Cultivating Feelings

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As defined since modernity architectural aesthetics seems to have lost, at some point in time – perhaps along with postmodernity – its *raison d'être*. The ability of "taste" to decide whether the volumes and forms are "beautiful" or not, following (neo)Kantian theory, doesn't seem to represent the privileged mode of accessing the profound meaning of architecture anymore, as Gadamer thought, half a century ago.[1] Architecture does not address "aesthetic consciousness," but our ability to understand the (historical) world we live in and which is opening to us – primarily through the very understanding of architecture. Thus, architecture as art represents an interruption of the rhythm of the "society of spectacle" (Guy Debord), a window opening to something else, transcending this society; the architectural work is not fundamentally seen as a "spectacular" object, society's self-glorification product or an "iconic building" (Charles Jenks) – although a significant part of today's architecture is conceived also for this purpose.

However, once freed from the straitjacket of the judgment of taste, architecture (as work of art) cannot remain on the (Hegelian-Gadamerian) hermeneutical soil, as if it addressed the intellect and our ability to grasp the meaning. Over the last decades, the phenomenological approach has showed that architectural works are experienced before being understood or simply noticed. They are not firstly – and essentially – serving an aesthetic consciousness, nor the rationality which deciphers their meanings. Architectural works are built for *the whole man*, endowed with reason and equally with the five senses working together within the act of perception, and finally, but not least, with imagination.

In our view, aesthetics aims to provide the grounds for an architectural practice that takes into consideration the presence of man in the world and of the body as "embodied self." The phenomenological approach of the experienced space turns its focus to the fundamental reality of the living body.

At the same time, architectural aesthetics in this way understood cannot be separated from *ethics*; better said, it is ethics. Through "ethics" we understand, according to the original meaning of the term *ethos*, a certain way of being within ourselves and in the world, a way of making friends with ourselves and with the world that surrounds us. The new alliance between man and the world could thus be understood as "a cultivation of feelings in an enclosed space" (Hermann Schmitz). According to Schmitz's views, the definition this would be dwelling itself. In our understanding, architectural aesthetics is, ultimately, a theory of dwelling.

But an important distinction must be made here. If dwelling is not simply sheltering, but a certain way of being in the world, a double question immediately arises: what is the world we dwell in, and what / who is the man who dwells in it? The answer to this question corresponds to a ramification of phenomenology. According to an important direction in philosophy, represented by Martin Heidegger and his disciples, "world" is first of all the social world of "they," and man *is* "thrown" into this world, in which he must *ex-ist*. The world tears him away from his own self and presents him with a new, social self. Another phenomenological trend starts from the living body. The world of the body that feels, perceives and imagines is not primarily the social world; the core of the living body is the perceived-and-imagined space. The new phenomenology therefore explores the way in which man lives with and in this space – dwelling in it.

1 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd edition (London, New York: Continuum, 1989).

In this paper we will approach the relationship between man and space from the perspective of dwelling, emphasizing the contrast between the inhabited space and the spatiality of the "thrown into the world's existence."

Existing in the world and the space of existence

From the very beginning, phenomenology aims to challenge the modern idea of dominant knowledge. The modern view of the world presents the world as the object that man, as knowing subject, places before and outside of himself with the purpose of dominating and transforming it. By criticizing this understanding of the world, phenomenology proposes a new paradigm, according to which knowledge is rooted in the world of living, in the fact of being in the world. This "fact" is the primordial phenomenon, and the task of philosophy is precisely to carry out its rigorous description.

What we refer to as "the primordial phenomenon" – being in the world – can be and has been interpreted in different ways. What is at stake here could be rephrased through the following question: what is this being that we say it is in the world, and what is the world in which this being lives or dwells? As we shall try to show, the answer points to the way in which philosophy and the theory of architecture understand space and the spatiality of human life. Anticipating the result of our approach, we could state that according to a certain understanding of *Being-in-the-world*, man is in his essence entirely socialized, and the world of living is simply that of the social world. According to a different understanding, which lies at the basis of our notion of aesthetics, man is the living body revealing to himself and to others through his three main faculties – feeling, perception and imagination – all existing concomitantly in both time and space: he inhabits the spaces and enriches them through his creations along his lifetime.

