

Commentary

# Sustainability, Beauty, and Power in Architecture

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## Abstract

The essay deals with the relationship among (total) power, beauty, and sustainability, which is considered an integral part of architecture and town planning for the future. Although beauty (architecture) is closely related to the good that stimulates our desires, it is often distorted by the construct of power. Sustainability, beauty, and power are all relative, multifaceted, and challenging also in the field of constructions. Ever since the times of primordial human communities and civilisations, beauty and power have been consciously or accidentally connected, and this also applies to their connection to architecture. It is the bearer of both of these nouns. It demonstrates power, warns against it, pleases human senses through beauty and mutual proportional relationships, protects people, but it can also be a symbol of destruction, resistance. At the same time, it is a practical tool and means of expression capable of carrying a certain message, information. The paper delves into deep philosophical contemplations of the three main topics and shows their complicated ties, based on the insights of the most important world and local savants of all times, speaking different languages, and offering different cultural perspectives on the issue. History is confronted with the present and implications the future are presented.

## Keywords

Architecture, Monumentality, Culture, Ethics

## 1. Introduction

‘Many environmental, ecological and economic issues have started directing the world's attention towards an urgent need for adopting sustainability in all fields.’ [1]

The global ecological footprint is related to economic and cultural instability and can ultimately lead to the global instability of life on Earth [2]. The ecological footprint indicates how much land surface area we need for our total consumption. We are currently consuming around one and a half Earths, if we do not reorient ourselves to the downward trend, by 2050 it could be three of our planets (Figure 1). The global goal of sustainable development requires new approaches [3] for improving the quality of life and society [4]. ‘The sustainability paradigm implies a cultural shift in order to really

change the world and society for a durable development.’ [5].

This research article deals with the relationship among (total) power, beauty, and sustainability, which is considered to be an integral part of architecture and town planning for the future. Although beauty (architecture) is closely related to the good that stimulates our desires, it is often distorted by the construct of power. In general, the big always want to be even bigger, but only one can be the biggest. Such a designed ‘Homo deus’ [6] is subsequently affected by monomania, and architecture is its mirror. Sustainability, beauty, and power are all relative, multi-faceted, and challenging also in the field of constructions. Ever since the times of primordial human communities and civilizations, beauty and power have been consciously or ac-

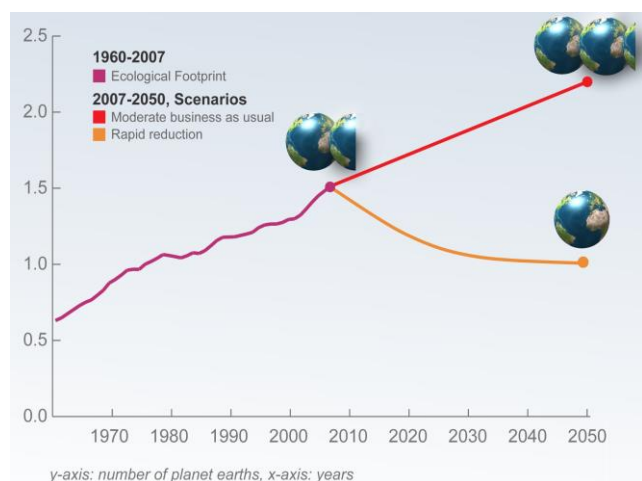
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**Figure 1.** Number of planets - scenarios (Image: [7]).

## 2. Notions and Context

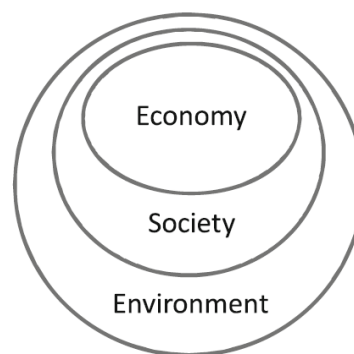
### 2.1. Sustainability

‘There are over 200 definitions available for sustainability. The most prominent related to the built environment is the Brundtland Report where sustainable development addresses the needs of the present without comprising the needs of future generations. Buildings that are built efficiently with a minimum negative impact on the environment during their life cycle are considered sustainable. Quite often, sustainable buildings are those that are eco-labeled for example U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ENERGY STAR, U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) NAHB Green and Passive House Institute US (PHIUS) Passive House Certificate.’ [8]

Such assessment systems provide us with guidelines on sustainable development [9]. In the past, they were quite limited to physical boundaries and reflected just or dominantly the perspective of an environment [3]. In fact, they were originally predominantly based on engineering methodologies [10].

