



Baukultur
National Research Programme

NRP 81 Seminar Series 2025/26

Baukultur: A European Genealogy



3 November 2025, Lausanne

24 November 2025, Lausanne

9 December 2025, Lausanne

13 January 2026, Lausanne

20 January 2026, Winterthur

in collaboration with





The concept of *Baukultur* has firmly taken its place in the European debate on architecture, cities and landscapes (Davos Declaration, 2018). It has become a well-established research topic in Switzerland (National Research Programme “*Baukultur*” (NRP 81), 2025–2030), despite the fact that its roots have yet to be thoroughly debated. Due to its topicality, the term is widely accepted and taken for granted, without questioning the significance of the preceding experiences it encompasses.

From November 2025 to January 2026, the Steering Committee of the National Research Programme “*Baukultur*” including Paola Viganò (President and Professor at EPFL and IUAV), Pierre Caye (member of the Committee and research director at the CNRS) and Andri Gerber (member of the Steering Committee and Professor at ZHAW) organises a series of sessions, to outline the European genealogy of *Baukultur*. This cycle of public events, to be attended in person or online, is jointly set in collaboration with the Habitat Research Center (HRC) of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL) and the Zurich University of Applied Sciences in Winterthur (ZHAW).

Rather than searching for the origins of *Baukultur*, these sessions invite guest speakers, NRP 81 project teams, researchers, and students to explore the numerous ramifications that contribute to understanding its construction and emergence. From a Foucauldian perspective, the sequence of these complementary sessions aims to retrace the successive or parallel paths that led to the recognition of *Baukultur*'s shared principles and values.

The sessions will be held in presence in Lausanne and Winterthur – and online. Please subscribe for the live stream at www.nrp81.ch



SESSION I

The European roots of *Baukultur*: An Introduction

Monday, 3 November 2025 (18:00 – 19:30)

Lausanne, EPFL, Archizoom

This introductory session assumes a specific format, combining a short introduction to the whole series, an engaging contribution from Sarah Wigglesworth and a roundtable discussion with members of the NRP 81 Steering Committee. The genealogical perspective it opens is first addressed from the present, by questioning its necessity and revealing its opportunities, from political, social and cultural points of view. On this perspective, this opening aims to highlight the lack of visibility surrounding the potential ramifications of the concept of *Baukultur* at the European level, while also contextualising the various related experiences and debates related to it within the European architectural and urban traditions.

Opening remarks and Introduction by
Paola Viganò, President Steering Committee NRP 81

Welcome message from
Caspar Schärer, Head of Knowledge Exchange for NRP 81

Invited talk by
Sarah Wigglesworth, London

Round table discussion with Paola Viganò, Pierre Caye and Andri Gerber
as members of NRP 81, moderated by Valentin Bourdon

Questions & answers

SESSION II

Cultural landscapes, landscape culture and the roots of *Baukultur*

Monday, 24 November 2025 (18:00 – 19:30)

Lausanne, EPFL, Archizoom

The second session explores the reciprocal influences between landscape culture and *Baukultur* over time and across space, in the form of two short presentations followed by a discussion. Through the contributions of Jean-Marc Besse and Michael Jakob, it seeks to identify the shared paths that lead from cultural values to the establishment of a normative culture of the built environment.

Invited talks by
Jean-Marc Besse, Paris and Michael Jakob, Geneva

Questions & answers



SESSION III

***Baukultur* and the critique of Modernity #1**

Tuesday, 9 December 2025 (18:00 – 19:30)

Lausanne, EPFL, Archizoom

The third and fourth sessions revisit various episodes of modernity and its critique. These undoubtedly continue to influence all cultural perceptions of architectural and urban production. As with the previous sessions, both begin with brief presentations, after which the floor is opened for discussion.

Invited talks by

Jean-Louis Violeau, Nantes and Paolo Scrivano, Milano

Questions & answers

SESSION IV

***Baukultur* and the critique of Modernity #2**

Tuesday, 13 January 2026 (18:00 – 19:30)

Lausanne, EPFL, Archizoom

Invited talks by

Angelika Schnell, Vienna and Irina Davidovici, Zurich

Questions & answers

SESSION V

***Umbaukultur*: the roots**

Tuesday, 20 January 2026 (18:00 – 19:30)

Winterthur, ZHAW, MD E0.17 (Tössfeldstrasse 11, 8401 Winterthur)

This concluding session broadens the genealogical question, exploring the theme of transformation. Undoubtedly, *Umbaukultur* is inextricably linked to the very concept of *Baukultur*, and can also be read by tracing back through the main strands of European urban culture.

Invited talk by

Paul Landauer, Paris

Round table discussion with Paola Viganò, Pierre Caye and Andri Gerber as members of NRP 81, moderated by Valentin Bourdon

Questions & answers

Conclusion by

Paola Viganò, President Steering Committee NRP 81



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