

OPHIUSSA

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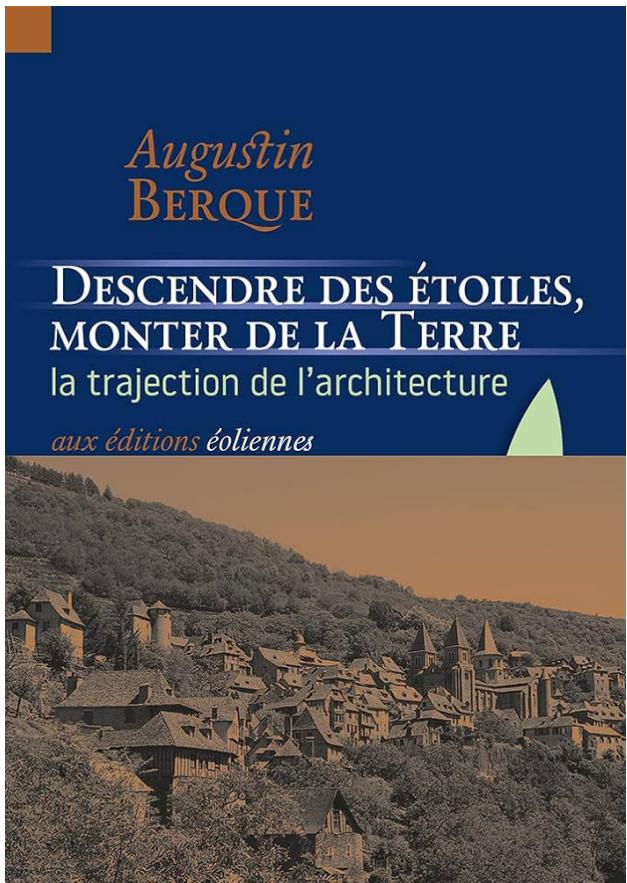
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RECENSÕES BIBLIOGRÁFICAS



BERQUE, A. 2019

***Descendre des Étoiles, Monter de la Terre:
la trajectation de l'architecture***

Bastia: Aux Éditions Éoliennes. 80 p.
ISBN 978-2-37672-018-8

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Das Werk lässt die Erde eine Erde sein.

The work allows the Earth to be an Earth.

Heidegger 1972: 32

Descendre des Étoiles, Monter de la Terre: la trajectation de l'architecture has, at its core, an expanded text of a conference given on the 19th of June 2018 at the *Centre international pour la Ville, l'Architecture et les Paysages* (Ixelles, Brussels). Expanding on Rem Koolhaas's concept of *junkspace* (*espace foutoir*), it is important to note that the book's size can be misleading. It not only builds upon and enhances previous discussions (e.g., Berque 2018b) that the author continued to explore later (e.g., Berque 2021a), but it also surgically addresses the contemporary state of a-Kosmos (without cosmos) through the lens of architecture, distinguishing itself from earlier works on the topic. Although this critical book review will focus on *Descendre des Étoiles* and its unique contributions to Berque's thought and the consequences it can have in archaeological thought, its deep interconnections with the works previously highlighted make them impossible to ignore entirely. Their contributions will also be briefly mobilised.

The book's main objective is to understand how we can *reconsolise the Earth* (*reconsomiser la Terre*), overpassing – but not ignoring – modernity (*dépasser la modernité*): the *POMC* (*Paradigme Occidental Moderne Classique/Occidental Modern Classical Paradigm*) and the *TOM* (*Topos Ontologique Moderne/Ontologically Modern Topos*). Both lay at the core of the problems that originated the *junkspace* or *Atkin* and *Rykwert's ET Architecture*: an architecture that "[...] [is] indifferent to the places where it settles, as if it were *descending from the stars* (*descendant des étoiles*) to land there" (p. 9).

