LA PERIFÈRIA

La força del lloc és a la perifèria, abstracció de lloc en el sentit clàssic, és a dir, absència de determinacions marcades per la història del "lloc", i el que els llocs perifèrics esquemen és, no sols les imagines dels que s'espera, sinó la sensació d'indefinitió en la posició de les coses. No és la posició diferenciada de les coses, sinó la indefiniteness de les coses entre si. Aquesta manera de diferenciar és la que fa la perifèria terrenys verigs per a les imatges, i el cinema i la fotografia han copat la força de aquests paisatges on la activitat com la construcció son sempre més débils que l'espai despullat en què es presenten. El llarg període resulat fort precisament per aquesta "especi- ficació" en "el continent de De- leuze" l'han ocupat.

Aquesta força del lloc és la que més s'acosta a traslladar la perifèria com a projectistes. Al costat de la irrellevància o de la brutícia de les àrees perifèriques, dels problemes funcionals, i de les dificultats estètiques de la buider, hi ha la força suggeridora d'un llarg que presenta als ulls de qui vulgui mirar-se amb lluita positiva, un camp de lluita per a futur més del present, que no pas en un pel punt.

Des de Pahlach a Bruno Taut, a Gau- nie er o J. L. Lewis, els nous territoris arquitectònics s'han imaginat en els marges de la ciutat estàndar. Els espais perifèrics, solvint secrets per referències documentàries de la urbanització compacta, però suggerint sobre tot que encara no ha fet, han estat, per aquesta flexibilitat, el llarg de la intenció de formes i tipus urbanos.

A les ciutats d'Europa, la força simbòli- fica i convenicional dels centres tradicionals no ha rebaixat en els últims anys la imaginació d'altres tipus urbanos. El pensament tipològico i la visió objectual de l'edifici arquitectònic (la seva comp- lementaritat paradògica) ha recuperat a entendre la barreja d'infraestructures i buits, de centres de serveis al costat de petits habitatges, de la gran mobilitat en volta racons d'extensos privacat. I s'ha resisted a entrar en el cercle finit de la "monumentalització" per a les perifèries a Itàlia i Espanya.

Les il·lusions de Peter Rowe, despudalles del pragmatisme que les ideologies, anavien una definició de perifèria identifi- cant certa llista de temes —museus d'oci, lloc del camp, museus d'infraestructures, centres de la ciutat d'esclat, paus resi- denciaules— caracteritzants d'un procés de creixement urbà en el qual la inacomiu tipològica i arquitectònica creuen a la ve- ritat fàctica i la resposta. El seu llibre "Poesia als EUA" describeix el procés de creixement que es va de la percepció de la perifèria com a un instrument de conseqüència bàsica per a l'enformament del dolor i el terror, i a la hipòtesi de la gràcia del desconèixer-se, en re- sulta quasi automaticament l'època.

Rowe no amaga ni un moment la seva col·locació pragmatista: això és el que hi ha, això és el que hem de acceptar. Tots d'esperit, menys compassió els que insistim a mirar la ciutat americana sobria miralls europeus, i treballar seriament i preocupadament per a establir l'evidència de les formes urbanes i de Nord- America.

La visió americana no es gaire llums de cert empirisme holandès actual, en què els escenaris de la perifèria són explicats per a uns desamortitzadors d'e- structuratamentals, atinent a l'accessibilitat i a les no- ves condicions funcionals d'urbanització com a raó dels patrons d'asentament. És aquesta, malgrat l'aspecte de grafisme descorat, que és la que es presenta, a un totalitariament, tan clàssica com la "cultura urbana" dels anys '60, transformada però —ja abolescendos ha veu un dels primers d'amuntament— a les formes de la ciutat oberta, desenvolupada o "delineant". Demanant de la traducció ex- tricta dels esquemes funcionals a formes estructurals, la beleza de les formes dis- crites aquestes el plafi d'aquesta sensibilitat i la satisfacció dels proje- cistes.

