COLLAGE CITY: CRISIS OF THE OBJECT: PREDICAMENT OF TEXTURE

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“But modern architecture’s object fixation (the object which is not an object) is our present concern only insofar as it involves the city”

Public Space – The Street

• Comparison of Amsterdam South, c. 1961 to Paris model of 1861. Amsterdam was a genuine attempt to provide a more tolerable theater of existence.

Air, light, prospect, open space have all been made available; but, while one may sense that one is here on the threshold of the welfare state, one may still be overcome by the anomaly. The two big avenues, for all their ambitious protestation, are diffident and residual.

“Simply these avenues are disposable. In no way do their facades designate any effective frontier between public and private. They are evasive.”

Public Space – The City Center

• Le Corbusier. Project for city center of Saint-Dié (1945) illustrates the dilemma of the free standing building. Doubted whether this “center” would facilitate confluence, then regardless of the desirability of this effect, it seems that what we are here provided with is a kind of unfulfilling schizophrenia.

• “Space of the Square, professing to be an elevation of density, the relief of an impacted context, quickly lends itself to be read as nothing of the kind. It exists without essential back up or support, without pressure, in built or human form, to give credibility or vitality to its existence; and, with the space thus fundamentally “unexplained,” it becomes apparent that, far from being any outcropping of an historical or spatial context (which it would seem to be), the Harlow town square is, in effect, a foreign body interjected into a garden suburb without benefit of quotation marks.”
Texture of the Urban Fabric

- Buildings as objects is not disregarded in its totality: suggests that buildings should act both as space occupier and space definer – maintaining an individual presence while providing continuity to the urban texture.

- Rather than hoping and waiting for the withering away of the object, allow and encourage the object to become digested in a prevalent texture or matrix.

- Instead of *Solid or Void* rather allow them both, as attempts to simulate the qualities of “solid” city with the elements of “void,” to emerge as comparable gestures of interrogation.

- The situation hoped for should be recognized as one in which both buildings and spaces exist in an equality of sustained debate. A debate in which victory consists in each component emerging undefeated, “the imagined condition is a type of solid-void dialectic, which might allow for the joint existence…”