

for a dialogue capacity as process to design

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[evidence] a project is so clearly a peculiar way to record a series of conversations about a topic — in this case a winery in Sao José do Rio Preto, Brazil — that in the end of the process an architect is able to describe each of those conversations just by ‘reading’ drawings.

In the beginning of the process, one talks on a quite restrictive sphere of dialogue, I mean, just a few interlocutors, in general: architects and clients. Thus, during the design process, that sphere grows, the number of interlocutors increases, manage information becomes more and more complex. The first phase is taken as preliminary or conceptual drawings, followed by its development. The first is quite open, than it becomes more and more focused. The first phase aims to expand our field of possibility in order to enrich the process of choices and then to bring those choices to the technical field, to organize them as actions in the constructions site. That first phase tends to be more sensitive while the others tend more accurate. Thus, the beginning would be more relate to creative, imagination and proposition followed by ulterior phases more related to a technical, normative and constructive approach.

Although, this typical approach to the different phases is true I tend to disagree about a typical reaction that recognizes just in the first phase the field for innovation, inventiveness as the only one that deserves the participation of the architect. As a result reducing the architectural proposition to this phase and renouncing or dismissing the further phases as if they were just automatic consequences of the first phase. I believe that since the first sphere up to the very last one, dialogue capacity and design skills, both of them associated to proposition and imagination, define the point a project can reach.

Who else takes place in this dialogue process? Besides those direct interlocutors, design also exchanges with indirect ones such as history and some buildings, geography and some places. In this case, it is clear how these indirect dialogues — taken as precedents — were highlight: old castles and its thick walls, formers wineries underground, rammed earth walls, water source and water flow.

Anyway, all these precedents are always mediate by direct dialogue.

Is it possible to do a project with no dialogue? For sure it is. Is it possible to suppress all interlocutors? Maybe. However, as a method, it tends to increase unnecessarily the risk of all sort of mistakes. If we are able to talk and listen, I mean by developing our dialogue capacity, we can reduce the number of mistakes, we can better balance propositions and its consequences, we will prevent the process of an exacerbated authorship and most important we will enhance the possibilities to produce an architecture meaningful for a larger group of people.

I hope this can be the case of this small winery as a cave emerged from the ground.