‘A holistic definition of sustainability (...) goes beyond the definition provided by norms and rating systems’ [11]. In general, now there are three areas, dimensions, pillars, components, aspects, perspectives, contexts, challenges, values, or conditions of sustainability applicable: environmental, economic, and social. This is a common view of sustainable

development [12]. In the construction industry, all of them are required to be covered [13], according to some authors equally [14]. Their integration is considered to be a fundamental tenet of sustainable design [9]. The Johannesburg Declaration also promotes balance in the development of the environment, society, and economy [15]. However, the discourse on these conceptual foundations is quite heterogeneous, coming from different schools of thought, and the origins vary [16].



**Figure 2.** One of the common representations of sustainability that have started to originate in the 1970s (Image: [16]).

Some researchers also add institutional, technical, and cultural pillars, some although prefer leaving this categorising aside, integrating them together into a set of broader goals [16]. There are especially attempts to integrate a fourth dimension of sustainability, which is ‘cultural, aesthetic, and institutional aspects, the religious and spiritual dimension’ [4].

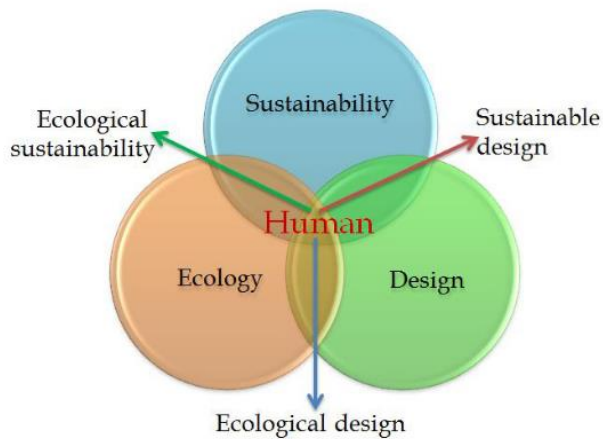
‘Cultural sustainability has long been categorised within the social pillar of the three pillars of sustainability, but with recent developments in this area, considerations are being made to make cultural sustainability its own.’ [17]

There have also been suggestions to move the sustainability focus in teaching and research from single and passive objects to the scale of the built environment which evolves in time with interactions and their complexity [18].

‘Sustainability is studied and managed over many scales (levels or frames of reference) of time and space and in many contexts (...). What sustainability is, what its goals should be, and how these goals are to be achieved is all open to interpretation.’ [19]

Sustainable architecture should last for a long time, use the energy efficiently, minimise waste and pollution etc. In today’s practice, this is proved by computer simulations of building performances.

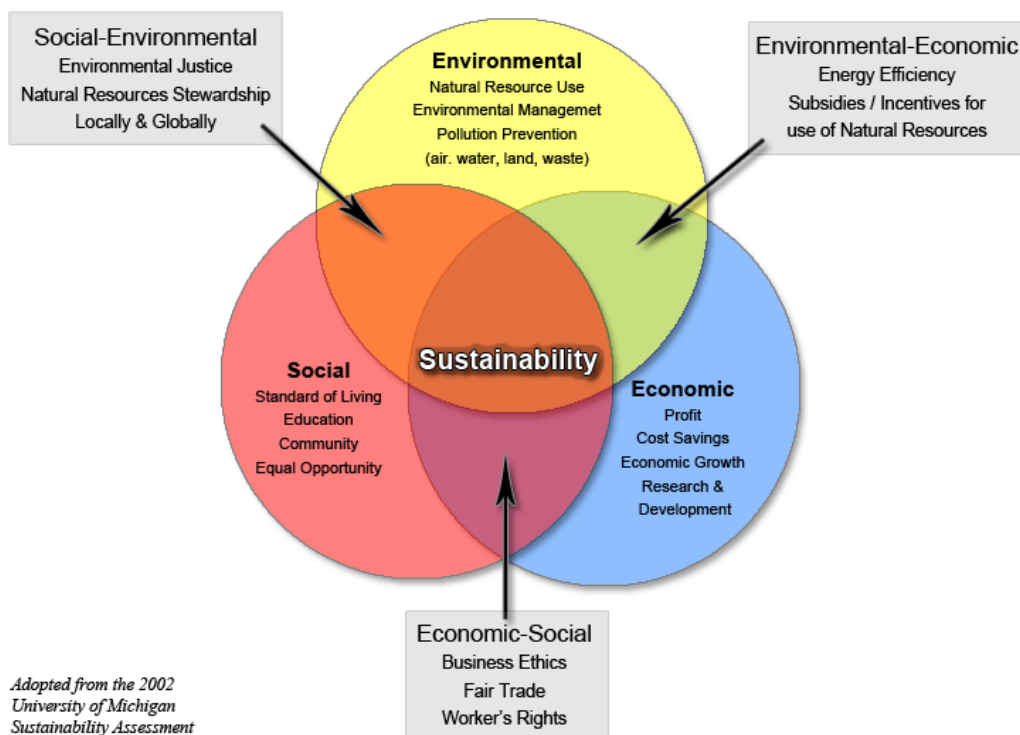
‘However, the strong focus on performances has increased the lack of a systemic view and complexity when designing components of the built environment, favouring a scale-based approach which mainly considers separate sustainable objects.’ [5].



