

Introduction: Time and space

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ABSTRACT: Veniet tempus quo ista quae nunc latent in lucem dies extrahat et longioris aevi diligentia; ad inquisitionem tantorum aetas una non sufficit, ut tota caelo uacet: quid, quod tam paucos annos inter studia ac uitia non aequa portione diuidimus? Itaque per successiones ista longas explicabuntur. Veniet tempus quo posterius nostri tam aperta nos nescisse mirentur.

Seneca, *Naturales Quaestiones*, Book 7, [25,4] and [25.5]¹

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1 INTRODUCTION

The creative spirit does not only live from the internalization of concepts, rules, practices, and conceptions. To trigger the creative process, it needs to fantasize, idealize, ramble and harmonize.

In the creative process, time is differential, and space is unifying. It can be said that time is memory and utopia; space is the real, the concrete, and the representation.

2 TIME AND SPACE

The study of the tradition/innovation dichotomy, as a reading of temporalities, whether in arts, architecture, design, engineering, humanities, sciences, social sciences, or technologies, among others, allowed us, in a previous volume of this book series, to exercise the understanding of the experiences carried out throughout history, either through styles or through the cultural circum-

stances associated with the temporal factor that made them last. (Monteiro & Kong, 2021, p. 3-4).



Figure 1. Ptolemy Astrology (1564) unknown author, from “Clavdio Tolomeo Principe de Gli Astrologi, et de Geografi” published by Giordano Ziletti.

1. There will come a day when the passage of time and the efforts of a longer stretch of human history will bring to light things that are now obscure. One lifetime, even if it can be wholly devoted to astronomy, is not sufficient for the investigation of such important matters. And just think of how we divide our tiny number of years unequally between our studies and our vices. So it will take a long succession. [...] There will come a day when our descendants are astonished that we did not know such obvious facts (Seneca, 2010, Book 7, 25. 4-5, p. 130).

Thus, the interest was launched in deepening the question of temporality and confronting it with the place, the space where time acts. In the Time/Space binomial, tradition is based on the physical space that supports and sustains it, while time incites change and innovation.

Anchoring our reflection on the binomial time/space that supports the existence of humanity since, according to the philosopher Kojève, “This other thing is, first of all, Space (the stopping place, in a way). Therefore: there is no Time without Space.” (1990, p. 39).

Following this order of ideas, the two entities are difficult to dissociate: time for a chronological understanding of historical experiences and as a driving factor for a future perspective; space as a material and local reference.

The evolution of life has always been accompanied by the human desire to build and create “something.” This “something” is the need to overcome one’s limits and to find the one ideal place of existence. Thus, Human Beings throughout history in the field of sciences invented - and in the field of arts created - to fulfill their needs at material, physical and spiritual levels.

All creation thus arises from a need, which is transformed into a will and materialized into a reality.

In this order of ideas, time and space allow for explanations based on the conceived heritage and its temporalities. Time and space are interconnected to give connection and cohesion to the formal and functional aspects of humanity’s creations, thus allowing, through their externalization, to denounce time.

Art can contribute, in many ways, to the objectification of the world. Through art, the Human Being seeks explanations that underlie its existence.

The importance of achieving the truth and that it is strictly in correspondence with the aspects of materialization of factual reality is fundamental. The philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) reflected on this issue in his work “*Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*” (1796), referring that sometimes finding the truth requires an investigation in various areas of knowledge. The relationship between theory and experience guarantees us to obtain this truth. Getting to this truth cannot be achieved by a copy; it will inevitably depend on the world, what exists, and who observes it. Throughout its history, Human Being has been revealed to have sensations and to be aware of their experiences in the space in which they live in an attempt to find the references that determine the possible path to finding the truth, that is, knowledge.

Through the artistic and built testimonies our ancestors bequeathed to us, we can see that the search for the reason for existence, the understanding of the world, phenomena, and events are closely linked to the societies’ relationship with the space and the time they inhabit and imagine - past, present, and future.

