THE FIFTH
COLUMN

La technologie et l'architecte
Technology and the architect

THE FIFTH COLUMN

The name of the Canadian Student Journal of Architecture, THE FIFTH COLUMN, is intended to be interpreted in a number of ways. First, there is an architectonic reference, the preoccupation with the development of a contemporary order of architecture that is at once respectful of antiquity and responsive to new conceptions of architecture. Second, there is a reference to journalism and the printed column of text. Finally, there is the twentieth century political connotation, an organized body sympathizing with and working for the enemy in a country at war. These three references essentially define the role of THE FIFTH COLUMN. The magazine promotes the study of architecture in Canada at the present in terms of both the past and the future. It attempts to stimulate and foster a responsible, critical sensitivity in both its readers and its contributors. Finally, THE FIFTH COLUMN provides an alternative forum to established views not for the sake of opposing them, but to make it possible to objectively evaluate them.

Objectives

To promote the study and the appreciation of a sensitive architecture within the architectural community and general population, thereby positively influencing the development of architecture in Canada;
To promote a forum for and to encourage the dialogue between students, academics, professional architects and interested members of the 'lay' population;
To provide a critical alternative to the commercial trade magazines by publishing a journal that originates from the schools, traditionally the vanguard of architectural thought.

Editorial Policies

1. To publish articles by students, academics and professionals and by other interested parties that would otherwise find little opportunity for expression and publication.
2. To publish a series of articles in each issue exploring a specific and relevant theme which contributes to an understanding and a greater awareness of current architecture.
3. To publish articles on the diversity of Canadian architecture as a means of promoting an understanding of these local traditions and their influence on current architectural thought.
4. To publish articles discussing historical influences on the development of architecture.
5. To publish student projects from the various schools in order to stimulate architectural debate.
6. To publish critical reviews of current works of architecture in Canada, as well as outside the country, in order to reflect on and positively influence the development of architecture in Canada.
7. To publish critical reviews of activities, publications, lectures and exhibitions of interest to our readership.
October 30, 1985

Le titre de la revue canadienne des étudiants en architecture, "The Fifth Column", a pour but d'inviter le lecteur à l'interpréter à plusieurs niveaux. Le premier niveau suggère une référence architectonique, celle consistant à l'élaboration d'un ordre architectural contemporain à la fois respectueux d'un passé antique et répondant aux nouvelles conceptions de l'architecture. Sur un autre plan, "The Fifth Column" rappelle son orientation journalistique par sa connotation avec la "colonne" imprimée d'un texte. Enfin, "la cinquième colonne", c'est aussi, depuis Franco, le nom donné aux partisans clandestins sur lesquels chacun des deux adversaires peut compter dans les rangs de l'autre.
Ces trois références définissent dans son ensemble le rôle de "The Fifth Column". La revue a pour but de promouvoir l'étude de l'architecture au Canada, en terme de lien entre le passé et la futur. Elle tente également de stimuler et d'entretenir un sens aigu de la critique chez ses collaborateurs ainsi que chez ses lecteurs. Enfin, "The Fifth Column" propose un forum où il est possible d'établir différents points de vue, non dans le seul but de les confronter mais plutôt de rendre possible leur évaluation objective.

Objectifs

Promouvoir l'étude et l'appréciation d'une architecture sensible à l'intérieur de la communauté architecturale ainsi qu'à de plus larges groupes, et par conséquent influencer le développement de l'architecture au Canada;
Promouvoir la constitution d'un forum dans le but d'encourager le diaglogue et les échanges d'idées entre les étudiants, les architectes et les individus intéressés de toute autre provence;
Offrir une alternative critique aux revues de type commercial, en publiant un périodique ayant ses racines à l'intérieur des Ecoles universitaires, traditionnellement pionnières dans l'évolution de la pensée architecturale.

Politiques éditoriales

1. Publier les articles d'étudiants, de membres du corps académique, de professionnels ainsi que d'autres groupes intéressés, qui autrement ne trouveraient que peu d'opportunités d'expression et de publication.
2. Publier une série d'articles dans chaque numéro explorant un thème spécifique qui contribuera à une compréhension approfondie et à une plus grande conscientisation de l'architecture contemporaine.
3. Publier des articles sur les diverses facettes de l'architecture canadienne dans le but de promouvoir la compréhension de ces différentes traditions locales et de leur influence sur la pensée architecturale contemporaine.
4. Publier des articles traitant des influences historiques sur le développement de l'architecture.
5. Publier les projets d'étudiants des différentes Ecoles dans le but de stimuler le débat architectural.
6. Publier des comptes rendus critiques de différentes œuvres architecturales au Canada ainsi qu'à l'étranger afin de s'arrêter sur et d'influencer le développement de l'architecture au Canada.
7. Publier des comptes rendus critiques des différents événements, publications, conférences et expositions ayant quelque intérêt pour nos lecteurs.
30 octobre, 1985

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FORUM

TECHNOLOGY AND THE ARCHITECT
LA TECHNOLOGIE ET L'ARCHITECTE

KENNETH FRAMPTON

by Todd Richards and Franka Trubiano

Kenneth Frampton expose ici les bases du régionalisme critique: l'attitude critique de l'architecte face aux pressions croissantes du marché de l'immobilier.

The Fifth Column: We may commence this discussion by inquiring upon what type of perspective does one have on the writings of Critical Regionalism since their first publication in 1983?

How have its principle ideas and issues changed and adapted to the changing architectural spectrum of the past five years?

Prof. Kenneth Frampton: In answering this question, there are two articles, one published in Perspecta 20 in 1983, and then in the same year, in the book The Anti-Aesthetic, edited by Hal Foster, a second article, was published. The second article grew out of the first. Hal Foster wrote the first article, which is in a way more descriptive in that it works by citing examples mainly. He then asked me to write the second article within which I was asked to try to develop something that was more theoretical, more a matter of principal, which is what I tried to do with the ''Six Points of an Architectural Resistance''. Therefore, while both articles share the same title, ''Towards a Critical Regionalism'', the second one was subtitled ''Six Points of an Architectural Resistance''.

There is this five year lapse of time, and the question of how and in what way has the original position changed in this five year period, can best be answered by sighting that there has been since that time, since 1983, a lot of talk about regionalism, if not Critical Regionalism. The whole notion of regionalism has surfaced. For example, the School of Architecture and the Centre for Studies in American Architecture, which is based in Austin, Texas has become very involved in this issue. They organised a conference last year, or the year before, on regionalism. And I have obviously also given quite a few lectures on this subject in the five year period we've been talking about.

One of the things which is embarrassing about the term Critical Regionalism is, in what way is Critical Regionalism different from Regionalism and does the term, the adjective, Critical, really qualify sufficiently the term Regionalism? It's problematic because there is this misunderstanding that Critical Regionalism is really just regionalism, and regionalism in the kind of sentimental and demagogic sense, which implies a specific style, therefore of course implying somehow or other, a very direct and simple minded reference to the vernacular. It is disturbing, of course, that this issue constantly comes up, this issue of being misunderstood in this way, and in a sense also being appropriated through that misunderstanding as someone who supports a kind of nostalgic, sentimental attitude towards the vernacular. I've tried to correct that and in fact to start to talk about it in terms of a kind of necessary dialogue between tectonic, on the one hand, and topographic on the other, is perhaps a strategy for avoiding this kind of misunderstanding.

TFC: You have on previous occasions previously discussed The Human Condition in relation to architecture and more specifically in relation to Critical Regionalism. What impact has Hannah Arendt's book had on architectural thought and expression with its underlying notion of existentialism?

KF: Well I suppose one has to be a little careful in arguing that that book you just mentioned is an existentialist text, it is a text of course that is influenced by existentialist philosophy.
Arendt was a pupil of Heidegger in any case, and also of Jasper, and as such she is very much formed by that mode of beholding.

To come to the text itself, the most important argument that she makes is this argument about the victory of the Animal Laborantis. It is seen by certain critics of Arendt as a somewhat elitist view of the world, but I think that her perception is very convincing when she makes the case that modern industrialised mass society has created very large populations where the members of these populations are impelled to consume and that the economic imperatives of a late industrialized society emphasize consumption to an inordinate degree. In fact, in discussing the Animal Laborantis, I should say that we are, and I am paraphrasing, compelled to consume our houses, our television sets, our clothes, our cars as though they are the fruits of the earth which would perish if they were not immediately bound into the metabolic cycle of man, of nature.

Through that, quite brilliant insight she makes this parallelism between surplus industrial production and the necessity for its incessant consumption in order to maintain it within the economic cycle. The way in which objects are reduced to this state and the challenge that it then offers vis-a-vis architecture is reflected in the fact that the rate at which buildings amortise has shortened. The life expectancy of a building in New York used to be forty years and I think its even less than this today as predetermined and calculated from the point of view of tax legislation. The whole pressure of the building economy, to build cheaper and to amortise the investment at a more rapid rate tends towards reducing the building to a consumer object. Yet one of the strengths of the built environment is its inherent aspect of resistance in that the object is not a freestanding object like an automobile, or a television set, but rather it is anchored into the ground. It has been the idiosyncratic nature of the

ground and the anchor that has been one of the reasons why it has been notoriously difficult to industrialize the production of the environment. Yet, one also has to admit to the attempt at the total industrialization of building, with the whole discussion in the Post-War period, in the 50's, of the promise of the total prefabrication of the environment, which did not come into being because of the lack of market, that is, the relationship in terms of consumption between the investment of the built artifact in the ground and its relation to property value. And of course one comes back to the market being determined by consumption. All these things have inhibited, in a way, the project, the modern project. There are so many complex issues involved here but I think that through her insight, vis-a-vis what she places under the rubric of the victory of the Animal Laborantis, is an awareness that these enormous imperatives influence or have an impact upon the practice of architecture and the first thing I suppose one can say without going further is that it is extremely important that architects should be aware of this as a pressure that exists within the society. Then, they have to respond, it seems to me, in different ways to that pressure, partly because of the way in which that pressure itself changes but also because it is possible in one building to take different attitudes towards this condition.

TFC: How do the principles of Critical Regionalism apply to a place which does not necessarily embody an inherent regionalism?
Within the American context, the city of Houston can be seen as such an example. Is its present reality, which is the reflection of a purely economically driven and controlled environment, not more appropriate than the notion of adapting a transplanted series of architectural intentions in the hope of establishing a more appropriate form of regionalism?

KF: This question raises the issue about how can one talk about a regional culture when one has an uprooted condition and a fundamental break in traditional society, a break which is, in a way, the elimination of traditional society, indeed the elimination of the vernacular, and as such how can one talk about a regionalism at all? There seems to be in a sense a lie here, particularly in relation to modernization and in relation to a kind of modernised reality.

I think that part of this response arises out of the opposition that one could appropriate from German nineteenth century thought, through such a philosopher

as Ricoer, which is to recognise or to set up a mode of beholding and operating in which one can see the forces of universal civilization, and at the same time posit the possibility of balancing those forces or resisting them in some way. Ricoer raises the issue very forcibly when he says that no developing nation can afford to forego the benefits of universal civilization. I think he is right, without question, but there is a real difference here between maximized technology and mediated technology. This becomes clear primarily through certain kinds of parallels, agriculture is one of them, medicine is another, it is clear that maximized agricultural technology has created a situation in some parts of the world where there are enormous agricultural surpluses which they don't know what to do with. This is particularly the case in Europe. Furthermore, the environment is extremely polluted because this maximized approach has been taken. The water table is polluted in some parts of Europe through the over fertilization of the ground, over production in fact. Even dairy production has led to pollution. In Scotland right now, there is an enormous amount of pollution due to dairy products, that is, waste dairy products entering the water system and killing fish for example. So here you have this paradox where what one thinks of as a natural production, particularly agriculture, becomes maximized under the rubric, or under the rule if you like, of the imperatives of the universe of technology. This is a grotesque use of technology and to sight a particular case, it is very well known that we are at the beginning of immunity in the population at large to penicillin and to other antibiotics because the technology of the antibiotic has been abused. This also relates to the kind of consumerist attitude that becomes the objective on the part of the pharmaceutical companies, and the medical profession as well. When one puts it into those areas, agriculture and medicine, I think one can see much more clearly the necessity for a dialectical otherness to resist this tendency towards maximization and universalization wherein one may develop a kind of level of mediation that does not always use the maximum.

"to build cheaper and to amortise the investment at a more rapid rate tends towards reducing the building to a consumer object."

TFC: As architects is it our moral duty to acquire a critical attitude and inform people as to their need for an all encompassing form of resistance. Or rather, would it be more effective to occupy ourselves with trying to discover and understand why the people in the Third World want this maximization? Would this attitude not better serve those which we are asked to build for?

KF: Why people want what they want and how people get to want what they want is an enormous problem. We touch here immediately this question of politics and the depoliticization of society and the whole problem of education and awareness and critical consciousness. To the extent that television is a misinformation industry, it is a tool in the depoliticization of a society. One only has to look at television to realise that that is the case. On the one hand it's the tool of information but at the same time what is information? Information is not neutral, and particularly the information that is put through the television network is not neutral either, and therefore to some extent it is just disinformation, and of course it is ideologically functional to the expansion of the consumerist market and to the maximization of certain technologies. And so you run right into politics. One can't talk about architects as being just architects. They are architects but they're also members of a body politic and as such there are many levels on which this discussion should be engaged.

It's extremely difficult when the architect, because he is a liberal professional, working in a society such as this, is commissioned to do a global work where the work is determined by very imperious forces with very severe calculations. It is very difficult working at that scale to do a work which is critically responsible, of course it is possible to set up a dialogue, but it's quite difficult, I am talking of course about the way in which the American real estate industry and the development of working in the American real estate industry almost predetermines, together with the bureaucracies of the mortgage companies and the banks, the product that hits the market.

In a way, this whole argument does touch on ecological questions. In 1963, Chermayeff and Alexander wrote this very remarkable book Community and Privacy. The argument set forth in that book about land settlement, in relation to megalopoli and in relation to neo-capitalist society are incredibly cogent and valid, then and now. Land settlement patterns that are as responsible as those set out in Community and Privacy have not been embraced by the society. And yet when you look at Community and Privacy one cannot look at it as a radical document which would presuppose revolutionary conditions in order to be applied. It is a mediation, it mediates in a sense within late capitalist civilization and technology. But the power of mortgage companies and the banks is absolute. What gets built in the suburbs is determined by the banks, the mortgage companies and the bureaucracies together. When you talk about what the people want, we are here faced with the real dilemma. What they want is what they are actually given to a certain extent, while the banks and the mortgage companies are going to turn around and say, but the people want that. I'm not convinced. I think that the power of mortgage companies, banks and bureaucracies to predetermine the rate at which land is consumed is enormous and it becomes an ecological and political issue, ultimately. When you look at Community and Privacy, it's not like looking at Le Corbusier megalomaniacal Utopian, Avant Gardist projects, it's an extremely realist critic and thesis.

TFC: As architects in the late twentieth century, we are faced with what some consider to be a Post-Post Modern Condition where once more the architectural discourse is taken over by yet another new camp - the Super Moderns - the Deconstructivists. We look back upon the Modern Movement, that which was once claimed to be the final utopian realization of all building efforts. What happened to the guest of the Avant Garde?

KF: You're quite right to evoke or link Avant Garde to this issue. I do think that the Avant Garde is a specific historical category and in a profound sense it has to be linked to the idea of the Enlightenment, and to a certain extent, one could even say, to Utopian or Realistic positive concepts of progress in relation to the species, beings etc. I feel very strongly about the energy and power of the Modern Movement particularly within the integral period where it arose out of the fundamental conviction of the manifest destiny of the Enlightenment or of the Modern Project as Habermas has alluded to. They had a capacity to see the whole project of modernization in positive terms. That kind of conviction is lost historically, it's denied or precluded from this historical moment, because of the fact that modernization has continued and has proceeded at such a rapacious rate that it has had certain consequences which one can no longer look at as being necessarily positive. That whole question of the modern

project, has to be looked at in a much more complex way. Society in general has much more extensive reservations then was the case, let's say in 1925, or 1935, or even in 1945. This places the whole heritage of the Avant Garde in a peculiar light. It becomes more and more difficult to assume that one can simply continue with Avant Gardist strategies, but rather   one really has to try to find other ways of developing culture. It is possible to talk about a super-animated Avant Gardism today, where the undertaking still has aspirations to be as radical , or as original as the first Avant Garde. But it, in a sense, not only ends up in a kind of repetition, even if it is a different repetition, to coin the term of Roland Barthes, but at the same time it is often disconnected, deliberately disconnected, but nevertheless, still disconnected from the imperatives of our historical realities and from the real situation of the still modernising society. From this point of view, this kind of continuation of Avant Gardism, with an emphasis upon the "ism", is in itself ambiguous. It's really a question as to whether it is Critical or Radical. One has to make very specific demands of it, to examine the discourse in a very specific way in order to make a judgement about it from the point of view of radical or critical culture, because it can also be seen as evasive. Late Avant Gardists' gestures can also be regarded as being evasive by not being radical, evasive vis-a-vis the actual historical state of modern society.

Todd Richards and Franka Trubiano are both recently graduates of the McGill School of Architecture.
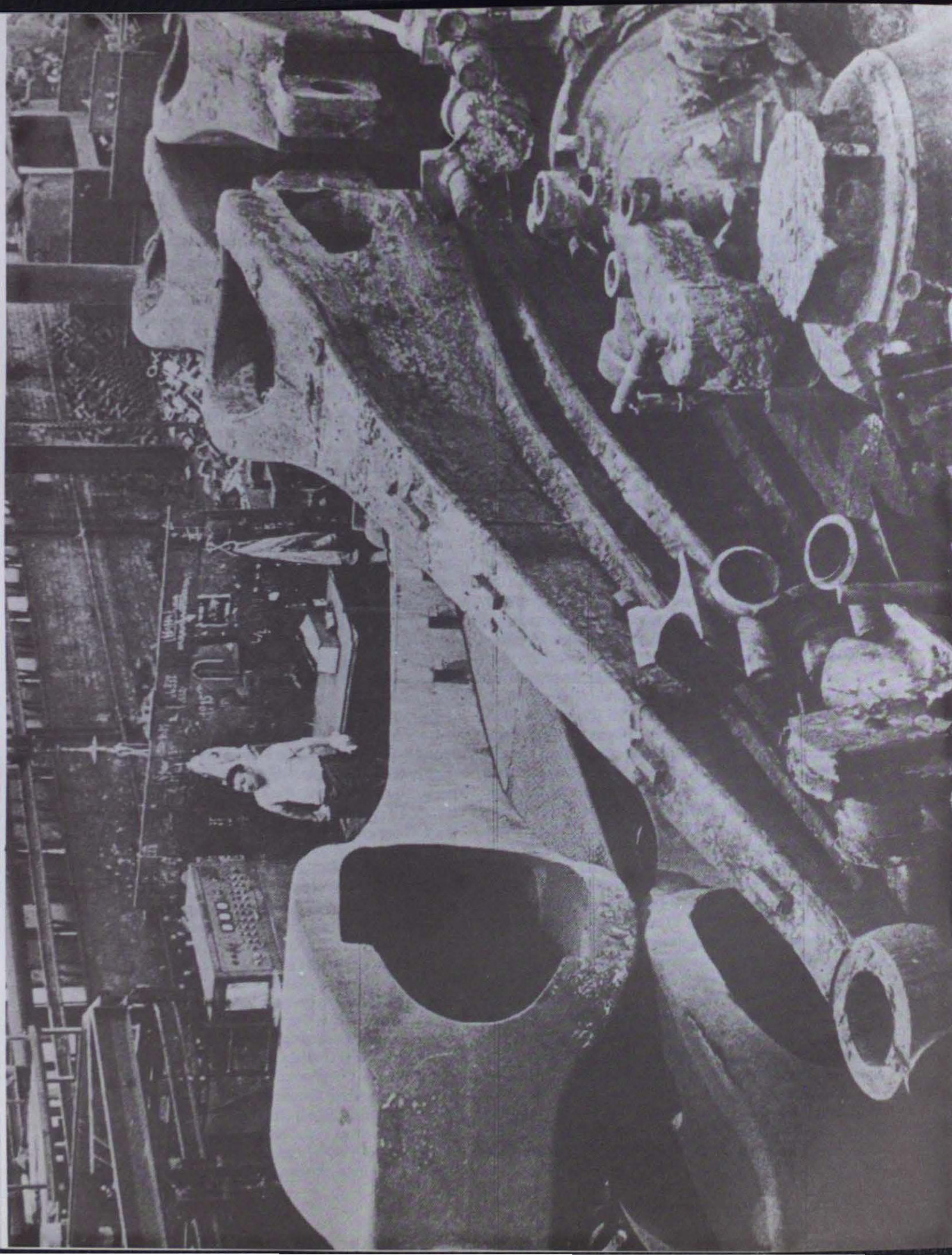
One of the unfortunate consequences of suggesting the theme "Technology and the Architect" for this issue of THE FIFTH COLUMN is that the mention of technology and architecture in a first breath commonly inspires references to High-Tec architecture and the notion of a contemporary technological society in the second. At once, the relationship between technology and architecture is viewed in a manner which suggests it is something new or, at least, that it has become the focus of our architecture now that our society has become so overwhelmingly technological. The unfortunate part of such a dialogue is the haste with which it accepts the basic notion that contemporary society is predominated by technology, and the error it commits in disregarding the historical dependence of architecture on technology.

If one accepts Vitruvius' notion that architecture requires "firmness" then, as Geoffrey Scott has written in The Architecture of Humanism, by this necessity architecture "stands related to science, and to the standards of science. The mechanical bondage of construction has closely circumscribed its growth. Thrust and balance, pressure and its supports, are at the roots of the language which architecture employs... On every hand the study of architecture encounters physics, statics and dynamics, suggesting, controlling, justifying its design (and without which) architecture is impossible, its history unintelligible." (Methuen,pg.2) Today, the weight of this statement is being substantially enhanced as the development of computer-aided design opens up new approaches to the consideration of architectural design.

