

ARCHITECTURE OF
TERRITORY
European Countryside

ARCADIA
Peloponnese



Fig: par V. Adam.

A. 5^e Arc.

ins d'Arcadia.

Citadelle construite sur un Acropole.

ARCADIA.

Introduction: 23 February, 2016
Tue, 10–12 am, ONA
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ASSISTANT PROF Milica Topalovic
TEAM: Hans Hortig, Karoline Kostka, Fabian
Kiepenheuer, Metaxia Markaki, Lukas Wolfensberger
PROGRAM: Design Research Studio
and Integrated Discipline Planning
PLACES: 18 students
TRAVEL: Integrated Seminar Week (cost frame C)

European territory has become completely urbanised. The countrysides in the traditional sense have disappeared; the distinctions between the town and the country have been blurred. In contrast to the unambiguous urban transformations of cities, the processes of urban change in the countryside are massive, yet often unnoticed. Away from the public eye and professional scrutiny, these processes have created new urban identities and configurations in the formerly rural realm of Europe. The studio series European Countryside will explore the terra incognita of the countryside, and its radical mutations. The project aims to reinvent contemporary countrysides as legitimate and critical subject of architecture profession. Starting in spring 2016, the studio will select several countryside case studies from the European typological panorama. Through these studies, a definition of contemporary countryside will be researched, and its potentials discovered and represented. These insights will form the basis for projects on the countryside.

The mythical Arcadia and the landscapes of Peloponnese in Greece are the birthplace of European territory and a source of European culture. They will serve as the threshold for the investigation into the character and urban potentials of European territories beyond the city.

Arcadia is one of the most enduring utopias of the western mind. As an imaginary locus and a pictorial style, Arcadia originated in the pastoral scenery of Roman poets Ovid and Virgil, from where it spread throughout western painting and literature. The imaginary realm of Arcadia, where human beings, animals, and plants harmoniously coexist, remains one of the most powerful idyllic constructions of the countryside.

By contrast, the actual region of Arcadia is located on the mountainous core of Peloponnese, the largest peninsula in Greece. These are the oldest inhabited territories in Europe and sources of European culture: sites of classical ruins, such as Epidaurus and ancient Olympia, still punctuate the landscape, and stone villages are scattered on the mountaintops. The entire Peloponnese is a quiet territory, seemingly unaffected by the metropolitan growth of Athens, and the gradual proliferation of new infrastructures and industries in the formerly rural landscape. The region's low population density,

remoteness, and low accessibility are surprising and can be understood as possessing a powerful potential in the European context: Arcadia and Peloponnese resist urbanisation, and remain an important interruption in the dense urban fabric of the continent. But this countryside is also much more than the imaginary of the pastoral ideal: cultural heritage sites, nature areas, agriculture, energy landscapes, and tourism have interacted here to produce radical urban transformations and new forms of living and production. Our investigation will concentrate on the character and potentials of the Arcadian countryside, seen as an important and typical case in the European panorama of countrysides.

The project is organized as an east-west section through the territory of Peloponnese, running from coast to coast — from Epidaurus to Olympia, through the mountains of Arcadia. Learning from the myths and the direct experience of the landscape, the studio will investigate, discover, promote and design new typologies of Arcadian countryside.

PROJECT ON EUROPEAN COUNTRYSIDE

With Arcadia and Peloponnese, Architecture of Territory starts a long-term project on European countryside. During the spring and autumn semester of 2016, our focus will be Greece. From there, in 2017 and 2018, we will move to other paradigmatic cases of the countryside in Europe.

PROGRAM

The semester offers an intensive fieldwork and studio program, with an opportunity for students to focus on large-scale territorial research and design. Architecture of Territory's approach to research and design enables students to

work with a wide range of methods and sources pertaining to territory, including ethnographic research, literature, architectural and urban design precedents, urban theory, photography and visual art. Architecture of Territory is looking for avid travellers and team workers with high motivation and independent position.

PROCESS AND RESULT

Students will work on research and design project in groups of two. All projects will compose a collective vision of Arcadia and Peloponnese.

The work will be represented in the form of drawings, common booklet and physical models. All projects will also be presented on Architecture of Territory website.

TRAVEL

An investigative journey to Arcadia and Peloponnese constitutes the core of the project. Travelling along the territorial line that crosses the Peloponnese from east to west, we will experience the region's complexity and beauty. Extensive field research is a prerequisite for the students' projects. The interaction with local experts as well as the faculty and students of the School of Architecture at the National Technical University of Athens, will enable a close view of the territory. The journey takes the form of an extended seminar week, from 11 March (evening) to 20 March 2016, which is integrated and mandatory. Cost frame C.

CREDITS

The semester project is designed for 18 students and offers the total of 18 credit points: The Design Studio with Integrated Discipline (Planning) 13+3 KP and the Fieldtrip 2 KP.

IMAGE

V. Adam, St. Aulaire, P. Baccuet, (1835). Lithography 'Vue d'Arcadia, prise par le côté qui regarde le nord', in *Expédition scientifique de Morée / Atlas*. (Paris, 1835; Athens, 2011). PL. XIV.