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Architecture through Mexican eyes

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Architecture is a word that is related in Mexico to many issues, beauty, richness, history and culture. Mexico is a nation that faces problems, many of these ones related on people's income. Mexico called the horn of Plenty, for many time directed its strength to combat poorness, but the way it start to diminish this inequality. Mexico developed the center of the country bringing new architecture from other parts of the world.

With this new "wave" or the new thinking included all Mexicans trying to reach the development that came from outside the country. Mexico began a new era where to be at the last place was bad. So many of the past and culture of Mexico was forgotten. We start to see outside of borders. Many of the cities in Mexico are developing very rapidly, and many of Mexicans want to share the success. Architecture in Mexico in certain way has followed this path. In the beginning of my career I believed that architecture was only buildings and an expensive career. The relation with architects in Mexico has been seen in Mexico related with wealthy and history. My relation with history pushed my idea of learn architecture. I started to learn how Mexican ancestor built our magnificent sites, for me at that time, learning architecture was related

to my identity as Mexican, and how this shaped me even if I didn't ask about.

The school showed me the different kind of styles along the time and how these were part of the development of the world and how Mexico wanted to enter between the most notorious countries in the world trying to imitate the fashion tendencies. And as in many times we know that this thinking only produces division in society. In many times people has thought that with a luxurious building they can change the reality of society.

In the nineteen century government and people used architecture to demonstrate they were sophisticated and developed, just as in the seventeen or eighteen governments wanted to show power and strength. Now in this century, the people that want to show how they wealthy and developed they are; those ones are companies and wealthy people trying to achieve approval of current times.

If we are neutral we could say that there is nothing bad with that, is just people following the opinion of society. But the bad thing is how architects has followed this path, only trying to gat rich and get fame. This is very common among architects around the world, many of them

only following what other architects has done. The want for recognition was my last thing to achieve; it true that that was one of my deceptions in architecture.

Architecture turn to a different way, it wasn't anymore something that I wanted to become part; I saw many times how students wanted just to show how good they were instead how they understand architecture, how this helped them to develop as persons. I think Architecture help society and we are only servants to people. My interest is more related in how to transform sites helping people to develop by its self, as Esteva said, to develop socially not economically.

Architecture Students in Mexico try to imitate new tendencies and follow what architects in Europe or United States, and have forgotten the vernacular architecture.

I start to understand how important this architecture (vernacular) is; and how people's knowledge can be so important for a sustainable architecture. My interest turns now for sustainability and how to help nature through good design and systems. I think it's time to give to earth a break to recover. It's important to improve in all architecture students

a new thinking, a new way to design, maybe we should go on and leave all this design that show only richness.

Now I begin to understand what really matter is the simplicity to design, to design understanding the site, respecting the culture and the time of society. Bringing ideas that can resolve problems of the city. The regenerative design should be a key to give to city all those things that have been taken, such as rain water absorption areas, roofs with systems that can accumulate rain water and use this water for home supply. These could some examples. And it is not new in Campeche in the beginning of the 20th century, there wasn't any water system. People saved water from their roofs to reservoir cylinders, and they got all the water from it. They used natural filters such as sand, fabrics and gravel to get their water clean as possible, and they just boil it and were ready to drink and cook. They also used wells to get water to flush or do laundry, but they didn't use electricity to reach the under water; they use wind vanes.

The way to fridge the food was putting all the food tied to a rope and hanged in the deep of the wells were temperature was much colder that in the surface, where it could be colder than the surface where it can be 31 C. Windows, doors and ceilings are big to allow wind goes

through the house. The ceiling is almost 8 meters high because they knew hot air will rise on top. Walls were enough thick with two purposes one as structure to hold the weight of beams and ceiling and secondly to insulate heat from outside. The house really can be an oasis to temperatures outside the house. That's the architecture I want to develop. Architecture must reflect the time and the place of the site, Luis Barragan says he never drew a line before understanding the site. We should think more in how building to interact with site and people instead people should use these buildings.

Our "modus vivendi" is pushing us to a new architecture develop, but sometimes this way of life is suggested for architecture. The fancy houses and buildings in certain way shows to people how to live, the problem all these people cannot achieve this life style. Western culture is the most spread culture around the world and its life style is now wanted to be "imitated" for other cultures, forgetting their roots and their habits, architecture and others things. These imitations of life style can be observed in places like Dubai or Shanghai, where skyscrapers are developing faster than anywhere else. They use steel and glass than in the case of Dubai might not be a good idea because the stream weather and even they are building sky stations in the middle of the desert. I might be a "non pro development", but these actions are

against nature. They even are consuming energy that should not be wasted. These ecological footprints are being expanded beyond borders and doing a serious damage to the planet.

We should start a new culture of understand and knowledge. People should be informed of what is happening and how their behaviors produce consequences. Architects should focus in a real architecture, maybe not ecological but trying to make understand people that what real matters, what is real beautiful is the natural things. I do not who says that the happiest people in world is those ones who have the simplest pleasures.