

dla właściciela), jak i cichego przyzwolenia czy tolerancji. Za fenomen należy uznać przypadek Berlina, gdzie tymczasowe użytkowanie zostało włączone w proces planowania, co pozwoliło na wypracowanie formy użytkowania odpowiadającej obszarowi w stanie zawieszenia (okres ochronny, okres zawieszenia obostrzeń). Warto w tym miejscu odwołać się do koncepcji Event-City (miasta – miejsca zdarzeń) autorstwa Bernarda Tschumiego, czyli „miejsca nieoczekiwanego”, w którym mogą się wydarzyć niezaprogramowane wypadki, wypadki, które nie są częścią „curriculum”. Jest to przestrzeń resztek, pozostałości, przerw, marginesów, wewnątrz których może się rozwinąć wielka liczba zdarzeń. Tschumi twierdził, że są one w tkance miejskiej równie ważne jak place i ulice, także podlegają procesowi projektowania, zatem powinny być włączone do dyskursu architektonicznego. Docenienie przestrzeni „pomiędzy” (in-between) skutkuje nasileniem się działalności artystycznej w przestrzeni miasta, różnego rodzaju happeningów i performance’ów. Twórcy - mieszkańcy nie projektują już formy a sty-

mulują zdarzenia – miejsca, w których pojawia się coś nieoczekiwanego i nie do końca zaprogramowanego. Tymczasowość jest zawieszona między pustką a trwaniem. Jest zdarzeniem. Dzięki koncepcji tymczasowego użytkowania, następuje kolonizacja pustki w nowym wymiarze, wymiarze zdarzeń. Chaos zostaje opanowany, kultury gustu nie są zagrożeniem dla miasta.

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*Sławomir Gzell, prof. dr hab. inż. arch.
Wydział Architektury Politechniki Warszawskiej*

CITY AS A PRODUCT OF “TASTE CULTURES”

SŁAWOMIR GZELL

1. The city - public or private?

The search for answers to the question whether the city is now more public or more private and what this indicates, and which it ought be, has become the main axis of the current debate about the city. This debate must not proceed without the involvement of urban planners or architects, many of whom treat the city as being the object of merely technological improvement (which the inhabitants should find sufficient) or as a product of artistic creation, and once you have given it an interesting form you have no other obligations to it. Yet none of these approaches satisfies the rebelling cities. Their inhabitants, as ample evidence shows, reject the status of passive onlookers on what they are given, with the hands of architects and urban planners, by the city authorities and developers. What they want is genuine involvement, and because they function within certain cultures, they want them to play a role in the process and be reflected in the city space.

2. Escape from the public city - the trap of freedom

Ten years after the publication of the original work, a translation of Charles Jencks' *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* was issued in Poland in 1987. Two years later, this time with a delay of nine years, another book by the same author, *Architecture of Late Modernism* appeared, issued by the Arkady publishing house. The two books were at the time a two-volume bible of what was labelled as postmodern architecture. They explained the origins of this trend and, somewhat prophetically but without exaggeration and not explicitly, indicated the directions of future developments in architecture. Not all of the changes implied between the lines have come true, but the value of the books lies in something else. Thus, when talking about the architecture of the 1970s and '80s, Jencks noticed some “impurities” in it that had been unknown to modernist architecture, stemming from the existence of “historical

memory, local context, metaphors and spatial ambiguity”, and focusing on the language of architecture, on appealing to the public as well as to the artist and to other works, as the *Time* magazine put it. A committed and committing task - a concept then new but now, in the era of the computer, commonplace. Today, when confirming Jencks’ observations, we can go farther than he did because, thirty years later, we know more. Today we can see how the computer, once discovered as the architect’s tool, changes his art while also changing its perception by opening up architecture to the general public. With a few clicks, not only can we move instantly to other architectural worlds in distant countries, which for many of us means that we can ignore both time and distance. Equipped with architectural primers and vocabularies provided by the Internet browsers we can build (or create?) our own urban landscapes and buildings and whatever else we might fancy - all according to our own taste, not always immune to the “impurities” pointed out by Jencks.

