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How to Reconcile the Past and the Present

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Experiences, Proposals and Ideas
from All Over the World

In Western culture, or in what today is called global civilization despite its diverse traits and contradictory evaluations, the relationship with the past has always been both profound and contradictory and in some cases even conflicting.

Actualization of the past has occurred in different periods of time and for a large variety of reasons simultaneously assuming cognitive, contemplative, evocative, emulative, normative forms.

In this continuous and multi-faceted process, ideological and political motivations led to the revival and legacy of the past seen, from time to time, as an analogical model, a foundation of identity, a source of ethical and aesthetic inspiration, or a tool for cultural formation and social pedagogy. In this sense, the past has become an absolute cultural value and – ideally – has constituted a powerful paradigm for the conception of new models and new metaphors for the construction of material and immaterial forms of the present.

Ideally. In fact, in this continuous phenomenon – unlike the testimonies of literature and art – the material remains of the past have been given a very special consideration: reliable witness and deceptive ghosts, authoritative document and cumbersome memory, waste material and sacred relics, burden and heritage, obstacle and stimulus to the

1 Alois Riegel, *The Modern Cult of Monuments. Its Character and Its Origin*, trans. K.W. Forster and D. Ghirardo, *Oppositions* 25 (1982): 21-50. First published as *Der moderne Denkmalkultus. Sein Wesen, seine Entstehung* (1903). See also Sandro Scarrocchia, *Alois Riegl: teoria e prassi della conservazione dei monumenti* (Bologna: CLUEB, 1995), 173-207.

2 Gioseppe Pucci, *Il passato prossimo. La scienza dell'antichità alle origini della cultura moderna* (Rome: La Nuova Italia scientifica, 1993); Alain Schnapp, *La conquête du passé. Aux origines de l'archéologie* (Paris: La Découverte, 1993).

construction of the present and development of the future. In fact, the different values attributed to heritage management and archaeological monuments highlight the contradictory and often conflicting relationship between the past and the present over the centuries and currently.

Since the Napoleonic era, European culture has been questioning the meaning and function of ancient monuments in contemporary civilization, attributing a relevant role to archaeology in the organization and development of the city and its territory. The testimonies of the past are no longer the mere objects of erudite observation and artistic contemplation, but have become the subject of scientific study, protected by law, preserved and restored. Ancient monuments come to be an integral part of public space, assuming a strong connotation of ideological self-representation and of cultural and social identity. All these elements, stages and instruments make up the so called "cult of monuments" that characterizes the nineteenth century (the "historical century"); later, in the twentieth century (the "century of antique"), European society and culture acknowledges the material remains of the past as the indisputable and superior "value of memory."[1] Nevertheless, the growing process of modernization has often jeopardized the survival and integrity of the archaeological heritage both in urban, suburban and rural areas. Building expansion and infrastructural modernization have often considered the presence of material remains of the past as an obstacle, to be swept away in the name of economic interests and social modernity.

In the last two centuries in Europe – Italy and Rome have been the main laboratories – archaeologists and architects had, above all, the task of designing methods, tools, and solutions for the knowledge, documentation, conservation and transmission of the archaeological heritage in a growing search for integration and for the material and ideal valorization of the multi-layered historical landscape.

The irenic representation of this complex relationship developed by contemporary Western culture and continuously submitted to politics and public opinion – consist also of the knowledge and the protection of the whole environment – testifies to the deep need to reconcile the past and the present, memory and the future, in a social and cultural value perspective.

Archaeologists and architects have been and are the protagonists of this stimulating research for reconciliation: both disciplines have a well-grounded contiguity of training and interests that, until the last century, was expressed in the frequent identification of the two professional roles. On the other hand, antiquarian erudition and the deep knowledge of ancient monuments have been the pillars of the affirmation of archaeology as a modern science.[2]

Increasingly, architects and archaeologists have the task of finding solutions for urban problems where the presence of monuments and ancient remains – at different levels of conservation and

legibility – requires scientific knowledge and a design vision capable of safeguarding and enhancing historical evidence, integrating it into the contemporary context.

This professional activity is, obviously, not just technical but, first of all, ethical in its relationship with society, institutions and politics.

However, it is precisely in this relationship that archaeology reveals its main weakness: since the birth of the nation-states in Europe, archaeology, in the individual research dimension, has always been characterised by an extraordinary creativity and freedom of orientation; differently, in the social dimension, it has frequently lost autonomy of vision and proposal and meekly bent to the dominant political and ideological conditioning. On the other hand, professional recognition, corporative organization and integration into the productive and economic mechanism have provided greater guarantees for architects in their relationship with the public administration and the politics that govern it.

This different degree of autonomy and socio-economic recognition has in fact produced a professional hierarchy that has not helped collaboration between the two disciplines and has often separated the activities of archaeologists, who discover and study ancient monuments, from those of architects, who plan their present and future.

