

Šoping¹ vekomaj! / Shopping¹ forever!

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Facilis descensus Averno / Pot v pekel je lahka.

(latinski pregovor)

Vsi redno ali vsaj občasno obiskujemo nakupovalna središča v predmestjih. Mene, in ta občutek delim s številnimi, je ob tem redno sram. V Hoferju, Leclercu ali Bauhausu se bojim, da bi srečal znanca in bi se moj sram pomnožil z njegovim. V Maximarketu ali na tržnici je drugače, razveseliva (razveselimo) se drug drugega, morda sledi dogovor za kavo ali vsaj kratek klepet.

Nelagodje je povezano s tem, da se v generičnem nakupovalnem središču »preveč očitno« pokaže strukturna resničnost sodobnega prostora in mesta. To je resničnost poblagovljenja vsega, tudi prostora, urbanosti in celo vrednot. Logično vprašanje je, ali ni sram, vsaj na podzavestni ravni, povezan s potlačenim zavedanjem o tem, da šoping ni za vse, o lastni privilegiranosti in tihem pristanku na sodelovanje pri neodgovornem odnosu do sveta in soljudi. Pa še, ali ni moj sram pravzaprav licemerski izraz snobizma? Kot privilegiran stanovalec in uporabnik mestnega središča viham nos nad suburbijo in to opravičujem z estetskimi kriteriji, obenem pa se izkušnji nakupovanja tam ne morem (in nočem) odreči. Ali pa je arhitektura tista, ki dela razliko? Nasproti si stojijo, na eni strani, kakovostni ambient tržnice in Maksija, na drugi strani pa predmestni šoping centri. Se pravi, na eni strani srce srednjeveške, baročne in Plečnikove Ljubljane ter avtorska (Ravnikar s sodelavci) arhitektura stavb in povezanih javnih prostorov socialističnega mesta s pasažo, ki povezuje kulturo, gastronomijo in nakupovanje, tako rekoč tempelj urbanosti pred obličjem demokracije, stavbo parlamenta. Na drugi strani pa imamo BTC ali Rudnik s prevlado avtomobilov in pločevinastimi škatlami nakupovalnih središč. Lahko bi trdili, da je odločilna kakovost arhitekture in lokacije, tako je vedno bilo, a tako, idealizirano razlago postavi pod vprašaj Trgu republike in Maksiju bližnji Novi Šumi z luksuznimi stanovanji nad zemljo in Lidlom v kleti. Dilema, ali BTC postaja novo mesto ali pa historično mestno središče postaja nakupovalni center, ostaja nerazrešena.

Sodobna potrošniška družba je socialno in kulturno druga plat neoliberalnega kapitalizma. Sharon Zukin definira dilemo potrošništva: »Sodobni potrošnik ne ve nič o proizvodnji potrošnih dobrin, ki so jo obvladale predhodne generacije. Natančneje, v šestdesetih Američani ne vedo več, kako pomolsti kravo, speči kruh ali narediti igračko iz embalaže. To pomeni, da mora tisti, ki hoče pametno nakupovati, namesto znanja produkcije osvojiti čutno in intelektualno kontrolo kakovosti produkta, njegovega izvora, socialne in kulturne vrednosti.«² To velja v teoriji, v praksi pa je konzumerizem razvil strategije, ki pokrijejo ves register potreb, od središča do periferije. Lahko je reduciran na neskončne vrste polic, med katerimi se mora potrošnik naučiti orientirati. Spomnite se samo Bauhauza in strašljive izkušnje iskanja igle v kopici sena. Lahko pa ponuja izkušnjo individualnosti, kot »pravico elite naroda«, kot se je za svojo klientelo pomenljivo izrazil ljubljanski developer.³

Nakupovanje je ekonomska kategorija (trgovina je ključni del globalne ekonomije), materialna (prodajajo se dobrine, predmeti), psihološka (delujejo principi želje, od individualne do potrošniške mrzlice), prostorska (v urbanističnem in arhitekturnem pomenu), pa še mnogokaj smo pozabili naštet, npr. geografsko razsežnost (od starih do sodobnih »svilnih poti«, od hanzeatske lige do sodobnih trgovskih sporazumov itn.).

Kapitalizem kontrolira, kje živimo, kaj trošimo in kako razmišljamo. Včasih je bilo sijajno živeti v modernem svetu. Imeli smo napredek in razvoj, vse boljše zdravje, vse boljše hrano. Lahko si potoval, imel vse več denarja, več si lahko trošil in tako

naprej. Potem se je, vsaj nekaterim, nenadoma posvetilo, da to dolgoročno ne pomeni nič dobrega za planet. Da pravzaprav ni dobro niti za nas. Aktivisti, znanstveniki in mnenjski voditelji so začeli biti plat zvona. To pa je prispevalo k preobratu, tranziciji v mišljenju, v ospredje so prišle naravovarstvene teme, pa tudi raznovrstnost, raznolikost v najširšem pomenu besede, od biotske, preko spolne do politične. Prevladujoči tržni kapitalizem, ki je po definiciji paradigma, povzdignjena na raven občega, se je odzval s projektom poblagovljenja ekologije, boja proti podnebnim spremembam in celo uporništvu samega. Kot da bomo svet rešili tako, da si bomo tudi prihodnost lahko kupili.

Kje sta v teh procesih urbanizem in arhitektura? Zdi se, kot da nista več zavezana trajanju, temveč sta sama postala potrošno blago. V veliko pogledih je to res, vendar nas zgodovina uči, da navidezna nujnost očitno ni tudi dolgoročno edina možnost. Če hoče arhitektura preživeti, se mora pogosto vračati *ad fontes*, k svojim koreninam in izvirom. Teh korenin in izvirov pa ne sme gledati in jemati rutinsko, svojo prihodnost mora graditi prav skozi prelom z obstoječim, ki pa ima v temelj vgrajen svoj izvor in kompleksnost preteklih izkušenj.

