

TOWARDS A NEW URBARCHITECTONIC COLORATION

UDC 711.42+72.01(045)=111

Nikola Cekić

University of Niš, The Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Serbia

Abstract. *The crisis in ecorurbarchitecture of modern times is reflected in the large number of superficially conceived villages and towns, houses, streets and plazas, lacking the artistic contents, as well as the coloration synchronized with the natural structures in the environment. Creators of the architecture failed to see the color as the fourth dimension, even though it was at hand. They failed to understand its role as a primarily multidisciplinary issue of awareness, culture, tradition, human customs, their ethnic and historical understanding of the artifact-nature relation, and its role as a corrective procedure to improve the living conditions in the habitations and its role in unifying of ecorurbarchitectonic values in the vision of art. The creators also failed to convince the future users to comprehend that village and city, different as they are, have noticeably drawn closer in terms of art.*

The aim of this paper is to pose the crucial questions concerning the new ecorurbarchitectonic coloration, which may improve the state of physical structures in space.

Key words: *ecorurbarchitectonic coloration, aesthetic balance of space, neglected visibility, spiritual identity, iconology of colors*

"Humans react to color in an organical way, directly, because the first impression of the color of an object is received through the eye. Only after that the reaction process includes brain and other parts of human organism. It has been scientifically proved that this first impression-reaction of an eye about the color of an object (picture, some other color composition, an object etc) has been subsequently changed and corrected. Being that colors are all around us, knowing the secrets of colors and their relationship is particularly important for all those who use their expressive potential in any way. Not only a painter uses colors. Not only those making posters, conceptual designs of carpets, tapestries use it... Any object used by humans in life is characterized by coloration, thus, when thinking about materials for construction of a building, particularly of an interior, one is also "painting" in such situations. Color is one of the characteristics of material "

(Prof. Ljubojevic Dusan, COLOR AND ITS APPLICATION
"Architectonic Faculty of Belgrade". Belgrade, 1982.)

The constant growth of ecorurban agglomerations in the worlds has brought about great changes in their size, but also very visible, picturesque changes of micro and macro-environmental units, and caused appearance of new ecorurbarchitectonic forms in space, new aesthetic values, but also failures. Simply, color, aroma and taste of villages and cities took on new intonations, effects of a different character, thus the quest for their new identities and their attractive physiognomies are nowadays the center of our attention.

Color and its application in city and village space have become topical to such an extent that it is not any more only the question of art and ecorurbarchitecture. It is at the beginning of the new millennium primarily a matter of awareness, culture, tradition, human customs, their ethnic and historical understanding of the artifact-nature relation, and a corrective factor to improve the living conditions in the habitations and an attempt to unify the ecorurbarchitectonic values in the vision of art.

In general terms, the question of application of color in recent ecorurbarchitectonic past has been marginalized, marked with chaos, with numerous monotonous "dumps" of gray concrete and brickwork, with endless, gray asphalt surfaces, where it is difficult to survive, and where it is even more difficult to find joyful natural colors and forms. Therefore, this is an appeal to change the present state of affairs, and a wish to harmonize the houses with their environment, by enriching them with colors, to elevate construction above a mere, canonized engineering act. There are numerous examples confirming such attitude and a wish to direct the taste toward the natural environment and to establish the correlation with artifact structures.

The application of colors in the architectonic space can be a risk, but it can also be a perfect opportunity for an artist to embellish the concrete facades, including the roof and the ground level, to place the existing portals, façade plastics, billboards etc. into a new aesthetic word, to offer a new understanding of healthy, beautiful and connected environmental units and of a new world of symbols, and to establish a new spirit of place, *genius loci* suited to the needs of users. There is a sensibility and humanistic effort to imprint the durable marks of one generation, via applying color on vertical, slant and horizontal surfaces of physical structures. This should improve, recycle, rearrange, transform and balance, to a certain extent, the present status of general, accelerated degradation of ecorurban living and the shattered image of the contemporary world. This should engender a more creative ecorurbarchitectonic handwriting, new modernity in city-building interventions, more colorful and dynamic "facadism", to impose a deep innovative revolution in cultivating the ecorurbarchitectonic space, and to found a different way of thinking about city and village, through culture, art and new aesthetic understanding. This should result in an easier visual acceptance and constant arrangement of villages and cities.

