



Social Perspective of Modular Housing: Six Study Cases in the Mediterranean Coast

Manuel Calleja Molina. Débora Domingo Calabuig. Universitat Politècnica de València (Spain)

Certain residential designs focus on the comprehension of the dwelling as a modular cell that will later be grouped on the basis of three-dimensional geometric laws. Thus, they seek to be flexible designs, suitable for change, and aim to make life easier for their users. The decade of the 60 can be highlighted as the launch and the expansion of this understanding, whose numerous examples are distributed widely by the American and European geography. "Habitat 67", in Montreal (Canada), by the architect Moshe Safdie, is an international reference; In Spain, the projects carried out by the Ricardo Bofill 'Taller de Arquitectura' are equally concerned with theoretical approaches to local and specific characteristics.

Both regarding the design process and the spatial results, these designs have a strong implication of social factors in relation with the desired flexibility. On the one hand, the customized dwelling is usually a starting point: it intends to respond to a large variety of users. On the other hand, the marked social character of this period architecture results into a clear intention to promote the communitarian spaces through functional oversized strategies.

These are particularly the two analysis paths that, together with others, are part of an ongoing doctoral thesis focused on six residential study cases located on the peninsular Mediterranean coast: "Xanadú" (Calpe, 1968) and "La Muralla Roja" (Calpe, 1973) by Ricardo Bofill Levi; The "Virgen de los Llanos Residential Group" (Valencia, 1972) and the "Malvarrosa Buildings" (Valencia, 1973) by Alberto Sanchís Pérez; "Les Gavines" (Valencia, 1972) by GO-DB and the "Espai Verd" (Valencia, 1992) by Antonio Cortés Ferrando. All these housing buildings are characterized by belonging to a modular architecture strategy, and they share in addition the consideration of the active role user in the design process.

Hence, and on the basis of the collected graphic, photographic and written archival documentation, we propose a double critical approach:

1. On the participation of the user in the architectural design first steps: In some of the study cases, the collaboration between users and architects was manifested through surveys, periodical meetings ...
2. On the configuration and the use of the community spaces where the trust of the social coexistence is deposited: Circulation spaces, terraces, common rooms, shared services ... are studied from the perspective of their successes and failures.