Če pogledamo produkcijo prostora kot del družbe skozi zgodovino, je poleg obrambe in religije trgovanje eden od formativnih dejavnikov pri nastajanju mest. Antična grška mesta so bila zasnovana na dvojnosti med akropolo in agoro, pri čemer je imela akropola religiozno, agora pa tržno in upravno vlogo. Atenci so še nadalje ločili prostor, kjer so se šli politiko, *Pnyx*, od ekonomskega središča, agore. Po Platonu deluje trgovanje po načelu potrebe in pohlepa, politika pa naj bi sledila pravicam in pravu. Agora je prostor, ki so ga obdajale stoe,⁴ ki so, med drugim, tipološki model tudi za Plečnikove ljubljanske tržnice.

V rimskih mestih, npr. v Pompejih, so bili trgovski lokali v pritličjih insul ali v k ulici obrnjenih traktih domusov. Koolhasova biblija nakupovanja⁵ se začne s fotografijo Trajanovih tržnic, Apolodorjeve mojstrovine iz leta 110 n. št., in jih s tem ustoličuje kot praobliko nakupovalnega središča. Koncept osrednjega nakupovalnega območja torej sega v antične civilizacije. Tudi tradicionalni bazarji in tržnice v muslimanskem in srednjeveškem svetu so bili predhodniki nakupovalnih središč, saj so bili živahna središča trgovanja in družbenih stikov. Srednjeveško trgovanje je potekalo na trgovskih trgih in ulicah, tržnicah, v trgovskih četrtih. Posebej impresivni so bazarji in suki v arabskih mestih, kot je na primer Veliki bazar v Istanbulu, ki obstaja že več kot 500 let, s svojimi 4000 trgovinami in 58 ulicami.

1 šōping in shopping-a [šōping-] m (ō) pog.; *nakupovanje*: hoditi na šoping v tujino; naporen šoping; šoping na razprodajah; nasveti za šoping / iti, odpraviti se v šoping *iti nakupovat*; v prid. rabi.; pog. šoping center *nakupovalni center*, *nakupovalno središče*, vir: www.fran.si

2 Zukin, Sharon. 2004. *Point of Purchase: How Shopping Changed American Culture*. New York: Routledge.

3 Kos, David. 2023. Intervju: Jože Anderlič: Narod brez elite ne obstaja, je samo amorfna gmota ljudi. *Siol. Dostopno na*: <https://siol.net/novice/posel-danes/joze-anderlic-gradnji-so-nasprotovali-predvsem-tisti-ki-so-imeli-zasebni-interes-617752>

4 Stoa. Podolgovata stebrna dvorana, primarno namenjena trgovanju, na agori v grški klasični arhitekturi.

5 Chung, Chuihua Judy, Jeffrey Inaba, Rem Koolhaas, Sze Tsung Leong, in Harvard University Graduate School of Design. 2001. *Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping*. Köln, Cambridge, Mass.: Taschen; Harvard Design School.

Facilis descensus Averno / It is easy to take the downward path.

(from Latin)

We all frequent - with some leeway to the respective frequencies - suburban shopping centres. This regularly fills me, as it does so many others, with a degree of shame. Be it Hofer, Leclerc or Bauhaus, I dread to run into a familiar face lest our respective shames recombine and amplify. In Maximarket, smack-dab in the centre of Ljubljana, or in the central city market, it's different: we welcome our encounter, which is customarily followed up by a plan to grab a coffee, or at the very least by a quick chat.

The unease has to do with the fact that a generic shopping centre reveals the structural reality of contemporary space and the contemporary city in an "overly transparent" manner. This is the reality of the commodification of everything, including space, urbanity, and even values. Naturally, one goes on to wonder whether the shame, at least subconsciously, stems from the repressed understanding that shopping is not for everyone, from one's own privilege, and from a tacit collaboration in fostering the irresponsible attitude towards the world and fellow people. And furthermore, is my shame not, in fact, a hypocritical manifestation of snobbism? As a privileged resident and user of the city centre, I employ aesthetic criteria to turn up my nose at the plebeian suburbia, yet I am still unable (and unwilling) to relinquish the experience of shopping there.

Or is it the architecture that makes the difference? It is a showdown of, on the one hand, the quality ambiances of the central market and Maximarket, and, on the other, suburban shopping centres. That is to say, the heart of the Mediaeval, Baroque, and Plečnik's Ljubljana as well as the distinct (authored by Edvard Ravnikar with his collaborators) architecture of buildings and related public spaces of a Socialist city with an arcade integrating culture, gastronomy, and shopping - essentially a temple of all that is urban fronting onto the visage of democracy, the National Assembly building. Then there is the antipode, suburban retail sites such as the BTC and Rudnik, where the car is king and where shopping centres are also housed in - suitably larger - tin boxes. Saying that the quality of architecture and the location is the decisive factor sounds plausible, it's the way it has always been, but such an idealised account is challenged by the New Šumi residential complex, built a stone's throw from Trg Republike Square and Maximarket, and containing luxury flats above ground and a Lidl in the basement. The dilemma of whether the BTC is becoming the new city or whether the historic city centre is in turn becoming a shopping centre remains unresolved.

Socially and culturally speaking, the contemporary consumerist society is the obverse side of neo-liberal capitalism. Sharon Zukin defines the consumerist dilemma as follows: "The consumer lacks the production knowledge that earlier generations commanded. Americans no longer know how to milk a cow, make a bagel, or build a car out of a soapbox, or packing crate. This means that, instead of the knowledge of production, those who want to shop wisely must acquire the sensory and intellectual control of the quality of the product, its origin, its social and cultural value."² This is true in theory, while in practice, consumerism has developed strategies which cover the entire gamut of needs, from the centre to the periphery. Consumerism may be reduced to endless rows of shelves which require the consumer to find their way about them. Just cast your mind back to Bauhaus and the unnerving experience of looking for a needle in a haystack. But consumerism may also offer an experience of individuality as a "right of the nation's elite", which also happens to be how, in no uncertain terms, a Ljubljana-focused developer refers to his clientele³.

Shopping is an economic category (retail is a key constituent of global economy) as well as a material one (goods and objects are what is being sold), a psychological one (it is driven by the principles of desire, from individual to consumerist feeding-frenzy), a spatial one (in the urbanist and architectural senses), and there are more than we may have forgotten, e.g. the geographical dimension (from ancient to contemporary "silk roads", from the Hanseatic League to contemporary trade agreements, etc.).