As per usual, Berque can provide a very thoughtful and accessible reading both to those familiar with his philosophy – a mixture of Plato, Aristotle, Jakob von Uexküll, Martin Heidegger, Nishida Kitarō, and Watsuji Tetsurō – and for those who are reading him for the first time.

The book is structured around 55 points, more to be read as a long essay rather than individual chapters or sections, as is typical in Archaeology.

At the centre of Berque's thought, we encounter two prevalent ideas: *Médiance* and *Trajectation*. *Médiance* is a translation of Tetsurō's *fūdosei* (風土性), and can be defined as "[...] the structural moment of human

existence" (*le moment structurel de l'existence humaine*)" (p. 33; Tetsurō 2011 [1935]: 35) – i.e., "[...] [fûdosei] is the dynamic coupling of the being and its environment (*couplage dynamique de l'être et son milieu*)" (Berque 2021a: 22). *Trajectation*, on the other hand, while not being the same as *Médiance*, is closely related, for it is the process that constitutes reality: "[...] the back-and-forth (*va-et-vient*) of reality" (Berque 2018a: 41); "[...] cosmosomatic back-and-forth (*va-et-vient*)" (Berque 2021a: 50); "[...] reality was therefore neither simply objective nor simply subjective; it was *trajective*, and the result of a long history in which nature and culture had in a way co-suscitated each other (*co-suscitées l'une l'autre*)" (p. 12).

One can turn to Aristotelian metaphysics to render these ideas more operative, bringing in the idea of *Substance* and *Accidents*, where, with all due simplification, the first is *matter in itself* and the second is its *properties, the things that fall upon it* (*accidere*): e.g., the potsherd is the *Substance* having the *Accident* "orange". There is also an equivalence between the metaphysical *Substance* and Logic's *Subject*, and between *Accident* and the *Predicate*, which will originate, in Berque, the *LgS* (*logic of the identity of the subject/logique de l'identité du sujet*) and the *LgP* (*logic of the identity of the predicate/logique de l'identité du prédicat*).

In Berque, *Substance* will take the name of the *Subject* (*Sujet*, or *S*) – something that can be *trajected* –, and the *Accident* will be the *Predicate* (*Prédicat*, or *P*). Reality, thus, can be summed as $r = S/P$ (reality equals *S* as *P*). However, this process is anything but a *triadic* process, for the *trajectation* that takes *S* as *P* necessitates an *Interpreter* (*I*), thus forming *S-I-P*.

Modernity would entail a gradual understanding of reality as *S* being separated from *P* – the illusion of a pure object: $r = S$, resulting in both the *POMC* and the homogenous, isotropic, and infinite proprieties of Newton's/modern concept of space – or *TOM* – leading to the "[...] the foreclosure of our medial body (*corps médial*) by modern individualism and the dualism's correlative abstraction (*abstraction correlative*) that renders things into objects" (Berque 2018a: 40). The invention of perspective also had fundamental ontological consequences for such a development, for it allowed for the first time to place the observer outside of the represented reality: this was a moment where modernity would take consciousness of its (modern)

sense of *subjectivity*, where everything else is but *objectal mechanics* (*mécanique objectale*) (p. 31).

This is thus reflected in architecture, for it is a fundamental part of *Médiance*, crystallising and reinforcing a particular *cosmos* – i.e., *un mettre en ordre*. Architecture is, thus, essentially *cosmophanique*: for "[...] it makes a world (*kosmos*) appear (*phainein*) clearly, not only through its symbolicity (*symbolicité*), but also its technicality (*technicité*)" (p. 20).

The 20th and the 21st century would be the epitome of the illusion of $r = S$, resulting in what Berque diagnoses as our current *acosmic* condition. The advancement of the (technical and technological) *Apparatus* (*Appareil*) in these centuries would make "[...] the technical possibility (*possibilité technique*) of *dearthing* (*déterrestrer*) ourselves more probable, and not solely by abstraction" (p. 31). Architecture would, therefore, be reduced to matter and function: [...] where is the Truth? The modern answer is clear: in matter and function. (p. 35), not possessing the "[...] three basic human values (the Good, the Beautiful, the True) have been disintegrated, disarrayed, each one freeing itself from the others" (p. 34).