**Figure 3.** The relationship between ecology, sustainability, and design (Image: [19]; CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).

Environmental sustainability concerns a safe and healthy

environment (ecology, efficiency), social equity, as well as cultural heritage. The definition is no longer purely quantitative. The shift has been made especially at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. Economic sustainability are decision-making and business principles aiming at economic growth or long-term financial stability without harming the environment. Social sustainability deals with the identification and management of business impacts on people, including human rights, equality, education, or health. [3] (Japanese Architectural Charter for a Global Environment [20] had appointed the following principles of sustainable development: longevity (architecture as a long-term social property), symbiosis (social and natural environments in harmony), energy conservation (low energy consumption, high use of natural and unused sources of energy), resource conservation and cyclicity (reuse and recycling, minimal consumption of natural resources), and succession (respect to local history, identity, and culture).



Adopted from the 2002  
University of Michigan  
Sustainability Assessment

**Figure 4.** The three spheres of sustainability (Image: [21, 22]).

For comparison, architecture sustainability in computer science is the ‘capacity to endure different types of change through efficient maintenance and orderly evolution over its entire life cycle’. It is one of the main objectives of systemic architecting, which takes into account the whole environment with ‘developmental, technological, business, operational, organizational, political, economic, legal, regulatory, ecological, and social influences’ (defined in ISO/IEC/IEEE 42010). In this regard, changes affecting sustainability can include

new requirements, business strategies and goals, environmental changes, architecture erosion or drift, accidental complexity, technological changes, deferred decisions to meet near-term goals, or changes related to human errors. [23] While we have found some similarities with sustainability definitions in the building industry, in computer science, there are virtually no standardised metrics ‘for architecture sustainability; such information is spread among various people and development artifacts,’ [24] and the rating systems in

architectural design have been available since the 1990s [14].

## 2.2. Beauty

The American psychologist Abraham Maslow talks about the existence of six basic needs (1943) in the following hierarchy from the most important: physiological (food, water, sleep, shelter...), safety-related (understandability, predictability of the situation, certainty of satisfaction of physiological needs, personal safety, protection...), social (love, sympathy, belonging...), respect-related (appreciation, dignity, self-respect, respect for others...), self-realization, knowledge, and beauty (need to know, understand, need for aesthetic satisfactory environment...). [25] Horatio Greenough (1805 - 1852), an American sculptor, defined beauty as 'the promise of function'.

Beauty has fascinated mankind since time immemorial, in various fields. Good architecture, green parks and nice spaces have a positive effect on human experience, health, and values. Many neuropsychological studies show that people who live in a monotonous, unkempt or even ugly environment have increased cortisol levels, are more aggressive and less willing to help. 'In the US, researchers have shown that people living in landscaped, diversified areas were evidently more balanced and willing to help others.' [26] 'Community, diversity, harmony, and connectivity are fundamental for social sustainability and can be facilitated with appropriate architecture and urban designs.' [10] According to Elaine Scarry, the experience of beauty is also important for increasing the sense of justice. In a society that has largely resigned to the truth and relativizes it, beauty is one of the few experiences that leads it to harmony and perfection [27].

