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ArchAlp 18 – The Geared Mountain. The "Short Twentieth Century" of Infrastructure in the Alps

Railways and roads, bridges and tunnels, dams and power plants, cableways: despite these works are highly visible in the landscape, yet for centuries they remained invisible, regarded as lying outside the remit of architecture and confined to the domain of civil and military engineering. It was only in the twentieth century – the "short century" of infrastructure – that architectural culture began to recognize them as a field of experimentation and design.

This shift was very pronounced in the Alps, where Robert Maillart's bridges in Switzerland and the new high-altitude ski resorts in Italy and France reveal forms generated through structural calculation that architectural culture came to recognize and appropriate as modern works. From that point onwards, the challenge became one of endowing utilitarian objects with architectural quality, while developing forms of design capable of engaging with both seriality and territorial scale. This dual nature, at once technical and representational, gave rise to a rhetoric founded on the complementary contrast between the organic forms of the landscape and the geometric purity of infrastructure.

In 1934, Guido Tonella wrote in his book *Il Sestrières invernale e le sue gite*: "The imposing ensemble of these works and the movement they set in motion – trucks arriving from opposite sides of the mountain, cableway cars following one another in an uninterrupted back-and-forth along cables stretched across the mountain, lines of automobiles winding their way up the steepest slopes through deep trenches cut by snowploughs – all these things powerfully strike the imagination of the visitor, already captivated by the bold architectural lines of the buildings rising here, prompting him to note in his notebook: "Sestrières represents the triumph of the most modern mechanical rationalism applied to the organization of a large ski resort."

This issue of ArchAlp sets out to investigate the period in which this faith in the machine and in infrastructure as engines of modernity emerged and ultimately ran its course: from 1928, when Maillart's Salginatobel Bridge ushered in a phase of full maturity for engineering as an architectural language, to the 1973 oil crisis, which in many respects marked the end of modernity understood as a project of unlimited growth and cheap energy.

From this perspective, preference will be given to original contributions on works and authors that remain relatively understudied, grounded in archival material – including, and above all, visual sources such as photographs, drawings, and period documents – that can shed light on projects, commissions, and contexts.

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The journal

ArchAlp is a biannual open-access journal and represents the evolution of the former print edition of the same name.

From a scientific standpoint, the journal explores the themes of architectural design and the built landscape in the Alpine environment as a field where issues of architectural and energy quality of the built environment, heritage, urban planning, sustainable technological development, environmental protection, tourism enhancement, infrastructure, and the valorisation of the historical, cultural, and social resources of the mountains converge. Special attention is given to contemporary developments and to the history of twentieth-century modernity.

The journal features monographic issues focusing on emerging and internationally relevant topics within the areas of debate mentioned earlier, alternating between issues of a historical-critical nature and those dedicated to contemporary design-related subjects.

The Editorial Board is responsible for the planning, conceptualisation, and editorial management of each issue, with the support of a Scientific Committee composed of internationally renowned scholars and experts in the journal's fields of interest. Other prominent field specialists form the core group of reviewers for the articles submitted for publication.

Submission of Manuscripts

Manuscripts may be submitted to **ArchAlp** by **22 November 2026** in response to periodic thematic calls for papers by sending the full contribution to: **redazione@archalp.it**.

The manuscript must comply with the journal's editorial guidelines.

The submission email must include:

a) full name;

b) academic title;

c) university position;

d) institutional affiliation (university or other research institution).

Submission of an article implies that the work has not been previously published, is not under consideration elsewhere, and that all authors have approved its publication.

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Manuscript Requirements

The manuscript must follow the editorial criteria described in the following paragraphs and include:

- Full text (10,000-12,000 characters including spaces) written in **English, Italian, French, Slovenian, or German**
- Title in both the language of the article and in English
- **Selected bibliography** (maximum 15 references), including in particular the works cited in the text
- **Author's biography** in English (maximum 300 characters including spaces)
- **Abstract** in English (maximum 1,500 characters including spaces)
- **Keywords** in English (maximum 5)
- **Iconographic material**: each article must include between 8 and 12 high-resolution images (300 dpi, minimum size 10 x 15 cm). Images must be free of copyright restrictions. The author or source must always be cited. Captions for each image must be provided in a separate text file (maximum length 300 characters including spaces).

Evaluation Procedure

All submissions will first be assessed by the Editorial Board to determine their suitability. If a submission is deemed unsuitable, the author will be notified, and a record of the decision will be kept.

Articles judged suitable will undergo a **double-blind peer review** process.

- If both reviewers recommend publication without changes, the article proceeds directly to publication.
- If one of the reviewers recommends rejection, the article will not be published.
- If one or both reviewers request revisions, the comments will be sent to the author, who may revise and resubmit the article.

The Editorial Board retains final responsibility for the decision to accept or reject the article.

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After Acceptance

Proofs of the contribution (in Word format) will be sent to the corresponding author by email to allow for final corrections.

Only strictly necessary changes (typographical or factual errors) that do not substantially alter the text will be accepted. Significant modifications to accepted articles will only be allowed with the approval of the Editorial Board.

Contributions by Distinguished Authors

At the discretion of the Editorial Board, contributions from emeritus professors or individuals holding academic and/or institutional positions directly related to scientific research in the field of Alpine architecture and landscape may be published without peer review.