

**MENTIONS OF ERUDITE TRADITION: THE ROLE OF PRECEDENT IN  
LUCIO COSTA'S ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPTION**

***Menções à tradição erudita: o papel do precedente na concepção arquitetônica de  
Lucio Costa***

**Abstract**

This article carefully examines various texts published by the architect and urban planner Lucio Costa over time, in which reference to the erudite tradition is evident, intending to analyse them critically. To this end, hypotheses will be raised that seek to clarify the focus of this theme, centred on understanding the reasons for the tradition that justify indications of the leading role attributed by Costa to the use of precedent as the foundation of his architectural conception. The reviews here begin by analysing the theoretical framework that eventually founded modern architecture in Brazil, entitled "Razões da nova arquitetura" (Reasons for the new architecture), from 1934. The selected texts cover the period from the thirties to the fifties, and their contents do not exhaust the theme of this article, but they do represent an essential sample in terms of the focus revered here, that is, verifying how Costa's thinking shapes the discourse that validates the architect's operative option. It is, therefore, in the set of arguments introduced by Lucio Costa in his written work that we will seek to interpret the reasons that led the Brazilian master to value the classical-academic erudite tradition and not to leave it aside (or hide it), as many modern architects did. This latter attitude ended up leading, at least in the most superficial discourse, to the characterisation of modern architecture as an instrument for breaking with the past: the condition of modernity, in this case, would imply creating unprecedented works based on technological and pragmatic issues from which would emanate an original aesthetic - an international style - detached from time and place. In contrast, Costa, as has already been mentioned, takes on a unique role in this context of modern architecture precisely because he never shies away from the explicit study of precedents rooted both in the erudite production of the past and the popular traditions underlying it.

**Resumo**

Este artigo examina criteriosamente diversos textos publicados pelo arquiteto e urbanista Lucio Costa ao longo do tempo, nos quais se evidencia a referência à tradição erudita, com a finalidade de analisá-los criticamente. Para tanto, levantar-se-ão hipóteses que buscam clarificar o foco desta temática, centrada na compreensão das razões da tradição que justificam indícios do papel protagonista atribuído por Costa ao uso do precedente como fundamento de sua concepção arquitetônica. As resenhas aqui encetadas iniciam pela análise do marco teórico que acabou por fundamentar a arquitetura moderna no Brasil, intitulado “Razões da nova arquitetura”, de 1934. Os textos selecionados compreendem o período da década de trinta a cinquenta e seus conteúdos não esgotam o tema deste artigo, porém, representam uma importante mostra quanto ao foco aqui reverenciado, ou seja, verificar como se configura, no pensamento de Costa, o discurso que valida à opção operativa do arquiteto. É, portanto, no conjunto de argumentos introduzidos por Lucio Costa em sua obra escrita que se buscará interpretar as razões que levaram o mestre brasileiro a valorizar a tradição erudita de vertente clássica-acadêmica, e não a deixá-la de lado (ou a escondê-la), como o fizeram muitos arquitetos modernos. Esta última atitude acabou levando, ao menos no discurso mais superficial, à caracterização da arquitetura moderna como instrumento de ruptura com o passado: a condição de modernidade, neste caso, implicaria criar obras inéditas, fundamentadas em questões tecnológicas e pragmáticas das quais emanaria uma estética original – um estilo internacional – descolado de tempo e lugar. Diferentemente, Costa, como já foi mencionado, assume um papel singular nesse contexto da arquitetura moderna, precisamente por jamais se afastar do estudo explícito de precedentes enraizados tanto na produção erudita do passado como nas tradições populares a ela subjacentes.

**Key-words:** *Lucio Costa; Brazilian Modern Architecture; Theory, history and criticism of architecture; Academic erudite tradition; Fundamentals of Architectural Project.*

**Palavras-chave:** *Lúcio Costa; Arquitetura Moderna Brasileira; Teoria, história e crítica da arquitetura; Tradição erudita acadêmica; Fundamentos do Projeto Arquitetônico.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The field of study of this article is the published writings of the architect and urban planner Lucio Costa (1902-1998), subjected to a critical reading that will progressively delimit the thematic section referred to in the title of this work: the role of precedent in Lucio Costa's architectural conception. The relevance of the Brazilian master's written work is widely recognised, and its choice as an object of study needs no comment: from the outset, this investigation was interested in the notable repercussions of the theoretical basis proposed therein for the practice of modern architecture in Brazil, which influenced generations of architecture students and professionals, particularly at the pioneering moment of the first realisations, marked by profound uncertainties and transformations in society and architectural production.

Lucio Costa's collection of articles on modern architecture became a milestone in developing the Modern Movement in Brazil. It consolidated his position as the intellectual leader in introducing and affirming Brazil's new architecture (as it was then called). In his writings, the constant mention of erudite and popular tradition, presented as part of the same historical phenomenon, takes on a unique and distinctive role. Lucio Costa revered the leading role, in architectural production, of precedents coming from either of these traditions to create links and thus harmoniously assist the transformations to come. All of this is done without drastic ruptures or ceasing to value what the man of the past has achieved, which can be reused to progress in inexorable evolution.

When examining the mentions of tradition in Lucio Costa's texts, one can see the reference to the architecture of the erudite tradition and the residential architecture of the popular tradition from the colonial period in the role of the precedent in its architectural conception. For Costa, erudite architecture differs from famous (or vernacular) architecture not because of its appearance but because of how each was conceived and built. In erudite architecture, conception and execution involve specific knowledge, which is used and acquired through professional and artistic training, whether academic or self-taught. Architecture is considered popular or vernacular when it is produced by laypeople, i.e. those who have not studied the discipline of "architecture". This is the case for the users and builders who empirically carry out their work.

These findings are at the root of the intellectual concerns that motivated the research that led to the thesis entitled "Razões da tradição: o papel do precedente na concepção arquitetônica de Lucio Costa" by the author of this article, Taís Alves, which has now been finalised, and which suggested the very focus of this article, that is, the delimitation, within Costa's theoretical thought, of the question of precedent, in order to search for the reasons for tradition as enunciated by him in his numerous texts, which are still relatively little analysed as a whole, displacing his architectural work, already studied by many, to the background.

Therefore, the article focuses on the reasons why Costa valued tradition so much, following the same formative concern as Guadet and not exactly how he used it in his projects, although the two issues remain interconnected. To do this, it is necessary to clarify the concepts related to architectural composition, as they are part of the theoretical categories used by Costa to better understand his written work, based on the theses of Julien Guadet<sup>1</sup>, which presided over the architectural formation of Lucio Costa's generation. These are the elements of architecture, the elements of composition and the rules of composition.