Abraham Goldberg from the University of South Carolina Upstate, who has conducted extensive studies in cities, concluded that living in a beautiful environment is the easiest way to an inner sense of happiness and satisfaction. Di Dio Cinzia and Galezze Vittorio explain this from the point of view of neuroaesthetics by saying that beauty activates several groups of neurons in the human brain that produce pleasant sensations, and also contributes to the formation of new neural connections between different parts of the brain supporting human creativity.

'Beauty is the subconscious driving force of our world and makes it a better place to live. Although it can negatively distort our judgement, it ultimately makes people happier and more satisfied.' [26]

The city and its environment can be understood as the result of concentrated human effort, in which the opinion on beauty, functionality, on social phenomena, and the needs of individuals are materialised [28]. German philosopher Wolfgang Iser claims that the city should offer surprises [29]. When we walk in large areas without surprises, we often feel disappointment or indifference. However, 'true beauty in architecture lies in its ability to serve and improve human experience' [30]. If a building or a space is not functional, com-

fortable, and welcoming, its value decreases despite the aesthetic qualities.

Orla Murphy, who is part of the round-table group for the New European Bauhaus, has said:

'I think what is really interesting in connecting beauty with sustainability is that it starts to demand a shift in values, or what we might mean by beauty. So architecture can no longer really be considered beautiful, unless it is inherently sustainable, and in fact regenerative.'

Czech architect and former president of the Czech Chamber of Architects, Dalibor Borák, also promotes the opinion that architecture must earn its sustainability through beauty, by being included in the cultural context [2]. Green architecture is not only about low operating costs, but also about its construction and disposal costs, and it should also be linked to cultural sustainability in the city context.

Robert Špaček thinks that architecture must 'first of all be beautiful, only then it has, must, or can be energy efficient, or must have other properties that we expect from architecture.' All parts of the city must be like this, including trash cans or trams. In reality, we are surrounded by many ugly things and spaces. To a large extent, it is also true that the environment is formed by an ugly society, and the ugliness of the environment does not lift us to beauty. Nice is not necessarily more expensive. It is mainly a matter of will and cultural level. [28]

'One of the tasks of architects is to arouse and revive people's interest in the space in which they live. To create it in such a way that they like to move in it, to start using it, literally, so that they are not afraid to touch it and establish a personal relationship with it. To step out of their closedness.' (Poláková, in: [31])

The politically misguided decision to build the Chinese city of New Ordos (Kangbashi; Figure 5) for over a million inhabitants in the middle of barren Inner Mongolia deserts (Figure 6) is unsustainable regardless of the beauty and efficiency of the architecture. It is not decisive at all whether some objects are green. The city ranked first in the list of Chinese Ghost Cities, also known as metropolises that have yet to come to life. In 2020, China had around 65 million empty homes, enough to house the population of France [32].

'In normal countries, condominiums are built because there's demand, said an economist under China's State Council. In China, condominiums are built to increase steel and cement production. It's backward.' [33]

'The city of world-class architecture and extravagant public plazas was intended to eventually house a million people (...),' nearly all properties in ghost cities are owned but very few people live there and some might never will. [34]

Values include beauty and ethics, 'sustainability is a way of thinking and an ethical design approach that links aesthetic and environmental values in architecture' [4]. Ethics must be in a relevant relationship with aesthetics [35]. Jozef Špáčil and Robert Špaček [36] deal with relations of beauty (aesthetics), good (main category in ethics, area of morality), and truth in the context of formation of a city environment. They discuss



an architect's role and ethical responsibility especially with regard to misuse of aesthetics as a power tool of criminal regimes. The Greek term *kósmos* included both ethical and aesthetic contexts.



**Figure 5.** Construction in the Kangbashi New District of Ordos City, Inner Mongolia, China ([34]; Photograph: GETTY. Reproduced with permission of the photographer. All rights reserved).



**Figure 6.** A woman and her child walk down a newly built road near the Kangbashi New District of Ordos City, Inner Mongolia ([34]; Photograph: GETTY. Reproduced with permission of the photographer. All rights reserved).

‘The paradigm of the concept of the identity of truth, beauty and goodness is Plato's doctrine of ideas. The realm of ideas is the realm of truth - true knowledge is exclusively the knowledge of ideas. At the top of their hierarchy rests the idea of goodness, which is also the most beautiful. An object that participates in the idea of good (i.e. which is good) also participates in the idea of beauty (it is beautiful). Ideal beauty is unearthly - and there is only one - earthly beauty is its reflection, which, however, can rest on various objects.’ [39]

The perception and evaluation of beauty is strongly conditioned by moral judgments. Morality defines the areas of what is permissible and at the same time the areas in which beauty can be sought and found. Moral judgments tend to be exclu-

sive, favouring one form of beauty.

