

IR-RECONCILABLE

"The only philosophy we might responsibly engage in after all that has happened would no longer make any pretence of being in control of the absolute. Indeed, it would forbid itself to think the absolute, lest it betray the thought. And yet it must not allow anything to be taken away from the emphatic concept of truth. This contradiction is its element"¹

1. Circlesquare

It is in the doctrine of Renaissance architectural theory, *The Ten Books of Architecture*, that Alberti attempts reconciliation of man and God through the act of architecture by assigning various rational processes symbolic representations. Geometrically, the circle (God) is squared (man) and is (p)raised as the highest form of beauty. The reconciled forms are the descended Son onto Earth (manGod), beauty at its most high(perfection). The represented Christ, through the act of writing, drawing and construction, becomes formula (formalism) and established (establishment).

It is the impossible burden of perfection, a perverse expectation of nothing less than to be a reconciled 'manGod' himself, that drives Michelangelo's scalpel deep within the flesh of this 'formalism'. Quite literally, Michelangelo dissects Alberti's facade to discover and expose the falsity of the image(the represented reconciliation). Michelangelo resurfaces exactly that which Alberti strove to resolve(repress) through illusion (geometric and architectonic); the ir-reconciliation of the two forms. The David and its impossibly large right hand, the Laurentian Library and its mannered theoretical impossibility exposed through theoretical 'cuts' in the walls, are the architectonic crucifixion of Alberti's formula of reconciliation. And Christ, out of necessity, had to be crucified.

2. Circle and Square

"Stop, dwarf!" I said. "It is I or you! But I am the stronger of us two: you do not know my abysmal thought. That you could not bear!"

Then something happened that made me lighter, for the dwarf jumped from my shoulder, being curious; and he crouched on a stone before me. But there was a gateway just where we had stopped.

"Behold this gateway, dwarf!" I continued. "It has two faces. Two paths meet here; no one has yet followed either to its end. This long lane stretches back for an eternity. And the long lane out there, that is another eternity. They contradict each other, these paths; they offend each other face to face; and it is here at this gateway that they come together. The name of the gateway is inscribed above: 'Moment.' But whoever would follow one of them, on and on, farther and farther - do you believe, dwarf, that these paths contradict each other eternally?"

"All that is straight lies," the dwarf murmured contemptuously. "All truth is crooked; time itself is a circle."²

