

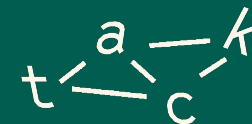
Probing Tacit Knowledge.

Codes of Tacit Knowledge

Teaching Module 5



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.



Communities of Tacit Knowledge
Architecture and its Ways of Knowing

Module Aims

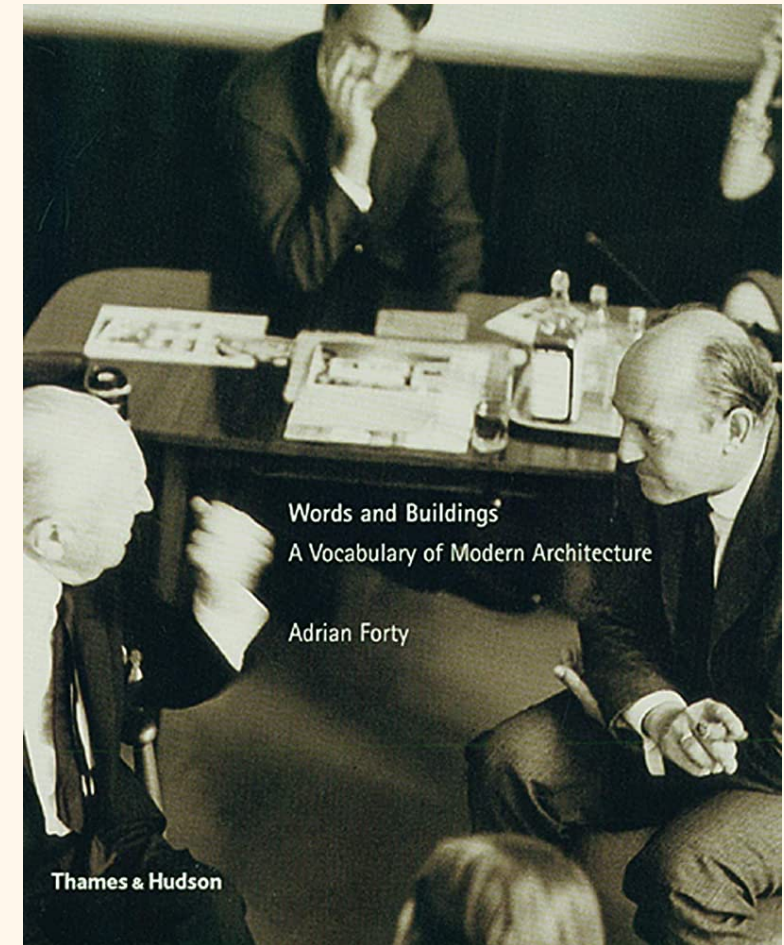
To focus on the specific codes and conventions that tacit modes of knowledge-transmission employ.

To examine the nature and efficacy of these codes, their conditioning role for architectural cultures and their performance within specific contexts and within local architectural cultures.

To unpack the ways in which these codes are communicated to clients, builders and a wider community of stakeholders and the general public.

To gain insights on:

- how codes affect the architectural production;
- how codes can be used to sustain communities of tacit knowledge in architecture;
- how codes change over time, and are transmitted to - and adopted by newcomers.

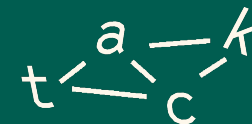


Adrian Forty, *Words and Buildings* (Singapore: Thames & Hudson, 2000).

Teaching Module 5



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.



Communities of Tacit Knowledge
Architecture and its Ways of Knowing

Codes

What is it meant by codes?

Codes are those distinctive features through which the subjectivity of a practice manifests itself in different forms – from verbal to visual, and ultimately physical, – crystallizing principles (i.e., the theories underlying the practice) and values (i.e., ethical instances) pursued through design.

As communication tools used both within the firm among designers, and with external audiences (professional or not), codes are meant to render implicit concepts explicit at different stages of the design process. In this perspective, they represent the mean element between theory and practice, a valuable instrument for revealing the tacit dimension in architecture.

codes en continuïteiten codes and continuities oase #92

tijdschrift voor architectuur
Journal for architecture

Tom Avermaete, David de Bruijn, Job Floris, (eds.), *Codes and Continuities*, OASE, 92, (2014), 5–11

Jerold S. Kayden
Understanding the "Code" of Codes

What are design codes?
Design codes are not created equal. Some carry the force of law; others enjoy only the power of persuasion. Some are enacted by government; others are entered into consensually by private parties. Some are spelled out in advance through written rules; others are revealed case-by-case through a discretionary review process. Some expressly address aesthetic appearance; others do so only as a byproduct of regulating non-aesthetic concerns.

