

# The Interior City. Infinity and Concavity in the No-Stop City (1970-1971)

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"Today, man is master over infinite space"<sup>[1]</sup>  
Hans Hollein

## The project and its development

The No-Stop City, developed by the Florentine group Archizoom between 1970 and 71, is, along with the Continuous Monument by Superstudio, the best-known and more studied and interpreted project of the Italian Radical Architecture. It should be noted that this is not a unitary project with defined boundaries, but different crystallizations of an idea due both to the different stages of its development and the occasion that motivated them (internal research, journal publications, competitions...). Even if the grouping of these proposals constitutes a single metaproject that can be discussed under the denomination of No-Stop City, quite often its pluralistic nature has not been taken sufficiently into account.

In the "political reference" submitted by Archizoom to the proceedings of the congress Utopia e/o Rivoluzione, held in Turin in April 1969, the group tried to define its position in the intense debate about the relations between politics and architecture that was taking place in Italy. Many of the ideas that were later embodied in the project were already featured in this text:

*"Until now, the depth of buildings and typologies remained anchored to the limits imposed by spontaneous equilibrium: natural lighting and ventilation, and surface per-capita are the result of an image of income and balanced life with general economic conditions that, definitely, needs to be blown to pieces. But the problem is not imagining new working-class neighborhoods linked to better typologies, but rather imagining amorphous or monomorphic structures, whose utopian content is performed only in quantitative terms, not imagining the organization of a different society, better and fairer, with more beautiful houses. At the moment, we are only interested in them being much larger"*<sup>[2]</sup>

At the beginning of 1970, the members of the group begin to capture graphically the result of their thoughts about a quantitative city. Gilberto Corretti draws a continuous space supported by huge triangulated trusses inspired by Mies and a magmatic and obscure volume that fills a valley in the wake of the *Continuous Monument* by Superstudio. Andrea Branzi produces a series of diagrams with a typewriter in which the paper is patterned with a grid of exes and dots representing, respectively, the bearing structure and the dimensional grid of a continuous space without clear limits. Sometimes, calligraphic signs, forming clouds, colonize areas of this space overlapping the isotropic grid. One of these diagrams has an enlightening label: *Homogeneous Habitational Diagram. Hypothesis of non-Figurative Architectural Language*.

The first publication of the project, with generous graphic content and an extensive text, happens in 1970, in the July-August number of *Casabella*, with the title: *City, Assembly Line of Social Issues. Ideology and Theory of the Metropolis*. The project shows already most of the items that will make it recognizable: an homogeneous structure of pillars, elevators and floor slabs with undefined facades and number of floors. Sometimes it is depicted as a series of massive prisms in the landscape, while other times it seems that only the orography or the coast may contain its spread. Indoors, the horizontal continuity is interrupted, either by landscape elements that occasionally emerge (rivers, rocks), or by straight and curved free standing walls or divisions between rectangular and pedestrian areas. In one of the plans there are even some courtyard houses of clear Miesian filiation even if, in this case, the patio is provocatively covered. This is a catalog of different situations in which the project shows its absolute flexibility of both implementation and use. The object system, which will be so important for the image of the proposal, has not

yet appeared, probably due to the fact that the scale of the plants is very small.

Following this publication, Archizoom focused on thinking how life and objects would be like in their new city model. They designed a set of clothes, adapted to life in a micro-conditioned environment, published under the name *Nearest Habitat System*. They also put forward the *Armadio Abitabile*, a furniture of considerable size containing everything needed to dwell any point of their homogeneous city.

The next stage in the project development was the proposal that the group submitted to the international competition for the *Università degli Studi* of Florence convened on May 1970. Although it is an attempt to adapt its abstract model to a specific case, their lack of interest in implementing their proposal is clear by the fact that, breaching the confidentiality required in the competition brief, they sign the proposal and are automatically disqualified. The chosen motto was "projects should be signed". The proposal explains how the previously developed system is colonized by different teaching, residential, administrative and recreational functions. Transport infrastructures run in the basement and lower levels. This stratification of uses is described in a section that has been frequently published. As it happens in all the stages of the project, the written content is essential:

*"The only architectural form that we would have liked to propose was [...] a wandering fog bank over the plain between Florence and Pistoia. Not so much as an inspiration or poetic invention, but in the sense that we refuse to design an object, and prefer to design its use instead. [...] In this sense, there is no formal difference between a productive structure, a supermarket, a residence, a university, or an industrialized agriculture sector."*<sup>[4]</sup>