According to the first mentioned way of understanding of *being-in-the-world*, explained in detail by Martin Heidegger in his treatise *Being and Time*, man is a being determined, in its essence, by temporality. Man exists within time, while temporality represents, as the original opening, the ground of man's possibilities of being in the world. As a temporal being, man exists outside himself, within his possibilities of being; he is "thrown" into them. "To be thrown" is his original way of being. Man is thus future-oriented; he exists according to his future, fulfilling his possibilities of being in the world: a profession, a career, a family, his contribution to a better society etc. and finally death, which, as the supreme possibility, casts its shadow upon every possibility of being in the world of the existence (*Dasein*). Being towards death is the supreme possibility, the possibility of all possibilities that are revealed to the anxious existent. In this sense, anxiety (*Angst*, in the ontological sense) is not a mental state; as a revelation of the supreme possibility of being in the world, it is the revelation of the very fact of being (thrown) into the world. This "depsychologization" of anxiety – and of moods as such – is the main contribution of existential ontology to the issue of man's place in the world. Anxiety is not, as with Kierkegaard's *Concept of Anxiety*, a revelation of man's profundity and of the possibility of a "leap of faith." Anxiety is the revelation of the phenomenon of the world itself.[2] The world is no longer a cosmos; it solely exists for the man who has been thrown into it.

What is the world, more precisely, if conceived this way? What is space, conceived as a dimension of the world? As Heidegger broadly points out, the world thus understood is the world of the everyday life in which man exists together with the others. It is a world of signs

2 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996), 175-176/187. The second page reference indicates the page numbering of the princeps edition of the treatise: *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1927). The italics belong to Heidegger. "Being anxious discloses, primordially and directly, the world as world […] *Angst* as a mode of attunement first discloses the *world as world* […] *Angst* throws Da-sein back upon that for which it is anxious, its authentic potentiality for being-in-the-world. *Angst* individuates Da-sein to its ownmost being-in-the-world which, as understanding, projects itself essentially upon possibilities."

and "tools," a meaningful world that offers itself to our understanding as it is. Existing means moving in this world in order to carry out, together with the others, our different "projects."[3] But "being with the others" is understood starting from the "significance" of the world. The other is simply one-among-others, and the others' way of manifesting is through their labor in the world of the available objects. We shall learn that, *mutatis mutandis,* the same could be stated about the way in which existential ontology understands man's relationship with space. Space is understood starting from the surrounding world, not from the living body.

The world of signs and useful things[4] – the only one that existential ontology takes into account – is the social world of the "impersonal se." The world of everyday life is that of the "available objects," where the existent is taken and from which the existent cannot distance itself otherwise than through an illusory, "inauthentic" approach. Man is absorbed into this world, that opens to him at the level of both understanding and affectivity: the affects hold an essential role for the opening of the world itself, since this philosophy presents affects as being social. Human existence is, together with the others, attuned to the world by the way of the primordial *attunement*. "Mood makes manifest 'how one is and is coming along'. In this 'how one is' being in a mood brings being to its 'there'."[5] As phenomenologists and theoreticians of architectural space point out,[6] mood belongs to being in the world in its essence: affects are not "states" of the psyche.

> "Mood assails. It comes neither from 'without' nor from 'within', but rises from being-in-the-world itself as a mode of that being […] *Mood has always already disclosed being-in-the-world as a whole and first makes possible directing oneself toward something*."[7]

At the level of our moods, we can meet every being (animated or not) and we can be called by them inasmuch we already are attuned to the world as a whole.

The world thus understood is the everyday world of the "others" (*the They*). In this world, the human existence *intermingles* with others; it is monopolized by the anonymous "mass"; the more he says "I" the more any real difference between himself and the others disappears.[8] Without doubt, merging the self with the others in the everyday life of public space corresponds to an "inauthentic" way of being; but this doesn't mean that the "authentic" way of being (*eigentlich)* is a completely different matter. In existential ontology, "the they […] belongs as a primordial phenomenon to the positive constitution of Da-sein." Authentic existence means nothing else but *taking on* the inauthentic way of being in the world, consciously accepting the absorption of the personal self into the social world. Being thrown into the world, the existent operates in the *not-at-home-mode*, a situation that reveals itself within anxiety as a realization of the "worldliness of the world."

> "Familiar being-in-the-world is a mode of the uncanniness of Da-sein, not the other way around. *Not-being-at-home must be conceived existentially and ontologically as the more primordial phenomenon.*"[9]

The fundamental mode of being of human existence is that of being delivered to the world in which he is minding his own business. *The spatiality* of existence is thus understood starting

3 Ibid., 116/123. "The structure of the worldliness of the world is such that others […] show themselves in their heedful being in the surrounding world in terms of the things at hand in that world."

4 Ibid., 71-72/76-77. "The further we penetrate into the understanding of the being of innerwordly beings, the more broad and certain the phenomenal basis for the freeing of the phenomenon of world becomes."

