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THE FACE OF THE CITY

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ABSTRACT

The evolution of European cities continues to oscillate between the essence of the "emotional city", and the potential of *urbanal* scenarios. Historic, newly built and radically transformed urban fragments coexist within a city and seek to fit into an urban structure that tends to redefine itself integrating discontinuities and a changing urbanity. A current review of European transformed cities through specific urban scenes allows a reading of the urban space and the role of architectural languages.

The dialogue between the built environment (*ville*) and the character of urban life (*cité*) reveals how cities are inhabited, and how the architectural forms draw a *face of the city* defined by "cosmetic techniques". Due to architects' trust in the possibilities of architectural language, a display of a cosmetic refinement enhances the subjectivity on the urban readers. Architecture approaches again the old debate between poetry and rationality.

In the urban debate, the language and image of the architectural objects are key for the urban identity and centres the debate between cosmetic subjectivity and scientific objectivity. Exterior and interior appearances define the links with the city. Specifically from the outside, architectural objects can choose to be contextual, autonomous or indifferent, to their surroundings. The study of urban scenarios in the European city looking at new or transformed fragments, analysing the use of cosmetic techniques that sheds light on the potential and limitations of each specific context allows to assess the ability of architecture to collectively or individually build the identity of a city.

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

At the end of the 1990s, the political consolidation of the European Union ratified by the signing of the Maastrich Treaty (1992) gave a great boost to public architecture. The optimism of the new community alliances gave rise to new built architectures and others that, in the competition phase, yearned to anticipate the form and function of the architecture of the future. Some of the competitions developed by the Metropolitan Office of Architecture (OMA) acquired this utopian character and would become, without being built, reference architectures in the international debate, both professionally and academically. On the other hand, and within a framework of political and economic development, there were other practices more pragmatic and realistic that explored the limits of the tectonics. The most representative case was embodied by the Herzog & de Meuron, which in the development of their architecture, sought the "highest ontological state of matter" (Zaera Polo 1993). Their constructive and material refinement was defined by Jeffrey Kipnis as the application of "cosmetic techniques" in which they linked antagonistic terms such as ornament and minimalism (Kipnis 1997). The architecture of Herzog & de Meuron once again pointed out the role of the spectator's subjectivity and, in a way, bringing architecture closer to the category of art.

Almost thirty years later, the architectural discipline has had to admit, after a global economic and climatic crisis, other attitudes resulting from a *rappel à l'ordre*. In the European context, the awarding of the last two Mies van der Rohe Award to interventions in existing residential buildings in the Netherlands and France, has not only valued built architecture, but also the social character that the discipline must take into consideration (Jacobs 1961).[1]

These two reference works have represented many architects who, through projects of a much smaller scale, have approached the architectural pre-existence and the users with care and respect. In this sense, the use of cosmetic techniques has been definitive for managing the architectural language in a personal way. The link between ornament and order, intrinsic to the term cosmetic, has allowed architects to offer the users a personalized response. This personalization of cosmetic techniques has given rise to: ornate architectures, naked architectures (in a way ornamented), technological architectures, brutalist architectures or other almost technically vernacular. Nowadays architecture is defined by artifices, often with layers, and with much or less thickness. This situation reveals the cosmetic character of the construction and the extreme possibilities of the architectural language defining the new based on the syntactic domain of the old. In consequence, the European urban scenarios show more and more the aims of architects for objectifying buildings in a way that highlights the difference between the interior and the exteriors.

This paper studies urban scenarios in the European city looking at new or transformed fragments, analysing the use of cosmetic techniques that sheds light on the potential and limitations of each specific context. In consequence, it assesses the ability of architecture to collectively or individually build the identity of a city, the meaning of *homeyness* (Caruso 2001), memory, nostalgia, heterogeneity and mistakes and success of urban spaces designed to inhabit.