The elements of architecture can be understood as the various physical components that make up buildings, such as walls, windows, columns, roofs, etc. These elements include stylistic references (classical capitals, Gothic ogival arches, colonial windows, and Portuguese tiles). The compositional elements are the volumes or spaces configured by gathering architectural elements (rooms, halls, porticoes, naves, auditoriums). These volumes can have different dimensions and geometric shapes.

Guadet says that the elements of architecture and composition (material elements and spatial volumes) are learnt by observing various historical examples. As for the rules for composing these volumes, there is a need to make an effort to grasp the essence of the organisational context of the great examples of architecture from the past. This clarifies the sequence of three stages that Guadet mentions at the end of "Chapitre premier": first, you need to know the elements of architecture; then, the elements of composition; and finally, the composition itself. According to Guadet, in order to understand perfectly, you first need to know the isolated physical components (walls, doors, windows, pillars, ceilings, staircases); next, you need to know these elements assembled into volumes with

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<sup>1</sup>GUADET, Julien. *Éléments et théorie de l'architecture : cours professé à l'École nationale et spéciale des beaux-arts*. 4. ed. Paris: Librairie de la Construction Moderne, [1909?]. [4 v.] : il. p.75-95.

internal space (rooms, corridors, halls); finally, you need to visualise how to bring these volumes together into a whole, using the rules of composition (systems of axes, use of symmetry, hierarchy in the distribution of volumes, systems of proportion and modulation, tectonicity, among others).

Another necessary clarification, which adds value to the argument on this subject and precedes the preparation of this article, are two important works highlighted because they present assertions regarding the possible explanations related to Costa's use of tradition in his design practice. In 1954, in the book entitled "Artigos e estudos de Costa"<sup>2</sup>, developed by academics from the Faculty of Architecture at Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul(UFRGS), under the guidance of Edgard Graeff, a professor of architectural theory at the same institution, there are comments from this research group (one imagines that this is a consensus shared by the professor and his students, as they are all authors), that Costa, when researching the precedent, draws compositional rules from the classical erudite tradition to conceive his projects and associates them with new technologies, as well as with the Brazilian context.

Later, for example, in Carlos Eduardo Dias Comas' doctoral thesis<sup>3</sup>, when analysing Costa's architectural projects, we will see a return to the incipient statements of this 1954 publication, in which the author, expressing the same idea, adds the influence of Guadet's concepts on Costa, In other words, he emphasises that Costa draws compositional rules from the precedent of classical erudite tradition, and from the precedent of Brazilian colonial popular tradition the elements of architecture and composition, both linked to the new precepts and technologies coming from the modern movement.

From the above readings and other bibliographical research carried out covering this topic, however, the following question remains: if the focus of this article is the role of precedent in Costa's architectural conception, more specifically, how does he enunciate it in his written work? Is it possible to look for evidence of the direct rooting of this notion in his thinking in the theses discussed above, given that both the authors mentioned above were focusing on Costa's design work and not his published texts, or is it necessary to go

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<sup>2</sup>CENTRO DE ESTUDOS DE TEORIA DE ARQUITETURA. Artigos e estudos de Lucio costa. Porto Alegre: UFRGS, 1954. 90p.

<sup>3</sup>COMAS, Carlos Eduardo Dias. *Precisões Brasileiras: Sobre um Passado da Arquitetura e Urbanismo Modernos a partir dos projetos e obras de Lucio Costa, Oscar Niemeyer, MRM Roberto, Affonso Reidy, Jorge Moreira & cia., 1936-45.* Tese de doutorado. Paris: Université de Paris VIII, 2002.

further in re-reading the publications? Therefore, the initial question was: how does Costa approach the reference to these traditions in his texts, and how is it possible, when checking this, to find the reasons he gives for theoretically validating this use? The answer to this twofold question will only be possible at the end of an argument that will preliminarily take into account the critical analysis of Costa's texts, which, in the course of this article, will be gradually presented and commented on with a focus on his mentions.

## DEVELOPMENT

### *"Reasons for the new architecture"*

The text "Razões da Nova Arquitetura" was published in 1936 in the "Revista da Diretoria de Engenharia" of the Prefeitura do Distrito Federal, volume III, number I. In the book "Registro de uma vivência" Costa points out that this text dates from 1934; therefore, this is considered in this work. "Razões da Nova Arquitetura" represented a milestone in Brazil in the sense that it provided a theoretical foundation for modern architecture, integrating past and present, unlike the international trend, which in many cases refutes precedent in order to avoid copying past models: "I transcribe this long text as a period document that reveals the climate of professional 'holy war' that marked the beginning of the architectural revolution here" (Costa, 1995, p. 108).

The text "Razões da Nova Arquitetura" discusses the transition and adaptation to a new world that began with the transformations generated by the Industrial Revolution and its influence on architecture. According to Costa, different and antagonistic reactions to this period are beginning to emerge: those who are happy with the new era tend to break with everything that preceded it, and some deny what is happening. The phase is one of disagreement on both sides, but the new era follows its natural flow of development, maintaining a connection with the "truths of old"<sup>4</sup>; the spirit is the same. It is the form of presentation and expression that is new, he says.

Costa also emphasises the importance of this period as a milestone of possibilities in various areas that the world had never experienced before. The changes at this time were so severe that Costa goes so far as to say that not even the Renaissance, despite its essential and profound influence, can compare to what this era represented.

The following extract, taken from the text "Razões da nova arquitetura", was chosen because it contains some critical statements by the master that provide clues to the article's focus. In Costa's words:

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<sup>4</sup>An expression that will later be analysed in terms of the concepts of truth as opposed to his prejudices, which Costa calls false. COSTA, Lucio. Razões da nova arquitetura (1934). In: Lucio Costa: Registro de uma vivência. São Paulo: Empresa da Artes, (2a ed.), 1995. p.108.

In this adaptation phase, the light dizzies and blinds the contemporaries - there is turmoil, incomprehension: summary demolition of everything that preceded, intransigent denial of the little emerging - iconoclasts and iconolaters clash. Nevertheless, despite the confusing atmosphere, the new rhythm gradually sets and accentuates its cadence and the old spirit - transfigured - discovers in the exact nature and truths, as always, unforeseen charm unknown flavour, resulting in new forms of expression. Another horizon then emerges, of course, on the never-ending journey. We are living through precisely one of these periods, the importance of which, however, surpasses all those that preceded it in terms of its social possibilities. The transformations are so profound and radical that the humanistic adventure of the Renaissance itself, despite its extraordinary scope, will perhaps seem to posterity, in the face of them, a simple game of refined intellectuals (Costa, 1995, p.108).