Capitalism controls where we live, what we consume and how we think. There was a time when living in the modern world was brilliant. We had progress and development, we got increasingly healthier, ate ever-better food. You could travel, your bank balance was going up, you could spend more, rinse, repeat. Then people - some of them, anyway - suddenly had an epiphany: all of this spells bad news for our planet. And largely for us, too. Activists, scientists, and opinion leaders started to sound the alarm. This led to a sea change, a transition in people's attitudes, ecological topics were receiving a greater mindshare, and so did variety, diversity in the broadest sense, from biotic to gender- and political. The dominating market capitalism, which is by definition a paradigm elevated to the level of the universal, responded with the endeavour to commodify ecology, the fight against climate change, and even rebellion itself - as if we could save the world by ultimately buying ourselves even our future.

Where do these processes leave urban design and architecture? It appears as if neither is any longer committed to permanence but rather that both have themselves become consumer goods. In many regards, this is true, but history shows us that by all accounts, apparent necessity is not the only long-term possibility.

If it is to survive, architecture has to keep going back ad fontes, to its roots and origins. Yet it mustn't make a routine of beholding and acting upon these roots and origins; it must build its future precisely by way of breaking with the existing, yet include its source as well as the complexity of its past experiences in every new foundation.

Looking at the production of space as a part of the society through history, trade - alongside defence and religion - has been one of the formative factors influencing the emergence of cities. The concept of the central retail area harks back to the civilisations of the Antiquity. Traditional bazaars and markets were the predecessors to shopping centres, acting as dynamic hubs of trade and social contacts. The designs of the cities of Ancient Greece were based on the duality of the acropolis and the agora, whereby the acropolis had a religious role and the agora a trade and administrative one. Athenians further separated the space where they engaged in politics, pnyx, from the centre of economy, the agora. According to Plato, trade works on the principle of need and greed, while politics is supposed to accommodate rights and the law. The agora is a space lined by stoa⁴, which act, among other things, as a typological model also for Plečnik's marketplaces of Ljubljana.

In Roman cities, e.g. Pompeii, commercial premises are located on the ground floors of the insulae or the street-side wings of the domus. Very early on, Koolhaas's shopping bible⁵ features a photograph of Trajan's market, Apollodorus's masterplan from 110 AD, thereby inaugurating it as the primordial form of the shopping centre. The concept of a central shopping area thus originates in civilisations of the Antiquity. As the vibrant hubs of trade and social contacts, the traditional bazaars

1 In its domesticated phonetic form, the word has featured in colloquial Slovene for decades.

2 Zukin, Sharon. 2004. Point of Purchase: How Shopping Changed American Culture. New York: Routledge.

3 Kos, David. 2023. Intervju: Jože Anderlič: Narod brez elite ne obstaja, je samo amorfna gmota ljudi. ["A nation without an elite is no nation but rather an amorphous mass of people.] Siol. Accessible at: <https://siol.net/novice/posel-danes/joze-anderlic-gradnji-so-nasprotovali-predvsem-tisti-ki-so-imeli-zasebni-interes-617752> (Slovene only)

4 Stoa. An elongated hall lined with columns, primarily intended for trade, in the agora in Greek Classical architecture.

5 Chung, Chuihua Judy, Jeffrey Inaba, Rem Koolhaas, Sze Tsung Leong, in Harvard University Graduate School of Design. 2001. Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping. Köln, Cambridge, Mass.: Taschen ; Harvard Design School.

V 19. stoletju so se razvile nove oblike trgovskih objektov. Pasaže z zastekljeno streho, okrašene z marmornatimi tlaki in oblogami ter z velikimi izložbami so zrasle v vseh velikih mestih, Parizu, Londonu, Bruslju, Milanu, Neaplju, Dunaju ... kot nekakšni urbani interierji v eksterierju, oblikujejo »mesto, kar svet v malem«.⁶ Kot v literaturi, glasbi, slikarstvu se tudi v arhitekturi inscenira spopad med romantično vero v umetnost in realizmom vsakdanjosti, ki se nato vleče skozi stoletje modernizma.

Pasaža je mesto v malem. Mimoidočim ponuja veliko več kot le možnost nakupovanja in uživanja raznolike ponudbe. Je tudi zavetje pred hrupom, dežjem, snegom, meglo, smogom. Prijeten način za krajšanje poti med dvema ulicama. Tudi prisotnost gledališč v prvih arkadah, zgrajenih v Parizu, ni naključna – prej je to nova oblika spektakla, zgrajena posebej za pasaže. V izložbah se sprehajalcu ponuja cel svet, tipični programi, kot so tradicionalne kavarne, specializirane trgovine, knjigarne ipd., pa so preživeli od nastanka prvih arkad do danes. Hoja, brezciljno pohajkovanje, ogledovanje izložb, opazovanje mestnih prizorov in ulic – so skorajda postali oblika umetnosti, ki ima svoje ime »*flanerie*« v francoskem jeziku, iz katerega izhaja samostalni *flaneur*, kar bi v ohlapnem prevodu pomenilo mestni potepuh. *Flaneurja* seveda ne smemo zreducirati na koncept brezciljnega sprehajalca – je kritičen in kompetenten gledalec v živem uličnem gledališču. Ta pojav in odkritje te oblike sovpadata s pojavom prvih pasaž kot urbanih prostorov. Pasaže so izgovor za mestno pohajkovanje, *flaneurju* pa ponujajo prostor, v katerem odkriva najsubtilnejše strukture vele mestnega življenja. In prav to omogoča, da skozi celotno zgodovino na pasaže gledamo kot na prostor kulturne ambivalence, ki se izraža z dvema obrazoma – na eni strani je pasaža trgovski objekt, na drugi pa tempelj udobja in urbana utopija z vsemi svojimi vsebinami, ki kuka-jo skozi ljubke izložbe.

