

When Idiocracy Builds

Introduction

With this essay I want to describe a utopian construct and their basic rules for contributing some of my thoughts to the discourse of the temporary and future architectural practice. It's not the representation of a Utopia that I put into words – more an approach, which could lead to a new environment of architectural practice. I introduce this text by explaining the title, just to refute the maybe intentionally negative interpretation of it.

In 1945 Frank Lloyd Wright released his Book 'When democracy Builds', where he describes a kind of utopian master plan for the civilization of the 20th century. The anchoring of architecture between democracy and neoliberal capitalism was fundamental for Wrights sense of the peaceful living together of the society, in contrast to the regime of dictatorship in the first half of the 20th century. Wright calls his visionary America 'Usonia', which is the deductive reasoning out of the architectural utopia of the 19th century and it's composed of a new urban form: the 'Broadacre City'. Only here the inhabitants could enjoy the 'real individuality' - and not just the 'robust individuality', which he equates with egoism – in a integral democracy. Because all the potential leaders like politicians, philosophers, artists etc. failed, does an architect lead 'Usonia', while the government only cares about the administrative tasks.

The term 'Idiocracy' I borrow from the science-fiction comedy with the same title by the American director Mike Judge. He shows with this amusing movie a dystopia of the world in the year of 2505, where the intellectual degenerated society stands on the edge of their precipice. This regressive evolution is social-Darwinian based by dysgenic and is the result of the deficient selection and the so degradation of the genotype. This means, that people with higher education only forgather in their social environment and having fewer or no children at all, compared to humans with lower education which often raise extended families.

I am with this essay (and also in general) very far away from a social Darwinian approach. And I won't describe the term of 'Idiocracy' with 'the society of stupid persons', like the makers of the movie meant it. 'Idiocracy' is more a form of a Utopia, managed by idiots in the etymologic correct sense: The word *idiot* is derived from the Greek term *ιδιότης*, which in a value-free meaning implies 'individual', in contrast to somebody who holds an office or practices in the name of an institution. The 'Idiocracy' in that sense, is the society where the independent human beings create and plan the lived space. It's the Utopia of individuals whose only consensus is the free practice without institutionally provided intellectual context. The 'Idiocracy' is situated in the virtual space or the digital reality and is self regulated by its creators. It does not carry the burden of an epical aesthetic style, because everyone creates his own thing, with his own parameters and his own digital instruments. It's a fair but competitive way of living together in the sense of: "You do your thing and I do mine, but if you need help, you can call me".

To understand the 'Idiocracy', it's necessary to equate the social value of the virtual reality with the social value of the physical reality. This maybe could be the point where most readers of this essay would contradict. But the fact that you can build a complete new second life, based on the binary system, is in my sense strong enough, to serve as an analogue fundament for the digital reality. So far it's also not wrong to say, that about 90% of the built architecture is virtual (stored on servers) and lots of architects like Frank Gehry or Jürgen Mayer H. just implement their context-independent, individual, virtual designs into the physical reality.

The 'Idiocracy' already exists – this essay just determines a way to face it.