The final stage of development of the project comes at the beginning of 1971 with its publication in the number 78-79 of *Design Quarterly* in charge of Peter Eisenman and devoted to conceptual architecture, and soon after, in March of that year, in *Domus*. For the first time the name *No-Stop City* appears. The title in both publications is almost identical: *No-Stop City. Residential Park. Climatic Universal System* in the American magazine while in *Domus* the original Park was replaced by Parkings. These publications include a new batch of graphic material and an essay in *Domus*. The study of possible ways of colonization by the inhabitants is further developed including habitats that are unfolded from equipped walls or large furniture that can be moved from one place to another using mechanical forklifts. Forms of sedentary habitats are also proposed through dwellings configured by functional stripes that could be accessed, only, from the elevators. In *Domus* there are views of interior scenes of the *No-Stop City*, named *Paesaggi Interni* and *Struttura teatrale continua*, which are a particularly valuable contribution to the image of the project. They are dioramas of sectors of the city colonized by furniture and objects of consumption in which an illusion of infinity is achieved through the use of mirrors.

These publications were the last development of the project. Later on, Archizoom produced urban proposals and furniture, interior and clothing design that followed the wake of the *No-Stop City* and complemented it, which have been occasionally published as part of it. These includes *Allestimenti di stanze* (1971), *Distruzione e Riappropriazione della Città* (1972) and *Dressing design* (1972).

## A city without architecture

This is not, therefore, a conventional project but a generic habitat that has no precise function, location or form. The system is defined by the invariants maintained throughout its evolution: A reticular and isotropic structure of pillars and elevators holding

1. HOLLEIN, Hans: *Absolute Architecture* (manifiesto), in: CONRAD, Ulrich (ed.): *Programs and manifestoes on 20th-century architecture*, The MIT Press, Cambridge: Massachusetts, 1971, p. 181, (first published in 1963).

2. ARCHIZOOM: *Relazione del gruppo Archizoom*. Marcatré 50-55, 1969, p. 100.

3. ARCHIZOOM: *Archizoom: progetto di concorso per l'università di Firenze*, Domus 509: April 1972, p. 11.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

5. ARCHIZOOM: *Città, catena di montaggio del sociale. Ideologia e teoria della metropoli*. Casabella 350-51, July-August 1970, p. 50

6. BANHAM, Reyner: *A Home is not a House*. Art in America 2, April 1965, p.109

7. ARCHIZOOM: *No-Stop City. Residential Parkings, Climatic Universal System*. Domus 496, March 1971, p. 56

8. At the beginning of the 1971 they published an article focused exclusively on this topic: ARCHIZOOM: "Utopia della qualità, utopia della quantità", IN. Argomenti e Immagini di design 1, January-February 1971

9. For the anti-utopian pressure in the field of Italian Marxism see: GARGIANI, Roberto: *Critica dell'ideologia e Discorsi per Immagini* in: Archizoom Associati 1966-1974. *Dall'Onda Pop Alla Superficie Neutra*, Electa: Milan, 2007

10. For the influence of *Operaismo* in Italian architecture see: AURELI, Pier Vittorio: *The Project of Autonomy: Politics and Architecture within and Against Capitalism*, Princeton Architectural Press: New York, 2008

11. TRONTI, Mario: La fabbrica e la società, in: Operai e capitale, Derive Approdi: Rome, 2006, p. 48 (1st ed.: Einaudi, Turin, 1966; originally published in: *Quaderni rossi* 2, 1962)

12. CORRETTI, Gilberto: *annotation in notebook*, September 4, 1964 (quoted in: GARGIANI, Roberto: *Archizoom Associati 1966-1974. Dall'Onda Pop Alla Superficie Neutra*, Electa: Milan, 2007, p. 11

13. BRANZI, Andrea: "Postface", in: *No-Stop City*. Archizoom Associati Editions HX: Orleans, 2006, p. 142

14. ENGELS, Friedrich: *Contribución al problema de la vivienda*, Fundación Federico Engels, Madrid, 2006, p. 26 (originally published in: *Volksstaat*, 1872)

15. Particularly the diploma projects of Andrea Branzi (1966) and Massimo Morozzi (1967), the *Superarchitettura* exhibition (1966) or the *Dream beds and Gazebo* (1967)

