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JOERHIO

Journal
of Architectural
Culture

no. 11 & 12

Archaeology,
Landscape, Architecture:
Crossings of Reciprocal
Learnings



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w: impactum-journals.uc.pt/joelho
e: edarq@uc.pt
t: +351 239 851 350

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Armando Rabaça
Department of Architecture
of the University of Coimbra

Bruno Gil
Department of Architecture
of the University of Coimbra

Chief Editors' Note

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As the new editorial team of *Joelho – Journal of Architectural Culture*, we must start with an opening statement that reinforces our aim of continuing the work developed in the past years and consolidating the place of the journal both in Portugal and abroad. It is our goal to present a platform for thinking about architecture and the interdisciplinary fields that, to different degrees, are implicated in the discipline, fostering the development of our knowledge on both architectural design and theory.

If we mention design and theory it is because we are concerned with the present tendencies to treat them as distinct subjects rather than as inextricable activities. On the one hand, there are those who transform theory into an autonomous world, who ignore that the purpose of theory is the development of a profounder knowledge of the practice rather than the construct of a discursive field with an end in itself. On the other hand, there are those who, reacting against the self-indulgency and abstraction of these self-reflexive theoretical acts, simply reject theory, neglecting its heuristic function to the detriment of practice.

This concern is all the more relevant in a journal of a school of architecture, where this artificial distinction is forced by an increasing academic specialization. Either one is a practitioner or one is a theoretician. Either one teaches design studio or one teaches theory and history.

Becoming inevitably reflected in teaching practices, this specialization questions the tradition and nature of architecture as a synthesis of the manifold of factors involved in the process through design, or through *disegno*.

The context of architectural education is also one of the reasons why we feel an obligation to attempt a balance between the new challenges which architecture is facing today and those which are inherent to the discipline, and hence, transhistorical, if we may put it thus. This means resistance to following the latest thematic trends in an attempt to keep up with the fashionable and the politically correct, seizing the opportunities provided by the marketplace of culture industry. The case of COVID-19 and the way it took over the architectural debate in the past few months seems to be such a case.

Perhaps we might say that we assume a modern posture, giving primacy to an object-centred approach to architecture and theory. This modernism is not like that of the visual arts, with its strict concern for the autonomy of the medium, but like that in architecture itself, where the object is charged with and aims at being a synthesis of social, cultural, aesthetic, and political factors and values.

The present issue, edited by Paulo Providência, Alessandra Capuano, Domenico Palombi, and Konstantina Demiri, responds to our intentions. Focused on the intervention in archaeological sites, it brings to the fore an interdisciplinary debate on architecture and archaeology with growing relevance in today's context, bringing to the equation undeniable concerns that are posed to the present situation – such as those of climate changes brought by unsustainable practices and consumerism – without losing the central focus on our disciplinary field.

Alessandra Capuano
Department of Architecture
and Design, Sapienza, University
of Rome

Domenico Palombi
Department of Sciences of Antiquity
Sapienza, University of Rome

Konstantina Demiri
School of Architecture
National Technical University
of Athens

Paulo Providência
Department of Architecture
University of Coimbra

Guest-Editors' Note

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This issue of the journal *Joelho* is dedicated to a reflection on the enhancement of archaeological sites and the necessary interdisciplinary dialogue between architecture, archaeology and landscape projects that such work entails. These topics are the subject of an Erasmus Mundus joint degree offered by the Universities of Rome Sapienza, Federico II in Naples, Technical University of Athens and University of Coimbra.

Forty-four abstracts were received in response to a call for papers that stressed specific problems concerning the sustainability of archaeological sites. A selection process among editors gave place to nine proposals that are now published and organized. They follow three broad themes related to questions concerning archaeological parks, archaeological sites in urban contexts, and the role of architecture in archaeological rural sites. Most of these topics were also the focus of the design studios of the second semester of the master ALA in Athens and Coimbra, and the design workshop held in Rome in the first semester.