Thus, when scholars and practitioners use the term "design code" without regard to its multiple meanings, as they often do, they muddy intelligent discussion. For example, codes imposed by government raise legal questions not presented by codes implemented through private consensual agreement. Codes administered case-by-case by government officials raise issues of fairness absent from codes announced in pre-set rules. Codes purposefully established to govern aesthetic outcomes raise concerns about legitimacy and free expression not presented in codes premised on protecting health and safety. The underbrush of uncommon assumptions must be cleared away.

Understanding the code of design codes is the starting point for critical evaluation. This article attempts to address this matter by specifying a taxonomy, fixing it within a legal framework, and highlighting the current debate between what I call antagonists and instrumentalists.

For the sake of establishing a general context, design codes may be defined as systems of rules meant to influence the physical appearance of the built environment. From this basic premise, design codes distinguish themselves along five major axes: law versus non-law, public versus private law, depth of coercive effect, extent of aesthetic intentionality, and rule versus discretion.

Significantly, to be a design code does not mean the same as being a law. Although the word "code" is often used as a synonym for "law," as in zoning code (also known as zoning by-law, zoning ordinance, and zoning resolution), code may be used to describe non-legal systems.¹ The production of Victorian or Colonial Revival homes arose not from law, but from socially constructed codes reflecting temporarily shared attitudes held by the general public or persons of influence. Popular pattern books and manifestos notwithstanding, no one was forced to do anything other than conform to or dissent from the fashion of the day. In short, non-law codes could be ignored without risk of legal repercussions.

Legal design codes are a far different story. Dividing themselves into publicly and privately enacted categories, they gained traction in the twentieth century. The current register of public codes, adopted by local, state, and occasionally the federal government, includes design review and guidelines, zoning, subdivision controls, historic preservation ordinances, sign and billboard controls, satellite dish and cell tower regulations, view protection and open space laws, building codes, and handicapped access laws. Such codes generally give individuals no choice but to follow them. Although some may dispute the coercive characterization, on the basis that affected individuals are responsible for choosing their own elected legislative and executive branch

officials, government-enacted codes effectively operate on a "majority rules, minority follows" model.

By contrast, privately enacted design codes are restrictions voluntarily created and accepted by individuals. Adopted by community associations, more narrowly known as homeowner associations, property owner associations, condominium associations, cooperatives, common interest communities, or councils of co-owners, such design codes are located usually in the binding by-laws of the association, and may be further enforced through easements and restrictive declarations placed upon a property, a "belt-and-suspenders" approach. Interestingly, although they are voluntarily created and accepted, such codes are often attacked by the same individuals who at one time agreed to the code's restrictions but have since come to find its application vexing.

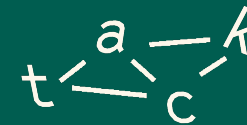
Design codes also vary according to aesthetic intentionality. Some, like design review laws, are expressly concerned with regulating the exterior "look" of a proposed building. Others, like zoning, have a less singular objective and advance a varied menu of physical planning concerns that includes health, safety, efficiency, as well as exterior appearance. Building and handicapped access codes profess no explicit interest in aesthetics, even as they may have significant effects upon it.

The final distinction between design codes involves a long-standing debate between rule and discretion. A rule-based design code declares its requirements unambiguously on its face: red brick is mandatory, maximum height is 35 feet, and so forth. Judgments are

Kayden, Jerold S. "Understanding the 'Code' of Codes." *Perspecta* 35 (2004). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1567338>.

Teaching Module 5

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.



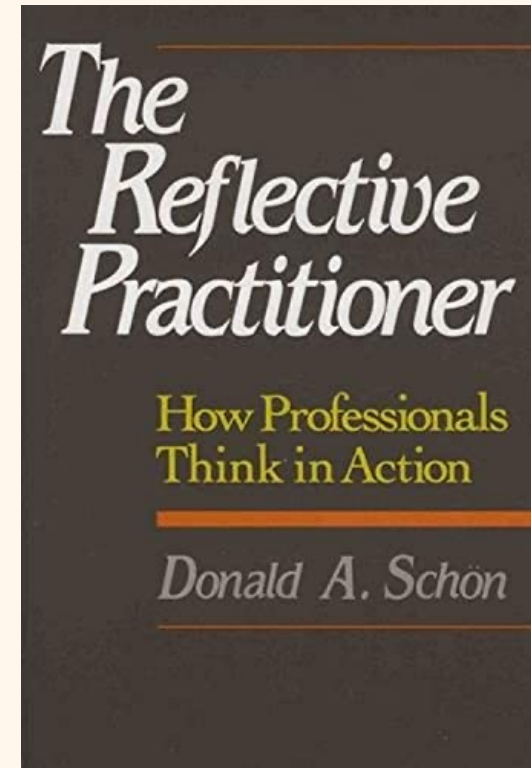
Communities of Tacit Knowledge
Architecture and its Ways of Knowing

How Codes Affect Architectural Production

The focus on Probing Tacit Knowledge involves examinations of particular cultural networks implied in architecture.