Thus, in the text "Razões", Costa initially presents the general picture of uncertainty that architects are going through at a time of new alternatives arising from technological development, i.e. on the one hand, those who are satisfied with the new alternatives tend to break with everything that has gone before. On the other hand, some do not accept the new alternatives and remain faithful to what they already know, generating great controversy between these opposing positions.

However, Costa seems to position himself as the conciliator of both sides, previously characterised as opposites. Costa tries to stitch together the antagonistic positions through a clear stance that refers to the past as a source of truths inherent to the discipline of architecture, as when he states that "the old spirit - transfigured - discovers in the exact nature and truths, as always, unforeseen charm unknown flavour, resulting in new forms of expression. Another horizon then emerges, of course, on the never-ending journey". In this sentence, Costa makes it clear that there are certain compositional principles and/or rules that in architecture are independent of the aesthetic that resulted from it and the time it represents.

For Costa, excellent architecture has an essence - an "old spirit" - and this essence represents the "truths of all time", even if its aesthetic form is "transfigured" by new technologies. When he uses the expression "truths of all time", Costa seems to hint that "true architecture" must necessarily have specific attributes, which will be clarified later, related to compositional principles and construction processes that are interdependent on the aesthetic form generated.

Thus, Costa finalises his thoughts by trying to give some hope to everyone who, according to his own words, is currently "fighting back". The crisis in contemporary architecture, as in other areas, stems from the creation of the machine, which is in the industrial age and trying to establish itself. Costa states that he is coherent with this new era that is beginning; he advocates that architecture differentiates itself in terms of meaning and form from previous periods without losing the link to the same rules that remain perennial in what constitutes the excellence of the discipline throughout the ages. According to Costa, it is worthless to label this period's architecture or promote conflicts between the past and the future. If, for some, the transformations of that time are complex to accept and apply to architecture but difficult to escape, excellent results are also triggered by the exact cause of the evolution of means of transport. Below is another extract from the text selected for analysis:

The machine - with big industry - has, however, come to disturb the cadence of this immemorial rhythm, making it possible at first, even now, without beating about the bush, to widen the fictitious circle in which, like good turkeys, the whole of dignity, we still think we are trapped. Thus, the crisis of contemporary architecture, like in other fields, is the effect of a common cause: the advent of the machine. It is, therefore, natural that, as a result of such different premises, it differs in meaning and form from all that preceded it, but this does not prevent it from being guided - in what is permanent about them - by the same principles and laws. The hasty and watertight classifications that claim to see an irremediable conflict between past and future in this naturally complex metamorphosis are devoid of any real meaning. If, however, it is not yet accessible for less astute minds to learn, in architecture, the true meaning of this transformation that we cannot escape, the evolution of the means of transport, driven by the exact cause, shows all its significance, clearly and without sophistry, in the surprising results it has achieved, even though none of this surprises us anymore, so familiar are we with this commonplace form of "miracle" (Costa, 1995, p. 110).

When analysing this other excerpt from the text "Razões", one can see Costa's attempt to clarify that the crisis that the architecture of his time was going through refers directly to the advent of the machine from the Industrial Revolution, which brought new materials and made new technologies available for modern architects to use. What Costa is trying to clarify is that there is much misunderstanding on the part of architecture professionals about these changes since they do not refer to a break with everything that preceded them. However, the compositional principles that architects use to create architecture from classical antiquity to the present day are the same because they are perennial in terms of the disciplinary tradition of architecture. According to his own words: "this does not prevent it from being guided - in what is permanent about them - by the same principles and laws".

Costa, therefore, affirms that, in terms of these principles, the link to the erudite tradition endures. There is no rupture. It depends on the most cautious way of trying to position oneself in the face of these changes in the sense of not breaking with everything that has gone before since that would be to fail in the aspect that is implicit in the "essence" ("old spirit" or "truths of all time") of the great examples of the past. The formal result will be different at that time, given that it will result from this new technology and the styles of different eras that have distinguished themselves from each other, expressing these different technical-constructive solutions.

This moment would mark a revolution in society through technological development in various sectors, transforming people's daily lives at a speed never seen before. The fear of the new also had an effect that ended up unbalancing many architects in the sense that they did not stop to think calmly and with the willingness to critically reflect on the new facts that were imposing themselves in order to be able to structure a path in what is impossible to deny, the evolution of the times.

Costa, unlike most, seems to have been the thinker and the intellectual who could reflect on these issues. Thus, his theoretical work served to mediate and reconcile this process of change in a balanced way, proposing alternatives that would support modern architecture in the sense of not losing its links with erudite tradition, of continuing to value the precedent as a historical record of architectural knowledge through its principles and laws inherent in the architectural object of excellence, regardless of the era in which it is found.

This problematic context, experienced at that time of the so-called "machine age", seems to have provided the reasons that led Costa to valorise the precedent, in the sense of making it a bridge or a connection between past and present, to structure and reconcile opposing thoughts on modern architecture. In other words, trying to interpret Costa, it seems that his thinking, in this circumstance, is directed towards the following assertion: architecture is created with a new aesthetic appearance, the result of new technologies, but this creation is elaborated through compositional principles and laws as the ancients have always done, works that are considered paradigms of the past, representatives of erudite disciplinary architecture.

Below is another crucial part of the exact text selected for further analysis:

While American engineers are raising the impressive metallic claims of the new technique to a height never before reached, American architects - wearing the same clothes, with the same hair, smiles and hats, but disgusted with the less than monumental past that their ancestors bequeathed to them, and without understanding anything about the exceptional moment we are living in - embark for Europe, where they quietly stock up on the most false and incredible modern stylisations, the most varied and strange archaeological documents, to glue them with the best cement - to the impassive frameworks, thus giving them the desired dose of "dignity". However, the "old" Europeans, fed up with a heritage that oppresses them, are moving forward, making a new life for themselves, taking advantage of the possibilities of the material and the prodigious technique that the "young" Americans have not been able to utilise. Thus, twenty centuries apart, history repeats itself. The Romans - admirable engineers - used masonry and concrete to erect surprising structures thanks to arches and vaults: they did not realise that architecture was just a stone's throw away; they turned to decadent Greece, covering the healthy nakedness of its monuments with a crust of marble and travertine columns and plat bands - vestiges of an opposite construction system. Furthermore, it was precisely the Greeks in Byzantium - St Sophia - who took full advantage of the extraordinary beauty of the new technique (Costa, 1995, p. 112).

In the above, we can see Costa's critical attitude towards what, in subsequent texts, he will call "false styles" instead of "true styles". In this passage, Costa uses the architecture developed in the United States as an example, contrary to the new technology available at the time. In other words, the Americans built with the new technology, but due to the lack of a marked past concerning the architecture produced in their country, they clad their architecture in historical European styles, in opposition to the aesthetic result of the technology being used.