Serbian writer, Milovan Danojlic said: "... nowadays, everything is built in a hurry, more with legs than with hands. There is no calm reasoning or thoughtful stroke, or an enthusiastic approach, no original and clean line. The building material is a prefab stuff: buy it cheap, assemble it as you can and push on. One comes to ask himself, what became of old master craftsmen, who produced all those curves and shadows that we perceive as hand marks on tools, furniture, tomb stones and façades of old houses? How come the poor of yesterday had more taste than contemporary commissioners and builders, who are more technically equipped and more well-off? Our towns were built in haste and for a temporary use... and then the temporariness stretched into eternity..."

I dare say that contemporary ecorurban situations with very varied, dramatic and contrasting arrangement of artistic, but also of very non-artistic interpolations of new parts into existing wholes, are absurd to the extent that the visual metabolics of appropriate relationship are omitted even in the places where there were no reasonable arguments for that, only to, at any cost, "persuade the unconscious wisdom of the eye", as Brent Brolin put it.

There are good messages to the world, sign of the times, and we can see them in the examples of Italian cities of Portofino, Burano, Manarole, Alberobello, Siena, Rumanian Sighisoara, Indian Jodhpur, Greek Santorini, Albanian Tirana, and other cities in the world. They demonstrate and confirm that the through the synthetic action of the applied visual art in architecture, where the volumes in space are articulated and defined by colors, a free interpretation of history of tradition can be established, as well as the flexible relationship towards the functions, and a refrained approach to the super systems and technologies.

Contents in action are essentially moved or abated by the multi-meaning, inserted colors.

A great Belgrade painter Leonid Sejka said that they bring peace and beauty, lavishness, silence and joy, and that painting is a form of prayer. They help to free ecorurban architecture of stringent recipes and constraints of the past, and to intensify the legibility and comprehensives of many agglomeration, to use the complex spiritual coordinates to determine the new organic pluralism, and inaugurate the new codes in restructuring of artifacts. We are dealing with discovery of visual and coloration changes in a new ecorurban architectonic rhetorics, I consider to bring about the variety of composition and an emotional improvement. It demonstrates that colors may amend many omissions made, and that it is a valuable, good, powerful artistic-designer tool, a synthesizer in remodeling and restoration of ecorurban continuum. In this context, the example of Tirana is very indicative. In a too hasty intervention with colors, a new visual, coloring setting has been created. The city lost the gray bulks overnight, and got a refreshed house façades, of an entirely new visual value. There is a theoretical question: has the "manufacturer" of such micro-environmental units, filled with varied and joyful colors, actually produced an improvement in terms of creating a certain visual pattern in space? I think yes, and also that with a very careful approach in understanding a city it is possible to create a new cultural environment in the old, existing forms. We are concentrating on the different forms of modeling of a city and creating its aesthetics. Therefore, it is necessary to remove and substitute the stereotype physiognomies of physical structures by more charming and attractive details, with more attractive attributes, by rediscovering identification in which any resident of a city will realize, that with all the differences there are, the city has noticeably approached to him!

Creators of contemporary ecorurban civilization may find a challenging task in using colors for recuperating cities and villages, and not let them deteriorate in terms of coloration, and improve their poor, chaotic and dilapidated appearance, particularly in relation with nature.

We cannot and we must not hide behind the facts of bare materiality of urban structures, behind the idea of rudimentary engineering city-building reduced to exclusively material-morphologic dimensions, where colors decipher the degraded status of ecologic and artifact environment, dimensions of historical, cultural and social movements – marks of material and spiritual character. Colors in the order of values are a means to escape banality and technical vulgarity of the destiny of modern ecorurban physical structures. The

ecorurban reality of houses, streets, squares and plazas, urban space in general in central and peripheral districts, can be significantly improved in this remodeling procedure, via an inspired color interpolation. In my opinion, there is a need in the human nature, to receive a sensation of rurbarchitectonic space as a whole, not in parts, and that such approach requires more intellectual effort to comprehend the spatial units symbolically. The attention of the users is related to the environment, and its intricate logical particularity, to the scenic non-globalistic quality composed of years and history and style forms, of old and new attire of the houses, iconology of colors...