These may pertain to architectural practices or studios, to groups of architects in a city or defined by a common agenda, but also to the communication between professional and societal groups.

The ability to use and share implicit codes is often of essential importance in establishing an architectural and cultural agenda. The question is how forms of tacit knowledge become instrumental in integrating different actors, different forms of knowledge and a variety of societal discourses.

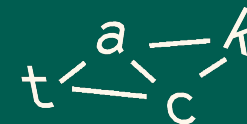


Donald Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (New York: Basic Books, 1982).

Teaching Module 5



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.



Communities of Tacit Knowledge
Architecture and its Ways of Knowing

TACK x Polimi

The course paid attention to the exploration and questioning of codes and conventions established and shared in specific community of practice.

Taking the Milanese architectural cultures of the '50s as a privileged ground of investigation, the course analyzed post-war Milanese built environment as a laboratory to study the processes of codification and the tacit forms of dissemination of architectural knowledge. The aim was to consider the formation of tacit practices in the architectural culture, in response to a changing society, paying a particular attention to the less implicit places of the affirmation of shared values, conventions and *modus operandi*, as well as to the diverse vectors of their transmission in diverse communities of practice and cultural networks.

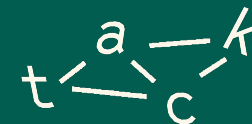


Dana Cuff, *Architecture: The History of Practice* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992).

Teaching Module 5



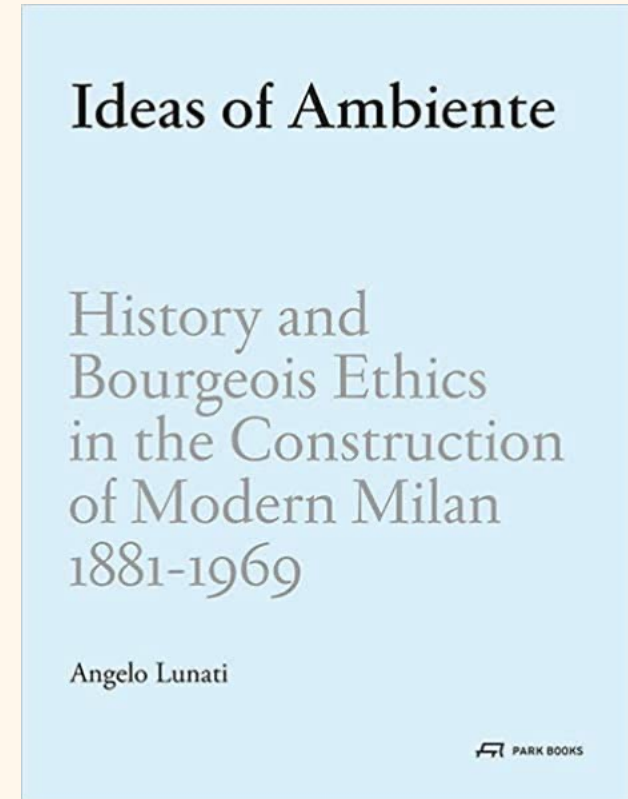
This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.



Communities of Tacit Knowledge
Architecture and its Ways of Knowing

TACK x Polimi

Post-war Milan collective buildings provide the main ground of investigation and therefore have been observed as a “laboratory” to examine the establishment of a set of shared values and unwritten codes within the community of practice engaged in the design and construction of the so-called “Milano Moderna” during the ‘50s - understood also as “professionismo colto” – and as place of negotiation between different practices, addressing the diverse and implicit forms of communicating and transferring knowledge between the architects and the diverse cultures (of the clients, the builders, the inhabitants).

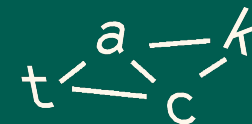


Angelo Lunati, *Ideas of Ambiente: History and Bourgeois Ethics in the Construction of Modern Milan 1881-1969* (Zurich: Quark Books, 2020).

Teaching Module 5



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.