Unlike the Americans, the Europeans were open to the new solutions unleashed in construction by the new technologies and began producing architecture that aesthetically represented these transformations. In this respect, Costa compares the architecture of the Americans with the architecture of the Romans in classical antiquity, who also possessed new technologies that were more advanced than those of the Greeks and based their styles on the aesthetics and decorative application of Greek materials. These narratives by Costa refer to the "false style", which, for the author, is the result of aesthetic forms that differ in origin from the technology and materials used in their construction, as will be seen later.

The modern construction technique, according to Costa, calls for a revision of the concepts used in traditional models. The most significant change from previous construction systems is in the independent structure of the building. Traditionally, walls structured the building from the ground to the top floor. With the new technique, the walls lose their previous function of structuring and sealing the building and are now only used as seals.

Thus, through the use of new technology, systems of independent structures that can be either reinforced concrete or metal free the walls from their structural function to become simple seals, and in many cases, they can be applied as sheets of glass, taking care of the best orientation, says Costa.

Structure and wall are now presented as things with different uses, materials and thicknesses, showing independence in their various applications. Costa says, for example, that walls can be made from lightweight materials with soundproofing technologies and manufactured to resist temperature variations better. They can be freely arranged, as they no longer need to support the weight of the entire building.

This is the "secret of all new architecture", Costa emphasises. If this independence is understandable (structure and fence), it could have the answer to the modern architect's intentions: the solutions of the time gave greater freedom to the floor plans and façades, which are now called "free" (designating total freedom of relationship between structure and fence, in the terms advocated by Le Corbusier). With the new structural system, it was possible to transfer the columns that used to accompany the ends of buildings from the outside to be placed inside the building, allowing the façades to be simple seals with total "freedom of treatment: from the closure to the glass panel", he says. According to Costa:

The new technique calls for a revision of traditional plastic values. What characterises it and, in a way, commands the radical transformation of all the old construction processes, - is the independent ossature. Traditionally, the walls, which grew thicker and thicker from the top to the bottom of the building until they spread out solidly anchored to the ground, played a key role: they formed the very structure, the proper support of the entire factory. A miracle, however, freed them from this age-old burden. The revolution imposed by the new technology gave the building elements a different hierarchy, relieving the walls of the heavy burden they had always been given. The new function entrusted to them - simple sealing - offers other comforts without the same risks and worries. The new system transfers all responsibility to an independent, reinforced concrete or metal structure. Thus, what was - invariably - a thick wall for several tens of centuries can, in a few tens of years, be transformed (when suitably orientated, of course: south in our case) into a simple sheet of crystal. Wall and support, therefore, represent different things today, two precise, unmistakable functions. Different in terms of material, thickness, and purpose, everything indicates and recommends an independent life without nostalgic preoccupation or false overlap. Made of light materials, soundproof and temperature-proof, free from the rigid burden of support, they glide alongside the impassive columns; they stop at any distance and undulate with the normal movement of internal traffic, allowing the built volume to perform better. This is the secret of all-new architecture. Once we understand what this independence means, we have the key to understanding the modern architect's intentions in all their particularities: because it was the springboard that led him to the current solutions - and not just in terms of the freedom of the floor plan, but also in terms of the façade, which is now called "free": this expression is intended to mean that it has no dependence or relationship with the structure. The overhangs imposed by the rational use of the floor frame had the immediate consequence of transferring the colonnades - which had always been very solemn on the outside - to the inside of the building, thus leaving the façades (simple fences) absolute freedom of treatment: from total closure to glass panelling (Costa, 1995, p.112).

In Costa's text, quoted above, the author may be trying to clarify Le Corbusier's "Five Points of Architecture", even though Costa does not quote them verbatim. However, two passages are the most relevant in this section to better focus on the theme of this article. In the beginning, Costa says: "The new technique calls for a revision of traditional plastic values. What characterises it and, in a way, commands the radical transformation of all the old construction processes, - is the independent ossature." Costa is continuing his criticism of American architectural production because it results in a different aesthetic to the construction they use. In other words, Costa is emphasising that "true architecture", in the sense that he enunciates, will be persistent in his thinking (as will be demonstrated in the analysis of his texts), in its stylistic appearance, must be the result of constructive technique and, therefore, maintain ties with the tradition of the

discipline of architecture, whether erudite or popular, considered by Costa to be of excellence.

Costa, therefore, believes that at this time, there should be a concern on the part of modern architects to produce an architecture that expresses and results in a form- the aesthetic of the new construction system, which lies precisely in the "independent bone" of the structure (concrete or metallic) concerning the masonry that only seals the compartments, unlike in the past. The second sentence selected from the quote mentioned above complements the idea: "This is the secret of all-new architecture. Once we understand what this independence means, we have the key to understanding the modern architect's intentions in all their particularities".

Next, Costa defends modern architecture against those who are opposing it:

However, such characteristic solutions of great plastic beauty shock those who, armed with prejudices and not adequately enlightened about the reasons and meaning of the new architecture, try to analyse it based not only on the permanent principles - which it fully respects - but on those that resulted from a different technology, thus pretending to discover "qualities" that it cannot and should not possess (Costa, 1995, p. 113).

It can be seen in the quote above that despite these clarifications of the "reasons and meaning of the new architecture" and the issues related to the peculiarities that transform it into a new plastic expression. Costa states that some do not seem to have understood these premises. For this reason, they do not accept it and try to compare it with architectures generated using other techniques. They claim that the aesthetic that represents modern architecture differs significantly from past architectures in that permanent laws and principles do not conceive it.

Costa believes comparing modern architecture with architecture from different technologies is impossible. They try to impose certain "qualities" on the formal result of modern architecture that do not exist because they have no reason to exist and no longer coincide with the new technology. Costa also takes issue with the criticism that modern architecture lacks perennial compositional laws and principles. Costa clarifies, therefore, that modern architecture is created through compositional principles stemming from the erudite disciplinary tradition of architecture from classical antiquity when referring to the rules of composition, in his words:

Although it unmasks the artificialities of false academic grandeur, the new architecture does not intend to evade - as it lightly insinuates - the impositions of "symmetry" but to see it in the proper and broad sense that the ancients attributed to it with measure - with metre - both meaning the primary rebound around an axis and the play of contrasts wisely valued according to a defined and harmonious line of a composition, always controlled by the regulatory tracings, forgotten by the academics and so much to the liking of the old masters (Costa, 1995, p. 114).