One can contrast the first stages of Tokyo, where the city was designed in accordance with the surrounding Landscape, without the superimposition of any blind Hippodamus of Miletus' orthogonal plant (Berque 2021b: 66), with Le Corbusier's *maxim*: "A house is a machine to live in" (p. 35), or Takamatsu Shin's *Syntax*, in Kyoto, whose form did not have any regards for its surroundings, be it natural or architectural (p. 39-40).

In this sense, his title, *Descendre des Étoiles*, is but a metaphor. Being essentially a symptom of modernity, the *junkspace* is a direct result of modernity's process of *decosmisation*.

A decosmolised Earth is no Earth at all – at least, as an *Umwelt* (*predicated Earth*), standing in opposition to the *Umgebung* (*physical, unpredicated environment*). Following Heidegger's "Origin of the Work of Art" (*Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*) closely, Berque establishes that the work of art – a Temple, in this case – transforms the *Umgebung* into an *Umwelt* (p. 60). Through symbols and *technique* humanity transforms the *Umgebung* into an *Umwelt*. The temple "[...] opens the world and, in return, establishes (*stellt*) the Earth, and, by itself, makes it appear (*herauskommt*) as a homeland (*heimatische Grund*)" (Heidegger 1977: 28). In Berquean terms, the

Temple unites the Earth (S) and the Sky (P), liberating the Earth, so that it can become an Earth.

Overpassing modernity – where Nishida's influence is undeniable (see Berque 2021b: 105) – entails surpassing the *Junkspace*, and what originated it: our *acosmie*. This is the essence of Berque's objective, although the answer is unclear. There is a rejection in applying the postmodern (what he calls *métabasiste*) solution to overpass modernity: rather than an $r = S$, the former inverts it as a $r = P$, turning "[...] the historical world into a predicate and therefore *an absolute nothingness (un néant absolu)*" (p. 42). Although it is imperative to form some cosmology, there is also a refusal to return to some pre-modern paradigm that ignores modernity. The solution to reestablish *Médiance*'s highest axiom – $r = S/P$ – would arise, almost in a dialectic fashion, from the clash between the POMC/TOM and the need for a new cosmology (at least in the Western world, *latu sensu*). Although the overall tone is not, in general, a positive one – Berque shares, in general, Heidegger's suspicious stance towards technique and technology – he believes that a *Transmoderne* cosmology/society is possible. So that the temple – "[...] transforming the abstraction that is the *Umgebung* in a milieu" (p. 60) – may, once more, *release* the Earth, so it may (be)come/produce (*herstellen*) an Earth.

As far as Archaeology is concerned, Berque's *Dessendre des Étoiles* proves to be an insightful work for Contemporary Archaeology, where its contributions are more directly applicable, but far from being reducible to it.

Berque's Geophilosophy can also be quite productive when thinking beyond the scale of a single archaeological site. As is frequent in Landscape Archaeology (e.g., Heilen 2005; see Darvill 2016), space is often reduced to a *Galilean Earth* – space becomes homogenous, isotropic, and infinite. TOC underlies most (but not all) contemporary Anglo-Saxon Landscape Archaeology: Landscape as a synonym for general (as an *Erdraum/Earth-Space*) or metaphorical space – essentially as a substantive with adjectives, e.g., Funerary Landscape, Social Landscape, etc. –, being reduced to a matter of scale, cartography, and general diagrammatics. Geographical Information Systems became a new, digital way to engage with spatiality, but perpetuated the same way of thinking about the Landscape: a homogenous and infinite background

to be filled with vectors and rasters. Through Machine vision, the algorithmisation and verticalisation of space – all stemming directly from TOC –, humanity's specific relation to Earth is crystallised and, hence, reinforced (Agosto – Teuchmann in press).