16. RODRÍGUEZ PEDRET, Carmen: *Miradas 'pop' en la ciudad contemporánea*, Annals d'arquitectura 5, 1991, p. 103

17. ARCHIZOOM: *No-Stop City. Residential Parkings, Climatic Universal System*. Domus 496, March 1971, p. 53.

18. BRANZI, Andrea: *Weak and Diffuse Modernity: The World of Projects at the beginning of the 21st Century*. Skira: Milan, 2006, p. 70-71

continuous floor slabs, and air-conditioning, lighting, electrical and informational networks housed in modular suspended ceilings and (presumably) under a technical floor. Nothing else. These few elements constitute the minimum common set that allows to house the maximum number of vital functions. Architecture is no longer responsible for the programmatic adaptation and, as it happens in the *Bürolandschaft*, a system of objects and mobile partitions is the only thing that functionally qualifies the different sectors of the city. The representative character also goes into crisis as architecture is reduced to the bare minimum role of neutral and tempered container, a sheer background for objects and life. The entire iconographic load is transferred to the consumption objects that populate it, causing the almost total semantic emptying and absolute blankness of the built. The system of objects absorbs, therefore, functions that traditionally have been in charge of architecture but escaping from its control and getting rid of its values.

From the point of view of Archizoom's young members, the anomalous would not be the typologies that take advantage of this new technological environment for becoming independent from the outside (the factory, supermarket, parking ...) but those typologies that have not done that yet. The environment technification, taken to its extreme consequences, allows the most remarkable and transcendent decision of the project and to which, in fact, owes its name: to establish an unlimited constructed depth, a potentially endless building. Thereby, the system not only encompasses all kinds of functions but, ultimately, the entire city. Although, in some images, the project shows different forms of containment, these limits and shape they define are understood as trivial and inconsequential: *"The outer perimeter of the whole is not identified or represented: we do not care about its shape since it will be determined by the result of certain quantitative ratios"*<sup>[4]</sup>. In most plants the edge of the building is not shown (unless when it is an insurmountable geographic feature) and the drawing is trimmed by the illustration frame suggesting an unlimited expansion. The primacy of plants and interior views over exterior representations, together with the total absence of elevations, emphasize the project latent infinitude.

What is paradoxical about this operation is that as architecture grows, occupying everything homogeneously, it loses most of the defining characteristics of the canonical architectural object that depend on its finitude and heterogeneity: its own object condition, its shape, facade, hierarchy, compositional nature, representative and iconographic capacity or the typological and functional specialization. A dissolution of architecture with few precedents and not at all involuntary; in its first publication Archizoom claim: *"The ultimate goal of modern Architecture is the 'elimination' of architecture itself"*<sup>[5]</sup>. The difficulty of analysis of this project, if we stick to its graphic content, lies precisely in the fact that it is very difficult to study under conventional categories (volumetry, implementation, composition, hierarchy, function, distribution) because it simply lacks them.

The intuition that the proliferation of systems and technology could end up shaping a new type of habitat that would turn the traditional building into something superfluous and unnecessary was, somehow, in the air. In the years in which the Radical was brewing in Italian universities, Reyner Banham said:

*"When your house contains such a complex of piping, flues, ducts, wires, lights, inlets, outlets, ovens, sinks, refuse disposers, hi-fi re-verberators, antennae, conduits, freezers, heaters - when it contains so many services that the hardware could stand up by itself without any assistance from the house, why have a house to hold it up?"*<sup>[6]</sup>

Another even more extreme example of the solvent potential of technology on architecture is the science-fiction film *THX 1138* by George Lucas, a speculation about a future society, marked by electronics, strictly contemporary with the No-Stop City (it was filmed in 1969 and released in 1971). The film shows a space, in this case of imprisonment, which is a white, homogeneous, infinite and pure background devoid not only of architecture but also of objects.

The *No-Stop City*, attempting to liberate man from architecture, also points toward that potential disappearance that was in the air, but does so, and this is important, grounded in the most absolute technical realism. While many other proposals of the neo-avantgardes of the 60s and 70s based much of its visionary and provocative load on a technology pushed to the limits of plausibility and close, sometimes, to science fiction; the *No-Stop City* seems to avoid any boast or speculation: the deployed technology is limited to what was already available, was commonly deployed in offices and supermarkets and, therefore, did not pose any challenge. In this sense, the project proposes nothing new. It is the application of two constructive types well settled at that time: the *Domino* system by Le Corbusier and the *Bürolandschaft*. A clear evidence of this absolute technical prudence is the structure of the project based on a pillar grid of 5x5 meters: dimensions that are, and were then, surprisingly modest.