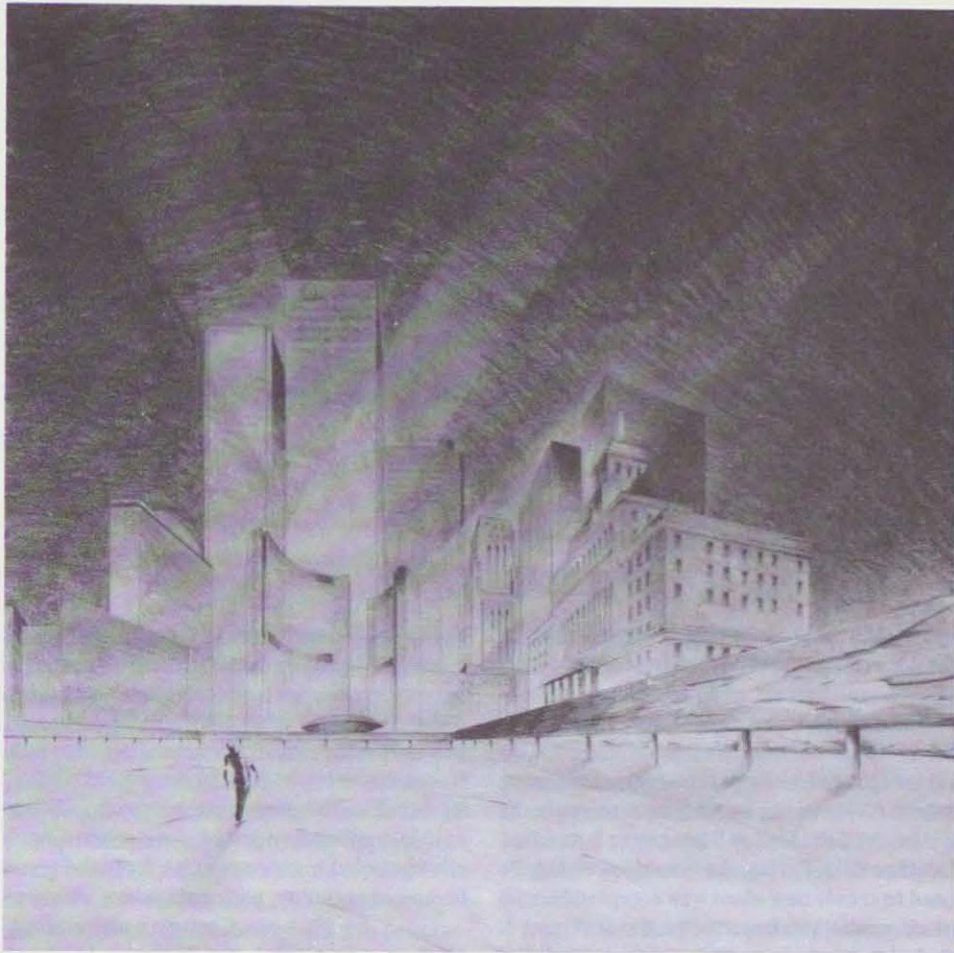
The 'moment', however, is not merely a moment of recognition; that would be much too simple and fundamentally uninteresting. Mere recognition allows for, through its exact opposition of the reconciliation; no reconciliation, complete separation (of the figures) of the paradox; the end of the paradox (and of course, of the conflict). The end of the paradox is, essentially, the opposite side of the same coin, on which the reconciliation lies on the other. Having lost its ability to posit an illusion of reconciliation(Alberti), that of the circlesquare(squarecircle) and having gained liberty (total separation of the square and the circle) through dissection from various skeptic scalpels, from the conflict of reconciliation through the knowledge of the paradox, architecture turns instead to one (man, rationality); to the technologic, physiologic, semiologic, sociologic, mythologic or the other (God, ir-rationality); to the unconscience, to mysticism.

3. Circle/Square

"The absurd, the paradox, is composed in such a way that reason has no power at all to dissolve it in nonsense and prove that it is nonsense; no, it is a symbol, a riddle, a compounded riddle about which reason must say: I cannot solve it, it cannot be understood, but it does not follow from this that it is nonsense"³

Yet, out of necessity, Christ is crucified. The exact 'thing' that would allow Man's deepest questions, strongest desires - exactly the conflict of reconciliation - to be answered, to be accomplished, is, instead, denied, forgotten . . . forsaken and then, promised to return. For it is this -do you believe; the crucifixion (of the reconciled), the necessity of crucifixion (the (mis)understanding of the (ir)reconciliation) which is The(God's?) strategic seduction⁴ (back into the eternal conflict of the paradox through the crucifixion and promise, i.e., the 'second coming') from which creation comes, has always come and always will come.

"it is accomplished"



NOTES

1. T.W. Adorno as cited in *Philosophical-Political Profiles*, 'Does Philosophy Still Have a Purpose', Jurgen Habermas, MIT Press, Cambridge 1985.
2. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Portable Nietzsche*, Edited and translated by Walter Kaufmann, 'Thus Spoke Zarathustra: Third Part, On the Vision and the Riddle', pg. 269-70, Penguin Books, New York 1982
3. Soren Kierkegaard, *Journals and Papers*, 1, 7
4. Jean Baudrillard, *The Evil Demon of Images*, 'An Interview with Jean Baudrillard', Interviewers: Ted Colless, David Kelly and Alan Cholodenko, Translator: Philippe Tanguy, pg. 45, Power Institute Publications, Number 3, Sydney 1987