

EUROPEAN ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY NETWORK

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**EIGHTH
INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE**

ATHENS • JUNE 19-23, 2024

PROGRAMME AND ABSTRACTS

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ABSTRACTS

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A veranda, a view and a motorway. Revisiting post-war touristic architectures in the Mediterranean

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Session chairs:

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The end of World War II finds European urban centres and territories massively destroyed. Parallel to a huge worksite of cities' reconstruction, supported by the Marshall Aid in Europe, economies of the Mediterranean basin invest for their development on another industry less widespread but enough promising: tourism. A mythical land of travel between East and West, of scientific expeditions, and an obligatory destination for artists, architects and archaeologists in the 19th century, the Mediterranean gradually became the leading destination for mass tourism in the 20th century. Large-scale investments on the coastal line of Mediterranean Europe aim to boost potential touristic territories' by enhancing accessibility and constructing new imaginaries through important infrastructure works and touristic accommodations complexes. Coupled with visions of the Modern Movement and aligned with an era of industrial innovation and standardization, numerous emerging architectures see the day in coastlines and mountains. The period from 1950s to 1970s was particularly fruitful in Spain, Italy, Greece, Southern France for its audacious projects both in terms of investment and architecture but also on the Mediterranean coasts of the Maghreb countries, where mass tourism appeared after their independence. These years marked also an era of constant tension and negotiation between heritage institutions and state policies, weaving each its proper agenda of economic development using local culture and Mediterranean landscape features as competitive touristic products. Hotels, touristic villages, motels, marinas, forge the landscape, and offer a new vision of life style according to the demands of a new era; this of consumerism and leisure. Significant examples of renamed architecture, vehicle the ambition of each country to demarcate itself as a prominent touristic destination but also formulate a new imaginary of traveling. By the turn of the 1980s and in a context of mass tourism's expansion and new trends in tourism activity, these architectures started to lapse. Some have been urgently transformed to host new uses, others have been labelled and sanctuarized while others have been abandoned and left to decline. It is the aim of this session to question the role of these productions- witness of the past – in today's territory transformation and examine the hypothesis of a new dialogue between modern heritage and acts of transformation in the very heart of an interdisciplinary debate. Under which gaze can we approach today these architectures? How do these objects shape contemporary landscapes and succeed in nourishing a common Mediterranean touristic imaginary today? Far beyond being dissociated elements in the same geographic context, these architectures present remarkable common features as social languages structured around debates on regionalism, universalism and culturalism. For this reason, they offer a great opportunity to address, through a fresh look, questions on heritage and touristic policies in times of crisis (ecological, economic, health) and shortage of resources. The session welcomes all disciplinary approaches examining the history and the potential capacity of transformation of these architectures as a common heritage in becoming. We particularly encourage discussions tending to overcome traditional readings of modern heritage as a subject of protection and conservation while proposing parallel explorations of these architectures as a fertile ground for actualized narratives on tourism.

State initiatives regarding Tourist Facilities on the northern shore of the Mediterranean (1950-1975)

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The paper deals with the tourist facilities on the northern coast of the Mediterranean (Spain, France, Italy, Greece) and their relationship with the state strategies/policies for tourism in each of them.

Specifically, similarities and differences will be examined in the way (public) tourist facilities are integrated into the landscape, marine or continental, (La Grande Motte, France), or near the monuments and historical sites and the reuse of these latter, as hotels (Paradores, Spain) or how they exploit the updated forms of contemporary architecture by offering a brand new lifestyle in fruitful dialogue with a local perception of modernity (Agip hotels, Italy), or their attempt to conciliate international style with theoretical approaches to *genius loci* (The XENIA Hotels, Greece).

The paper also examines the evolution of these “national” policies during the first two decades after the Second World War and tries to trace the common path - if any - followed by all these pioneering initiatives in the 1970s and especially conscription to the new rules dictated by tourist operators and agencies and the willing obedience by governments to show a fake prosperity by expanding tourist areas and building on a larger scale without any aesthetic concern for what kind of tourist facilities had originally attracted tourists to the shores of the Northern Mediterranean.

Shaping and representing a seaside tourist territory. The case of the Italo-French Riviera, 1950s-1970s

Alessandro Benetti independent scholar

Since the mid-1950s, the Italo-French Riviera was the hotspot of the rise of mass tourism in its two countries. This led to major transformations of its landscapes, crossed by new infrastructures – an international coastal highway, in the first place – and densified with countless facilities for holidaymakers, both homes and collective services. By the early 1970s, a large part of the coast stretching between Genoa and Toulon had turned into a linear conurbation, grown on both side of the frontier mostly without plan and in the frame of very permissive regulations.