But this is not just a crisis of architecture, the city that arises from this operation is, by no means, a conventional one. In the proposal definition, not only the hypertrophy of the built environment is crucial, but also the fact that this happens in a continuous and homogeneous way. By pushing out any interior void and ignoring the outside, a concave city is generated. The definition of this model, by Andrea Branzi, as a "city without architecture" is best understood if we consider that it is also an "interior city". The disappearance of urban fragmentation, of the succession of solids and voids that shapes the traditional city, deepens the crisis of representation pointed in the interior configuration of the proposal: the vanishing of the limit that was shaping the different elements and the whole city entails the vanishing of the meaning or, at least, of all meaning linked to architectural and urban form. We find ourselves in a city without qualities, devoid of any attribute other than the pure undifferentiated and homogeneous extension.

Therefore, the infinity and concavity of the *No-Stop City* are, not only unusual and provocative traits of the project, but the essential characteristics that shape it and the key to its solvent and subversive potential for the architecture and the city. As we have seen, available technology allowed such a construction to be thought of. However, the pure technical feasibility does not fully explain the project. There are other reasons that explain Archizoom's bet for an infinity and a concavity that are not accidental: we refer to Marxism and Pop art.

### Marxist roots of concavity

Regarding this, it is essential to understand that we are facing a manifesto, and that the drawings and images of the proposal are, also, the illustration of its written content. Texts that very explicitly want to reflect the political activism of the members of the group in the field of Marxism. Field in which, on the other hand, were included most of their radical fellows and a good part of the Italian architectural and intellectual environment.

The "quantitative" concept appears recurrently in the project, from the time prior to its first formulation (in the group contribution to the congress *Utopia e/o Rivoluzione*) until its last publication in which they claim: *"Nowdays the only possible utopia is quantitative"*<sup>[7]</sup>. Through this concept the members of the group sought to develop a "non figurative"<sup>[8]</sup> architecture and move away from figurative utopias and visionary architecture which had been condemned by influential figures of

Italian Marxism like Mario Tronti, Manfredo Tafuri or Massimo Cacciari<sup>[9]</sup>. It is important to remember that one of the three laws of dialectical materialism stipulates, precisely, the passage from quantitative changes into qualitative changes. The operation by which the *No-Stop City* is generated as an endless and interior city can be seen as a radical application of this principle of the "official" philosophy of Marxism. As we have seen, through the boundless increase of the built depth (a change, in principle, strictly quantitative) a number of radical qualitative changes are triggered: not only the architectural and urban form and the associated figurative load disappear but, ultimately, the architecture and the city itself as we know them. This dissolution by hypertrophy (as architecture grows, it loses its architectural character) represents a true quantitative revolution able to completely redefine the built realm. The mentioned use of a relatively *low-tech* construction, compared with other contemporary projects, cannot be accidental. What Archizoom seems to be telling us with this operation, both simple and sophisticated, is that forcing technology and pushing it to its limits is not necessary in order to put forward an innovative and provocative proposal: it would be enough to extend the established technology without quantitative limits.

A very important influence in the work of Archizoom was the *Operaismo*<sup>[10]</sup>, a tendency of the Italian "new left" that had Mario Tronti as his main ideologue. This trend intended to overcome the *impasse* that the workers struggle seemed to have reached with the connivance of the parliamentary left parties and trade unions. For the *Operaismo*, the labor force is the ultimate contradiction of capital. The worker occupies the economic centrality being his work indispensable for the capitalist system of value creation, and that should enable him to transform the system in his favor. The task is not to resolve the capitalist system contradictions, but to use them to take control over it. The liberation from the system occurs, therefore, from within the system and in order to take control of the economic cycle, not to destroy it. The project concavity can be read as an abstraction of the operaista "against from within" principle. If subversion against the system must come from within the system, subversion against the city happens from within the city.

Besides, the No-Stop City functional homogeneity, that merges production, consumption and residence, as well as its boundless extension over the territory, are in debt with two concepts of Marxist filiation: the "society as a factory" by Tronti and the "city territory" by Tafuri and the AUA. These two concepts occupied a central role in the debate about the city that took place in Italy in the early sixties and inevitably influenced the young radicals who were students then.