Here – within POMC/TOC –, Architecture and the Landscape are akin. Both arise from *Médiance* and the *Trajective* process that constitutes reality ($r = S/P$), yet, POMC/TOC reduces them to matter (*matière*) and function (*function*) (p. 35). The *cosmophanique* properties of both may prove essential to a deeper understanding of the communities in question, both in their historical dynamics and concerning their environment. Yet, the theoretical responses that Anglo-Saxon Archaeology has given – mostly stemming from a postprocessual(ish) (*métabasiste*) standpoint – invert the overall scheme, where the *Substance (S)* is replaced solely by the *Accident (P)*, becoming pure *prédictat*, free of natural constraints (e.g., Edmonds 1999; Tilley 2004).

More than adapting epistemological frameworks from other traditions, surpassing modernity in Archaeology requires a thorough epistemological revision that does not ignore modernity. Archaeology's privileged relationship with the Earth – in a sense, Archaeology can be a way of thinking about the Earth –, naturally posits it towards a Geophilosophically-based Epistemology. A more robust union between Philosophy, Geography, and Archaeology can catalyse such an Epistemology. There are already non-Anglo-Saxon epistemological traditions in Archaeology that, in a way, show the potential of such a union, such as with the French *Archéogéographie*, where a robust theoretical basis created a unique conceptual apparatus (e.g., Chouquer 2000; 2005), traversing chronologies and geographies.

The paths that Archaeology may take beyond modernity – Berque's *transmodernité* – are numerous and vast, but the solutions may take the case of *Archéogéographie*, so that the *Temple* may allow, once more, the Earth to become an Earth.

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POLÍTICA EDITORIAL

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Objectives

Ophiussa – Revista do Centro de Arqueologia da Universidade de Lisboa started under the direction of Victor S. Gonçalves in 1996, with the edition of volume 0. After Volume 1 (2017) it became a printed and digital edition of UNIARQ – Centro de Arqueologia da Universidade de Lisboa (ISSN 1645-653X / E-ISSN 2184-173X).

The main objective of this journal is the publication and dissemination of papers of interest, quality and scientific rigor concerning Prehistory and Archeology, mostly from Europe and the Mediterranean basin.

Periodicity

Ophiussa – Revista do Centro de Arqueologia da Universidade de Lisboa will publish an annual volume. The submission period will always occur in the first quarter of each year and the edition will occur in the last quarter.

Journal sections

The journal is divided into two sections: scientific articles and bibliographic reviews. Exceptionally, texts of an introductory nature may be accepted, in the context of specific tributes or divulgations, which will not be submitted to peer-review evaluation. Exemptions from this evaluation are also the bibliographic reviews.

Authors / editors wishing to submit a book for review should send two copies to the direction of Revista Ophiussa: one to the author of the review who will be invited for the purpose and another to the Library of the School of Arts and Humanities of the University of Lisbon. Spontaneous proposals are also accepted.

Papers written in Portuguese, English, Spanish, Italian and French are accepted.

Peer review process

Submitted articles are subject to a double blind peer-review evaluation process.

All submissions (articles and reviews) will be considered, in the first instance, by the Editorial Board, regarding its formal content and adequacy in face of the editorial policy and the journal editing standards. Articles that meet these requirements will subsequently be submitted to a blind peer-review process (minimum of two reviewers). The Scientific Council, constituted by UNIARQ direction and external researchers, will follow the editing process.

This stage will be carried out by qualified researchers, and their feedback will be delivered within a period of no more than two months. The reviewers will carry out the evaluation in an objective manner, in view of the quality and content of the journal; their criticisms, suggestions and comments will be, as far as possible, constructive, respecting the intellectual abilities of the author(s). After receiving the feedback, the author(s) has a maximum period of one month to make the necessary changes and resubmit the work.

Acceptance or refusal of articles will have as sole factors of consideration their originality and scientific quality.