In the quote above, Costa affirms modern architects' importance to the compositional principles that come from the erudite disciplinary tradition of architecture. He also takes the opportunity to take a stand against academic teaching about the use of precedent and its stylistic appearance to decorate the architecture that is still being produced of an eclectic nature, which the modern movement refuted. According to his assertion: "Although it unmasks the artificialities of false academic grandeur, the new architecture does not intend to evade - as it lightly insinuates - the impositions of "symmetry" but to see it in the proper and broad sense that the ancients attributed to it with measure". If, on the one hand, Costa had an academic education at the National School of Fine Arts in Rio de Janeiro, along the lines of the "École des Beaux-Arts" in Paris, on the other hand, not all of its teachings influenced him. There was indeed a great deal of influence from École's master Guadet on Costa's theoretical framework for modern architecture in Brazil regarding the use of certain concepts, such as architectural elements, compositional elements and compositional rules.

However, as far as the focus of this article is concerned, it is worth asking what reasons there might be to justify the permanence of tradition in the fundamental role that precedent assumes in Costa's architectural conception? In some respects, it differs from the role precedent played for academics. Guadet, like Costa, states that compositional rules are drawn from precedent (great examples of architecture from the past). However, unlike Guadet, Costa takes the opposite position in another instance: for academics, precedent also serves as a material for choosing the various architectural elements that characterise the different styles that architects would use to decorate their compositions in an eclectic spirit that he finds unacceptable because it does not satisfy a criterion, which he invokes, of architectural "truth".

For Costa, the uniformity present in modern architecture is the same as that which characterises the great styles of different eras; Gothic architecture, considered by many to be just a style adopted in religious buildings, was a construction system. This system was used in any building of its time, just as reinforced concrete characterised the achievements of the new architecture. Today, it can be used in military, civil or ecclesiastical buildings. In the following quote, Costa tries to demonstrate that modern architecture conforms to a style that emerges following the parameters of the erudite disciplinary tradition:

This uniformity has always existed and characterised great styles. The so-called Gothic architecture, for example, which the public has become accustomed to considering appropriate only for religious buildings, was at the time a generalised form of construction - just like reinforced concrete today - and applied indiscriminately to all kinds of buildings, whether military, civil or ecclesiastical (Costa, 1995, p. 114).

Costa manages to associate the use of new technology with a formal expression that is distinct from all previous styles, showing that, despite this, modern architecture remains traditional: the other styles that characterised each period in the history of classical architecture were also the result of the techniques and materials used, regardless of the function that the building would house.

Costa once again reinforces the idea that, although modern architecture results in a new aesthetic and is repeated in large numbers worldwide, its genesis is entirely rooted in tradition, as the history of architecture itself can attest. Costa, therefore, takes the following position when critics accuse modern architects, arguing that the new architecture is monotonous, in some respects repetitive, due to the forms that are peculiar to it:

It is equally ridiculous to accuse new architecture of being monotonous simply because it has been repeating, for a few years, a few forms that are peculiar to it - when the Greeks took several hundred years working, invariably, on the same pattern, until they reached the masterpieces of the Acropolis of Athens. Styles are formed and refined precisely because of this repetition, which lasts as long as the deep reasons that gave rise to it remain (Costa, 1995, p. 114).

Costa emphasises, in the quote above, that all the styles that have marked the history of architecture over time can be identified or classified as belonging to the same current of thought because their resulting aesthetics have been repeated in various buildings and various places and that, according to this line of thought, modern architecture would therefore be strictly traditional. Another relevant comment by Costa is that the great styles of the past have, in their essence, "the deep reasons that gave rise

to it remain" and that, therefore, modern architecture would also contemplate these reasons. These reasons seem to be related to the principles previously emphasised by Costa: compositional principles and the interdependence between constructive technique and formal aesthetic result.

Costa takes a stand against the term international modern architecture, stating that:

In addition to that apparent uniformity, that "conversational tone" that predominates in contemporary buildings of both private and public character - in contrast to the discursive tone required for the latter by our grandparents - another sin is attributed to the new architecture: internationalism. We believe that this fear is belated, however, because the internationalisation of architecture did not begin with reinforced concrete and the post-war period; when it did begin - omitting Romanesque and Gothic architecture, which are eminently international, on the assumption that the catalysing influence of the Church can be claimed as justification - there were still Indians on our virgin beaches of Portuguese sweat: it began with Charles VIII's tourist-military trip to Italy in the spring of 1494, followed by those of Louis XII and Francis I. It was then that the new enthusiasm spread across Europe - tired of Gothic juggling - which, with the expansiveness of a gas, penetrated every corner of the Western world, intoxicating every spirit. Moreover, the new architecture, at first blending in with the Gothic carries, gradually simplified, eliminating the "barbarisms", imposing order, rhythm and symmetry, until it culminated in the classicism of the 17th century and the academism suggested by it. Nothing can be imagined as absolutely international as this strange freemasonry that - "superstitiously" - from Vienna to Washington, from Paris to London or Buenos Aires - with disconcerting insistence, repeated until yesterday, the same colonnades, the same pediments, and the very same domes, undefeatable. Thus, the internationalism of the new architecture has nothing exceptional about it, nor is it particularly Jewish - as, in a facile play on words, it pretends - it merely respects a centuries-old custom. Even in this respect, it is strictly traditional (Costa, 1995, p. 115).

Once again, Costa, in his defence of modern architecture when it is considered an international style, demonstrates that it is also "rigorously traditional" in this respect since other styles throughout history have also been reproduced in places and cultures other than those in which they originated. In this sense, Costa will use eclecticism as a critical example, which in his conception is as international or even more so than modern architecture itself and, worse, its forms arise from construction techniques that are often opposed to the objective, conventional function that it should fulfil, with the sole purpose of applying mere decorative elements, which Costa will continue to refute in later texts vehemently.

To finalise the quotes selected from the text "Razões", the following sentence by Costa briefly highlights his thoughts on modern architecture and exposes the link with it about the role of precedent in its conception: "Because if the forms have varied - the spirit is still the same, and the same laws remain fundamental (Costa, 1995:116)." Interpreting Costa's assertion, it can be seen that the forms have varied since they are the result of a new building technique; in the course of reading this text, it was possible to see that, according to Costa's thinking, throughout history, the various styles that have marked different periods are also the result of their different techniques and the formal expressions resulting from this technique. Likewise, these styles were created by applying compositional principles and/or laws. In this way, modern architecture is also created from the knowledge of these compositional laws, derived from the study of precedents, as they are perennial principles of the disciplinary tradition of erudite architecture because "the spirit is still the same"; only the forms vary.

The profound reasons that Lucio Costa refers to in "Razões da nova arquitetura" and which ended up becoming the theoretical basis for the practice developed in the first decades of modern Brazilian architecture and, in particular, his architecture, initially marked by the design and execution of the Ministry of Education and Public Health (MESP), are based on the connection between the present and the past. A structural system independent of fences is seen as a direct consequence of the Industrial Revolution and the production of new materials. In turn, the past is manifested in the compositional laws found in precedents stemming from an erudite tradition associated with the new construction techniques of the present, referring to a moment of transition and evolution, not revolution.

