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The argument of this Docomomo Journal is Modern Movement in Sub-Saharan Africa and Tropical Architecture. Docomomo is very pleased to gather the reflection of a range of skilled researchers in this issue, becoming to point a huge critical attention. Ten numbers and ten years after Docomomo Journal 38, dedicated to Modern Heritage in Africa, the aim of this number 48 is to update the discussion contributing to “fill the gaps” identified by Jane Drew (1911–1996) and Maxwell Fry (1899–1987).

The expression “Tropical architecture” is frequently associated to Fry and Drew, due to an international diffusion of Tropical Architecture in Humid Zones (1956), followed by Tropical Architecture in Dry and Humid Zones (1964). Far from European production, African colonies created new architecture giving shape to a brand, the one of tropical architecture: “architecture in the humid tropics is collaboration with nature to establish a new order in which human beings may live in harmony with their surroundings”. The idea was “to fill a gap in general information for architects and town planners”. Until then the edition was concentrated on French and British colonies.

1960 seems to be “the African year” coinciding with the peak of the beginning of the African decolonization process, following a post-war circumstance and the foundation of the United Nations Organization in 1945 (having a huge reverberation on changes made to statutes of several African regions that were being shared by European states since 1884, as decided at the Berlin Conference), with the independence of 17 countries and the beginning of rebellion towards independence all over the continent.

Published in 1963, the book Neues Bauen in Afrika, by the art historian Udo Kultermann (1927–2013), constitutes a reference on the analyses of Modern architecture in Africa, stating that the new task was to build new nations, implying a new evolution on African architecture. Six years later, New Directions in Africa Architecture points a path and a future by analyzing typologies, identifying trends and establishing conclusions. In the book published in 2000 World Architecture 1900–2000: A Critical Mosaic, he regains the 1963 chronological setting and selects 100 buildings to illustrate the 20th century in sub Saharan Africa, assuming the Sahara frontier and defining a sub Saharan cultural unity to built his idea of the “continent of hope”. Kultermann’s progression emerges from optimism focusing on doubt in 1969 and on hope on the edge of the 20th century. Kultermann’s approach by questioning the link between tradition and innovation on African architectural production has no precedents.

Since the 1990s architectural historians discovered Modern architecture in Africa as part of a cultural production related to colonialism. With the introduction of postcolonial theory in the historiography of architecture, an exclusively ideological critical sense has been developed preventing disciplinary autonomy or practice of architecture and finally…
condemning any objective look. Recently, the development of concepts such as hybrid or the otherness\(^8\) has been promoting a nuanced historical analysis about architecture and politics in the 20\(^{th}\) century in Africa.\(^9\) The recognition that a widespread awareness of Modern Movement architecture has always been serving colonization\(^10\) involves rethinking the basic principle of Modern welfare society and practiced architecture as a mission. How Modern principles have been exchanged, resulting from a Eurocentric culture, with the cultures from the East and Africa. In addition, it must be said that the case of sub-Saharan Lusophone Africa is now beginning to be studied in depth putting together peripheral universes.

It is time to keep on debating African’s surprising Modernity and to reflect both on the lack of information, namely the one concerned with territories such as Angola or Mozambique, to re-evaluate the memory of the past, the present and the future with a wide range of issues dealing with documentation and conservation topics. I wish to thank the skill of a brilliant range of researchers and critics that contributed to make possible this debate that starts with the acute reflexions on colonialism and orientalism conducted by Hilde Heynen. Antoni Folkers makes the necessary revision on the very early and native Modern African architecture; Ana Tostões deals with local culture and global influence highlighting the work of Pancho Guedes in Mozambique, introducing the Lusophone Africa which is followed by paradigmatic case studies analyzed in the scope of a heritage assessment by Margarida Quintã in Angola, Vincenzo Riso and Susana Gomes, followed by Zara Ferreira’s contribution on Mozambique school programs in Conservation Issues. Heritage conservation’s future is the question identified by Hannah Le Roux, Brendan Hart and Yasmin Mayat, followed by Ola Uduku who stresses the importance of education for the future of heritage. Finally, the tropical architectural education is analysed from two Mediterranean authors—this is to say peripheral Europeans—point of views: Portugal and Greece, through Jorge Figueira/Bruno Gil and Petro Phokaides essay’s updating the AA School Tropical Architecture Program.