‘However, to recognize the right of morality to make a general decision in matters of beauty means to violate beauty. It would mean giving ethics a higher degree of generality than ethics has. How generally does morality apply? - and how much beauty? If generality means "frequency of occurrence", i.e. quantity, then the aforementioned right of morality is in contrast with reality: there is more beauty than goodness. (...) Goodness seems to naturally lead to one thing in common - beauty, on the contrary, to uniqueness, multiplicity, and variety.’ [36]

‘Various kinds of visual aesthetics are the greatest contribution of architectural art. But it is applied art, it has a practical purpose and more than any other kind of art depends on political patrons - those who decide on the construction.’

Mies van der Rohe, the iconic architect of modernity in architecture, is an example of ideological characterlessness with the desire to realise his beautiful architecture at any cost, for anyone. He designed, for example, the memorial to the communist martyrs Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg (1926) and after Hitler's rise to power (1933) he accepted an offer to build the Reichsbank. However, there were also those who purposefully created in the name of the given regime: Speer in Nazi Germany, or Jofan and Gelfrejch in the Stalinist Soviet Union. Their work and its aesthetics are firmly connected to the power it helped to enforce. Does this type of architecture have any claim to beauty? [36]

The city is an ethical phenomenon. Nature, which is not a human creation, is considered to be the model of beauty, so moral judgments are not involved in its evaluation. It can be assumed that the more natural a city is for a person, the more beauty it will have. ‘Beauty is power because it arouses desire. The power of beauty is aesthetic, it has the ability to stimulate and control.’ [36] Most signals are manipulative [37]. Beauty is seductive and more convincing than truth. It is often felt religiously and thus firmly connected with the idea of goodness, eternity and security. The beauty of monumentality evokes a feeling of unearthly goodness and justice. ‘In practice, monumental beauty is an expression of power, the power to handle beauty is the power to control souls.’ [38] And ‘true monumentality can only come out of dictatorship because it is an expression of their emotional complexes’ [39]. ‘We can consider the search for a balance between truth, goodness and beauty as the meaning of the history of human culture.’ (Špaček, in: [40]) The concepts of dictatorship, monumentality and beauty are also interwoven with history.

Aesthetics is an often-abused aspect of architecture. Everyone wants to have beauty. We find goodness in enjoying and savouring beauty. The use of art is proved by the fact that Hitler took the artists to visit conquered Paris, although he considered the need to destroy it. His architect Albert Speer, who lent his skills to the presentation and support of the regime, has raised the question of the relationship between goodness, beauty, aesthetics, and ethics with his architecture. Nazism absolutely denied ethics with aesthetics.

‘The idea of good is considered the highest idea only in political philosophy, while in metaphysical dialogues the essence of the idea does not create good, but beautiful. It is precisely for the philosopher that the leading role is not good but beautiful, the philosopher is a lover of wisdom or a lover of beauty.’ [38]

The creation and its aesthetics of the Stalinist Soviet Union is inextricably linked to the power they helped to assert, as well. We see from history that dictators want to be architects and urban planners. ‘A capable political technocrat, architect, artist... without a conscience is more dangerous in a top position than a political or religious fanatic.’ The willingness of technocrats to serve any government is very common. [38] Film director and photographer Leni Riefenstahl and sculptor Arno Breker have also legalised Hitler's lack of ethics with their beautiful performances. Speer's architecture has been reconstructed and digitised, and is beautiful in its own right, even though impressive projects across Germany dazzle rather with scale and magnificence than architectural qualities and detail. It was him who especially shaped the language of totalitarian architecture. [38] We have seen that even in non-democratic social conditions, extraordinary architectural works can be created [35].

‘... if we are consistent, then we must admit that one of the most historically significant buildings of modern times is the building of crematorium II in Auschwitz. History changed there...’ [41]

One of their architects, Fritz Ertl, was a graduate of the famous Bauhaus.