Therefore, as far as the focus of this article is concerned, concerning the possible reasons for tradition to the fundamental role that precedent plays in Costa's architectural conception, there are indications of a mindset geared towards the search for links connections in an evolutionary sense; in the ideological search for what Costa considers to represent an architecture of excellence; in the criticism of eclecticism and defense of new architecture based on interdependence between constructive technique and the plastic expression that results from it, as can be seen in the great examples of the past.

In this adaptation phase, the light dizzies and blinds the contemporaries - there is turmoil, incomprehension: summary demolition of everything that preceded, intransigent denial of the little that is emerging - iconoclasts and iconolaters clash. However, despite the confusing atmosphere, the new rhythm gradually sets and accentuates its cadence and the old spirit - transfigured - discovers in the exact nature and truths, as always, unforeseen charm unknown flavour, resulting in new forms of expression. Another horizon then emerges, of course, on the never-ending journey (...). Thus, the crisis of contemporary architecture, like in other fields, is the effect of a common cause: the advent of the machine. Therefore, it is natural that, as a result of such different premises, it differs in meaning and form from all that preceded it, which does not prevent it from being guided - in what is permanent about it - by the same principles and laws. The hasty and watertight classifications that claim to see an irremediable conflict between past and future in this naturally complex metamorphosis are devoid of any real meaning. If it is still not easy, however, for less astute minds to learn architecture, the true meaning of this transformation is that we will not be able to escape (...) (Costa, 1995, p. 110).

### ***Student interest***

Costa wonders what the architect would be interested in knowing - after Costa's question, the content of which is present in this text and also in the book "Registro de uma Vivência", although under a different title - "Interessa ao estudante". It is important to emphasise that there is no record of when Costa wrote it, but it may have been in the 1940s. This text shows the importance of studying precedent as a design foundation for the erudite tradition, associated with the rules of composition, and the popular tradition, associated with the conventional use of architectural and compositional elements. We can also see its direct link to the present moment, as quoted below:

First and foremost, we want to know how, in identical or different conditions of time, medium, material and technique or programme, construction problems have been solved architecturally in the past. Awareness of the true meaning of this precious accumulated experience is necessary so that the student, deeply imbued with the new spirit of his time, becomes familiar with the particular conditions of the environment in which he lives, acquaints himself with the new resources of material and technique, learns about the specific features of contemporary programmes, exercises and refines himself in the secrets of modulation and modelling, in order to, in turn, enable himself to solve current construction problems architecturally. Thus, on the one hand, the history and theory of architecture, and on the other, the theory and practice of the profession of architect, an activity embodied in the discipline that has come to be called, with a certain redundancy, architectural composition, and where one learns the art of technically composing buildings, in other words, simply architecting. Architectural composition is, therefore, the very purpose of the architect's profession, and where all the other disciplines of the course converge and are embodied, which should be arranged in the curriculum, first and foremost, according to it (Costa, 2007, P. 114).

Analysing the quote above, we can see how much Costa valued precedent. For Costa, precedent can play various roles in producing architectural knowledge. Thus, when the precedent comes from an erudite tradition, one can extract compositional principles and/or rules from it through the analysis and interpretation of those who are studying it to apply them in design practice; on the other hand, when it comes from popular tradition, one can look to it for programmatic knowledge (compositional elements) and investigate technical-constructive solutions (architectural elements). Subsequently, it is up to the creative architect to interpret this knowledge bequeathed by the past to connect it to the uses that characterise the present moment and update it by incorporating the new technologies available.

Against this backdrop, it should be emphasised once again that the focus of this article is not on studying the way Costa uses precedent in his design practice (as has already been mentioned, this work has already been started by Comas through his analysis of Costa's architectural projects). The study that supports this thesis, in turn, collaborates with Comas' thesis by shifting the object of analysis: the source is no longer Costa's architectural work but his theoretical work, contained in the architect's written and published work.

Once again, the main purpose of this investigation is to ask what are the "reasons for tradition" that, for Costa, would justify operatively maintaining links with the architectural production of the past that are denied by so many other supporters of the "new architecture"? The issue here is not how he uses them but why he uses them in the context of modern architecture, as he advocates in his doctrinal formulation. In this respect, Costa's constant concern with trying to reconcile those who accept modern architecture and break with everything that preceded it and those who refute it because they believe that modern architecture distances itself from the erudite disciplinary tradition seems to be implicit in his analysis of the text "*Razões da nova arquitetura*" (Reasons for the new architecture). The attempt to cater for everyone, in the sense of reconciling opposing views, seems to highlight Costa's initial reasons for giving precedent a fundamental role, that is, the role of mediator in the process of radical transformation that society and the practice of architecture were undergoing.

Another fundamental reason for the permanence of the erudite tradition lies in the desire to provide a theoretical basis for modern architecture by valorising the role of precedent as a source of inspiration and knowledge for the architectural profession. This foundation, as it might expect, is not neutral but is deeply rooted in Costa's ideological values<sup>5</sup>, in those aspects that he truly believes are an inherent part of the architect's creative process so that one can thus conceive an architecture of excellence, for the love of architecture itself, architecture in itself.

This complements the idea presented earlier in the text "Interessa ao estudante" (It interests the student), in which Costa emphasises the importance of the erudite tradition by studying the precedent in detail in order to extract knowledge from it for application in design practice:

It is also essential to realise the characteristics of the different scales: in the "plastic" or ideal scale, the unit of measurement - the module - is a particular part of the thing built; on the human or functional scale, the unit of measurement - the inch, the span, the foot - is a specific part of the human body; on the theoretical or abstract scale, the unit of measurement - the metre - is the forty millionth part of the earth's quadrant, i.e. an abstraction, thus losing any relation to man or the manufactured thing. Le Corbusier's modulator, linked to the plastic or ideal scale and the human scale, made it possible to restore the lost sense of proportion despite the metric system. Finally, it is important to emphasise the importance of intention because the final expression of the work will depend on faithful and constant attachment to that original intention. Thus, for example, the so-called classical orders - Doric, Ionic, Corinthian - correspond purely and simply to the plastic expression of different intentions, added to that greater intention of serene balance, peculiar to Greek art: in the Doric, restrained strength; in the Ionic, grace and elegance; in the Corinthian, refinement and wealth; orders to which the Romans added the Tuscan, with a more utilitarian intention, and, in the opposite direction, the hyperbolic ostentation of the "composite" order - a fusion of the Corinthian and the Ionic (Costa, 1995, p. 118).

