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## **Avenues of Approach – Petar Bojanić and the Institution of Architecture**

**Abstract:** The philosopher Petar Bojanić advocates resistance of the architectural discipline to the philosophy of architecture. Using the technique of *mise-en-scène*, in “Thinking Architecture/DisCIPLining Architecture” (2015) Bojanić reaffirms that after architecture’s theoretical turn in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the architect is undoubtedly capable of theoretically thematizing his/her own work. I argue strongly that this implies, among other things, building a disciplinary language, which must reconcile, or at least balance between, the verbal and non-verbal form of expression. Also, I try to show that it is precisely theory that the architect has needed through history to establish the architectural discipline as liberal and autonomous.

In “The Real and the Theoretical” (2013) the philosopher from Belgrade stresses the tensions between reality and theory present in the work of the architect. Theorizing in the field of architecture carries a danger of severe detachment from currently important and pressing social problems. Since there is no discipline without a group and since architecture is defined as the art of community, architectural practice can be understood, as it is in “The Architectural Philosophy” (2013), as a spatial way of transforming society.

**Keywords:** Petar Bojanić, architecture, resistance, autonomy, philosophy

As a sort of introduction to this essay, I would like to say that my intention is not to try to objectify the thought of Petar Bojanić on the question of architecture. The main reason for this decision is that I am dealing with the continuously developing and vital thought of this philosopher. Despite all efforts, at this moment it would be hard to predict the future course it will take, and it would not be possible to thoroughly expound on all of Bojanić’s reflections on this immense topic in a single exposition. Bojanić’s writing on architecture is quite multidirectional and my intention here is only to reflect on the statements I found essential and draw conclusions from them. Therefore, this essay will be only one of many possible avenues of interpretation.

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## 1.

From a metaphorical point of view, it is very easy and effective to imagine an introduction as a spatial object, as a certain architectural element – a portico or a vestibule. Does every text on the topic of architecture have to be seen as an introduction to its realm? Bojanić presents many (but not all) of the ideas about architectural phenomena in the form of introductory texts to the books he co-edited with the architect Vladan Đokić. Does a text with this function and communicational status have a right to claim the dignity of an important textual form? Such practice is indeed unusual.

The genesis of the prefaces written by Bojanić and Đokić from 2009 to 2014 can be metonymically followed by focusing on the structure of the titles they bear. The first one is simply titled “A Word of Introduction”. The second one has the same title but is supplemented with the subtitle “On the City, On the Thought of the City”. They are followed by “On the Architect’s Word as the Architectural Act”, “What is an Architectural Gesture?” and “The Architectural Philosophy”. In their last joint work, the intricateness of title reaches its full capacity in “Technique as the First of Institutionalized Action: On the First or Second Attempt of Building”. The complexity and the variation of the titles are correlatively followed by the increasingly complex structure of the texts they announce.

The institution of the preface is a place where a philosopher becomes just an author, where the philosophical text confronts its material and communicational boundaries. It logically precedes the purity of philosophical discourse and is exterior to it: “In the introduction, it is the philosopher who speaks; in the preface, it is the author of the book.”<sup>1</sup> However, the prefaces I am talking about are not pure prefaces. There are at least two arguments for this assertion: a) they do not only anticipate particular texts which follow them in the books they separately open, but also problematize the very concept of architecture from the perspective of their universal validity; the theoretical dimension of these prefaces raises them to the level of the general introduction to the problem of architecture; b) they can stand by themselves independently of the original place of their publication and surpass their occasional function.<sup>2</sup>

It can be said that almost all of these prefaces have the same purpose: to insist on the legitimate request that the architect should not mutely act and must be able to verbally and theoretically thematize his or her work. Each of them accentuates a specific aspect of the architectural occupation, directly or indirectly related to this postulate. In the introductory piece of writing titled “What is an Architectural Gesture?” it is observed that the most desirable and convenient form for architectural

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<sup>1</sup> Jean-Marie Schaeffer, “Note sur la préface philosophique,” *Poétique* 69 (1987): 37.

<sup>2</sup> The important text “The Architectural Philosophy”, which should be seen as a paper in which the ideas from the prefaces written earlier culminate, and which was originally published as the clarifying introduction to the series of conversations with architectural thinkers gathered in the Proceedings of the international conference *Architecture of Deconstruction* held in Belgrade in October 2012, was published later on without any problems in the form of a separate study (“La Philosophia Architecttonica”) in the journal *Rivista di Estetica* (1, 2015).

expression is a short one.<sup>3</sup> This verbal economy points out the forcefully terse way of exposing the subject matter and, at the same time, points to the exterior side of every verbal expression, to the broadness of space where every utterance about this topic confronts its limit.