5 Ibid., 127/134.

6 Alberto Pérez-Gómez has carried out further research on this aspect of the opening of the world of life within the affective disposition (*Stimmung*) and of the way in which architecture enriches the world thus understood in his book, *Attunement. Architectural Meaning after the Crisis of Modern Science* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016).

7 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 129/136.

8 Ibid., 118-119/126.

9 Ibid., 177/189.

from the structure of being-in-the-world, not the other way around.

> "Space is initially discovered in this spatiality with being-in-the-world […] Space is neither in the subject nor is the world in space. Rather, space is 'in' the world since the being-in-the-world constitutive for Da-sein has disclosed space."[10]

Human existence gains a spatial dimension while discovering the space; space does not exist "in itself," outside man. The discovery of space occurs from the everyday world into which he is thrown.[11] The primordial possibility of being in the everyday world is temporality. Time, as "being outside," represents the possibility of existence as diving into tasks and projects. That is why spatiality, space itself as a dimension of being in the world, belongs entirely to the everyday world and can be understood on this ground. Space is discovered while working around the house, but also outside the house, as "public space."

> "In accordance with its spatiality, Da-sein is initially never here, but over there. From its over there it comes back to its here […] Da-sein is spatial by way of circumspectly discovering space."[12]

In both situations man discovers space starting from the world in which he is thrown. Space is a dimension of being in the world, secondary to the primordial dimension of the temporality of human existence. "Space can only be understood by going back to the world."[13] We shall see that this existential phenomenology principle is not obvious.

The body and the inhabited space

There is an excerpt from the 24th paragraph of *Being and Time* starting from which we could *relaunch* the problem of space.

> "In accordance with its being-in-the-world, Da-sein has always already been pre-given its discovered space. On the other hand, space in itself is initially still obscured with regard to the mere possibilities of the pure spatial being of something contained in it. The fact that space essentially *shows* itself in a world does not tell us anything about its kind of being […] *Nor does the being of space have the kind of being of Da-sein.*"[14]

What is then "space in itself" if "the being of space" does *not* manifest the (thrown) way of being of the existent? *Being and Time* does not offer an answer to this question. Conversely, as we have seen, spatiality – and along with it, space itself – is sensed on the ground of being in the world as temporality. Heidegger's isolated note indicates nevertheless the possibility of a primordial understanding of space starting from the *living body*.

Following Merleau-Ponty's extensive research while at the same time offering it a new direction, O. F. Bollnow points out that the body is the foundation of the spatiality of human life. Body is attuned to space, not to the space of mere existence thrown into the world, but to the space of feelings. This is what we intend to show. The critique addressed to Heidegger's theory firstly consists of a discussion concerning the nature of the thrown existence.

> "Heidegger characterizes human 'being-in-the-world' as 'being-thrown'. This includes the relationship with space, and we will need to understand this as a 'being-thrown' too. To say

10 Ibid., 103/111.

11 Ibid., 62/66. "Being-in-the-world and thus the world as well must be the subject of our analytic in the horizon of average everydayness as the *nearest* kind of being of Da-sein. We shall pursue everyday being-in-the-world. With it as a phenomenal support, something like world must come into view."

12 Ibid., 100/107-108.

13 Ibid., 105/113 (The italics belong to us). To put it in other words: "The specific spatiality of Da-sein must be grounded in temporality […] *Only on the basis of ecstatic and horizontal temporality is it possible for Dasein to break into space*" (Ibid., 335-337/367-369). The italics belong to Heidegger.

14 Ibid., 104/112. "Space in itself" and "Nor does..." in italics.

> that man is thrown into something means more than that he is located there in a neutral sense. It means rather that, unintentionally, or even against his will, he is in a rather ungentle manner brought into a medium that is unfamiliar to him […] All throwing contains a note of aggression. Wild beasts have their food thrown to them, while humans are offered food in a rather more cautious manner. And so, man finds himself thrown into a medium that is strange to him, that is hostile and uncanny […] Space is such a strange and oppressive medium, in which man may find himself at any location."[15]

Being "thrown into the world" does not constitute the original way of dwelling in the world. The idea of dwelling is fundamental for the phenomenology of the body. Dwelling entails a close, almost intimate connection with world: man dwells in the world as the psyche dwells in the body. *The house is not a mere shelter, but the very model of dwelling in the world.*

The bridge between man and world is represented by the presence of things. We live around things whose presence constitute the atmosphere of the space we inhabit, whether we refer to things of the interior space or to those of the public space. Things are not simply "useful things." The messy books and the notebooks on the table, the lamps, the table itself, the chairs, the bookcase – those are not simply tools for reading and writing, sitting etc. Instead, they constitute the inner space insofar as we feel-in them, as empathy is the initial relationship between body and things. Perception is not simply contact (visual or auditory) with things, but a real experience. Perceptual experience means "that we perceive objects as 'directly expressing an inner form of life'."[16] At the foundation of perceptual experience lies the "total bodily feeling," meaning "emotional-kinesthetic dynamics and action like inner gestures." If things – the things we feel into – are perceived as expressions of the living body, perception is a valorization of the world of life. Thus, the world ceases to be exclusively understood as the alien and hostile world in which we are "thrown."