There is much room to question the notion that contemporary society is predominated by technology, and this debate is fundamentally a sociological one. The architectural dialogue on technology seems to have wandered incautiously into this sociological realm while, unfortunately, limiting their discussions on the subject to aesthetic expression. But the issue is far more complex than that. One might well question, for example, whether Douglas Cardinal's new museum in Ottawa is a more profound investigation of the architectural/technological relationship than the more blatantly "technological" work of Foster or Rogers. It seems that a far broader consideration of technology and architecture, derived from a clear understanding of their historical relationship, wherein technology served as a means and as an indispensible compliment to Commodity and Delight, is important to the future development of architecture.

La technologie et l'architecte
Technology and the architect

Beaubourg
Symptom
of Insecure Times

by Tony Barake

L'époque contemporaine a été la scène de la remise en question des valeurs établies et de la vérité absolue. Tony Barake esquisse ici comment le problème de la signification en architecture a évolué depuis deux siècles et indique comment le Centre Pompidou constitue un ''signe'' de notre temps.

The search for meaning in function and in technology characterizes the Modern Movement. Questioning and ultimately rejecting this notion, as many do now, leaves a void at the centre. The initial distancing from the certainty of how and what to build began in the 18th century to later reach a high period in the 19th, when style wars were being fought by architects. The abstraction process, which separated the idea and style of a building from its particularness had begun much earlier, but the raging historicism of the 1800's was a sort of culmination.

The Industrial Revolution was the effervescent adolescence of a new age. Crystal palaces, immense bridges of
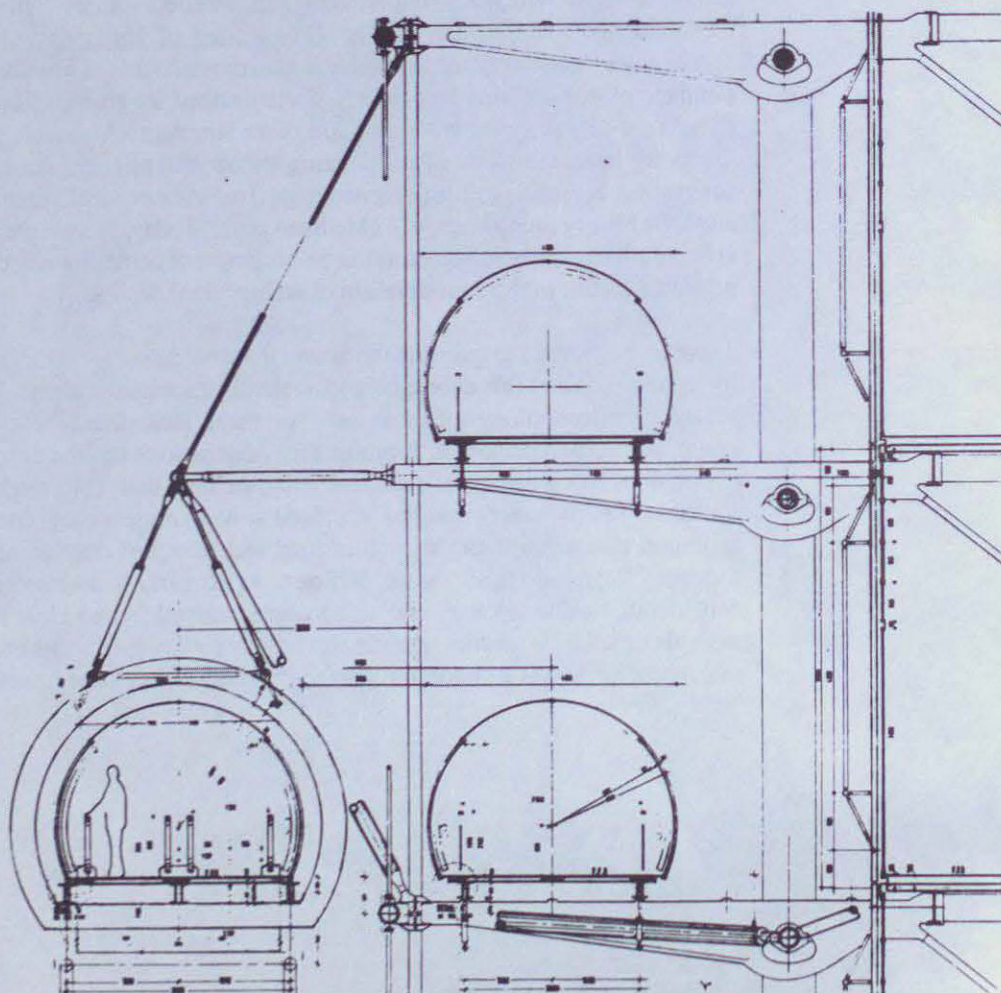
steel, and wondrously crafted buildings of stone, steel and glass were erected, boastful of what "man can do". Physicists were stating that nothing was left to discover. The Empire's colonies were feeding its industrialized, coal burning towns the raw material necessary to dominate nature. As a result of such resource availability, the builders developed new techniques, allowing them to, for the first time, exceed the sizes and heights of Roman monuments. The absolute beauty of these ancient masonry monuments was being emulated in cast iron, glass and stone veneer hung on steel. It was inevitable that the thinking become functionalist, and the technology which made all this possible celebrated.

With Loos and his contemporaries, a questioning of the necessity to borrow meaning from the past arose. Meaning was to be found in the new forms and structures. Plain surfaces, structural systems, and the open plans were now newly expressive. Architecture stopped being referential to older monuments and it was not long before it became referential to itself. Paradoxically, the ancient ecclecticism began to give way to a newer one. Form followed form. Various schools of thought evolved and competed indicating a continued search for Truth. There was much room for debate. Although Le Corbusier adored the rational beauty of machines, he saw the poetry inherent in form, and often contradicted his own writings to imbue architecture with that poetry.

In philosophy, the absolute values and ethics of Plato, and Kant were being challenged by Niezstche, and later, in the twentieth century by the existentialists. Meaning no longer would be derived from absolute truths to be then used by logic to elaborate a complex world. Instead, meaning became inherent in existence. The interpretation of perception mediated by experience becomes truth. It is a convention, reflecting the current reality. Logic begins to be seen as a construct of the mind, not a law of nature, as the crisis in mathematics brought on by Cantor and Godel demonstrated.

Physics recognized the necessity of the observer during his crucial early twentieth century. Yet the scientism of architecture lagged behind. Buildings took on forms dictated by a search for absolutes.

Today, after the rejection of Modernism, the question of meaning

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The interpretation of perception mediated by experience becomes truth.

recurs constantly. Post Modernism is a sort of schizophrenia, oscillating between the lost truth of technology and the lost truth of the past forms and beauty. No longer is either satisfactory. Certain buildings of the Late Modern period address the issue of meaninglessness, although they superficially seem to be glorifying the forms of technology. Designed by Piano and Rogers, Centre Pompidou in Place Beaubourg, Paris is such a building. It has been called gothic by some critics, referring to the obvious revelry in structure and its exaggerated expression, much like the work of the stone masons of the middle ages. But Beaubourg, shows a certain humour. The gothic masons used the intricate stone work to glorify religious ideals. Theirs was a confident monumentality. With Beaubourg, some fun is being poked at the past era of technological miracles. The building is overly built in a sense, asking the question: "Does this give it more meaning?".

It is interesting to note that the two architects of the project hold divergent views on technology. Renzo Piano sees himself as a builder, and admires the beauty that can be achieved with new structural methods. Richard Rogers, although labelled as a "high-tech" architect, denies the implications of this appellation. He uses the forms of Buckminster Fuller and the English Dymaxion movement only as a language, to express technology. He does not adhere to their philosophies of greater efficiency through science and mass production. It is ironic that Beaubourg is made of very sophisti-

cated parts manufactured by artisans in old fashioned workshops. The recent Lloyds of London shows his use of applied and integrated factory like complications on an essentially prismatic form, creating a wonderfully playful and interesting tower. The collision (or collusion) of these two

The building is overly built in a sense, asking the question: "Does this give it more meaning?".

architects' views gives a building that reflects the era.

Beaubourg is an insecure building. It displays an exaggerated modularity and flexibility. Everything is clip-on and moveable, including the escalator on the facade, the ventilation systems, and the firewalls. Have the architects decided that users' needs are changing unpredictably, and that it is impossible to make a building that fits the moment and will continue to fit for any length of time? Building permanence is being questioned.

Beaubourg's great success as a tourist attraction indicates that a resonant chord has been struck. Inherent in its appeal as sheer novelty is the idea that shock value is the last resort to a jaded, shifting vision. It is a building

designed for the senses, with its glassed mechanical access, bright colors, and huge spaces. In an existential age, where all values can change with new events and fait-accomplis, those are the only stable elements.

On a more prosaic level, Beaubourg comments accurately on the changes in thinking towards the contextual fabric. The surrounding city is addressed only by providing a paved plaza to separate it slightly from the building, to allow the visitor to take a step back and look at the technological wonder. The architects deliberately created this plaza by moving the music facilities in the program underground since the competition program did not anticipate any open space. It is a building to be looked at, but strangely enough, one can also look at the city from its clipped on escalator that goes nowhere.

From the operational standpoint, one tends to forget that Beaubourg is a "Centre Culturel", since this Culture, this Platonic absolute, is totally overwhelmed by the architecture. The architecture becomes the culture, which can no longer be imprisoned in a library, or in a gallery.
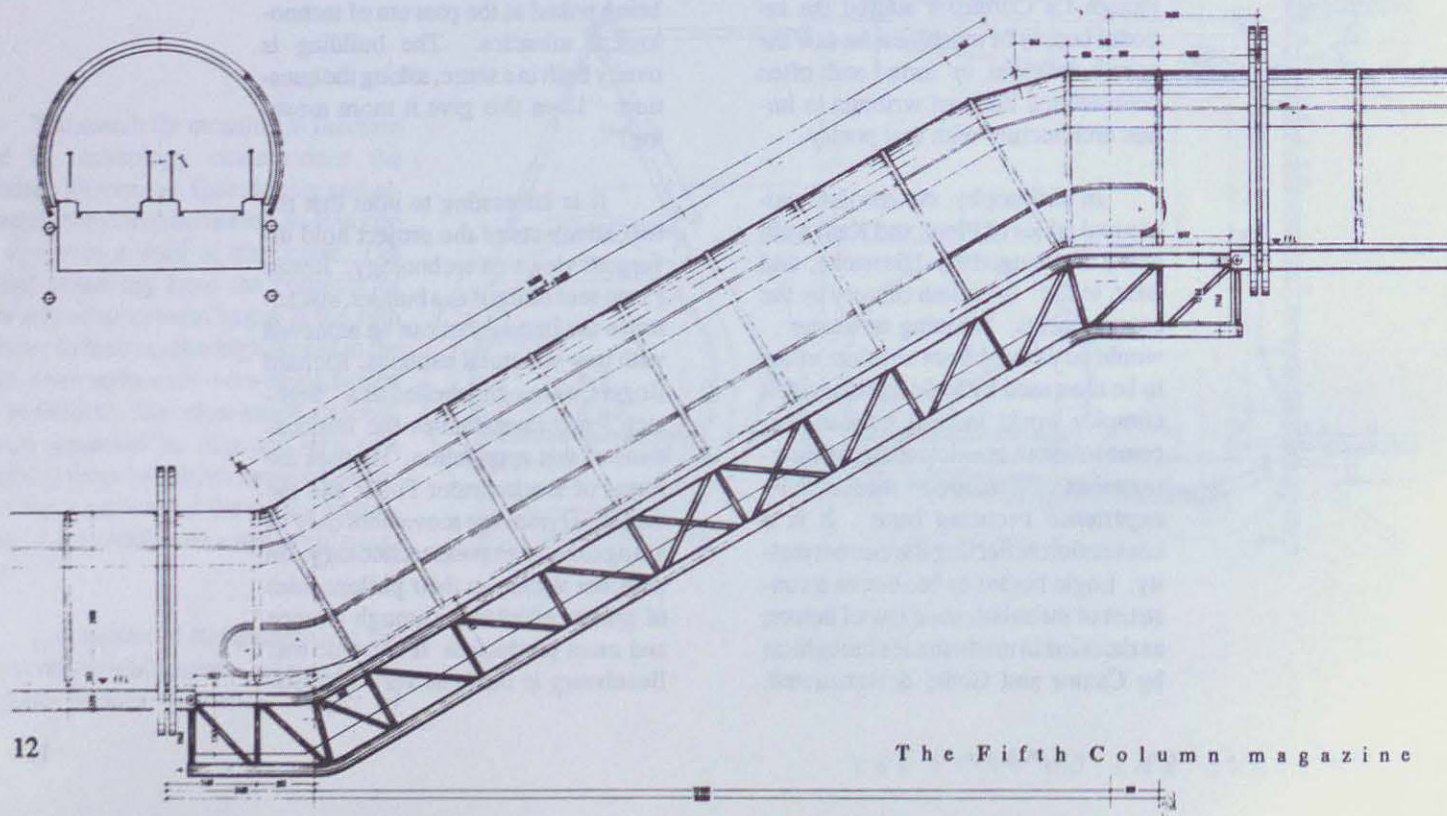
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"Renzo Piano", Architecture d'Aujourd'hui, no. 219, Groupe
 Expansion, Paris, fevrier 1982, pp. 1-53.

   This issue, devoted to Piano and his work, shows his bent towards crafts-
manship and building technology. In the interview (pp. 4-8) he says:

   "every artist, sculptor, painter ... must know the
   tecnics of his profession before being able to
   express himself [...] elegance originates from the
   strict necessity of the material".

"Le langage de l'industrie", Architecture d'Aujourd'hui, no. 221,
 Groupe Expansion, Paris, juin 1982, pp. 1-63.

   This issue features many buildings by Rogers and by other architects
which borrow from the language of factories. Rogers exaggerates structure, as is
obvious in his Quimper distribution centre (pp. 18-25), where he creates a tensile
overstructure, and in his Inmos Factory where the ventilation systems are almost
an ornament placed on top of the roof, and finally in the NAPP labs, where the
structural trusses are extended beyound the building limits. One wonderfully
ironic building in this issue is a flower market by L. Saviloi (pp. 10-13), which
totally contradicts it function through its industrial form.

Buchanan P., "Foster/Rogers: High Tech Classical/Gothic",
 Architectural Review, Vol 169, no. 1011, May 1981, London.
 pp. 265-282.

   This article compares the work of Foster and Rogers, stating that Rogers
could be classified as a Gothicist and Foster a Classicist. Lloyds of London and
the Hongkong Bank are featured.

   The Centre Pompidou is documented in many places. The sources I used
for the figures and descriptions are listed below:

"Beaubourg", Architecture d'Aujourd'hui, no. 213, Groupe
 Expansion, Paris, fevrier 1981, pp. 92-95.

Futagawa, Y., Centre Beaubourg, Global Architecture, vol. 44
 Edita, Tokyo 1977. Text is by the architects and from the
 program for the building.

Frampton, P., Modern Architecture, revised and enlarged
 edition, Thames and Hudson, NY 1985, chap. 4.

Fuller, R.B.Ideas and Integrities, Macmillan, NY, 1974.

   Here Buckminster Fuller expresses very clearly his ideas on architecture
and building: (p. 96)

   "... that the materials-raw, partially processed,
   or sub-assembled-of old housing [...] have weighed
   on the average of one hundred to one and have
   bulked on an average of ten to one in excess of the
   quantities necessary to accomplish the end result,
   and have fallen as proportionately short of
   satisfactory performance as they have of energy
   conversion efficiency."
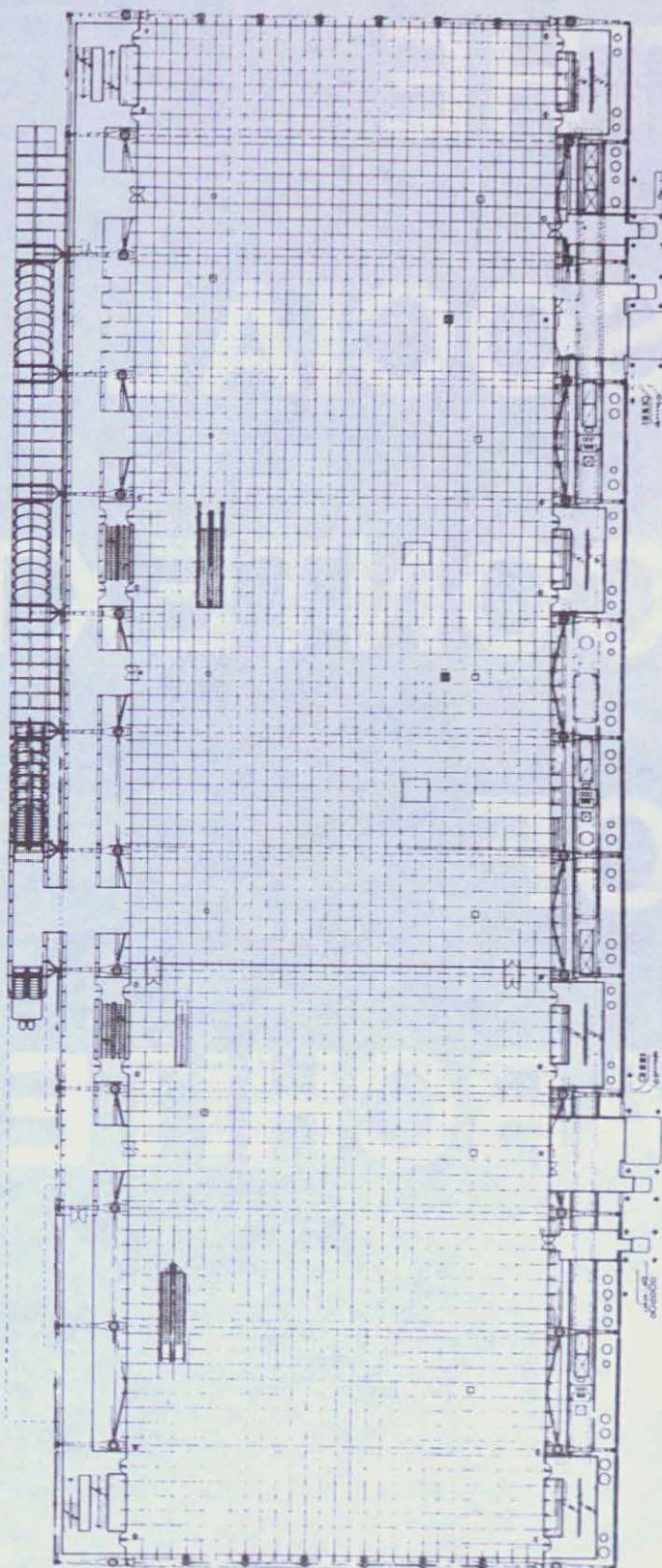
*Tony Barake is now completing his Bachelor of Architec-
ture at McGill University.*

Layout by Eric Stein

THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF ARCHITECTURE

by Johann Albrecht

Les défis lancés à l'architecture contemporain sont nombreux et se renouvellent sans cesse. L'article qui suit examine comment l'architecture d'aujourd'hui doit répondre rapidement à ces défis, en particulier ceux qui ont trait au contexte social, si elle veut garder sa légitimité en tant qu'institution.

The dramatic changes that have occurred in contemporary society as a result of, or concurrent with, technological changes, and the failure of architects to inquire into the nature and implications of our changing social context, is discussed in this article. Professor Albrecht argues that architecture must address the evolving social context if it wishes to remain a legitimate and socially responsible institution.

"The present situation is still hostile to the essential role of architecture as a primary form of reconciliation: the architect is made to respond as either <u>engineer</u> or <u>decorator</u> under the pressures of a technological worldview."
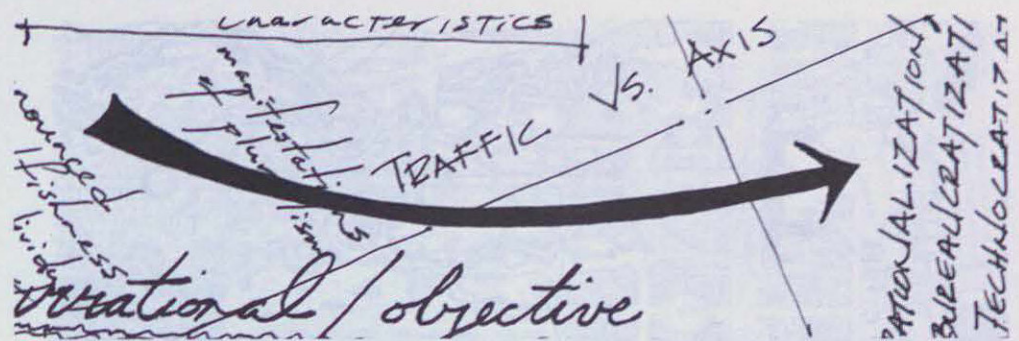Alberto Perez Gomez[1]

"<u>Metaphysics of the present</u>: Where only trivialized works of art win exhibition value."
Walter Benjamin[2]

Currently architecture enjoys an unprecedented popularity with the general public. This can be explained, on the one hand, through an eagerness by the press to glamorize the more spectacular results of new

characteristics

traffic vs. axis

irrational / objective

RATIONALIZATION BUREAUCRATIZATI TECHNOCRATIZATI

developments in architecture and, on the other, through an increased public knowledge of past architectural achievements. Disappointment is certain, however, if one expects to find this popularity paralleled by a thorough awareness of the present condition of society in the work of architects. Never before has architecture disassociated itself so completely from social issues and problems. This happens at a time when pronounced social change has taken place, change which not only requires reactions by architecture, but which is also bound to influence the nature of architecture and its role in society. Unfortunately, role models of the past are unquestioningly accepted; or the position is taken that the purpose of architecture is self-evident and not in need of continuous definition. It seems reasonable to state that architecture faces a crisis of legitimacy. What are the dominant characteristics of current society and recent social change, and what are the implications of these on architecture? What follows is a brief discussion of these questions and an attempt to outline how architecture can respond to the challenges of the current condition of society.

