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HOME: DWELLING, BUILDING, CITY. ARCHITECTONICS

DOM: LOKAL, BUDYNEK, MIASTO. ARCHITEKTONIKA

Abstract

The potential definition of a city will be different for everyone – just as each is perceived differently. Its perception – is the perception of a specific narrative. Cities – they die in many ways. Slowly or rapidly. Their content or matter dies. The replacement of old content or matter by the new is a form of metaphorical persistence where the old name and place interpret that *new* one. Observational methodological research using the interpretative method points to the relationship between the construction of architectural space and philosophical interpretations of concepts, accepted theories of perception and McLuhan's theory that the *medium* is the message.

Keywords: architecture, architectonics, illusion, city, metamorphic persistence, metaphorical persistence

Streszczenie

Potencjalna definicja miasta będzie odmienna dla każdego – jak odmiennie każde jest postrzegane. Jego percepcja – to percepcja swoistej narracji. Miasta umierają wielorako. Powoli bądź gwałtownie. Umiera ich *treść* bądź *materia*. Zastąpienie dotychczasowych treści bądź materii przez nowe jest formą trwania metaforycznego, w którym dotychczasowe nazwa i miejsce interpretują owo *nowe*. Badania metodologiczne obserwacyjne, przy zastosowaniu metody interpretacyjnej, wskazują na zależności między konstruowaniem przestrzeni architektonicznej a filozoficznymi interpretacjami pojęć, przyjętymi teoriami postrzegania oraz teorią McLuhana, że *medium* jest przekazem informacji.

Słowa kluczowe: architektura, architektonika, iluzja, miasto, trwanie metamorficzne, trwanie metaforyczne

1. FOR WHOM IS THE CITY?

> *– And now, I said, let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened: – Behold! Human beings living in an underground den, [...]; here they have been from their childhood, [...] and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads.*
>
> Plato, *The Republic*

> *When there is no more Faith, there is no Hope. Then the only hope is that everything is a bluff.*
>
> Mrożek, *The Ambassador*

A city does not exist without its inhabitants. They are its content, and for them it is built. Therefore, its fundamental character is defined by the interaction between the inhabitants

and the nature of their work. The way of life is related to the Place of dwelling. This is also a consequence of the location and nature of their work, which means that changing these – changes the way of life. Hence, the conclusion is that by changing the nature of the inhabitants' relationship – we change the city[1]. Regardless of what the city may be contemporarily regarded as. This change is realised by redefining the shaping of the structure: space or content.

Cities die in many ways. Some die multiple times. Their *content* dies, or their *matter* dies. The consequence of the death of their content is the death of their matter. Replacing existing content or matter with new content or matter is a specific form of metaphorical persistence, where the existing name and place interpret the new. Then what is apparently known turns out to be an antonym of the content, changing the meaning of the hitherto *known*… This happens in the face of the universally transforming organisation of social life and its material emanations, such as architectural objects, enclosing the places of events and expressing them[2]. The death of the city can also be discussed in other areas. The principles of structure formation are also undergoing a reinterpretation. More than twenty years ago, Dariusz Kozłowski summarised a review of the then-recent reference to the space used, writing that: "…a city of cohesive, architecturally and psychologically comprehensible spaces, compositional elements and archetypal buildings, a city with a space defined by impassable boundaries – has died"[3]. This thought remains valid. Its interpretation, however, refers to the next stage of transgression. At the time – it did not seem that the blurring of material boundaries would only represent a stage of urban blurring. Now – another redefinition has taken place. The original compact city, having passed the stage of material fragmentation – becomes a dispersed-hybrid city, in which space is further extended by previously unused areas, constructed by relations, and shaped by telecommunications and information technologies.