L'acceptació de les torres d'oficines, les nous comercials o els hotels d'autopu- pista al llarg dels accessos a les ciutats no esgota per l'argument de la perifèria, i el seu reconstruccionisme no pot ja superar- se mitjançant un deliuc tancant la discurs. Aquest paisatge de la que pe- díeu anomenar "diferencia de luxe" és tan sols la més aparent com la més simple de les mecanismes, com és la dificultat fàsic del judici a priori sobre el del existir. Alguns projectes, per exemple de l'escola holandesa, que tens colla de que per haver-los sigui escrits tan així fins i tot sovint propostes amb poc intent dialectal, d'un esquematisme functiona- list que cerca en el contrarestat la terminologia programàtica a què han renunciat. No en vancomen un home neo-liberal que veurà en l'espontaneous- me perifèria un valor en el qui, auto- justificació de qualsevol assumpte. El territori és sempre camp de combat, i no vull veure'l com un dels productes del consum tardo-capitalista. Estimulant i provocador d'ideses, pensar, és reconhe- r-se les seves tensions de forma i de func-
ciument, i no pas acceptar-les com una moda que no sia grindir directe-ment els resultats del mercat econòmi-

colla havia treballat les discontinuïdats i les ruptures amb la idea de la "resistència" que troba en els elements urbanes separats, buscant-se la forma urbana com un efece d'aquesta resistència al temps, a la soc, a la conducció, a l'erosionific.

El la parla de les formes "que resisteixen", amb més delicia per la indumentar-se i imitant que la de la pura superposició morfològica d'alguns da-

者 estudis francesos, bons horitzó d'una visió geogràfica i cartogràfica. El biodisegne de la idea de resistència per-

a Colloca ser actes productius Segue-

ment amb un leís de context i d'històri-

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re en la recuperació del teixit per-

s un caí a la que no sols de-

corder amb la idea de paràfrasis de 

- simple resistència amb resistència com resulten fer un cotxe "convençional" a l'ide-

ca de les "teines" de la textura metro-

pelament. L'excelent de les super-

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a "Instrument de projecte de la Bar-

, Jean Biquet, Josep Parceras, 1981-82) es fa la presència de les donades topogràfi-

i morfològiques com a base proje-

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en el context
PERIPHERY AS A PROJECT

THE PERIPHERY

The "sense of the place" in the periphery is in the classical sense, that is, the absence of determinations marked by the history of the "locus". And the sensations that peripheral places evoke are not only unjustly, but also unjustly, void, but most of all the temporary as a temporary character of the position of the built forms. Not that objects be indifferent in themselves, but in their relationship between themselves. This lack of distinction is what makes the periphery a vertiginous terrain for images, and the cinema and photography have grasped the force of these landscapes where built activity and construction are always weaker than the bare spaces in which they appear. And the sense of the periphery is changed precisely because neither "repent" nor "difference" - Deleuze's sense - have occupied it.

As an urban designer I rather find this special space of the place just the most suggestive line of action to deal with the periphery. Laying aside the irrelevance and dirt of the peripheral areas, its functions and problems, and the pathetic difficulties of dealing with emptiness, there is a strong suggestion, for the eyes of those who look at it positively, of a field of free thoughts oriented towards the future and to the present rather, and not existed by any past.

From Palladio, to Bruno Taut, to Garnier of the Beaux-Arts, architects have been imaging new architectural territories at the fringes of the established city. Peripheral spaces, are taken only as suggestive references to compact urban areas, those projected in the past, but not yet been done and lost in the form, and for that the place of intervention of urban forms and types.

The symbolic and conventional strength of the traditional centres has weakened the imagination of new urban tissues in recent years. Typology theorist, the view of the architectural building its complements - have given up any attempt to understand the mixtures of structures, habitat and social centres and small dwellings, great mobility around small places of extreme privacy, a form terrain for more contemporary urban family, or even the role of architecture and urbanism seems to have followed too closely the renewed interest of real estate and public policies in the recovery of central cities.

The International Laboratory Master Course that we started in Barcelona in 1991, and which was repeated in 1992, has begun a theoretical and applied work on the idea of periphery, not seen negatively as the degradation of the central city, but on the contrary as an active territory for the contemporary project of the metropolis. Architects and lecturers are invited to contribute with their attitudes, their work and their personal hypotheses to the progressive shaping of this idea.

The careful and critical understanding of the periphery cannot be understood as starting from a positive interest in the theoretical aspects of the dense city, but also from the conviction that it is the reference of the immediate future of the European city.

To start with, we lack a geographical definition of the periphery comparable to that provided by schools of human geography for the central cities thirty years ago. Today we only read generic ideological repetitions of the term periphery applied as a sociological category, and statements of its shortcomings in comparison with the paradigms of the bourgeois city. There is no great theoretical effort to grasp what is specific in it, and which is rejected a priori.

The periphery, it is where there is not continuity, mutation, reproduction or system. But to project the periphery does not necessarily mean to provide it order to it, or to help it in its completion or redemption. And the "recuperation" or redemptive attitudes cannot be transformed into a serious social starting point for the project of the periphery, because the demand for order against disorder, as a social demand, it is not the periphery's solution.