Pasaže so edinstvene, ker niso nastale kot načrtna arhitekturna dejavnost, ampak so se organsko razvile iz želje lastnikov manjših trgovin, da svoje dele ulic postavijo pod klobuk železnih in steklenih strešnih konstrukcij. Pasaže niso bile hrami potrošniške in propagandno-marketingške kulture, kot so današnji trgovski centri, temveč nasprotno: predstavljale so kulturo časa, ki se je izrazila v obliki komercialnih vsebin. Znamenita je Benjaminova razprava o pasažah⁷ kot najpomembnejši arhitekturni obliki 19. stoletja, ki predstavlja prostorsko utelešenje *flaneurjev*, o katerih je govoril Baudelaire. Pasaža je v bistvu produkt modernizma. V njej najde svojo mizansceno tudi nadrealizem. V enem svojih najzgodnejših besedil, *Le Paysan de Paris*,⁸ Aragon povezuje odlomke v področje nadrealističnega razmišljanja. Benjamin trdi: »Nadrealizem se je rodil v pasaži. Njegov oče je dadaizem, njegova mati pasaža. Dadaizem je bil že star, ko sta se spoznala.«

Javni prostor se preobraža v komercialni prostor. Prvi nakupovalni centri so se pojavili v Parizu v izteku 19. stoletja. Zanimivo je videti, kako so se od takrat spreminjale tržne strategije. Takrat so postavili luksuzne objekte potrošnje v neobičajne kombinacije, posodo za cvrtje na perzijsko preprogo, zraven pa stekleničko dragega parfuma. V sodobnih nakupovalnih centrih je ponudbe preveč in je ne-selektivna, na policah Bauhausa najdemo vse v (pre)velikih količinah. Kvantiteta je pomembnejša od kvalitete. Te mehanizme so obravnavali neštevilni sociologi in drugi teoretiki, od Arendt do Bourdieuja in Sennetta.

Ko je svet vstopil v 20. stoletje, so se v Združenih državah Amerike rodila sodobna nakupovalna središča. Viktor Gruen, avtor prvega sodobnega šoping mola je leta 1963 zapisal recept za idealno nakupovalno središče:

»Vzemite 100 hektarjev idealno oblikovanega ravnega zemljišča. Obkrožite ga s 500.000 potrošniki, ki nimajo dostopa do drugih nakupovalnih zmogljivosti. Pripravite zemljišče in osrednji del prekrijte z 1.000.000 kvadratnih metrov stavb. Napolnite jih z vrhunskimi trgovci, ki bodo prodajali vrhunsko blago po privlačno nizkih cenah. Celoto na zunanji strani obrobite z 10.000 parkirnimi mesti in poskrbite, da bodo ta dostopna po prvovrstnih in ne preobremenjenih avtocestah iz vseh smeri. Na koncu ga okrasite z nekaj lončnicami, različnimi cvetličnimi gredami, majhno skulpturo in potrošnikom postrezite vročega.«⁹

Njegov ameriški naslednik, Jon Jerde je razvil eklektični jezik ameriških nakupovalnih centrov: zastekljene pasaže s *pizzami* in *piazzami*, atriji, diagonalami, vhodnimi emporami, paviljoni, kolonadami in predvsem veliko svetlobe, barv in kotičkov. Ta začetni entuziazem v kreiranju nadomestnega javnega prostora (elementov

tradicionalnega mediteranskega mesta) se je hitro razširil po vsem svetu. Ko so dodali še tekoče stopnice in umetno klimatizacijo, je bila tipologija razvita do popolnosti.

Ta koncept je preplaval svet in Slovenija ni bila izjema. Doživela je tako optimistični sijaj gradnje veleblagovnic v času socialističnega modernizma kot neizbežno tranzicijo iz socializma v kapitalizem in v kulturo simulirane demokracije. Po osamosvojitvi se je naša gospodarska krajina začela spreminjati, kar je utrla pot novim oblikam tržnih prostorov, ki so izgubili navidezno auro »idealnega sveta« in se podredili železni logiki dobička.

Državljan se preobrazi v potrošnika. Izkušnja nakupovanja ima elemente teatra, v katerem prodajalec vzdržuje suspenz želje, da bi pripravil potrošnika k nakupu. Tudi prozaični Bauhaus je takšen teater, v katerem velikost in preobilje dobrin spreminjata potrošnikovo dožemanje njegovih lastnih potreb in s tem njega samega in sveta v celoti. Ritual nakupovanja ima dramsko moč: »*Samo posedovanje je manj izpolnjujoče kot želja po stvareh, ki jih še nimamo; dramatizacija potenciala vodi potrošnika-gledalca v željo po stvareh, ki jih ne potrebuje.*«¹⁰

Zasebna lastnina nas je tako poneumila, da objekt štejemo za svojega izključno, če je naša last – če ga posedujemo kot kapital, če ga priposestvujemo, z nakupom, dedovanjem, rabo ...: »Namesto različnih fizičnih in mentalnih občutkov je ostal le njihov izvleček, občutek imeti.«¹¹ Potrošniška kultura – ideologija neutrudno promovira stališče, da je edini smisel življenja v lastnini. To je temelj kapitalistične dogme neomejene ekonomske rasti. Ta pa pomeni nenasitno potrebo po produktih potrošniške kulture.

Uprostorjenje nakupovanja je doseglo prevlado *urbi et orbi*, kot rečeno, z ustoličenjem nakupovalnega centra kot ultimativne tipologije, ki je nadomestila vse druge. Od tu pa je pot seveda mogoča le še navzdol. In ta proces je v zadnjem desetletju dobil usodni pospešek z ekspanzijo spletne trgovine. Super, mega, hiper, giga in tako naprej marketi so verjetno obsojeni na izumrtje, saj so postali dinosavri. Morda bodo obstali zgolj superdiskonti na eni in super luksuzni butik na drugi strani, ostalo bo pobrala spletna prodaja. Amazon kupcu ponuja na tisoče možnosti na dosegu roke; predstavi vam jih v določenem, a večinoma nepojasnjenem vrstnem redu. Sodelovanje z Amazonom pri večini strank prinaša železo, pričakovano in na splošno nepreksljivo izkušnjo; naročiš različne artikle; cene so običajno ugodne in ni treba razmišljati o stroških pošiljanja; naročene stvari so na voljo precej hitro; vračila niso velika težava. Toda v jedru te izkušnje se je nekaj neznansko poslabšalo. Večina blaga je *džank*.¹² Če Amazon razumete kot podjetje, ki si prizadeva za infrastrukturo v mega obsegu – ponudnika sistemov, storitev, zmogljivosti in delovne sile –, je njegovo *džankificiranje* smiselno. Amazon že nekaj časa ne deluje več zgolj kot trgovina. V njegovi idealni prihodnosti je prodaja stvari ljudem problem drugih. Amazon je že onkraj trgovine same, je utelešenje *džanka*.