On the contrary, the need (and the effort) to share knowledge (and the feeling) of the antique and to identify its meaning (and destiny) seems evident: to build an historical narrative that is both complex and communicative; to transform it into a project for urban and landscape architecture; and to realize a creative process "controlled" by a rigorous scientific and methodological path, far from the simplification that has become imperative in mass cultural communication (and not only).

Usually, the ability to collaborate between the two disciplines is consolidated, on an individual level, with professional experiences within national and local institutions responsible for the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage. However, there is a growing need for a suitable training programme shared by archaeologists and architects that, in addition to the theoretical discussion on the role of antique in contemporary landscape, provides a concrete experience of collaboration between young professionals in contexts of high historical and cultural value and great environmental complexity.

In the international academic environment, this need has been solved by a master's course entitled: "Archaeology for Architecture. Architecture for Archaeology" promoted in 2006 by the Departments of Architecture and Project (Faculty of Architecture) and Science of Antiquity (Faculty of Letters and Philosophy) of the University of Rome, Sapienza.

From this experience the Erasmus Joint Master "ala. Architecture Landscape Archaeology" was created in 2019, promoted by the University of Rome Sapienza, University of Coimbra, National Technical University of Athens and University of Naples Federico II, with further

3   Andrea Tramontana, "Il Patrimonio
dell'Umanità dell'Unesco. Un'analisi di
semiotica della cultura," PHD Bologna
University, 2007 (www.amsdottorato.unibo.
it/222/1/Tesi_Tramontana.pdf); Kenneth R.
Olwig, "The Practice of Landscape 'Conventions'
and the Just Landscape. The case of the
European Landscape Convention," *Landscape
Research,* no. 32 (October 2007): 579-594;
Andrea De Montis, "Impacts of the European
Landscape Convention on National Planning
Systems. A comparative Investigation of Six
Case Studies," *Lanscape and Urban Planning,* no.
124 (April 2014): 53-65.

partners from other universities, governmental and international agencies, museums, archaeological sites and professional architectural offices. An extraordinary opportunity for young architects and archaeologists from all over the world (and for their teachers) to share the construction of a common wealth of knowledge, methods and objectives for the conservation, management and enhancement of the historical landscape. This was to be carried out in the context of the natural and man-made environment of which it is an integral part and, also, in relation to the social, economic and cultural dynamics of the communities that are its heirs and guardians.

In addition to the many interesting projects developed by the young students of the master's courses at the University of Rome, with whom I was lucky enough to get involved in the discussion, this extensive dossier of experiences gained by authoritative professionals of urban and environmental design in multi-layered historical contexts in different countries of the world has now been added. A further opportunity to reflect on the role, function, form and location of the antique in contemporary landscape, also in the light of what has been developed, nationally and internationally, by the main institutions of cultural protection and enhancement.

It should be immediately noted that, here, the diversified series of experiences carried out in different geographical contexts (five in Italy, one in Spain, one in Greece, one in Peru and one in Australia) reveals a substantial coherence of methodological approach and cultural objectives, which was far from obvious until a few decades ago: this methodological coherence allows a "global" evaluation of the problem and reaffirms the dimension, at once "local" and "universal," of historical-environmental heritage as progressively defined, albeit from different angles, in the UNESCO *World Heritage Convention* (1972) and, above all, in the *European Union Landscape Convention* (2000).[3]

From the archaeologist's point of view, when we are dealing with ancient remains, the order of priorities is (or should be) out of the question: identification, analysis, documentation, interpretation and scientific discussion of the monument and its context. Only after that, it is possible to proceed to the design of strategies for conservation, valorization, and communication.

The projects presented in this issue of *Joelho* share this principle and take the preliminary scientific research phase for granted. In this regard, however, one must keep in mind the intrinsic condition of partiality and precariousness of archaeological knowledge that always reveals a minimal part, in quantity and quality, of the ancient context, itself inevitably residual in consistency and occasional in conservation. This limit of archaeological knowledge – which contemplates the potential acquisition of further elements of evaluation – must be taken into account in the conception of the architectural project that cannot be considered

4   Adriano La Regina, "Quale antico e per chi. Il caso dei Fori Imperiali," in "Progettare la memoria. L'archeologia nella città contemporanea," *Italia Nostra,* no. 444 (June 2009): 19.

5   Mario Manieri Elia, *Topos e progetto. Temi di archeologia urbana a Roma* (Rome: Gangemi, 1998), starting from Massimo Cacciari, "Tradizione e rivelazione," *Il Centauro,* no. 13-14 (1985): 13-37.

final and irreversible, as the results achieved by archaeological research regarding the object and context treated.

The sensitivity and interest of the authors of this issue of *Joelho* towards the forms and reasons for this research path are, however, demonstrated by their propensity (a need for internalization, one might say) to abstract and conceptualize the practices of archaeology: from excavation to reconnaissance, from the analysis of material to the building techniques, from architectural reconstruction to urban planning and landscape. This occurs within the context of a very heartfelt (even inspired, at times) reflection when experimenting with powerfully evocative metaphors to represent archaeology (as "archives": T. Kordonouri; as "autopsies": V. Mannering and T. Morgan) and extends to the ideal and symbolic meanings of the rediscovery of material traces of the past.