Today, I wish to remember Udo Kultermann who passed away last February and to pay a tribute to his unprecedented work: African’s architecture challenge, its current reality and its evolving process gathering together cultural heritage and the test of time. The case studies analyzed represent only a small example of African Modern architecture’s potential showing in the iconic, tectonic and programmatic qualities of this singular heritage. If one may admit that this legacy begins to be recognized as a cultural heritage, it is important to consider the fact that this astonishing universe faces a lack of legal protection. However, even carrying the fragility of more than a fifty year-old construction and minimal maintenance, these buildings and cities still show a surprising sort of resilience. Perhaps due to the fact that Modern Movement architecture that has been designed and conceived with great consistency and climatic conditions awareness shows a spatial and tectonic worthiness, which has enabled it to survive the test of time. It is important to understand this production envisaged through a transformation process following a truly progressive orientation and the cultural dissemination of these pioneering works with plenty of social and urban significance. As I believe that heritage implies a collective sense of belonging, I wish to enlighten the utopia vision of Modern Movement architecture as a step forward for the improvement towards a better life for all and considering that this heritage may turn into a sustainable, cultural and economic resource.

Ana Tostões, Chair of docomomo International

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Definitive international recognition came in 1946, when he was part of the team in charge of the design the United Nations Headquarters also in New York, when Niemeyer’s design was the one chosen to be followed in further developments. Pampulha was also the beginning of his partnership with the politician Juscelino Kubitschek, then a young mayor and the President of Brazil from 1955 to 1960, when he decided to accomplish the long-cherished national dream of building a new federal capital: Brasilia. Lúcio Costa won a competition for the urban “Pilot-Plan” and Niemeyer designed the main administrative buildings. He never ceased to produce new and sometimes controversial designs for the Capital. However, as Brazil immersed into a twenty-five-years dictatorship from 1964 on, he intensified his work abroad, in places as different as Haifa, Tripoli, Algiers, Milan, Paris or Havre.

Niemeyer performed a rare combination of true avant-garde innovation with professional success. His longevity, along with the large number of important commissions, makes him one of the most influential architects of the 20th century in western culture. Works derived from his initial colorful and sensual phase, from his new monumentality in Brasilia, and from his late minimalist work, can be found in the architecture from every corner of the Modern world.

Danilo Matoso Macedo, August, 2013
Architect and Urban Designer, specialist in Public Policies and Government Management. He is the author of Da Matéria à Invenção. As Obras De Oscar Niemeyer Em Minas Gerais 1938–1955 published in 2008 and he founded the docomomo Brasilia within docomomo Brazil.
Pedro Ramírez Vázquez 1919–2013
Requiem for Pedro

By Armando V. Flores Salazar

The news of his death was instantly dispersed, displacing all other issues of national or international interest. When I read the message that Louise Noelle sent to all docomomo Mexico members, I accepted it as a plain and sad confirmation of what had happened: “Dear colleagues, this tragic note is to inform about the death of architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez today, April 16. He was one of the most prominent architects of the Modern Movement and his work has been part of our writings”.

The mental mechanism of what we had in common about and in a disorderly manner I reviewed the analysis and reflection of the meetings, retreats and affinities that built the personal and professional friendship that uniquely brought us together.

His close ties with the city of Monterrey began in 1953 when President Ruiz Cortines assigned him to become the liaison with the Monterrey delegation—led by Governor José S. Vivanco and Don Alfonso Reyes— to pursue the procedures to create the Ciudad Universitaria of Nuevo Leon. This request was made in correspondence to his duties as Head of Building Conservation of the Ministry of Education of Mexico. In 1954, he was part of the delegation accompanying President Ruiz Cortines in his visit to Nuevo Leon and in the Government Palace he informed on the progress of the studies to achieve this ambitious project. An unfinished cultural and professional service to the city and the region began including his role as President of the jury that selected the winning project for the new Palacio Municipal of Monterrey (1975) and the project management of the new Guadalupe Shrine in Colonia Independencia (1981), where he wisely respected the existing sanctuary and the privilege of equipping the new temple with a stone block from Cerro del Tepeyac for the altar.