> "The perceptual world is indeed directly invested with values by virtue of the same dynamic principles that confer 'interiority' on perceived objects and dynamic configurations and urge perceivers on to action."[17]

We shall see that this valorization of the perceived world ultimately means an enrichment of the world through active imagination. Imagining the world – and not just the simple perception – is the foundation of "attuned meaning."

Dwelling is therefore a complex act, and the phenomenology of the body is focused on different "levels" of dwelling. To inhabit a space means to make it our own, to be rooted in it through our perceptual experience and, at the same time, through the anchors provided by the "outside world."

> "Man, or the ego, dwells in the body, in the house, in things, in the world, in space and time […] Everywhere it is a question of designating a particular intimacy of the relationship, with which something psychical or spiritual is to some extend merged into something spatial."[18]

This intertwining of the human life and the world of life leads to Merleau-Ponty's notion of "flesh of the world." However, the intimacy between human being and the world is not a simple fact, but a relationship that must be preserved. But what does it mean "to preserve"? Contrary to the objectivist perspective prevailing in our civilization, the new quintessential element is the perspective according to which the relationship between man and world is that of reciprocity; world is not something-already-made or simply-present, but the "product" of the action of the *whole human being*, with his feelings and imagination.

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15 Otto Friedrich Bollnow, *Human Space* (London: Hypen press, 2011), 257-258.

16 Victor Rosenthal, "Microgenesis, immediate experience and visual processes in reading." In *Seeing, Thinking and Knowing*, A. Carsetti (ed.), (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004), 228, online at http://lias.ehess.fr/docannexe/file/933/microreadreprint.pdf

17 Bollnow, *Human Space,* 240. The italics belong to us.

18 Ibid., 262-263. Altered translation.

The space of feelings: atmospheres

If the living body is the foundation of man's presence in the world, the way of being of the body and the "content" of the space in which he lives must be rigorously described. It is the task assumed by Hermann Schmitz's "new phenomenology."

The living body is first of all the one that feels itself in a double sense: the felt body and the feeling body.

> "The felt body is a feeling body – its mode of existence cannot be separated from its becoming manifest to the conscious subject in specific kinds of corporeal feeling."[19]

It is fundamental to notice the distinction between the felt body and the material body. The latter possesses a certain dimension, it is commensurable, while the living body is "surfaceless" (*flächenlos*): it feels itself and the spaces of the body's "area" (*Gegend*). Self-feeling becomes manifest in the feelings of the body: joy, sadness, shame, fear, boldness, mercy, thankfulness, despair. However, these feelings (*Gefühle*) are not, as with traditional and modern psychology, assets or passions contained by the psyche as inside a box – a representation called *Innenweltdogma* (the inner world dogma) which is radically criticized; instead, feelings radiate immediately around the body making up *its space.* Schmitz expresses their diffuse character through an original definition: feelings are spatially diffused and bodily perceived atmospheres and forces (*Mächte*); atmospheres being defined, in turn, as "occupation of a space or a surfaceless area in the realm of felt presence."[20] Therefore, although feelings are atmospheres, not all atmosphere is a feeling. Weather, silence, night – those are atmospheres radiating within the space of the felt presence.

Atmospheres can be perceived, just as a torn or enraged man perceives the quiet and grave atmosphere of a church he enters by chance. That man may remain indifferent to the atmosphere of the space insofar the nature of the contact is limited to *simple perception.* Conversely, the atmosphere may affect him emotionally in the sense of a reconciliation with the world and with his fellows. Human being becomes attuned to the space's atmosphere and his mood is transformed by space. Mood is the "place" of the world's opening to the man as *a body*, not as mere existence. In his turn, man can be seized (*ergriffen)* by the atmosphere of a space with which he comes into contact. Then, a consonance with the respective atmosphere may occur. We could speak about an authentic attitude of the man "walking along" with the feeling that comes towards him.