It would be the archaeologist's task, however, to guide the architect along this path and to reveal the limits (the limits!) of the historical and monumental reconstruction that is offered to the architectural project. Archaeology, in fact, almost never gives back the "ancient reality": rather, it is a representation of it achieved by different investigation methodologies, by historical questions, by the understanding of the complex, by strategic-conservative choices and by strategies of setting up and restitution. In this situation, the first step is to clearly and consciously distinguish the moment of knowledge from the moment of representation, because a "misunderstood historicist conception of preservation" has often prevented us from distinguishing "the moment of knowledge from the moment of representation, which inevitably takes the form of pure abstraction with respect to any actual development assumed by places in the course of time."[4]

From this comes the awareness that the archaeological setting is a modern symbolic creation: the result of the selection and the re-composition of monumental entities from different eras and inserted into a contemporary design vision. Inevitably, the archaeological site becomes a "setting" that has little to do with the ancient reality that it evokes and reinterprets. In this sense, archaeologists and architects are condemned to be the creators of an "artificial reality" that places the question before us – never really addressed and even less resolved – of the conscious construction of a "tradition" (from the same Latin root: to betray/to hand on) that is both transmission/conservation and betrayal/renewal of the historical past and its material traces.[5] Because it is certainly true that "conservation is an active and complicated process, a process which presumes the change" (P. Miano, F. Coppolino).

From all the different experiences presented in this issue of *Joelho*, emerge some common tendencies that are worth highlighting.

Here, the antique and their material remains are understood as a subject and an opportunity for contemporary design and are considered a fundamental theme in contemporary architectural, urban, environmental

and social culture, in a complex network of relationships between different sciences and professional spheres (F. Zaffora; G. Tupputi, A. La Notte, O.G. Paparusso, M. Cafagna).

This approach, inevitably, amplifies the conceptual dimension and the goal of the archaeological discipline that, in its double dimension of scientific research and "preventive" investigation and documentation, is called upon to provide content and tools for urban and architectural design, for territorial enhancement, for environmental and landscape protection and also for the construction of the identity of places and the communities that live in them. In this sense, archaeology is certainly the least "pure" of the historical sciences because its subject of investigation, its operational practices, and the result of its research possesses a concreteness, material and symbolic, of extraordinary cultural, social and political impact.

The theme of antiquity treated in this issue of *Joelho* does not – as happened for centuries in Europe – favour a specific period and/or a specific culture, but considers the perspective of the *long duré* essential to the historical understanding of the monumental, urban and landscape context. This approach acknowledges the perspective progressively developed by the archaeological research of the second half of the 20th century and contributes to solving the traditional "conflict between the antique" that, in European idealism, favoured the classical period at the expense of the subsequent historical phases – and also of the regional and local cultural expressions – with inevitable consequences on the choices of preservation, transmission and representation. In this issue of *Joelho* it is in fact possible to find design experiences in different geographical and historical-cultural contexts, in a long-term vision that goes from the highest antiquity to the contemporary age, up to adopt the "stratigraphic" approach also in the reading and interpretation of modern urbanism (T. Kordonouri).

History in its integrity – concretely testified by the stratification of its material remains – is therefore considered and proposed as a founding value of the cultural and social identity of the community that is its heir and would like to be its guardian (T. Emerson, G. Othenin-Girard, L. Crignola).

It is not by chance that this issue of *Joelho* is pervaded by the theme of the persistence of memory (historical and cultural) and by its different forms of removal and negation (occasional and intentional) as mechanisms of identity construction (T. Kordonouri; P. Miano, F. Coppolino; V. Mannering, T. Morgan). In archaeology, the topic is often substantiated by the famous Freudian metaphor of the unconscious as archaeological stratification, more than true, if not referring to the succession of distinct levels of different ages (as occurs in the archaeological excavation) but rather as a coexistence of historical levels that are not contemporary but simultaneously perceived (as is always the case in the archaeological site in urban context).

However, the theme of the identity value of the material remains of the past should be considered with particular caution. This is, certainly, an attribution of meaning which is in some way compensatory for the loss of the ideological and political dimension that the antique – especially archaeology – has had in national cultures since the second half of the nineteenth century, but that risks taking on improper cultural and social connotations, certainly anti-historical and easily instrumentalized.

It is not so much a question of identity, therefore, as of self-awareness and awareness of the historical and cultural journey to which we belong and, ultimately, of safeguarding a heritage of universal value to be preserved and shared for the present and the future.

Only in this sense is the dimension of "patrimoniality" with which we define the collective value of ancient monuments justifiable. The economic dimension of cultural heritage in all its manifestations and meanings prevails in social perception and political-administrative actions (in Italy, the definition of "cultural deposits" has even been coined as if monuments were mineral resources to be exploited). However, the absolute cultural value of this heritage should rather be emphasised and it should guide any further cost-benefit assessment for its knowledge, conservation and management.

