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## TERYTORIUM, MIASTO I ARCHITEKTURA

### TERRITORY, CITY AND ARCHITECTURE

Wydaje się, że umilkły architektoniczne debaty, ponieważ nikt już nie dba o “stare” problemy jak ludzie i budownictwo mieszkaniowe. Architektura to dzisiaj reklama, a jej piękno podlega tym samym warunkom. Niebezpieczeństwo polega na tym, że architektura zamieniła się w projektowanie obiektów.

*Słowa kluczowe: miejsce, czas, obraz, miasto*

It seems like all the architectural debates are finished as nobody cares for the “old” problems like people or lodgings. Architecture today means publicity and its beauty follows is the subject to the same conditions. The risk is that architecture has become an object design.

*Keywords: place, time, image, city*

Considering the rapidity with which the new technologies are produced in modern times, subjectivity is the predominant feature of all branches of art, included architecture. The image of the work prevails over its content. The search for an image that complies with the needs of the market has become an obsession with architects in these last years. Therefore, to speak of architecture and of what it is today, is very difficult for me, because the design of the image, apart from its theoretic contents, presents numberless solutions.

Don DeLillo, with “Cosmopolis” offers us a fascinating caustic novel, placed in a present which is already future: a surrealistic contemporary odyssey on the background of an obscure menace and the collapse of the world markets. *Future is always something*

*complete and uniform. In the future we all will be tall and happy. She said That is why future is failing. It always fails. It will never be the cruel and happy place into which we want to turn it.*

Lately I have often thought of plastic surgery as the art of changing the forms of the body, an art, which referring to a prototype of womanly beauty has become an everyday practice: a design of new breasts or lips to emphasize feminine sensuality, a high and round bottom lean and long legs, while the body shall have a continuous perfect line.

The components of this false and monotonous global beauty are sought for in the catalogues of plastic surgery (just as looking in an architectural review). They are prototypes which allow a person to choose and define the recomposition of his or her

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body. To be nice surely allows a person to feel at ease, to attract attention and take party in environmental culture. Every person, in his own way, is worried about environmental culture and making a landscape adequate and perfect with regard to the beauty of nature.

The German naturalistic post-industrial movement is an excellent example. But, unlike today plastic surgery, a group of persons have sought refuge in nature and nudism to face the bourgeois ugliness of society. Nature has become the essential source for the beauty of the body and consequently the society, while the rhythmic dance should reconcile the movement of the body with that of nature. A physical education of the body, rediscovered through the power of nature, affects the intellectual development of the persons. The work of Tessenow, the school of dance, is an excellent example of the relation among nature, body and space.

Let us consider, for instance, the reviews of architecture: there are hundreds of them in the world representing a business for the architects. To follow them and see what they publish has become an obsession for those who want to be up-to-date. On the other hand, we must not neglect the importance of these reviews which are a sufficiently indicative example for "les dames du salon"; to choose their dream-homes is the same as to choose the form of their breasts or bottom for their renewed beauty.

The flourishing, production and publication of most part of the works let us realize that all we do in architecture has a value; nothing is ugly and everything has sense to exist. Everything that existing and has already been has the right to exist. Technology, just as plastic surgery, is capable of endowing the work with an aspect sufficiently acceptable in its details, while formerly, both price and the inadequacy of technology prevented this operation. I was surprised when I heard that the "Pravda Shop" by Reem Koolhaas had a cost of 60 million dollar, not

to mention the cost of the social houses by Jean Nouvel in France (who would not like to live in those luxury houses?) and not to speak of the works of Frank Ghery, Zaha Hadid... Consumism has surely reached its breaking point where the image of things is at the basis of our society. Who would care to say today that this architecture has no importance?

Modern history has taught us, that architecture has not died yet. Architects, considered today as traitors of humanity, have issued a challenge inventing and conceiving out of nothing a public architecture appropriate to the social crises and a civil architecture which should answer the economic exigencies and give something to society, protecting the environment, expressing and inventing things.

Surely the authors and investors on the territory have changed; they require more publicity and image and less architectures. Architecture today means publicity. The architect who speaks of the problems of public and social housing is considered antique whereas he who speaks of a private house as a Porsche in order to meet his customer's requirements is considered up-to-date. Is it true that the cities have no more space to extend and lodgings are no longer wanted? Or the political interest has changed? Where have these debates vanished? Do they still exist or nobody wants to face the problem? Or are they no longer themes to be taken into consideration, notwithstanding the increase of population?

It is surely difficult for the world to face such a problem and foresee lodgings for all the nomads of the future planet. Even the political speech has adapted itself to reality with the aim of promoting only grandiose works, which has begun with Mitterand in Paris.

"Le pouvoir culturel" has been imposed on society and would represent the "grandeur" of any city in a world where the arms belong to history. The battle is not about architecture as in the times of Palladio, Alberti, Le Corbusier, Terragni... but about the cities

who will be more powerful and show their culture in the world. It is a battle as in Roman times only to represent the supremacy of the urban power.

The architectural beauty is like the beauty of plastic surgery, that is an expensively modified beauty with the only aim of being fascinating apart from its educational content.

Surely in a consumestic society there is no longer any space for poetry, metaphors and the reading of things. Therefore, speaking of architecture it is very difficult for me to express a judgment or any definition.

