

The Imaginary Killed at the Heart of Housing

Unpublished text by Attila Kotányi¹

- Well, hello! Who has been killed? The imaginary?! Which one?
- Eisenheim² and the imaginary: the attic and its role in the instinctual economy of children.
- Is it that one can say that the lived environment is part of both individual and social neuroses?
- The imaginary is the environment itself: there is no lived environment without the imagining machine. There is no other environment or history than those that are reconstituted by the imagining machine and its instinctual economy.
- The therapeutic dimension is completely neglected by the ideology of emotional impoverishment: the assassination of the imaginary and hallucinatory.
- To dwell is instinctual. Its material, lived experience, constitutes a system of associations that is obviously richer than the act of building (Holderlin, Heidegger and the situationist concept of the planning of the always-colonized territory).³
- An interpretation of the slogan: “Power to the imagination!”⁴ It is work in general, social labor in its entirety, the productive forces in their entirety, that must be engaged to be in a better mood. It is relatively undivided work.
- Marx and the other great romantics, especially the Americans, have lived and thought this way. In their own times, they already reasoned in terms of work.
- What? You want to change the play in the Society of the Spectacle? Is that it? Is that all?
- Is it that architecture follows the advice that one must think that Sisyphus was happy? Is it that the architect isn’t the bearer of an unhappy consciousness, but is in fact insufficiently alienated for him to be able to draw enough big symbolic wounds from his suffering?
- About those who leave their insufficiently injured bodies out of play (deprived of motivation, how could they seek a remedy?).
- If one inhabits Sarcelles⁵ and not Eisenheim, isn’t it necessary to be a sacred monster of the instinctual economy, [isn’t it] self-therapeutic to be able to recover from one’s wounds, from the asphyxiation of the liberating and sparkling imaginary? (Hell is noxious if you aren’t Dante.)

¹ Undated. Published in Raoul Vaneigem and Gérard Berréby, *Rien n’est fini, tout commence* (Allia, 2014). Translated by NOT BORED! 23 November 2014. Footnotes by the translator.

² A small town in Germany. It doesn’t appear to have any particular significance.

³ The phrase used here – *l’aménagement du territoire* – echoes one of the chapter titles in Guy Debord’s book *La Société du Spectacle*, which was published in November 1967.

⁴ This appears to be a reference to one of the slogans (usually rendered as “All power to the imagination”) popularized during May 1968 in France.

⁵ Northern suburb of Paris notorious for the construction of huge housing blocs in the 1950s and ’60s.