Have you ever thought just how many urban agglomerations have toponyms, names, with colors in its prefix: Beograd, Belgorod, Bela Crkva, Bela Palanka, Crna Trava, Crnokliste, Crnojlevica, Zelenika, Golden Prague, Rottenburg, Grinberg, Blue City... or about these: Red square, Crvenka, Crna Gora, Schwarzwald, Grinwald, ... or about Cracow with its majority of buildings in an agony of colors, coated-colored-veneered by the black color from the particles of soot from the steel mills in Nova Huta, require urgent remedy since the second half of the previous century. Disturbed appearances of the façades of houses with very lavish, plastic relief, call for a serious intervention in order to save the endangered architecture and at the same time indicate the necessity of the return of lost colors, abandoned visual metabolics, their relations and harmony in space, and an establishment of ideas for arrangement of structures, that are based on multidisciplinary and artistic foundations.

The idea of enhancing the coloration of micro and macro environmental ecorurbarchitectonic units is sustainable.

We can mend and change the world with color! It is a fourth dimension of space and its elements!

We can visually integrate the resources in the environment, initialize mitigation of disharmony of architectonic forms, their stiff, commanding geometrical strokes, we can soften and coordinate the rigidly shaped forms which are prevalent in the modern ecorurbarchitecture. It is necessary to attempt to emphasize or diminish the dynamism of forms of physical structures, to focus on the problems of a preventive aesthetic solution of the conflicts and the harmony (disharmony) in space, repair the legibility and perspective of physical and cultural and historical environment, improve definition of constituent contours, and clarify the bulks.

In the same sense, one should use their important, psychedelic property as an additional impulse, city-building, artistic element for influence on the human mood and their visual comfort, its influence on the better conceptual understanding on the picturesque relationship: man-wall, man-artifact, man-nature. In the past, we did not deal with the entire concept of appearance of street or square façades, and their physiognomies were created spontaneously and non-harmoniously, in the process, according to the investor's idea, so the spatial interpretations were neglected, and became standard, cliché and sometimes controversial, of an irritating intensity. Apart from the efforts made, many ecorurban agglomerations did not include in their vocabulary, nor understood, the spiritual identity of the people through the used color, nor did they understand it as a normal artistic challenge, nor as an important city-building circumstance, a mastery of primordial degree. It can be very successfully employed, but also abused. Especially in an era of ecorurbarchitectonic explosion of creation of physical structures which are in a sort of metastasis. There emerges an impression that we have forgotten the emotional impression of peo-

ple in contact with ecorurban structures and their psychological growing up. We have forgotten of the spiritual coordinates whose direction depends on the sensory pleasure or displeasure, and we have never been indifferent to the colors.

I am convinced that we have understood the building of a city in a wrong, chaotic way: as a rigid formalism, in too a static and engineering way, without any high-level artistic expression, visual and aesthetic influences, and that because of that the search for the lost structures and an unrealized artistic originality today is a great, dead-end, modern odyssey.

The dramatic courses of development of cities in the world resemble of ships lost in fog and time. Their artistic face still cannot be visualized. We are plunged into an unexpectedly strong mediocrity, with little artistic potential, and a lot of globalistic, imitative commodity. We have neglected the originality of national spirit, neglected the values of national coloration, and instead championed the agreed to the non-productive vagueness, tension and universal visuality. And this is not a good sign!

In this context, the latest example of the Olympic structures in Beijing is inevitable, as they have brought about an entirely new concept, a series of revolutionary, dynamic, quickly alterable visual and coloration innovations. The integration of electronic, digital technologies and art, where the domination of modern electronics is easily perceptible.

