

POST-MODERNITY AS A CULTURAL WEAPON

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1)-Today's idea of a cultural "Globalisation" represents a concept mainly coined with in a network of strong political interests aimed at the effective cultural control of the entire planet.

Though seldom avowed, nevertheless we could easily gather some sound statements that seem to confirm of the validity of this interpretation (Jameson; Leach; Argan; Said; Maalouf).

2)-Particularly in the architectural fields, a skilful stratagem underlying the reasoning that supports the idea of a "Globalisation", is the ambiguous way of understanding the historical periods considered, and the designations employed.

Therefore, I think it is useful to reorganise them all, in order to do away with much of the ambiguity (Le Goff; Nesbit; Eisenman; Betts).

3)- Especially with some designations like "Modern Movement" which covers different things, and which has been already recognised as being an "ambiguous umbrella", allowing every interpretation and sustains every conclusion (Nesbit).

4)-So concretely, I am proposing the need to read the evolution from the 15th century until 20th century, divided in two main modernities, which I believe to be better than others because they are settled mainly in social-economic fields.

5)-The first one to be considered covers all the period from the Renaissance until the end of the last century, and it is considered the **Macro Paradigm of Anthropological Modernity**.

6)-It includes the **Minor Paradigm of Sociological Modernity** which is more specific and comes with peculiar problems implied by the Industrial Revolution.

7)-They both include several main periods and some other micro periods like modernism and post-modernism which are precisely that: movements totally integrated on the Great Paradigms considered before.

8)-Nevertheless the 21th century assists to the birth of **Post Modernity**, which corresponds to another **Macro**

Paradigm, that splits out all principles structuring the Paradigms existent until then.

9) Besides, **Post Modernity** implies a new cultural consciousness merged with a strong political consciousness spread all over the world.

10)- *Trying to be aware of this new demanding era is perhaps the first step, a big one, in order to oppose the idea of a procrustean and sterilising “Globalisation”.*

1)- Today we can easily find almost everywhere texts referring to a “Globalisation” as a notion that is self-evident and in some way ineluctable.

However, I am convinced that this is not an naïf concept but it corresponds to an idea mainly coined in a network of very strong and well-defined political interests.

As such, “Globalisation” corresponds to an aggressive weapon in the field of culture.

Of course this is my own view on the matter but we could find many other opinions supporting that statement.

We could quote from Edward Said who in 78 underlies “that political imperialism tries to control all academic research, all imaginative studies”, or expresses the idea that we lack a general study about “imperialism and culture” (Said, 2004:15).

We could quote as well from Fredric Jameson who in 84 writes that Post-modern culture in fact corresponds to a new effort of the United States to rule the planet economically and militarily (Jameson, 1991[1984]:19).

We could quote from Montaner who more recently underlined that since the thirties, North American cultural politics has tried to control the cultural and artistic production all over the world (Montaner, 2001:13).

And so on.

Had we time enough we could quote as well from Neil Leach (2005), from Amin Maalouf (2002) and many others.

2)- Specifically in the architectural fields, a skilful stratagem is used to support

the idea of an unavoidable “Globalisation”, trying to transform History into a futile exercise, as the historian Jacques Le Goff (1982:72) refers, or changing as far as possible cultural references, blurring the borders between periods of evolution in history and rendering ambiguous or senseless all periods previously defined.

Of course this can be used as a tool for an improved historical understanding as Jacques Le Goff has done by proposing to extend the Middle Ages until the 19th century as a continuous evolution.

It is easy to understand how this corresponds to a proposition that determines new paths of research and new global interpretations in the ways of considering History.

Nevertheless today’s pseudo “arguments” are used as an opportunistic tool twisting and perverting any interpretation, in order to reach certain political objectives.

Neil Leach adverts that we are living in a time when it is possible to frame and distort “truth” in order to validate the myths of History (Leach, 2005[1999]:40). Finally we learn from Paul Betts how far certain circles and interests are decided to go just to reach that aim of twisting History (Betts, 2009: 200).

3)- This is especially so with certain designations such as “Modern Movement” which covers different things, what has been already recognised as being an “ambiguous umbrella”, allows every interpretation and sustains every conclusion (Nesbit, 1996: 12).

Charles Jenks in 85 had denounced the lack of critical reliability of these kinds of designations (Jenks, 1985:11).

4)- That’s the reason why I think that, as far as architecture is concerned, the attempt to re-analyze the issue of more operative periods in History is an important step to take.

Concretely, I would like to propose the need to reorganise the historical evolution from the Renaissance until the end of 20th century, divided in two

main periods of Modernities that are partially superimposed but that I suppose more warranted than others because they are settled mainly in social-economic fields.

5)-The first one to be considered covers generically the whole period and is the **Macro Paradigm of Anthropological Modernity**.

This means that men have ceased to think about themselves as a consequence of metaphysical conceptions (in this period **Rome would be the *Caput Mundi***). From now on slowly but firmly, men are the real centre of any speculation, and the conception of God is in fact a real consequence of our ideas about ourselves (Almeida, 2005).

6)-Though in the second half of this period, with the economic and social problems that arise from the Industrial Revolution, the specific transformation of life conditions forces us to consider a new Modernity which is totally integrated in the preceding period, rendering it more accurate.

That one is a period we could name the **Minor Paradigm of Sociological Modernity** (from now on **Paris becomes the *Caput Mundi***) (Almeida, 2005).

7)-They both include micro periods like Modernism and Post-modernism which, independently of their qualities and general merits, are nothing but professional movements defining specific paths of research, like many others that have occurred during the long period of Modernities.

8)- In the 20th century, especially after World War II, we can enumerate several attempts to transform New York into the capital of culture (**NY *Caput Mundi***) (Almeida, 2005).

9)- Anyway, in the 21th century we also witness the birth of the **Macro Paradigm of the Post Modernity**.

This represents a fairly new cultural circumstance.

No more a world centralised culture, no more peripheral countries, no more guiding cities and vanguards meaning world wide values.

10)- We can say that this Macro-Paradigm disintegrates thoroughly the Paradigms existent until then, which means that now it is spread all over the world, and that a new cultural consciousness which refuses to acknowledge any country or any city the legitimacy of claiming to be the cultural global leaders all over the planet.

11)- Of course this new Macro Paradigm of **Post Modernity** means a strong cultural consciousness but it represents a strong political consciousness as well. Both of them are absolutely necessary to oppose the idea of a procrustean and sterilising “Globalisation”.

12)- To cope with this new era – I believe a big and decisive one-- is perhaps the first step, to be done to establish a new and more suitable frame work in order improve research on those matters.

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