Communities of Tacit Knowledge
Architecture and its Ways of Knowing

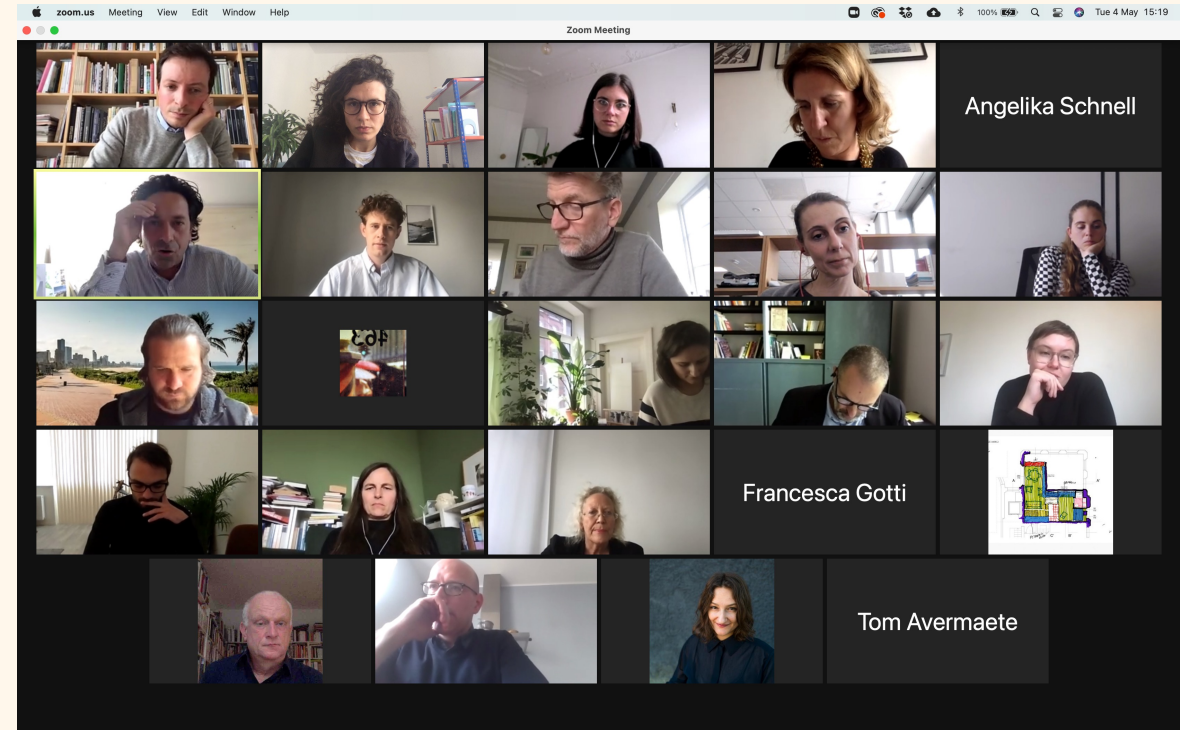
TACK x Polimi

The meeting was framed through a series of pillars and tools:

- **three lectures and preparatory seminars** aimed at providing a theoretical framework on the topic,
- **the assignment/fanzine** conversation,
- **the workshop.**

The course focused on the issue of codes, considering it through two diverse perspectives:

1. The investigation of codes and conventions in a specific community of practice, looking at Milanese professional cultures of the '50s (introductory lectures+ Day 1+Task 2).
2. The questioning of codes and conventions through the secondment's experience conducted by the ESRs (Day 2+Task 1).

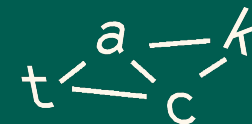


Extract from the three-days online module 5 meeting.

Teaching Module 5



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.



Communities of Tacit Knowledge
Architecture and its Ways of Knowing

TACK x Polimi

The discussion of the online module 5 has been framed through 3 main activities, all intersecting the question of codes in a different but interlinked way, raising a diversity of questions:

- activity 1: the preparatory seminar
- activity 2: the fanzine
- activity 3: the workshop

TACK Communities of Tacit Knowledge
ITN Network

Training Axis 2: Probing Tacit Knowledge

Module 1.
Practices of Tacit Knowledge
July 2021 / BUW Wuppertal

Module 2.
Codes of Tacit Knowledge
May 2020 / POLIMI Milan

Module 3.
Assemblages of Tacit Knowledge
September 2021 / ABKM Wien

The focus on Probing Tacit Knowledge involves examinations of particular cultural networks implied in architecture. These may pertain to architectural practices or studios, to groups of architects in a city or defined by a common agenda, but also to the communication between professional and societal groups. The ability to use and share implicit codes is often of essential importance in establishing an architectural and cultural agenda. The question is how forms of tacit knowledge become instrumental in integrating different actors, different forms of knowledge and a variety of societal discourses.

BUW Wuppertal
School of Architecture
and Building Engineering

Contact:
Christoph Grafe
grafe@uni-wuppertal.de

POLIMI Italy
Department of Architecture
and Urban Studies

Contact:
Gaia Caramellino and Gennaro Postiglione
gaia.caramellino@polimi.it
gennaropostiglione@polimi.it

ABKM Wien
Institute for Art and Architecture

Contact:
Angelika Schnell
A.Schnell@akbild.ac.at

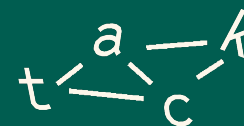
tacit-knowledge-architecture.com

Extract from the liflet of the online teaching module 5.

Teaching Module 5



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.