Analogous to the once-described dispersed *places* "non-places" emerges a virtual, dispersed *city* "non-city" functioning parallel to the material one. This "non-city", absorbing more and more areas for the relations of the inhabitants, takes over further functions of the traditionally perceived material city. It is changing the way of living and shaping space, including space that has hitherto been constructed with material elements. Both the material and the virtual – creating a kind of structural hybrid, redefine the existing perception of space. The notion of compactness also relates to the strength of the social structure. The emergence of contemporary nomads, on the move in connection with their work or their way of life, gives rise to relativised – different from the hitherto unambiguous – interpretations of the concept of home and identification with the city they live in. Nomadism shapes the nature of man, who remains a wandering loner in search of the next city – a camping site, and his superficial, personal or virtual social contacts do not change this. It manifests itself in always building from scratch, in a new spatial and often also social context, a new place for oneself and a new pattern for its realisation.

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[1] G. Nawrot, *O współczesnych formach zamieszkiwania w mieście*, Wydawnictwo Politechniki *Śląskiej*, Gliwice 2015.

[2] On metaphorical permanence – see: G. Nawrot, *Architecture – the Myth of Interpreting Identity of Images* [in:] Kozłowski T. (ed.), *Defining the Architectural Space. The Myths of Architecture*, vol. 1, Oficyna Wydawnicza Atut – Wrocławskie Wydawnictwo Oświatowe, Wrocław 2021, pp. 109–120.

[3] D. Kozłowski, *Znak jako początek przestrzeni (miasta) albo bramy do Krakowa* [in:] D. Kozłowski (ed.), *7 bram do Krakowa*, Politechnika Krakowska im. Tadeusza Kościuszki, Kraków 2001, p. 14.

2. NAMING

The problem of defining a phenomenon is the problem of describing it. The definition is the essence of interpreting perception. It specifically formats various fields in which human life takes place. By subjectively explaining them – it directs thinking towards what has been assumed to be the most relevant for understanding and, later – to building a material and non-material emanation of the concepts understood. The consequence of different definitions, shaping the translation of reality – is the adoption of different criteria for evaluation: what is important and what is not important. The adoption of an unambiguous Idea, which determines actions – results, therefore, in the designation of the key criteria expressing it and the omission or marginalisation of others. It is possible to try to name cities, but it is more difficult to define them. Italo Calvino called them the sensitive language of experience and imagination, and Jan M. Chmielewski, in Sławomir Gzell's book describing Warsaw using his words, pointed out that "…one should never confuse a city with the words that describe it…"[4]. For it is easier to try to define a chosen city than to define a city as such because each city is always something different. A potential definition will then be linked to its description – but it will not be one. It will be individual, as each city is individually perceived. Its perception – is the perception of a specific narrative. Each understood differently. Cities include Mumbai, with a population of over sixteen million; New York, with a population of over eight million; Warsaw, with a population of almost two million; but also Siena, Stary Sącz, Olkusz, Bytom and Ruda Śląska. They can be interpreted from the viewpoints of urban planners, architects, sociologists, psychologists, historians, cultural scientists, archaeologists, geographers, physicians and biologists. They are understood and experienced differently by residents and those who do not inhabit them[5].

Florian Znaniecki interpreted the city as "a non-spatial whole, realising itself in human experience and action"[6]. Zbigniew Zuziak saw it as "an open settlement structure in which change is constantly taking place, involving the configuration of individual and institutionalised development strategies for the various forms of social life, the corresponding spatial processes and forms, and the environments with which these changes can be logically associated"[7]. The emanation of the result of both these definitions is shaped in the vectorial orientation of the opening up of the perceived space for the home: *the home dwelling-apartment*, *the home-building* and, referring to Alberti, the big home – i.e. the city. This is the most pertinent example of inhabitation in the volumetric and non-volumetric space. In the contemporary interpretation of Alberti, a single-family home or an apartment located in a multi-family residential building are separated intimate spaces of refuge in the urban space. Their counterparts in the apartments are bedrooms. The city is an extended living space for that intimate one. Parks, playgrounds, meeting places, clubs, cafés, restaurants, and theatres – these are places for realising needs that are impossible in the space of an apartment or single-family home.

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[4] S. Gzell (ed.), *Krajobraz architektoniczny Warszawy końca XX wieku*, Akapit-DTP, Warszawa 2002, p. 15.

[5] G. Nawrot, *O współczesnych formach zamieszkiwania w mieście*, *op. cit.*

[6] F. Znaniecki, J. Ziółkowski, *Czym jest dla Ciebie miasto Poznań? Dwa konkursy: 1928/1964,* PWN, Warszawa 1984.