I. One of the salient characteristics of present society is the all-pervasive belief in rationality; but what appeared previously as a sure safeguard against all irrational tendencies has now become itself irrational. The logic of positivism allows only for rational thinking with regard to means. Statements about objectives and ends remain subjective, according to positivist postulates, and are, therefore, at best, a-rational. As a consequence, goal-finding processes are considered to be an irrational activity; the only kind of rationality possible is functional in nature. These positivist tenets provide the epistemological and methodological framework not only for the natural sciences, but also for the mainstream of the social sciences: value-free conduct is the generally accepted norm in the scientific realm.[3]

As a result, societal goals are discussed without the involvement of one of society's main institutions. The sciences do not take part in such a debate; their reflective capacities and resources go unutilized for this vital task. Instead, goal-finding processes occur only in the political realm, leaving societal goals both embroiled in politics and substituted by interests, preferably by ones which can be measured and quantified. The insistence on value-free

conduct by the sciences furthers the trend in society to abandon qualitative for quantitative concerns. Meanwhile, scientific knowledge transformed into technology helps to produce means for which ends have to be found -- surely an inversion of any real rational behaviour. In addition, the influence of the positivist sciences (e.g., scientific management, operations research, systems analysis, and so on) has brought about a rationalization, bureaucratization and technocratization of most aspects of our life. The abstractness of thought tends to overwhelm the concreteness of life. The loss of moral order has been supplanted by technical order. Behavior previously guided by ethics has become role-behavior directed by rules.

Simultaneous with a widespread disinclination to discuss and share common goals and values, a distinct plurality of interests has surfaced, heralding the appearance of a new kind of democracy. Not so long ago, a social and cultural elite occupied the center of power, provided leadership, and determined the direction of society without the participation of the public at large. Today, however, and despite the positive aspects of democratic participation, there remains the problem that any government, in order to maintain itself, may have to satisfy all the particular wishes of numerous special interests, thereby losing its ability for decisive action. The ability to govern according to any given set of principles may be impossible,[4] at least as long as the pronounced selfishness of individual interests remains unchanged.

The manifestations of pluralism appear at a time when the retreat from public life is no longer myth but certainty. This is no coincidence, since both processes are interdependent. The preferred places for activity outside the realm of work are now the family, and associations of like-minded people who have the same socio-economic background and interests. Involvement in such associations is often confused with participation in public activity. With the erosion of public life, not only has the stage for developing common values been lost but also the sense of belonging to a larger entity, namely to a community. The search for identity no longer relies on identification with a given community. The classic milieu of public experience -- the city -- is undoubtedly in a state of decay, contrary to exaggerated news about a reversal of this trend. The move to the suburbs continues, and the suburbs
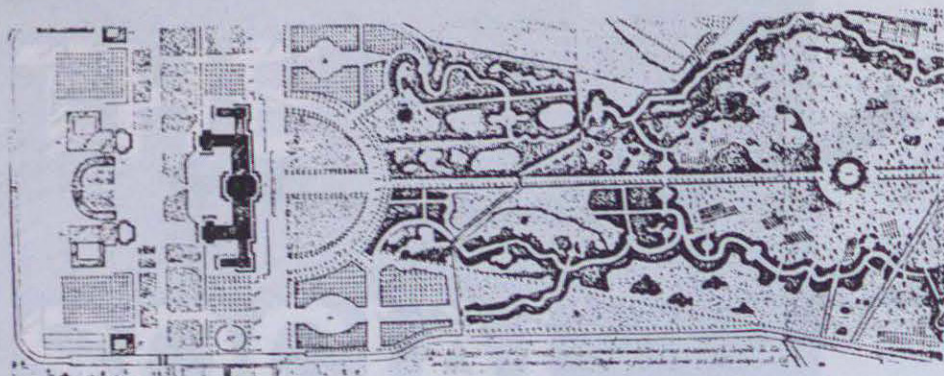
do not foster public experience, nor even a sense of belonging to a community as one might expect; at best they provide a kind of pseudo-community. An ever-increasing mobility prevents people from developing an identity through a profound relationship with their social and physical environment.

Another implication of the retreat from public life is the development and application of two sets of ethics: for family and close friends nobler ethics are applied, whereas for the cherished activity of enhancing one's own interests (and those of the group to which one belongs), less scrupulous ethics apply. The paradox of the loving and caring family-man who also happens to be an aggressive and ruthless businessman may suffice to portray this phenomenon. Unfortunately, this schizophrenic situation is generally condoned and, indeed, taken for granted. The existence of these double standards prevents a genuine discussion of the common objectives and legitimate needs of others.

An additional consequence of the disappearance of public life is growing media manipulation, which is fully in keeping with an increasingly consumption-oriented society. This should not be surprising in a society where a marked shift from qualitative to quantitative concerns is occurring. Unfortunately, when progress is largely defined in material terms, the quality of life depends solely on economic growth. At a time when the majority of people can easily satisfy their basic needs, economic growth can occur only if the consumption of non-basic goods is continuously increasing, and that, in turn, necessitates the incessant creation of artificial needs.[5] Consequently, the rationality of the market dominates most aspects of life. Almost everything is subject to pecuniary evaluation; and efficiency, the fetish for many and the apparent cure for all woes, is replacing humanist concerns. Moreover, the urge to comprehend reality is no longer fashionable. The moment a large segment of the population is occupied with gaining material wealth and achieving success in a career, efforts to understand reality are considered an unnecessary hinderance.[6]

II. What has been said in this rather short discussion of the present condition of society is not new, but this is the socio-political context in which architecture is situated and must perform. We have seen that the pursuit of

rationality, alluring as it is, has some major drawbacks. Due to the influence of logical positivism, rationality has been defined in such a way that the deliberation over values is considered to be of a subjective and, therefore, non-rational nature. In conjunction with this point of view, the concomitant declaration that only empirical investigation will deliver objective knowledge has further provoked the move from qualitative to quantitative concerns in society.

Not only is this situation disquieting, it also poses a direct threat to architecture, as is evident in the uncritical acceptance of this quantitative trend by the commercial segment of the profession. The importance given to issues of form by a minority of the profession could, at first glance, be viewed as a reaction to this trend; but this is not the case. The emphasis on form will actually further and not diminish that trend since form is stressed at the expense of other qualitative aspects essential to architecture. The current independence of form is a reaction to the Modern Movement's scientific and rational approach toward architecture, an approach which resulted in functionalism and reductive formalism. There are no elaborate comments necessary about the results of both scientific planning and the design minimalism of the Modern Movement; the impoverishment of urban life is obvious enough.[7] Yet to replace the rational fallacy with a fallacy of form will not bring about a "better" architecture, nor help stem the quantitative trends in society, nor make a profound contribution to the quality of life. The preoccupation with eclectic and historicist form creates a symbolism devoid of meaning.

The neglect of social issues and of the public good by those concerned only with formalism or commercial design shows a complete disregard for the ethical foundation of architecture. To claim that architecture is an artistic activity and, therefore, spared the task of taking issues beyond architecture into account, misrepresents and misunderstands true artistic activity. The strict fulfillment of client demands, which is used by the commercial branch to defend the disregard of public and social issues, although good business sense, is unprofessional conduct.[8] Such behavior accepts by implication, and perhaps even consciously, the common adherence to two sets of ethics. The commercial "ethos" of many
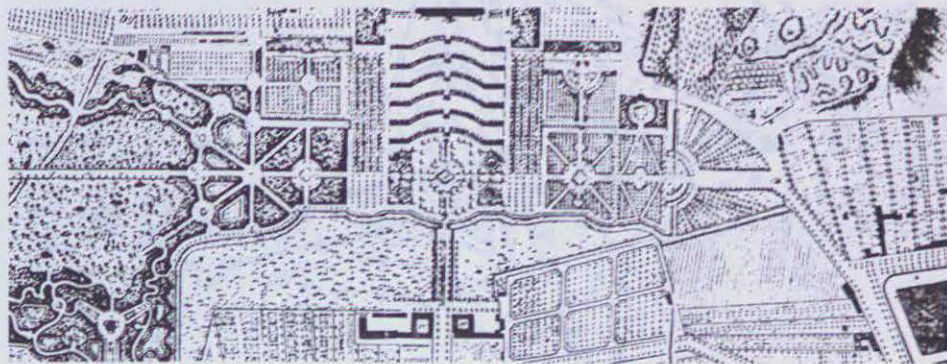
firms and their excessive promotion of efficiency leads to an internalization of rationalization and technocratization processes already so prevalent in society, and this, in turn, produces an externally mechanistic environment. This has recently been cosmetically camouflaged by borrowing from the past.

While the Modern Movement failed in its social intentions and the ''physical determinism'' practiced during the fifties and sixties did not cure urban ills, these failures should not be sufficient to cause us to abandon social issues. Admittedly, the sociological studies conducted during the last few decades to assess major design projects provided a sobering experience; but it is now evident that the conclusions reached were often exaggerated in the justifiable attempt to counter exaggerated promises previously made by planners and architects alike. It is now also clear that some aspects of these studies were fundamentally flawed, since such empirical studies can only analyze quantifiable problems.

The conclusion is not that architecture and physical planning cannot contribute to the solving of urban problems and to the improvement of urban life, but rather that their contribution must be assessed anew. Unfortunately, there will be no certain and clear-cut evaluation possible because of the qualitative, and thus immeasurable, component of this question. The hope that empirical analysis will solve this particular problem remains wishful thinking. And aggravating the problem is the fact that available scientific knowledge about the urban realm is of a general nature; that is, human needs are expressed in numbers and in abstract categories. Yet the design professions must cope with concrete situations and problems. Both the social sciences and the design professions must come to terms with this predicament. Of course, the solution is not to shun such difficulties; architecture must accept its responsibility. A renewed consideration of social and qualitative questions would reduce polarization in architecture, and would also strengthen the attempts of those architects who do not accept the present status quo in society and in the profession alike.

The pluralism in contemporary society indicates, as previously mentioned, the disappearance of a democratic reality based on elitism with which architecture was closely associated or part of. Many consider architecture to be an elitist activity and there are reasons that support such a notion. Surprisingly enough, it appears as if architecture is not fully aware of the disintegration of the coalition between elitism and design and of the questions which are raised by this disintegration. For instance, does the disappearance of the elite mean that architecture should change its role and forge a new alliance, or does it mean that architecture should remain an elitist activity and be an institution which counters pluralism, and that this will benefit society? If the latter, then it seems necessary to question the attitude that being elitist permits architecture to prescribe ways of living and determine the physical environment at its discretion. Being avant garde can no longer mean being deterministic. Yet this statement needs modification; otherwise, there is the risk of oversimplifying a complex situation.

To consider the alternative, we have the proposition, sympathetic to pluralism, that architecture should give people what they want. This proposition must also be questioned. The obvious objection to it rests on the fact that the desires of society are not only manipulated but actually created by the commercially controlled media. Giving people what they want would, therefore, be irresponsible and would imply an impairment of the creative process, since this process cannot operate without responsibility. Nor can it function without authority when it comes to making decisions of a creative nature. It is precisely this claim to authority that made architecture congenial to an elite in the first place. To fulfill the wishes of people is against the nature of the creative process, and since those wishes are manipulated and artificial, one is inclined to favor the demands of the creative process. But the claim to authority and responsibility, inherent in the creative process, is also against the justifiable demand for participation by all segments of the population on matters important to their life.

It is necessary here to distinguish between the concept of participation and the fulfillment of wants. Could one argue that in some areas, especially creative ones, democracy may lead to questionable results? Obviously, this question needs attention. Unfortunately, architecture has so far been unwilling to seriously investigate when participation must end and when, for reasons of both creativ-

ity and responsibility, authoritative decision-making by the architect must take over. In other words, how much determinism is essential for good quality design and how much determinism is permissible before democratic principles are violated? The common excuse for not addressing this issue is that the principles will vary from case to case. And of course they will, but such a feeble excuse manifests intellectual shallowness, for it rests on the assumption that architectural theory can deal only with problems of form. A profound inquiry cannot be avoided for problems of this nature need theoretical insight and guidance.[9]

The problems of participation, fulfillment of needs, and the creative process have so far been discussed in the context of recent change in our democratic reality. But these problems must also be considered bearing in mind the current acknowledgement of various "taste cultures" (popular culture). To object to giving people what they want, given that these wants are manipulated, takes on a different meaning if one assumes that beneath those wants there might still be genuine tastes (one must differentiate between wants and tastes). Vernacular architecture in its pre-industrial form was a true expression of such tastes. Until recently, architecture has been associated predominantly with high culture and, as much as architecture is avant-garde, it has indeed created high culture. The contemporary partial rejection of this association is responsible for the current popularity, and the promotion, of the vernacular. This promotion, however, overlooks the fact that the vernacular of the industrial period was not truly vernacular, but a style marketed according to the taste of the builders.[10] Attempts should nevertheless be made to discover the genuine taste cultures and consider them as a source for diversity and an inspiration for creativity. The fine line which separates a manipulation and copying of such tastes from a truly creative response must be heeded. Also, we cannot overlook the argument that the promotion of popular culture will, in the long run, work against high culture in the sense that such promotion lessens the possibility that high culture can give new directions and induce necessary change. It would be a fallacy for architecture to side with high culture at the expense of popular culture.

The task (difficult as it may be) is to work with both popular and high cultures to assure a great variety of stimulating influences on architecture; but also to permit architecture to have its own creative impact on each cultural realm. Needless to say, that is presently the case. What is lacking, however, is an awareness of the disparity and incompatibility between these two cultures, and a greater insight is needed into both positive and negatives aspects of their interdependency. Missing, too, is a debate about what kind of role architecture should play in assisting interaction between the two realms, and how much high culture must be favored because of directional and intellectual gains for society and architecture alike. The negative possibilities of the association of architecture with each realm are not fully understood. For example, in the case of high culture, architecture could be tempted to remain elitist in a deterministic, instead of suggestive, way. With regard to popular culture, it could mean an unquestioned perpetuation of the negative aspects of popular culture. The beneficial impact that architecture could exert in both instances must be clarified. A creative and positive connection of architecture with each culture would assure a plurality in architecture that would eliminate formal demagoguery of any one position in architecture.

The preceeding statement describes the potential of such a situation in optimistic terms. It also assumes for a moment that the cultural realm is safe from penetration by the market. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Most cultural products, even those of high culture, have become consumption goods; that is, their exchange value is greater than their use value. Architecture, because of the nature of its products, has been for quite some time the only aspect of culture to resist this trend. But this is changing for a variety of reasons. The widespread habit of considering the home primarily as a possibility for investment and, therefore, as a continuously changing affair, is a manifestation of this change. A similar attitude determines the financing of large-scale projects. Acquiring short-term profits is the objective; long-term considerations, including those of a non-pecuniary nature, are dismissed. Thus, constant selling and re-financing is characteristic of this building sector. Finally, a growing number of buildings have become advertisements in the strict sense of the word. These various processes have made it possible for the "laws" of the consumer market to determine the outcome of the design process; that is, the

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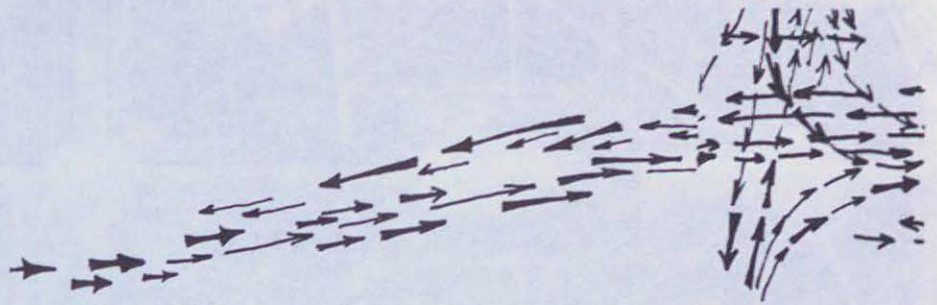
continuous need for new appearances and fast change, with which the market operates, has invaded architectural activity. The present formal emphasis in architecture, where attention can be gained only through exaggeration which surpasses previous exaggeration, attests to this invasion and corruption -- architecture has become fashion. The failure of the Modern Movement seems not to be the sole cause for post-modernism; the total penetration of the cultural realm by the forces of the market might well be the other.'1'''' Another characteristic of the present condition is the disappearance of public life. The absence of public life has far-reaching consequences not only for society but also for architectural activity. Architecture has always understood itself as an activity that depends on public life and public activity. We do not yet know the full implications of the disappearance of public life with regard to the production of urban culture. We know more when it comes to assessing the loss of a setting for discussing common objectives and a means for identifying with a community. And we speculate what the disappearance of public life could mean in terms of severing the ties with tradition and history. What we do know, however, is that, with the absence of public life architecture is in danger of partially losing its justification as a didactic instrument for explaining the past and as a medium for expressing present cultural and social identity.
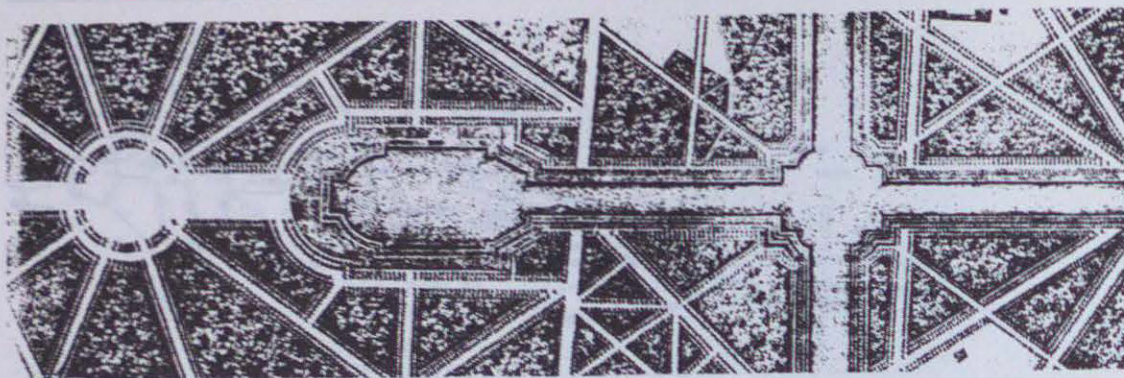
In light of all this, it is ironic to see the appearance of colonnades, porticos, pediments, columns and similar architectural elements in current architectural language. These elements once attested to a rich public life and were part of its symbolic expression: they articulated the drama between inside and outside. Today this kind of dialectic is lacking. There is no precarious balance between these two realms; their areas of separation and transition have become unimportant, unless one is concerned about security. Today the outside has lost its significance, and the absence of meaningful urban spaces is immediate proof of this bitter truth. The outside has degenerated into useless space framed by surfaces for advertisement. It should be evident that with the disappearance of public life the architectural elements mentioned cannot take on any new symbolic meaning; very likely they become initially the appendices and finally the symbols of advertising. Whatever public life remains is threatened with becoming

"internalized", and then misused and corrupted by gallerias and urban shopping malls. The damage inflicted on suburban life and culture by suburban shopping centers continues through its urban duplicate. In the world of Potemkin, public life was abundant; only its built counterpart was missing. Now, this situation has been reversed, though the emphasis on "facades" remains.

Parallel to the present preoccupation with architectural elements that previously portrayed a flourishing public life occurs a fascination with the application of axes. Unfortunately, the preceding observation applies here too. With the disappearance of public life, this application of axes seems a rather futile exercise. In addition, the use of axes overlooks the obvious fact that the manner of circulation has changed profoundly since the time when axes were more common. In conjunction with this alteration another change has taken place. Current sense of space differs from that of previous times, partly because of cultural differences but more so because of our constant over-exposure to two-dimensional stimuli. A full experience of axes needs a three-dimensional awareness of space. In the past, the application of axes symbolized and implied a discernible societal direction: axes were directed toward a center and similarly emanated from it. With the disappearance of an authoritative elite leadership, this kind of symbolism seems to be out of tune with social reality. Pluralism and axes belong to two different worlds. Nevertheless, one could argue that the renewed application of axes and architectural elements that once symbolized public life may be helpful in preventing the total disappearance of public life and that such an application may also be helpful in expressing permanence and continuity. If this holds true, then the reappearance of such devices in architectural activity can be justified. Their reuse must, however, occur with an awareness of, and as an answer to, current social predicaments.

It is evident that the social changes discussed have had, and will continue to have, a profound impact on architecture. It is also evident that architecture cannot avoid investigating the political, economic and cultural context in which it operates, and the social forces which determine our time. Yet it seems as if the profession, while occupied with rejecting the methods and condemn-

ing the results of the Modern Movement, has also discarded the critical and inquisitive mode of operation that proved to be the common denominator for its diverse members. It is certainly not this critical attitude which is responsible for the negative implications of the Modern Movement but, rather, the premature disappearance of the movement itself. It appears we are to experience another disappointment if we think that without such an attitude current architectural efforts will, in the long run, produce better results.

III. The discussion about the present human condition points to a fundamental dichotomy, which expresses itself in such oppositions as the abstract versus the concrete, quantitative versus qualitative and functional rationality versus substantial rationality.[12] Architectural activity displays these dichotomies. On the one hand, there are the thought processes of the engineer explaining problems through causality -- the solutions offered are therefore rational in a functional manner. On the other hand, there is the mind of the artist reacting reflectively to life -- in this instance problems are confronted by creativity. The objective of the engineer is to maintain a system in its equilibrium, whereas the aim of the artist is to transform a system, to create a new reality. Ideally speaking, the architect is both engineer and artist, and it is precisely this synthesizing capacity which could help mitigate the current dichotomy of dilemma in society. Due to the overall and continuing trend toward specialization, this concept of the ideal architect not only seems outdated, but it is also increasingly improbable that such an ideal architect might exist. Yet the ideal must be upheld if we are serious about meeting the challenge generated by these dichotomies; and this challenge has recently become even more critical since, as pointed out, quantitative considerations now far outnumber qualitative concerns. Again architecture, because of its dual nature, is in a unique position for assisting societal attempts to alleviate the mentioned dichotomies and counter the advance of one side at the expense of the other.