The Americans downtown and the old europe only care about the good and the upperclasses of the poor and the underprivileged besides the yuppies and the white collars, within the same morphological orthodoxy. And on the other hand, we could find how some residential exclusion developments in Barcelona's Maresme, Bellfuscan's Milano-2, or Campaigno aparments, are both neo-environmental and well-ordered, at least in their presentation.

THE COURSE

In his five master classes given during the course, Nicolau was concerned with the urban project that could be possible in the periphery as an expression of ways of life and work. For him, the crisis of modernity also involves the more or less relevant acceptance of an urban condition, characterized by the value of coherence has disappeared, and in which what was seen as a deficiency has become the substance. His discourse is frontal, and following it would help us to avoid at least the triviality of many proposals of action self-perpetuating itself. Rather than a definition, Nicolau provides us with a counterpoint about the interrelation of the geographical and cartographic vision. The biologist of the idea of resistance permits Nicolau to be defined as an environmental designer, certainly with a good deal of contextualism and historicism, but also with a strong theoretical position about the role of the case of Parleys (see, for example, the "need" for hybrid capital consumption. More stimulating and through generative, I feel, to recognize its tensions in form or function, and to propose a possible plan that merely registers the results of the economic market.

Collavo has worked on discontinuities of the urban project, "the urban project of the central areas" that he finds in the separate urban elements, seeking their urban form as an effect of this resistance to time, to use, to be "represented" in the city, and which is called "resisting forms" with a more vitalistic and immanent interpretation than the pure cartographic superposition of some real elements. He defines this empty skeleton as an "urban intangible" and the "social and cultural vision. The biologist of the idea of resistance permits Collavo to be defined as an environmental designer, certainly with a good deal of contextualism and historicism, but also with a strong theoretical position about the role of the case of Parleys (see, for example, the "need" for hybrid capital consumption. More stimulating and through generative, I feel, to recognize its tensions in form or function, and to propose a possible plan that merely registers the results of the economic market.

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Caravaggio, the image of which the reconfiguration of the tissue is intended to be solved through its singularities. His project is not an urban project, but it shows us the intervention of Caravaggio of the "Biancone" 70 in France, or the genie- called "caravaggioing" in Italy and Spain.

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THE DESERT, THE CENTER AND THE PERIPHERY

On this point the contribution of C. Juel Christiansen is interesting, and his book is one of the best works we have come recently to understand the effort of peripheric territories. Juel Christiansen bases his explanation on the understanding of places of peripheral metropolitan transformation, and he finds in the different images of the processes of superposition of constructed forms very clear fragments for intervention projects.

The greater knowledge of the laws of transformation of the city that Colloua claims again the sterile securities of analysis ("I am pretending to possess the pseudo-scientific information of the pseudo-artistical scale") finds an excellent example, in another tone and in a different terrain, in the work of Christiansen.

Two. Testing proposals for clusters of building, models of settlements, even if they are insecure and open. These would be urban images of mixed forms, with sufficient symbolic value to reply in the isolation without being able to function actually, very effectively, without which no architecture is possible. With a formal personality enough to understand the territory as a landscape form, which is therefore subject to very strict ecological and environmental demands. More specifically, according to the void that the interstitial lands as a positive material.

I am thinking of the enlightened effort to imagine autonomous peripheric establishments such as the Panalido villas, the factory towns or the first garden cities. The hopes for us in our repertoire, the idea of grouping would be that which must needs revising and updating. And we should work out autonomous intermediate scale models in which the habitation in "new neighbourhoods" of heterogeneous buildings, spaces and infrastructures takes strength as a poema of a new metropolitan culture.

I thing that these peripheral establishments must be based on the concept of "interests"—positive separation between multiple objects—as objects in our environment, or in the classical style of Montano. The empty distance between things is the subject, and this protagonist of the empty space, where buildings, objects, ideas, thought and the idea of the transcendental continuity that is the great virtue of the traditional compact city.

Maybe we are today returning to a "gothic" model of space. It is the loss of classical (Roman) realism in urbanism which wishes to be modern and still needs regularities (of scale, volume, material use). A non-regularity, on the other hand, governed from within itself by the law of the mutual distances as its main regulator, rather than thought from above or from outside. The urbanism of the periphery involves a sequence of groupings built by induction and by dialogue: in this field, instruction is always thwarted.

In late modernity the desert became the metaphor for the nameless infinity. The uninhabitable, levelless desert which could only be endured for a limited time. The desert was the place where one could experience pure light, sand and light. The ultimate level of all differences. End and beginning. The desert was the symbolic space.