Indeed, in the projects presented in this issue of *Joelho* there is a constant consideration of the economic potentialities offered by an integrated management of cultural heritage: this is recognised as an effective opportunity for the enhancement and the development of the cities and territories to which they belong (D. Falco; T. Emerson, G. Othenin-Girard, L. Crignola).

This condition, which has been increasingly experienced in recent decades as a result of mass "cultural" tourism, nevertheless deserves some further reflection, also in relation to its actual and lasting effectiveness. The tourist-cultural 'specialisation' of entire cities and territories, in Europe and beyond, has shown all the critical aspects of a development model that, having weakened the production fabric independent of its supply chain, proves to be extremely fragile in times of global crisis such as the one we are currently experiencing.

Only informed and conscious management of monumental heritage guarantees against these social and economic risks. The authors of the projects presented in this issue of *Joelho* recognise the key to this in an overall, integrated assessment of the historic landscape, in its complexity of environmental and cultural values and in its double dimension, vertical (chronological, historical, archaeological) and horizontal (landscape, settlement, infrastructure, mobility). The integration of archaeology, landscape and the city would seem to be the only possible approach for a design capable of proposing a narrative that is, at the same time, knowledge, conservation and enhancement of the territorial context. However, the order of priority in terms of urgency, relevance and

6 For an overview of these topics, see, after the classics J.-P. Babelon and André Chastel, *La notion de patrimoine* (Paris: Liana Levi, 1994) and André Corboz, *Le territoire comme palimpseste et autres essais* (Besançon; Paris: Editions de l'imprimeur, 2001), the most recent and extensive review proposed in Alessandra Capuano, ed., *Landscapes of Ruins. Ruined Landscapes* (Macerata: Quodlibet, 2014).

purpose of the intervention should be specified each time, as it cannot be generic with respect to the specific settlement, environmental and heritage components of its context.

With respect to the conservation of the archaeological heritage, an approach prevails that, alongside the usual practice of restoration, places an "integrated" perspective on the care of the context: this is achieved by integrating and functionalising it in contemporary reality – as called for in the UNESCO document on the historic urban landscape – through a design process that guarantees its use through accessibility, valorisation, and the organisation of cultural activities and the economic armature, also with the support of technology (S. Guideri, T. Matteini).

Ultimately, the theoretical principles, supported and certainly shared in this issue of *Joelho*, which are related to the architectural project applied to the ancient monumental heritage for the contemporary, are classifiable in key words such as: knowledge; preservation and enhancement of the stratified historical palimpsest; integration in the environmental and settlement context; cultural awareness and collective heritage; and social and economic re-functionalization.[6]

Other, even more problematic and crucial themes which are proposed in this issue of *Joelho* as a point of reflection about the conception and realisation of the architectural project for archaeology, are classifiable as: cultural specificity; form of realisation; aesthetic quality; cultural necessity; and relationship with society and politics.

It is certainly positive that all the presented projects are the result of urban and territorial intervention programmes conceived within the framework and in the light of planning instruments with a solid theoretical, methodological and documentary basis.

However, a 'high' and 'systemic' political vision, animated and supported by public debate, which goes beyond the dimension of management and administrative planning, rarely emerges. Reflection and action on cultural heritage has long since lost its ethical charge and its civil tension to become an eminently technical issue – reserved, in essence, for archaeologists and architects/urbanists – with very little involvement of the broader intellectual community and of the various components of society. That is, undoubtedly, a reflection of the end of ideologies which, although welcomed, has led to extinguishing ideals and weakening ideas.

On the contrary, as shown by the experiences presented here (D. Falco; G. Tupputi, A. La Notte, O.G. Paparusso, M. Cafagna; S. Guideri, T. Matteini), the architectural project for the safeguarding and integrated enhancement of the historical landscape provides an opportunity for discussion between the various local and national authorities responsible for the cultural heritage. However, the work of archaeologists and architects/urbanists should be supported by the contribution of other professionals (classicists, engineers, sociologists, anthropologists, jurists) and open to discussion with the social and institutional operators on

7   Françoise Choay, *L'allegorie du patrimoine* (Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1992).

the territory (training and research institutes, cultural and professional associations, productive activities) for a "participated" valorisation of the cultural heritage (T. Emerson, G. Othenin-Girard, L. Crignola).

This approach could help to resolve the paradoxical contradiction between the rhetoric of heritage (particularly practised in political communication) and the intolerance for the constraints of protection and knowledge that this imposes (or that it is considered should be imposed) on urban and territorial development. It is also for the benefit of a public opinion which is (dis)educated by the mass media for superficial enjoyment (or worse, consumption) of historical-cultural heritage.

In terms of design, it is interesting to highlight the substantial homogeneity of approach and solutions proposed in this issue of *Joelho*, despite the significant differences in scale (in terms of size, complexity, conservation) and content (in historical and cultural terms) of the contexts presented. While this homogeneity is a guarantee of a shared and widely verified methodological process, it would seem to reveal a weakness in the creative and design process.