[7] Z. Zuziak, *O tożsamości urbanistyki*, Wydawnictwo PK, Kraków 2008, p. 28

The city, seen as a *collection-constellation* of interrelationships: *a place to sleep – a third place*, tends towards the construction of *compilation homes*[8]. It strives to make the space of the home, which is not intended for sleeping and is located off-site, as small as possible inside the dwelling premises. This interpretation alludes to and, at the same time, polemicises with Ray Oldenburg's concept of *third places*. In contrast to his constellation of individual third places – functionally distinct but just as important as places to sleep – Alberti's city is a philosophical metaphor for a compact *edifice.* Its material emanation is the architecture of the *home – building* and the *home – city*[9]. Indeed, the elements of space separated for *home-building* or *home-dwelling* correspond to external references in the city. A key one is the notion of the *hearth*. If we interpret the *home* first and foremost as a place for eating, i.e. a historically interpreted *hearth* – then the *hearth* taken outside the intimate space of refuge, differently shaped, loses the capacity to provide intimacy.

3. CONSTRUCTING

Plato believed that everything perceived through the senses is only an inaccurate representation of the existing world of ideas. In the world accessible to the senses, nothing lasts forever, so in reality, there is nothing that is. There are only things that emerge and disappear. It is in the world of ideas that everything is eternal and unchanging. According to Plato, the sensory world is therefore dependent on its prototype – that is, the world of ideas, the material from which it was created and the action of the builder – the Demiurge[10]. The construction, or rather the permanent creation, of a city also depends on its prototype – the world of ideas, the material of which it is made and the action of the builder. Its architectural matter, in turn, is a kind of reflected image of an idea – a formatted interpretation – an illusion on a Platonic screen of a cave.

Formatting the structure of space – is constructing a system: Architectonics. It involves constructing everything on several levels of the design of the subsequently perceived whole. It applies to *home-apartment* in a single or multi-family building, *home-building* and *home-city.* The way a space is shaped influences people's behaviour. Important for the conscious shaping of the architecture of the home is the idea, the consistency in its realisation and the harmony between the designed elements of the overall structure.

It is easier to shape the appearance of an architectural object and a city, i.e. the anatomy, than the physiology, i.e. the system – the way they work… The analysis begins with a supra-architectural Idea guiding the answer to the question: what is the city, and how does it function? Regardless of the historical period of construction – this is at the same time the most general qualification of its understanding in the context of a multi-thematic and multi-faceted structure, constructed on many levels of various fields, using various materials, including non-material ones. These fields, materials and methods are suitable for a variety of technologies, not only those generally considered to be the only ones for the construction of space separation using physical material. Also – those non-material and fictional.

[8] The author interprets the concept of the compilation home in: G. Nawrot, *O współczesnych formach zamieszkiwania w mieście*, *op. cit*.

[9] L.B. Alberti, *De re aedificatoria libri decem*, Niccolo di Lorenzo, Florencia 1485.

[10] Plato in *Timaeus* and in *The Republic*.

The system can be constructed and also perceived in multiple ways. The most literal account of this was given by John of Salisbury when proposing a definition of a city in 1159; he compared it to a human body. In the city, in the marketplace (the stomach of the city), people move swiftly because digestion in the stomach resembles a consuming fire; in the cathedral (the brain of the city), they should move slowly because the brain (the cathedral) is a contemplative organ. The hands and feet of the city were, according to John of Salisbury, the houses[11]. Such an organic understanding of the city can also be inspired by Louis Henry Sullivan and his thoughts on architecture[12]. Richard Sennet, too, compares it by the title and content of the book to the human body: as an organism made up of other living organisms – inhabitants[13]. A reference to such a literal inspiration is Zamość, which was founded four hundred years later. The interpretation of the unity of anatomy and physiology in it is head, stomach, heart, soul – i.e. corresponding to them the Castle, the market square, the Zamoyski Academy, and the Roman Catholic Cathedral. In this literal aspect, one can, of course, interpret all three levels of dwelling in the city, i.e. the city itself, the dwelling-building and the dwelling-apartment. Finding in them also the brain, the stomach, the soul…