1. BARCELONA, ZURICH AND COPENHAGEN. THREE CASE STUDIES

Barcelona, Zurich and Copenhagen define a European axis (South - North) representative of the cultural, social, urban, geographical and climatic diversity in Mediterranean, Central European and Nordic cities. These three cities have undergone relevant transformations in areas with their own identity and with well-defined physical limits. The diversity of these fragments, situations and contexts, allows establishing conclusive relationships on the architectural and urban appearance, finding points of connection and differences. Barcelona, the compact city (Busquets 2005), has shown that it feels much more comfortable and recognizable in the transformations in the center (El Turó de la Rovira for instance) than, for example, in more "peripheral" ones such as the 22@ or the Forum in which the new identity is characterized by an autonomy with respect to the existing city. Zurich, identity of the central European city, presents growths close to each other, really diverse. The Europaallee operation is a central complex tangent to the train tracks and nearby the Hauptbanhoff. Completely new, it evokes Hans Kollhoff's master plan for Alexander Platz in Berlin (1933) defined by large blocks around a central courtyard and a crown built with volumes at different heights. Architectural tectonics is a clear heritage from Kollhoff's teachings and practice, especially in the mannerism of Caruso St. John's project (who, like Kollhoff, also teach at ETH). Not far away, Zurich West, similar to Barcelona's 22@, has built on the existing industrial fabric, but in this case it has been an excuse for the redefinition of Swiss architectural cosmetics and a truly successful urban atmosphere. Following the train tracks we arrive in Oerlikon,

[1] "The need for aged buildings" is the title of one of the chapters of Jane Jacobs' book The Death and Life of Great American Cities.

an almost new neighbourhood, in which a large number of residential buildings have been built and in which Zurich's urban identity really takes on a new, much more global physiognomy. Copenhagen, to the south of the North, is a dynamic city in which two very interesting transformation zones are worth studying: Nordhaven and Ørestad. The first, the result of the transformation of a port area into an urban fragment, has been subjected to a radical cosmetic process in which the new buildings are, in some cases, prostheses or actions in existing architectures, giving rise to a new urban environment that, by maintaining the original essence, invites its inhabitants to recognize an identity based on pre-existences. Ørestad shows a different situation where the embryo of his growth is not a port, but a metro line and a wetland plain. In this sense, the difficulty of building a new urbanity is greater; here cosmetic techniques are at the service of objects and not so much that of the construction of urban links.

2. BARCELONA, A BEFORE AND AN AFTER

At the end of 1985, the Barcelona City Council promoted a communication campaign entitle "Barcelona get pretty" with the aim of advertising the Measures for the Protection and Improvement of the Urban Landscape.[2] This anthropomorphic message invited citizens to pay more attention to the aspect that "the face of the city" presented. In 1985 the neglect of the architectural heritage in Barcelona was evident and the urban disorder drew an irregular skyline with party walls left exposed. This campaign referred directly to the architectural surfaces of the city, to the epidermis of the buildings, and set "the face of the city" as the starting point of an urban transformation that would end up going far beyond surface treatment. The rehabilitation

of the facades was the action that would precede transcendental changes in the urban and infrastructural morphology of Barcelona. These deeper changes were evident globally during the celebration of the Olympic Games in Barcelona (1992), and a few years later, during the celebration of the Forum of Cultures (2004). Both historical milestones were fundamental at the time of internationally projecting a new, much more cosmopolitan, image that would eventually attract numerous global events. Olympic Barcelona was recognized worldwide for its opening to the sea, and last but not least, the optimization of the new infrastructures, as for example the beltway (*Les Rondes*), today still crucial for the city's mobility. The opening to the sea and the architectural nature of *Les Rondes,* were complemented with a third new urban proposal addressing the public space, the "hard squares". The so-called "hard squares" (built before the Olympic project) ordered the mobility and prioritized pedestrian rights. Plaza de Sants (1981-83) designed by Viaplana-Piñón with the collaboration of Enric Miralles, was a reference for the design of the Barcelona's public space that relied on geometric systems that created places with a remarkable degree of abstraction[3]. This new abstract public space presented a lack of green areas, especially due to budgetary and maintenance issues. The second public space reference was built ten years later on the occasion of the Olympic Games and it was projected by Eduard Bru in the Vall d'Hebrón. An ambitious Master Plan ordered an area of 37 hectares, attending to a complex topography and integrating sports facilities, green areas and paved areas with outdoor carpets that built a nature with artificial fragments. In Barcelona, in the 1980s and early 1990s, the language and the materiality of public space were more innovative than the building ones (Busquets 2019).[4]