Communities of Tacit Knowledge
Architecture and its Ways of Knowing

TACK x Polimi: PREPARATORY SEMINAR

Activity 1

Definition of a theoretical and methodological framework to work on the specific case of Milanese post-war architecture, looking at an expanded field of architecture through a series of introductory lectures and a preparatory seminar on specific areas of investigation

Lecture I

On Monday 19 April h. 17.00: Simona Pierini (DASTU-Politecnico di Milano) Urban Domesticity. Reflecting on codes and practices in Milanese Residential Architecture

Lecture II

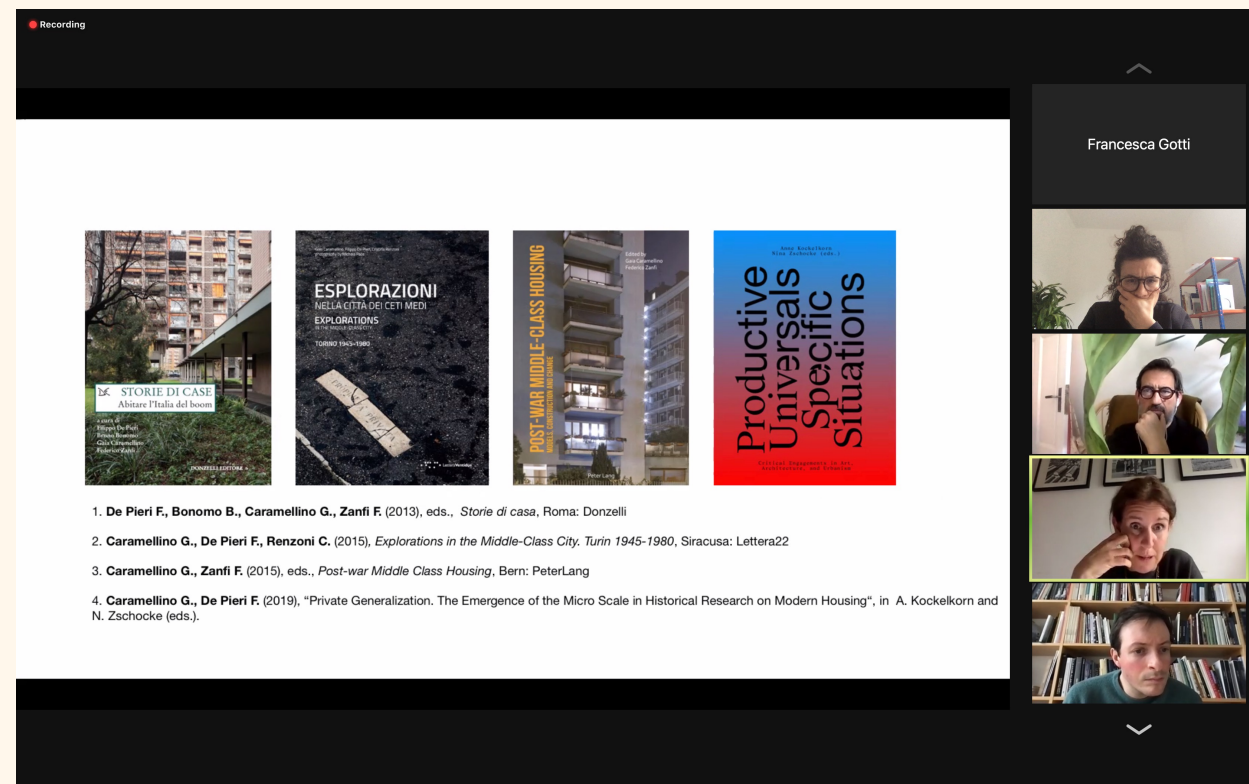
On Monday, 3 May h. 17.00: onsitestudio
Codes and Practices in Post-War Milan

Lecture III

On Tuesday 4 May h.9.50: Alessandro Rocca, (DASTU-Politecnico di Milano)
Design Driven Research: between Open and Tacit Knowledge

PREPARATORY SEMINAR:

On Monday 25 April 17:00:
Gaia Caramellino (DASTU-Politecnico di Milano)
Stories of houses: investigating ordinary practices in post-war Milan

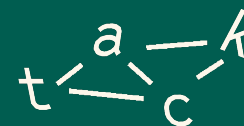


Extract from the Gaia Caramellino's online preparatory seminar.

Teaching Module 5



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.