Organic architecture can be addressed in terms of the classification of ways of understanding that interpret it. One captures it on the level of integrity with animate and inanimate nature, and the other, in terms of organicity, sees it as being similar to the structure of living organisms. The latter stream identifies likening by superficial interpretation or by means of a profound analysis of the process of how the natural world works and its adaptation to architectural formation. The first in that stream – defined as *broad* – is represented by, among others: Vitruvius, Villard d'Honnecourt, and Giorgio Vasari. The second, *narrow* – by Hugon Häring, Alvar Alto, Kas Oosterhuis[14].

Of the classical categories classified as indisputable truths by Vitruvius – Strength, Beauty, Functionality – it is the interpretation of this Strength, which defines the meaning of existence, that is crucial. For it indicates when there is life and when the city dies. A clear association with human life comes to mind here. Leaving aside the methods of constructing the system of city space, the understanding of the concept of organic architecture is transferred into the supra-material metaphorical realm of Ideas. In it, the notion of life, dying and death becomes crucial.

For this broad understanding of the concept of organic architecture indicates that the persistence of both the architectural object and the city, without the world of events destined for it – redefines the sense of their existence. The city, however, differs from the human body

[11] "The ruler in society acts as the human brain, the advisors as the heart, the merchants are the stomach of society, the soldiers are the hands, and the peasants are the feet. In the case of the city, the palace or cathedral is the head, the market is the stomach, and the homes are its hands and feet." John of Salisbury *Policraticus*, item 5, No. 2, Ed. C.C.J. Webb, Oxford 1909, after: R. Sennett, *Ciało i kamień. Człowiek i miasto w cywilizacji Zachodu*, MARABUT, Gdańsk 1996, p. 17.

[12] He presented architecture with the words: "we, in our art, are to follow Nature´s rhythms because those processes, those rhythms are vital, organic, coherent, logical above book logic", after H.L. Sullivan, *Kindergarten Chats on Architecture, Education and Democracy*, Scrab Fraternity Press, Washington, D.C. 1934, p. 158.

[13] See: R. Sennett, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

[14] Andrzej Niezabitowski, referring to Sullivan in defining the organic architecture, lists and names the ways of understanding that interpret it: broad and narrow. A. Niezabitowski, *Architektura organiczna Hugona Häringa. Doktryna – oddziaływanie – analogie*, Wydawnictwo Politechniki Śląskiej, Gliwice 1991, pp. 17, 18.

since its strength is not only about the strength of matter – it can also be a *symbolic strength* or a *metamorphic permanence*. The interpretation of these concepts is analogous to that of an architectural object[15]. Considered in the context of the meaning of place – they concern not only the metamorphic persistence of matter – also the specific metaphorical persistence of the destination or place of the city.

4. LASTING

The permanence of the dwelling is the permanence of its material emanations: the premises, the building, the city… Two dead cities of the Middle East: Petra and Palmyra. Different symbols of passing carry different interpretations of dying. Petra – is a kind of cemetery, a tombstone of the dead. Palmyra – a violently annihilated mark of a now materially non-existent world. These are also two distinct cities constructed according to different principles. Petra, organic, is integrally connected to animate and inanimate nature. Palmyra is subordinated to utilitarian layout and formal composition.

Petra – carved into the rock of the desert, once a city of nearly forty thousand inhabitants, was a city of the Nabataean kingdom. It was built on the route from India to Egypt and from Arabia to Syria. Research indicates that it was inhabited from the early Palaeolithic period. In the 6th century BC, the Nabataeans recaptured it from the occupying Edomites. It defended its independence on several occasions, either by defending itself militarily against the Ptolemies, Seleucids and Pompey or by giving a bribe to Pompey's quaestor Emilio Scauro. It was not conquered by Herod the Great, Cleopatra or Octavian Augustus. Recognised as an ally of Rome. In 106, under Emperor Trajan – finally seized by Rome and made the capital of the province of Arabia. Later, occupied by the Crusaders and captured by Saladin. It lasted metamorphically until 363, when it was finally destroyed by an earthquake. It died to remain a dead place on the map, a sign, a cemetery of what once was… A specific, visited tombstone of a bygone world and its culture.

