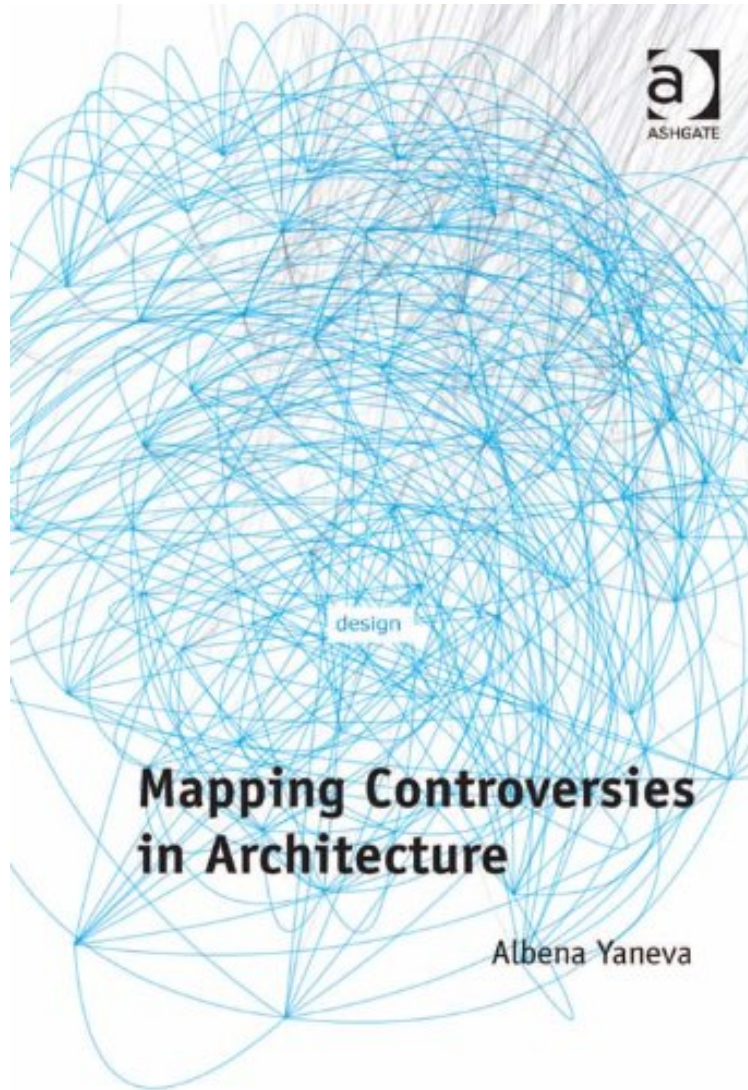


Mapping Controversies in Architecture

Albena Yaneva

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Albena Yaneva : Mapping Controversies in Architecture before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mapping Controversies in Architecture:

The book tackles a number of challenging questions: How can we conceptualize architectural objects and practices without falling into the divides architecture/society, nature/culture, materiality/meaning? How can we prevent these abstractions from continuing to blind architectural theory? What is the alternative to critical architecture? Mapping controversies is a research method and teaching philosophy that allows divides to be crossed. It offers a new

methodology for following debates surrounding contested urban knowledge. Engaging in explorations of on-going and recent controversies and re-visiting some well-known debates, the analysis foregrounds, traces and maps the changing sets of positions triggered by design: the 2012 Olympics stadium in London, the Welsh parliament in Cardiff, the Heathrow airport runway extension, the Sydney Opera House, the Eiffel Tower. By mobilizing digital technologies and new computational design techniques we are able to visualize the variety of factors that impinge on design and track actors' trajectories, changing groupings, concerns and modalities of action. The book places architecture at the intersection of the human and the nonhuman, the particular and the general. It allows its networks to be re-established and to run between local and global, social and technical. Mapping controversies can be extrapolated to a wide range of complex phenomena of hybrid nature.

'By crossing the tools of science studies with the digital techniques of mapping controversies, this book renews the critique of architecture. It offers a new way to place architecture and design as one of the most exciting ways to explore the common world because it takes controversies as the normal state of affair. With many lively examples it is a masterpiece of theory made empirical.' Bruno Latour, Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris, France 'Yaneva brilliantly proposes a new and robust ethnographic approach to built form: mapping the controversies in which they emerge and seeing them as "connectors" with unique properties - neither just reflections of society or constructors of it, nor as cold materials - but as dynamically tying together different media, materials, peoples and things in a distinctly architectural way. This represents a profound shift in the way we can think anthropologically about the analysis of buildings and what buildings "do" and how they emerge socially and materially in the widest possible sense.' Victor Buchli, University College London, UK 'Mapping Controversies in Architecture is a fresh and highly productive challenge to the tendency of architectural theory to represent architecture as a static object. In Yaneva's richly documented analysis, buildings become animated ecosystems, "in the making" long after the completion of their final design. Yaneva's innovative methodology, hybridizing parametric animation and 'post-parametric' computation, unfolds buildings as multi-dimensional controversies. Political tides, technological shifts, financial crises and aesthetic experimentation are but a few of the actors Yaneva follows in demonstrating architecture's fundamentally connective role. In doing so, she extends a powerful platform for discourse well beyond the architectural community.' Ariane Lourie Harrison, Yale School of Architecture, USA 'Yaneva makes a heartfelt attempt to address the very real problem currently threatening the academic understanding of architectural history; namely, the reading of buildings as the crystallised effects of the political and economic world that produced them. It's the type of view that sees the Dome as Tony Blair's ideas incarnate, utterly negates not just the technological aspect of architectural production but its complexity. It ignores the way buildings emerge from a set of social concerns, as much as they address them. Yaneva should be praised for raising concerns about this trend...' The Architects' Journal 'Mapping Controversies demonstrates the intricacies and continued dialogue that architecture creates as a connecting thread in society. This is why the book offers much for architectural pedagogy. It reminds us of the power of architecture to delineate cultural change'. Journal of Urban Technology
About the Author
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