Analogically, other Bojanić texts on this subject – that is, those not written in collaboration with Vladan Đokić – are also written in a short form. I refer here to “Quotings”, “The Real and the Theoretical” and “Thinking Architecture/Disciplining Architecture”. Why does Bojanić insist on a short form of expression? I believe that because architecture is a non-discursive art this philosopher aims to intentionally limit the scope of architectural discourse and to acknowledge the existence of the linguistically ineffable in the realm of architecture. However, since there is no architecture without the discourse then theoretical writing on this topic should be presented in an effective form. When it comes to architecture, the introductory and/or short forms have a performative potential different from the one that more closed and voluminous texts have. Will Bojanić ever write an organically structured book that will be entirely dedicated to architecture? I must emphasize that this question interests me on the level of logic. Is such a project conceivable with his approach? Should it be expected? Is such a hope justified or is this *a priori* in vain?

The philosopher sententiously declares: “The first space of philosophy and architecture – THE ROAD.”<sup>4</sup> But where does this road come from and where does it go? Is the introduction necessarily the beginning of the road? The introduction is a form which is insisted on precisely because a *pure* beginning in fact does not exist.<sup>5</sup> To insist on the road which opens the writing of introductions means to avoid the effect of originality of commencing. Each text with the intention to thematize the architectural phenomenon must be perceived as an introduction to it, even if this goes against its original intention. It would be legitimate to take the next step and, because of the very nature of the topic in question, to say that each text about architecture is just a discursive introductory form to a space which is not built only of pure concepts.

## 2.

The theoretical turn in architecture in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century made firmly evident that the architect is a thinker capable of thematizing his or her work:

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<sup>3</sup> Petar Bojanić, Vladan Đokić, “Šta jeste arhitekturni gest?,” in *Arhitektura kao gest* (Beograd: Arhitektonski fakultet, 2012), 11.

<sup>4</sup> Petar Bojanić, “Navođenja,” *Polja*, 394 (1991): 459.

<sup>5</sup> In the text “Realism: institution and corporation” it is confidently stated that “there is no first step, but always and only the next step”. Petar Bojanić, *O institucionalnom delovanju* (Novi Sad, Beograd: Akademska knjiga, Institut za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju, 2016), 165. (The english version of the book is to be published by Vittorio Klostermann Verlag, Frankfurt am Main.)

“Indeed, today the philosopher is awakened in the architect.”<sup>6</sup> I think it is important to focus attention on the verb which Bojanić justifiably uses when talking about this recent ‘dramatic’ turning point. The usage of “to awake” (“risvegliare”) indicates that the figure of the theoretician has always been present through history in the figure of the architect *qua* architect.

Where does this statement draw its legitimacy from? Bojanić is absolutely right when he claims that there is no discipline without its history. The genesis of the architectural discipline has been philosophico-theoretically conditioned. With the pretension to gain a better and acceptable social status, the architect had to show and prove that his enterprise could not be reduced to mere *fabrica* or the category of *armatura*, that behind it an intellectual endeavour is present, which separates it from the so-called ‘mechanical’ arts and manual work. In order to be respected as such in the community, the architect had to become a figure with knowledge of theory and the ability to express himself conceptually. Actually, it was the mutism of the builder that prevented him from becoming the architect, or – as Bojanić concisely said – from coming out of anonymity. The emancipation of this discipline has been possible, in that direction, through his theoretical activity. The recognition of the architectural discipline as intellectual and liberal took place for the first time in Italy of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Once the aforesaid distinction was made, the investigation of the theoretical aspect of the architect’s profession had been introduced in the process of his education, beside the practical or the technical one.<sup>7</sup>

Apart from the continual need for the (re)constitution of autonomous architectural terminology and language, and, generally speaking, its coherent body of theory, to be a discipline for architecture means that its disciplinary knowledge can be rigorously taught to students and as such transmitted through time and from one person to another. This fact indicates that architecture as a discipline has to necessarily imply a group of people and joint work as a condition for this project to be realized.