Communities of Tacit Knowledge
Architecture and its Ways of Knowing

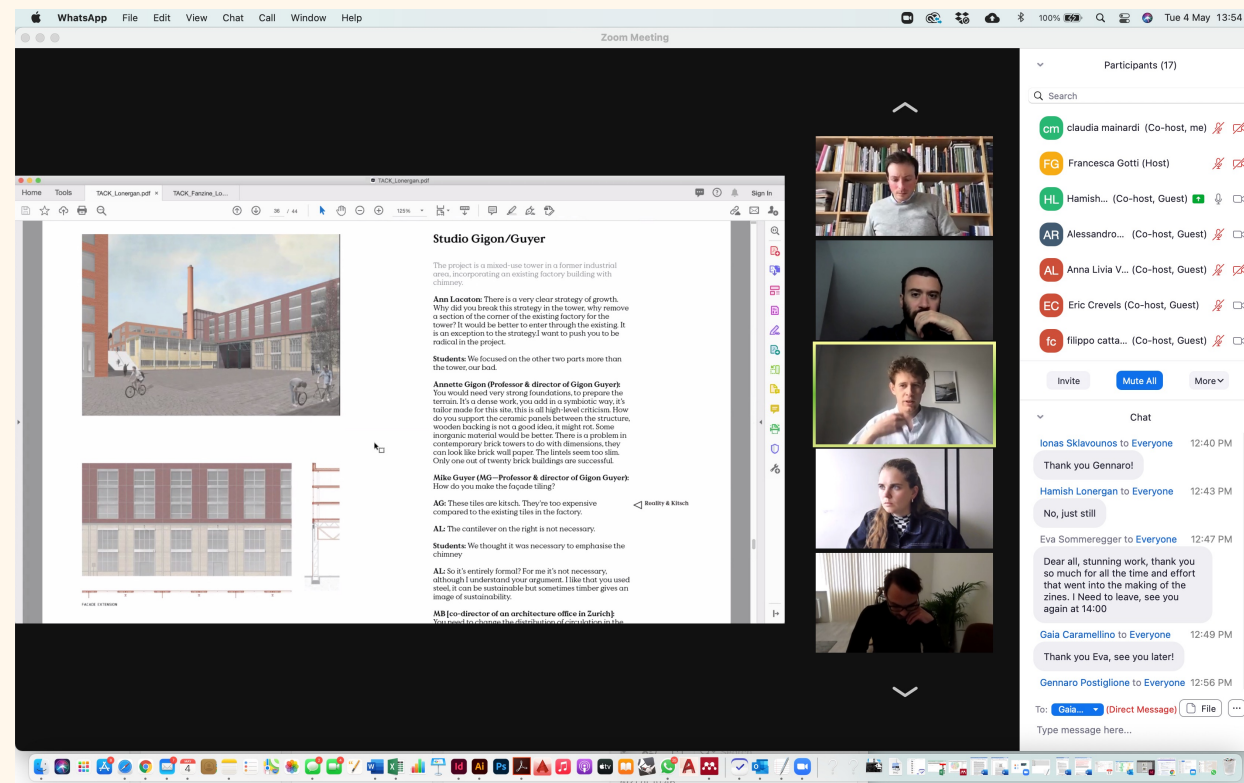
TACK x Polimi: THE FANZINE

Activity 2

Definition of a set of tools to conceptualize and discuss the ongoing secondment experience by preparing and presenting a fanzine.

The Fanzine aimed to analyze and conceptualize some crucial aspects of the secondment experience relevant to the ESR.

To do so, it asked the ESR to **reflect by (physical) doing (a fanzine)**. As a meta-operative activity, typical of research-by-design, the fanzine assignment activates ESR's tacit knowledge in producing a small publication to reflect on tacit knowledge of the practice where the secondment has taken/is taking place.

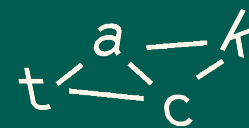


Extract from the ESRs' fanzine presentation.

Teaching Module 5



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.