Italo Calvino in his book "Sotto il Sole Giaguaro" considers the history of humanity and the loss of values in a consumestic society through the loss of human senses. The conception of space is expressed by images which define the quality of the object. What we see is what we are able to judge and to what we give a material value.

Therefore describing the space and the persons through the five human senses Calvino succeeds in defining, in a detailed way, through our senses more scenographies belonging to different realities; when, for instance, the perfume of a beloved women that pursued him, becomes at a certain point the reality itself of the imagined person.

Form and beauty don't evoke memory any longer, while perfume and smell become the metaphorical sense of beauty. In absolute darkness an unknown beloved is recognized by the perfume of her skin. It is an animal-human sentiment which defines what we are looking for. The image is surely metaphorical, rather inexistent. The perfume provokes the representative sense of the "intellectual reason" by which the person is conceived in the space. It is fascinating, in my opinion, how Calvino interprets the scenographic space through the sense of smelling and not through the reason of seeing, analyzing and judging. To overturn the senses in order to find a quality of

life different from the one according to which we have lately become accustomed to reason, gives rise to our research.

The invention of the Corinthian capital is bound to a human story, the story of two lovers. The form of the capital represents the metamorphosis of the bush grown on the tomb of a beautiful girl who died before her youth was finished, when she was on the point of getting married. Architecture is the human relation between two lovers and the story of their sad end; the Corinthian represents the end of their story but also the beginning of another one, "the history of the arbitrariness of architecture."

The perfume, as the Corinthian represents the object which groups together the different actors on the scene: the place, the loved person and the space. The perfume is the metaphor of the object-space.

Mallarmé, on the other hand, hostile to metaphor and nostalgia, takes a part in the scenography of the space through the void of the pages of the text. An emptiness premeditated and sought after that tells the reading of the composition of the scene lets the reader the freedom to project the space according to his image. The space and the senses coincide and are a part of the scenography. A rhythm identified and sought after through the sixth sense in order to involve the reader in the text. The reality is rhetorical, it exists and wants to be denied at the same time; it is a space that wants to deny its existence. The persons are virtual, that is, they are the image and suffering of what they feel, they are the provocation of our existence and are at last the present of our future. In fact, it is very difficult to speak of Mallarmé's texts without being conscious of what they represent in their context. The senses loose value and the reasoning regains the capacity of interpreting the scenography of the space where the story develops.

The image covers spaces invented by the reader according to his own image and limit. The more the

reader is acquainted with places the more the space diversity becomes the play of representing the space. This fact is strongly evident in Mallarmé: the emptiness of the pages which are a part of the text is the emptiness of the places where any person finds again its appearance according to a predefined structure.

This fact makes us remember the architecture of Eisemann, which denies any predefined function of the form. The form is the result of a structural analytical process. The innovation is conceived through the decomposition that represents the imperfection of the perfect forms. The plan in this case is a part of the spatial construction of the tridimensional forms. The story of the object and the project corresponds to the story of its end.

The emptiness of Mallarmé as well as that of Eisemann is the rhetorical and stratified space of the place.

In the "Exercices de style" by Queneau the text represents the grammatical and formal structure. The composition of a text which tells an insignificant story becomes the matrix of a variant of texts with the same content. The content loses its meaning and the form predominates. In the "Exercices de style" Queneau writes the same story in 99 different forms; the text is exactly alike but the form of the presentation changes continually. Queneau thinks that the grammatical components of a phrase or a text are given and predefined by the science of languages while his task is just to rewrite the story according to the suggestibility of the writer. Every person tells a story in his own way, in the context that he thinks right. The structure is predefined by the story and logic of things; every generation has the task of rewriting a story according to the needs and evolution of things. The innovation is the logic of rewriting and no longer the logic of the object. The composition is the re-composition of the components. The richer the components of the story are in elements and contestuality, the richer playing

and fun become in the re-composition. To resolve means to explore in details all the fundamental elements of the objects. It means to understand the necessary limit of the story and its meaning. Time in this case has no limit and is no longer defined by the story, but it is its innovating transformation.

This makes us remember the five points of Le Corbusier's architecture. Perfection in architecture is conditioned by the function of the building as regards its form. The elements have become for Le Corbusier the grammatical structure for the architectural composition: to compose, decompose and recompose. The object is without time, it always proclaims the unconditioned presence of its contemporaneity through the components of the history of the places.

The place, for Queneau as for Le Corbusier, is innovative transformation of the history of the context and of history in general.

Place and architecture are the elements which allow us to write their history. The place provokes innovation in architecture and architecture makes the place important and significant. I refer, at this point, to the rational architecture of Le Corbusier, through which he has declared the death of arbitrariness, and to Eisemann's architecture through which he has proclaimed the end of classic.

The place of contemporary society is the territory and no longer the city as the place of civilization and education for the society. The territory is the place of the future of the metropolis, a place to be defined and invented, a place without culture and sense, that is an historical void. The architecture of the post-metropolis, that is the architecture of the territory, is still looking for its elements and new instruments of analysis.

That is what is lacking in the territory: its history, a history which has to be invented and described. For this reason perhaps I have chosen to describe

architecture through three literary authors. History needs to be charged with sense and emotion; our contemporary history is fascinating but it is lacking this superimposition of values which derives from its history, as of Calvino, Mallarmé, Queneau: metamor-

phosis, atemporal place and recomposition of history. The risk is that architecture, apart from its civil function, has become an object design, therefore devoid of any provocative feeling exactly as plastic surgery.