My impersonal relationship was primarily born from the admiration of his outstanding professional production: National School of Medicine at UNAM; National Anthropology Museum; Basilica of Guadalupe and Azteca Stadium among others.

We talked a lot and even more we became silent. We never talked, for instance, of his ‘Magna Solidaridad’ library project for the Ciudad Universitaria of Nuevo Leon which in 1997 became the Biblioteca Magna Universitaria ‘Raúl Rangel Frías’. Once the design and detailing were in an advanced stage, the project was transferred to Ricardo Legorreta’s office due to a personal dislike between Rector Manuel Silos’ person in charge of the project and the architect’s project chief. The rector solved the problem by suggesting another office to continue the project. Thus the opportunity to have one of his works in the Ciudad Universitaria—the academic institution with which he was linked from the outset—vanished.
The chivalry of Don Pedro never allowed speaking of this issue in his subsequent visits to the city. It was in this ongoing dialogue and mutual interests that I gave him to read the manuscript of Calicanto, a book that explores the cultural frameworks that underpin regional architecture, including the African context. I knew of his particular interest in this continent due to the museums that he had built there. When we met to speak about it his first emotional and excite words were: “I wish I had been the author of your book”. My grateful and enthusiastic response was: “That forces you to write the foreword and thereby make it yours as much as it is mine”.

Since then friendship turned into brotherhood. His physical absence has created a void that leaves me flat, full of sadness. Living together in Calicanto mitigates the feeling a little bit... as well as the possibility of keeping on with the dialogue in the timeless dimension.

Armando V. Flores Salazar
Architect and professor at the Faculty of Architecture of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nuevo León.

Clorindo Testa 1923–2013

By docomomo Argentina

It is with regret and sadness that docomomo Argentina informs the international docomomo community that architect Clorindo Testa passed away on April 11 2013.

Testa was an architect and urban planner but also a painter whose artistic sensitivity has been always present in the way he conceived architecture.

Born in Naples (Italy), he moved to Argentina with his parents when he was only a few months old and there he attended school. He received his architectural degree at the University of Buenos Aires and soon after that he worked for the town planning office steered by Jorge Ferrari Hardoy, Antoni Bonet Castellana and Jorge Vivanco, all of them in close contact with Le Corbusier’s Modern ideas and the CIAM international conferences.

His built legacy includes the former London and South America Bank (1959, associated with SEPRA), the National Library (1962, with Francisco Bullrich and Alicia Cazzaniga), the Central Navy Hospital (1970, with Héctor Lacarra and Juan Genoud) and the Terrazas building (1975) in Buenos Aires; the Santa Rosa Civic Centre in La Pampa (1956, with Boris Dabinovic, Augusto Gaido and Francisco Rossi); and the beach complex La Perla in Mar del Plata (1985–1990, with Juan Genoud and Osvaldo Álvarez Rojas).

The remarkable conceptual, expressive and material values of his work have received national and international recognition. Clorindo Testa’s architecture represents and inspires the evolution of Modern Movement ideas and his most referential buildings have been included in the docomomo international register.

Furthermore, most of us will recall him as a kind, enthusiastic and inspiring man, always receptive and patient to explain his vision of architecture to students and colleagues.
Born in 1934 in Milan, Roberto Segre migrated to Argentina with his family in 1939, fleeing the anti-Semitism of Benito Mussolini’s fascist government. He graduated as an architect at the University of Buenos Aires in 1960 and soon after, in 1963, settled in La Havana, Cuba, where he taught history of architecture for three decades. In 1994, he began his career as a Brazilian researcher and professor on graduate courses in urban planning at the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), where he served until March 2013. During these decades of professional activity, he came to be respected as a critic and historian, publishing many books and articles of the utmost importance on Latin American architecture.

In the last fifteen years, Roberto Segre devoted himself to in-depth research on the history of the Palácio Capanema, the current seat of the Ministry of Education and Health, opened in Rio de Janeiro in 1945. In 2009, Luiz Fernando de Almeida, then Iphan’s national chairman, learnt of his work and subsequently invited Roberto Segre to coordinate the preparation of the document claiming the building’s inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

This research project also became a publishing project, developed over the past five years by Romano Guerra Editora. During the proof-reading process, the author was impatient to share glimpses of the publication with his friends and colleagues on his iPad. “This is the great book of my life”, he would say to friends he crossed in the corridors of the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism of the UFRJ.