In conclusion, architecture must (1) accept its capacity for synthesis and not perpetuate polarization processes by its own polarization; and (2) declare again a critical inquiry into the human condition as an essential part of its activities'1[3] Accepting both demands is in accordance with the humanist tradition. Architecture needs more insight into the reasoning that justifies the constant inducement of artificial wants and the almost total commercialization of every aspect of life. It also needs to be more aware of the implications of an increasing plurality of interests, an ever increasing mobility and a concomitant disappearance of public life and common objectives. To accept the status quo in an unquestioning manner would mean to accept uncritically its underlying ideologies; emancipation from false consciousness would remain elusive, impeding human, though not material, progress.

In case there is the impression that a claim is being made comparable to the one at the outset of the Modern Movement, namely, that society can be changed for the better only if the ideas of architecture would prevail, then clarification is necessary. All that is demanded here is that architecture commit itself fully to its obligation as a socially responsible institution. To do this correctly, consideration of the human condition by architecture must be undertaken in a dialectical manner; that is, architecture must enter into a dialogue with the general public and other social institutions. Given the fact that truly qualitative aspects of life are currently lacking support, alliance should be sought with institutions that voice similar concerns; but again even in this instance, the dialogue remains essential.

It is obvious that the academic side of architecture has a special obligation to perform, not just because of the particular task but also because it enjoys greater independence from economic and social pressures. To teach only professional skills or aesthetic competency under these circumstances would be to ignore or even to oppose the obligation of architecture. If the demands outlined are met, especially the call for critical inquiry, then architecture could live up to its intrinsic purpose, that is, to enhance the human condition and make life more meaningful -- the legitimation crisis of architecture could end.
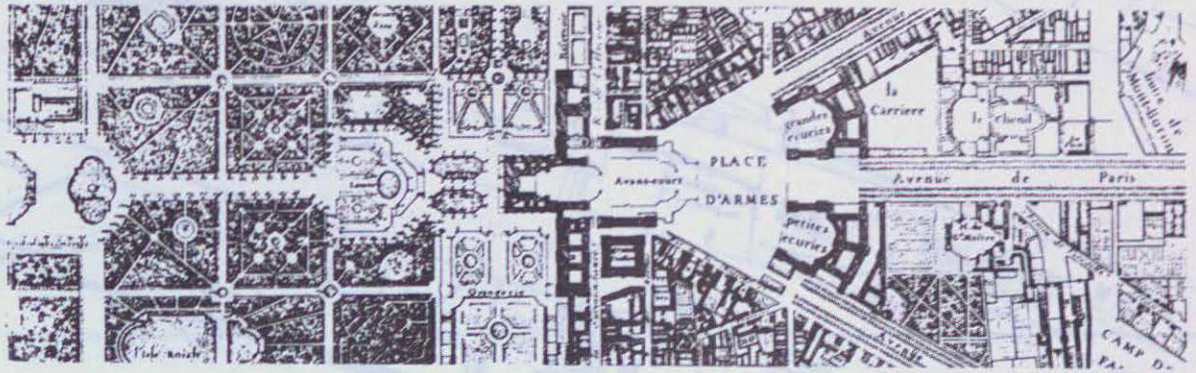
Notes

1. A. Perez Gomez, (1982), p. 55.

2. W. Benjamin, (1969), p. 188.

3. Value-free conduct is based on the drive for objective knowledge that is founded on the belief that there is nothing that is not given in stable objects and that cannot be perceived by the human mind and logically ordered and thereby made intelligible and communicable. Yet this quest for certainty is paralleled by, if not steeped in, a fear of liberty. While a reduction of all to a universal objectivity avoids the anxieties and risks of personal responsibility and decision, liberty and choice must cope with the imperfection of knowledge, namely with uncertainty. K. Jaspers in H.J. Blackham, (1959).

4. One of the more vigorous remedies for this danger calls for a drastic reduction of the role of government. This would eliminate the possibility that a nominally omnipotent government becomes the pawn of all the separate interests it must appease in order to secure support. F.A. Hayek, (1978).

5. H. Marcuse (1964) asks for the replacement of Marx's concept of "economic exploitation" with the Freudian notion of "instinctual repression." Repression characteristic of most historical situations was necessary because of scarcity. It is for this reason that repression is not inherent in human nature but is a historically conditioned phenomenon. In a society which is increasingly capable of removing scarcity, repression tends to take the form of "surplus repression." Conflict in society is caused then by the clash between the rationality of the market and real human needs; the uneven development of the productive forces prevents societal emancipation. Uneven means, here, that our moral and reflective capacities are not as well developed as our productive capacities. Cf. K. Mannheim, (1940).

6. W. Shawn, (1982).

7. The extent to which the abstract tendencies of positivist rationality or "ruthless economic exploitation" are responsible for this impoverishment is, in the opinion of K. Frampton (1981), not yet clear. In my view, both must be held responsible.

8. The professions differ from other commercial activities through an adherence to ethical standards that, of course, need redefining according to changes in society. What remains constant, however, is the acceptance of the notion of the public good which guides any professional activity. The colloquial usage of the word "professional" disregards its original meaning.

9. Urban planning literature has been addressing these problems since the '60's. Admittedly, the situation in planning is not exactly the same, but many parallels exist.

10. It ought to be mentioned that the vernacular of the period was, nevertheless, embedded in regionalism which had its own economic and social base, whereas today this base has disappeared for a variety of reasons, though cultural traces of regionalism may exist.

11. C.W. Mills, (1963).

12. These dichotomies are part of the Cartesian split between mind and body, cognition and reality (res cognitans and res extensa).

13. A. Rossi believes that "the gulf between art and profession can be bridged through the search for the basic human condition", (1982), p. 21.

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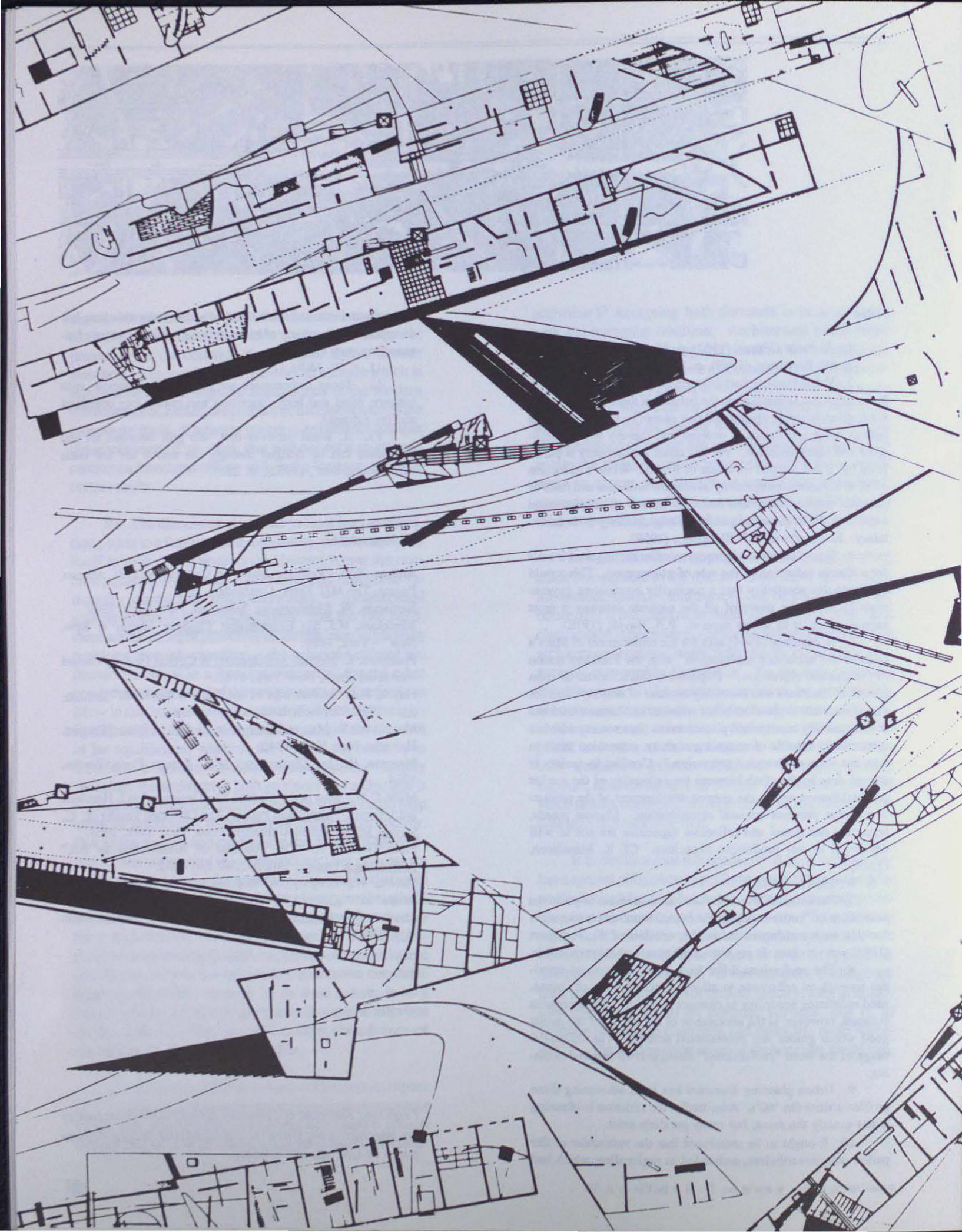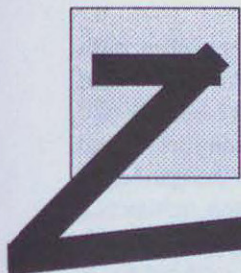
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... an interview with
Zaha Hadid

Last spring, Zaha Hadid was interviewed by Nicholas Holman and Paul Lalonde, both students in architecture at McGill University. The night before the interview, Ms. Hadid spoke at the Alcan lecture series on her work.

TFC: You started off in *mathematics*. Did you have any idea of going into something else later on?

ZH: I always wanted to do architecture, so math was... I don't know why I did math... I just liked it as a subject, so I thought I would do it for a short period of time. I was never intending to just devote my entire career to *mathematics*.

TFC: Would you say that the mathematical education has influenced your work?

ZH: It does because, first of all, it abstracts your thinking. It also gives you a system which I think for architecture is very appropriate. I mean it depends on the person; for me it was very useful.

TFC: Before you encountered **Malevitch**, in your fourth year at the AA, what kind of design philosophy were you following?

ZH: Well, I mean, in third year, what design philoso-phy do you have? At the AA, you choose units which you have a certain affinity to, to go to places where you think you can explore ideas which otherwise are not possible. So my work in third year was quite different, but I was still interested in very similar kind of ideas.

TFC: And now you've gone beyond that, you've diverged from it?

ZH: I think so. I think it was an important starting point, but...

Zaha Hadid nous livre dans cet entrevue les différents aspects de sa formation et de sa pratique professionnelle qui ont contribué à élaborer effectivement sa vision particulière de l'architecture.

it's not my Bible sort of thing.

TFC: What's happening now in **Berlin**? What's the stage with these various buildings?

ZH: **Well**, Berlin, you know... is a very strange place where things take off, and sleep for a while, and then they move on... I was complaining in Germany recently and they said that, you know, things take a long time here. Seven years is the normal thing; it's only been a year. With the IBA it will dribble on, and will eventually get built, and most probably will not be recognizable because they'll mess about with it so much. But I think that the Japanese projects, although they were started a year later, will happen quicker.

TFC: It seems like a very *curious situation in England* where you have all these people with incredible ideas, and yet the attitude of the population in general seems to be very negative.

ZH: Well, four or five years ago there was a turning point in British architecture. The Brits resisted Post-Modern-ism for a long time, and there was a moment when they could have really geared towards Modernism again. There was a whole debate which was about the Mies van der Rohe tower in London. It was kind of an issue of principles and many people knew that, if they rejected it, it would mean the end, for a period of time, to any Modern work in Britain. Had they accepted it, it would have really enabled a lot of people to do a lot of work in England. It put a lot of people in a very difficult position where they knew that maybe they couldn't support a project totally, because it wasn't really Mies' best work, and yet they knew it was a political issue.

I think it's a shame that it didn't happen. First, I don't think it's a bad building. It's not his best, but it's not bad, considering what they do in London. It made architecture really very superficial and posed certain people onto the political scene who had no idea what they were talking about. I mean, Prince Charles had a lot of leaway because of this situation. England is very funny because it acts as a kind of incubator for ideas and people come from all over the world to study there and to develop ideas. But they all leave England eventually, and that's the sad thing.

There has never been an English Modern tradition. The English don't like change. The English accept people who do

funny things because they accept eccentrics, but when push comes to shove they don't really support them. And that's what happens to a lot of designers: textile designers, I already said fashion designers... They all leave. Some very strong people had to get out of there. The music scene is the same, although there's a lot of money in it. And you take also all their top architects... If you look at Rodgers, Stirling and Foster, Foster has built his main building in Hong Kong. He's built in England but not in London. Stirling, after I don't know how many years - he's sixty years old - he's just opened the Tate Gallery extension last year in London; after all he done, he's never been able to build in London. Rodgers was in an unfortunate situation where he had to do Pompidou before he did Lloyd's. And there are many other examples: you look at Peter Cook, at Cedric Price, and a whole bunch of people who really did very, very interesting work in the sixties. They could have never done it anywhere else - but they always were seen as kind of nuts, you know... It's a very strange situation now, because there is a lot of work in England, but it's really schlocky, it's really bad stuff.

TFC: So do you foresee staying in England?

ZH: I really don't know. I mean, I'm there right now. I quite like London because it's central. And I think what is exciting for me about London is that it has all these services which are otherwise unavailable in any place. It has very good engineering firms, very good specialists, who all work all over the place, but they are based in London. There are a lot of people based in London but they don't do work in England.

TFC: How do you find dealing with the engineers in your projects?
ZH: Well, I deal with Peter Rice, of Ove Arup's, and they have a kind of group which is Creative Engineering, and they are far more flexible than anybody else.
So they get a project from you, and they're interested to see whether they can deal with it. For the Berlin project, they actually volunteered to do the work. Peter Rice heard that we needed help and he just volunteered. So we work with him very closely now. Really, he's fantatstic. And his group is very good, and of extreme help to us. And they never see a problem. I mean, basically, they **deal** with it.

TFC: You used computer-designed drawings on the Peak competition, but how are the paintings actually produced? You have, say, an aerial perspective, are they layed out using the

computer?

ZH: No, they're done by hand. They are various projections.

TFC: Do you do any of that?

ZH: I do all of the preliminary sketches, yes. We have a pattern of colours which we mix prior to any of the paintings. It takes a long time to actually build it up, but, it's very funny, we found always at the end that the final image is very close to the preliminary study. The big drawings take a long time.

TFC: At lecture last night, many people seemed to be struck by the **intensity** of the graphics and the originality of the way they're put together. I was wondering why you felt it was necessary to develop such a ...

ZH: We felt that drawing, which is imposed on architects and is basically invented by architects as a method of communication, is rather restricting. And we felt that if the work had to take on a different kind of form, then it had to be seen from a different kind of viewpoint. I think the drawings were a very useful tool, because we m*anipulated* the work through them; we felt we had to see the work through projections which were not available otherwise. And I think the projections were really seen as sketches, because the work developed through them. The drawings and paintings were always done simultaneously.

TFC: So the painting's not an after-the-fact thing.

ZH: They're not illustrations. A lot of the time they work almost in parallel to the work at different moments in the project; they're not done at the end.

TFC: I noticed a difference between, say, the earlier black and white drawings and the later colour drawings, especially those which incorporate oblique projections. You get more of a feeling for, say, the textures of the materials that are involved. I'm wondering how this graphic serves to communicate your intentions?

ZH: I mean they're really done for our personal use. They're not done as a way of explaining it. And a lot of the drawings have a kind of a story line in them: the Peak drawings and the Berlin drawings, for instance. So there is this constant thing where you make the painting as a kind of piece and segment it to understand the pieces in it. Because all these projects really rely on more than one layer. For example, all the interiors of the Peak were always drawn to show the differences between the beams and the fluidity of the space within the various projects. There's always this desire to convey more than one piece of information in a drawing. And in time they become much more **compressed.**

TFC: The reason I ask that question is that there's an obvious parallel between the drawings that are exploded or superimposed, as you say, and the buildings themselves whose plans seem to come *apart*. It came to my mind: what you're proposing is a new vision of the world. I don't know if that's accurate...

ZH: It portrays a different kind of world. I mean, it doesn't have to be so global that it covers everything. The work had always wanted to really be visionary, and in a sense predicting certain things which could occur in the future. There's been a version to looking to the future for many years. Of course the future's always unknown, but I think architecture in a way is a field where you have to project ten or fifteen years ahead of time because it takes that time to complete a project. And I think you have to take into consideration the *ever-changing* conditions in cities because nothing is really ever static. You have to be able to actually inject a certain vision - you might change your mind about it in ten years' time, you know, it might not be right - but you have to be able to do that.

I think also that by teaching and studying at the AA for a period of time, it's really a learning exercise where a lot of these ideas could be implemented. It allows you, in a sense, to predict certain things. The projects from the unit we did are being done now in London. It's very curious because we picked up all the sites which now, ten years later, have become available as development sites; at that point they were not. And a lot of the time our predictions were quite accurate, which gives one the confidence that one's analysis of the situation is quite correct; not, obviously, one hundred percent, but...

I think the difficulty is a lot of people are frightened of the idea that you're giving them something which they have not yet experienced. I see the work, even in the office, really like a laboratory.

TFC: This ties back to what you were saying of people being afraid of things they haven't seen before. When I asked about *your* vision of the world, I meant what is **your** vision of the way people can live. Many people look at your plans and say 'you can't live in a building like that'.

ZH: I do not think that people wish anymore to live in a Modern surrounding. They like to have their little toy houses with little gardens, and it's very much kind of cuckoo land, you know. And I think it has to do with a certain upbringing, or rather with a certain political situation which makes the living conditions very conservative. For example, in London, if you're talking about living in lofts - which for them would be kind of a freak - in New York, people have been living in them for a very long time. So what might seem to be conventional in one place is not conventional in another. I just think that there is a different way of looking at things and that has to be tested. I think it's valid.

You know, there's also a tendency now that people don't say anything. There's no declaration of any form. They have no views. There is no opinion. So it's really a mishmash, highly eclectic, and it's very safe. I think that the progress of architecture relies on people taking certain risks.

TFC: **Well,** that taking of risks and willingness to explore different ways of living is the hallmark of the heroes of Modernism.

ZH: Yes, there was a Modern tradition which has either been **killed off** deliberately or **died off** because the participants didn't want to pursue it. I think it was a very valid experiment, and people should try to pursue it. I don't know by what means or to what end, but I just think that we do work in a different way, we do live in a different way than we did a hundred years ago. The way we enjoy public spaces is different. *Our whole vision of movement within the city is very different. Things which change, like restaurants or shops - things that can be regurgitated and done very quickly, and thrown away - if we applied that attitude to housing or landscape, it could have a lasting effect; it might enable people to work and live in a way which they don't know is available.*

People generally don't know what is available. On one hand they're too scared to try something which

is too imposing. On the other hand, I think fundamentally it has to do with the fact that architects lost a great deal of respect and power because they made so many disasters, and they're no longer given the chance to pursue other things.

TFC: Could I ask you about your own house?

ZH: I live in a very small little thing, which is untouched, like a derelict almost.

TFC: It's always like that. You have Corb designing these big concrete buildings and working in his little log cabin.

ZH: And I'm not sure I even would like to live in my own thing. I might even think of asking someone else to do it in the end (I don't think so), but I imagine it would be difficult to live in your own place surrounded by all your own objects.

TFC: How do you find working with students, as a teaching experience?

ZH: I used to enjoy teaching for because I thought it was reciprocal. I learned a lot from them and they learned whatever they learned from me. (I stopped teaching this year.) What I enjoyed most about teaching is to really watch people change. I mean, the work is one thing, but the personalities change... The unit I ran at the AA, which was previously run by myself, Elia [Zenghelis] and Rem [Koolhaas], was extremely demanding in terms of inventing programs for cities. They had to find the site, and write a program for it, which was a very taxing exercise but very valid. But ultimately the most important part of this whole experiment was that a lot of the students became very close friends of mine. Also, in time you have a support system. There are people who you can talk to, and who have certain affinities with you.