> "In the case of each feeling, understood as the phenomenon of being […] the active availability of the one who is seized is created due to the impulse of feeling: it attracts him into an indivisible relationship with himself […] This is the case with every penetration into an atmosphere which is a feeling."[21]

In the space of feeling (*Gefühlsraum),* feelings become *dilated,* thus filling the respective space, creating it. Not being enclosed within man (in his "soul") feelings constitute "half-things" (*Halbdinge),* spaces in which the body – as nondimensional space – enters, allowing the body to be surrounded, felt, impregnated by them. Between the space of feelings and the space of the body an intimate relationship is thus created. Together with Schmitz, we understand dwelling as this relationship with an atmospheric space that transforms the human being who enters it.

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19 Hermann Schmitz *et al.*, "Emotions outside the box—the new phenomenology of feeling and corporeality" (https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fs11097-011-9195-1.pdf), 244.

20 Hermann Schmitz, *Atmosphären* (München: Karl Alber Freiburg, 2016), 30. My own translation.

21 Ibid., 75.

The culture of feelings

Man dwells in the space of the humanized things that are not simply "tools." Dwelling is the rooting of man in his space, starting with perceptual experience. Moreover, dwelling is a feeling of feelings as atmospheres, that constitute humanized spaces; thus, dwelling is the cultivation of emotions in the enclosed space.[22] This consists of an inward look (*Blick nach innen).* Interiority (*das Innere*) is not an enclosed space, a fortified citadel in which man would retire in order to run away from the world, but "an immensity" (*Weite*) crossed by the directions (of the gaze), in which feelings arise freely, as they "interwind with memories and expectations."[23] We shall see that this interwinding of senses and memories in the space of interiority is nothing else but *reverie* as active imagination. So to say, the inner space of the living body (apparently) chased out the door returns through the window. The inner space is the place of the opening towards the cosmic world, to a space felt and imagined as *vastness.*

Interiority is attuned to the interior space of the house, where the vastness of the world loses its menacing character. For the dwelling body, the space of the house becomes the embedding background that gathers and amplifies the feelings. For example, a storm experienced from inside the house enhances man's feeling of safety while awakening the consciousness of vastness. The interior of the house also contributes to the creation of a favorable framework for the "fluid embedding of man in the immensity laden with feelings,"[24] the house becoming, as enclosed space, "a home" in a greater sense.

This movement within man's depths, this experience of its cosmic dimension is the "material" of a work of art. Feeling gains an amplitude that can be turned into "aesthetic meditation" (ästhetische *Andacht*). The vital impulse, attached to mere living within the world of everyday life, is partly detached from the main stream of life and it becomes an immense feeling in the enclosed space of silence (*Stille*). An interior distance is thus created – the distance of aesthetic contemplation – which is the foundation of man's inner freedom. Feelings are able to breathe, not being suffocated anymore by the projects of everyday life and by their completion. Understood in this way, aesthetic contemplation may be the foundation of *ethics* as an opening to the other and to the other's feelings.

Another "place" for the formation of feelings is landscape. Aesthetic contemplation takes the form of *expansion* (*Ausleibung*) – a form of "bodily communication with immensity."[25] Feeling becomes so vast that the narrow limits of the ego that clings to the objects around it are exceeded through their identification with cosmic elements. Even impressions gain an "absolute" character (*absolute Eindrücke*) surpassing the simple contact — a process of identifying with the cosmic world takes place within them. The tension of the ego as persistence in its own difference is replaced by "dedifferentiation" (*Entdifferenzierung*), which is the transformation of perception: from a central element of incorporation (*Einleibung*) in the surrounding world through corporeal everyday communication, perception becomes expansive, as detached from the primary vital impulse. Moreover, it becomes expansion itself.

> "The specificity of the way in which the landscape gives something consists in the transformation of bodily communication and of perception from the incorporation in everyday life to expansion. A landscape that opens to the eyes often possesses some kind of immensity, in which the gaze might become lost. Ideally, such a feeling becomes expansion in itself."[26]

22 Hermann Schmitz, *Der Leib, der Raum und die Gefühl* (Bielfeld: Aisthetis Verlang, 2019), 75.
23 Ibid., 76.
24 Ibid, 77.
25 Schmitz, *Atmosphären,* 117.
26 Ibid., 121.

And expansion can, in some cases, gain a mystical aura – when not just the gaze, but the body itself sinks into the cosmic Elements. One of the purest expressions of this feeling is to be found in Nietzsche's poem *Sils-Maria:*

> "I sat there, biding, biding – but for nought,
> Beyond good and evil, now the light
> To savor, now the shade, all merely mime,
> All lake, all midday, all untending time"[27]

In this case, feelings gain an immensity that dwelling in the enclosed space of the house or the garden cannot provide: the body dwells in the universe of the primordial phenomena – the light, the warmth, the wind felt and listened to through the trees – the universe itself is the "house" of man.