On the morning of March 10, 2013, two days before the layout process began, Roberto Segre sent the last corrections to the editor: “Finally I found a mistake. In the references, the book América Latina fim do milênio! appears twice. Check it”. He then left for his Sunday walk on the beach. Soon after, the magnificent adventure of his life was interrupted by a motorcycle traveling at high speed.


Abilio Guerra
Architect, historian and professor at the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism of Mackenzie University, São Paulo.
The Headquarters and Museum of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation are a major work of architecture. The impact it has had and the way it has revealed the effectiveness of qualities such as formal sobriety and containment have confirmed the magnificent articulation achieved between design and construction. Together with the garden, the complex has constructed the image of prestige and innovation of the Foundation itself.

This book is the final product of research that began some years ago, focused on the buildings and the relevance in affirming Modern architecture. By delving into the Projects and Works Department archives, the author unearthed thousands of documents that made it possible to reconstitute the strategy adopted, the choice of the protagonists, the doubts, discussions and major decisions, and the opinions and recommendations gathered. The aim of this work is to reveal the whole process from the moment of creation in 1956 to the present day.

Particular emphasis is placed on the design process, with the role of Modern Movement in the urban context, the building’s capacity for renewal. It also states the relevance in affirming Modern architecture.

The book can be found at: http://servidor.esteticas.unam.mx/docomomo/publicaciones/page1.html

Ivan Blasi
Secretary General docomomo International

Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

Modernidad Urbana
Urban Modernity
By Louise Noelle and Iván San Martín
Publisher: docomomo Mexico
Language: English and Spanish
Year: 2012

Ten years ago, in 2003, docomomo Mexico was created and in 2010 it organized the 11th International Conference under the title “Living in the Urban Modernity”, celebrated at the UNAM in Mexico City. This publication compiles the speeches by Ana Tostões (docomomo International Chair), Louise Noelle (docomomo Mexico Chair), and Louise Cox (UIA President between 2008 and 2011); and the keynote presentations by Barry Bergdoll (“Good Neighbors: the Museum of Modern Art and Latin America, 1933–1955, a Journey through the MoMA Archives”), Víctor Pérez Escolano (“1929: La Primera Arquitectura Moderna en las Periferias Iberica y Latinoamericana”) and Ricardo Legorreta (“José Villagrán García y Luis Barragán”).

The book is presented by Iván San Martín and has a preface by Sara Topelson de Grinberg. Texts in English and Spanish depending on how they were originally presented, and it has been possible thanks to the scientific and economical support of docomomo Mexico members, showing their strong commitment with their academic work and with docomomo.

These documents are not only a compilation of texts but they suppose a critical approach towards the role of Modern Movement in the urban context, seen from the point of view of some of the most important critics and architects of our time.

The book can be found at: http://servidor.esteticas.unam.mx/docomomo/publicaciones/page1.html

Miguel Horta e Costa
Commissioner General of the Year of Portugal in Brazil

Bloquinhos de Portugal.
A Arquitectura Portuguesa no Traço de Lúcio Costa
By Lúcio Costa
Publisher: Caixa Cultural
Language: Portuguese
Year: 2012

The exhibition of the same title shows the recordings made in small note books by the famous architect and urban planner during his visits to Portugal in 1952. These small note books were lost for 50 years and were revealed to the public in an exhibition at Espaço do Brasil, curated by Maria Elisa Costa (daughter) and José Pessoa. In total, these documents by Lucio Costa resulted in 305 sheets, filling five small blocks. On the occasion of the publication of his autobiography in 1995, he unsuccessfully tried to find the drawings he had made in Portugal in order to to include them in the book. Only after his death, this material was found by her daughter Helena. This publication compiles these materials and makes it possible to see these unknown documents.

Lúcio Costa’s relationship with Portugal has always been one of extreme tenderness and respect. The creator of Brasilia, the foreword looking visionary, had a profound connection with the Portuguese mold of Brazilian culture, not as a counterpart to its architectural boldness but as the foundation and pillar of a Modern reality.