The need to welcome an unprecedented number of tourists, alongside this condition of virtual freedom and the complex morphology of the region’s territory translated into designs showing a high level of experimentation. The Italo-French Riviera turned into a rich catalogue of the spatial, functional and formal strategies adopted by architects, urbanists, engineers, landscapers and other practitioners to shape a “modern” seaside tourist territory at all scales. At the same time, precisely for the intensity and the hectic pace of its upheavals, it became a paramount topic in those decades’ discourses and controversies on France’s and Italy’s built environment, and a battlefield amongst the actors involved in its making in their different capacities.

This paper investigates the case of the Italo-French Riviera between the 1950s and the 1970s through a double lens. First, its infrastructural, urban and architectural transformations are framed within the political, socio-economic and regulatory contexts of the two nations, underlining both their similarities and specificities. Second, the design, construction and criticism of three case studies will be analysed in detail,

to cast light on the complex relationships between practices and representations: the compound of Torre del Mare (since 1954), the Italian A10 highway (since 1950) and the foundation town of Port Grimaud (since 1966).

The Coastline, contested: Mimarlık and tourism development in the 1970s Turkey

Koken Burcu, TU Delft

In the early 1960s, the professional organization the Chamber of Architects saw a great opportunity in tourism planning, as it would stimulate economic growth and support their vision of democratic development in Turkey after the coup d'état. This belief was well founded since the number of European tourists surged by 79 percent between 1964 and 1965, and only a small percentage of them had discovered their vacation destination through government advertisements. With the support of the Union of International Architects (UIA), one of the leading organizations of that period, the Chamber of Architects took on the responsibility of making mass tourism an integral part of economic and national development. However, in the 1970s, the government's aggressive strategies led to the spread of hotels and holiday resorts along the Mediterranean coast, raising concerns about the preservation of natural and cultural heritage. This led to many politicized architects advocating for democratic tourism development. While the Chamber's journal, *Mimarlık*, played an essential role in supporting tourism by informing professionals about new standards and exemplary national and international projects, it later switched to a publishing policy that conveyed to its colleagues the occupation of the coast with private investments and promoted a new trajectory for the profession that emphasized the mutual exercise of technical expertise and political activism. Consequently, the Mediterranean coastline became a contested territory, exposing the Chamber and *Mimarlık*'s contradictory approach to development discourse in architecture. This paper will explore the development of the Turkish Mediterranean coastline by looking into the content published in *Mimarlık* between 1968, the first issue dedicated to tourism development, and 1980, the journal closure due to the coup d'état. It will discuss how *Mimarlık* expanded its political activism and developmental agenda into advocacy of natural and cultural heritage through its evolution in the agenda.

Architecte de soleil: Olivier-Clément Cacoub and the Nationalist Development of the Tunisian Leisurescape

Nancy Demerdash, Albion College

Still reeling from the damages of WWII, the post-independent period in Tunisia's development ushered in an era of architectural construction that capitalized on the nation state's azure beachfronts and capacity for leisure. A defining cornerstone of President Habib Bourguiba's program for economic development was the investment in and growth of a robust, vibrant tourism industry; this mission must be understood as falling into Bourguiba's westward-looking, capitalist-leaning politics in the midst of global Cold War decolonial dynamics. Catering to a range of tourists both intra-regional tourists and western Europeans escaping the cold gloom of northern winters these Tunisian hotels and resorts would provide all manner of jobs for Tunisians

in construction, transportation, heritage, and the service and hospitality sectors. One artifact that showcases such Tunisian touristic resorts is that of the Jewish, Tunisian-born architect and urban designer Olivier-Clément Cacoub (1920-2008), who, in his semi-autobiographical, monographic publication, *Architecture de soleil* (1974), presents an array of hotels and administrative complexes that, with Cacoub's design, yield to the sun's directives. Replete with brise soleil features to ventilate and diminish the sunlight's intensity, or piloti to open courtyards, or roof gardens to provide additional space for gathering, Cacoub's structures are grounded in both a modernist vocabulary and regionalist discourse of climate instrumentalized for the creation of landscapes of leisure. Cacoub sought to revive iconic formal elements the dome, the mashrabiyya, the arch, the whitewashed facade and reintegrate them in his multitude of modernist touristic compounds. Reminiscent of colonially appropriated coastal enclaves like Sidi Bou Said, or the fishing village of Hammamet, the resorts of the 1960s and 1970s are the byproduct of a postcolonial frenzy to capitalize upon one of the prime desires of settler colonialists of early twentieth-century Tunisia: the coastline. This paper critically re-examines the seaside oeuvre of Cacoub (a winner of the Grand Prix de Rome in 1953), a friend and darling of Bourguiba, and arguably one of the most important figures in the story of Tunisia's postcolonial projects of modernization and economic development. Additionally, the paper historicizes Cacoub's work against parallel economic development plans in the postcolonial Maghreb.

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