In the book "Postmodern town planning" Nan Elin claims that "boredom, this horrible enemy of new cities will find its opposite in the likeness of alternating narrow streets and open spaces, in the original details on the facades, that will not always conform to the ruling laws of taste, but bring about the variety and break the monotony; in the streets open for the cars, without the fashionable care to divide the fast automotive lanes and pedestrian tracks. Along the space are alternating: shops, cafes, ball sport facilities, houses with small gardens where children can play in front of their mothers, while they are busy doing other things. The features discriminating such neighborhood from the typical up-town areas include/ a well measured and varied public space, houses in a row (city houses) with a small lawn in front of the house and a big backyard: "picturesque" style of architecture with various facades and the specter of colors one may find in the old villages and the environment".

For the closure, I conclude with the theses for further consideration:

1. Houses, streets, squares of ecorurban agglomerations must speak with colors.
2. Colors must be allowed to develop in creating the scenic spaces of ecorurban continuum.
3. Time, space and ecorurbarchitecture must be artistically linked with color?
4. The world nowadays has a need, more than ever before, for a new iconology of colors in ecorurban space.
5. Color is enigmatic, fourth dimension of space and its elements.
6. Coloration univalence and one-dimensionality are not and cannot be signs of modern ecorurbarchitecture.
7. Colors are used to form atmosphere in ecorurbarchitectonic space. They define it but also suggest visual sensations and new experiences.
8. Color is the imprint of time. Synthetizing, aesthetizing moving tool for metamorphosis in space.
9. Color is all around us. It is a powerful means for crystallization of contents in space, but also for arrest of their dilapidation of coloration.
10. We can improve the world with color!

REFERENCES

1. Arnhajm Rudolf, Umetnosti vizuelno Opažanje. "Univerzitet umetnosti", Beograd, 1987.
2. Bogdanović Kosta, Svest o obliku. "Muzej savremene umetnosti", Beograd, 1988.
3. Brolin Brent, Arhitektura u kontekstu. "Građevinska knjiga", Beograd, 1985.
4. Dorfles Đilo, Pohvala disharmoniji. "Svetovi", Novi Sad, 1986.
5. Eko Umberto, Kultura, informacija, komunikacija. "Nolit", Beograd, 1973.
6. Elin Nan, Postmoderni urbanizam, "Teorija urbanog dizajna na evropskom kontinentu". Edicija: "Raskrsnice arhitekture"- "Orion", Beograd, 2002.
7. Foht Ivan, Uvod u estetiku. "Svjetlost", Sarajevo, 1984.
8. Krijer Rob, Gradski prostor u teoriji i praksi - Na primerim gradskog jezgra Štutgarta. "Građevinska knjiga", Beograd, 1991.
9. Ljubojević Dušan, Boja i njena primena. "Arhitektonski fakultet u Beogradu". Poslediplomske studije-kurs: Stanovanje 1981-1983. Materijali sveska 65. Beograd, 1982.
10. Pušić Ljubinko, Grad, znaci vremena. "Matica srpska", Novi Sad, 1991.

KA NOVOM URBARHITEKTONSKOM KOLORITU**Nikola Cekić**

Kriza u ekourbarhitekturi novog vremena sagledava se kroz veliki broj površno osmišljenih sela i gradova, kuća, ulica i pjaceta, sa malo umetničkih iskaza i premalo kolorita, uskaladenog sa prirodnim strukturama u okruženju. Stvaraoci nisu uspeli da vide boju kao četvrtu dimenziju, iako je bila na dohvat ruke. Nisu razumeli njeno učešće kao prvenstveno multidisciplinarno pitanje svesti, kulture, tradicije, običaja ljudi, njihovog etnosa i istorijskog razumevanja relacije artefakt-priroda, važan korekturni faktor poboljšavanja uslova življenja u staništima, težnju ka jedinstvu ekourbarhitektonskih vrednosti u viziji umetnosti. Niti su ubedili buduće korisnike da shvate kako su im se selo i grad, sa svim različitostima koje nose, primetno umetnički približili!

Ovaj rad ima za cilj da otvori ključna pitanja koja tangiraju novi ekourbarhitektonski kolorit sa kojim se stanje fizičkih struktura u prostoru može popraviti.