TFC: And did you find that it helped you break out of the
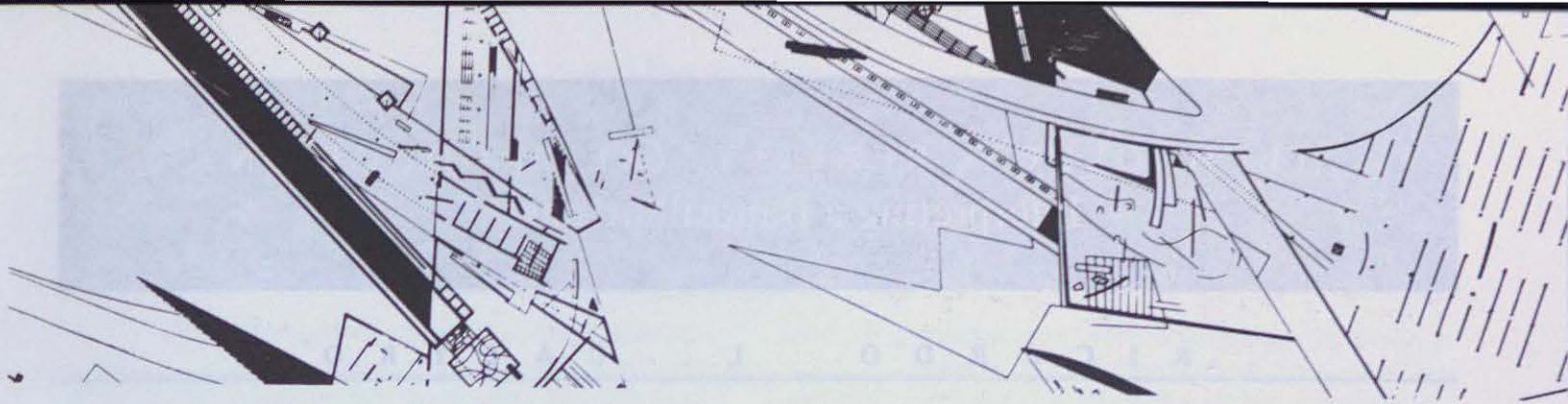
traditional approach to building? And would the students tend
to follow you or would they tend to [rest of question buried by ZH's reply]

ZH: Well, in the beginning they didn't really follow
me; I think the more well-known I became, the more
it became that they really joined me because I was so-
and-so. They expected to do my kind of work, and that's why
I stopped teaching. I've had some very good students over the
past ten years, and some of them have carried on in [my area of
work]... A few of them work for me. The others are all over the
world. I think it changed their view of the world, which for me was the most
valid experience.

TFC: Many of the people felt after hearing you speak that you
exude an incredible optimism. What is your feeling, look-
ing at the future?

ZH: I am optimistic. If I weren't optimistic I wouldn't be able to do this
work.

TFC: Many people also seemed disturbed by
your apparent dislike of trees.

ZH: It's like an in-house joke. I actually don't like trees. I like them in China
because they're willow trees. I like nature in the sense that I like the ruggedness
of landscape: like when I went to Australia, the light is very beautiful, the beach
is very beautiful, the water's beautiful, and that's nature. I have an aversion to
the way architects for a long time used nature to fudge architecture. You take a
plan, and someone designs the interior, they put a plant here and there, and they've
resolved it. People can't do elevations put a tree in front of it, and the elevation
disappears. When they don't know what to do with the section, they draw in people,
stuff it with people... *and zip-a-tone*. That's what I really object to. I think it's camouflaging architecture.
Flowers? I don't mind flowers...

RICARDO L. CASTRO

"It is a new generation of signs and objects which comes with the industrial revolution. Signs without the tradition of caste, ones that will never have known any binding restrictions. They will no longer have to be *counterfeited*, since they are going to be produced all at once on a gigantic scale. The problem of their uniqueness, or their origin, is no longer a matter of concern; their origin is technique, and the only sense they possess is in the dimension of the industrial simulacrum.

Which is to say the series, and even the possibility of two or of n identical objects. The relation between them is no longer that of an original to its counterfeit--neither analogy nor reflection--but equivalence, indifference. In a series, objects become undefined simulacra one of the other. And so, along with the objects, do the men that produce them. Only the obliteration of the original reference allows for the generalized law of equivalence, that is to say the *very possibility of production*." (pp. 96-97)

Montreal. Silos, 1986.

The urban silo made possible through a modern technology is re-presented- and re-produced--(t)here. Like the endless elevated highway, the pervasive high-rise or its older counterpart, the walls, gates and towers of the medieval city, the modern silo has become "undefined simulation". Its silent proliferation marks the absence of an origin. Its presence in the urban landscape reminds us of a lost "post-technological future".

"...The fact alone that anything might be simply reproduced, as such, in two copies, is already a revolution; you only have to consider the shock of the African native seeing, for the very first time, two identical books. That these two products of technique should be *equivalent* under the sign of socially necessary work is less important in the long run than the *serial repetition* of the same object (which is also of individuals as force-of-work). Technique as medium dominates not only the "message" of the product (it's use-value) but also the force-of-work that Marx wished to make the revolutionary message of production. Benjamin and McLuhan saw this matter more clearly than Marx; they saw the true message: *the true ultimatum was in reproduction itself*. And that production no longer has any sense; its social finality is lost in the series. The simulacra win out over history." (pp.99-100)

Carcassone, France. Gateway to the Old City, 1984.

Layers of massive walls: stone, sand, metal--materials of a mythic past--produced and re-presented here thanks to light, the evasive medium of the photographer, the writer of light.

"Every image, every media message, but also any functional environmental object, is a test--that is to say, in the full rigor of the term, liberating response mechanisms according to stereotypes and analytic models. Today, the object is no longer "functional" in the traditional meaning of the word; it no longer serves you, it *tests* you. It has nothing to do with the object of yesteryear, no more than does media news with a "reality" of facts. Both objects and information result already from a selection, a montage, from a point of view. They have already tested "reality", and have asked only questions that "answered back" to them. They have broken down reality into simple elements that they have reassembled into scenarios of regulated oppositions, exactly in the same way that the photographer imposes his contrasts, lights, angles on his subject (any photographer will tell you: you can do anything, all you have to do is approach the original from the right angle, at that right moment or mood that will render it the *correct answer* to the instantaneous test of the instrument and its code). It is exactly like the test or the referendum when they translate a conflict or problem into a game of question/ answer. And reality, thus tested, tests you according to the same grill; you decode it according to the same code, inscribed within each message and object like a miniaturized genetic code." (pp. 120-121)
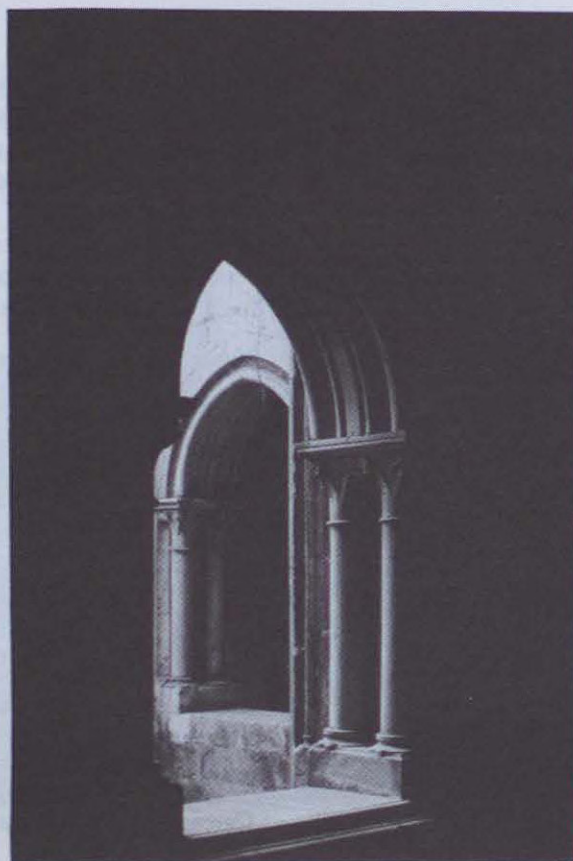
Alcobaca, Portugal. Cloister, 1983.

Inside and outside, light and dark, black and white, solid and void, all adding up to the presence of presence and absence, all, ultimately speaking of difference. Is simulacrum a presence or an absence?. How is reality present now?

Alcobaca, Portugal. Cloister, 1983.

"The very definition of the real becomes: *that of which it is possible to give an equivalent reproduction*. This is contemporaneous with a science that postulates that a process can be perfectly reproduced in a set of given conditions, and also with the industrial rationality that postulates a universal system of equivalency (classical representation is not equivalence, it is transcription, interpretation, commentary). At the limit of this process of reproductibility, the real is not only what can be reproduced, but *that which is always already reproduced*. The hyperreal." (p. 146)

Alcobaca, Portugal. Cathedral Facade reflected on Windshield.

> **Mode d'emploi:**
> CUT ALONG THE LINES.
> RAISE SHEET IN FRONT OF
> YOU. LOOK THROUGH THE
> FRAME TO REACH, THERE, A
> PRESENCE. WHERE IS THE
> DIFFERENCE? HERE or
> THERE?...AND THE REAL...?

Reality, now. Cut along the line and use it as a frame of reference.

* All excerpts, except the text in bold italics, have been quoted from Jean Baudrillard's "The Orders of Simulacra", in *Simulations*, New York: Semiotext(e), 1983. Page numbers appear in parentheses after each quote.

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PANOPTICISM IN THE UTOPIAN VISIONS OF LEDOUX AND LE CORBUSIER:
A Comparison of Chaux, Ville Contemporaine, and Ville Radieuse.

by Cynthia Chung

Le Panopticon de Jeremy Bentham a marqué un tournant dans la conception des institutions. Cynthia Chung montre comment ce modèle se reflète dans deux projets utopiques urbains: celui de Claude-Nicolas Ledoux à Chaux, et ceux de Le Corbusier.

"Morals reformed, health preserved, industry invigorated, instruction diffused, public burdens lightened ... all by a simple idea in architecture!"

J. Bentham, 1791.

The Panopticon, as first developed by Jeremy Bentham in 1791, was essentially a new architectural scheme for a penitentiary, formulated in response to the penal reform movement occurring in France and England at the time. The Panopticon however, was not merely an exercise in prison design. In addition to the obvious applicability of the model to schools, asylums and hospitals, the working principles of the Panopticon addressed a more pressing issue of late eighteenth century society, that is, the maintenance of power and surveillance of a population during a period of emerging democracies, increased populations, burgeoning industrialization and rampant desire for social reform. In the absence of a single, identifiable power structure, the problem of governing and disciplining an increasing population seemed even more critical. Needed was a means of social control which would act effectively towards a humanitarian, if somewhat idealized, end. As articulated by Foucault, in Power and Knowledge, Bentham's Panopticon functioned as such a technical device of social control and surveillance. Indeed, Bentham thought of his Panopticon as "the great innovation needed for the easy and effective exercise of power".[1] Because the Panopticon characteristically functioned as an enclosed, self-contained unit, and
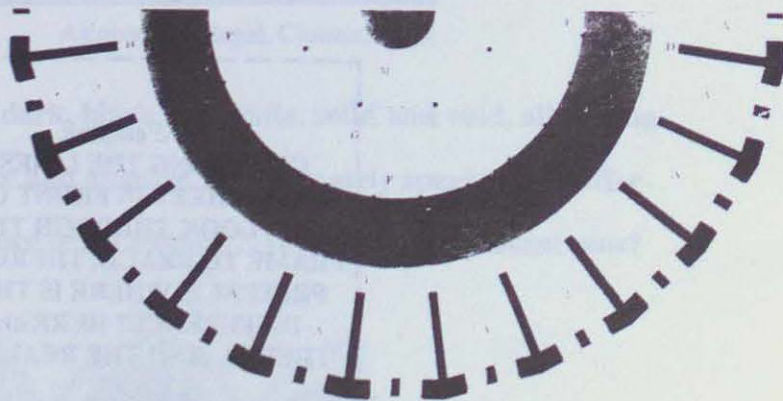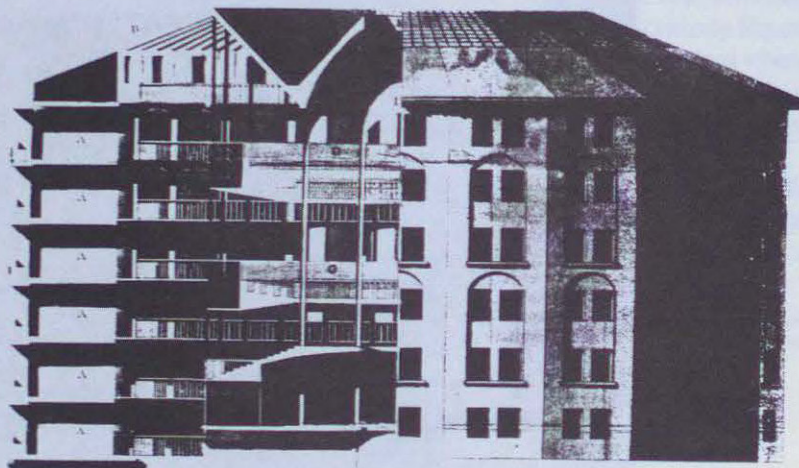
The "Penitentiary Panopticon", Jeremy Bentham, Samuel Bentham, Willey Reveley, 1791.

its existence was based on an idealized vision of social reform, the panoptic plan was utopian in both form and intent. The following is an attempt to demonstrate the applicability of Bentham's panoptic model at the city scale by comparing the utopian schemes of Ledoux at Chaux, and Le Corbusier with La Ville Contemporaine and La Ville Radieuse. Although Ledoux's plans antedate Bentham's model, Ledoux and Bentham were nonetheless social contemporaries. The presence of Panopticism in Le Corbusier's plans reflects an underlying continuity, from the end of the eighteenth century to the middle of the twentieth, in the utopian

belief of social engineering through the deliberate manipulation of space.

The physical layout of the Panopticon consists of a central observation tower surrounded by a perimeter building which encircles the central tower like a ring. This outer ring is divided into cells, each cell extending the thickness of the perimeter building. Each cell has two windows, one opening towards the inside, thus allowing for a view of and from the observation tower, and, an outer window which allows day light to pass through the entirety of the cell.[2]

Surveillance in such a system is

easy, efficient, and effective. An overseer of the Panopticon is positioned in the central tower. In each cell is placed a convict. With the effect of backlighting, one can observe from the tower, standing out precisely against the light, small captive shadows in the cells of the periphery.[3] Surveillance is easy because it eliminates the need to patrol individual cells (as required in traditionally organized penitentiaries). The system is efficient in that only one overseer is needed to overlook many more penitents. Furthermore, the observation tower is arranged such that the penitents never know when they are being watched. A
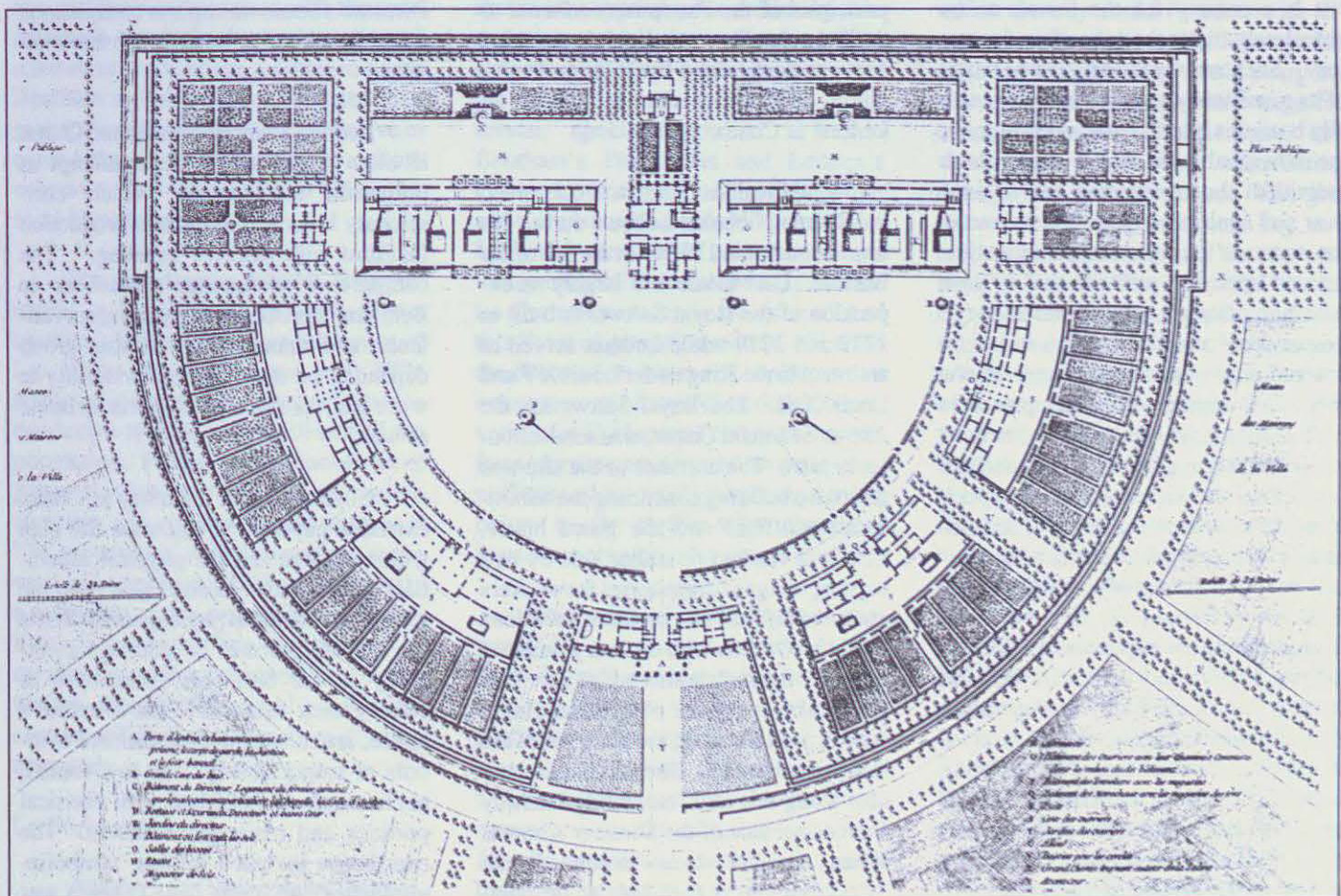
Executed Plan of La Saline de Chaux, Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, 1773.

> *"Knowledge is power" summarized well the importance of gaining access to the bodies of individuals, to their acts, attitudes, and modes of everyday behavior.*

system of venetian blinds and staggered doorways installed in the central observation tower ensures a sense of surveillance that is at once visible and unverifiable. The Panopticon is effective in that the penitent simply comes to assume that surveillance is constant. In short, the principle of the dungeon is reversed; daylight and the overseer's gaze capture the inmate more effectively than darkness "which afforded after all a sort of protection".[4]

Three working principles of the Panopticon contribute to its effectiveness. First, the Panopticon relies on the principle of the Gaze. Bentham writes "It is necessary for the inmate to be ceaselessly under the eyes of an inspector". Such an inspecting gaze because, of its consistency and continuity, eventually becomes internalised. At this point, the individual is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising surveillance over and against himself. Furthermore, the sense of being watched is so impressed upon the prisoner that it stays with him after his release into society.[5] Second, the Panopticon allows an unconditional access of the overseer to the individual inmate. Prisoners placed in each cell become objects whose actions are inspected, registered and classified. Each prisoner in effect becomes a specimen of Enlightenment inquiry, contributing to knowledge upon which the exercise and maintenance of power depends.[6] Foucault elaborates on this theme by demonstrating the importance of opinion among enlightened society. Opinion represented a "mode of operation through which power would be exercised by virtue of the mere fact of things being known".[7] Hence, the axiom "knowledge is power", and vice versa, summarized well the importance of gaining access to the bodies of individuals, to their acts, attitudes, and modes of everyday behavior.[8] Third, the Panopticon worked on the idea of an ordered and

clearly legible space. The observation tower is centrally placed within the Panopticon, accentuating its status and function. Thus it occupies a singular and unique position. In contrast, the individual cell is merely a repetition of its neighboring cells. The circular arrangement of the prison cells does not allow even an "end" or "beginning" cell to be defined. In addition, the ordering of the space functions to define the limits of possible human interactions. The solid walls seperating cells prevents communication between inmates. Inmate and overseer, however, are intimately engaged as directed by the strategic placing of windows. In summary, the working principles of the Panopticon adhered to the formula of power through transparency, and subjection by illumination.[9]

Ledoux at Chaux

Cité Idéale at Chaux was conceived by Claude-Nicholas Ledoux during his imprisonment in 1793 after the fall of the Bastille. Cité Idéale was largely an expansion of the Royal Saltworks built in 1773 and 1779 while Ledoux served as architect to the King under Louis XV and Louis XXI. The Royal Saltworks, the Arc-et-Senans at Chaux, was semi-circular in plan. The entrance to the site was through a building containing the administrative offices and the guard house. This was flanked on either side by two curving wings of dormitories for workers and were divided into separate pavillions by craft. On axis with the entry building was the Director's house, which served as the focal point of the plan, occupying a central position along the diameter of the semi-circular plan. The salt sheds were also along this axis, extending laterally from either side of the Director's house. When Ledoux later expanded the Saltworks into a Cité Idéale, he completed the circular plan with the addition of various civic buildings. These included a church, stock exchange, houses

of culture, and the Oikema, a phallus-shaped building whose purpose was to instill virtue through sexual satiety. A "green belt" of trees replaced the more traditional city wall to mark the town boundaries.

Beyond the obvious symbolism of the Enlightenment found in Ledoux's plan, that is, the pure geometry and the images of sun and light the town's circular arrangement evoked, the spatial configuration served well the working principles of Panopticism. The focal point of Chaux was the Director's house. Here, knowledge of individual workers was registered, activities regulated; the Director's house was no less conspicuous than Bentham's central observation tower.

Ledoux's Arc-et-Senans and Chaux is often noted as the first attempt at industrial architecture which consciously links and integrates production facilities with workers' housing.[10] The comparison of Ledoux's workers to Bentham's prisoners is apparent; surveillance and management of this group depended on their constant visibility at work and, for full effectiveness, at home as well.

Environmental legibility at Chaux extended beyond the elaborate site plan which emphasized the physical separation of functions. Ledoux also used the idea of architectural physiognomy, that is the use of symbolic or isomorphic imagery in the buildings themselves to convey their function. The Director's house, articulated with traditional symbols of respectability, was low-roofed, pedimented, embellished with classical porticos and rusticated columns. The courthouse included fascias, symbolizing justice and unity. The Oikema was penis-shaped, an overt and blatant indication of the building's association with sexual pleasure. Accordingly, worker

housing was of plain flush ashlar masonry built in a simple vernacular style.[11] The open belt of green space is analogous in function to the outer open windows of Bentham's cells. As the outer window serves to silhouette each penitent in his cell, so the open greenbelt serves to silhouette persons coming to or leaving Chaux. More solid boundaries, such as the city walls of medieval towns, indicate a specific boundary over and beyond which one is no longer subject to the rules and surveillance of the town's jurisdiction. In such a physical setting, one can escape the town's boundary and subsequently be free from observation. The elimination of these definite city boundaries and their replacement with the open greenbelt parallels the replacement of solid stone walls of a penal dungeon with Bentham's glass windows. Both the open greenbelt and the glass windows serve to extend the overseer's visibility. Both subvert as well the protection offered by solid boundaries.

