

### *Intentionally leftover void?*

*In the physical sense most people understand open urban spaces as those between buildings. Therefore they are a product of building since they are neither inherently articulate nor independent. Understanding open spaces is based on built boundaries, edges that somebody placed intentionally after serious recollection or consideration, or vice versa without excessive premeditation. In the first case they are planned spaces of perception, communication and interaction, stages necessary for understanding the built environment and the functioning of people. We can speak about uniform spaces where intensities of use, utility and image are previously defined and intentionally varied. In the second case they are unplanned remnants of space, which can nevertheless later be adapted to some use, indirectly and completely defined by the built boundaries or edges.*

*Some adversely claim that open urban spaces, i.e. streets and squares, don't exist anymore, since modern space is fluid and irrational. Satisfaction of human needs concerning perception, communication and functioning has moved into the controlled virtual environment of the web and closed spaces of homes, shopping malls, multiplex cinemas and transport terminals. Selected motifs from nature are placed there (e.g. artificial streams, flower beds, groups of trees in concrete containers, controlled temperature and sound and always pleasant lighting with reduced colour spectre) and traditional elements from urban spaces (covered shopping streets and squares, benches, fountains etc.). Cities have become Babylonian masses of disconnected parts; between them there is a dysfunctional autistic space, an insignificant and simultaneously threatening empty scapegoat, a historical Disneyland, which needs maintaining. The open, external interaction space is left over to coincidental visitors, traffic and the impoverished, the only people capable of withstanding the aggressiveness and anonymity of such empty places, or tourists, reluctant to accept the pleasures attainable from their two-dimensional household monitors.*

*I believe that both attitudes are wrong. Ideas about open urban spaces have to be included in any ideas about cities as a whole or their constituent parts. Open spaces are not fragments that can be dealt with separately, without respect for their character. They are places of connections, built urban syntax or stages for own stories about intentionally leftover voids.*

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