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Cultures of mathematics in architecture

Several of the papers in this issue of **arq** consider cultures of mathematics in architecture. Daniel Norell discusses the recently popularised technique of physics simulation, setting this development in context with reference to Greg Lynn and Colin Rowe (pp. 255–265). Rowe also features in an extended cast of characters (to include Leslie Martin and Richard Llewelyn-Davies, and indeed Christopher Alexander) whose voices were significant in the reformulation of architecture as a research discipline in the UK, following the 1958 RIBA Conference on Architectural Education in Oxford. This is the topic of a comparative study of Cambridge School of Architecture and the Bartlett, led by Martin and Llewelyn-Davies respectively, from thence throughout the 1960s. For these academics, mathematisation and computation held great promise. As the authors Natcha Ruamsanitwong and James W. P. Campbell narrate, both institutions had nuanced agendas that went beyond any simplistic formulation of a singularly mathematically predicated architecture (pp. 278–287). Theodora Vardouli presents us with a thinker – Hungarian-born French architect Yona Friedman – who did indeed aspire to a 'scientific architecture' at much the same time (pp. 245–254). Vardouli's paper examines a debate between Friedman and an interlocutor, Bernard Huet, dissecting Friedman's claims for the priority of 'mathematical principles' over 'stylistic choices'. That debate took place in a *milieu* that embraced Archigram, Cedric Price, Ionel Schein, and Hans Hollein. Finally, Francesco Proto's article on James Stirling's early work turns on the originality of his working methods and spatial constructs, established through collage techniques and the flat bed picture plane (pp. 231–244).

THE EDITORS