Generični nakupovalni center je zapisan propadu in to seveda pozdravljam. Kot rečeno, je bil prostor slabe ali kvečjemu povprečne zasnove, ki ga ni brigal kontekst, napolnjen je bil s klimatskimi napravami in fluorescenčno svetlobo, povzročal je ogromno nepotrebnih voženj z avtomobilom in spodbujal sumljivo kulturo, utemeljeno na potrošništvu.

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- 6 Baudelaire, Charles. 1992. *Spleen*. Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba. *Spleen de Paris*, 1869. Baudelairejev »spleen« se nanaša na literarni pomen besede – melanholija brez očitnega vzroka, za katero je značilen odpor do vsega.
- 7 Benjamin, Walter, and Rolf Tiedemann. 1982. *Das Passagen-Werk*. 1. Aufl. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp. *Arkadni projekt* je nedokončano delo, pisano med letoma 1927 in 1940.
- 8 Aragon. 1926. *Le Paysan de Paris*. Paris: Librairie Gallimard, Éditions de La nouvelle revue française.
- 9 Gruen, Victor. 1963. *Recipe for the Ideal Shopping Center*. (Prosti prevod avtorja)
- 10 Sennett, Richard, in Aleksandra Kanjuo-Mrčela. 2008. *Kultura novega kapitalizma*. Ljubljana: Založba /cf.
- 11 Marx, Karl. 1961. *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. Dover ed. Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications. (Prosti prevod avtorja)
- 12 džank tudi junk. Kar je slabo, nekakovostno - junk food. Vir: *Center za jezikovne vire in tehnologije*. <https://lexonomy.cjvt.si/slovar-tviterščine>

and marketplaces found in the Muslim and Mediaeval world were the predecessors of shopping centres. The Mediaeval form of trade took place in trading markets as well as in the streets, marketplaces and trade quarters. The bazaars and souqs characteristic of Arabic cities make a particular impression, such as the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul, whose 4,000 shops spread over 58 streets boast more than 500 years of tradition.

The 19th century saw the development of new forms of buildings for retailing. Arcades with a glass roof, decorated with marble flooring and cladding, and featuring large shop windows mushroomed in all the large cities: Paris, London, Brussels, Milan, Naples, Vienna - the list goes on - like some sort of urban interiors-in-the-exterior, shaping the city like a miniature world unto its own⁶. As in literature, music, and painting, architecture also serves as a stage for the struggle between the romantic faith in art and the realism of the mundane, which had continued right through the century of Modernism.

An arcade is a miniature city. The passers-by are offered a lot more than merely an opportunity to shop and enjoy a diverse range of merchandise. It is also a shelter from noise, rain, snow, fog, and smog. It is a pleasant way to cut down on the distance between two streets. The presence of theatres in the earliest arcades, built in Paris, is not accidental - quite the opposite, it is a new form of spectacle built especially for arcades. The shop windows put the entire world in front of a stroller, while typical programmes such as traditional cafés, specialised shops, bookstores, etc. have survived from the creation of the first arcades until today. Walking, aimless wandering, perusing shop windows, and observing urban scenes and streets have all graduated almost to the level of an art form, which in French has its name, "flânerie", giving rise to the noun "flâneur", which in a rough translation would denote an urban wanderer. Naturally, a flâneur must not be reduced to the concept of an aimless stroller - they are a critical and empowered audience member in the living street theatre. This phenomenon and the discovery of the form in question is co-incidental to the emergence of the first arcades as urban spaces. Arcades are an excuse for urban wandering while offering the flâneur a space in which to discover the most subtle structures of metropolitan life. This is precisely what enables one to see the arcade throughout its history as a space of cultural ambivalence expressed by means of its two faces: on the one hand, an arcade is a retail building and on the other a temple of comfort and an urban utopia with all of its content literally sitting pretty in the adorable shop windows.

Arcades are one of a kind because they weren't created by means of deliberate architectural activity but instead developed from the desire on the part of the owners to place the streets housing their small shops under the canopy of roof structures made of iron and glass.

Arcades didn't represent sanctuaries of consumerist and advertising culture embodied by the present-day retail centres - on the contrary, they represented a culture of the time, and this culture happened to express itself in the form of commercial content. There is the famed Benjamin's treatise on arcades⁷ as the most important architectural form of the 19th century owing to the fact that they represent the spatial embodiment of the flâneurs, as spoken of by Baudelaire. Essentially, the arcade is a product of Modernism, while also being leveraged by surrealism for its purposes of stage design. In one of his earliest texts, *Le Paysan de Paris*⁸, Aragon pieces together excerpts to create a scope of surrealist thinking. Benjamin will go on to assert: "Surrealism was born in an arcade. The father of Surrealism was Dada; its mother was an arcade. Dada, when the two first met, was already old."

Public space is undergoing transformation, becoming commercial space. The first shopping centres appeared in Paris at the tail end of the 19th century. It's interesting to see the changes in marketing strategies that have appeared since. At that time, luxury consumer items were placed in unusual combinations, a sauceman laid on top of a Persian rug, and a bottle of expensive perfume next to it. In contemporary shopping centres, there is excessive offer and a lack of selectivity; on the shelves of Bauhaus, the amount of product is first and foremost ample, if not excessive. Quantity trumps quality. These mechanisms have been discussed by numerous sociologists and other theoreticians, from Arendt to Bourdieu and Sennett.