Mario Tronti publishes, in 1962, the article *La fabbrica e la società* in *Quaderni Rossi*, where he detected an unstoppable process of capitalist integration in which the factory (the production) is extended to the whole of society, fully occupying it:

*At the highest point of capitalist development, social relationships become a 'moment' of the relations of production; the entire society becomes an 'articulation' of production, which means that all society lives according to the factory, and the factory extends its exclusive dominion over the whole of society"*<sup>[11]</sup>

Tronti formulated this analysis in highly metaphorical terms and without pretending that an alternative urban model should derive from it. However, and almost inevitably, his equation of factory and society was taken by many young architects, orphans of alternative models to the bourgeois city, as an appealing proposal for a new and genuinely Marxist urbanism in which the total coincidence between the social space and the production space would take place.

At the same time, Manfredo Tafuri and his fellows of the AUA (*Architetti Urbanisti Associati*) were developing a concept, the "city territory", that was very close to the thesis of Tronti. The year in which this term is proposed is, in fact, the same in which *La fabbrica e la società* is published. The city territory sought to advance toward a greater territorial integration that would transcend the city-countryside division and the traditional concentric arrangement of functions to respond to the new needs of the productive apparatus, and the imbalances caused by the rapid urban growth. It was an "open" urbanism unconcerned about urban form.

The influence of these concepts in the work of Archizoom is easily traceable already in their student projects of mega-structures such as the 1964 *Città Estrusa*. The name of the project refers to the extrusion of the city into a previously agricultural land (the *Piana* of Florence) that would allow its systemic integration: "A true extrusion of the elements that constitute the current production system"<sup>[12]</sup>. The presence of these ideas is also evident in the No-Stop City. The text of its first publication in *Casabella*, in the summer of 1970, is, first and foremost, a political manifesto on the relationship between economic system, society and city, full of explicit references to Mario Tronti, Tafuri and other Marxist intellectuals, and significantly entitled *City, assembly line of social issues*.

The city overflow on the territory does not imply, in the case of *No-Stop City*, the integration of the rural world but, rather, its exclusion. The introversion of the project highlights the absolute ignorance of its exterior alternative, of the realm that the city has traditionally confronted with. A lack of interest in the agrarian that is also ideological. Moving away from its Rousseauian roots, Marxism sees the countryside and agriculture, rather than as a happy arcadia uncontaminated by industrial capitalism, as the lair of reactionary and counter-revolutionary values.

Marxism distrusts the countryside and the rural, and it is aware that it owes its origin, as ideology and as political movement, to the development linked to the industrial city. It is also aware that the city, despite being the maximum theater of capitalist exploitation, is a much more fertile breeding ground for the workers struggle than the rural world. The writing by Friedrich Engels "The Housing Question", from 1872, clearly influenced the urban discourse of Tronti and Tafuri and, as Branzi recalled recently<sup>[13]</sup>, we know that it was circulating in those years among the Florentine architecture students. For the Marxism co-founder rural areas: "produced only servile souls [...] Only the proletariat created by modern large-scale industry, liberated from all inherited fetters, including those which chained it to the land, and driven in herds into the big towns, is in a position to accomplish the great social transformation which will put an end to all class exploitation and all class rule."<sup>[14]</sup>

### Pop and unlimited commodification

Pop Art is another fundamental influence in the work of Archizoom. The evident interest of the group in this phenomenon and, more generally, their clearly Anglo-Saxon cultural background, coupled with their political militancy (an apparently absurd and contradictory position between communism and consumerism shared with other Radical members) earned them criticism both from the most uncompromising Italian Marxism and from opposed ideological positions in the Anglo-Saxon world. Yet, the ideological and politicized rereading of popular culture and consumerism carried out by these young Italians, is not only a specific feature of the Italian Radical Movement that distinguishes it from other neo-avantgardes (with less political content or more ideological prejudices), but it also explains much of the interest, the significance and the remarkable cultural depth of the movement.

Although in the *No-Stop City* the building (the micro-conditioned and homogeneous container) seems to

have been entirely freed from the sharp Pop image of earlier proposals of the group<sup>[15]</sup>, the presence of this trend and of the reflections that it triggered are latent in the texts and the images of the project. The economical, sociological and iconographic centrality of the consumer product is an ingredient of the proposal that, while being completely alien to the most orthodox Marxist discourse and its moral values (although not so distant from the *operaista* motto "more money and less work") is, however, perfectly coherent with the influence of Pop. In fact, and not by chance, in parallel with its development, the group undertakes the study and design of furniture and clothing. An activity as designers to which they would later devote themselves on a priority basis. The project implies an assessment of consumerism as something not only unavoidable, but liberating. Unlike the Marxist debate on the city that emphasized the production, understanding consumption as something secondary and inconsequential for the urban form, the project equates these two moments of the economic cycle by being the simultaneous support for both, and poses a continuous and homogeneous system designed to offer no resistance to this cycle and to speed it up.