Figure 1. Forum 2004 area. Photographer Duccio Malagamba

Figure 2. Transformation of the anti-aircraft defence facilities. Turó de la Rovira. Photographer: Lourdes Jansana

"The face of the city" would not undergo a significant change until 2004 as a result of a global urban strategy that aimed to balance the city, both from an urban and economic point of view. The exhibition "Barcelona in progress", organized during the Forum 2004, decoded the meaning of the city's new growth. These new urban guidelines were based on three poles: the Plaza de las Glorias (Cerdà's Eixample centre), the area of the new intermodal station of La Sagrera, and the Forum area complex located at the end of Avenida Diagonal. In addition, the conversion of the former industrial district of Poblenou into an eminently technological district (22@) completed a series of actions in the east of Barcelona. These urban projects did not approach the public space (and the architecture) in an integrated way with the city as the Olympic project did. In this sense, the urban appearance gave rise to public spaces with a more fragmented and no-contextual character and a generic architecture and city (Koolhaas 2006), specially highlighted because of the construction of many hotel buildings very autonomous respect the existing urban identity.

Coinciding with the development of the Forum project (Fig. 1), the construction of new "skyscrapers", mostly concentrated in the final section of the Diagonal and the Forum area, underlined the global character of the city. This less familiar *face* was partly the result of the difficulty of projecting these buil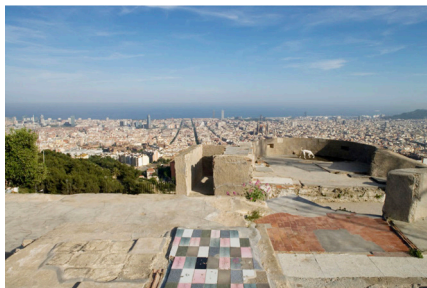dings in height in contexts not yet consolidated, such as the Plaza de las Glorias or the new Diagonal (area that goes from Glorias to the Forum). The set built on the occasion of the Forum 2004 integrated large buildings in height and consolidated the architectures with a more global character within a fragment of city built in the blink of an eye. The new skyscrapers in Barcelona were not referenced in those first high-rise buildings built in the late 1970s with a contextual vocation, with textured and three-dimensional facades. These strategically placed buildings would occupy representative corners or islands, and would be designed with a contextual language that managed to integrate them into the existing city, although they would stand out in contrast to the compactness of the urban fabric of no more than six or seven stories. The Torre Colón (1966-1971) or the Torre Urquinaona (1970) are the best examples.

The real estate crisis of world scale suddenly slowed the growth of the city. Barcelona's plans to balance and equalise its growth by promoting actions in the east (Glorias, Sagrera, Forum and 22@) were blocked. The 22@ slowly followed its development based on action units that evidenced economic power through a more no-contextual language and with few points of connection with the city cultural background.

[5] Unfinished. Pabellón Español. Biennale Architettura 2016. Ministerio de Fomento y Fundación Arquia. 2016