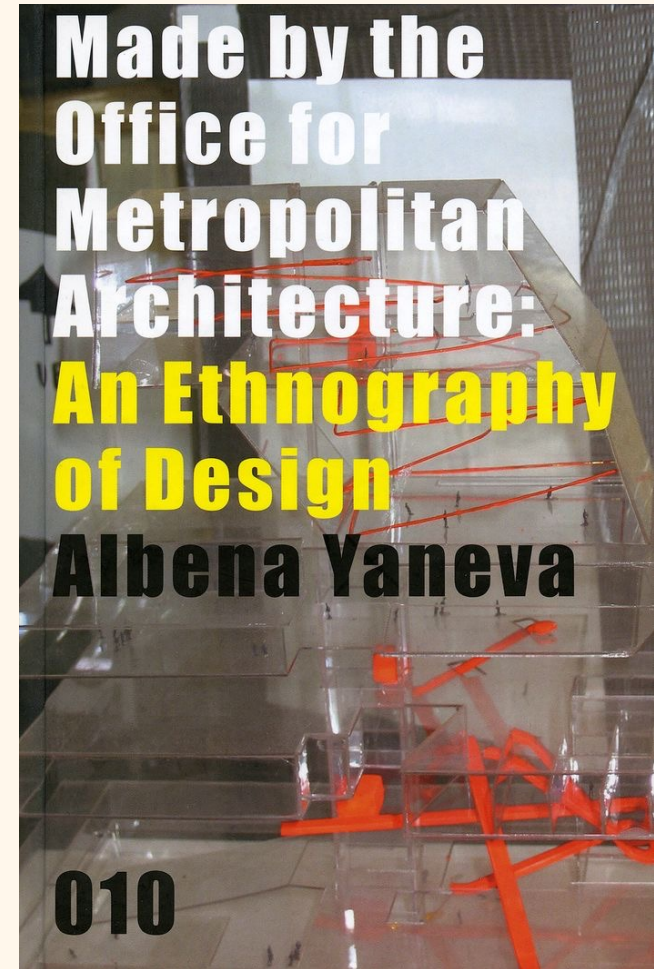


Communities of Tacit Knowledge
Architecture and its Ways of Knowing

The fanzine, or the restitution of the offices' ethnographies

The 'practice-based' secondment gave all ESRs direct access to tacit knowledge in architecture in various ways:

- learning both 'by doing' and 'by being told' – thus gaining first-hand experiences on how tacit knowledge is embedded in architectural practice and how it is communicated and conveyed (both verbally and non-verbally) within the office;
- assuming the role of 'office ethnographer' within the architectural practice that they are seconded to. (interviewing the architects, working in the office and closely observe the operations of the office, etc.)
- encouraging self-reflexivity.

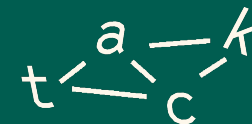


Yaneva, Albena. *Made by the Office for Metropolitan Architecture: An Ethnography of Design*. Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2009.

Teaching Module 5



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.



Communities of Tacit Knowledge
Architecture and its Ways of Knowing

TACK x Polimi: THE WORKSHOP

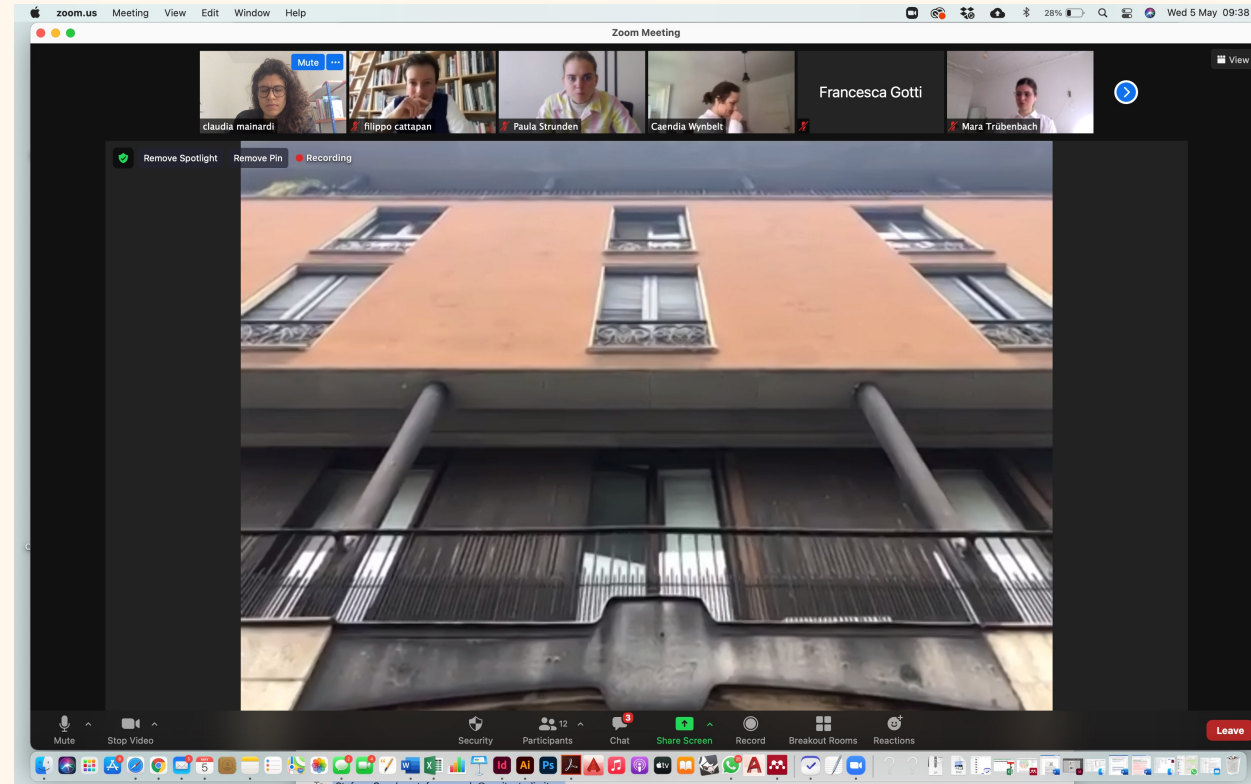
Activity 3

PhD candidates took part of the online workshop “Codes and Practices in Post-war Milan” (Day 3+Task 2) aiming at testing a set of tools to question codes and conventions in a specific community of practice.