### 2.3. Power

Max Weber understands power as the ability of an individual or a group to influence the actions of others, ‘as any chance to assert one's will within a social relationship, even against resistance, regardless of what this chance consists of’ [42]. He argued that power can take different forms. Human power can manifest itself in the social order through position (status), in the economic order through class position, and in the political order through party affiliation. Thus, class, status, and party are aspects of the distribution of power in a community. They also have a big impact on these areas: wealth (includes assets such as buildings, land, farms, houses, factories but also other assets - economic situation), prestige (the respect with which a person or social position is perceived by others - status situation), and power (the ability of people or groups to achieve their goals despite the opposition of others - political parties). At the same time, he defines two basic dimensions of power: holding power and exercising power [43].

Ladislav Mňačko adds that: ‘Power is neither good nor bad. Power can become good or bad, it depends on who uses it.’ [44] According to Foucault, it is not important who and where the power itself is exercised, but by what techniques and technologies it is applied. It is necessary to distinguish between the aforementioned holding of power and the exercise

of power. The power should follow the now global public welfare with respect for people and their rights. But it is not always the case. The last century showed us the face of totalitarian states representing a system of political ideas that was thoroughly dictatorial and utopian. They represented a gross depravedness of basic civilised and ethical values in favour of mass bureaucracy, propaganda, thoughtlessness, and unification.

Michael Mann [45] and Eric Wolf [46] state that there are four interconnected networks of social power: ideological, economic, political, and military, which are manifested materially or through architecture. Economically, power is expressed by possessive and decisive authority through the acquisition, distribution, and exchange of work and its results with the aim of real or apparent satisfaction of social needs. Political power is manifested in the control of the economy, the ability to control behaviour and punish indecent or bad behaviour in various spheres - civil, social, but also religious. Military power, in turn, through armies, armaments, military interventions, victories, and defeats. Ideological manifestations of power and their identification is perhaps the most difficult. It is often hidden, unreadable at first glance. On the other hand, of all the arts, architecture is most strongly associated with ideology, not only because it is often an instrument of power, but also because the building precedes the word.

According to Sharon R. Steadman [48], we can perceive architectural objects in relation to power from the following four points of view:

‘(1) how architecture can be used for the purposes of establishing and obtaining power as such; (2) how it serves to demonstrate power; (3) how the human-made environment affects the control of the actions or even the thinking of others and finally; (4) whether and how architecture can represent an important indicator of power changes.’

Architectural identification elements of power can be the relative size of the object - monumentality (as, for example, an indicator of relative status in society, often refers to a lucrative location), the amount of work required for its construction, the type and importance of decorative elements, the existence of physical boundaries around the object, location, etc.

Former US President Donald Trump and real estate tycoon chose the construction of a wall separating Mexico and the US as one of his campaign themes. The wall, almost 15 m (50 feet) high and 1,600 km (1,000 miles) long, 3,200 km (2,000 miles) in total, and which should cost 25 billion dollars, embodies ‘political theatre’, demonstrates political, economic power dividing nations with the declared aim of ensuring civil welfare and wealth. In the era characterised as post-truth, it attacks the basic impulses of the population and serves as a marketing, ideological tool for maintaining power. It becomes a symbol of xenophobia, ethical lack of education and economic, corporate profit. [47]

The basic reason for monumentality (the construction of visually impressive buildings and monuments) is to send a message to the observer, signalling information, which is most



often power, its acquisition and persistence. At the same time, their controlled use is an excellent way to demonstrate control over people and space. Bruce Trigger states in his theory that if someone exerts more energy than others, it means that they have more power, or rather more control. In general, monumental architecture is represented on all continents and serves roughly the same functions as defence, royal residences, religious buildings, tombs, rarely intended for the public. Descartes was already fascinated by such cities, whose appearance testified to the fact that they were created according to the plans of one engineer, architect, leader. In Hannah Arendt's book *Vita activa*, the author claims that in the ancient city, the builder and the legislator were two equally important subjects. The lawgiver gives residents the certainty of written rules of conduct, and the builder of walls and walls of houses gives people the certainty of their own space providing physical security. [49]

If we define monumentality in Slovak as the quality of an object or a phenomenon manifested in the ability to influence dimensions, shape or importance, it is magnificence, celebratory character, massiveness. In English it represents something very large, extraordinary, very significant, stunning, or reminiscent of a monument. The English meaning sounds more positive. Hitler said about his gigantic Dome dominating the future Germany (completed in 1950), the design of which he carried everywhere with him since 1925, that: 'The value of this monument lies in its greatness, which is the only basic faith of mankind.' [50] This new Berlin offered only one interpretation, and that was as a celebration of the power that built it.



