



MONS

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scientific journal UOU scientific journal
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About UOU Journal.

In 2020 the pandemic provoked instant changes in our lives from its very beginning, with the pass of the months, it became clear that many of these changes were not transient.

This Journal has been designed as a space to host the reflection on current topics that are at the center of the discourse on the education of the future architects, thanks to the opportunities that have emerged from the experience of exchange between the European Universities on the Internationalization of Teaching Architecture in time of pandemic.

The foundation of our University of Universities is in the intention of moving beyond the virtual lectures, crits and tutorials, in search of new exercises that not only re-define the pedagogical approach to the discipline, but it is giving us the opportunity of re-defining the basis of a new Programme in the Architectural Education.

As a first attempt we have expanded our classroom sharing an international staff of more than 20 teachers with their knowledge and researches, and more than 200 students coming from 15 different countries, improving the internationalization, opening the borders, travelling without moving, testing and designing a curriculum towards another future for the academia and a professional environment that will be slightly different from the one that we already know.

It is more and more evident that nowadays the Architect does not stay within the boundaries of building construction but also seeks to build communities. And today at the beginning of this new year 2021 we are - as researchers, students, teachers and professionals – more than convinced of the evidence that is necessary to reflect again on the role of the architect in a wider and interdisciplinary context, re-positioning the architecture in the society.

This experiment gave us the possibility of enhancing the value of the international exchange between cultures and empowering the education in architecture thanks to the opportunity of sharing the same *common* space at miles of distance and different time zones. The reflection on the notion of commons from now on will be enriched by the experience of pushing the limits of time and space and rethinking the notion of values in an innovative and unprejudiced way.

An ATLAS of possibilities, both here and now.

The UOU Journal is looking for

- researchers' contribution in form of Critical essays and scientific Articles in the section "WRITINGS",
- student's contribution in form of Projects that will be included in the section "ATLAS".

UNIVERSITY of Universities

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Issue n1 Commons | Call for Paper

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February 26: OPEN CALL

March 31: PREVIEW Submission DEADLINE

April 14: notification of PEER REVIEW Evaluation

May 5: Final Submission DEADLINE

Issue n1 / Commons.

In 1982 the English-Swedish architect Ralph Erskine, opened his lecture reflecting on the definition of “Architecture as the Art of Building Communities”¹. His point of view, that led to a more radical way of considering the role of the architect in the society, can be considered as heritage of the main intention shared within the Team 10 during the CIAM in 1959 in Otterlo with Aldo van Eyck, Giancarlo De Carlo, José Antonio Coderch - above the others - while introducing the notion of *Democratic Architecture* and *Architecture of Participation*.

Nowadays with the escalation of the climate crisis, social inequities and political divergence, the general concern about the access to natural and common resources, including spaces, is leading the architects and planners to reconsider the notion of values in claiming their collective role towards the definition of a new right to the city². The pandemic has opened a new scenario, in which the notion of communing and sharing is assuming a new value and defining new spaces.

How can architecture respond to social challenges and climate crisis? Where is the limit of the architecture as a discipline in facing the human condition scale and nature? What is the role of the architects in response to social and spatial inequalities? What impact can the notion of *Commons* have on the transformation of cities? And what agency do designers have in contributing to such a transition in the current condition of Urgency?

In this framework *Commons*, the first Issue of the UOU scientific Journal, aims to redefine the notion of values in relation to material and innovative practices from an unprejudiced aspect. The notion of *Commons* is to be conceived more as collective production of resources and spaces in general – material or immaterial - rather than with the resources themselves. This opens a reflection on the process of spatial organization in the relations between production, ownership and access to these resources, with an open eye on the effect of the Pandemic.

This call for articles aims at exploring the notion of *Commons* in the field of research in architecture and urbanism along three axes of investigation.

The resulting sections are:

Agency*: Practices and Geographies of Common Places

*[the capacity, condition, or state of acting / the vehicle of such drive or intention to create alternative worlds]

- **Practices:** One of the urgent questions in architecture is: are we building or making places? This call invites the authors to reflect on the possibilities for a place of becoming the scenario of new and inventive practices that generate architectural processes of value. This means to consider the territory as a whole, highlighting initiatives both on the social and political aspects that embody a certain spirit of experimentation and on the infinite possibilities related to the specificity of the architecture itself: quality of the spaces, relation to the

¹ R.Erskine, *Democratic Architecture, the Universal and Useful Art*, in: RSA Journal, September 1982, London.