The review process is confidential, with the anonymity of the evaluators and authors of the works being ensured, in the latter case, up to the date of its publication.

Papers will only be accepted for publication as soon as the peer review process is completed. Texts that are not accepted will be returned to their authors.

The list of reviewers will be published in 3-year cycles, indicated at the end of *Ophiussa* (printed and digital version).

Publication ethics

The Journal *Ophiussa* follows the guidelines established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE, the Ethics Committee Publications): <https://publicationethics.org/>

Only original papers will be published. For the purpose of detecting plagiarism or duplicity, the URKUNDU platform (<https://www.urkund.com/pt-br/>) will be used. Practices such as the deformation or invention of data will be rejected. Authors are responsible for ensuring that the works are original and unpublished, the result of the consensus of all authors, and comply with current legality, having all necessary authorizations. Articles that do not comply with these ethical standards will be rejected.

Contributions submitted for publication must be unpublished. Article submissions can not include any problem of forgery or plagiarism. Illustrations that are not from the author(s) must indicate their origin. The Scientific Council and Editorial Board assume that the authors have requested and received permission to reproduce these illustrations and, as such, reject the responsibility for the unauthorized use of the illustrations and legal consequences for infringement of intellectual property rights.

It is assumed that all Authors have made a relevant contribution to the reported research and agree with the manuscript submitted. Authors must clearly state any conflicts of interest. Collaborations submitted that directly or indirectly had the financial support of third parties must clearly state these sources of funding.

Texts proposed for publication must be unpublished and should not have been submitted to any other journal or electronic edition.

The content of the works is entirely the responsibility of the author(s) and does not express the position or opinion of the Scientific Council or Editorial Board.

The editorial process will be conducted objectively, impartially and anonymously. Errors or problems detected after publication will be investigated and, if proven, corrections, retractions and / or responses will be published.

The following ethical principles will be considered:

1) RESPONSIBILITY:

Ophiussa through its editors and authors has the absolute responsibility for approval, condemning all bad practices of scientific publication.

2) SCIENTIFIC FRAUD

Ophiussa will seek to detect manipulation and falsification of data, plagiarism or duplicity, with the appropriate detection mechanisms.

3) Editorial policy and procedures:

- a) Authors must have participated in the research process and in the review process, and must ensure that the data included is real and authentic and are obliged to issue retractions and corrections of errors of published articles;
- b) Reviewers must carry out an objective and confidential review and have no conflicts of interest (research, authors or funders), and must indicate relevant published works that were not cited;
- c) In the detection of fraud or malpractice in the evaluation phase, it must be indicated by the reviewers and in the post-publication phase by any reader.
- d) In case of detection of bad practices in the evaluation phase or of detection of previously published articles, the Editorial Board will send the occurrence to the author, establishing a period of 7 days for clarification, which will be subsequently evaluated by the Editorial Board. In the post-publication phase, the Editorial Board may file or determine the retraction in a subsequent issue, indicating the previous procedures.

Digital file preservation policy

The journal guarantees the permanent accessibility of digital objects through backup copies and use of DOI, integrating the Public Knowledge Project's Private LOCKSS Network (PK-PLN), which generates a decentralized file system.

Regarding the self-archiving, the magazine also includes Sherpa/Romeu (<https://v2.sherpa.ac.uk/id/publication/41841>).

Open access policy

This edition immediately and freely provides all of its content, in open access, in order to promote global circulation and exchange of scientific research and knowledge. It follows Creative Commons guidelines (license CC/BY/NC/ND 4.0).

The publication of texts in *Ophiussa – Revista do Centro de Arqueologia da Universidade de Lisboa* does not imply the payment of any fee nor does it entitle to any economic remuneration.

This publication has a limited printed edition in black and white, which will be distributed free of charge by the most relevant international libraries and institutions, and exchanged with periodicals of the same specialty, which will be integrated in the Library of School of Arts and Humanities of the University of Lisbon. It also has a digital version, in color, available in open access.

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