On the other hand, what is the relation of philosophy to architecture? Since its beginnings, philosophical discourse has included architectural metaphors inside itself; undoubtedly the dialogue *Timaeus* is one of the most sonorous examples, but the transcendental foundation of philosophical projects, from Descartes onwards, has provided the possibility of a firm establishment of the analogy between the activities of the architect and the philosopher. From that point of view a philosophical system must unconditionally rest upon the logic of its proper architectonics and must be

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<sup>6</sup> Petar Bojanić, Vladan Đokić, “The Architectural Philosophy,” in *AoD Interviews* (Belgrade: Faculty of Architecture, 2013), 11.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Oskar Kristeller, “The Modern System of the Arts (I),” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12, 4 (1951): 514. On the other hand, it is an interesting and significant fact that education in architecture in Serbia was introduced for the first time precisely within the Department of Philosophy, with the reform of the Lyceum in Belgrade (1841), and this school subject carried the title “civil architecture”. Jovan Miličević, “Razvoj nastave arhitekture na visokim školama u Srbiji (1841–1914),” *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta* 13 (1976): 175.

categorically built up and developed in accordance with its fundamental basis.<sup>8</sup> By moving the focus to the constructivist subjectivity, reality has to appear as a mentally-constructed phenomenon.

In the philosophy of transcendentalism, the central text where essential moments are presented (and not at all accidentally) in a form of architectural and urbanistic terminology is *Discourse on the Method*. Descartes here and elsewhere mostly insists on the figure of ‘foundation’, followed by geometaphors of soil or bedrock, whose security and solidity serve, figuratively speaking, as the basis for a reliable philosophical reflection. Descartes’ approach can be adequately described by using the figure of the city: the most beautiful is the city built from the beginning on an empty plain, as a product of a rational geometric plan.<sup>9</sup> In addition to the urbanistic and architectural ones and in correlation with them, the metaphors of road (right or wrong) and journey (even the term “method” from the title contains the word *ὁδός* as its root, which means journey, way or road) are also vastly exploited.

In a way, architecture and philosophy both signify the project of a thoughtful building of rational structures. The very idea that philosophy can allow itself such spatial metaphors points to its relationship with architecture as a spatial art. Petar Bojanić undoubtedly follows the constructivist principle in his approach, but shifts focus from the ego logical perspective of transcendental subjectivity to the ontology of social objects.

Architecture can be and is a philosophical topic, but can architecture take itself as a topic? For a discipline to establish itself as autonomous it has to provide its own theoretical basis. Bojanić affirms that thematization or self-thematization of architecture and the architect leads to the institutionalization of this discipline in its autonomy.<sup>10</sup> In the previous sentence the conjunction ‘or’ corresponds to Bojanić’s intentional ambivalence about the nature of the agent who would perform this act or project of institutionalization. Is the philosopher then the main agent or does he only have a supporting role in this action? In “Thinking Architecture/Disciplining Architecture”, exactly where the statement in question is found, the whole real *mise-en-scène* with the figures of philosopher and architect is effectively constructed. The end of this text, in fact its last sentence, explicitly reveals that the philosopher is the one who is retreating in front of the architect in an optimistic and promising way (*adesso, ora...*). A philosopher should construct and provide a theoretical basis for the process of self-thematization of the architect, and then go off the stage on which he would play the role of the architect’s fundamental source.

As philosophy is capable of self-foundation and of constructing a framework and creating space for other disciplines and genres of knowledge to be firmly founded, it has the legitimate right, even the task, to do the same with architecture. But an

<sup>8</sup> In a response to objections by Pierre Bourdin to the *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Descartes explicitly says: “Everywhere in my writings I made it clear that my procedure was like that of Architects planning houses.” Descartes, *The Philosophical Works*, vol. II (New York: Dover, 1955), 325. (Descartes, *Oeuvres*, vol. VII /Paris: Léopold Cerf, 1904/, 536.) In the polemical exchange, which was printed in the second edition of the treatise, the philosopher describes his opponent as a common bricklayer who is not able to understand the architect’s construction.

<sup>9</sup> Descartes, *Oeuvres*, vol. VI (Paris: Léopold Cerf, 1902), 11.

<sup>10</sup> Petar Bojanić, “Disciplinare l’architettura/pensare l’architettura,” *Aut Aut* 368 (2015): 54–55.

important problem is set in front of Bojanić: how to save this foundational and limitational role of philosophy and simultaneously avoid its hierarchically structured and dominative intention? The answer is found in Bojanić's assertion that the architect is by his or her immanent nature the architect-philosopher, a figure competent to confidently provoke and challenge a philosopher's assertions. One thing is absolutely irrefutable in this case. Bojanić's scene with the characters of the architect and the philosopher is philosophically directed and constructed. Architecture cannot be liberated from the philosophical grip without its support. The shadow of the philosopher or theoretician will always lean over the figure of the architect.