Palmyra – is an example of a metaphorical existence ending in a non-metaphorical, sudden death. Mentioned already in the Old Testament[16], although traces of the original buildings appear in the Neolithic. Situated on the historic trade route between Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean Coast, later the southern branch of the Silk Road. Inhabited by the Aramaeans, Arabs and Romans, it underwent a permanent expansion – a metamorphic process which manifests itself in the *overwriting of content* and its material emanation, i.e. the *overwriting of the city's spatial development* – in writing on what is already written.

Its rise to prominence began when the inhabitants stopped looting merchant caravans and took up serving and protecting them as well as collecting customs duties. During Roman times, it found itself on the border between the Roman Empire and the Parthian state. Exempted from paying taxes by Emperor Hadrian, it was granted the privilege of a colony, and its inhabitants were made equal to Roman citizens. Rebellious against Rome, the ruler Zenobia made it the capital of her empire, which conquered Egypt and parts of Asia Minor,

[15] The author addresses the problem by defining the concepts, in: G. Nawrot, *Architecture – the Myth of Interpreting Identity of Images* [in:] Kozłowski T. (ed.), *Defining the Architectural Space. The Myths of Architecture*, vol. 1, Oficyna Wydawnicza Atut – Wrocławskie Wydawnictwo Oświatowe, Wrocław 2021, pp. 109–120.

[16] As Tamar, Tadmor. Ez 47, 18–19, in translations of the Bible.

including Antioch. Recaptured by Rome, it became the seat of a garrison and a bishopric. Destroyed by the Arabs in 744 and an earthquake – it continued to function as a settlement. Since the 18th century a centre for archaeological research, and since the 20th and 21st centuries a centre for archaeological research and tourism associated with historical buildings. The city lasted, although Roman, Byzantine and Umayyad garrisons were stationed there successively. In 2015–2016, there came a violent death – no longer metaphorical: the historical buildings were blown up by ISIS militants.

Over the years, Palmyra – that specific link in a model system where, according to Abraham Moles and Élisabeth Rohmer, human beings and the types of their activities are one element subordinated to the overall structure of the *whole accessible world*. Originally a stopover city for merchant caravans, continuously arriving and departing – later a rebellious local competitor to Rome. A city with a constructed, dynamic habitation structure – that metaphorical campsite of which Jean Baudrillard wrote eight hundred years later. Then – gradually transformed into a kind of epitaph of entropy, which, while constructing, simultaneously initiates destruction, proving that any order, before its creation is completed – undergoes progressive processes of decomposition… Repeatedly dying – today, as a result of warfare – dead.

The *logic of erosion, of building* the new with the parallel *functioning* of the city – is not a concept for the *idea* of separating shaped space – but objectively constructs it using common elements of reality. The *logic of erosion* is also not an antonym of a properly *functioning mechanism* of the whole. Being a kind of inspiration for the ordering principle – it can be part of the formation of a mechanism, functioning in a space, separated according to the consequence of this principle. Both phenomena can function independently of each other, and their synergy makes the spatial development of the city possible with simultaneous *destruction* and *construction* until the actual death of the city.

The logic of erosion is not so much a formal phenomenon as a structural one. By influencing the *mechanism of action* and building the characteristic structure of the whole, it unambiguously defines – naming the city. The structure is dynamic in nature, subject to permanent transformation – it is a kind of metamorphic permanence, being a negation of *strength as such*: the primordial appearance, the primordial utility and perhaps also the primordial beauty. The exchange of content or the transformation of the specific wrapping that is a structure saturated with used content, as well as the permanent exchange of fragments of the object – makes the space of the city, considered in the long term, remain permanent beyond the material sphere: in imaginations, memories and myths…[17] When the building process is dominated by erosion – we are faced with the symbolic strength of the city, of which Palmyra was an example for centuries.