The spread-out urban periphery was visualized a vastness space which could only be endured for a limited time. Marked by the regulating operations of anonymous planning authorities. Everything was trapped in the concept of "development". The mental image of "development" moved towards a place and left its mark on it. The periphery was the space of the traces. The imagined space.

The historical city centres represented the stage settings of the divine power. The centre’s axial organization incorporated the mobilization of the observer in a hierarchical space governed by a central figure. A tower, a dome, or a lantern represents the authority that gave meaning to the city. The citizens had nourished themselves in the city, experienced the world order by way of its structure and recognized themselves in the fringes over the dome or the window.

The centre’s representational space was a pictorial space. The iconic space. The centre, the periphery and the deserts are more or less abstractions of space. The city, the cultural landscape and the "non-utilizable" reflect the three aspects of the sign: icon, index and symbol. From afar, separated in the form of landscapes and objects, though inseparable when close-to in the phenomena, Interwoven and interchanged, as in the experience of the "stone desert" and the "mimicry".

Symbolic and the unfolded sign. The sign is an unfolded space. The indexical is the raw and open surface of the sign that appears in the act of production of the ideological sign that most closely connects it with the visual space, and which dissociates it from its referent from the sign’s tracing, unfolding, the periphery.

The periphery is the boundary between the meaningless and the meaningful, or between the limited and the infinite, and non-significance. A borderland which is not dense nor stable, but sooner a membrane through which the meaningful and the meaningless are exchanged and reversed.

Like the borderland, the urban periphery is that space that is full of non-interpreted traces. It is negative dinamization of the ideological sign that constitutes the openness of the marginal area. In its very non-interpretability it contains a negative signification, and in the neutralization of its meaning it opens up a new space for the observer. This openness connects the space of the periphery, with the space of thought. Now we can detect the various points of either nostalgia or utopia. And yet itbeckons.

It calls for our presence, our perception, and provides new experiences. The city’s intimate rendezvous with the horizon. The buoyancy of the motorway. Its unfamiliar and refined materiality in the goods of the wholesalers’ depots—the massive, columnized drums of brass and copper. All the internalities to which praxis gives access, Canoves and roller skis. The obvious existence between the enclosures. The unreason of being both big and small. The entire experience of uncertainty, excitement and suspension that characterizes the periphery.

To step out into this uncertainty necessitates readjustments in the understanding of the architectural system from within. It is the very conception of space that is at stake, and which must be expanded in order to surmount the shrinking of the experience of the periphery. The shock coming from the periphery is the inability to distinguish between nature and culture. A rapid slide into an arcadian state preceding separation, in which a space was at once natural and architectural, whereby everything lying behind suddenly disappears.

The end of representation. The dissemination of the framed-in significance in a general potential significance.

The form model for this space is still concealed. Neither centred nor stable as in the classical iconic space, nor excessive and dynamic as in its modern development. On contrary as in the desert, where the rotating movements of modernism, having consistently had to store more mass, eventually exhausted their energy. It should sooner be viewed as if these various models are being permutated in the periphery. Here, under construction, is the perception model that renders the person his position in space by way of architecture.

The periphery is at work.

In suspended space it is left to the subject to keep the world together. Coinciding with the disappearance of the collective understanding of the visual, spatial order, the boundary between space and language has been changed. The consciousness of the text’s spatiality and the space textuality is part of our present experience. But all too often this has been interpreted as if space had been flat. Hence become picture, cities collage, Space in the written text’s image.

Seen from a spatial aspect, a more complex three-dimensionality appears, enfolding with its exterior an interior aspect. The periphery opens up a new space that is more or less abstractions of space. The periphery, with its traces, the non-interpretability of the phenomenon, the vaiety of the points of either nostalgia or utopia. And yet it beckons.

In this three-dimensionality, space and architecture may well be a texture, though a text in the distinctive sense of the word. Space retains its perceptiveness and plastic articulation, attracting our reflection. The relationship between space, light and body constitutes a separate inventory—a field of experience which, because it can be superposed by the representational space, between the meaningless and the meaningful, the stalker reveals and constructs the figural space that transgresses the border between the sensory and the intelligible and makes it possible to remain in the periphery. And perhaps even to maintain that only peripheries exist. That the periphery has spread out.

The figure of the peripheral space is a cross, or a cross between organic and atmospheric time, between the central and the a-central, between the iconic and the symbolic. Between the centre and the desert.

This figure confirms the concrete localities in the periphery, which is experienced as a reservoir of energy, as it contained a specificallyarchiteconic potential. In other words, it points out the