We are saying this about architecture and the city, but these are not the only areas that are subject to unrestrained manipulation via computer. In fact, this applies to everything that we call culture, so depending on one’s taste we are witnessing large-scale formation, distribution, discussing, criticizing or glorifying of an unlimited number of taste cultures. Anyone can, if one so desire, write and disseminate one’s own bible, one’s new communist manifesto or one’s new Athens charter. At every moment a new New Age is born, and at any time we can witness a sharp clash of attitudes and beliefs.

This mode of operating is already widespread today. While implementing computer-controlled production in their state-of-the-art factories, large car manufacturers are not shy of switching from mass production to individual production of cars with features matching specific orders. It is similar with designing and building homes, and especially flats, not to mention clothes. Films shown on television are starting to be interactive, with the viewer choosing between the death of the heroes and a happy ending, even though with today’s films one cannot always be sure which is which. A seasoned viewer accustomed to seeing bodies mutilated on the screen with a circular saw, which helps raise the viewing figures, may well, when opting to see “Lotte in Weimar”, expect (and indeed get) a porn movie, while a redone version of “Confessions of Felix Krull, Confidence Man” may prove to be a much sought-after guide on how to avoid

paying VAT. This means that we can get anything on demand, in any variant we like, and it we should be writing about it if only as a reminder or - more importantly - as a warning to the readers of Polish Academy of Sciences journals, as today’s scientific research is not free from a tendency to establish the primacy of crude parametric analysis over evaluative reflection. It is a far-fetched attempt to adjust scientific research to the tastes of its administrators and to evaluate its quality by means of a balance sheet summing up individual ratings, sometimes referring to completely unrelated fragments of the whole, that are assumed to produce an overall assessment.

When this ease of creating fragments of the world is applied to the city, we can choose between two outcomes of such analyses: the urban space may seem either dangerously fragmented, or joyously multiple. Until recently, the so-called official commentators in many countries tended to opt for the latter. It was dictated by political correctness, which was transformed into the cultural policy referred to by the media as *multi-culti*. Slogans such as the dialogue of cultures as a strategic necessity, tolerance, common destiny, bringing of diversity, change of perspective, all sound beautiful and are of course objectively justified, especially since all the parties to the potential dialogue invoke their right to freedom and to free exercise of this right.

In the practice of cultural policy, finding a neutral platform for dialogue may not turn out to be so easy. Without citing the examples of Paris suburbs or the [Polish?] debate on the Holocaust, it is sufficient to focus here on what is relevant for the space of Polish cities, such as the involvement of local communities in the planning of urban space, i.e. its design, implementation and maintenance, as well as consent to various forms of *street art*. Here we can see how much needs to be done, especially when freedom sets its own trap. The fact remains that the urban space is one and indivisible, which is seldom realised by the majority of those willing to develop or utilise their portion of it. It is individual good, i.e. the rarest of the rare, and when destroyed, including its clumsy or thoughtless dividing, it is exhausted once and for all.

3. The urban planner’s know-how as an offer to the public - a global vision of space

There is no doubt that the space is one and indivisible, although for purely utilitarian reasons we do

divide it. This view was presented publicly in Lublin in September 2012, during the Fourth Congress of Polish Urban Planning “Responsible for the city,” especially during the session “City through the eyes of the planner. Do urban planners know better?”.

The thesis presented at the Congress clearly stated that space, including urban space, is individual and non-renewable good, and its sharing and use should take into account the needs of the future generations and their same right to using the space, with similar provisions as to bearing in mind the next and subsequent generations without any time limit.

The implementation of this motion requires knowledge and skills, which means indispensable involvement of people equipped with both. Such specialists do exist and are (traditionally) called urban planners, which does not mean that they deal only with urban space; on the contrary, their interests, in accordance with the holistic vision of space, include non-urban areas. In Poland, such knowledge and skills have been acquired by urban planners trained at the departments of architecture and urban planning of Polish technical universities, and by no one else.

What is crucial here is the combination of architecture and urban planning. For when the planner is planning and designing the future of any portion of space, whose physical characteristic is, as we know, its three-dimensionality, it is also self-evident that he must be able to work within the scope of all the three dimensions, not forgetting about the fourth dimension, that of time. He must be able to shape it whilst displaying architectural talent, and thus treat space as the object of his art, in accordance with the common-sense definition of urban planning as the art of building cities.