When the world entered the 20th century, the United States of America became the birthplace of contemporary shopping centres. Victor Gruen, the author of the first contemporary shopping mall came up a recipe for the ideal shopping centre, which he put down in writing in 1963:

"Take 100 acres of suitable flat land. Surround it with 500,000 consumers who have no access to other commercial developments. Prepare the site and cover the centre with 10 million square feet of building. Fill with the best merchandisers selling quality products at a low price. Decorate with 10,000 parking spaces, and ensure that the site can be reached with excellent, under-used expressways. Finish by decorating with bushes and a small sculpture and serve hot."⁹

His American successor, Jon Jerde, developed the eclectic language of American shopping centre: the glazed arcades with pizzas and piazzas, inner courtyards, diagonals, entrance triforia, pavilions, colonnades, and, above all, lots of light, colours, and secluded spots. This initial enthusiasm in the creation of substitute public space (the elements of a traditional Mediterranean town) quickly spread all over the world. Upon the addition of escalators and air conditioning, the typology had reached perfection.

The concept was a world-beater and Slovenia got hit along with the rest of them. It experienced both the optimistic sheen of shopping development in the time of Socialist Modernism as well as the inevitable transition from Socialism to capitalism and the culture of simulated democracy. After the independence, our economic landscape began to transform, priming to embrace new forms of commercial spaces, which shed the illusory aura of an "ideal world" and submitted to the ironclad logic of profit.

A citizen undergoes a metamorphosis to become a consumer. The experience of shopping contains elements of theatre in which a seller sustains the suspense of desire in order to get the consumer to make a purchase. Even the lowly Bauhaus puts on such a show, where the size and the overabundance of goods alter the consumer's understanding of their own needs, and by extension of themselves and the world in its entirety. The ritual of shopping has dramatic power: "Possessive use is less arousing to the spectator-consumer than the desire for things he does not yet have; the dramatization of potential leads the spectator-consumer to desire things he cannot fully use."¹⁰

Private property has stultified us to the point that we can see an object as ours only in case we own it outright - if we possess it as capital, if we appropriate it through purchase, inheritance, usage, etc. "In the place of all physical and mental senses there has therefore come the sheer estrangement of all these senses, the sense of having."¹¹

The consumerist culture - ideology relentlessly promotes the attitude that the meaning of life may only be found in ownership. This is the foundation of the capitalist dogma of boundless economic growth. Which, in turn, purports an insatiable desire for the products of the consumerist culture.

We have seen that the spatialisation of shopping has achieved dominance *urbi et orbi* by the shopping centre having been crowned as the ultimate typology to replace all others. And from this juncture, there is no way but down. This process has

6 Baudelaire, Charles. *Spleen de Paris*, 1869. Baudelaire's "spleen" refers to the literary meaning of the term, i.e. melancholy without an apparent cause, characterised by a disgust for everything.

7 Benjamin, Walter, and Rolf Tiedemann. 1982. *Das Passagen-Werk*. 1. Aufl. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp. Arcades Project is an unfinished work, having been in development between 1927 and 1940.

8 Aragon. 1926. *Le Paysan de Paris*. Paris: Librairie Gallimard, Éditions de La nouvelle revue française.

9 Gruen, Victor. 1963. Recipe for the Ideal Shopping Center.

10 Sennett, Richard, and Aleksandra Kanjuo-Mrčela. 2008. *Kultura Novega Kapitalizma* [The Culture of the New Capitalism]. Ljubljana: Založba / *cf.

11 Marx, Karl. 1961. *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. Dover ed. Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications.

Treba bo najti arhitekturne rešitve, ki bodo prenovile ostaline nakupovalnih centrov nazaj v civilno mesto. Marsikje ta proces že poteka. Veliko se govori o avtentični izkušnji, vrnitvi k lokalnemu in pravični trgovini (fair trade). Vendar sem pri tem vedno nekako skeptičen, saj bi bilo verjeti v tako rešitev kar preveč preprosto, da bi delovalo, nekako tako, kot bi zamenjali obliko, vsebina pa bi ostala nedotaknjena. Boj zato še zdaleč še ni končan, vprašanje je, ali je sploh načrtano bojišče. BTC kljub lokalom, multipleksnemu kinu in gledališču ni mesto. To je nadzorovan, zasebni prostor. Reveži se lahko pojavijo, če želijo, vendar z malo denarja v žepu dobijo ustrezno malo muzike. Je pa nakupovalno središče klinično očiščen prostor. Tukaj ni pijancev in norcev, nobenih beračev. Nobenih uličnih glasbenikov, nobenih tolpa, nobenih protestnikov, nobenega nereda. BTC je varen, urejen, mesto sreče kot vizija utopije – ali bolje rečeno, za nekatere je to vizija zapeljive utopije. Če se tej utopiji pustimo zapeljati, se strinjamo z retoriko politikov o brezrazrednosti, pozabimo na ideal socialne pravičnosti, pretvarjamo se, da stare razredne napetosti med tistimi, ki imajo, in tistimi, ki nimajo, pri nas ne obstajajo, in marginalce odstranimo s prizorišča, jih delegiramo nekam, kjer jih ne vidimo in nam teh delov mesta tudi ni treba obiskovati. Le vzpostaviti moramo mejo, do koder smejo. Skratka, gentrifikacija in potrošniška kultura sta dve plati iste medalje.

Kot rečeno, nakupovanje je prav v esenci potrošniške družbe in tudi njenih prostorskih implikacij. Rem Koolhaas je v uvodu v priročnik *Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping*¹³ napisal:

»Nakupovanje je verjetno zadnja oblika javne dejavnosti. Nakupovanje je z vrsto vse bolj plenilskih oblik prodrlo, koloniziralo in celo nadomestilo skoraj vse vidike mestnega življenja. Mestna središča, predmestja, ulice, zdaj pa tudi letališča, železniške postaje, muzeje, bolnišnice, šole, internet in vojsko oblikujejo mehanizmi in prostori nakupovanja. Nakupovanje je zaradi svoje silovitosti, s katero zasleduje javnost, postalo eden glavnih – če ne edini – načinov, s katerimi doživljamo mesto. V tem priročniku (Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping) so raziskani prostori, ljudje, tehnike, ideologije in izumi, s katerimi je nakupovanje tako dramatično preoblikovalo mesto. Morda si bomo začetek enaindvajsetega stoletja zapomnili kot točko, ko mesta ni bilo več mogoče razumeti brez nakupovanja.«