In the quote above, Costa shows that previous architectural concepts that have become paradigms emphasise using certain compositional principles. Costa then highlights one of these principles, which he calls the module. Depending on the period in which it was used, the module was associated with architectural design in different ways, but in short, it represents a unit of measurement that, if well studied, can be used

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<sup>5</sup>sf (ídeo +logo +ia121) 1 Philosophy Science that deals with the formation of ideas. 2 Treatise on ideas in the abstract. 3 Philosophy System that considers sensation to be the only source of our knowledge and the only principle of our faculties. 4 Way of thinking that characterises an individual or a group of people: Socialist ideology. Var: ideologismo.

in conjunction with an architect's plastic intention. At the time of Lucio Costa's writing, the example of Le Corbusier comes to mind, who, based on his study of classical antiquity, took up the inspiration of the Vitruvian man designed by Leonardo da Vinci and created the Modulor, a working tool that, in his proposal, would sustain the practice of modern architecture. In this quote, Costa demonstrates his earlier observation that one of his possible reasons for tradition, and in this case, specifically erudite tradition, lies in his vehement belief that in order to be a great architect, it is necessary to know the past in depth. With this in mind, Costa shows that this past can be brought to the present moment in a new guise, as Le Corbusier, the great Master of Modern Architecture, did.

Therefore, there is no need for rupture when creating modern architecture. It is enough to follow the examples of the great masters of the past who evolved by knowing and studying precedent. Moreover, in this sense, Costa is trying to send a message to modern architects that refer directly to the role that precedent can play at this time, that is, for them to take a closer look at the works of architects who have stood out throughout history, since they have never shied away from studying precedent, but as long as it is interpreted critically and placed in the context for which it was created. These seem to be some possible reasons why Costa values precedent so much. In addition to the role of conciliator that Costa seems to give precedent in an attempt to insert modern architecture, as he discusses in the text "Reasons", in this text, Costa seems to highlight a new role, a new reason for precedent, which we can see is related to something more splendid, superior to any other reason - his simple and profound love of architecture.

Furthermore, in this sense, Costa goes beyond the scope of modern architecture and into the realm of architectural excellence, regardless of the historical moment it is in, as he tries to demonstrate that all exemplary architecture was inspired by precedent, so why should modern architecture be any different if Costa wants it to be an architecture of excellence, too? This possible reason why Costa values precedent represents his peculiar way of conceiving an architecture of excellence, whatever historical period it is in, is because time does not seem to matter to Costa. What matters is the evolution of architecture, in the aspect of qualitative growth, in which precedent critically analysed becomes the most critical benchmark for improving the 'discipline' of architecture.

### ***Considerations on the teaching of architecture***

The book "Sobre arquitetura", referring to the text under the title "Considerações sobre o ensino da arquitetura", initially published in the magazine of the Academic Directory of the National School of Fine Arts - "ENBA", Revista de Arte - number 3, September 1945, deals with Costa's considerations on an appropriate curriculum for architecture, its partial disconnection from the teaching of painting and sculpture, its association with the teaching of engineering concerning technical-scientific disciplines, among others. To address this issue, Costa presents us with a definition of architecture and addresses the importance of architectural composition as a fundamental instrument of architectural creation associated with the organic-functional and plastic-ideal concepts. In this text, therefore, we see the presence of clippings from other texts such as "Interessa ao estudante" and "Considerações sobre a arte contemporânea".

Although there is a need to update the teaching of architecture, Lucio Costa believes that the link with the teaching of Painting and Sculpture remains indispensable. In order to update it, however, the architecture course needs to go further, with the participation of specialised teachers, mainly engineers, to teach subjects in the science of building techniques. In addition to the teaching staff, the facilities and equipment need to be improved for this purpose, and these changes are at odds with the traditional teaching of the School of Fine Arts.

In any case, according to Costa, when accepting the independence of the schools of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, care should be taken when putting together the curriculum that the interaction between the three arts is not entirely lost without jeopardising the technical-scientific training that is indispensable for the development of an architecture student. Architecture, "despite its current complexity of realisation - remains, as in the past, fundamentally a plastic art (Costa, 1995, p. 111)". In this statement by Costa, it is possible to see the importance he attaches both to architectural knowledge related to science and knowledge related to architecture as an artistic expression. According to the following quote, we can see Costa's constant concern to value the architecture of the erudite tradition and the architecture of the popular tradition equally:

Plastic art because, from the germination of the project to the completion of the finished work, feeling is constantly called upon to intervene in order to choose freely - within the extreme limits determined by the calculation, recommended by the technique, conditioned by the medium or imposed by the programme - the appropriate plastic form. It is erudite art when such a choice is made consciously, and popular art when it is made unconsciously - which is why the plastic quality can be present in either case (Costa, 1995, p. 111).

Recognising architecture as an art from the outset, Costa says that his curriculum design should start from this principle. For this reason, it is debatable whether to accept the proposal to have the same subjects as Engineering for two years and then deal with Architecture. In this way, it would be unfair to students passionate about the profession to make them wait two years to put all their creativity into practice. This is just as important and unacceptable when the architect does not take the building profession as seriously as the engineer, says Costa. It is also important, according to Costa, to point out the differences in procedure between one profession and the other: while the engineer, with an exclusive background in the exact sciences, starts from the particular to the general, the architect, on the other hand, starts from the general to the particular, reinforcing the idea that architecture is art rather than science, and then starts from the particular to the general, varying the order of these questions with permanent self-criticism from the beginning to the end of the project. It is, therefore, the predominance of synthesis over analysis that characterises the architect's craft and is what qualifies him for urban studies within the modern concept:

However, if architecture is fundamentally art, it is no less fundamentally construction. It is, therefore, strictly speaking, a construction conceived with a plastic intention. This intention distinguishes it precisely from simple construction. It does not, however, act out this plastic intention in an abstract way but is always conditioned by factors that vary in time and place, such as the period, the physical and social environment, the materials used, the technique resulting from the use of these materials, the programme. Architecture can thus be defined as a construction conceived with a specific plastic intention, according to a specific time, environment, material, technique, and programme (Costa, 2007, p. 112-113).

The definition of architecture presented in the previous quote differs somewhat from the first definition of architecture in the text "Considerations on Contemporary Art", written in the 1940s but only published in 1952, which is: "Architecture can then be defined as a construction to plastically order and organise space, according to a certain time, a certain medium, a certain technique and a certain programme" (Costa, 1995, p. 246).

Comparing the two definitions, the content of the one in the text "Considerations on Contemporary Art" shows that architecture is construction but conceived to order and organise space plastically; now, architecture is construction, conceived with a particular plastic intention and adds that it must have a particular material. There is a slight change in thinking, but the rest of the sentence's content is formulated similarly.

