***ENGLISH FOR ARCHITECTS***

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***SECOND SEMESTER***

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***INTRODUCTION TO DESIGN***

1/Everything that does not occur by accident begins from an idea. A concept comes to our mind, and we want to realize it. At first, we don’t know how to do it. Before we do anything, we guess, more or less, why we want to do it. And, in the end, achieving the main aim is the prize for our effort. The first idea determines the general aim of the activity, for example: “I will build a house, in which I am going to live” or “I will build a factory.” In fact, it is not even a way of thinking. It is only a verbal formulation of our dreams.

2/After this verbal formulation we take the next step, which is specifying and detailing the main aim of our actions. And at this point we stop and reflect: “Yes, I am going to build a house or factory, but how am I going to make it?” Each of us deals, to a greater or lesser extent, with creating a new reality in its various aspects. However, only some of us learn how to create a space in a professional way, because for this action both proper knowledge and a developed consciousness of creation are necessary. That’s why the space is created by professional designers, including architects , and the whole creative process of making decisions aimed at satisfying human needs we call “design.” Simply, design is the art of making decisions and their logic is defended by the use of proper arguments.

3/We architects may design not only houses but also landscapes, apartments, clothes, cars, planes, machines and tools, graphics, promotional campaigns, and even law. Thanks to design we know how to build a plane that doesn’t crash during its first flight, a house that doesn’t collapse, and an apartment in which we may live, how to design a poster that attracts people, how to plant trees that don’t obstruct the view, and how to create an aesthetic space. Above all, we are especially interested in spatial design, e.g. houses and their interiors (corridors, halls, apartments, etc.), other buildings and nonbuilding structures (bridges, advertisement pillars, and so on), and landscapes including monuments, benches, trees, and other plants.

4/Urban planning involves the design of larger areas’ and, therefore, remains on another, more general level of spatial precision in comparison to architecture. At this point it should be underlined that decisions in architectural design, understood exactly as a decision-making process aimed at complete architectural project preparation, on the basis of which we may build a certain object, refer to in particular: • the selection of people to perform specific creative activities and organization of work, • the choice of specific design methods, • the choice of preparation and presentation technique for an architectural design (including drawing tools and the material on which this design will be presented).

5/Architectural design stands out from other kinds of design because of a few important features. Firstly, it applies to a relatively large space, usually much bigger than in the case of any means of transport such as planes or cars. At the same time, an architect becomes responsible for the space that (s)he has created; of course, this responsibility also concerns her/his client.

6/Secondly, the realized effect of design work, e.g. a building, park etc., usually cannot move, or even be moved from one place to another. Thirdly, such a realization serves people for a relatively long time, much longer than the above-mentioned means of transport. Fourthly and finally, to prepare an architectural design it is necessary to possess knowledge from a few branches beyond pure designing; for example, it is not possible to design a sports hall without knowledge of football, basketball or volleyball rules. It would also be difficult to design a garden without any knowledge about the needs of the trees and flowers we want to plant there. Similar problems would occur in any attempt to design a temple without knowledge of any of the rituals of that particular religion.

7/It should be emphasized that architectural design is a paid service for which we take proper payment. Architectural practice is a professional service that we, as architects, provide to our clients. Apart from in extraordinary situations, when we prepare an architectural design for ourselves – in this case we are both service providers and customers – we work for a specific client(s). A client may hire us to solve some design tasks that cannot be solved by herself/himself/ because of a lack of proper knowledge. That is why this client hires a professional architect. The result of this relationship between an architect and her/his client is an obligation to realize the will of our customers.

8/ We should be aware of our responsibility for the effects of our design activity. This means that implementation of the architectural design on behalf of ourclient shouldn’t lead to any aesthetic or functional disorder or compromise of the safety of the space designed by us. Moreover, our architectural design cannot disturb the society or, generally, the public interest, and all proper regulations in force must be respected. Therefore, it is important to explain to clients how some of their ideas might affect the space, either negatively or positively. This is an obligation and privilege for all architects.

9/By the term “clients” we understand not only individuals but also institutions, local authorities of a municipality , or even the state. For example, a client who wants to build a playing field may remain a member of the local authority of the municipality. In some cases, we may deal with institutional clients or firms, which may be represented by individuals. These people, officially authorized to represent their institutions, firms or local authorities, will pass us information about our clients’ needs that is necessary to perform all the design.

10/In conclusion, we can state that architectural design is the preparation of a plan for changing a space that is not our property. At the same time, we should remember that when starting work on any spatial change, we take responsibility for the result of our work (Fig. 1.2.). This responsibility we take both to our client and the society, because the profession of architect is an occupation that requires public trust.

***AIMS OF ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN***

The main objective of architectural design is to realize an idea of aesthetic and functional alteration of a certain space. This idea, in accordance with its high degree of complexity, cannot be realized without a prepared plan.

11/ WHAT IS DESIGN? A design consists precisely in preparing such a plan. To execute this plan, we need adequate knowledge of architecture, and at least basic knowledge of disciplines related to architecture, above all engineering, and branches about which knowledge is required in certain cases, for example the sports industry, trade, gastronomy and catering, private or public transport, etc. These branches are also represented by their own specialists. In particular, architects cooperate with specialists from various engineering branches.

12/ Starting to construct any new house doesn’t mean the completion of the architect’s work in the investment process. (S)he also supervises the realization of the architectural design throughout the construction process. During construction it is possible – or sometimes necessary – to make some changes in the design, including detailing of architectural and technical arrangements of chosen elements of the building.

13/One of the aims of architectural design may also be research if we are able to locate a new building(s) on a certain plot of land – we call this architectural activity “analysis of the land capacity.” Evaluation of the proper functioning of a building(s) on a plot in relation to its surroundings, on the other hand, we call “functional site analysis” . An example of functional site analysis may be verification of whether, on a plot of land, in some district and with certain surroundings, it is reasonable to build a new building.

14/Another objective of architectural design is to perform a preliminary cost estimation of the construction or renovation of a building(s), and also that of modernization or adaptation to other functions of an existing object(s). In the above-mentioned cases we have to make preliminary conceptual drawings of the investment object. It is important that, on the basis of the preliminary conceptual drawings, general costing can be developed, so it is possible to check the price of the investment. Thanks to this general costing, the client, with the help of the architect, is able to make a decision about starting the architectural design process or, on the other hand, discontinuing it.

***DESIGN THINKING IN ARCHITECTURE***

15/The real foundation of our design activity is thinking, so we take into consideration how to lead thinking processes in a conscious way. The starting point of our thinking about a certain design usually occurs when we get clear information from a client that we may start with the design process. This means that the client has already made a decision about commencing the whole long and complex investment process in which our architectural design plays the main role.

16/Sometimes architects who commence design processes in certain architectural tasks have in their minds some solutions that they found earlier. Regardless of their earlier realization, these solutions are useful for work on new architectural designs. Of course, it should be emphasized that the more experienced an architect is, the more possible solutions to architectural problems she/he will know. Our design thinking in architecture usually starts from generally imagining what a new building or garden wanted by the client could look like, and whether realization her/his expectations is possible at all?

17/Sometimes our clients want things that are not realizable yet. That’s why it is important at the beginning of the design process to aim for an assessment with the client of which of her/his ideas may be realized, and which (s)he can discard. At the same time, we should remember to keep our emotional distance from our first image of the space created by us; ultimately, we are not owners of the land, and the largest investment risk is taken by our client. It should be underlined that the first image of the space we create is very important from a psychological point of view. It allows the architect to get accustomed to the building, garden or other design object.