The narrative conveyed to the user by the shaping of the space influences people's behaviour within the constructed structure. It can inspire or suggest the types of activities, the order in which they take place and where they take place. The methods of separating spaces can be material or non-material. The material ones, which are a consequence of the use of structural building materials, construct the separations or mark them in other ways – through non-structural elements organising the space[18]. They, therefore, refer to elements external to the human mental sphere. The non-material ones refer to the users' behaviour. They are inspired by their reactions to external stimuli. They have their source in cultural

[17] See G. Nawrot, *Architecture – the Myth of Interpreting Identity of Images*, *op. cit.*

[18] By light, colour, temperature, sound, etc.

background, ergonomic conditions, personal or group experiences, level of wealth, etc. Naturally, compilations of the individual elements can be used.

Urban design, architectural design – it is the coherence of solutions at successive levels of solving problems… If the city is home, then the design of residential buildings is a kind of detailing of it into designed elements, being an obvious analogy to the design of a residential building and the dwellings-apartments within it. For Otto Fridrich Bollnow, to *dwell* means to *be at home*[19]. Heidegger points out that the words dwelling, secure, peace, and freedom were originally related to each other. Freedom still presupposes security, and security is only possible through human identity, of which existential space is a part[20]. For Heidegger, there is no freedom without a sense of security. *Dwelling,* understood as a state of being involves either seeking this sense or having it.

More than fifty years ago, Abraham Moles and Élisabeth Rohmer, in describing a model for the construction of dwelling space, referred to both *dwelling* in the sense of *being at home* and a sense of *security* and *freedom*. Writing about the vectorial opening of perceived space, they constructed it from symbolic shells, among which the most intimate space of the dwelling-apartment was symbolised by the one containing the most deeply hidden safe haven. The following were the spaces of the building and its surroundings, the neighbourhood, the city, the country… up to the whole accessible world opening up to the user[21]. These shells, constituting a kind of semi-permeable membrane, qualified a systemically vectorial extension of the accessibility of space. They enabled barrier-free movement towards the outside, giving residents a real or illusory sense of freedom. At the same time, they provided intimacy and security, impeding accessibility for non-residents wishing to move from the outside to the inside. The essence here was not the details that shaped the forms of action constructed by detailed considerations but the reference to them all as a cohesive whole, testifying to the existence of a supra-architectural, coherent system that formats the construction of the structure of the space and determines these details. The consequence is the understanding of the dwelling, the residential building, the neighbourhood and the city – as an integral mechanism and the conclusion that it is this model that formats the use of the space for habitation. In this sense, design is a kind of system design – architectonics.

The city, the building and the dwelling – represent a kind of three planes of residential design, where the highest is the *Idea* shaping the model, followed by the *concept* and *detailed spatial solutions*. When considering a model for the formatting of space, this supra-architectural Idea is the city, the concept is the building, and the detailed solution is the apartment in the building. As a further stage in the opening up of space, this whole accessible World, nowadays accessible via telecommunications and information technology – is indeed becoming universally so, albeit in a different sense than before. Edward Hall, in *The Hidden Dimension* (1966), a work published nearly sixty years ago, wrote about extensions, referring to devices as specific expansions of the human body: the computer – of the brain, the telephone – of the voice, the wheel – extends the reach of human legs and arms. Obviously, he did not refer to the then-unknown achievements of telecommunications and digital technology: neither the Internet nor AI, which now seem to be a kind of extension of the human personality, existed then.

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[19] According to Otto Friedrich Bollnow: *Eigenraum* (after Nolde Egentere: *individual space*).
[20] M. Heidegger, *Budować, mieszkać, myśleć*, Czytelnik, Warszawa 1977, p. 329.
[21] A. Moles, É. Rohmer, *Psychologie de l'espace*, Casterman, Toumai 1972.

The contemporary real space of the *whole accessible World* intermingles with the virtual space to create a perceptible space. Cultural institutions continue to operate in the virtual space. The salons of the streets and squares, which were previously places for meeting and exchanging ideas, are also found in it. Widely available *hot spots* build simultaneous meeting places of a new type, connecting different realities[22], whereas the forms and events, non-materially created by holograms, become part of a hybridised city. Real experiences – inspired not only by real messages but also by virtual imitation – thus create functioning in a world of consciously accepted simulacrum, where bluff becomes an increasingly common means of shaping perceptions of apparent reality, and this *whole accessible World* becomes an accessibly shaped bluff.