² H.Lefebvre, *Le Droit à la Ville*, Points, Paris 1968.

context, adaptability, flexibility, openness. An *Atlas* of pioneering places³ that explore and experiment through collective processes the notion of building communities in a specific context and place.

- **Geographies:** The process of *mapping* extends and enriches our interaction with the specific conditions of a site and its atmosphere. Can the perception of the users allow us to understand and experience the unique characteristics of a specific place? The 'agency' of the map, is that which exploits the research to identify, decode and create the potential of possibilities for a specific place and to define the foundation for a future transformation⁴. If *mapping* is understood, not as a process of representing geographies or ideas, but as a tool for research and translating into action, how can we as architects effect the way these geographies and ideas are manipulated?

Hyperspace*: Tectonics and Hybrids of Common Elements

*[in science fiction a notional space–time continuum in which it is possible to travel faster than light.]

- **Tectonics:** The cities are often judged due to relationships within society. Under these novel circumstances what the experts are looking for is a necessary change in architecture more than to architects themselves. Without a doubt, it is time to question the single authorship of the future of Architecture: more than ever, as a discipline, it cannot continue being taught alone, nor on a local level. How the Tectonic as a representation of the authorship in architecture can reconquer its link to the social context and common values? How can the fundamental elements⁵ incorporate and translate the needs for a radical change in the definition of a new role of the architect in the future society?
- **Hybrids:** Architecture, open and expansive in nature, has explored unlikely interactions and projected hybrids with unpredictable results. The notion of bigamy⁶ is based on the evidence that multiple elements that apparently don't fit together can be merged together to create a new creation or genre. We have the possibility of building the world that we want to inhabit. This is a positioning that will allow us to experiment new parameters in architecture opening the path to new ideas that previously seemed impossible or unknown. In this sense the notion of commons intersects the definition of hybridity in the discovery of innovative and unprejudiced techniques and materials for the definition of new kind of common material and immaterial spaces and explorations. What are the disciplines involved in this interaction? How common data and digital commons are driven the material explorations in architecture?

Cosmos*: Meanings and Values of Common Ecologies

*[everything that exists: all physical matter, including all the stars, planets, galaxies, etc.]

- **Meanings:** The architect is a storyteller. The architect designs spaces that speak to the user and, in turn, the user hears that story through an interaction with a building. What would architecture be without a story? We suggest it would not be *architecture*. But to tell a story we need a language in which to communicate and we need to specify the actors and their movement in the space. What does it mean to imagine and indeed experience a space without seeing it? What is the common language that enable the architecture to be perceived, in terms of knowledge and interaction, within the place itself? How can imaginaries⁷ be conceived and built by the living inhabitants through the definitions of common values overcoming the cultural identities and boundaries?
- **Values:** The city and, at a micro scale, the building can be explored as a mosaic of spaces defined by 'the patterns of events which we experience in it'⁸. The pandemic offered us a chance of enhancing new values, not only in terms of relationship between human beings, but enabling us to discover and redefine the notion of inception spaces, undetermined spaces, third places and to determine the importance of nature in the design of our everyday life spaces. But not only: in this sense the traditional notion of common ecology interferes with the basic values of dwelling, a room, an apartment, a city. What is the role of the undetermined spaces in the city both in terms of nature and dwellings? Can the architecture be open to the unplanned and highlight the value of the role of the inhabitants of defining a flexible notion of dwelling?

³ Encore Hereux, *Infinite Places (Lieux Infinis) - Constructing Buildings Or Places?*, Publisher Editions B42, 2018.

⁴ J.Cornier, *The Agency of Mapping. Speculations, Critiques and Inventions*, 2011.

⁵ R.Koolhaas, AMO, Harvard GSD, *Elements of Architecture*, Tashen, 2018.

⁶ Byarke Ingels Group, *Yes is more. An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution*, Tashen, 2018.

⁷ R.Barthes, *Le Degré zéro de l'écriture suivi de Nouveaux essais critiques*, Editions du Seuil, Paris 1977.

