Living and Sustainability: An Environmental Critique of Design and Building Practices, Locally and Globally

1. Paper / Proposal Title:

The Home of Man, - a manifesto commemorating the 75th anniversary of 1st edition of François de Pierrefeu and Le Corbusier “La Maison des Hommes”.

2. Format:

Written paper / verbal presentation

3. Author(s) Name:

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5. Abstract (300 words):

Accordingly Le Corbusier, in Vers un Architecture, 1922, the question was: “Architecture or revolution”; further elaborated in The Home of Man, 1942: “… people live in poor conditions, this is the real, the most profound reason for the battles and upheavals of our time.”

The 19th and 20th century Metropolis encompasses the major social changes towards 21st century neoliberal capitalism, following the slipstream of people’s migration from
rural areas to still bigger urban agglomerations. Currently, this goes on with even bigger pace in Africa, Asia and Latin America: urban agglomerations of various scales hold since year 2000 50% of world population estimated at 65% in 2050.

In those emergent regions people still live in poor conditions, and in the US and EU the enhanced living/housing standard throughout the post-war economic growth is deteriorating under the rising inequality of recent crisis.

Today, Le Corbusier’s concern is met by new concerns for the local and global milieu, as a conflict between fulfilling people’s social requirements and theirs long-term impact on the environment.

A conflict that can only be solved addressing politically said inequality. This is our century’s challenge obtaining social and natural sustainability, let alone preventing further hazards caused by depletion of resources and liability to climate change.

Given the dispersal of previous urbanization, the complex immensity of existing agglomerations cannot be ignored, only be restructured. Accordingly, commemorating The Home of Man, our manifesto intend propagating a renewed social pact as a pact with nature, not just early modernism’s agenda of light, air and view, but also and even more so the potential of its urban models within the broader perspective of restructuring the build environments at a sustainable density. Being a key issue of sustainability in urban contexts this potential puts modernism back on architecture’s agenda, still holding relevance, as for incorporating the ‘Home of Man’ in a sustainable setting.

6. Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Recent research is a project titled, Between Plan Voisin and the Generic City - a comparative study on urban models between the Metropolis and the Mega City, - case study on Buenos Aires (2008 - ).