and develop the statement “the monument of Carouge is its plan”, made by Corboz in 1968? In its day, the shifting of the discourse on the city towards a history of ideas and concepts was fundamental as a critique of functionalist urbanism. Corboz’s subsequent deployment of the metaphor of the *territory as a palimpsest* must therefore be contextualized. This axis seeks to identify the long duration of the plan, its impacts at all scales and according to all registers (structure of the plan, urban morphology, architectural expression, functional). It will also address the question of borders and transitions between urban structures and their planning principles, especially when reading of the evolution of Carouge through 50 years. It will finally address the potential of GIS data in palimpsest mapping.

Mapping the Text?

How to study the Corbozian architecture of connections and information that informs the book? This axis aims at tracing a series of multidimensional maps by using a set of network mapping tools and charts of sequential connection: identifying travels from the archives to the plans, from the architects' biographies and their work as authors to their proposals for Carouge, from the historical framing in Corboz's narrative to the explicating cartographic charts.

Expected outcomes

By the end of the course the students are expected to acquire the following capabilities:

- To evaluate Corboz’s methodological values for contemporary urban research in an interdisciplinary perspective
- To take part in a collaborative project including fieldwork and dissemination
- To develop an autonomous research based on specific tools coming from different fields of knowledge, such as urban history, urban design, ethnography and network analysis

References

André Corboz, *Invention de Carouge*, Lausanne, Payot, 1968.

Bâtir une ville au siècle des lumières. Carouge : modèles et réalités, catalogue de l'exposition (Carouge, 29 mai-30 septembre 1986), Torino, Archivio di Stato, 1986.

Pierre Barde, *L'invention de Carouge : le premier urbanisme moderne*, RTS, 1971

<https://www.rts.ch/archives/tv/culture/dimensions/3472353-la-ville-de-carouge>

Organisation

The seminar will be held in English and French. It will take place in Geneva at the Fondation Braillard Architectes (lectures) and in Carouge (collective fieldwork).

The seminar is organised in partnership by CDH-EPFL, Lab-U EPFL, Politecnico di Torino-DASP, Accademia di Architettura di Mendrisio, Fondation Braillard Architectes and the EPFL Center HABITAT, in the frame of Swissuniversities program.

The 3 days of workshop-seminar include 2 key note lectures; 3 half days of fieldwork in Carouge, supervised by the responsible of the course and 1 half day of feedback on each participant’s production.

The course requires a good understanding of French in order to conduct collective fieldwork in Carouge and to relate to Corboz' text of *Invention de Carouge* (1968).

For more information see the presentation of the seminar in the Course Book of EDAR Doctoral Programme (<https://www.epfl.ch/education/phd/programs/>).

Admission

20 Students maximum will be accepted to attend the seminar. The participation fee as well as 2 nights hotel and lunches will be covered by the seminar's organization.

When applying, students are asked to submit a motivation letter of max 500 words with name, affiliation and year of attendance of the PhD providing answers to the following questions:

- What is the overall topic of your current research?
- How would you connect your participation at the workshop-seminar to your current PhD research?
- What are the skills you consider to employ and develop during the workshop?
- Have you published any texts (papers, book essays) which you consider pertinent to the course topic? Please list your possible bibliography (the list is excluded from the word count)

The letter must be sent by e-mail no later than April the 1st 2019, to florence.graezerbideau@epfl.ch

Notification and preparation

All applicants will be notified of acceptance or rejection of their application by April the 12th, 2019.

Credits

The Doctoral Seminar counts for 4 ECTS.

Key dates

Application deadline: April the 1st, 2019.

Notification of acceptance: April the 12th, 2019.

Seminar dates: May 21, 22 and 23, 2019.

Contact

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Scientific Committee

Prof. Alessandro Armando, Department of Architecture and Design, Politecnico di Torino.

Dr. André Bideau, Accademia di architettura Mendriso, USI.

MER Dr. Cogato Lanza Elena, Laboratory of Urbanism, Habitat Research Center, EPFL, and Fondation Braillard Architectes.

Prof. Filippo De Pieri, Department of Architecture and Design, Politecnico di Torino.

MER Dr. Florence Graezer Bideau, Institute for Area and Global Studies, College of Humanities, Habitat Research Center, EPFL.