⁸ C.Alexander, *The timeless way of building*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1979

Issue n1 / Submission guidelines.

Articles should be written in standard English. Only original work will be considered for publication, i.e. outcomes of research conducted by the author/s which have not yet been published anywhere else and are not currently under review by any other journal.

UOU Journal accepts manuscripts in different submission types: **Critical Essays** and scientific **Articles** are primarily text based, while **Students Project** are image based:

- **Critical Essays** should be grounded in relevant discourse, offer an original and critical contribution of a theoretical or a more empirical nature as a response to a research question or proposition and can be supported by appropriate visual apparatus. (length 3,500 - 4,500 words including notes, captions, and references and including the abstract written both in English and in the mother tongue language).
- **Articles** should include a consistent focus, clear definition of the research framework, and give a deep understanding of the subject or topic described, including findings, reflections and conclusions. (length 3,500 - 8,000 words including notes, captions, and references and including the abstract written both in English and in the mother tongue language).
- **Students Projects** should include images, scheme and/or diagram through an argumentative and not illustrative nature. (Images should be submitted in a A4 PDF format in high resolution (300 dpi) and accompanied by a text of max.500 words as an introductory abstract written both in English and in the mother tongue language).

Critical Essays and scientific **Articles** undergo a process of double-blind peer review prior to acceptance for publication. All contributions should be submitted through the [online platform](#) of the UOU Journal.

Submitted manuscripts should be fully anonymized: remove full name and affiliation; remove references to funding sources; do not include acknowledgements; remove your name from file name; and make sure that document properties have also been anonymized.

Manuscripts are written in English, and should include a short abstract written both in English and in the mother tongue language.

Manuscripts should be submitted online in Microsoft Word Format (.docx), and in case of proposals using symbols (e.g., phonetic transcriptions), you are kindly requested to add a PDF version.

All the personal information regarding authorship should be provided when registering to make a submission through the platform: title of the manuscript; authorship (author and co-authors); institutional affiliation, full institutional address, including ORCID identifier and e-mail address.

To ensure the academic and scientific quality of the publication, all works submitted to UOU journal will be reviewed by the Editorial Committee, which will approve its academic quality, as well as its format and publication standards. The works will be submitted later to pairs of academics, as detailed below:

Phase one: PREVIEW

After sending the manuscripts through the platform, the authors will be automatically notified by email that their files have been successfully received. The manuscript will first be reviewed by the Editorial Board. Editors determine if the works submitted fall within the remit of the journal and ensure compliance with scientific quality standards, verifying:

- a. The adequacy of the content to the research lines and objects of the journal and, where appropriate, to the specific theme of a monographic issue proposed for publication.
- b. Compliance with the formal requirements established in the Guidelines for author's section.
- c. The non-commission of plagiarism through the use of specialized software.

If the initial assessment outcome is negative, the authors may be required to make all necessary changes within two weeks. Please note that manuscripts may also be rejected; in that case, the grounds for rejection will be duly explained to the authors by email.

Phase two: DOUBLE-BLIND PEER REVIEW EVALUATION

Next, the articles will be double-blind peer-reviewed by two external evaluators, chosen by the Editorial Board from among experts in the relevant fields of study. The evaluators will be required to review the manuscript within four weeks and draft a report by completing a form available on the website. If they disagree on their assessment, a third evaluator will be sent the manuscript, which will be anonymous throughout the whole process.

After receiving the assessment reports, the general editors will inform the author that one of the following statuses has been assigned to the manuscript:

- **Accepted.**
- **Accepted with modifications.** The manuscript will be published only if the authors introduce the changes proposed by the evaluators within two weeks.
- **New assessment required.** The manuscript is not yet suitable for publication, but the Editorial Board will allow the authors to rewrite it and make any proposed changes in approach within three weeks. Upon receipt of the revised article, the Editorial Board will decide whether the new version can be published or should be assessed again by external evaluators.
- **Not accepted.**
After the assessment process a proof of the article will be sent to the author, who may propose non-content-related changes within seven days. Once the final version is ready, the article will be available on the journal's website.

The decision is made within the next three months after receipt of the manuscript.

For any information you can contact the Editor in Chief, here: uou@ua.es

Detailed guidelines are available on the UOU Journal website: <https://revistes.ua.es/uou>