The procedure of involving time in an artistic work of art is evident in objects that manifest a historical dimension, as is the case in architectural monuments, which necessarily express a spatial and

temporal dimension essential for the perception of the way of life in the time of their conception.

Due to their dimension and durability, buildings and monuments are real examples of the dynamics of time. Therefore, we can define architecture as an art inserted in the class of trans-temporal art forms - they appear in a certain space under specific conditions, but their existence is prolonged in time. Over that time, cultural and social conditions undergo changes that will be reflected in the use of spaces and lead to interventions in the built heritage, especially in the most monumental and significant. These successive interventions mark the unfolding of time and convert architectural work into a witness to history.

Before proceeding with our presentation, it should be noted that the architectural suggestion mentioned throughout this work is justified, in our view, by its evident relationship with the binomial Time/Space. However, the fact that we highlight architecture in this context does not disrespect other disciplines since what applies to this specific artistic area can also apply to others.

The studies and investigations that we have carried out lead us to conclude that, to understand better time and space or space/time in architecture, we will first have to understand the circumstances that led to it. Social data, that is, of function, the constructive data, that is, of technique, the volumetric and decorative data, that is, plastic and pictorial data, are certainly quite useful but ineffective in helping to understand the value of architecture if one forgets its essence - the noun that is space. Bruno Zevi (1918–2000) was led to say: “that space is not only the protagonist of architecture, but represents the whole of architectural experience, and that consequently, the interpretation of a building in terms of space is the only critical tool required in judging architecture.” (1957, p. 29).

In other words, becoming masters of knowing how to see constitutes the key that will allow us to understand architecture. Nevertheless, it would be absurd to think that space is a merely aesthetic object of study since, fundamentally and functionally, it must house human activities. According to Zevi, “everyone who has thought even casually about the subject knows that the specific property of architecture – the feature distinguishing it from all other forms of art consists in its working with three dimensions, even if it can suggest three of four. Sculpture works in three dimensions, but man remains apart, looking on from the outsider. Architecture, however, is like a great hollowed-out sculpture which man enters and apprehends by moving about within it.” (1957, pg.22).

However, it would also be absurd to disconnect from the functional concern of the space and its aesthetic aspect, as both must be combined better to satisfy users’ comfort and well-being needs.

For a building to be considered balanced, all the elements that compose it must be carefully studied so that the set of all components is proportionate and harmonious. (Kong, 2013).

In architectural pieces, the proportionate and harmonious arrangement and organization of the elements of form and space convey meanings and inspire the user's responses, wishes, and intentions. However, these elements of form and space present themselves as the result of the need to solve a problem in response to the conditions of functionality, intentionality, and the context in a given cultural time. For example, Herbert Read (1893-1968), in his work *The Meaning of Art*, noted, "The Architect must express himself in buildings which have some utilitarian purpose." (Read, 1936, p.15).

Thus, we can deduce that human beings, in the idealization of their forms and spaces, use various means to convey feelings, emotions, sensations, and ideas that reflect their culture, place, and time, thus identifying the fundamental need to communicate something that implies intentional expression and mobilizing power - this is what defines the process of artistic thought.

3 CONCLUSION

One can conclude that the entire process of artistic thought appears closely linked to sensory perception, the ability to see, and the possibility of formulating judgments about things. In other words, Human Beings live in a world of countless natural forms and objects of civilization, which conditions behavior and the formation of their way of perceiving in a specific context of time and space.

We see things differently because there are different types of aesthetic codes. These change depending on the time, place, and society in which it operates. We can say there is a different code of beauty and harmony for each moment, problem, and case. This difference will determine, in practice, a significant

variety of ways of doing things, that is, a variety of solutions that each person finds to transmit to others the experience of the world around them.

We can, however, assume that at any time, in any culture, the ultimate objective will always be to provide quality of life to those who come to enjoy the projected spaces.

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