Archaeologists have learnt to adapt their scientific methods and operational strategies to the characteristics of the research subject, and one might wonder whether in architectural design, too, the specificities of the context should not be enhanced in order to imagine more diversified solutions in relation to the specific environment. This could constitute a sort of 'cultural biodiversity' to be valued and protected in the face of a latent homologation of theories and practices, materials and forms, articulation and organisation of spaces, re-functionalisation and use of the context (the materials presented by L. M. Correia and C. Coelho are useful here).

On the other hand, the architectural project, in the cases exemplified in this issue of *Joelho*, reaches elaborations and takes on very sophisticated forms of representation, especially in drawing (e.g. F. Zaffora; P. Miano, F. Coppolino) which happily combines the potential of the computer tool with a cultured and refined aesthetic sensitivity.

This high degree of elaboration, however, creates high expectations and invites architects to take greater responsibility in the realisation phase of the project where there is frequently a significant loss of quality and architectural design is reduced to a "game of images." In the transition from design to construction – in fact, the last transformation, in order of time, of the monument – it is necessary to feel a strong sense of responsibility for the impact it will have on the context and on the landscape, remembering the roots that architecture itself has in the historical heritage with which it is confronted (L.M. Correia, C. Coelho).[7]

At different levels, the authors of this issue of *Joelho* emphasise the need for a balance between monument and environment, between history and nature; they are aware that in contemporary design, the built has largely replaced vegetation as a means of organising and communicating the antique.

8   Marc Augé, *Non-lieux. Introduction à une anthropologie de la surmodernité* (Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1992).

9   Salvatore Settis, *Futuro del classico* (Turin: Eunaudi, 2004); Daniel Fabre, *Émotions patrimoniales* (Paris: Edition de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2013).

It is comforting to read in this issue of *Joelho* that "there is no contrast between the forms of architecture and those of archaeology" because "architecture is a scaffolding, a framework with its own specific structure designed to read, interpret and narrate the archaeology, but not to compromise its forms" (P. Miano, F. Coppolino).

These are, of course, entirely theoretical petitions of principle, as is blatantly demonstrated by the widespread tendency to re-functionalize archaeological sites into performance spaces, exhibition spaces and as sites for the most diverse social activities. In this case, the architectural intervention distracts from the contents and from the meanings of the ancient context and declares its cultural and social insufficiency. Ultimately, one gets the impression that archaeology was the occasion (or the pretext) for the architectural project rather than the reason and motive for its valorisation (L.M. Correia and C. Coelho).

Paradoxically, 'over-musealization' is also a real risk for the safeguarding of the content of the archaeological heritage. Although dictated by security and protection needs and although animated by a sincere desire for cultural communication, it does not create real opportunities for integration, it ends up reaffirming the separateness of the archaeological object – a "non-place" – and is imposed, in extraneous forms, on the surrounding reality.[8]

In this context, the 'forced indoctrination' must also be contained: it imposes contents, points of view, paths and suggestions on the visitor which are dictated and bound by the exhibition project, and which make the fruition substantially passive and do not compensate the deficit of individual and collective cultural growth.

Obviously, we have to deal with one of the most striking social phenomena of recent decades: mass cultural tourism, the offspring of the "democratisation of cultural heritage", which uses archaeological sites and monuments in a consumerist dimension fuelled by the strategy of "patrimonial emotion," artfully stimulated – both by architects and archaeologists – to attract media, social and political attention but with very few cultural results (V. Mannering, T. Morgan; T. Emerson, G. Othenin-Girard, L. Crignola; L.M. Correia, C. Coelho).[9]

In view of these potential distortions, we might consider that the architectural arrangement of the archaeological context is not always the appropriate tool for its valorisation: when the project takes over or reveals its inadequacy, when it is not sustainable in the future perspective or when the cognitive assumptions on which it is based are not solid, the renunciation of intervention must be considered as a concrete option.

If we free ourselves from the widespread obsession of the organic assimilation and the total control of the context, then we could return to considering the ruins as ruins – without didactics, without facilities, without accessibility. This is as they have been for centuries, integrated into an immaterial but highly valid landscape of knowledge,

10 Choay, *L'allegorie du patrimoine*. See Manieri Elia, *Topos e progetto* for the "archaeological bradyseism" in the contemporary landscape.

values and feelings, both individual and collective, to the construction and effectiveness of which we should recognise equal, if not greater, importance than the material landscape into which we would like them to be modernly integrated.

In short, it is a question – by means of science and conscience – of controlling the growing generalisation of the concept of 'monument' and the consequent "ecumenical expansion of heritage practices": this creates the "fourfold inflation" – typological, chronological, geographical, of use – of the historical-monumental heritage and ends up trivialising its meaning.[10]

The fact that the archaeological context cannot be dealt with the tools of the archaeological discipline alone is clear to all the authors of this issue of *Joelho*. Within the projects presented here, its complexity can be observed at different levels (from the single monument to the site that includes it; from a restricted geographical area to a wider territorial and regional vision) and in the peculiar characteristics of the environment of reference (urban, suburban, agricultural or natural). Therefore, the search for the integration of the monument in the contemporary context is manifested in the project in a gradient of extremely interesting diversified formal and substantial solutions, all within a shared theoretical and methodological framework.