### 3.

Our knowledge of the past of the institution of architecture is mostly based on preserved monuments, but also on the documents in which the presence of the architectural institution is officially confirmed in a written form. Moreover, some very important early facts about its genesis are available through records in the form of building inscriptions which contain written contracts or the architect's specifications (*συγγραφή*). Not only that written documents serve as verbal evidence about the history of the discipline – they precisely institutionalize the occupation of the architect. Today it is impossible to be an architect without registration in a bureau or studio, signing contracts and other administrative and transcendental requirements, which – Bojanić strongly claims – somehow make architects exist and provides the endurance of their profession. Because of that “the form of text or expression in space”<sup>11</sup> are equally significant for them.

In order to present their work in a correct and effective way, architects should connect both of these aspects. In building a disciplinary language, the architect must reconcile, or at least balance between, verbal and non-verbal forms of expression. Sebastiano Serlio, for example, left a mark in the history of architecture, not because of the objects he built, but because he wrote *I sette libri dell' architettura*, an influential treatise. On the contrary, his contemporary Giulio Romano did not leave a single piece of writing, but the history of this discipline is unimaginable without his *Palazzo del Te*.

In the text “On the Architect's Word as the Architectural Act”, whose title eloquently confirms and underlines its main thesis right from the start, it is affirmed that, over the last decades in the realm of “the prose of the world”, many architects have frequently been comparing architectural structures with structures of language.

“Arrangement and (dis)harmony of elements in space, on the basis of this logic, could be analogous to arrangement of signs in text or to order of phonemes and signs in language.”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Petar Bojanić, Vladan Đokić, “The Architectural Philosophy,” 16.

<sup>12</sup> Petar Bojanić, Vladan Đokić, “O reči arhitekta kao arhitekturnom aktu,” in *Dijalozi sa arhitektama* (Beograd: Arhitektonski fakultet, 2011), 9.

From this passage at least one important conclusion can be deduced. The relation between architecture and language corresponds to the relation of analogy, not identity. Analogical transfer clearly presupposes the existence of a similarity between two entities. In this case, the comparison is made on the assumption that both systems have a codified set of repetitive elements to be compounded in order to build more complex structures. Consequently, talking about architectural language is justified, because it possesses its proper elements and units (for example, arch, vault, cornice, entablature or bay, facade, corridor, terrace and so on).

It is true that composition of elements requires the rule of sequence. In order for somebody to be able to think, temporal sequentiality is *a priori* required for this process of composition of words and phrases, which corresponds to the process of development of thought. It is not possible, for example, to say at the same time *architecture* and *theory*; one word must follow the other. But the situation appears to be more complicated when it comes to architectural language (or better said, its languages). Unlike the linguistic one, architectural arrangement can present itself simultaneously. The philosopher or theoretician needs the temporal form of exposition for the verbalization of his thoughts, the architect not so much; he or she is a figure who thinks more spatially, whose ideas and plans must find their expression and realization in space.

Finally, what is architectural language? Does the architect speak more than one language? Are they translatable, and in what measure? How does the architect balance between them? It is clear that, unlike the second one, only the first is verbal in nature. Bojanić makes the essential difference in this context between “utterance” (*iskaz*) and “expression” (*izraz*). Although both belong to the category of architectural act or gesture, it is clear that the first one is only verbal in nature, unlike the second one. Therefore, being an architect implies a capacity “to move from one system of signs to another”<sup>13</sup>. He or she has to count on the parallelism or, more complicatedly, intertwinement of the different forms of expression and different kinds of vocabularies.

If there are two forms of language in the work of the architect, the verbal and non-verbal, which one has ontological priority? In other words, the question is which form is the original or primordial one. From Bojanić’s point of view, this dilemma appears to be meaningless. He argues elsewhere (in the essay “Quid pro quo”) that “what is being translated is already a translation of something else”<sup>14</sup>. It turns out that the original is always mediated. Logically speaking, the mute expression in space neither precedes nor comes after the architect’s verbal and conceptual occupation.

