

EDITORIAL**Nota Pantzou**

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This new issue of e-dialogos gives once again an overview on problems and proposals in the heritage field. Just as earlier issues presented an inside perspective on the heritage difficulties in Egypt due to the Arab Spring, this time Rim Lababidi writes about the situation in Aleppo, Syria, and the deep destruction the city suffered during the war. She stresses the necessity “to deliver first aid emergency measures” to the historic city once the turmoil ceases. With this in mind, she proposes a first approach to face the reconstruction of the place based on its assets and overcoming its weaknesses.

Another profoundly transformed city, due this time to the evolution of technology, is Muharraq, in the Kingdom of Bahrain. In this case Ghassan Chemali explains the mechanisms of the transformation of the historic centre, highly influenced by the British protectorate era but also from the sudden arrival of new materials and techniques, due to the discovery of oil in 1932. The author interestingly analyses the architecture of the so called “transitional period”, finding architectural patterns similar to the traditional buildings, although the transformation is sometimes to such an extent that it is difficult to read them at first sight. The author raises interesting questions about how modernization and local technical culture can coexist by respecting local values.

As against the destruction and transformation of some areas and the evolution of others, architect

Pedro Murilo brings an old style approach to the timeless architectural Italian heritage. Like the Grand Tourists of the 18th and 19th century, the author spent two months travelling around Italy, drawing its magnificent monuments and understanding them through the lines of his illustrations. As many artists before, he learnt by tracing lines on his white paper. In a rapidly evolving world, he took a step back and took time to contemplate and immerse himself in the works of art.

That heritage arose from a moment when history was not running as fast as nowadays. The impact of the environmental changes and the rapid loss of intangible values and social context require the inclusion of sustainability strategies in cultural projects and the setting up of policies and guidelines. The text by Marta and Noemí Sas presents different initiatives, comprising the interest of combining cultural activities with sustainable actions. More specifically, the authors focus on those cultural projects which effectively took into account their possible impact on the environment. The interest in the relevance of cultural heritage and collective and individual memory for urban communities as well as their impact on the social fabric are also key points in the Pithari project run by Diadrasis. This project which was entirely designed by Diadrasis volunteers, conducted research based on a close collaboration with the local community of Exarcheia, a neighbourhood in the centre of Athens (Greece). The aim was to record landmarks, memories

and stories of an ever changing urban space and to trace and present them through an e-platform to the public, especially those which carry special values and meaning for this community.

Finally, issue number 6 ends with a personal reflection by paleoanthropologist Aida Gómez-Robles about the remarkable anthropological and archaeological site of Atapuerca, in Burgos (Spain). This place, reminiscent of the distant past, is where some of the oldest

“European” inhabitants, as human remains dating to about 800,000 years ago found in situ testify, started the path which led towards our days.

As always, we expect our readers will enjoy the varied texts and our authors’ ideas and insights, hoping that their contributions will expand the heritage knowledge and information.


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