Koolhaasova študija nakupovanja je objavljena v zajetni knjigi, ki z vezavo in z zlatimi črkami asociira na biblijo. Knjiga je hkrati ironična in afirmativna apoteoza nakupovanja kot vseobsežne nove realnosti sveta, ki je zamenjala tradicionalne vrednote in koncepte: znanje, kulturo, religijo ..., ter v prostorskem smislu nadomestila pa tudi preobrazila po svoji podobi javne prostore: »Ne le, da se nakupovanje preobrazi v karkoli, tudi karkoli se preobrazi v nakupovanje ... čeprav se torej nakupovanje nenehno sooča s krizo in upadanjem, se hkrati nenehno (in umetno) na novo izumlja, reinterpretira, preoblikuje, rojeva, preoblikuje in prepakira ... «¹⁴

Sicer pa avtorji v knjigi ne iščejo odgovorov, temveč postavljajo vprašanja. Zakaj se trgovina na drobno spopada s krizo? Kako bo napredek na področju informacijske tehnologije vplival na trgovino na drobno? Kaj se spreminja pri tem, kako kupujemo, kaj kupujemo in zakaj kupujemo?

Avtorji izhajajo iz predpostavke, da je nakupovanje živa entiteta, ki skrbi za svoje preživetje. Trdijo, da se je nakupovanje razvijalo po načelih evolucije, podobno kot so se razvijala živa bitja: nekateri razvojni dosežki so bili načrtovani, drugi so posledica naključja, vsi pa so odziv na zunanje sile. Pri nakupovanju prevladuje odnos med trgovino in kupcem. S spreminjanjem kupca se razvija tudi trgovina.

Uporaba informacijske tehnologije v trgovini, običajni in spletni, ter tudi v arhitekturi in urbanizmu je po mojem mnenju osrednje vprašanje. Od »kako prostorsko načrtovanje vpliva na ljudi«, se je fokus prestavil h »kako informacijsko načrtovanje vpliva na ljudi«. Pomen tega premika za prihodnost nakupovanja je še odprt, prevlada spletne trgovine še ni v celoti udejanjena.

Potrošništvo je nekakšen rak prostora, saj noben prostor ni varen pred tem, da ga tako ali drugače doseže produkcijska logika prostora, ki je danes globalna. Kot trdi francoski filozof mlajše generacije Mickael Labbé, za nobeno mesto, nobeno četrto danes ne moremo trditi, da je brez posledic prestala pravi pravcati napad na skupnostno in skupno dimenzijo prostora. Ne gre za makroskopsko nasilje, temveč za mikrospremembe fiziognomije urbanega skozi tržni imperativ.¹⁵

»V svetu, kjer potrošniška, turistična, kulturna in na znanju temelječa industrija postanejo glavni vidiki urbane politične ekonomije, se kakovost urbanega življenja in tudi samo življenje v mestu spremenita v blago.«¹⁶

V tem procesu se je izgubil civilni skupni javni prostor, v katerem se lahko razvija skupnostna arhitektura. Namesto tega se zdi, da se arhitekti vse bolj soočamo z eno od dveh enako slabih izbiri: ali sprejmemo sedanji status quo in se povežemo s svetom denarja in moči ali pa se prepustimo delu na margini, kjer bo naše delo kljub temu, da ga mediji pogosto hvalijo, imelo zelo omejen družbeni ali kulturni vpliv.

Italo Calvino konča *Nevidna mesta*¹⁷ z dialogom med Kublaj kanom in Marcom Polom:

»Pekel živih ni nekaj, kar šele bo; če je kakšen, je tisti, ki je že tukaj, pekel, kjer bivamo vse dni, ki ga ustvarjamo s tem, da smo skupaj. Dva načina sta, da od njega ne trpiš. Prvi se z lahkoto posreči mnogim: pekel sprejeti in postati njegov del do te mere, da ga ne vidiš več. Drugi je tvegan in zahteva nenehne pazljivosti in učenja: iskati, znati prepoznati, kdo in kaj sredi pekla ni pekel, storiti, da to traja, in mu dati prostor.«

13 Chung, Chuihua Judy, Jeffrey Inaba, Rem Koolhaas, Sze Tsung Leong, in Harvard University Graduate School of Design. 2001. *Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping*. Köln, Cambridge, Mass.: Taschen; Harvard Design School. (Prosti prevod avtorja).

14 Ibidem, str. 129. (Prosti prevod avtorja)

15 Labbé, Mickaël. 2021. *Zavzemimo prostor: proti arhitekturi prezira*. krt. 195. Ljubljana: Krtina.

16 Harvey, David. 2008. The Right to the City. *New Left Review* 53, cit. po: Abram, Sandi. 2017. Samonikla kreativna fabrika v času neoliberalne mašine kreativnih industrij. *Časopis za kritiko znanosti* 45 (270): 17–31. Dostopno na: <https://ckz.si/docs/publications/journals/270/270-017-031.pdf>

17 Calvino, Italo. 1990. *Nevidna mesta; Grad prekrizanih usod*. Kondor 254. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga. Prevod Srečko Fišer.

been fatefully accelerated in the past decade through the expansion of online retail. Super, mega, hyper, giga, and other markets are likely destined to disappear owing to having become dinosaurs. Perhaps all that will be left is warehouse stores on one hand and super-luxury boutiques on the other - everything in between will be gobbled up by online sales. On Amazon, a customer is presented with a choice of thousands of items, all at an arm's reach; the order in which they are presented is deliberate but the criteria are largely opaque. For most customers, choosing Amazon results in a desirable, predictable, and generally unbeatable experience: you order various items, typically at bargain prices and without having to account for postage costs; the order is available reasonably quickly; returns aren't a hassle. But in the heart of this experience, there has been a colossal downturn somewhere along the way: most of the merchandise is junk. If you regard Amazon as a company committed to building infrastructure on the largest of scales - a provider of systems, services, capacity, and manpower - its junkification makes perfect sense. For some time, Amazon hasn't operated merely as a store. In the ideal future as envisaged by Amazon, selling items to people is somebody else's problem. Amazon is already beyond retail itself, it is the embodiment of junk.