Currently, the face of the city in Barcelona presents global architectural languages inherited from the era of the real estate boom; but also more *affable* ones, from the post-crises years, that are the result of the willingness to bring architecture closer to people. These languages were identified by the curators of the Spanish pavilion of the XV Venice Biennale held in 2016, which under the title of "Unfinished"[5] gathered a series of projects that evidenced an "unfinished" architecture, in some ways "without make-up", and with a more domestic and iconoclastic character that reacted to a generic architecture or an exuberant architecture that at the beginning of the 21st Century gave no concessions to the user. This attitude is having, even now, its translation in the design of the city's public space. Examples of public space that developed this attitude were also part of this exhibition. Among them, there was the Jansana, de la Villa, and Paauw's project in Turó de la Rovira (Fig.2). At the top of a promontory, the same place previously was an Iberian settlement, an agricultural settlement, an anti-aircraft defence facility, a barracks neighbourhood, and now a 360º viewpoint that respects the history that the place has lived and bets on a really unfinished project that seems to be a ruin. This emaciated *face of the city* contrasts with another project that exemplifies a new line in the treatment of public space. It is the Passeig de Sant Joan, designed by Lola Doménech (2014), which incorporates green areas almost as if they were urban oases offering a friendly and close image, referenced in the hard squares, but also in the nature that was before the existence of the city. This public space project exemplifies how to intervene in existing urban scenarios incorporating new attitudes and promoting alternative urbanities.

3. ZURICH, FROM THE CENTRE TO THE PERIPHERY

The urban identity of Zurich remains influenced by the local debate that confronts tradition and modernity. In 1955 the writer Max Frisch (Frisch 1955) openly criticized the conservative character by referring to "homesickness for the day before" while advocating an urbanism that assumed the demands of future evolution and growth. In this sense, the urban identity of the city centre has undergone few *apparent* changes. Perhaps the most notable ones are the great underground infrastructure performance in the basement of the central Hauptbahnhof railway station, imperceptible from the outside, and the large Europaallee complex, recently built just near the same station, occupying lots next to the train tracks. The two actions are, in regard to appearance, a faithful reflection of the debate that Max Frisch raised, although the dimensions of the underground world under the Hauptbahnhof bravely assume the demands of the future. The appearance of the Europaallee project, with its large blocks with public courtyards inside, picks up a collection of architectural languages that goes from the modern Swiss tradition, sober and of great rationality (E2A), through a more ornate architecture (Caruso St John) to a language of glazed curtain walls (Gigon Guyer) with a more *international* character.

In the redefinition of Zurich's urban identity, rail infrastructure and old industrial areas have a decisive influence. It is needed to highlight that the great Europaallee project is based on land owned by SBB (Swiss Federal Railways), and that Zurich-West project is based on the conversion of the industrial zone crossed by Hardbrücke Bridge. This old industrial district is now an area that mainly allocates office building and facilities with their own and cosmopolitan identity unknown so far in the city. The success of this operation is the result of having integrated the pre-existence into a new tertiary fabric without renouncing to a new identity. The Gigon Guyer's Prime Tower is

Figure 3. Zurich West. Photographer: Georg Aerni.

Figure 4. Oerlikon. Photographer: Michael Freisager

leading a modernity that is referenced in some of the downtown Zurich office buildings. The restaurants integrated between the arches of the Viadukt guarantee the life of the district beyond working hours. But the project that best reflects the new identity and a *friendly* city face is the conversion of the old milk factory (Toni) designed by EM2N studio. Toni Areal is a mixed-use building for education, culture and housing, in an operation that addresses the interior as an internal urbanism (Bideau 2015).

Apart from these spaces with an industrial history, there are other areas with a much more noticeable residential character and that also explain the redefinition of the city's urban identity. In this sense, it is necessary to differentiate between those that are the result of an urban re-densification and those that have been completely built from scratch. Among others, these are the metropolitan neighbourhoods of Affoltern, Altstetten, or Albisrieden. In these neighbourhoods, as dictated by Swiss tradition, existing residential projects are always linked to a landscape project. They respond to a desire to be part of the existing urban fabric with a generally austere architecture based on residential buildings with pitched roofs, also identifiable in the first ring of downtown Zurich. In terms of language, the private real state tends to have a global appearance in comparison to the public promotions, which have a more personalized and attentive one, in a way, closer

to the internationally recognizable Swiss architectural language. Language in collective dwelling projects is especially careful, which, having a long local tradition, collect all the wisdom of local architecture from architects such as Werner Stücheli or Max Bill: a sober architecture, but at the same time very sensitive and full of nuances.