The article by Alessandra Capuano frames the issue of archaeological parks and the relationship between vestiges and urban transformation referring to the case of Rome, where the first concept of an “archaeological park” was born during Napoleon’s reign. The Appia Antica Park is a vast protected area where the archaeological context

goes hand in hand with that of an environmental ensemble of great importance; it helps to define the role of these areas in contemporary metropolitan contexts and was used as an interesting case to develop in the EMLMD ALA workshop – a comprehensive and integrated approach in the sense recommended by the UNESCO Historic Urban Landscape Recommendation of 2011. The problems of enhancing archaeological sites in an urban context, normally highly stratified, layered places that create complex urban realities, is the topic of the text by Konstantina Demiri, with additional references to the results of the Athens design studio. Lastly, the theme of the role of architecture in the enhancement of archaeological sites in rural landscapes is the topic explored by Paulo Providência, including comments on the results of the Coimbra design studio. A broader and inclusive editorial text concerning an appreciation of the archaeological implications underlying the papers' cases is signed by Domenico Palombi.

We thank the authors, the copyeditor and the editors-in-chief for their support in our task as guest-editors.

Call for Papers

Archaeological sites have been considered as places of memory preservation and celebration of a past – settlements of communities and migrations of ethnic groups, cultural exchanges between communities, religious movements and their progress in the territory, and the processes of territorial domination, among others.

An interdisciplinary interpretation of these topoi crosses geological, historical, material, environmental, architectural and landscape studies, and allows us to rethink their interaction with the contemporary territory and the preservation of the signs of the past. That is, it allows us to think of these places and sites as potential levers of social, cultural and economic development of the societies that preserve them.

Places located outside of great touristic attractions, generally placed in peripheral metropolitan locations or remote areas of the interior, or in some lost places on the coast, are particularly subject to difficult economic sustainability. In spite of their dimension, many of these sites are of great interest concerning cultural value, local appropriation and identity, and they may have a new role in local development, in difficult or even survival economies.

The next issue of the journal *Joelho* is devoted to the crossings of reciprocal lessons in landscape, archaeology and architecture studies. It focuses on the disciplinary intersection and considers studies devoted to a reflection on the sustainability and conservation of peripheral archaeological sites. It takes into account the great threats involved in abandonment and degradation or that climate change implies (in particular on sites located on the shore of fragile coastline systems subject to collapse, changing seawater levels, river and stream flooding regimes, and forest fires). It also covers actions concerning the mitigation of threats

to heritage (fences and walls, coverage and other protections, inclusion in contemporary developments of archaeological remains; run-off channels; forests, plantations of fire-fighting tree and plant species), tourist pressure on the shoreline and inland desertification (construction of accessible routes, logistic and informational support, cultural uses of archaeological findings), and alternative uses of agricultural intensive soil that may take advantage of other forms of plantations, including millennial fallow. We are particularly interested in the connections between archaeological landscapes and other types of landscape such as: infrastructural systems where contemporary intersections collide with ancient ones; productive landscapes (agrarian, fishing, extractive, industrial), considering not only the rich collection of landscape devices (paths, roads and bridges, centuriation and division of property, dams, dikes and canals), but also the irrigation and water systems (ancient baths, cisterns and rural *domus*); the canning industry (*garum* in the Iberian west, Mediterranean and south coasts); and mining and quarrying (iron, copper or gold, throughout the country). We value studies that are based on: the interpretation of archaeological sites and landscapes through mappings and cartographies, and the disciplinary crossing needed for mappings (geology, botany, topography, orography and history of settlements), as a way of knowing geographical, ecological, historical and social systems and its importance in preservation and visiting, integration and alteration; the use of design and narratives that connect directly with readings of the archaeological context, producing sites of higher cultural and social meaning, and reinforcing their economic resilience.

At a time of strong, unsustainable consumerism with serious environmental consequences, the study and interpretation of the rich archaeological processes allows links between these places, marks and traces and the contemporary situation, thus demanding new design tools and processes. In support of a newly inaugurated European joint master's degree among Portugal, Italy and Greece, dedicated to building a common language between archaeology, landscape studies and architecture, *Joelho* is interested in these archaeological landscapes because of their potential for learning about and rethinking the areas where the intersection of the past with the present can generate improved ways of interdisciplinary interaction – and therefore foster a qualified architectural design capable of integrating and conserving archaeological landscape environments with the use and life of societies.