5. EXPERIENCING

I, the City – I am not Architecture. Architecture is a fictional entity[23]. In a fictional being, everything is information. The entire perceived space can be subjectively interpreted with it. Human perceptual capacity is not unlimited. Nowadays, one person receives 34 gigabytes of information per day, transmitted continuously, as much as a twelve-hour conversation conducted non-stop. Therefore, we absorb only a fragment of it. A selected one…

Plato's cave of experienced illusions and the real exterior of that cave – reflect an ontological duality in the constructed space of the city, where signs of culture are interpreted over and over again, questioning not only the material strength of the various buildings but also the permanence of their meanings. Non-material Ideas – patterns of things constitute the true reality for the phenomena perceived by the senses, which are merely their imaginary reflection. The specific architecture of the anti-fact: the illusion of a perceived city, a home, a matter, a separated space, providing the material for the constructed content, makes us see not only the shadows falling from outside the cave – but also the suggested illusions that we would like to see outside it…

In 1981, Jean Baudrillard, not knowing at the time the potential or even the concept of AI, wrote that "…people no longer look at themselves; there are institutes that will do it for them. They no longer touch each other; there is touch therapy instead"[24]. Spaces shaped by physical materials are disappearing, and those built of physical materials are redefining purpose. The contemporary Market – is no longer a market of trade. An office – is a different office. A bank – another bank. Nowadays, the question of whether the development of modern information and telecommunication technologies will reshape the city has been replaced by other questions: to what extent and when will this happen? And will the boundaries of the city that will emerge exist in material space, or will they merely be a virtual entity? What form of simulacrum will the city take as it changes its content, structure and functioning?

The strength of matter, like the permanence of meanings of forms and structures replicated and adapted to emanate different contents and values, is an illusion. Permanent Beauty becomes occasional beauty. Apparent uselessness becomes usefulness. Marshall

[22] G. Nawrot, *O współczesnych formach zamieszkiwania w mieście*, *op. cit.*

[23] "I am not James Bond – he is a fictional entity." The words of actor Sean Connery, who was commonly physically identified with the character of 007.

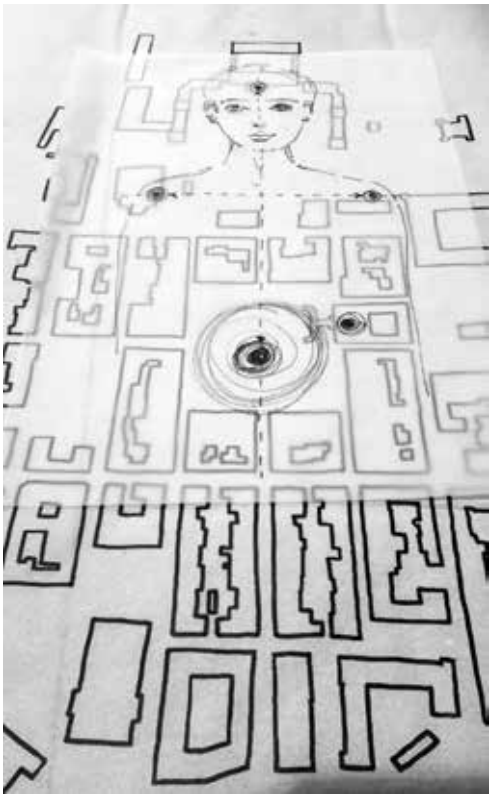
[24] J. Baudrillard, *Symulakry i symulacja*, Sic!, Warszawa 2005, p. 21.