The union of architecture and urban planning is revealed in the creative process, when the future shape of the space is recorded, i.e. when a plan is created for the development, building up, regulatory control, or use of land, whichever may apply. Such a plan is not merely a function of the technical ability to record the accumulated desiderata. It is a reflection of the planner’s urban and architectural tastes, the sum of his knowledge and talent focused on a specific portion of space. He puts his talent and knowledge at the service of the public, because he does not build the city for himself. His offer consists of urban planner’s specialist knowledge about the cities’ past, and the principles behind their construction, about technology and finance, about the theories of urban planning and building, as well as knowledge about the

residents, both past and present. The problem lies in the ignorance of people and institutions with whom and for whom the planner is to work. It is often the case that the plan is commissioned only because this is required by law, and individuals and institutions collaborating with the urban planner all too often think of his work as the simple task of painting the base map in different colours.

Meanwhile, the urban planner multiplies problems. When this approach was tried, he says, it ended up in protests; that costs too much; something is missing here; those buildings will ruin the city skyline; that kind of economies will harm the environment. Nobody seems to understand his objections, and least of all his arguments about the damage to spacial harmony. And the planners’ proposal to separate ownership rights from the right to develop the land are treated as anathema. So much for the typical reactions of the local government and land owners to the urban planners’ suggestions, which usually are not to their taste.

An important actor on the urban scene, whose interests the planner so often tries to put forward, is the urban community. This is an actor who, together with the previously mentioned, has completely dominated the urban growth processes. And although we know that while the public’s participation in the building process of the city is a necessary but not sufficient mechanism, we tend to assign the urban planner, with all his professional know-how, the role of a mere moderator in even the least sensible discussion, denying him the right to make the final decision. This is not to say that we believe that discussions with the participation of local communities should not take place. The question is that all the parties to the discussion should be aware of the power of their arguments and be able to bring their opponents round to their own point of view. This also applies to urban planners. It is not enough if they present their offers and wait for them to be taken up. They have to try harder. Maybe only then will they be able to make use of the manifestos having their origins in, among other things, the taste of their authors.

4. The Bilbao effect as a dream of a beautiful and prosperous city.

If manifestos by creators from the field of urban planning and architecture are to be profited from, they first need to be known. The indispensable Charles Jencks is of great help in this respect: together with

Karl Kropf he published a book containing 144 such manifestos (*Theories and Manifestos of Contemporary Architecture*, Wiley Academy, Chichester, 2006), beautifully analyzed and classified. They are a kind of announcements or billboards, using a semi-literary genre to talk about architectural tastes. But this is not enough for the sum total of these tastes to become a city. Even though, like the participation of the inhabitants in its development, they are necessary, they are not sufficient. And here comes the need to check on the taste of another participant in the city's creation, namely that of the investor. Most often he appears *deus-ex-machina* style and, wielding his financial strength, he "settles all the disputes". Therefore it very often happens that it is the tastes of investors and developers, whether private or institutional, that get exposed to public view in the urban space. The tastes of architects do so only occasionally, and there is no need to explain who those fortunate ones are.

One such case, best recognizable, occurred in Bilbao, where the city's economy was greatly boosted thanks to the architect's talent, the investor money and the city fathers' nervous stamina. Unfortunately, despite numerous attempts, such a situation has not been repeated on a similar scale anywhere else, hence the lesson that a city's cultural policy may have to be built from "small things".

The worst off are the cities that are not able to decide on anything. Let us take as a theoretical example a big city, which, having in its centre a large empty area with unsettled ownership status, keeps making plans for its development, but none of the plans please the city's authorities for longer than four years. Inspired by Bilbao, it promises to build a prestigious museum in that area, but at the last moment, before the final decisions are made, it takes to court its designer, who, even though he has produced a good design, goes about his business so "cleverly" as to allow this to happen. Concurrently, in this theoretical case, the authorities, wishing to be remembered as successful, try to persuade potential developers to build skyscrapers in the empty space, but no one is willing to invest in that place. Thus the authorities display their taste, gaining the applause of their architectural consultants with a similar taste, or perhaps just pretending to have such taste because they count on lucrative contracts. As it happens, the large empty space in the middle of the city is decaying. So in terms of creating its image as part of its cultural policy, the city earns a failing grade.

