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Zeynep Celik, editor

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Abstracts

History and Science: Julien-David Leroy's Dualistic Method of Architectural History

In eighteenth-century France, the influential architect and historian Julien-David Leroy studied ancient monuments through two different methods-what he called the "historical" and the "architectural." These two approaches had distinctly different intended audiences, methods, and goals. His historical method was a traditional humanistic approach to the ancient monuments that studied a building's architecture in relation to its specific historic context. His architectural method, consistent with scientific practice, considered the relations among numerous similar monuments as a means of revealing underlying universal laws. In the eighteenth century, history and science both promised enlightenment, but the exact shape of that new knowledge and its implications for the present varied tremendously. Through a comparative analysis of his two methods, and of their development, interaction, and significance, this paper assesses the exact shape of Leroy's dualistic thought, and its implications for architectural practice, history, and theory.

JEANNE KISACKY

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The Colleoni Chapel in Bergamo and the Politics of Urban Space

Bergamo's central square is dominated by the imposing Renaissance funerary chapel of the Venetian condottiere Bartolomeo Colleoni, commissioned by him in the 1470s from the Lombard sculptor and architect Antonio Amadeo. In the past, analysis of this monument has focused on its place in the tradition of Renaissance architecture, on its relation to other works by the same artist, and on how it reflected the preoccupations of its famous patron. This essay expands significantly on the last approach by examining the critically

important relationship of the chapel to its setting. Through a combination of visual and iconographic parallels with the other buildings in that space, Colleoni challenged and transformed the representation of power in the city. In particular, political meaning emerged out of the chapel's juxtaposition with the Gothic entrance portal of Bergamo's principal civic church, Santa Maria Maggiore. The form, iconography, and placement of the chapel in relation to the portal all suggested that the city should be ruled by a virtuous individual, such as Colleoni himself, and not by a body of elected oligarchs, the communal ideal of government represented by Santa Maria Maggiore.

GILES KNOX

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Inscribing Minority Space in the Islamic City: The Jewish Quarter of Fez (1438-1912)

The great city of Fez is made up of a series of smaller urban cores, each having its own distinct character. Among them is the mellah, or Jewish quarter, which was the home of the Jews of Fez for more than 500 years. Gradually abandoned by the Jews during the first half of the twentieth century, the quarter is occupied today by working-class Moroccans from the countryside. As a result, the particular features marking the mellah as Jewish space are disappearing. The aim of the study was to document the domestic architecture of the mellah in relation to its surroundings and to the historical and social processes that influenced its development. Engaging both historians and architects, this collaborative research began with a reading of the existing urban fabric, and then worked backward in time to create a narrative of how the quarter evolved. Beginning with the house, then moving to the street, and finally examining the quarter as a whole and its placement in the larger city, we looked for continuities and ruptures that could be explained by historical circumstances and cultural practices.

The study found a marked conservatism and continuity in building styles despite the periodic devastation of the quarter over the centuries. Although buildings were destroyed, specific sites continued to have meaning and to function as ritual, commercial, or domestic space. In domestic architecture, many features associated with the Islamic house were replicated, and there was little deviation from the standard courtyard type found in the medina. Jewish elements were confined to the surface, appearing in the decorative motifs and in the embellishment of spaces for ritual use. The study concludes that the mellah was not an isolated quarter but rather an integral part of the larger city, playing a vital role in establishing the registers of similarity and difference that contributed to the articulation of a specific urban identity.

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The Unified Plan of the House of the Faun

The theory that the House of the Faun, as it is known from the excavations, was the product of at least two successive building phases meets serious problems when the plan of the house is considered as a whole. The following analysis of the ground plan reveals a work of architecture that seems extraordinarily unified in its design, hence unlikely to have been implemented in separate phases. Elements of the atrium plans (those supposedly created in the first phase) appear to be so clearly subordinated to the planning of the insula as a whole (the putative second phase), that it is hard to imagine them as part of a presumably earlier building phase separate from the one that comprises the central peristyle in its entirety. Even more indicative of a unified plan is the consistent use of the 4:5 rectangle in three of the four major features of the house—from the subdivision of the insula as a whole to the proportioning of the Tuscan atrium.

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Reference:

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