Furthermore, I am interested in the concept of untranslatability that Bojanić uses in the aforementioned essay. It is precisely the phenomenon of the untranslatable (*l’intraducibile*) which secures the existence of two simultaneous architectural forms of language. If it ceased to exist, this discipline would become absolutely transparent and theoretically uninteresting. Also, it leads to the point where the theoretico-discursive

<sup>13</sup> Petar Bojanić, Vladan Đokić, “Reč uvoda,” in *Teorija arhitekture i urbanizma* (Beograd: Arhitektonski fakultet, 2009), 9.

<sup>14</sup> Petar Bojanić, *Violenza e messianismo* (Milano, Udine: Mimesis, 2014), 47.

articulation of architectural phenomena reaches its limit. Architecture is not a discipline opposed to philosophy, but rather different only to a certain extent. I think it is precisely the non-discursiveness of architectural objects (the non-conceptual nature of their appearance) that is a specific quality by which the work of the architect confronts the work of the philosopher. Their final products are not of the same nature. In a literal sense, the architectural object is not built of verbal signs; it mutely occupies a certain place without necessarily containing words. On the other hand, philosophy or theory is a rigorously discursive discipline.

#### 4.

Every discipline has to imply a group or collectivity of subjects. As Bojanić argues, only from this perspective and through the procedures it requires to be constructed as such can the architectural discipline institutionalize itself as a 'social fact' and 'social factor'. Architectural activity is always a social action; to design and to build is always for the other, for somebody who will dwell or work in a certain building or a city as a whole (near us, you, me, them). Moreover, the situation becomes more complex concerning the contextual field the architect (or, consequently and more adequately said, architects) must approach and move through. Being truly an art of community and in comparison to other art forms, architecture affects *a fortiori* the largest number of its members. Because of that, and not only because of that, every architectural gesture is a social act.

This position should undoubtedly oblige architects to act responsibly in their enterprises, also in expressing their statements and viewpoints on this issue. Architects must try as much as they can to act as morally autonomous and socially aware figures, not simply as anonymous actors whose task is reduced to material verification of existing social and economic constellations, as if those were unchangeable.

In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, Ortega y Gasset noticed the potential self-destructivity of liberal professions in the epoch of anonymous collectivity. On the other hand, in an annex to his participation in the "Darmstadt Conversations" in 1951 and first published in Tangier later on, he spoke about architecture as an "art of community" (*arte colectivo*), as an expression of "collective intentions" (*intenciones colectivas*) and about buildings as an immense, in a certain manner ineffable, "social gesture" (*inmenso gesto social*).<sup>15</sup> Needless to say, the content of this reasoning is very similar to Bojanić's approach to the role of architecture, and any coincidence between them is not at all contingent with regard to the current framework of socio-ontological analysis.

Petar Bojanić is aware of the danger of the architect's fall or decline into anonymity. Non-linguistic or generally non-reflective modes of architects' behaviour in relation to his or her social circumstances, among other things, leads to the absence of their social or political – in a word, public – engagement and leads their work to an avenue without a name.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. José Ortega y Gasset, "Las profesiones liberales," and "Anejo: en torno al 'Coloquio de Darmstadt, 1951'" in *Obras completas*, tomo IX (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1965), 691–706. and 626f.

“We suggest this critique of the architect’s or architecture’s engagement be called the social gesture, or more precisely, that a key characteristic of architecture as a gesture or the gesture as the key to architecture, is resistance towards structures and hierarchies of our time. The gesture has social value and importance, if characterized by resistance (the architect is certainly one of the key actors in society who produces such gestures).”<sup>16</sup>

But how it is possible to defend at the same time the principles of architectural autonomy and the ability of architecture to reflect and impact on politics? At first, the so-called *formal critique* is necessary to strictly differentiate and establish architectural elements in their formal specificity. On the other hand, if architecture has a capacity to resist “towards structures and hierarchies of our time” and to actively transform them, it does not, therefore, only express itself and nothing else. It is argued that exactly this contradiction reveals the impossibility to apprehend architecture in a definitive manner and in its totality. Although *le silence des formes* exists, it only appears inside the dialectic of the social. In other words, “everything which is indispensable to architecture is precisely everything which does not concern it”<sup>17</sup>. It is the resistance to the political in the name of the political.

## 5.

In this *theatrum mundi* the philosopher and the architect share the same purpose in their missions, which somehow transcend the boundaries of their respective fields: it is a care for public good. The city is a category in which such concern finds its most manifest dimension. In the text “We’ who dwell: the necessity of philosophy of city” Bojanić asserts that philosophy is always civic – that is to say, the public and the philosopher simultaneously propose and call for the idea of “engaged dwelling”.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, we have seen that there is no architecture without a group and that it is defined as the art of community.

