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The Evolution of a City: Imaginary Spaces By Nadia Samir

The world is full of beautiful, functional, and places to remember. The main factors that get a place in decadence are the economic, political and social and it is necessary to get a general idea about each one in diverse contexts going from a general view to a particular analysis, to understand a path that gives a social value to the city.

Architecture labor is to create spaces for our societies that are engaged with the natural context where they are emplaced. The technological advance, building techniques, design methodologies are the tools to reuse important spaces for our growing humanity. The integration of the inhabitants with space makes a big impact on how a city is determined and its success in our society.

According to the writer Richard Sennett (2001) "cities have the potential to make us more complex human beings. A city is a place where people can learn to live with strangers, to enter into the experiences and interests of unfamiliar lives. Sameness stultifies the mind; diversity stimulates and expands it." There are many definitions for "city" and the UK has regulated how a city could be considered. Henry VIII said that the presence of a diocesan cathedral was usually enough to guarantee the claim; the size of it was not the most important factor, but it was its power -spiritual or temporal.

The relevance is given to a city in the context considering time and space are dictated in how it evolves in history. Public and private buildings determined the characteristics of a city and activities determined its function and it can change according to different economic, political, and social factors. During humanity, history cities have been important for society because they allow people to work and many diverse activities can be produced in them such as cultural and commercial that improve the relationship with other people and the self-growing.

There are many situations that cities confront and which need a solution to permit the evolution of society. Poor housing is one of the major problems in many cities due to overpopulation and economic factors. People are living in old houses and surrounded by dirt. The waste produced in cities and the air polluted by industries and transportation is our society's responsibility and it is important to reduce it to live in healthy places. Governments are responsible to give livable places to the growing societies and help them to improve.

The migrations from towns to cities and within countries have been part of human history since the beginning. Many reasons make the population look for a new place. It has been for natural reasons environmental disasters, looking for better life quality and improve their economic situation, to space from civil persecution or war, among many other reasons. The globalization has motivated the migration because of the information and the facilities in transportation.

"Today, the number of people living outside their country of birth is larger than at any other time in history. International migrants would now constitute the world's fifth-most populous country if they all lived in the same place" (UNFPA).

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The term 'urbicide' became popular during the 1992-95 Bosnian war as a way of referring to widespread and deliberate destruction of the urban environment. Coined by writers on urban development in America, urbicide captures the sense that the widespread and deliberate destruction of buildings is a distinct form of violence. (Routledge, 2008).

Over the last 20 years, our world has faced more than 30 wars that are completely changing our societies and their interaction. Many cities have been destroyed, many monuments in the world are not part of our history anymore, so it is important to analyze cases from the last century that have been in decadence to identify the main buildings and places in each. It is also necessary to contrast the decadence places with successful examples of reuse to understand the change with the techniques and used methods. With that knowledge, it will be possible to make solutions or urban proposals for places in decadence to protect society.

We need to remember places that make the city unique, so knowing more about these places as an urban and architectural model will let society keep evolving and respecting the history of our world. Information about spaces in decadence will let designers think in methodologies to skip functional and technological problems that could give ideas to design with our existing resources and know which parts could remain to articulate the space as a whole.

"When architecture combines ecology, economy and social interest to help people and places to regain, self-sufficiency might become a catalyst for a cultural and economic transformation" (Anna Klingmann 2007).

The analysis is based in understand urban developments that have been decadence due to the different situations in the most important cities of countries as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Siria, Afganistan, Israel, Russia, Japan, United Kingdom, Germany and United States and the reasons of their actual success or decadence and imagine a path to follow to give possible solutions for places, as a model for the future reconstruction of our cities.

It is necessary to travel around the area, considering the actual situation of the place, make deep analysis, understand the urbanization of the main cities, the problems they have faced, which are the main buildings, areas and important places in each, what are the main economic, social and politic activities, understand and make a synthesis on the main aspect that distinguishes the place from others and create possible solutions for the problems.

The project will be based on photography and documentary films to understand the main cities destroyed in the visited countries and its reconstruction. An urban plan analysis will be made from the reshaping of the cities before and after important events (as wars, environmental catastrophes, or social events). As an urban analysis marking the main buildings and activities of each city.

A publication of a synthesis of the path that correlates each city, the destruction, and the reconstruction, with an imaginary model proposal to reconstruct and to preserve our cities.