Through this perceptual experience, world is invested with the values of the house, and this valorization of the spatial feelings (of the atmospheres) is realized through language – poetical language. And not by chance. Man is a being of language; language is the house of being as man can be in the world only through and within language. The words of poetry are words that express this belonging of the body to the world – be it the protected space of the house or the garden, be it the space of the "natural" landscape. "Poetically man dwells on this earth" says Hölderlin. But the essential words of poetry are images, and dwelling as nurturing of feelings cannot be separated from imagination.

The culture of feelings: the space of imagination

Feelings are not simply "within us" but, as atmospheres, they manifest within the nondimensional space of the life of man. Man cultivates his feelings by *naming* them, and named feelings are already images. Dwelling in the world means cultivating emotions in the enclosed space, that is a named space at all times. Naming feelings does not represent a designation of feelings, but an amplification of feelings through poems. The humanized space of the man who nurtures his feelings is, therefore, the space of poetry. In this case, poetry itself is understood as the originary language of man.[28]

Man dwells on this earth poetically. The space of man has an "echoic character;" as Bollnow points out, it is what enables man to inhabit it.

> „Space can fulfill this task only because man does not originally find himself as a stranger in space [...], but feels bound to it, merged with space and supported by it [...] Life can live in sympathy and harmony with its surroundings, because the echo denotes a primaeval state, which is more original than the contrast of I and world. Because the split between subject and object is here removed or, rather, has not yet formed, this space can never become objective, but rather we can identify with it. Space belongs to us as does our body [...] In a certain sense we can say that we are our space. Bachelard stresses this too, when he particularly refers to the ‚great' poetic line: 'Je suis l'espace où je suis' [*I am the space where I am*] [...] Man dwells in space to the way in which he dwells in his house, and dwelling in a house can give us protection, to the extent that man at the same time dwells more comprehensively in space."[29]

27 F. Nietzsche, "Sils-Maria," transl. by Mark Daniel Cohen.

28 An issue that Rousseau had understood and exposed in *Essay on the Origin of Languages*, an endeavor also described by a contemporary author: "A metaphor is created by itself in the spirit of the 'primitive' man when a new object occurs to him. The image is the instrument of natural expression, immediately; it is the embodiment of the forces of language. The primitive man creates concept-images, metaphorical expressions grafted on the perceived object. Language is intimate, affective and poetical, in the sense that man's identification with the world is produced within it; language creates a mythical space, through the prestige of the image and that of the symbol." Marc Eigeldinger, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau et la réalité de l'imaginaire* (Neuchâtel: La Baconnière, 1978), 134.

29 Bollnow, *Human Space,* 282-283.

Dwelling means a deepening of the original friendship between man and the space of man, in which perception and imagination, as Bachelard points out, tends to be taken one for another.

The space in question is that of poetic imagination or *reverie.* By daydreaming, man becomes incorporated in the space of emotions, and thus this space becomes his inner space. We can state that the phenomenology of daydreaming writes out the last appearances of objectivity that Schmitz's "new phenomenology" retains. It would be futile to talk about feelings as "half-things," since things are transformed within the more comprehensively inhabited space. Things are kept and suppressed (*aufgehoben*) – as Hegel would put it – inside *images*, without losing realism; by losing their massiveness, they aren't mere tools in the space of the everyday life. Poetical reverie is the uppermost play with images through which man transforms the alien space (of the everyday life) into a space that belongs to him. It is within poetical images that the "opening towards the world" takes place; it is an opening towards the originary world: the identification of the intimate space (of the "house") with the immense space of the cosmos. The reverie creates and reveals a *beautiful* world, the single one that is truly habitable.

> "Poetic reverie gives us the world of worlds. Poetic reverie is a cosmic reverie. It is an opening to a beautiful world, to beautiful worlds [...] It is this, my non-I, which enchants the I of the dreamer and which poets can help us to share [...] There are times in the life of a poet when reverie assimilates even the real. Then, what he perceives is assimilated. The real world is absorbed by the imaginary world [...] Following Shelley and poets in general, the phenomenology of perception itself must stand aside for the phenomenology of the creative imagination."[30]

Poetry transposes the flow of reverie into a body of words. It transforms the world of perception in which we are thrown into the immense-and-intimate world in which we may find ourselves; the world is not an object thrown into itself anymore – from *iacere:* to throw (in front) – but a "sphere," in which man feels protected and knows that he is protected.[31]

If, as we stated in the previous chapter, the cultivation of emotions is achieved especially within the phenomenon of expansion, now we are able to understand that the factor of expansion is the imagination amplified by poetic reverie. In the intimate space of the house and within "things," imagination discovers the distances that wrap things into images.