**Figure 7.** A very often cited example is the *Palatul Parlamentului* (Palace of the Parliament, also called the People's Palace) in Bucharest, Romania. Nicolae Ceausescu (who was the head of the country from 1965 to 1989) completely demolished one third of the old city for the purposes of its construction, which is larger than the American Pentagon (the third largest building in terms of volume in the world recorded in the Guinness Book of Records). It was served to visitors as a symbol of power, beauty, wealth, as a sign of escape from the Balkans (Image: [51]).

Michel Foucault, in his work *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, deals with the methods, mechanisms, and institutions that ensure the punishment and correction of individuals who have broken the law in our society. Despite the author's attempt to point out rather the inhumane social discipline, control and violent form of power manipulation in the past centuries (especially in barracks, hospitals, schools, or factory workshops), one can find in his work also architecture-related passages. [52] Disciplinary power is a power whose main function is to 'train'.

'It is not a triumphant power that... can boast of its superiority; it is a modest, suspicious power that operates as a calculated and continuous economy. Compared to the majestic rituals and apparatuses of sovereign state power, these are modest and small procedures... The prerequisite for the application of discipline is a dispositif that coerces with a look: an apparatus where vision techniques induce power and where, on the contrary, coercive means clearly visible to those they are aimed at.' [53]

He cites a military camp as a perfect example, where all power is exercised only through precise supervision. This all was determined exactly: the geometry of the sidewalks, the number and location of the tents, the orientation of their entrances, the distribution of rows and lines, a network of views was drawn that supervised each other. Such a camp is a certain diagram of power that works through general visibility.

'From this also arises the issue of architecture, which is no longer made to be seen (the splendour of palaces) or to guard the outer space (the geometry of fortresses), but to enable internal, interconnected, and detailed control – to make visible those who are there. (...) Disciplinary institutions spawned a control machinery that worked like a microscope of behaviour... A perfect disciplinary apparatus should allow one to observe everything consistently with a single glance.' [53]

'Architecture is the manipulation of people, space and its quality and rules. Manipulating rules, creating new rules, enriching language and speech. Manipulation with a certain target group requires a certain vision. The unpredictability of certain other elements can turn against the manipulator.' (Vojtechov  in: [31])

Architects and architecture can do a lot, but not everything. The sense of beauty should be part of the consciousness of people who do not know how to do beautiful things but have the power to make decisions. [2] When visionaries turned into ideologues with real (albeit irrational) political power, urban deviations immediately arose, which had a long-term degenerative effect [31].

'Products of architecture have been long considered a representation of human culture and awareness, which expresses the political, social, cultural, economic and symbolic state. After 2000, Iconic architecture and sustainability are one of these modern practices. Iconic architecture emerged as one of the contemporary architectural trends at the turn of the 21st century.' [54]

According to Rem Koolhaas, "Greatness" carries an ideo-

logical program that is said to be independent of the will of its architects. It lies beyond authorship and means yielding to technologies, engineers, suppliers, manufacturers; to yield to politicians; yield to others. He summed up his reflections on urban greatness with the words: 'Our only link to Greatness is Big Mistakes.' [55]



**Figure 8.** Size (monumentality) and high-rise buildings are a symbol of prosperity, economic power. Five projects from the finals of the 2016 International Highrise Award. Three of them are located in New York, USA, and two in Singapore (Image: [56]).

#### Images

All relevant image copyright agreements have been secured.

### 3. Conclusion

'Architects are responsible for contributing to the protection, preservation, and restoration of the global ecosystem. (...) Sustainable development is not only ecology, but also social, economic, psychological, and cultural factors that determine the health, safety, comfort, and social interaction of individual users. Sustainable development implies a holistic view of the ecological, economic, and social impact of technology and the material environment on humans and nature.' [57-61]

The relationship among power, beauty, and sustainability is considered to be an integral part of architecture and town planning for the future. Although beauty is closely related to the good that stimulates our desires, it is often distorted by the construct of power. Sustainability, beauty, and power are all relative, multi-faceted, and challenging also in the field of constructions. Ever since the times of primordial human communities and civilizations, beauty and power have been consciously or accidentally connected, and this also applies to their connection to architecture. It is the bearer of both of these nouns. It demonstrates power, warns against it, pleases human senses through beauty and mutual proportional relationships, protects people, but it can also be a symbol of destruction, resistance.

### Author Contributions

Lucia Benkovičová is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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