This theoretical example illustrates a flawed cultural policy (not to mention the resultant loss of profits). It was intended to show that cultural policy is better formed of small things, so that the fragmentation of life inherent to our times does not turn into chaos, and diversity does not become the antithesis of unity. A case of building of a city from fragments, but ones embedded in a holistic idea of spacial development, took place in the Polish town of Kazimierz Dolny in 1946, when Karol Siciński was rebuilding the town after World War II. This indicates that cultural policy must take into account the present-day physical characteristics of the city, and specifically it must prevent transportation problems arising from city sprawl from hindering access to culture. Cultural policy should balance off everything that repels people from the city, by lending its features a pulling power, making them attractive; it should animate cultural tourism and create and maintain the city's myth so that the present-day descendants of Walter Benjamin's passerby should ever be willing to explore its shopping arcades.

5. The chaos effect

The multitude of taste cultures as understood in the colloquial sense that keep emerging in a city can lead to chaos which is impossible to control. There is, however, such a thing as chaos management, having its origin in the conceptions of temporary use of city space.

It is an approach to urban management that attempts to exploit the potential resting in spontaneous and grassroots activities occurring in city space aimed at revitalizing areas at risk of decay. According to it, the creation of a new, "temporary", type of land use opens the door to new actors on the city stage who are capable of improving dramatically and at a low cost the quality of urban space and giving it a new boost or, as we say, of revitalizing it. In this approach, city authorities play the role of guarantor and mediator between land owners and activists, who sometimes want to be treated as the creators of new urban space solutions.

The uniqueness of the temporary use consists mainly in acknowledging and playing along with the people, spaces and processes that have so far been pushed out of the area of interest of the authorities and investors, and labelled as "system errors". It is a qualitative change in thinking about the city: a new logic is born, and thereby the rules of the game

are altered. A major shift takes place in the way of thinking about urban voids (wasteland), about arbitrary unregulated actions (recognition of urban "guerrilla" takes place) and about planning which now aims at coordinating the ongoing processes by introducing mediation in place of supervision and implementation of plans. It is an attempt to respond to the uncertain time of change in the cities, which has fallen within the scope of interest of academic researchers (e.g. .Klementyna Świeżewska working on her a PhD dissertation at the Faculty of Architecture, Warsaw University of Technology).

The term temporary use refers to the interim phase. It makes use the time gap that appears when the land is no longer used or has been abandoned by its original owners, and its future development is still uncertain. Temporary use is an opportunity for places where the owners, investors and planners would not have been able to achieve a transformation within a reasonable period. This applies mainly to large areas that are difficult to get access to, where the creation of new development plans may take a very long time, and investment in these areas is uncertain and unlikely to bring a quick return.

The scope of activities that may occur under temporary use is very wide. Due to its duration, it may include both one-day happenings as well as seasonal projects or ones that last several years, without precluding the possibility of such events obtaining a permanent status. Within the temporary-use framework art projects can be created that adapt the space to the needs of the inhabitants, usually with their active involvement and funding. Such activities could include extreme urban sports, and if there are people who will come to have picnics on an abandoned waterfront, this will also be a temporary micro-intervention. Temporary use may take place on the basis of lease agreements with the owners even though its short duration may not look profitable to them, or with their tacit agreement or sufferance. A noteworthy phenomenon is the case of Berlin, where the temporary use has been included in the plan-

ning process, which makes it possible to work out modes of use that are suitable for an area in limbo (with an appropriate protection period and a period of suspension of the restrictions). It is worth evoking here the concept of Event-City (the city as a venue of events) proposed by Bernard Tschumi, meaning "a venue of the unexpected, where unscheduled happenings may occur, events that are not part of the "curriculum". It is a space of residues, leftovers, breaks or margins, within which a great number of events can evolve. Tschumi claimed that they are as important in the urban fabric as the squares and streets, they also are subject to the process of design, and should therefore be included in architectural discourse. Such acknowledgement of the "in-between" space results in the rise of artistic activity in the city, of various happenings and street performances. The creators-inhabitants no longer design the forms but stimulate the events-venues, places where something unexpected or not fully programmed crops up. Temporaryness is suspended between the emptiness and the duration. It is an event. Thanks to the concept of temporary use, colonization of emptiness occurs in a new dimension, the dimension of events. Chaos is taken under control, and taste cultures are no longer a threat to the city.

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*Sławomir Gzell, prof. dr hab. inż. arch.
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