For the group, Pop turns everyday life into art accessible to everyone, being, in this sense, anti-elitist. This trend flattens reality and dissolves the categories of high and low culture. The resulting scenario is very similar to the undifferentiated homogeneity of the *No-Stop City*. In fact, this trait of the project reflects an egalitarian society freed from social hierarchies, something also expressed in the horizontal nature of the proposal, free of skyline, and in the absence of center and periphery.

The influence of Pop is particularly evident in the project dioramas. In what looks like the epiphany of a consumption paradise, and in sharp contrast with the absolute abstraction of the building, a flood of consumer goods saturates iconographically the space. In this sense, the contrast between the inexpressive stability of the building and the hyperexpressive transience of the mobile is striking. The tension between these two spheres reflects an increasing loss of prominence of architecture, despite the permanence of its presence and the provisionality of consumer products or, perhaps, precisely because of this. Faced with the growing complexity and constant renewal induced by the production system, the stability of the built proves problematic. It is this constellation of highly obsolescent and continuously renewed objects of consumption which, more than anything else, constitutes human habitat, involving an increasingly secondary role for architecture.

It does not seem accidental that Branzi has always demonstrated an explicit admiration for Richard Hamilton, nor that his collage *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?*, considered one of the foundational works of Pop Art, appears illustrating several of his writings over the years. Let's compare this work of the British artist with the interior images of the *No-Stop City*: what we see is, in many respects, a premonition of the interior city without architecture proposed by Archizoom fifteen years later. Not only because it is a scene built from consumer products, but because the environment that houses them is a completely superfluous interior. What makes this home so "different and appealing" is, precisely, everything that is not home: the set of consumer goods ready to meet any need, any desire, in short, the market. A market that, as was felt even then, was beginning to have an unlimited dimension, to occupy everything. While Banham persuaded us that "a house is not a home", Hamilton, by presenting in his collage the commodification of all spheres of life, including leisure and intimacy, shows us a home that, dissolved in the market, has ceased to be.

Pop detects and, at the same time, encourages the dissolution of boundaries between public space and

private space, between exterior and interior. If in Hamilton's collage, this solution produces a domestic internalization of urban space and a simultaneous urban externalization of domestic space<sup>[16]</sup>; in the *No-Stop City* it goes one step further by ending with the domestic as a category. What is in crisis in the project is not the nature of the home, but its own existence as a protective sphere of privacy: everything is a home and nothing is a home. The internalization of public space implies the disappearance of the traditional interior space, that of intimacy, something evident in most of the project images that present living as a nomadic activity.

Somehow, the relationship that the No-Stop City maintains with the domestic space is parallel to the one maintained with the rural sphere: pure omission. This interior space, public and urbanized, doesn't accept competition and extends a panoptic domain over the whole of the existence that leaves no room for rural externality or private interiority. As the market does.

### A project without limits for a system without limits

Ultimately, in their contribution to the project, Marxism and consumerism are not so far away. The materialistic and totalizing logic shared by both promotes the fusion of all built reality in an homogeneous *continuum* that, as these systems, lacks an outside, that is to say, alternative realities that limit and question it.

In this sense, the project reflects a profound change in the very nature of the urban reality that is not alien to the influence of Marshall McLuhan. It does not seem accidental that the text of its first publication already made reference to the "global village". The city is no longer a specific place defined by opposition to another place, the countryside, but is understood as a condition: wherever information and consumption reach, reaches the city:

*"But now the use of electronic media takes the place of the direct urban praxis: artificial inducements to consumption allows a much deeper infiltration into the social structure than did the city's weak channels of information. The metropolis ceases to be a 'place', to become a 'condition': in fact, it is just this condition which is made to circulate uniformly, through consumer products, in the social phenomenon. The future dimension of the metropolis coincides with that of the market itself."<sup>[17]</sup>*

The No-Stop City puts forward an infinite interiority because the urban has ceased to be a place, and has become a virtually ubiquitous condition. If the system occupies everything, everything is interior to the system and nothing is external to it. A project without limits and without outside for a system without limits and without outside. Or, as Branzi recently stated: "... a freed society (freed even from architecture) similar to the great monochrome surfaces of Mark Rothko: vast velvet, open oceans in which the sweet drowning of man within the immense dimensions of mass society is represented."<sup>[18]</sup>

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BRANZI  
DISSOLUTION  
POP  
MARXISM  
NEO-AVANT-GARDE