ESRs were divided into two big groups of 5. Each group focused on one urban situation made of a couple of buildings, forced to compare approaches and final results on a common investigation object.

The first case study was the two buildings in Gardini D’Arcadia by Minoletti and Gardella. The second case study was the two buildings in front of Sant Ambrogio church by Caccia Dominioni and Asnago Vender.

The day ended with a presentation of the findings by the ESRs in conversation with the guest-discussants: Alessandro Rocca (POLIMI), Angelo Lunati and Giancarlo Floridi (onsite studio).

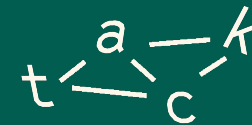


Extract from the onsitestudio's Milan virtual tour.

Teaching Module 5



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.



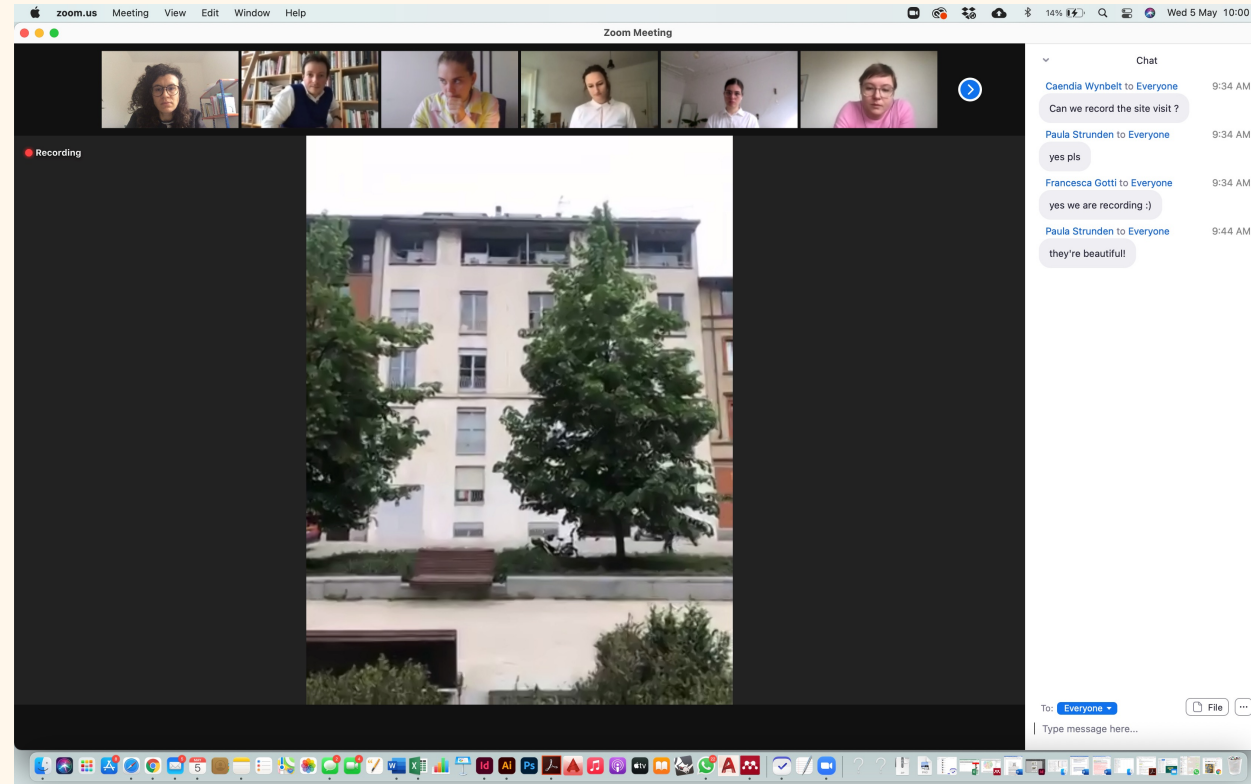
Communities of Tacit Knowledge
Architecture and its Ways of Knowing

TACK x Polimi: THE WORKSHOP

Activity 3

The first case study was the two buildings in Gardini D'Arcadia by Minoletti and Gardella. The second case study was the two buildings in front of Sant Ambrogio church by Caccia Dominioni and Asnago Vender.

The day ended with a presentation of the findings by the ESRs in conversation with the guest-discussants: Alessandro Rocca (POLIMI), Angelo Lunati and Giancarlo Floridi (onsite studio).

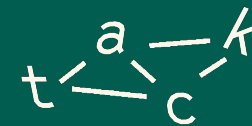


Extract from the onsitestudio's Milan virtual tour.

Teaching Module 5



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.



Communities of Tacit Knowledge
Architecture and its Ways of Knowing