> „The two kinds of space, intimate space and exterior space, keep encouraging each other, as it were, in their growth. [...] Poetic space, because it is expressed, assumes values of expansion. [...] In this activity of poetic spatiality that goes from deep intimacy to infinite extent, united in an identical expansion, one feels grandeur welling up. As Rilke said: 'Through every human being, unique space, intimate space, opens up to the world'. [...] It would seem, then, that it is through their 'immensity' that these two kinds of space – the space of intimacy and world space – blend."[32]

If we know how to look at it and to name it (with a poet's help), each thing could be the origin of a personal "Big Bang", through which our being receives a universe as a gift – the poetical space. This is exactly the meaning of dwelling (poetically) in the world.

The space of the expressive images of poetry is a *space-time*. Bachelard often points out that the source of poetical images is the unconscious, not the individual unconscious, that of stories and

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30 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Reverie* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), 13-14, online at https://www.csus.edu/indiv/o/obriene/art192b/bachelard-poetics%20of%20reverie.pdf

31 Today's man finds in poetry the "Sphere" of classical metaphysics, by retracing the opposite path towards it, and not the other way around. In classical metaphysics, the Sphere is an image that preserves something of the mythical thought being at the same time, in its geometric perfection, a product of scientific thought, and therefore a pre-modern representation. The spherical cosmos of poetry represents a return to mythical thinking, as a source of poetry, a return that modern man needs to complete in order to keep his humanity. For the metaphysics of the Sphere see Peter Sloterdjik, *Spheres II. Globes* (Cambrige, MA: MIT Press, 2014).

32 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 201-203.

small misfortunes, but the vast, cosmic one, in which the past of humanity is contained and, along with it, the great (mythical) images and symbols. The House in which we dwell is *the oneiric house,* the immemorial one – the foundation of the "real" house. Whether he has lived in a house or not, every human being may find within himself and in poems, beyond personal memories, the archetypal House. "Through poems, perhaps more than through recollections, we touch the ultimate poetic depth of the space of the house."[33] This is the poetic ground that we ought to keep insofar as we intend to "take root in a corner of the world."[34] The life of the man who is rooted in the world through imagination recovers the "lost time," that is not that of the *Dasein*'s temporality, but of the immense *past* concentrated within the memory: an image of eternity, as Plato would put it.

> „Thanks to the home, a great many of our memories are housed. [...] At times we think we know ourselves in time, when all we know is a sequence of fixations in the spaces of the being's stability – a being who does not want to melt away, and who, even in the past, when he sets out in search of things past, wants time to 'suspend' its flight. In its countless alveoli space contains compressed time. That is what space is for."[35]

The places of our inner life represent the manifested time: the past gathers within us – in our unconscious – in order to manifest as spatial images, and this manifestation, in turn, present in some of our dreams, unfolds and amplifies in poetry. The world itself becomes an immense visible body; there is no separation between the spaces of the interior – "the spatial alveolus" – and the places filled with history; the transition is continuous from the first to the latter, and the other way around.

Architecture builds upon the double theme of time gathered in the human psyche – of the "*oneiric* house" – and of the common, shared history, emphasizing its traces. A contemporary architect refers to the intertwining of the inner time and that of the history of the world as "historical substance."[36]

> „I think nothing is more powerful than the historical substance itself. Clearly, there are many ways of evoking a feeling of history and the layers of history that are embedded into places. When I worked in Berlin for ten years on a building to mark the former Gestapo headquarters, I kept hoping that the historians there would understand that the history of a place is also stored in physical things – remnants, even rubble – that help us understand it in a way that goes beyond scientific texts and didactic explanations. Maybe not beyond, but in a different mode of understanding, based on emotions rather than intellect."[37]

To build means to bring the historical substance to light, by nurturing the historical sense and the "sense of history."[38] To dwell the earth means to keep places imbued with the traces of the past, to feel-in them, to borrow something of our feeling while receiving what places are able to give us, through the attention we pay to them.

We may now understand the way in which the "aesthetic" – the feelings, and the feeling oriented towards creation – coincides with ethics. The ethical is the true sense of dwelling.

> "To dwell (perhaps wandering) is our destiny. We are dwelling in the world. We must preserve places and we must take care of them. *Ethos*, in ancient Greek, means 'home.' Ethics, as discipline, came afterwards. Only carefulness allows us to exist; it watches over the

33 Ibid., 6.

34 Ibid., 4, "We should therefore have to say how we inhabit our vital space, in accord with all the dialectics of life, how we take root, day after day, in a 'corner of the world.'"

