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VIZZION Europe's initiative aiming to promote and organize, in collaboration with the Archives d'Architecture Moderne (AAM), the first of what we hope will be a long and fruitful series of competitions for architecture and urban planning students from schools and universities all around the world, is undoubtedly an initiative that is worthy of welcoming.

Opportune first of all, because this initiative suggests that works which have been elaborated and presented explore the themes of both urban and architectural production refurbishment in the prospect of what we have come to call "sustainability", or, if you prefer, by adopting an approach that is more humanist and respectful of environmental values.

But this initiative is also a welcome one since we have been able to observe - all of us who are in one way or another connected to the teaching of these same themes at the university level - that the overall quality of this teaching left a lot to be desired, with a few exceptions.

We observe a kind of distancing and even a certain indifference in the planning of these various curricula with regards to drawing, history, traditional techniques and practices, the renaissance and the preservation of our cities - of their identity or their singularity - and a more rigorous use of the environmental resources.

Effectively, in our universities, in architecture and urban planning courses, abstract models are almost exclusively privileged, supported by the "mechanisms of an excessive consumerism", as Javier Cenicacelaya put it, disconnected from all cultural, social, or economic context, in a process that even appear worrying for our wellbeing. Do not forget that it is up to the architect to give body and form to our built environment and, if our cities today are unsure, or if our quality of life is, in general, inferior in many ways to that we could have had, this is explained, in very large part, by the manner in which we have carried out our constructions and took care of our cities.

Thus, initiatives like the one of VIZZION Europe embody a precious incentive, for all of us who are implicated, directly or indirectly, in the training of architecture and urban planning, being whether student or teacher, to give much more attention to these ideas - it's especially urgent - leaving aside these "abstractionisms" which dominate the architectural and urban planning production, and willingly applying our creativity to the refurbishment of our urban environment and our manner to integrate solutions both old and new into our buildings and cities, with the goal of reducing the consumption of resources and sparing, as much as we can, our badly treated planet. Moreover, this must be done by integrating populations, by contributing to what allow the City to function once more, this City which, as Maurice Culot and Gabriele Tagliaventi tell us, constitutes "the best urban environment ever produced by

mankind. It is beautiful and efficient. It is the fruit of the work realized by successive generations over thousands of years. It is a masterpiece - an authentic work of art.”

It also seems to me oportune, and useful, to recall here the extraordinary “DÉCLARATION DE VISEU SUR LA FORMATION EN ARCHITECTURE AU XXI^e SIÈCLE” from the “CONSEIL POUR L’URBANISME EUROPÉEN”, as a fundamental text on these topics, which is still basically unknown by the majority of students and even their professors.

In my capacity as president of the jury that evaluated the submissions put together for the current competition, I will try to convey, in a few words, the essential conclusions that the members of the jury made together. However, it is important to mention that there has not always been a unanimous decision for the various choices which were put into effect nor for the selections made, but more of a consensus to which we all abided by in the end.

By analyzing the different proposals, we quickly ascertained that there was talent, creativity, goodwill, work that, however, almost always manifested itself in a disorganized, heterogeneous way and that there was not a single project that fully fulfilled all the requirements put forth in the competition programme - this led the jury to decide not to award a first prize.

In the majority of the works, we observed that the cult of the architectural object, the abstract, computer-generated shapes, in a quest for originality at any price, relegated to a secondary status equally vital matter such as the urban context - its relation with the city - the integration, as well as many other issues that the program of the competition clearly indicated as being primary objectives.

The awarded works constitute, among those that the jury felt they had been the most attentive to these fundamental issues, a project as a whole presenting interesting qualities. These projects, all very different from each other, are those which in the most integrative and careful manner showed concern for the refurbishment of the city and at the same time showed an attention to the architectural and urban design as well as to environmental aspects.

The Vitruvian formula “*Venustas, Firmitas, Utilitas*” is just as valuable today—if not more - than it was in Antiquity and constitute perhaps the best directions there might be for those who, directly or indirectly, intervene in the city, for it bears within itself those qualities that will allow us to overcome the new challenges posed to us by our times.

Lastly, a word from both myself and the other members of the jury to thank VIZZION Europe and, in particular, Şefik Birkiye, for having taken the initiative in organizing this competition, so stimulating and encouraging, and for the generosity and the hospitality with which we have been received here. My deepest thanks also to Maurice Culot and to the AAM team for all of their help in putting this operation together.