

# THE HUMANIZED SPACE

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We design a piece of furniture like we design a house, like we design a city, a place, with people and with history, with meanings and needs, with all the difficulties and facilities in the world, this world that we build every day, that is our day-to-day, that is the place of relationship.

The relationship between man and architecture develops far beyond the concepts of use or utensil which many users and architects use to describe, act or perceive the architectural spaces available.

In accepting that the architectural space is more complex than its instrumentalization or utilitarian occupation, a vehicle of culture and civilization, where emotionality and sensuality describe the values that subjectivity incorporates, we recognize the systematization difficulty that our inhabiting describes.

Currently we appeal to philosophy, anthropology and sociology to find a foundation, that is, we turn a lot of the material that philosophy has dealt with and has developed into an object of work in architecture and project design and this has been quite productive.

Understanding the evolution of the concept of Inhabiting is, in a way, a clear example of this concern and situation, describing the whole controversial world of oppositions between Inhabiting, as a foundation of the place or of roots that takes us back to Heidegger (1889-1976), the wandering and movement of the body, as a vehicle and identity for the existence of the inhabiting of Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995), or as a Living and sometimes unreal Being or Value that “transcends” us and which Gaston Bachelard (1884-1962) poeticized in his bestseller “The Poetics of Space”.

In a more architectural way, it was the architect Adolf Loos (1870-1933) who wrote in the early twentieth century that “your house will grow with you and you with your house”, in an ideal of identification or overlapping between content and container, in a divergent reflection on the subject of housing formalization and what architects think, design or “leave” for the inhabitant to inhabit.

Inhabiting is, today, a global phenomenon and thus something “urbanized”, therefore its study involves a series of interactions of the universal, public, private and also intimate domains that inhabiting promotes as a mesh of actions shared with many other inhabitants, near or distant, in a sense of mere contamination.

We increasingly accept the idea that today we inhabit workplaces, the highway, schools, churches and football stadiums, car parks and the endless motorway “queues”, theme parks and hotels, the Internet and the virtual home, the cinema and television, and therefore the thematic focus of this issue has moved to the problems of everyday life, of the relational and novelty as a factor for understanding or “constructing” the concept of inhabiting.

The concept of inhabiting promotes and is the result of the relationships that man establishes with places, and thus relates the notion of location with the action of structuring space itself as an entity of perception and interaction which has, through the function of orientation and

identification, the essential factors to achieve the primary phenomenon of inhabiting. Knowing where and how a place is and how to identify it to act in the space is a condition for our inhabiting.

On these different modes of use among objects and which the architectural space enables, Alfonso Ponce said:

*“Man uses the architectural spaces in the only way possible. We are their inhabitants and residents. A pencil or shoes are used. The works, we live and inhabited them. A relationship that goes far beyond the simple action of using. Use becomes, on many occasions, out of habit, a mechanical, almost irrational, act. Inhabiting in turn implies a committed, conscious and active relationship”.*

Inhabiting is increasingly a future action and the “house” contains an ideal of the past. A “house” is only such when Man inhabits it, imbues it with values, emotions, customs, dreams, culture ... without Man, without humanization, it is just a collection of matter and space, of voids and surfaces that define areas and hierarchies, the basis for a game where the rules are the different ways and styles of life that the age promotes at a given moment in time.

To talk of inhabiting is, above all, to talk of humanizing.

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