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COURSE OF ARCHITECTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE
DESIGN

Abstract

**The vineyard landscape of Saint-Émilion (Bordeaux):
the case study of château Magdelaine**

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The theme of architecture and wine landscape contains a synthesis between the rural work, the respect of the landscape and the culture of wine.

The first step towards the knowledge of this world is to understand the evolution through the ages, from its roots: we can find the first example of a winery, as well as we understand it today, around 1550 in the region of Bordeaux.

The evolution of winery had a big acceleration only in the second half of the twentieth century, thanks to the mechanization of agriculture and the introduction of technology in the winery, causing considerations and debates about the functions and the uses that new wineries have in the territorial and social context.

It is paid more attention to the image that the company communicates through the winery, with the purpose of ostentation and recognisability, where architecture becomes a marketing strategy; but other companies, through a more respectful approach of the environment, integrate architecture into the landscape, aiming to promote the area and, more specifically, of its *terroir*.

The wineries become destinations of eno-gastronomic tourist itineraries and reception areas become fundamental.

In returning to the roots of the Bordeaux winery, my study continues till coming across in the particular case of the Jurisdiction of Saint-Émilion, whose vineyard landscape is UNESCO world heritage site in 1999. The village has medieval origins and the whole built center it is characterized by limestone extracted for centuries from its hills.

The stone extractions led to the formation of a network of underground quarries along almost 200 km away. In conjunction with the winery-châteaux, the quarries are used as refining and aging cellars thanks to their qualities of temperature and humidity.

In last decades, Saint-Émilion has suffered from a strong territorial and social dynamism, characterized by strong estate pressures: rich foreign businessmen, interested in investments and acquisitions of prestigious properties, hit a consolidated system for years, made up of micro-associated companies to compete the difficult market of Bordeaux wine. The new foreign entrepreneurs introduce a competition game to override the system of cooperatives of micro-enterprises, in a logic of ostentation of the image of châteaux acquired and therefore in a unequal competition in the sale of wines.

In this context, where the social and territorial balances are precarious, the case study takes place: Château Magdelaine is located on the crest of the limestone *plateau*, in the South-West of the village of Saint-Émilion.



Plan ground floor of Château Magdelaine.

The eighteenth-century settlement, the lateral areas of the early twentieth century, the park and the vineyard in Saint-Émilion of Château Magdelaine fall into neglect since 1950, when the family Chatonnet sold the property. In 1952 Jean-Pierre Moueix bought the property: he implanted again the vineyard and modernized the winemaking.

The main building of the old eighteenth-century Château is still in a state of neglect.

The winery is active in the lateral areas and behind the Château.

The architecture for the expansion of Château Magdelaine corresponds to a declarative idea: make active the dialogue between modernity and tradition through a project that can synthesize functional needs and requirements of representation of company identity: this is a summary for not giving up elements of a solid building tradition and to make use of experiences of contemporary life. On the sidelines, the search for an effective design



Render, the relationship between the new extension on the left with the old Château on the right

solution in the correlation between the historic core of the building complex, the Château, who attributed representative functions and architecture of the current enlargement. Forms of simplicity through which lead a line of reasoning about the use of traditional materials and move to compositional variations and accents.



Render, slits on the wall of the new winery.

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