The application of the Panoptic model in Le Corbusier's work is less obvious. Indeed, the physical layout of La Ville Contemporaine and Ville Radieuse is neither circular, nor is its size conducive to a close surveillance of the population. Furthermore, procedures of power that are at work in more modern societies are numerous and diverse.[12] The principle of visibility evident in the work of Ledoux and Bentham was clearly a reflection of the desire during the Enlightenment to replace the intrigue of royal power with a new openness. Nonetheless, Panopticism in the twentieth century still functioned to serve disciplinary ends.

Le Corbusier

Although not a planner by training, the Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier was nevertheless a prolific and influential urbanist, designing several plans for cities in and outside of France. Le Corbusier's most articulate utopian schemes, however, were found in "a contemporary city for three million", or Ville Contemporaine. Proposed in 1922, it contained most of the ideas he later developed in Ville Radieuse, 1930.

The rectangular plan of Ville Contemporaine emphasized two cross-axial major streets intersecting in a central commercial district. This central district included twenty-four identical cruciform skyscrapers which would "contain the city's brains, the brains of the whole nation. They are symbolic of the careful planning and organization of all activity in the city. Everything is concentrated in the towers: apparatus for abolishing time and space, telephones, cables, and wireless; the banks and business affairs and the control of industry; finance, commerce, specialization".[13] As in Bentham's Panopticon and Ledoux's Chaux, Le Corbusier's Ville Contemporaine envisioned a central complex inhabited by members of society conferred with great administrative powers. In fact, Le Corbusier extends the centrality of this "seat of power" upwards. Whereas the observation tower and the Director's house secured a lateral direction of observation, Le Corbusier's sixty-story cruciform skyscrapers allowed an aerial surveillance of the city's inhabitants living below in the twelve-story apartment houses surrounding the central district.

To the left of the business district would lie a civic and cultural center, beyond which would extend a rectilinear landscaped park. A large-scale grid incorporating the central cross-axis was superimposed on the city and served as a highly efficient, strictly vehicular street network. A smaller grid pattern was used for the residential superblocks, with buildings set up either along the perimeter of the superblocks or as continuous slab apartments sited within the block. The industrial district would be sited outside the city and separated from it by a greenbelt.

Evidently, Le Corbusier saw no advantages in mixed-use areas. Every function within a working city, residential, commercial or administrative, was carefully assigned a defined space. The geometric ordering and symmetry of the city, from the extensive grid network to the "Cartesian" skyscrapers, further contributed to order and environmental legibility. It was precisely the lack of order which Le Corbusier found in the cities of his time that he felt contributed to the squalor and blight of the congested industrial city. With order, the individual within the city could function with increased productivity and efficiency. He or she would know (as would everyone else in the city) exactly where to go for certain activities. Furthermore, one would not waste time meandering through city paths or streets. The grid network effectively connects any two origin-destination points of the city with straight lines. The individual moves about in the city as a well-disciplined subject, restrained from any randomness in activity by the strict ordering of his environment. Such a definitive environment left little to chance, emphasizing instead a certain degree of "truth-telling" to one's behavior in the city.[14] Once finished their daily activities, one would retire to the home, a standardized unit in mass housing complexes.

The productivity and efficiency of Le Corbusier's city evolved from his application of Taylorism to social problems of the city. This philosophy was introduced by the American Frederick W. Taylor (1856-1915). It described a system of labour discipline and workshop organization intended to instill human efficiency.[15] Applied to the city, and in particular to Le Corbusier's Ville Radieuse, Taylorism was an urban equivalent of factory production. In the
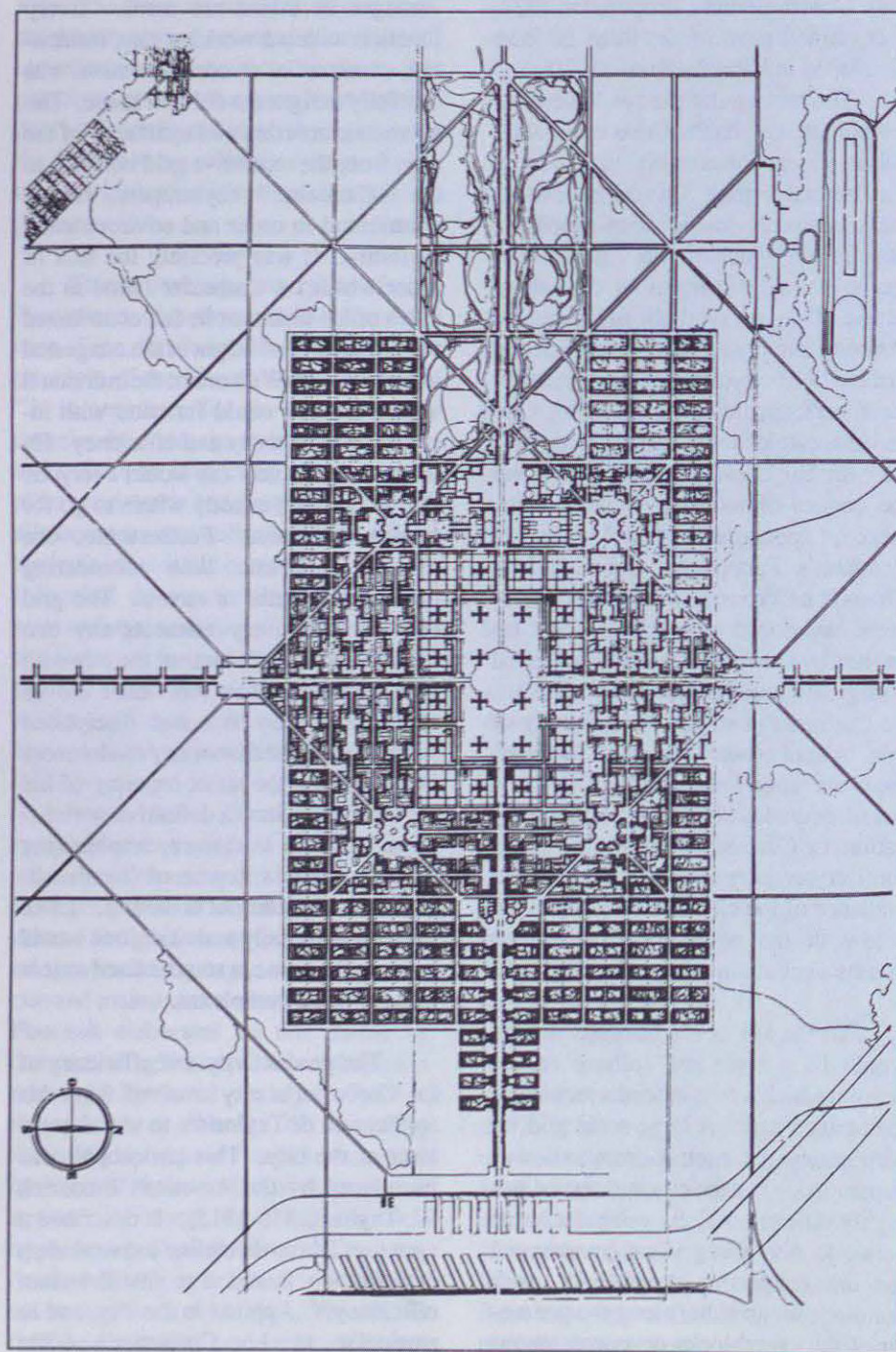
La Ville Contemporaine, LeCorbusier, 1922

factory, the stages of manufacturing are separated and rationalized. In the city, the activities of life would be segregated into discrete parts. As such, housing was in one place, work in another, and leisure somewhere else. In turn, these separate parts were standardized; administration was conferred to anonymous skyscraper towers, with a "universal standard and complete uniformity in detail".[16] Rationalized units of city space contributed to an environmental legibility with which discipline of citizens could surely be maintained. Indeed, Taylorization was the "Benthamization" of the modern period.[17]

Ville Radieuse was also characterized by a highly developed, multi-leveled transport system. In order to insure rapid movement of wheeled transport through the city, Le Corbusier sought a total separation of motor freeways from building lines and pedestrian ways. The freeways were characteristically linear, and were set in a grid of superblocks, 400 by 600 meters in area. Linearity and expansivity ensured speed. Le Corbusier claimed "a city made for speed is a city made for success". The city's transportation system would be additionally served by a subway and an underground commuter rail system linking the various outlying components of the city to the city center. The city center of the Ville Radieuse was no longer dominated by an administrative core as in La Ville Contemporaine, but instead with a multi-level traffic interchange, containing motorways, railway stations, bus stations and, above and between skyscrapers, an airport.

It is clear that the urbanity and animation of the traditional city street is severely compromised in such a plan. The street served merely as an element in

a system of vehicular transportation, and no longer promoted the chance or random encounter of strolling pedestrians. However, Le Corbusier's transportation system ultimately functioned as more than just an efficient circulation network. It was in fact a highly developed communication system which allowed Bentham's principle of the Gaze to function despite the physical incongruity of La Ville Radieuse and the Panopticon.

The principle of the Gaze is based essentially on an imposed relationship between two subjects, the overseer and the observed individual. Initially, the Gaze requires the actual physical presence of an overseer within the physical proximity of the observed. The distance between overseer and observed is determined by that minimum distance needed for visual (or audio) exchange to take place. The overseer is eliminated when the process is internalised. What is essentially exchanged or communicated between the overseer and observed individual is information that ''I, the overseer, am within inspecting distance of you, the penitent''. It is precisely the possibility of such a confrontation, whether visual or physical, between overseer and penitent, which perpetuates the power of the Gaze. The spatial configuration of Bentham's Panopticon and Ledoux's Chaux was confined to the actual physical distance needed for such an exchange. With an elaborate, efficient transportation and communication system, the distance between overseer and observed meant an efficiency in the transfer of knowledge. The possibility of confrontation remains omnipresent, the Gaze travelling with equal omnipotence along Le Corbusier's highways.

The notions implicit in Panopticism in both Ledoux and Le Corbusier's Uto-
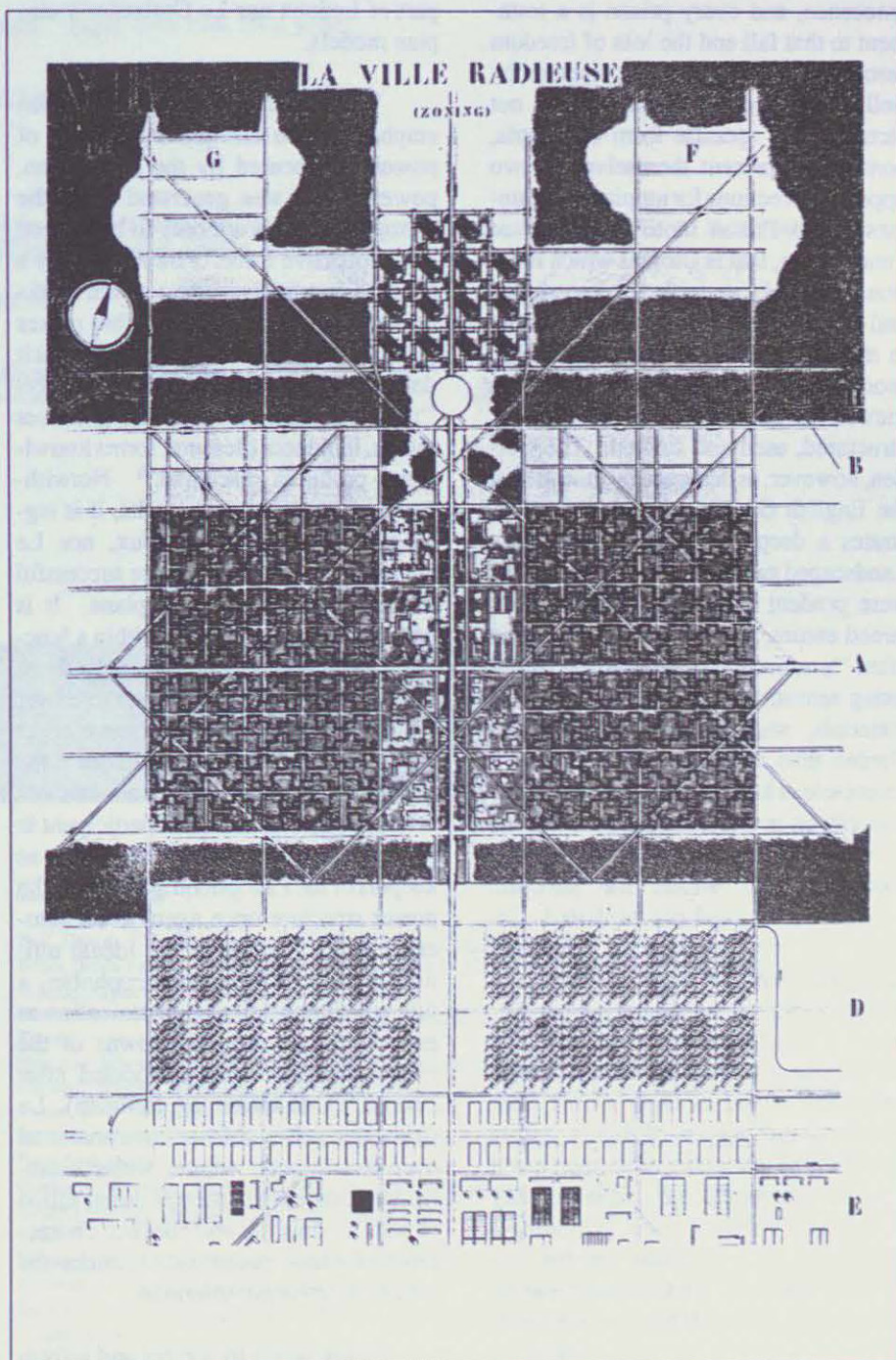
La Ville Radieuse, LeCorbusier, 1930.

pias are further revealed in the oft-cited division between Prison and Garden. Every garden is a reminder that man was banished from paradise when he lost his innocence, and every prison is a testament to that fall and the loss of freedom associated with guilt.[18] As presented by Bell, these two institutions, while not dictating any specific form of Utopia, nonetheless present themselves as two opposing directions for utopian programmes. The Prison motif manifests as Panopticism, that is Utopias which function ultimately as tools for knowledge and power. The relationship with Nature is marked, at best, with disregard and, more often, with exploitation. Nature is viewed as an element to be ordered, structured, used and studied. The Garden, however, as designed by disciples of the English Garden movement demonstrates a deep appreciation of Nature. Landscaped gardens of England and Italy were prudent in allowing views to untamed nature, and the garden itself was often "a collection of objects and stimulating sensations, rare and exotic plant materials, sculpture".[19] The utopian Garden thus is both a place for and a receptacle of knowledge. In contrast, the Panopticon is a tool or machine for the extraction of knowledge. Nature plays a secondary role within the panoptic scheme, not exalted but exploited. Indeed, the raison d'être of Ledoux's Saltworks was the literal extraction of wealth and produce directly from Nature.[20] Carved stone urns projected from the flat planar walls of the worker dormitories and served as large spouts from which the salt waters of Salins visibly flowed. The unloading of lumber, razed from the forest of Chaux, occurred daily in the town's central plaza, providing a continuous demonstration of the exploitative process. Le Corbusier was no less obvious in his advocacy of man over nature: "A city is the grip of man on nature, a human operation directed against Nature, a human organism both

for protection and for work".[21] Le Corbusier's blatantly inorganic rectilinear landscaped parks are evidence of his views. Clearly, Garden ideals were not part of Ledoux nor Le Corbusier's utopian models.

While the foregoing discussion emphasizes the disciplinary aspects of power as procured by the Panopticon, power which was generated from the Panopticon needs not only to be viewed as a repressive force. Power includes a positive, productive aspect which works to make power desirable. What makes power acceptable is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh as a force that says "no", but that traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse.[22] Notwithstanding such virtuous results, it is significant that neither Ledoux, nor Le Corbusier, nor Bentham were successful in the realization of their plans. It is perhaps because everyone within a functioning Panopticon is entrapped, those who exercise power as well as those over whom it is exercised.[23] Bentham is never specific about exactly who resides in the central tower. The overseer nonetheless is trapped as he is an active participant in the individual or group of individuals as keepers of the Panopticon and returns the power structure once again to an autocratic rule. Ledoux's Cité Idéale ultimately suffers from claustrophobia, a fate which translates to ghettoization as experienced in company towns of the early twentieth century modeled after Ledoux's Cité Idéale (eg. Pullman). Le Corbusier suffered from environmental over-determinism which, while establishing total environmental order, failed to plan for disorder and conflict, characteristics which paradoxically make the urban environment tolerable.

In his vision to correct and reform convicts through a simple architectural design, Bentham shared with Utopian

builders a belief in the possibility of ameliorating human society through built form. However, in their visionary plans, Ledoux, Le Corbusier, and Bentham were ultimately short-sighted in their failure to consider the actual participants in their Utopian design.

Cynthia Chung is presently completing a Masters in Urban Planning at McGill University. She also has a passion for video games.

Notes

1. Bentham in Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977,(New York, 1980), p.148.
2. Op. cit., p. 147.
3. Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, (New York, 1975), p. 200.
4. Op. cit., p. 200.
5. Foucault, op. cit.,(1980), p. 155.
6. David Bell, "The Prison and the the Garden" in The Fifth Column, (Vol. 5, No. 3/4, 1986), p. 22.
7. Foucault, op. cit., (1980), p. 154.
8. Op. cit., p. 125.
9. Op. cit., p. 154.
10. Tony Shuman, "Utopia Spurned: Ricardo Bofill and the French Ideal City Tradition", in Journal of Architectural Education, (Vol. 40, No. 1, 1986), p. 22.
11. Kenneth Frampton, Modern Architecture: A Critical History, (London, 1980), p. 16.
12. Foucault, op. cit., (1980), p. 148.
13. Le Corbusier, 1922, in Norma Evenson, Le Corbusier's the Machine and the Grand Region, (New York, 1969).
14. Roschburg, 1986, p. 191.
15. Mary Macleod, "Le Corbusier in Algiers" in Oppositions, (Vol 19/20, 1980), pp. 53-81.
16. Le Corbusier in I. Tod and M. Wheeler, Utopia, (London, 1978), p. 141.
17. Taylor, (1985), i.
18. Bell, op. cit., p. 20.
19. Op. cit., p. 24.
20. Op. cit., p. 25.
21. Le Corbusier in Tod, Wheeler, op. cit., p. 138.
22. Foucault, op. cit., (1980), p. 119.
23. Bell, op. cit., p. 21.

