

## **WEEK 16- EXTRA CREDIT**

### **ARCH-572, ARCHITECTURE THEORY AND CRITICISM**

20/4/19

Lovejeet Gehlot  
Section:08

#### **Junkspace by Rem Koolhaas**

I was intrigued by Rem Koolhaas's writings from this semester and I found another interesting article that he wrote in 2001, in which he explains how contemporary massive buildings have devalued Architecture. Koolhaas describes Junkspace as "sealed, that is bonded up in a bubble with no structure but skin".(176)

He argues that "air-conditioning has dictated mutant regimes of organizations and coexistence that leaves architecture behind."(176) Described as architecture of masses, like shopping malls, airports and hotels are examples of Junkspace where there is no concept, meaning or distinction. It has no rules or order to its connections. These characterless buildings are designed for the world of consumption with the intention of ambushing the consumers in a futuristic environment, where one loses all concept of time, direction and reality. Koolhaas compares airports to city by explaining how they are becoming complicated with circulation and latest building techniques with lack of expansion.

He argues, "Say an airport needs more space. In the past new terminals were added, each more or less characteristic of its own age, leaving the old ones as a readable record – evidence of progress. Since passengers have definitely demonstrated their infinite mall-ability, the idea of building on the spot has gained currency. Travelators are thrown in reverse, signs taped, potted palms (or very large corpses) covered in body bags". Once an open large space has now become a place full of travelers wandering around. These spaces, now are in need of easily readable signages that can control the turmoil and chaos arising from the otherwise strict planning. Even TV screens have replaced windows with cyberspace being the new type of outdoors. (189)

Koolhaas ends up with a question if Junkspace will or has already invaded the body. (189) Junkspace is a direction of the current towards an ideal future, which aims to turn things into something better. Junkspace is distracting us from the important questions of reality by faking a surreal world that is completely disconnected from its originality. Koolhaas is arguing in this article that in today's era, we are developing so fast and rapidly that we have now lost track of its context. Buildings are being built unnecessarily with purpose of consumerism. Koolhaas is not trying to warn us of this situation, but make us aware of it. He wants us to realize how modernization has not only brought junkspace in our neighborhood, but has also started quelling on humanity with techniques like botox injections and liposuctions.(189) It is important that we avoid getting succumbed to its nature or just like cities, we will soon lose our originality as well.