Among the complexes built completely from a *tabula rasa,* the Oerlikon area stands out. Located in between the centre and the airport, Oerlikon gathers in a single operation a set of residential and commercial blocks with a little referenced character to the Swiss tradition. In this case, architecture is not completely capable of creating an urban context with its own identity, and the public space does not integrate a landscape project able of establishing links with immediate neighbourhoods. In this sense, in this complex, one of the most representative green zones is a metal structure that supports vegetation growth (MFO Park) and can be understood, in a way, as an empty housing block, and as a version away from the Swiss landscape tradition which fulfills the objective of mediating between architecture and the city or the countryside, eliminating any type of physical barrier. The criticisms of the residential project of Oerlikon do not lie on the quality of the housing, which has it and is relevant, but in the urban conception and its link in the general plot of the city.

Figure 5. Nordhavn, Copenhagen. Photographer: anonymous

Figure 6. Ørestad, Copenhagen. Photographer: Adam Mørk

The analysis of the urban identity of Zurich shows that the "apparent disorder of the contemporary city" (Zardini 1997) and the heterogeneity that this disorder implies, is one of the specific characteristics that offers new possibilities for intervention. The commitment to heterogeneity, difference and the value of tradition as a starting point, builds in Zurich the most favourable conditions for the development of urban life.

4. COPENHAGEN, NEW AND TRANSFORMED COAST

The coastal border of Copenhagen, as in other cities of Denmark, is in a continuous transformation to allocate new urban fabric. Nordhavn (Fig. 5), the northern port, gives name to the largest metropolitan development in Scandinavia. Located 4 km from the centre of Copenhagen with exceptional connections by land and sea, its construction began at the end of the 19th Century. Nordhavn extends over the Øresund Strait on land reclaimed from the sea[6] to house a constructed area of 4,000,000 square meters, in which 40,000 inhabitants will live and in which 40,000 jobs will be created. With the aim of being a "sustainable city of the future",[72] the urban project, developed by COBE in 2008, integrates the debate between citizens and developers. The district of Aarhusgade, the first to be developed in Nordhavn, seeks to consolidate itself with the district of Østerbro going forward, despite the infrastructure barriers that separate them. Aarhusgade is the result of the transformation of an industrial sector into an urban residential space, with production and an economy typical of the tertiary sector.[8]

Strolling around Göteborg square we leave behind a stepped waterfront, a sign of a new urbanity, and looking towards the north, we can see an urban space that includes three of the most representative buildings of the old and the new Nordhavn: the Portland Towers (DesignGroup), The Silo (COBE), and Frihavns Tårnet (Praksis).[9]

Different cosmetic techniques define a new architectural identity in which only in the Portland Towers is possible to discern the

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[6] According to the data provided by By & Havn, the area reclaimed from the sea in Nordhavn accounts for 1% of the total area of Copenhagen. The filler material used for the new growth comes from the island of Zealand itself, and approximately 16 percent comes from the excavation of the Copenhagen Circular Metro line.

[7] CPH City & Port Development participates in the EnergyLab Nordhavn strategic partnership, which focuses on the development of intelligent energy systems, providing the energy flexibility necessary for the efficient use of renewable energy. A sustainable urban development process is the backbone of a sustainable city with a high degree of habitability. For this reason, the new areas of the city in Nordhavn are certified according to DGNB sustainability standards. Sustainability in Nordhavn can be experienced and measured.

[8] The new container and cruise port moves to a new extension of the same port (northeast) occupying new land reclaimed from the sea (Ydre Nordhavn).