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T U N S
Student
Work
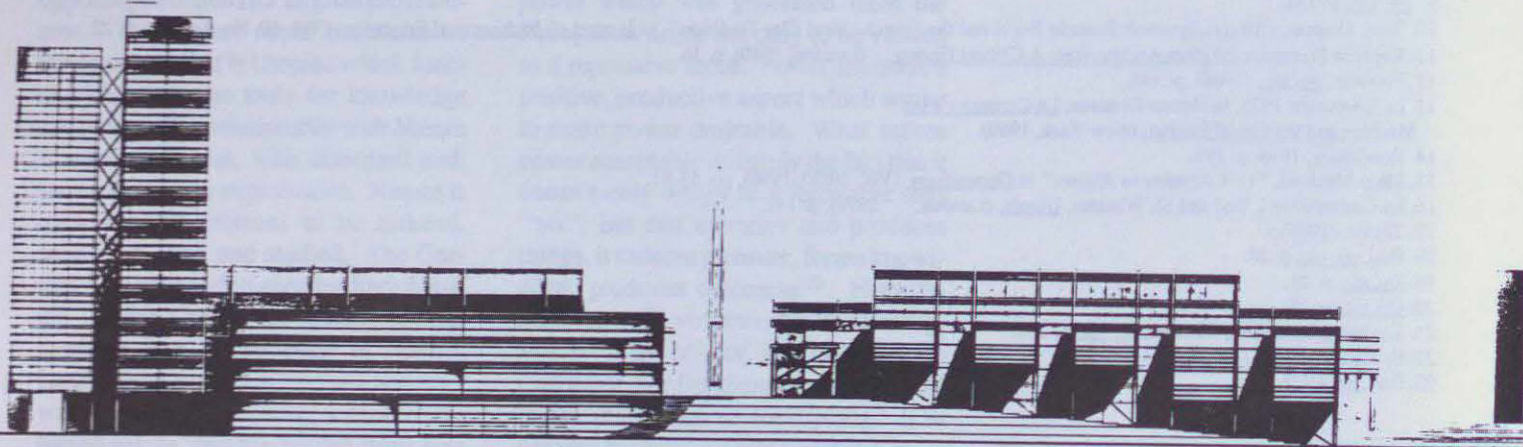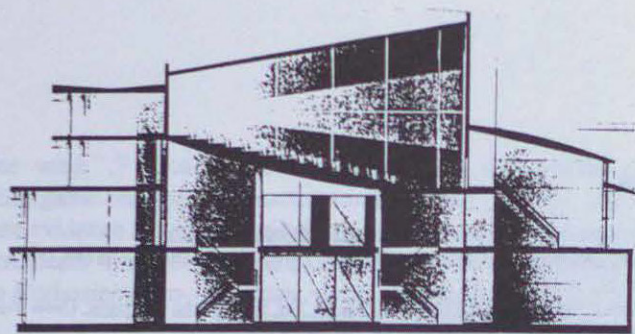
Works by Brian Kucharski

THE PROJECT CONSISTS OF A

Multi-use complex, for a site along the waterfront in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. The scheme is divided into three functional groups; institutional, pop/cultural and commercial. The portion of the project closest to the civic steps (seen in the model) is a main branch library for the city. An outdoor public space connects the library with a cinema/market building which in turn connects to a fourteen story office tower. The intent of the project was to give the center of Dartmouth a presence, landmark, or beacon, that would be familiar and welcoming to thousands of commuters working in Halifax, and traveling across the harbour each day.
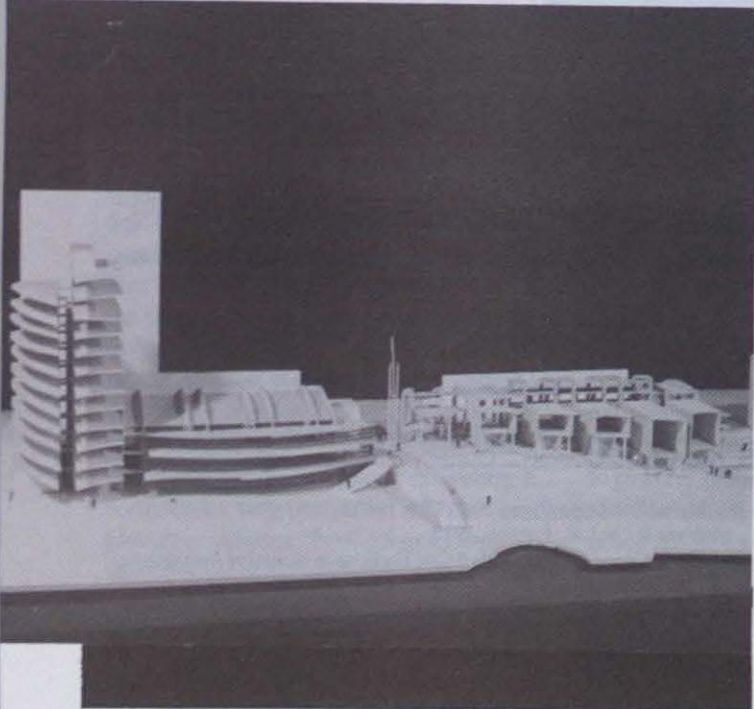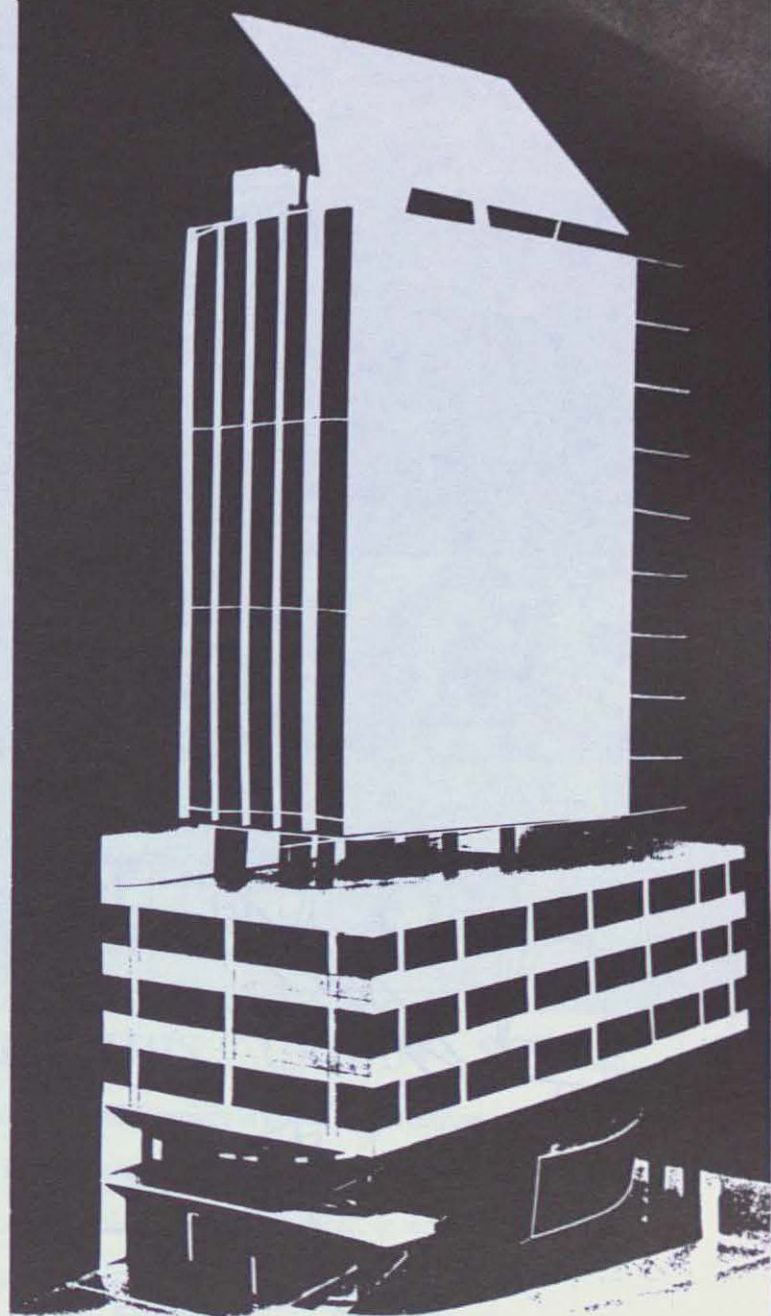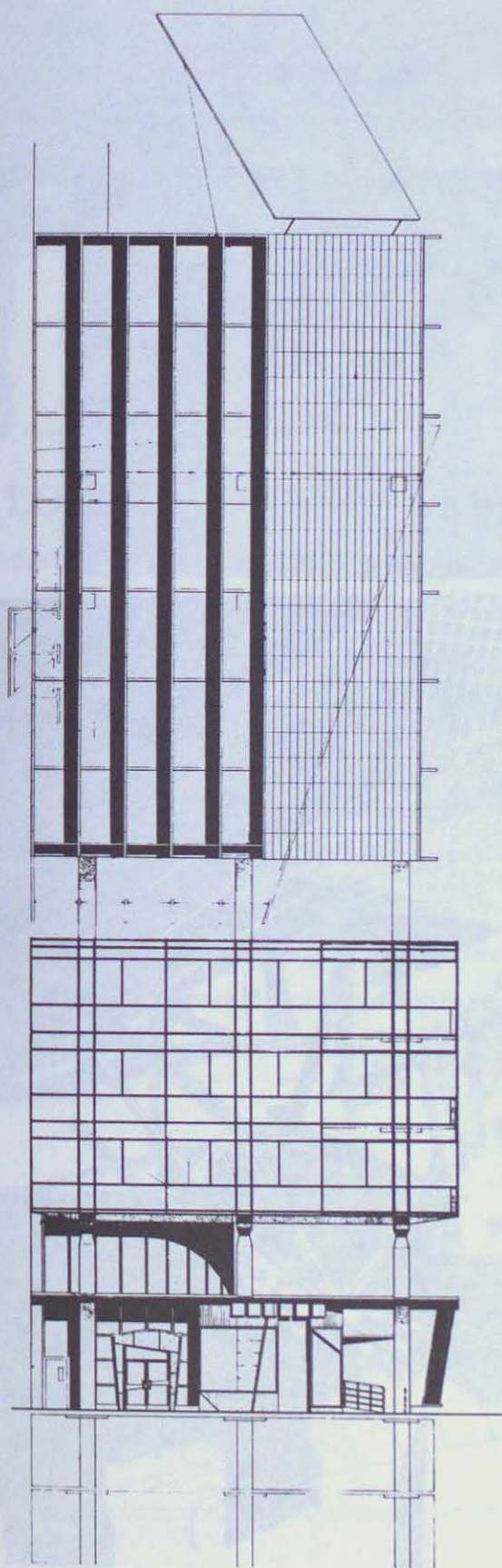
Works by Mikael Sandblom

THIS OFFICE BUILDING ON

the short end of a city block is based on an urban reading of the city. Its meaning is derived from three distinct scales of reference; the sidewalk scale of the pedestrian, the scale of the city block, and finally the scale of the skyline. It is a modern building contextually compatible with the Nineteenth Century urban fabric.
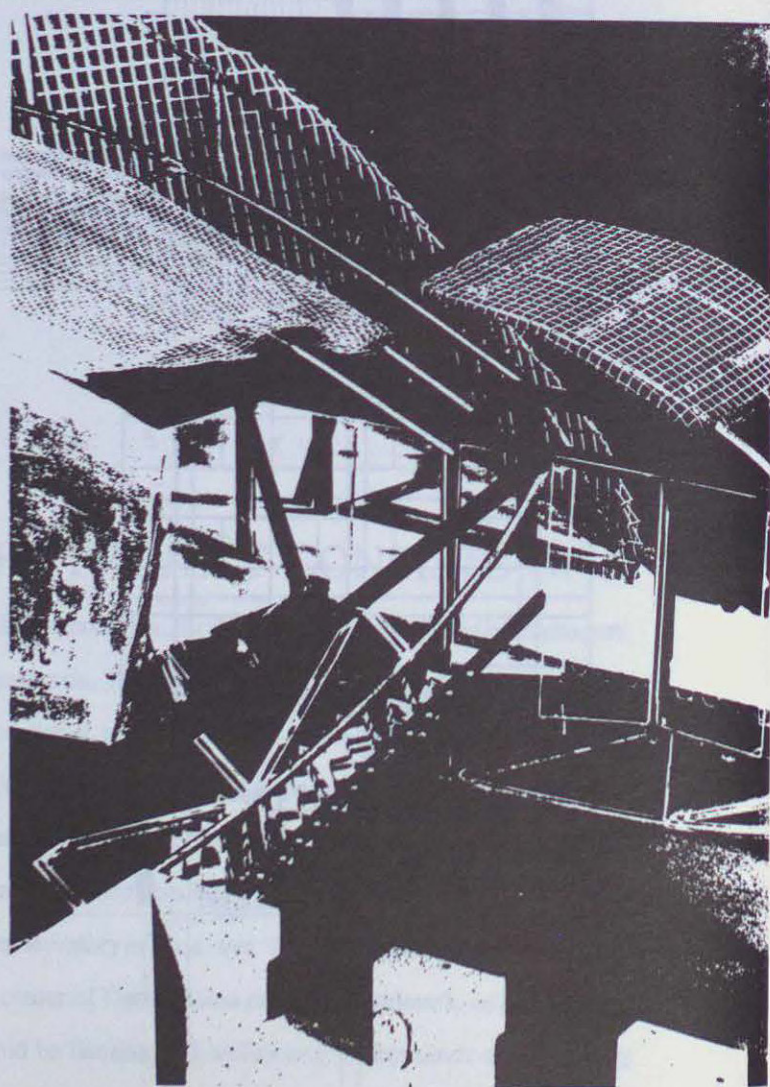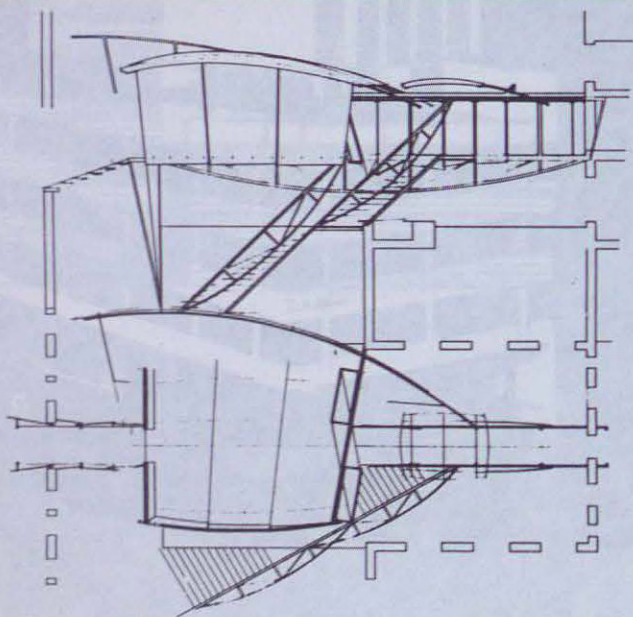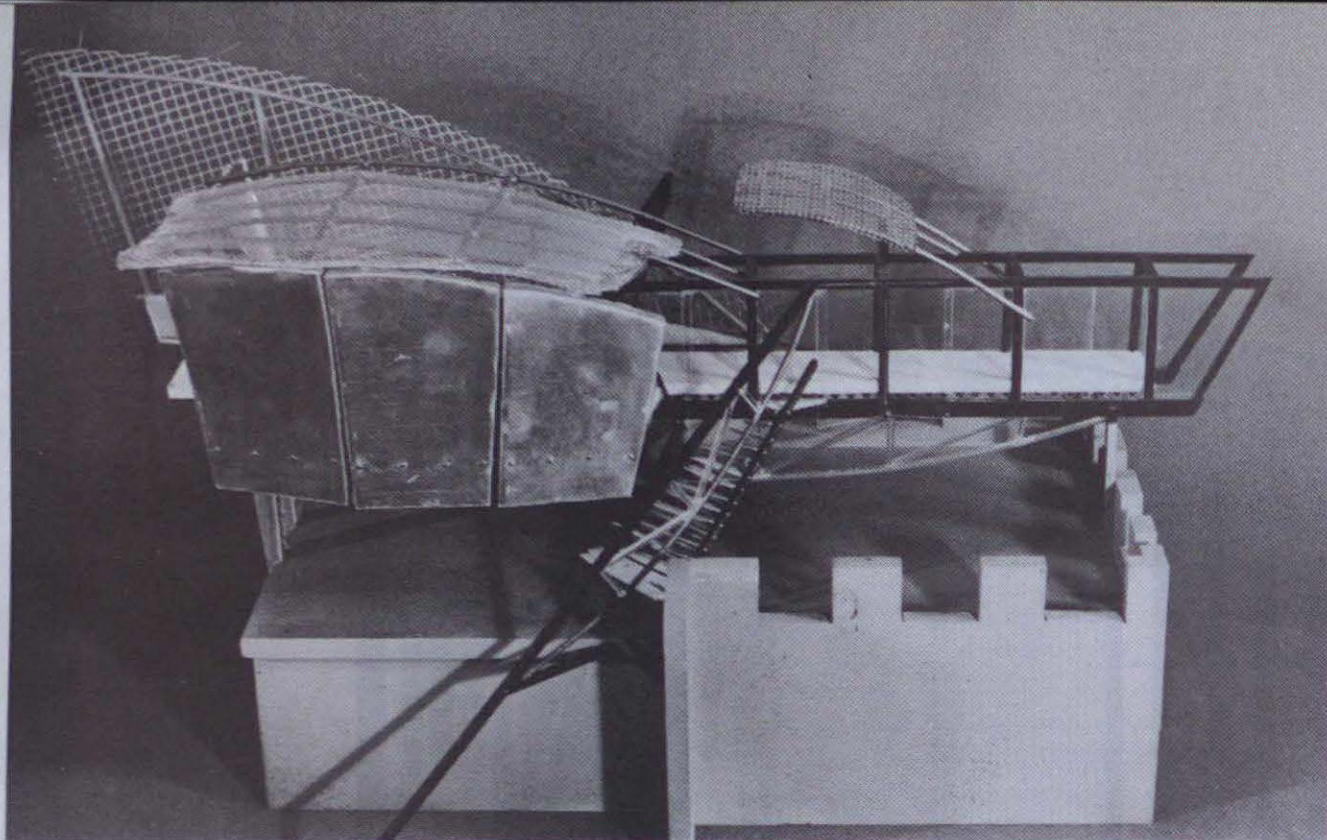
Works   by   Steve   Outerbridge:

I.   THIS   BUILDING   STUDIO

was conceived with an attitude towards architecture as sculpture in a design which deals with path and suspension. The design was a gathering place along a raised corridor between the studios of the architecture and engineering faculties, and was built to portray a fragile structure in which all components were necessary to retain stability.
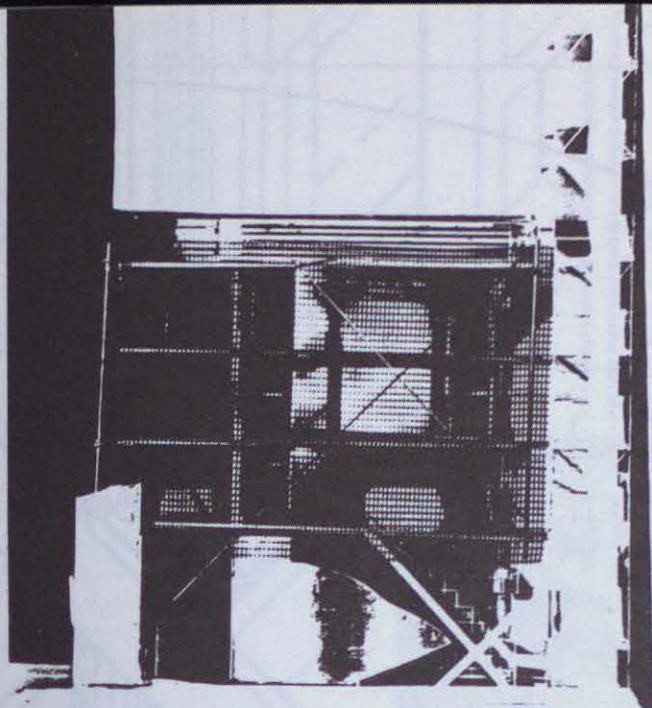
II. LOCATED ON THE CORNER

lot of a downtown city block, this urban form project protrays a vertical frame of reference to a city map. The first zone is that of the sidewalk and the pedestrian. The second zone deals with a partial separation; placing the automobile up in the building, looking out, provides an inverted perception of it as a display item. This concept; therefore, alleviates conjestion while utilizing building space (second, third and forth floors) which inevitably becomes under utilized on the downtown strip. The third zone or the top of the building, separated by a relief of mechanical fuctions, contains office or residential space and a parasitic restaurant, clinging to the skin of the building and accessed by ground elevators.
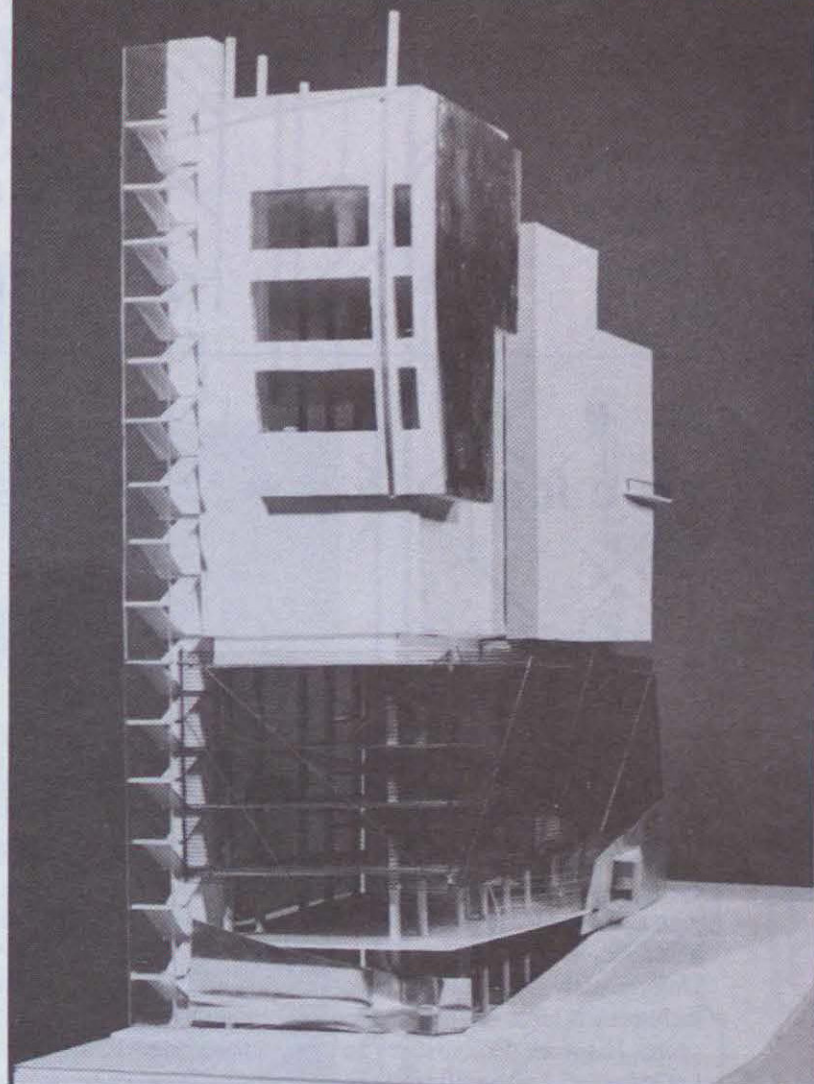
III.   THIS   URBAN   SCALE,

double city block project is an attempt to display a revealing of the initial livelihood of the cities waterfront area where the site is located. This plan becomes a narrative script acted out by five stage members, each in a varying degree of city fabric metamorphosed dress.

