Housing investigations

1. Exploring housing actually means to judge whether residential architecture is still a tool in city construction. Leaving apart social housing events, to be studied just in case of an urban history or collective outline, this comment observes home and housing in comparison with house and city, seeking in this way to put back architects' everyday job through the dwelling-building relation that defines its tasks. Raising questions, in which we come across having to deal with such a matter, let us show the difference between facts and representation. The following "cutting" is just a contribution to current discussion on housing.

2. Building activity shapes the human space by giving form to social life. Yanomami people live in a large single hut settled by several families. This Amazonas collective house with its inhabited interior displays a space built by the same materials of the surrounding rainforest obtained after cleaning up the chosen site.

3. Plans of Foro Buonaparte blocks in Milan, images of Luigi Cosenza's Barra neighborhood project in Naples and Rossi's Milan Gallaratese slab introduce the universal role of housing in the modern city. Performed by construction manuals, the functional house carried dwelling in the XIX th. century collective housing. These handbooks showed characters of *exsistenz-minimun*, domestic organization like an industrial plant, passage optimization in limited interior furniture space, inside arranged facing exterior views, etc. Kleins's diagram dealing flat dimensions with building size gives form to better choice for assorted sites. At least Griffini's heliotermic disposition scheme exemplifies universal settling doctrine of "tabula rasa" concept.
The "Milano Verde" masterplan (1944) and the QT8, 8th Milan Triennale planned building community, (1947) are plenty evidences of several speculative possibilities hidden behind the Modern Movement concepts and of a new thought of the site associated with the territorial extension of metropolitan cities. The Città Orizzontale project in Milan (1940) and the Marseilles' Unitè d'Habitation building (1946) encompass a clear dwell-city concept and at same time a statement of relations between old and new in urban fabric. In the Forte Quezzi community in Genova by Daneri (1956) building are directly shaped by the form of the site. In the Monte Amiata Gallaratese's cross section by Aymonino (1967) the representation of the landscape plays an important role in the project, opposite to the Rossi's slab affirmed typological view that was the reason why of his professional charge. Buildings listed above stand in metropolitan contemporary scenes with theirs pictures and implied certainty trouble loads in social housing passed by decades.

4. These kind of constructions beat time of "modern housing" revealing his death in European postwar architecture. The *Minima Moralia* sentence: "*housing is in our time impossible*" was a sign of the false conscience of modern utopia facing the global population living conditions, more and more flatten out. What in the middle of the century Adorno prophetically states still forces architects to search in books, projects and constructions shaped on site the sense of dwelling in housing.

5. Post-reconstruction house collects objects setting the privileged costumer inhabitant qualities in comfortable interiors that look out by floor-to-ceiling windows. Italian postwar architecture facade inevitably records all the noble authority of this issue contradicted by inside veiled curtains which aims to protect and to identify. Thus LC's villa Schwob *grand style* (1917) becomes the Mangiarotti-Morassutti's Branschwig interior in 1955. Rear window shifts in this way from backyard in face composing front elevation as shown in Milan instances sequence: *casa Lurani* by BBPR and *casa ai Giardini d'Arcadia* by Gardella, the same author's *casa al Parco* and *via Quadronno* apartments house by Mangiarotti-Morassutti.

6. Looking at "home" we have to emphasize that the consumer identification through economy boom was coping with forced people displacement in metropolitan cities. In the same way Testori's popular interiors turns into the *Karamazov* version of Visconti's *Rocco e i suoi fratelli* (1960) if not the restless existence anxiety of Antonioni's *Blow up* photographic studio (1966). A quick look to real estate advertising, such as for *torre Velasca*, or to the domestic devices publicity at once put us into the *affluent society*, just to take in that the growth of the *New Class* coexists with national immigration. Living in towns now modifies identities pointed to get into the *new* forced to inconsistent homes. Research of *status* changes to *vita agra* like occurs in Bianciardi's novel. Interiors are at this time like *autobiographies* , more *wunderkammer* or memory machinery than collectors' room, in which several *objects trouvè* and doings wastes piles up. New Yorker Pop art workshop goes side by side with Negri's *studio* or Giacometti's *atelier*. Rossi's *teatrino scientifico* or Morassutti's *studiolo* stand for hidden *intérieur* of architects' workplace interiors. Perhaps on top of these beloved obsessions rests the Goya's *pinturas negra,* painted on walls of his *Quinta del Sordo* country house, analogous to reflected inner life layers, personal nightmares and wishes figures of domestic extreme meditations.

7. Contemporary housing matter introduces contradiction in architects' design proposal. Personal life at home is barely achievable in the individual shelters quoted above similar to *existence-craft*s. Conflicting in metropolitan condition evolves from XIXth century cities to conclusion worked out in 2005 as world urban inhabitants overcome rural population. Today lifestyle sums *metropolis* and *nervenleben* toward existences heralded by movies and portrayed by sociology of the never-ending city. Being impossible to resolve home and self being the global nomad and the daily wanderer consist in time network of theirs several activities. Provisional lodge in great infrastructures is now surrounded by web wandering of global *flaneur,* rather traveling by last-minute leisure. Similar situations introduce needs of a *building form* not possible other than spending time in un-consistent places. Next to the homeless cabin, camping and parking facilities, the Bruno Morassutti's tent at Taliesin West and the second-hand pickup modified in a van to be able to cross the *Great Country* show the self-conscious way of housing on the edge of a just overcome *avant-garde*.

GB 30 aprile 2010