[9] The Portland towers are the result of the transformation of two concrete silos built by Aalborg Portland in 1979; The Silo and the Frihavns Tårnet are the result of the adaptation of two silos built by the DLG Company.

existence of a port industrial structure, covered with a volume of cantilevered offices fortified with industrial-style bracing, and finished with an enveloping curtain wall. In Nordhavn, what you do not see is important: in the Frihavns Tårnet building, for example, electricity, light, and heat are controlled by automatic sensors that measure CO_2 levels and temperature. This means the temperature and the indoor climate are regulated automatically. On the other hand, what is evident (and visible) in Nordhavn is part of a new style that gives it an identity of its own.

A high-rise red car park (Lüders, JAJA) houses a recreational-public space on its roof covering an area of 2,400 square meters. At 24 meters high, and after climbing 135 steps lined with planters and the history of Nordhavn printed on the metal facade, we recover the view of the centre of Copenhagen, the sea and the dynamic and constantly transformed urban port context.

Approximately eight kilometres south of Nordhavn, the final section of the M1 subway line traces a dramatic straight line. Raised above ground level, it establishes the urban and territorial identity of the district of Ørestad (Fig. 6), located ten minutes from the centre of Copenhagen. The M1 Line circulates on an intermittent concrete bridge just after the Sundby station in the direction of Vestamager, the final stop; in this way, the M1 allows, in a transverse way, the urban connection and the crossing paths of other infrastructures.

Ørestad is an *artificial city* developed in a wetland area south of the island of Amager, and construction began thanks to the sale of publicly owned land to private interests[10.] Ørestad was conceived in the late 1980s as

a strategy to alleviate the main problems of the city of Copenhagen: low growth, unemployment, and indebtedness. Near the two important infrastructures of the airport and the Øresund Bridge, which links Copenhagen and Malmö, it contrasted the tendency of the capital to grow towards the north.

The initial plan included mainly housing and offices, and currently includes educational facilities, a large shopping centre (Field's), an international convention centre (Bella Centre)[11], and a multipurpose venue (Royal Arena) with global ambitions.

Ørestad is, in itself, a new great axis that divides an urban fabric woven together from single-family homes with gardens, a golf course, and wetlands. The duality between large and small scale coexists in Ørestad, where the architectural organization resulting from the building lots and interests of private development, combines terraced houses with orchards and large housing blocks.

In Ørestad, water is another structural element that participates in a personal way of understanding the urban landscape that connects with the nature of the place. A canal parallels the route of the M1, and a pond defines the southern limit of this promised land that looks out towards the natural area of Vestamager, also known as Kalvebod Fælled[12]. On the southern edge, the architecture of Ørestad is abruptly interrupted by the presence of the horizon. 8 House (BIG), on the southern limit of Ørestad, reveres the landscape by tilting its architecture and inviting nature to be part of its dynamic courtyards defined with small mountains, this time, real ones.

[10] Together with Ørestad, it was decided to build the subway, which would significantly improve public transport in the capital.
[11] In Ørestad, signs have been installed to announce the identity of this district, and they provide different messages:
- "With roots in Copenhagen architecture and lifestyle, Bellakvarter shows how a local neighbourhood can co-exist beautifully with an international conference centre".
- "A new Copenhagen neighbourhood is in the making right here! The area around Bella Canter is transforming into Bellakvarter - with residents, shops, and visitors from all over the world."
- "Just around the corner, you will find Nordergarden - a new urban space that during the coming summers develops into a hotspot for urban gardens, play, good food, and events for all of Copenhagen. In the middle of Nordgarden the Bella Urban Garden community is growing. Here you will find radishes, apple trees, and flowers and everything in between. During the summer, there are free workshops on urban gardening. "
[12] Area reclaimed from the sea in the 1940s to house military manoeuvres, and which is currently structured as a natural marshland space.
[13] «La ciudad urbanal es una Ciudad con lugares "urbanales" que explican las consecuencias urbanas de la globalización» [The urbanal city is a city with "urbanal" places that explain the urban consequences of globalization].

