

Remarkable buildings and common spaces in XXth and XXIth century Dialog between architecture and anthropology

Special issue coordinated by Catherine Deschamps and Bruno Proth

In 1969, architect Amos Rapoport published his book *House, Form and Culture*. He was inspired in his work by his own observations as well as his meetings with anthropologists. The book focused more on vernacular architecture than on the modern or contemporary one. Since then, the anthropology of architecture, and the most recent forms of architecture in particular, remained in a foetal state. In France, the recurrent appear of Marion Ségau's name cannot but testify that she is lonely. Sociology has been a bit more eloquent, sometimes having the perverse effect of heaping opprobrium on an entire profession and its productions: the criticism of "grands ensembles", where architects have often taken the role of scapegoats, almost disqualified the modern movement. The malevolent reader could still see the architect as a demiurge in the fact that the sociology of professions, rather than any another field, also takes over the subject. Meanwhile, famous architects set up so-called "remarkable buildings", thus crushing the majority of small architectural gestures - such as attempts to build more spacious buildings - under their media coverage.

In order to understand its social impact and/or what makes it social, we are here interested in the materiality of architectural production. This does not involve reducing architecture to mere buildings isolated from one another nor does it forget how, in reverse, the absence of buildings create public spaces: different levels of understanding are possible. But it does involve an attention to concrete walls seen from the inside, from the outside, *ex nihilo* or *in extenso*. Therefore, space notion gains depth, and the reasons for the production of these contemporary spaces as well as its relation with anthropology both need to be investigated.

In seeking to take anthropology out of its silence on the architecture of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, this issue has three objectives: 1) promoting a dispassionate anthropological reading of norms and representations that are influencing contemporary architectural designs, 2) understanding relations or distances between designed and lived spaces, 3) understanding how architects use anthropological data.

These three objectives determine three possible themes for articles, which can be summarized as follows:

1) **Norms and representations:** questioning patrimonial conversions; notion of sustainability; growing awareness of "landscape"; influence of arts and techniques on productions; craze for so-called "architecture of emergency"; precepts and concepts that govern the making of new public spaces; relationship between spectacular architecture and ordinary architecture; etc.

2) **Designed and lived spaces:** questioning the way spaces are being thought by different professionals and social actors of the building area such as contracting authorities and project managers; differences between the initial project's challenges and realities after the delivery; reasons for individual or collective appropriation; tensions between scholarly and experienced space perceptions; differences between books architecture, dreamed architecture, built architecture, sold and experienced architecture; etc.

3) **Anthropology in the architecture:** Questioning types of levels where anthropological thought is taken into account in the architectural design; opportunities, difficulties or rejection of dialogue between anthropology and architecture; invention of forms and transformation of practices; open kitchens or open spaces effects; etc.

Are expected French or English articles from architects, anthropologists or sociologists. They may contain theoretical developments, can be based on fieldwork, specific buildings or public spaces, or even take the form of an interview. Summaries (5000 characters) should be sent by email before September the 1st 2012 to Catherine Deschamps (cathdes@club-internet.fr) and Bruno Proth (bprothiste@free.fr) both with a copy to the editor of *Journal des anthropologues* (jda@revues.org).