The plastic intention present in this architecture definition is fundamental in its conception; however, it must follow the context in which it is inserted (climate, topography, appropriate technology, among others) and make it clear to which period it belongs. Once again, Costa rejects any copy of a past model, such as the Neocolonial, so "pretence for pretence's sake" is far from his mind.

By analysing Costa's thinking, one can see that for architecture to exist, it is necessary to recognise an "essence" linked to the spirit of its plastic intention, the time that represents it, and the constructive truth that materialises it. These last assertions seem to be the main reasons for tradition. We can see, then, that these reasons that lead Costa to value the classical tradition so much are directly connected to the role that the classical precedent will play, that is, as a source of research to extract knowledge implicit in its essence - compositional principles. In this way, it seems that, for Costa, the role of precedent in the renewal of architecture lies in building a link, a bridge, between past and present.

***There is much construction, some architecture and a miracle.***

The text "Muita construção, alguma arquitetura e um milagre", written at the request of Carlos Drummond de Andrade and Paulo Bittencourt for the 50th-anniversary edition of "Correio da Manhã" was published on 15.6.51 and is the same text that appears in the book "Sobre arquitetura", under the title "Depoimento de um arquiteto carioca".

In this text, Costa gives a brief historical overview from the foundation of the first architecture course in the country, comments on important masters who influenced the fate of architecture in Brazil and discusses its main phases until we reach his important considerations on modernity.

The title of this text is very suggestive; in it, Costa discusses the project and Le Corbusier's participation as an advisor to the Brazilian team responsible for the study of the Ministry of Education and Public Health (1936), inducing the reader to conceive of this work as a "miracle", due to the excellence and difficulties experienced during the development of this endeavour, which marked the insertion of the new architecture in the country. In this sense, Costa once again regrets not having succeeded in reforming the teaching of architecture in the country through his proposal when he was director of ENBA, stating that the changes in official teaching were far removed from architectural practice. This observation allows us to interpret that, at the time, the significant quantity of low-quality buildings resulted from the lack of fundamental premises for achieving consistent architecture. According to his thinking, this consistent architecture must be allied to the knowledge of the precedent, in what consists of its essence, linked to the rules of composition and the present moment through constant criticism. This can be seen in his appeal to tradition, in his own words:

No longer able to react in the direction of the "pseudo-classical-modernised" orientation, which would consist of a vain stylistic pretension still based on attachment to the technique of academic composition and conventional commodification, but with a stiff appearance because it was stripped of the moulding and ornaments that were part of the original organism, official teaching began to adopt the regime of freedom without the indispensable clarification, as if contemporary so-called modern architecture were merely a matter of licence or improvisation of personal whim. This was not due to the strict incapacity of the teachers, who were always dedicated and suitable, but because their lack of conviction and experience, if not a certain natural repulsion, prevented them from transmitting the modern lesson with the indispensable objectivity and clarity, resulting in a certain puerile pretence of self-sufficiency prevailing in the students' minds and the

foolish assumption that proper academic teaching is dispensable for good professional training. The continuous and timely exercise of appropriate criticism should make them, if not immune, at least refractory to any and all frivolous attitudes and curb the adoption of inappropriate solutions because of their gratuitousness or because they are not functional. However, as it is traditional in the artistic sense for there to be several autonomous studios for students to choose from, according to their preference or natural inclination, it is worth renewing here the appeal made on the occasion of the inauguration of the Ministry of Education and Health building: Let the architect Oscar Niemeyer Soares and the painter Candido Portinari be appointed "hors-concours" professors of architectural composition and painting (tomorrow, because the calends is already full) because if we have at our disposal two artists of such international prominence due to the magnitude and quality of their work, we cannot understand why we should officially deprive the new generations of the irreplaceable mutual lesson of such experience. This simple and sensible measure would remedy the problem at its root and, without breaking its current character, reconcile the school with life, re-establishing the balance that had been lost since 1930 for the more significant benefit of teaching and the greater prestige and renown of the secular institution, since, although separate and to set up their own house, for the students of the old school - Fine Arts and Architecture will always be the same (Costa, 2005, p. 171).

Twenty-five years after the publication of "Razões", Costa resents the fact that so much architecture is produced with such low quality. Furthermore, he takes up the arguments of "Razões" because he refers to the knowledge from academic teaching in terms of the immortal principles and laws concerning classical architecture. In other words, it is the arrangement of the elements of architecture and composition, governed by a set of conventional rules called composition, just as musicians arrange different pieces of music through their musical notes when they compose them.

Moreover, Costa is trying to say that for the architect, it happens in the same way and that this way of creating architecture is independent of the time in which it is conceived and the individual choices of each architect, such as their plastic intention and the technology used. Therefore, Costa makes it clear that in the aspect of academic teaching, in which architects use compositional principles and/or rules that come from analysing the essence of the preceding paradigms that have marked the history of architecture, this is a perennial procedure for the architectural profession, valid for any historical period, whether in the present or the future. However, what Costa will refute from academic teaching is the use of precedent as a merely decorative function of the various styles that academic architects eventually chose as the aesthetic result of their creations. Costa again shows that one of his reasons for the tradition lies precisely in the

fact that he wants an architecture that represents his time with the same values and principles that generated the tremendous architectural examples that represented other previous eras of architecture, intending to enrich the architect's cultural repertoire and, consequently, improving society with his intervention.

## **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

As noted in the text "*Razões da nova arquitetura*", Costa seemed imbued with a mission: to defend the new architecture. In the face of the numerous negative criticisms of it, Costa cleverly links past and present, between the erudite tradition present in the great examples of architecture from the past, with the compositional principles and/or laws inherent in architectural creation in general, stating that, in this sense, modern architecture is rigorously traditional, because its formal expression has changed as a result of new technologies. However, its way of conceiving it is identical to the architecture of the ancients. This knowledge of the fundamentals of architectural practice resides implicitly in the preceding, and its application depends on each architect's critical interpretation and plastic intention.

Therefore, Costa's reasons for associating the new architecture with the erudite disciplinary tradition stemming from the classical tradition, when he values precedent as an incessant source of knowledge, seems to be a way of calming tempers, making modern architecture acceptable to both of the antagonistic positions described by Costa.

Consequently, the other analyses of the texts in this article generally reinforce these indications already seen in the "*Reasons*" text, linked to possible influences from evolutionary theories. It was also possible to verify the following observation, which turned out to be another possible reason: Costa's sincere love for architecture as a 'discipline', in what Costa believes represents an architecture of excellence in any period of architectural history, regardless of style, in what concerns the 'essence' of architecture, namely its laws and perennial principles of composition allied to a plastic intention that represents the constructive technique used. Moreover, it is precisely in this aspect that Costa's thinking merges past, present and future.

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