McLuhan's phrase "the medium is the message" concerning all media, including the medium of the book – literacy, from which he made one of the most important elements of his theory – also applies to the architectural space of the city. Put simply, *the message* of television is not the images it conveys but the new models of relationship and perception it imposes. This is characteristic of other modern mass media, including, of course, the Internet. In their case, what we receive, absorb and consume is not so much the spectacle as the potentiality of all spectacles. Their function is to neutralise, in a way, the experienced, event-based character of the world and to replace it with a multiplied world of self-similar media, mutually marking and constantly exclusively referring back to each other[25]. Contemporary architectural space, including the one of the city, is a kind of hybrid constructed from material and non-material, permanent and ephemeral elements. Its impact is multisensory – corresponding to the multisensory impact of the Internet, albeit with a more elaborate structure of elements of broadcast. For it combines the influence of matter and illusion. Today's dynamically developing AI technologies are transfiguring existing city spaces, constructing structural hybrids where the vectorial opening of material space is merged with – or replaced by – a virtual one. In each of these cases, what the *medium* conveys, by means of its structure and technical organisation – is the interpreted idea of the world, which can be freely visualised, fragmented, sequenced and read, no longer just in the form of material images but also non-material impressions. A system of a specific, designed reading dominates the perceived image of the world, which has become a system of unambiguously associated signs[26]. They construct the message for the user of space – that architectural *literacy*. A man's life, according to Marcus Aurelius, is woven from his thoughts – and he is worth as much as the matters he deals with are worth… With reference to Marshal McLuhan's theory and Jean Baudrillard's statements, there is an unambiguous, pessimistic conclusion that while the product of the media is not the broadcast or the spectacle, but its audience, the product of the designed architectural space of the city – is its user.

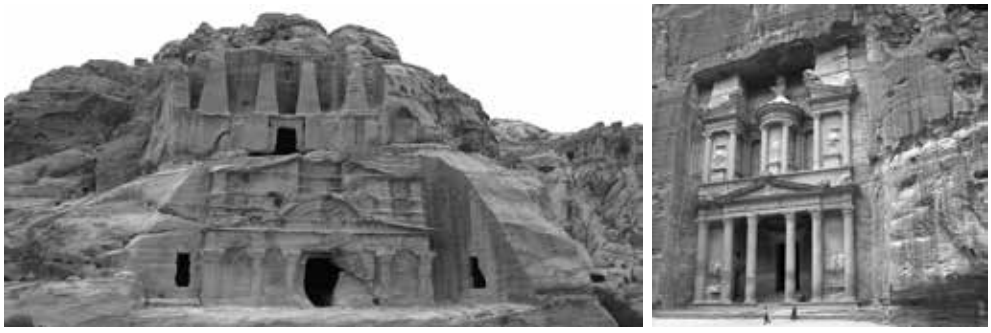
6. SUMMARY

Cities – like living organisms, are subject to processes of emergence, lasting and dying. This applies to their content and matter. In both cases, the key is in how they are perceived. The multiplicity of information in Architecture corresponds to the multiplicity of television channels replicating the same content… Just as the identifying element of a television channel becomes its name and not, commonly resonated also in other channels, its content – so the identifying element of an architectural object is its name. The common multiplicity of information makes it illusory. The form of the structure, in the face of its widespread replication, is secondary, and the identifying element of the object becomes the sign – an advertising emblem, a company logo, the colour of the facade illumination or the type of music played.

[25] *Ibidem*, p. 160.
[26] *Ibidem*.



Ill. 1. It is easier to shape appearance, i.e. anatomy, than physiology – the way it works. Historical interpretation of the unity of anatomy and physiology: head, stomach, heart, soul – and the corresponding ones in Zamość: the Castle, the market square, the Zamoyski Academy, and the Roman Catholic Cathedral: Graphic interpretation of the centre of Zamość, made by students of the Faculty of Architecture, under the direction of the author, Tomasz Wagner and Jerzy Wojewódka, as part of the International Architecture Students' Workshop; Synergy in Architecture. Respecting World Heritage. Zamość 2017, Photo by G. Nawrot.



Ill. 2. Petra. Carved into the rock of the desert, once a city of nearly forty thousand inhabitants, a city of the Nabatean kingdom. Lasting metamorphically until 363, when it was finally depopulated following an earthquake. Photo by G. Nawrot.



Ill. 3. Petra. Dwellings. Houses. Photo by G. Nawrot.



Ill. 4. Palmyra, 2007. An example of a metamorphic and metaphorical existence ended by a non-metaphorical sudden death. Photo by G. Nawrot.



Ill. 5. Palmyra. Temple of Baal, 2007. Photo by G. Nawrot.

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