Exploring "Architectural Ethnography"

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The relationship between ethnography and design is still a few explored field, often dominated by the production of toolkits, of by the works of professionals' defining what they do "architectural ethnography", without proposing a critical and comparative reflection on their own practices. The theses will be framed in a broader research project called "Ethno-graphs", carried out by the three teachers. The project aims at exploring the generative value of "ethnographical representation", and at testing the hypothesis that a key step in ethnography for designers occurs in the transcription phase (graphical, photographical, textual).

Through a series of case-studies, the work of professionals more or less explicitly engaged in architectural ethnography will be unpacked. This investigation aims at understanding if and how the ethnographical posture may be transcribed into effective representations of the intertwining between the social and material culture in spatial practices, and to understand if these representations provide useful information for design and for testing design.

Within this broader context, we offer the opportunity to develop three different theses where the diverse skills and backgrounds of the members of the research group will lead to explore more in depth some specific aspects of architectural ethnography.

Paola Briata who is an expert of urban ethnography will be available to supervise one thesis on more theoretical issues related to architectural ethnography, as well as to how practices of everyday life in specific places could be used for design and for testing design.

Gennaro Postiglione who is an expert of architecture and interior design will be available to supervise one thesis on the relationships between ethnography and architecture that will lead to a project at the architectural scale.

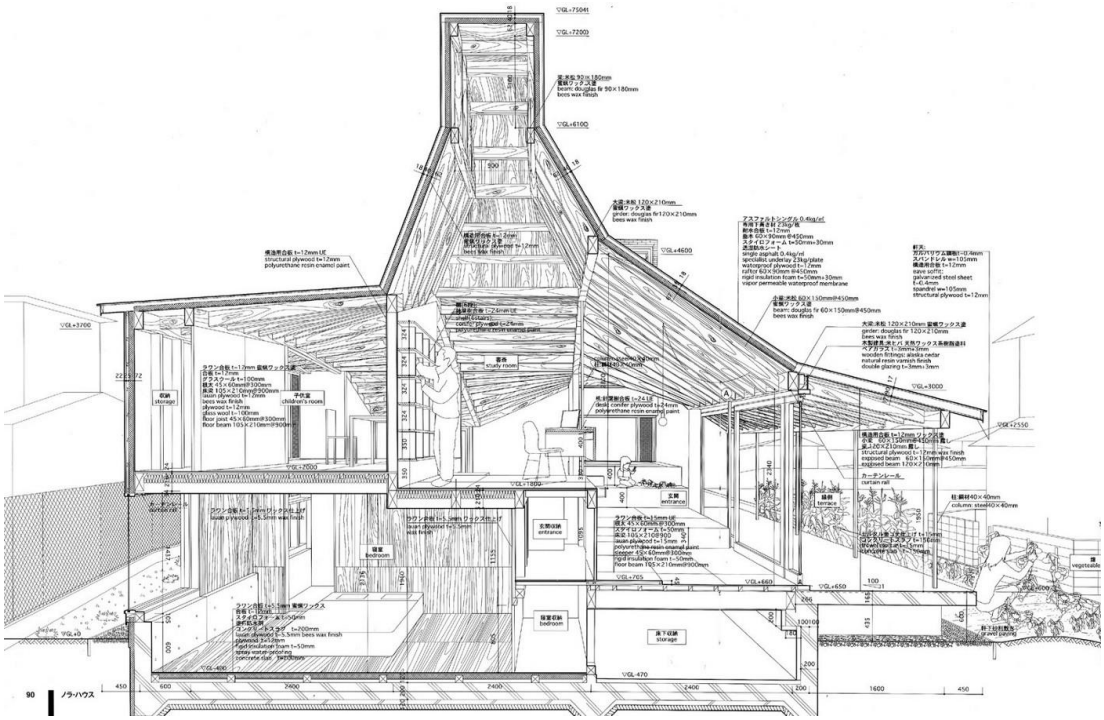
Daniele Villa who is an expert of representation of architecture and urban space will be available to supervise one thesis on the possible transcriptions of architectural ethnography.

All the students will be involved in the broader research context of the "Ethno-graphs" project, establishing forms of exchange with all the three teachers and other experts involved in this research.

References

Cranz G. (2016), *Ethnography for Designers*, Routledge, London & New York

Sigler J., Whitman-Salkin L. (2020), *Atelier Bow-Wow. Architectural Ethnography*, Sternberg, Harvard.



Example of Atelier Bow-Wow's architectural ethnography