The generic shopping centre is doomed and, naturally, I welcome this. As demonstrated, it was a space of poor or, at best, average design, context-agnostic, filled with HVAC devices and fluorescent lighting, it caused an immense amount of needless car trips, and encouraged a suspect, consumerism-based culture.

Architectural solutions will have to be found which will refurbish the remains of shopping centres to make cities civic again. In many places, this process is already ongoing. There is a lot of talk about the authentic experience, the return to the local and to fair trade. Whenever I hear of such solutions, I default to a sort of scepticism: believing in them is easy because they themselves are easy - too easy, in fact, to work, as if we changed the form without even touching the content. The struggle is thus far from over; one wonders if the battlefield has even been charted already. Notwithstanding its cafés, the multiplex cinema, and the theatre, the BTC is not a city. It is a private space under surveillance. If you're down and out, you may turn up there if you wish, but without money in your pocket, there will be precious little to do. However, the shopping centre is a fastidiously cleansed space. There are no drunkards or crazies, no beggars. No buskers, no gangs, no protesters, no disorder. The BTC is safe, orderly, a city of happiness as a vision of utopia - or rather, for some at least, it is a vision of an alluring utopia. If we let ourselves succumb to the allure of this utopia, we concede to the politicians' rhetoric of classlessness, we pretend that the old class tensions between the haves and have-nots don't exist here, and when the undesirables have been swept from view, we dispatch them somewhere we don't see them, to the parts of the town where we don't ever need to go. All we have to do is draw a line in the sand which they are not to cross. In other words, gentrification and the shopping culture are two sides of the same coin.

Again, shopping occupies the very essence of the consumerist society, including its spatial implications. In the introduction to the Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping,¹² Rem Koolhaas writes thus:

"Shopping is arguably the last remaining form of public activity. Through a battery of increasingly predatory forms, shopping has infiltrated, colonized, and even replaced, almost every aspect of urban life. Town centers, suburbs, streets, and now airports, train stations, museums, hospitals, schools, the Internet, and the military are shaped by the mechanisms and spaces of shopping. The voracity by which shopping pursues the public has, in effect, made it one of the principal - if only - modes by which we experience the city. The Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping explores the spaces, people, techniques, ideologies, and inventions by which shopping has so dramatically refashioned the city. Perhaps the beginning of the 21st century will be remembered as the point where the urban could no longer be understood without shopping."

Koolhaas's study of shopping is presented as a hefty book whose binding and golden letters are reminiscent of the Bible. The book is an ironic and at the same time affirmative apotheosis of shopping as the all-encompassing new reality of the world which has replaced traditional values and concepts: knowledge, culture, religion, etc., whereas in the spatial sense, it has replaced and transformed - in its image - airports, churches, museums, libraries, hospitals, and schools: "Not only does shopping turn into anything, anything turns into shopping... So even if shopping is constantly facing crisis and decline, it is also being constantly (and artificially) reinvented, reinterpreted, refashioned, reborn, rechanneled, and repackaged."¹³

Throughout the book, its authors don't seek answers to questions but rather ask questions. Why is retail in crisis? How will IT development affect retail? What is changing in terms of how we buy, what we buy and why we buy? The authors' premise is that shopping is a living entity which concerns itself with its survival. They posit that shopping has evolved according to the principles of evolution, similar to living creatures: some evolutionary achievements were planned, others were the consequence of chance, but all of them are a reaction to external forces. Shopping is dominated by the relationship between retail and the customer. As the customer changes, so does retail.

The use of IT in retail, be it traditional or on-line, but also in architecture and urban design gives rise to the question which I see as central. The focus has shifted from "how are people affected by spatial planning" to "how are people affected by information planning". The jury is still out on the significance of this shift for shopping; the dominance of on-line retail is not yet fully realised.

Shopping is a kind of spatial cancer, being that no space is safe from being impinged upon in one way or another by the production logic of space, a logic that has become global. Mickaël Labbé, French philosopher of the younger generation, claims that nowadays, no city and no city quarter may be said to have survived unscathed a veritable assault on the communal and common dimension of space. The violence in question isn't macroscopic, it is about micro-alterations of the physiognomy of the urban by way of the market imperative¹⁴.

"Quality of urban life has become a commodity for those with money, as has the city itself in a world where consumerism, tourism, cultural and knowledge-based industries have become major aspects of urban political economy."¹⁵

What has been lost in this process is the civic shared public space which can serve as the backdrop to communal architecture. Instead, it seems that us, architects, are increasingly facing one of two equally bad options: either to accept the current status quo and align ourselves with the world of money and power, or to resign ourselves to working in the margins where our work, despite being regularly lauded by the media, will exert very limited social or cultural influence.

Italo Calvino concludes his *Invisible Cities*¹⁶ with a dialogue between Kublai Khan and Marco Polo:

"The hell of the living is not something that will be. If there is one, it is what is already here, the hell we live in every day, that we make by being together. There are two ways to escape suffering it. The first is easy for many: accept the hell, and become such a part of it that you can no longer see it. The second is risky and demands constant vigilance and apprehension: seek and learn to recognize who and what, in the midst of hell, are not hell, then make them endure, give them space."

12 Chung, Chuihua Judy, Jeffrey Inaba, Rem Koolhaas, Sze Tsung Leong, in Harvard University Graduate School of Design. 2001. Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping. Köln, Cambridge, Mass.: Taschen ; Harvard Design School.

13 *ibid.*, p. 129

14 Labbé, Mickaël. 2019. Resuming space. Against the architecture of contempt. Paris: Payot.

15 Harvey, David. 2008. *The Right to the City*. New Left Review 53, as cited in: Abram, Sandi. 2017. "Samonikla kreativna fabrika v času neoliberalne mašine kreativnih industrij" ["The Grassroots Creative Factory in the Age of the Neoliberal Creative Industries Machine"]. Časopis za kritiko znanosti 45 (270): 17–31. Available at: http://www.ckz.si/images/objave/Sandi_Abram_The_Grassroots_Creative_Factory_in_the_Age_of_the_Neoliberal_Creative_Industries_Machine_a.pdf.

16 Calvino, Italo. 1972. *Invisible Cities*. Translation by William Weaver, 1974.