The case of Giardini Naxos presented by Flavia Zaffora (*Synchronous Worlds. Architecture, Archaeology and City through a Project in Sicily,* but the terms should be reversed) summarises the complex relationship between ancient monument, natural environment, historical city and modern town planning. Archaeology, which is part of this palimpsest, is integrated in a more organic relationship with the needs of contemporary cultural, social and economic life: "the general purpose of the intervention is to change the archaeological park into an urban park." In this sense, the architectural project, through large installations that evoke the ancient reality, "wants to show a once existing reality with new eyes, stimulating the visitor to imagine spaces and volumes now physically lost… the proposal aims at making the Greek site and the contemporary park exist synchronously, at simultaneously perceiving what exists today and what no longer does." However, apart from restoration work for protection and conservation, on a museographic level the project reveals the risks of the pedagogical approach which, in the form of the archaeodrome layout, imposes a univocal and restrictive perception in which the ancient ruins are overwhelmed by the modern reconstruction: this inevitably ends up giving an image that is far from the ancient reality distancing the viewer from the main ideal and material content.

"Transforming absence into presence" is also the challenge proposed in Pasquale Miano and Francesca Coppolino's project (*Coastal landscapes and invisible archaeology. The case of Crapolla Abbey in Massa*

Lubrense) in the context of the medieval St. Peter's Abbey in the fjord of Crapolla in Massa Lubrense. An interdisciplinary historical, archaeological and architectural landscape research supports a valorisation project "between coastal landscapes, invisible archaeology and architectural design."

The 'low-intensity' archaeological context – in terms of consistency, conservation, knowledge and visibility – suggests a design path "which tries to explain weaker traces and where mutual intersections between nature and artifice, memory and amnesia, imagery and imagination represent some of the main tools that characterize design approaches in these specific situations." The experiment, very consciously, revolves around the theme of a balance between ruin and nature, between ruin and architecture and between ruin and imagination, in order to measure how much the process of re-emergence of the archaeological context is coherent with its original contents and in which forms it can be represented and proposed. In a reflection around the concept of 'absence,' the multiple potentialities expressed by the 'traces' of a context largely lost and/or hidden are highlighted: "It is of great importance to keep in mind the imaginative force produced by the traces, the alignments and the rhythmic sequences of the ruins, eloquent fragments of lost architecture and for this reason capable of generating new figures and new shapes." The decision to stop at the 'traces' leads to the actions of the design proposal "which have the main aim of transforming absence into presence, placing the interaction between the historiographic function of archaeology and the design mechanisms linked to the topic of imagery and imagination."

Traces, imagery and imagination, governed by knowledge of the history and the environment, scientific documentation and design awareness, appear to be sufficient to guarantee the preservation of an evocative natural and historical environment in a sober, cultured and elegant project.

On the delicate relationship between nature and history, we return with the experience of Silvia Guideri and Teresa Matteini's (*Cultivating archaeological landscape. Notes on a Mediterranean applied case study*) who present "the executive project for interventions of conservation and valorisation of the archaeological and landscape heritage of the Park of Baratti and Populonia in Southern Tuscany."

The proposed approach is particularly stimulating from two points of view: it recognises archaeology as an opportunity and tool to protect the integrity of the landscape ("from an ecological point of view, it might be useful to recall that archaeological sites generally constitute an important reservoir of biological diversity") and because, in the perspective of 'cultivating' places of cultural and natural interest, it adopts the concept of extensive and constant 'care' of the historical, natural and anthropic context ("a continuous attitude of taking care of (archaeological) places over time to preserve and regenerate resources for future in a holistic vision, also considering economic sustainability and liveability for

inhabitants and local fauna"). Here the principle is reaffirmed, culturally, economically and politically, that taking care of the historical landscape is certainly the best way to guarantee quality to the present environment and to the life of its inhabitants. In this perspective, the parks system in which the intervention is inserted becomes first and foremost a project of global territorial valorization "that became the policy basis for the "Strategic Cultural Development Plan," the substantial appendix to the Valorization Accord between the Cultural Assets and Activities Ministry, Tuscany Region, and Piombino Town Council, entered into in 2007."

At the same territorial scale and with the same complexity of approach, Davide Falco ("*A quiet, secluded little miracle*". *Some remarks on the territorial system and landscape of central Apulia twenty years after the European Landscape Convention*) proposes a project centred on the archaeological park of *Egnatia* in the geographical sector of Valle d'Itria and Murgia dei Trulli defined by the Apulia Region as part of the ELC. Here, considering the different natural and anthropic components, emerges the theme of the valorisation of a highly original agricultural landscape with strong cultural and identity connotations ("the image of a "town-territory": a widespread historical heritage of rural stone building and a peculiar substratum of ethno-anthropological traditions"), recognised as a potential economic and tourist engine which must be evaluated in its present and future implications for the liveability, conservation and valorisation of the territory ("but whose direction and long-term effects are clearly important to understand").

