

SEQUENCE VISUELLE

VISUAL SEQUENCE :

Contemporary concept which associates the reading of space with its representation; the word sequence, of Romance origin, has been used since 1925 in the context of cinema. "Series of shots constituting a whole in relation to a given dramatic action". Translated from "Dictionnaire Robert".

A visual sequence represents a succession of views or images which reveals the particular interest of an urban or natural unit.

Four types of sequences will be distinguished: the linear, the panoramic and the fundamental sequence, and the urban film.

The linear sequence is appraised during a walk in town, at the time of a specific trip: home to work or to the town centre, or from school to sports grounds... It is a about establishing the important places along the trip, which qualify it. "Serial Visions" in Gordon Cullen's "Townscape" is the reference model for this type of exercise (1).

In his book "Town design", Frederick Gibberd also uses the principle of the linear sequence when carrying out an urban analysis of the perception of a building (3). The representation is similar: it shows together the views and the corresponding locations of the observer (g, b, c) indicated on a map with the direction of their movement. The exercise "in the style of ..." carried out in la Ferté-Gaucher (2) combines the two preceding examples. The principle of the plan-view (4/5) is often used to represent a lived or perceived space (cf R.Unwin and F.Gibberd).

The linear sequences of going up or down are interesting particular cases. The change of

Reflexions on architecture p.5 et 6.

"... Our perception of space is dynamic. It is related to action. Rather than a contemplative view starting from a fix point our perception is kinematic. That made Corbusier say: "architecture is judged by our seeing eyes, turning head, walking legs. Architecture is not a synchronic phenomenon, but a successive one, which is made of spectacles, added the ones to the others and following themselves in space and time, indeed like music"

Tr. from Robert Anzelle., Réflexions sur l'architecture p 5 and 6

" C'est en étudiant les détails de plans semblables et en analysant leurs traits caractéristiques que l'on peut essayer de recueillir quelques directives dans la voie de l'urbanisme, cet art si ancien qui, en réalité, est pour les modernes un art nouveau dont ils doivent rechercher les principes dans les œuvres d'autres âges "

direction in a trip creates what is called "a nodal point". Transitions between districts, or the passage from rural areas to a city are also linear sequences at another scale to show the changes of places.

The panoramic sequence is carried out starting from a particular point of observation and, taking into account the field of vision of an eye (54° horizontally), and the head's mobility, makes it possible to cover three side by side angles of views and to represented them by a panoramic triptych (6/7). R.Unwin astutely represents the center of Buttstedt (5), with 2 shifted points of observation. There will be in this case an interpretation of the panoramic vision of a lived space.

In the traditional composition of view-points, terraces, square or city entries, the panoramic sequence has always been specifically used to create an effect of monumentality (divergence of a landscape points

of view - view of the Square du Vert galant and the banks of the Seine from the middle of the Pont du Carrousel (6) - or convergence of the glances towards the monument). In the example of the Paris Panthéon (7) to the plan correspond the views associating an urban window flanked by two angles of two ways. The panoramic sequence can be either a lived space, or an intermediate space, or a space perceived with parallel silhouettes pointing out the distance.

Modern town planning uses the panoramic effect in a permanent way, on flat roofs, on flat grounds occupied by buildings put on insulated piles, and in each dwelling, thanks to picture windows (cf urban window). It is one of the consequences of the fundamental principle of autonomy described by J.Belmont: "They created buildings in which no element was any longer connected to any other and which were themselves isolated from their environment".

The fundamental sequence defines an urban whole by its principal visual characteristics; it leads to associating a succession of views: reference marks, panoramic sequence, linear sequence. This combination makes it possible to define better the architectural, social and environmental identity of a district for its inhabitants and visitors. The district of the Rue Daguerre is an illustration of fundamental sequence (8). The choice of the views rests on the principles of perception of urban space, which Kevin Lynch exposed in "The Image of the City".

Finally, the urban film is a succession of visual sequences which introduces movement and drama, thanks to the audio-visual means given by sound or comment. The representation of space is thus better simulated for the analysis or the project. Computer graphics and synthesized images used in the video games have already found their application in the archaeological, road and architectural field.

This working method facilitates the democratic debate by helping people to understand the interest of an urban design project. It is up to the building owners and to the city mayors to include this type of work in the study brief of the urban design scheme.

Cf. ANGLE OF TWO WAYS, VIEW-POINT, CITY ENTRANCE, URBAN WINDOW, BUILT FACE, CHURCH SQUARE, MONUMENTAL PROSPECT, VISUAL PLAN, PLAN/VIEW, LANDMARK DISTRICT, TERRACE.

SEQUENCE LINEAIRE



SEQUENCE PANORAMIQUE



SEQUENCE FONDAMENTALE