CONCLUSION

With practically no exceptions, the evolution of European cities recognizes two types of contrasting scenarios that make up contemporary urban reality: the essence of the "emotional city" (Caruso 2001), and the confusion and potential of new *urbanal* (Muñoz 2008)[13] scenarios. Historic, newly built and radically transformed urban fragments coexist within a city. All of these fragments, succeeding or not, seek to fit into an urban structure that tends to redefine itself integrating discontinuities and an idea of a changing urbanity. The reaffirmation of the urban identity tries to balance local conditions versus global influences, and in some cases strong real estate and market pressures. The diverse socio-economic circumstances and situations experienced in the European context, with moments of prosperity and recession, influence the urban development and the way of *making city*. The review of the European transformed city through specific urban scenes allows a reading of the production of the urban space (Lefebvre 1974) in the last decades, and the role that the architectural language plays in creating a concrete urban appearance and a specific urbanity (Solà-Morales et al. 2008).

The dialogue between the *ville* and the *cité* (Sennett 2018) links the physical and built environment with the abstract nature of the character of urban life. This dialogue reveals how cities are inhabited today, and how architectural forms are designed full of meanings (in their composition and in their envelopes) showing a *face of the city* defined with different cosmetic techniques (Kipnis 1997) that conditions the perception of urban scenes. In consequence, European architects fully trust in the possibilities of architectural language, and therefore a display of a cosmetic refinement enhances the subjectivity on the urban readers. Architecture, again, approaches the old debate that faces poetry and rationality[14].

Poetry, today, in the architectural context linked to ornament and the desire to create a much *kinder* architecture, becomes a tool to bring discipline closer to the user. It could be affirmed that the cosmetic linked to the management of architectural language seeks to create an "initial domesticity"; that is, conditions of comfort and habitability that already exist even before the inhabitant comes to experience architecture. This iconoclastic will is a consequence of the exhaustion of iconic architecture and the demands caused by the real estate crisis.

The habitability of the city is associated with the face, meaning the appearance and the semblance of the city. In Barcelona, El Turó de la Rovira, despite being a deconstructed and naked space, is capable of showing the history of the city and becoming a social meeting place. It is exactly the opposite situation to which one can experience when wandering through the soulless spaces of the Forum area. In Zurich, despite the functional success of the Europaallee blocks and the urban pragmatism of Oerlikon, the essence of the city reappears under the infrastructural bridges or the different viewpoints (Swiss tower or Toni Areal) of Zurich West, and is there where the Swiss socio-cultural identity feels like home, that sense of *homeyness* that Caruso talks about. In Copenhagen, when strolling around Nordhavn, the marine environment, saltpetre and freedom can be seen in the superimposition of the new on the old without any renunciation of modernity. Meanwhile, in Ørestad the most effective cosmetics are those of each building, such as the 8 by BIG, since the sum of architectural cosmetic techniques dilutes the feeling of belonging to the place.

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[14] The Triennial of Architecture of Lisbon, that takes place this year 2019 and is title "The poetics of the reason", reaffirms the validity of the debate that raises the application of different cosmetic techniques within the scope of the architectural discipline. «The poetics of reason states that, for all the subjective and non-scientific dimension, architecture does rest on reason, and our aim is to shed light onto he specificity of this reason».

In these urban debates, the language and image (Lynch 1960) of the architectural objects are key for the urban identity. In this sense, the architectural object centres the debate between cosmetic subjectivity and scientific objectivity, and it is confirmed as a meeting point for the meanings of the face of the city and the architectural fragments. In recent decades, the image (Ursprung 2008) and appearance have increasingly played a more important role in the production of urban space, both exterior and interior (Pimlott 2016). In this context, it is necessary to take into account that the order of the visual culture that now prevails, alters and conditions the design processes. The artifice, intrinsic to the architectural act, continues to draw interpretations that regulate the freedom of all those who experience architecture. Exterior and interior appearances define the links with the city and, specifically from the outside, taken into consideration that architectural objects can choose to be contextual, autonomous or indifferent, and therefore, to be friendly, distant or indifferent to their surroundings.