His wise take on Portugal, which he visited so many times and got to know profoundly, is quite patently clear in this admirable collection of sketches, mnemonic moments of an aesthetic devotion that was experienced by this unique architect and urbanist in his 1952 trip to Portugal.
The Historic Urban Landscape. Managing Heritage in an Urban Century
By Francesco Bandarin & Ron van Oers
Publisher: Wiley–Blackwell
ISBN 978–0–4706–5574–0
Language: English
Year: 2012

Much of the current debate on how we should preserve our cultural heritage revolves around urban sites—historic monuments in urban settings, historic districts, or complete historic towns. The growing complexity of urban heritage conservation makes reaching a consensus on how to manage urban heritage difficult. Additionally, the sharp increase in the world’s population now living in urban areas, combined with a lack of policies to facilitate a sustainable use of heritage assets means the pressure on historic sites is set to rise. Unless new and innovative ways of managing these sites can be agreed on, there is a real danger that historic cities as we know them today will not survive the first decades of the 21st century.

The Historic Urban Landscape: managing heritage in an urban century offers a comprehensive overview of the intellectual developments in urban conservation. The book examines its modern interpretations and critiques, and the way in which the classical approach has been challenged by the evolution of the conceptual and operational context of urban management. Analyses are provided of how World Heritage sites are managed—with associated de contextualizations more aprotundadas do que tem sido comum na historiografia especializada nesta temática e cronologia. Note-se, por exemplo, como emergem as diferenças, que por certo agora a autora estará a desenvolver, entre os contextos e resultados da produção arquitetónica na Guiné, Angola e Moçambique.

A preface is a lens mounted on a book according to a particular perspective. [...] When the book is a collection of texts issues become sharper [...]. Unless they constitute a coherent body and have been organized with clear principle. This is the case of “In the Tropics without Le Corbusier”, a collection of texts with a suggestive title which clearly expresses its content [...]. If the title (which is also used for the last text) defines time, the subtitle (Portuguese–African architecture in the Estado Novo) tells us, here equivalently, which is the space. It even reveals much more: the social, political and historical context.

There are other arguments in this group of texts. [...] I like the way these are insinuated through contextualizations which are deeper than what has been usual in specialized historiography on this theme and this chronology. Note, for example, how differences arise—something the author will now develop—between the contexts and results of architectural production in Guinea, Angola and Mozambique.

Walter Rossa
Architect and Professor at the Universities of Coimbra and Algarve

Now in a new, updated and re-designed second edition this award-winning book, first published in 1992, is the only comprehensive account of the life and work of Berthold Lubetkin (1901–1990), pioneer architect of the Modern Movement in Britain, survivor of the Russian Revolution, European traveller and intellectual, social commentator and, at the age of 81, RIBA Royal Gold Medalist. John Allan’s study (now with 1000 illustrations) is the outcome of his 20-year friendship with Lubetkin and contains many previously unpublished drawings, photographs and extracts from Lubetkin’s writings, which were as compelling as his architecture.

The author studies Tecton’s large-scale post-war housing schemes in Finsbury and Paddington and the circumstances of the firm’s dissolution in 1948. There follows a fully-documented account of Lubetkin’s greatest challenge as Architect–Planner of Petherton New Town—a dream commission that ended in ruins after only two years, leading to his long period of embittered seclusion. The conventional myths of Lubetkin’s unbuildable city of towers and ensuring premature retirement are disproved, and the considerable but little known design work of his later years is critically evaluated.

The book is complemented by the original text of Lubetkin’s celebrated Royal Gold Medal address; a full directory of works and references; an essay on Lubetkin the writer; an extensive bibliography; a note on sources of material, a chronology and an additional section containing over 100 new colour illustrations.

Berthold Lubetkin—Architecture and the Tradition of Progress
By John Allan
Publisher: Artifice Books Architecture
Language: English
Year: 2013

Nos trópicos sem Le Corbusier: arquitectura luso–aficana no Estado Novo
By Ana Vaz Milheiro
Publisher: Relógio d’Agua
Language: Portuguese
Year: 2012

Há outras teses neste conjunto de textos. [...] Gosto da forma como se insinuam através de contextualizações mais aprofundadas do que tem sido comum na historiografia especializada nesta temática e cronologia. Note-se, por exemplo, como emergem as diferenças, que por certa agora a autora estará a desenvolver, entre os contextos e resultados da produção arquitetónica na Guiné, Angola e Moçambique.

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