The experience of Apulia stands out for its strong coherence with local and national institutional and administrative programmes and for the quality of the documentation at the basis of the project design. It foresees: the realisation of a *Heritage Atlas* that represents cartographically, describes and interprets the whole territory; the conception of a *Strategic Scenario* that explains the general and specific objectives; the definition of *Technical Standards* that respond to the need for conservation.

At this scale, archaeology becomes the 'high' source of inspiration for the conception of the landscape architecture project. Archaeology is then freed from the risks of self-centredness and spectacularization that always threaten it, while it regains the dimension of a component of the historical anthropized landscape in a more balanced relationship of values, meanings and functions for the environment, society, economy and contemporary culture.

The project by Giuseppe Tupputi, Alberto La Notte, Olga Giovanna Paparusso, Massimiliano Cafagna (*The lower valley of Ofanto river: from landscape archaeology to landscape design*) for the redesign of the landscape of the Regional Natural Park of the Ofanto River in the Apulia region, addresses the same theme.

The project considers the Ofanto basin in its hydrogeological, natural, anthropological and historical complexity. It enhances an area

of great complexity between Venosa, Canosa and Canne, a crossroads of indigenous, Hellenic and Roman cultures and a setting of historical memories that are fundamental for the development of the ancient Mediterranean. The long-term historical-territorial analysis is based on the critical redesign of territorial maps and aims at the overall regeneration of the area and incentives to attract new visitors to the wider Ofanto mouth park. For this purpose the renaturalization of some sensitive and degraded areas is foreseen, with restoration of the physical connection between the watercourse, the renewal of the road networks, the restoration of Ofanto's Tower and the redevelopment of the modern Fiumara settlement. The ambition is that the conservative issues of the archaeological landscape can be combined from a sustainability perspective with the value in use for society today. Also, in this case, the large-scale vision of the landscape and the design of an integrated protection and enhancement strategy for the territory, places the archaeological heritage in a more balanced dialogue with the other natural and anthropic components.

The theme of the stratification of the historical landscape and the hybridization of research methodologies for its comprehension and reactivation is inevitably emphasised in the only two urban archaeology projects presented in this issue of *Joelho*. The fact that there are only two of them and that they are not purely archaeological projects is perhaps not accidental: this invites us to reflect on the interests and orientations of contemporary architecture with regard to historical and archaeological heritage.

The work proposed by Thomais Kordonouri (*Archiving Metaxourgio*) is a refined experiment in long-term stratigraphic analysis, aimed at interpreting contemporary urban form and its formal and ideal reconfiguration. An archaeology of the present that opens up to anthropological and sociological perspectives.

The resulting urban design is particularly ambitious in its conception of a new landscape in which the antique is elegantly integrated in the context of many different elements.

The metaphor of the 'urban archive' ("the city is an archive with traces, ruins and monuments that is produced through the dialectics of place, time and ideas") enriches the archaeological perspective and generates a conscious design for the reorganisation and for the spatial and temporal interrelation of stratified urban signs ("the archive that consists of the conscious selection of these layers and traces of the past and the present, looking towards the future"). In this case, archaeology becomes a 'special technology' for the city (borrowing from a famous definition by Italo Insolera on the failed role of archaeology in Rome) that goes beyond its scientific, academic and professional limits to become a tool for conscious management and design of the urban palimpsest.

Striking in this context is the metaphor of archaeology as "a metaphorical 'autopsy', a brief moment of pause when the sites history

can be publicly examined and challenged" that Virginia Mannering and Tom Morgan (*New public excavations – The city performs an autopsy*) proposed in relation with the recent archaeological excavations in Melbourne (Australia), that reveal the nature of urbanisation in the city in the 19th century.

Looking towards the 'New World' from our 'Old World', which has so often wilfully ignored its historical heritage in the name of modernity, it is touching to read that "In Melbourne, archaeology, architecture, and infrastructure are inherently linked… At each site, acts of archaeological excavation have been a necessary precondition of the larger architectural or infrastructural project" because "there is a relationship between the act of digging and the act of building – and unpacking – the image of the urban." A statement of principle that constitutes the best legacy of European archaeological and architectural culture.

In this experience, the high level of professional awareness ("Architects also employ and romanticize the notion of palimpsest, which views the continued construction and reformation cities as neat sequential layers, where the past coexists, still politely visible under the present"), theoretical (the distinction between 'site' and 'ground' is relevant), methodological ("But such processes, on a vast scale, and committed with violence, erase and confuse the collective memory") and cultural ("The archaeological excavation becomes theatrical and performative. The spectacle surrounds the narrative of the dig, rather than the findings themselves") must be emphasised.

