

Summary

CEZARY WAŚ/ From perversion to deconstruction. Bernard Tschumi's architecture – part 3

Among numerous philosophical strategies of deconstruction most frequently used was questioning the practice of strong opposition of two reasons. In many cases Bernard Tschumi's writings consider functioning of the conflict juxtaposition of the ideas of structure and ornament or theory and practice in history of architecture. Violation of traditional relations between terms of this kind, both old and modern, raised Jacques Derrida's objections, when he was induced for the first time to co-operate with architects' milieu. During this long lasting thought exchange the philosopher eventually acknowledged Bernard Tschumi's arguments for reasoning the encroachment of architecture's fundamental rules. Deconstruction applied in architecture was not a simple transposition or analogy of practices that had been applied by philosophy of deconstruction. We may even say that consideration of architectural terms became an important formula of deconstruction. Architecture understood in philosophical way became something beyond the practice and theory of its own discipline, a sort of metaphysics of both philosophy and architecture.

The deliberate encroachment of the simple division of architecture into theory and practice for the first time was a clear aim for Tschumi in his drawings and texts entitled *Manhattan Transcripts*. The contents of this series of works was a record of characteristic features of this borough of New York City in such a way that not only objects were the subject of the record but also relations between objects, people and events. The record was about to take into consideration a conflict character of elements of this representation and at the same time to avoid applying to them the rule of Mimeticism. The record became a form of reflection over the very record by an increased control over the ways of representation. Architecture which was considered in the MT was not directed to fulfill the needs of inhabitation or production, it was rather related with hitherto usually marginalised liminal situations: building ostentatiously big monuments, religious cult, war etc. Architecture operating in such relations focused the attention also on the included in it continuous tendency to overpass its own restrictions, the role of violence as its not recognised factor, or the meaning of excess and shock in its operation.

Architecture moving from reason towards madness became even more visible in the design of Parisian park de la Villette, whose pavilions were defined as *folies* (in French it means both small park buildings and follies). The Parc was supposed to be on the one hand a reflection of traditional society disintegration while on the other it questioned basic rules of producing a work of architecture. The traditional rules of designing, based on ordering up, were replaced with the strategies of dysfunction and dissociation. In Tschumi's opinion methods of this kind may be equivalent of what Derrida named *différance*. Instead of aiming at mergence, any diversity, games or variations were strengthened.

Tschumi's texts, in which he explained his attitude, were completed by Derrida's

extent statement entitled *Point de folie – Maintenant l'architecture*. Derrida's article is the most significant of all his statements on architecture as a form of thinking and activity. According to the philosopher, architecture should divide space (in French defined as *espacement*), what enables both thinking and action – it arranges the space of an event. Tschumi's buildings, defined as *folies*, in an essential way destabilise any created order, and at the same time they refresh it. Derrida's statement suggests that architecture may become both metaphor of an order merging a language or a society but also a metaphor of inner forces which deconstruct and reconstruct it. Therefore architecture is at the same time a construction, a deconstruction and a reconstruction. Parc de la Villette stands out in this system with its attempt to step beyond the scheme of an easy repetition and its heading for chances of achieving more radical otherness.