35 Ibid., 8.

36 Peter Zumthor and Mari Lending, *A Feeling of History* (Zürich: Scheidegger & Spiess, 2018).

37 Ibid., 25-26.

38 Ibid., 50-51. "I would be happy if it managed to bring back emotions of a lost time. […] So what are we talking about here? Is it history, is it the past, is it time? It is obviously not the past itself, but maybe a feeling of the past, a sense of time. I'm trying to open a window through which we can see things and lives that came before us, so that we can discover traces of the past."

> fragility of our existence and our buildings' existence – neither technique nor even scientific calculation. Carefulness watches things in time, without *hybris*, respecting the flow of time."[39]

We are dwelling in the world, in time, in history, cultivating emotions and the sense of history in the enclosed space. It does not simply refer to the private space, but to the common, shared space: neither the sacred, nor the public space, but the secret connection between them. The sacred – or "mystery" – descends into the everyday life, creating the dense places filled with historical substance that gives meaning to this world. Human life in the spirit of preservation and creation is a battle for meaning against the active non-sense or "barbarism" that destroys the historical substance of the world.

Synthesis and conclusions

„*Voll Verdienst, doch dichterisch, wohnet der Mensch auf dieser Erde. / Full of merits, and yet poetically, man dwells in this world*."[40] This excerpt from the famous prose poem *In lieblicher Bläue* is intriguing to any reader. Quite often, writers cite it in a truncated manner, eluding the complement "full of merits" that the poet meaningfully placed at the beginning. The link word "doch" (yet) indicates the fact that the poet was entirely conscious that "poetical dwelling" in his world represents a paradox. Thrown into the world, man is rather acting under the impulse of the desire for recognition, as pointed out by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Hölderlin's childhood friend, and lesser for the pursuit of beauty and harmony. A century later, Heidegger would build an entire ontology starting with the "thrown" state of being, in which the *Dasein* tends to realize its projects. And yet, dwelling poetically is not simply an illusion *if* we understand the fact that it is not a natural given, but a way of being – *ethos* – and an act of creation.

Thus understood, dwelling is the creation of the Self, with a double dimension: the *creating-self* and the *creator-self*. The Self feels itself in its depths, and this "auto-affection of life" — as a contemporary phenomenologist has put it[41] — becomes a multiplicity of feelings. These are, in turn, fed and cultivated in the enclosed spaces, as pointed out by the new phenomenology, which is thus aligned with the humanist European tradition. Cultivating emotions is the highest form of dwelling. The spaces in which this nurturing is possible are increasingly rare in the technically dominated society of spectacle, insofar as the "things" around which man may dwell were replaced by useful and disposable objects. However, they have not disappeared entirely, as the living body, endowed with senses, feelings, imagination and memory, has not been transformed yet by the new technologies. The more invasive they become, the more man's duty (to himself and to the others) to save dwelling, as well as *the idea* of dwelling, seems to be binding. The merit of the "technicist era" is to awaken man's ability to discern: to "force" him to decide whether he wants to deliver himself body and soul to the new technologies or to save his humanity by cultivating feelings.

In this regard, architecture's role is crucial, as some contemporary theoreticians point out.

> "Architecture should strengthen the reliability and comprehensibility of the world. In this sense, architecture is fundamentally a conservative art; it materializes and preserves the mythical and poetic ground of constructing and inhabiting space, thus framing human existence and action. By establishing a horizon of existential understanding, architecture encourages us to turn our attention away from architecture itself; authentic architecture suggests images of ideal life."[42]

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39 Roberto Peregalli, *Les lieux et la poussière* (Paris: Arléa, 2017), 27.

40 Friedrich Hölderlin, *In lieblicher Bläue*: *Sämtliche Gedichte* (Frankfurt: DKV, 2005), 479.

41 According to Michel Henry, *I Am the Truth* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

42 Juhani Pallasmaa, "Toward an architecture of humility: On the Value of Experience (1999)." In *The People, Place, and Space Reader,* Jen Jack Gieseking, *et al.* (Oxford: Routledge, 2014), 332.

Architecture doesn't create, but enforces the world's intelligibility, and this intelligibility is not simply that of the concept: it is not pure reason that reveals it, but imaginative intelligence, that permeates the depths of the world and of the space, while creating it at the same time. The world thus created is essentially a world shared between the living ones, as well as between the living and the dead. The world of the present is just a small part of the immense world of the past; it cannot be understood otherwise than starting from it, from the mythical and poetical thinking that founds it and enriches its meaning while nurturing our thought. The high mission of architecture is to enrich the meaning of the world, thus understood. We believe this manner of understanding aesthetics promises an interesting development.

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