“Secondly: an architect or the group of architects are a social fact only to the extent to which they produce protocols of responsibility for all the parts of the society or city and for the recognition of public goods and public interest.”<sup>19</sup>

Buildings are real objects in space, an inevitable part of our daily life and actions. Concurrently, the essence of the city cannot be reduced to the sum of buildings. Nevertheless, its presence is an integral part of the reality we are living in. Every citizen, guided by his or her experience, should be engaged and participate in the project of making cities more livable for everyone, but it is especially an ethical obligation for

<sup>16</sup> Petar Bojanić, Vladan Đokić, “The Architectural Philosophy,” 16.

<sup>17</sup> Massimo Scolari, “Les Apories de l’Architecture,” *L’Architecture d’Aujourd’hui* 190 (1977): 89.

<sup>18</sup> Petar Bojanić, “‘Noi’ che abitiamo: modi di convivenza nella città,” in Carla Danani, ed., *I luoghi e gli altri* (Roma: Aracne, 2016), 21–32.

<sup>19</sup> Petar Bojanić, “Disciplinare l’architettura/pensare l’architettura,” 54.

architects and philosophers to face this reality – as Bojanić says – to protect “il interesse pubblico”, or as Silvia Malcovati states – to build “a better world”<sup>20</sup>.

“The real or the realism clearly asks for the cooperative action (working together) (not just the presence of a world, with or without quotation marks), the consideration of a context, as well as collective dimension, or global if you prefer, a radical change of the given, of the context (global or local), of the *inadequate*.”<sup>21</sup>

It is important to say that social acts are not always verbal acts, no matter how fundamental they are; words are only one kind among others. Social transformation is also possible in a mute manner, through realizations of architectural and urbanistic projects as a material way to non-discursively transform public and private spaces. This logic in no way excludes a theoretical approach to this problem from its horizons, *una svolta verso la teoria* is absolutely justified. But it is also true that every theorizing signifies a dead end. “The Real and the Theoretical” stresses the tension between reality and theory present in the work of the architect and the latent anti-realism in every discourse on architecture, because the horizon of social reality cannot be reduced to its verbal representation.

Theorizing in the field of architecture carries a danger of severe detachment from the currently important and pressing problems in society. On the contrary, the opinion of David Leatherbarrow that “the real task of reflection within the discipline is to witness and comprehend the emergence of both ideas and buildings from the cultural context that endows them with vital significance”, or that, again phenomenologically speaking, “reflection in architecture should become less theoretical, that it needs to be regrounded within a horizon of typical life situations”, seems very valid.<sup>22</sup> To penetrate into this radical reality which serves as architecture’s prefiguration is an initiative worth accomplishing and it is a serious and inspiring task, because “l’iniziativa è sempre un inizio, un nuovo inizio, un manifesto, una disciplina, ma anche un’iniziazione”<sup>23</sup>.

If every text on architecture has to be seen as the verbal introduction to a space whose essential part consists of non-verbal material elements and constructions, then this principal designation – which I propose – does not mean that all the texts written about architectural phenomena must be seen as inherently unfinished, like, for example, a half-finished building. This logic only suggests that there is always something more to say about the subject in question, because the formal language of architectural objects is not verbal in its nature: it is silent and spatial.

On the other hand, the demand for the autonomy of architecture and its disciplinary specificity does not necessarily nullify the socially and politically responsible role of architects in this Great Theater of the World. Architectural reflection on social

<sup>20</sup> Silvia Malcovati, “The Utopia of Reality,” *Serbian Architectural Journal* 6, 2 (2014): 160.

<sup>21</sup> Petar Bojanić, “Il Reale e il Teorico,” in Silvia Malcovati, ed., *Architettura e realismo* (Milano: Maggioli Editore, 2013), 111.

<sup>22</sup> David Leatherbarrow, “Architecture is its own Discipline,” in: Andrzej Piotrowski and Julia Williams Robinson, ed., *The Discipline of Architecture* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2001), 95, 101.

<sup>23</sup> Petar Bojanić, “Il Reale e il Teorico,” 107.

reality is only possible through reflection on its own internal reality.<sup>24</sup> The second approach, which consists of the theoretical and spatial self-thematization of architecture, does not exclude the first, socially aware approach; on the contrary, it is about two avenues irresistibly converging toward each other.

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