In the continuous reference to "theatricalisation" and "public participation" in the archaeological experience that guides the renewal of the city, one can grasp a social dimension of cultural communication that emerges particularly in the original project realised by Tom Emerson, Guillaume Othenin-Girard, Lucio Crignola (*A Room for Archaeologists and Kids Pachacamac, Peru*) in collaboration with the University of Lima for the Museum of Pachacamac, near Lima in Peru and that in the title "The Archaeology of the Territory… revealed a new understanding of the place that enfolded its history within its contemporary condition."

Here three different experiences come together: the creation of the Pachacamac Atlas ("sought not only to represent the archaeological structures of the site (which are already well documented), but also the contemporary reality of the wider landscape"); the design of a functional integrated system ("The design and build project was intended to help the museum develop its existing outreach programme, providing a space within the landscape where educational and community events can take place, helping increase engagement with the people that live nearby and those in the wider region"); the construction of a support structure for the archaeological area, which constitutes a mix of a warehouse and scientific laboratory for the work of the archaeologists and a didactic and reception area for students and visitors ("The structure was collaboratively

How to Reconcile the Past and the Present

designed and constructed by the students …, following a joint research project over several months that produced a new topological survey of the territory").

This 'thinking warehouse' is intended to be a place of study and rediscovered relationship between ancient material evidence and the contemporary territory through the experience of institutions, professionals, scholars, students, visitors and local communities: an excellent metaphor for the potential – and the many critical – issues that arise in the contemporary relationship between archaeology and architecture, between archaeology and society.

In short, this is an original and provocative experiment in professional, functional and symbolic hybridity which, after the excellent ethical, scientific and methodological premises, once again takes risks in making a spectacle of archaeology and downgrading it from a historical science to an object and an occasion for recreational entertainment.

On the whole, the projects presented in this issue of *Joelho* offer an extensive vision of the problems connected to the relationship between knowledge of the antique and contemporary architectural design.

They find a refined synthesis in the critical reflection proposed by Luis Miguel Correia and Carolina Coelho (*Architectural constants from Toni Gironès. Habitability and poetic reverberations*) about the work and design theory of Toni Gironès.

For the Catalan architect, memory and traces of the past are fundamental to the reformulation of the contemporary landscape: "it is on that ground that we encounter the traces of those who preceded us and where, at the same time, we build contemporary projects." However, these traces must be considered the product of a temporal transformation due to natural and anthropic factors that have substantially altered their shape and perception: "memory is also physical, recyclable material; archaeological spaces are territories of memory(ies) in expectation, per se." These traces are a historical document and a collective heritage on which to base the contemporary project, an opportunity for "recognition and activation of pre-existences" but never "as a hermetic object or work of art that is only created to be exhibited in a museum room."

Once again, architecture is proposed as a medium for the projection of historical and archaeological heritage into the present and the future, in an interpretative and creative dynamic in which the stimulation of individual perception and collective awareness plays a decisive role. The rigorous scientific archaeological interpretation and its translation into contemporary architectural forms are transformed into an experience that is at once sensorial, evocative, emotional and nostalgic: "In short, his [Toni Gironès] conclusion is that architecture is emotion and thought."

In this process of material and ideal roots of the present in the past, architecture plays a primary role ("architecture mediates them [past time frames] in the present, providing them with a renewed

11 Jürgen Habermas and Jeremy Leaman, "Concerning the Public Use of History," *New German Critique,* no. 44 (1988): 40-50; Nicola Gallerano, ed., *L'uso pubblico della storia*, (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1995); Martin Carver, *Making Archaeology Happen. Design Versus Dogma* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2011); Daniele Manacorda, *Enciclopedia Treccani X Appendice*, s.v. Archeologia (Roma, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 2020): 78-83; Giuliano Volpe, *Archeologia pubblica. Metodi, tecniche, esperienze* (Roma, Carocci 2020).

12 Andreina Ricci, "Luoghi estremi della città. Il progetto archeologico tra 'memoria' e 'uso pubblico della storia,'" *Archeologia Medievale*, no. 26 (1999): 21-42.

condition of habitability"), according to a principle of apparent simplicity: 'habitability' is, in fact, the main aim of architectural design for the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage, a principle that is based on solid theoretical and operational bases but which is transformed into a broader ethical, cultural and social perspective.

Ultimately, this is the contemporary way of interpreting the "duty to remember" that has characterised, albeit with very different approaches and perspectives, the history of the West since the Renaissance. The historical sciences have the role of countering the dissolution of the order of cultural memory and the archaeology – with its places, monuments, representations and narratives – makes a decisive contribution to "generating awareness of human experience" becoming the most effective and visible form of "public use of history".[11]

However, in this dimension of "public archaeology" it becomes selective, mnemonic, identitarian, pedagogical and, above all, recreational and therefore potentially manipulated and manipulative, radical and consumerist.[12] If we cannot escape this condition, we must be aware of the great responsibility that burdens archaeologists and architects with the task of 'recomposition' of the historical places and their messages, with the awareness that it is a question of "designing memory." This issue of *Joelho* provides an important dossier of experiences for current and future reflections.