Layout by Daniel McGean and David Morin.
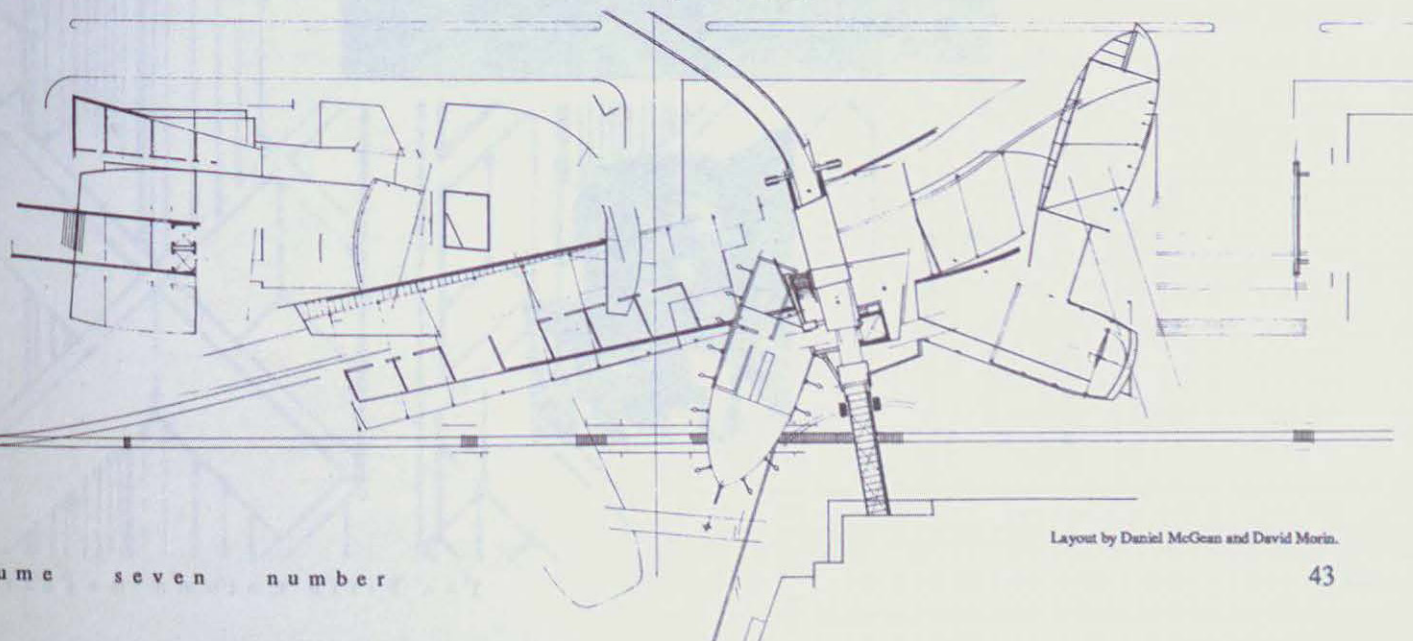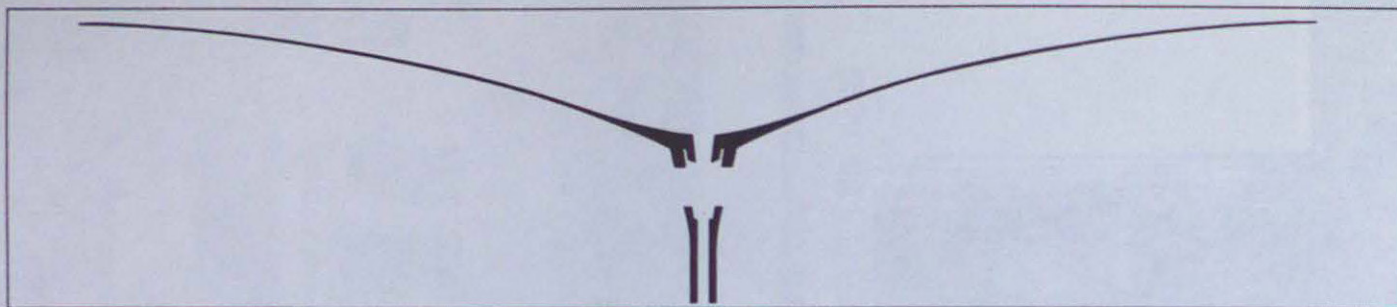
A M A N C I O   W I L L I A M S

TECHNOLOGY AS GENERATOR OF FORM

by Eric Russell Bunge

Les oeuvres illustrees ici meritent une attention renouvelees non seulment en ce qui concernent leur contribution importante a l'architecture Moderne, mais egalement pour leurs exploits technologiques.

Two visits to Amancio Williams' studio in Buenos Aires, Argentina, last summer were sufficient to leave me with the uncomfortable feeling of having been in the presence of a genius. With respect to his approach to architecture, Williams is an architect in a class with LeCorbusier in that he feels that he has somehow been chosen to fulfill and enormous architectural task, one could even say, a mission.

Unfortunately, the nature of his obsession with a few spatial paradigms and his uncompromising commitment to the purity of his architectural ideas has resulted mostly in a number of unbuilt projects which have been reworked and perfected over the past fifty years. His work demonstrates an unmistakable Modern signature not only in form (greatly derived from Mies Van der Rohe and LeCorbusier), but significantly in its worship of modern technology and concern for social welfare. Although Williams has strived to institute a typology of architectural form based on the logical consequences of new technologies and programs, his manipulation of technology is lyrical rather than mechanistic.

The work presented in these photographs therefore merits renewed consideration in the light not only of its important contribution to Modern Architecture, but also of its technological achievements.

I. Suspended Office Building (1946).

Although hanging constructions have been fairly common in recent years, this project was daring and innovative forty years ago. A series of steel slabs is suspended from the top of a reinforced concrete structure rising the entire building height. Since the tension bars supporting the slabs are much thinner than the columns typically used as structural supports, the office floor plans are almost unobstructed.
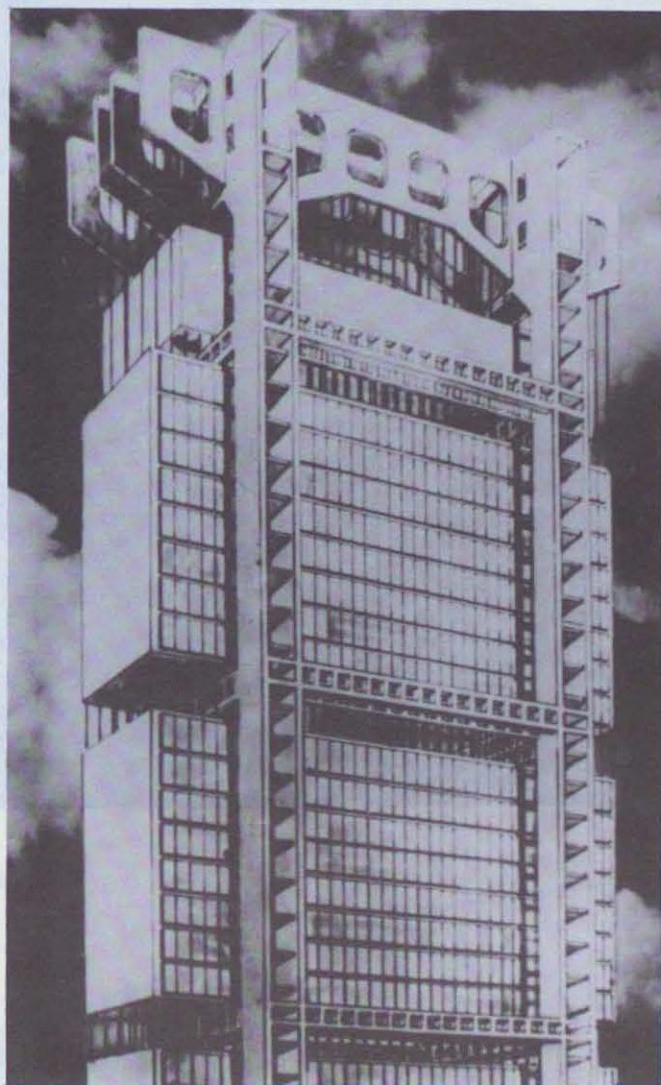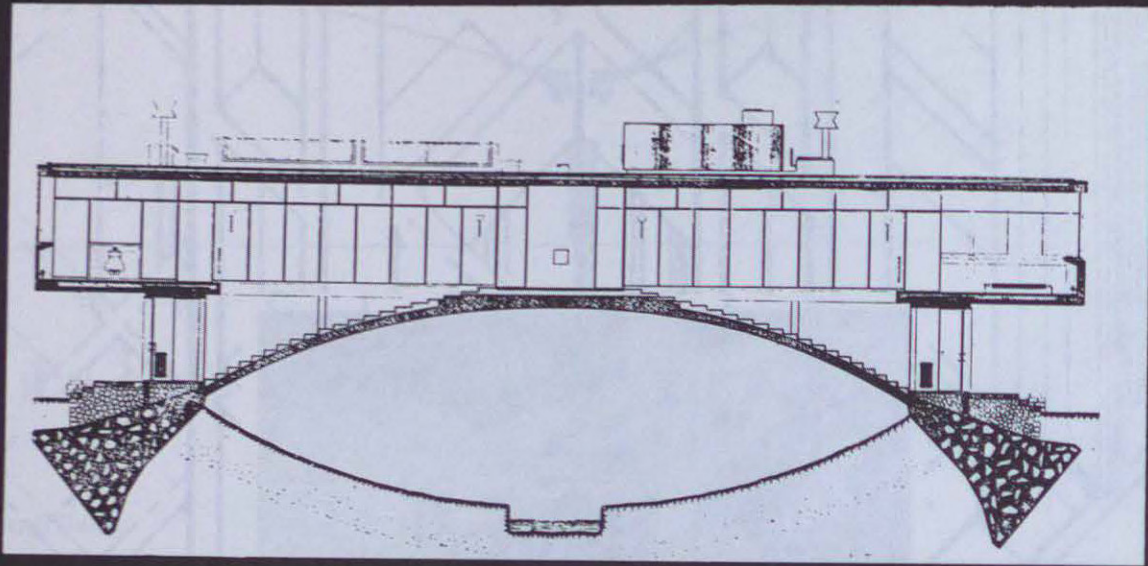
FIG II. House over the Brook in Mar del Plata, Argentina (1942-1945).
Williams described this house as "... a form in space that does not deny nature." The bridge-like structure is both structurally exciting and poetic in its response to the existing brook. The structure, which operates as a whole, is composed of the flat slab of the main floor connected to the curved slab below by thin transverse walls. The horizontal thrust is absorbed by the two pillars and angled foundations at each side of the brook.

FIG III. Airport for Buenos Aries (1945).
Williams' choice of the river Plata as a site for an airport in Buenos Aires is not only logical in view of circulation requirements, but sensitive and poetic in the relationship of the river to the supported runways.
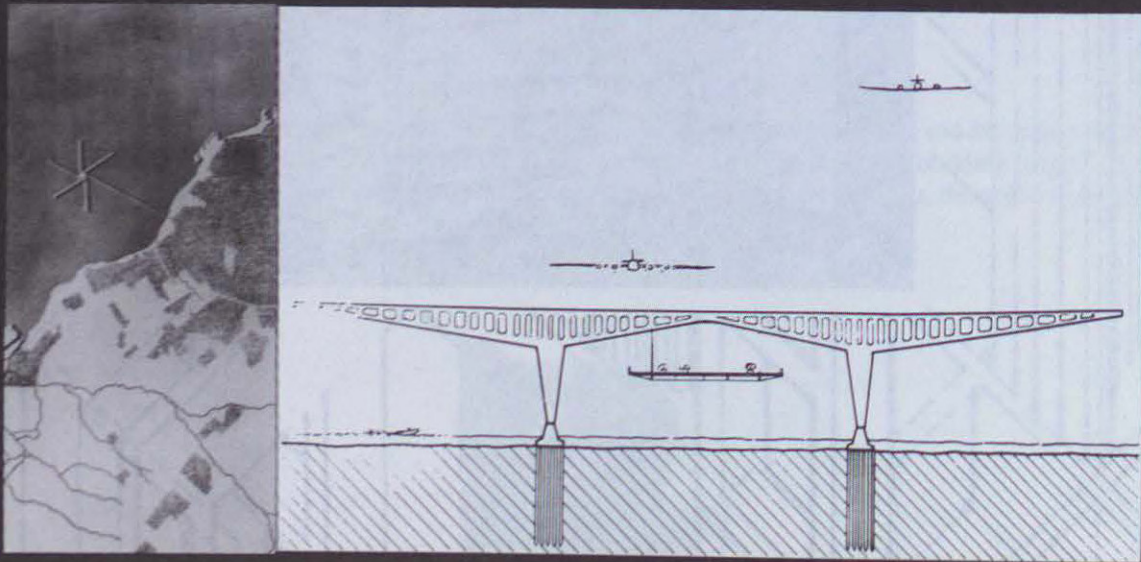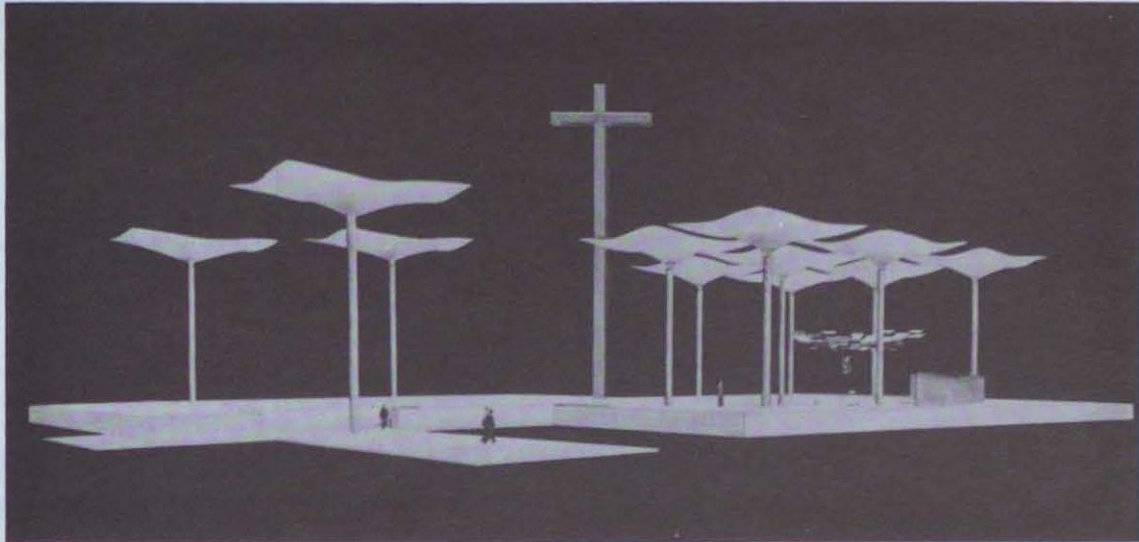
FIG V. Shells of Minimal Thickness (1951-1966).
Conceived as independent structural units, these shells can be grouped together to cover large areas.

Eric Russell Bunge is a third year architecture student at McGill University.
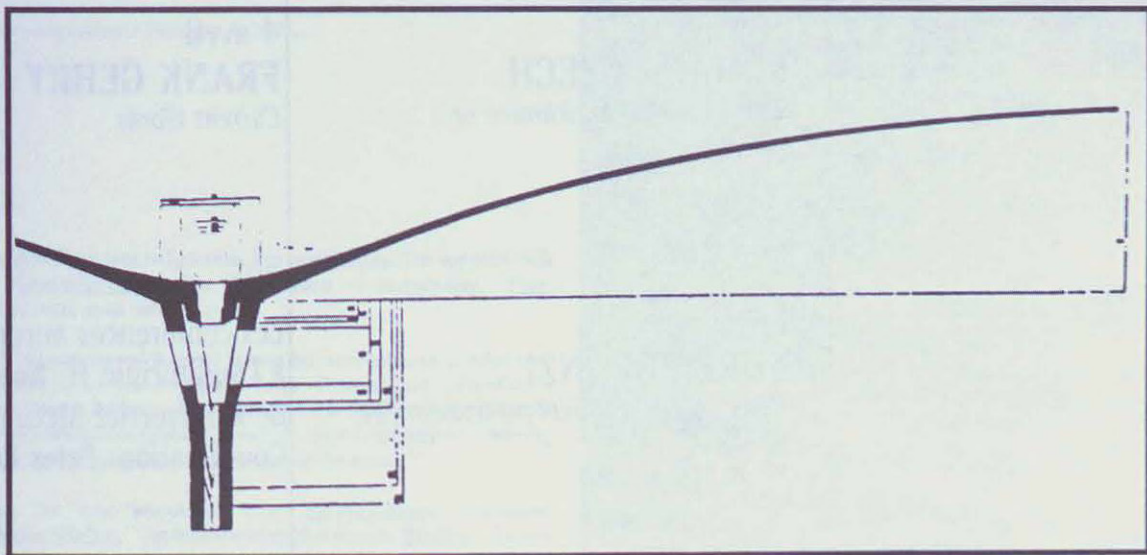
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THE FIFTH COLUMN, as a national journal, is calling for increased participation throughout the country and beyond. Whether from student, professional or otherwise, material is welcome and needed to raise the level of debate and broaden the appeal of the magazine. Articles can be thematic or of general interest. It is our policy to publish themes of future issues well in advance in order to better solicit submissions.

The deadline for submissions of thematic articles for each issue, as well as any material for our Forum section, is as indicated. We invite submissions of material from the Canadian architectural community. They should be typed double spaced on 8 1/2" x 11" paper. Include a 100 word summary and a one line biography and send in triplicate. All graphic material included may be either black and white or colour and may include photographs, clear photocopies or posistats. All graphic material is published in black and white. Please note that the material sent will not be returned unless requested. Articles and graphic material submitted are subject to the magazine's editorial requirements.

OLD BUILDINGS IN CHANGING CITIES
Vol. 7, No. 3

Today, as architects, we sit and watch, or often contribute, while buildings, or parts thereof are 'preserved' (from the effects of a neglectful society, some would say). Is it worth saving a building once its surroundings deny its original place in the city? Our understanding today of architecture as a combination of elements and styles from which we may draw at will has even brought us to accept juggling the building elements, in fact creating a whole that was never there. Are we deceiving society? If only the facade of the building is kept, is it enough? Some might disagree, but others, Alberti for instance, see the facade as the stageset for the city, in effect the theatre of a culture. Have we forgotten who walks the streets of our cities?

The deadline for submission is February 1, 1989.

PARALLAX
Vol. 7, No. 4

Parallax. The gap between past and present. Papraarlallalxax. The apparent shift of meaning. Parpaalrlaalxlax. The displacement of corporeality. Paraplalraaxllax. The curse upon modernity.

"Mr. Bloom moved forward raising his troubled eyes ... After one. Timeball on the ballast office is down. Dunsink time ... Parallax. I never exactly understood ... Met him pike hoses she called it till I told her about the transmigration. O rocks! ... She's right after all. Only big words for ordinary things on account of the sound."

Paraplalraaxllax. The "then" revealed in "now". Parpaalrlaalxlax. The hidden in the given. Papraarlallalxax. The deep structure of existance. Parallax. The task of the modern architect.

This issue is devoted to articles that seek to understand the task of the modern architect in this light, and how their contribution can be seen as a "stereoscopic" view with the past, where insight is opened up to a dialectic with History's intersubjectivity. With its return to McGill University, this issue will be edited by students in the History and Theory Masters program at McGill under the direction of Alberto Perez-Gomez.

The deadline for submissions is March 1, 1989.

THE FIFTH COLUMN, en tant que périodique d'envergure nationale, veut accroître la participation de ses lecteurs au Canada et à l'étranger. Nous lançons un appel aux étudiants aussi bien qu'aux professionnels à contribuer au contenu de la revue afin d'en élargir les horizons tout en encourageant le débat architectural. Les articles peuvent être d'un intérêt général ou ils peuvent élaborer sur le thème choisi. Les thèmes des numéros ultérieurs sont toujours publiés bien à l'avance afin de susciter l'intérêt et de mieux solliciter vos soumissions.

La date limite pour le remise des articles non thématiques ou tout autre matériel qui pourrait être inclus dans les autres sections de la revue, est la même que pour les articles thématiques. Toute contribution écrite ou graphique de la communauté architecturale canadienne est grandement appréciée. Tout document doit être dactylographié, à double interligne, sur papier 8 1/2" x 11" et accompagné d'un résumé de 100 mots et d'une biographie d'une ligne, le tout en trois examplaires. Les illustrations peuvent être en noir et blanc, couleur, sous forme de photographies, photocopies ou de posistats. Par contre, les illustrations sont publiées en noir et blanc. Notez que les documents et illustrations ne seront pas retournés sauf si désiré. Les articles et les illustrations acceptés seront assujettis aux exigences du comité de rédaction.

VIEUX BATIMENTS DANS LES VILLES CONTEMPORAINES
Vol. 7, No. 3

Aujourd'hui, en tant qu'architectes, nous nous assoyons et observons, ou souvent contribuons, à la 'préservation' totale ou partielle de bâtiments, des effets d'une société négligente, d'après certains. En vaut-il la peine de sauver un bâtiments une fois que l'environnement nie sa place originale dans la ville? Notre approche actuelle vis-à-vis l'architecture, en tant que combinaison d'éléments et de styles d'où nous puisons nos idées, nous a mené à accepter que l'on jongle avec ces éléments, en effet que l'on crée un faux sens d'unité. Sommes-nous en train de décevoir la société? Si seule la façade est gardée, est-ce assez? Certains ne sont peut-être pas d'accord, mais d'autres, comme Alberti par example, voient la façade comme étant une mise en scène pour la ville, le théâtre de la culture en fait. Avons-nous oublié ceux qui marchent dans les rues de nos villes

La limite pour la soumission d'article est le 1er février 1989.

PARALLAXE
Vol. 7, No. 4

Parallaxe. L'espace entre le passé et le présent. Papraarlallaxe. Le déplacement apparent d'un sens. Parpaxallax. Le mirage de la corporéalité. Prarapallaxallax. La dislocation de la modernité.

"Dupont avançait les yeux lui sortant des orbites. Et puis un. Dégonflé le ballon du ... Entretemps ... Parallaxe! Je n'ai vraiment pas saisi. Mets en-ci cause l'appelait-elle avant que je lui en parle de transmigration. O pierres! ... Elle a raison, après tout! Seulement de ongues onomatopées pour des choses bien ordinaires."

Paraplaraaxla. L'"alors" révélé "maintenant". Parpaaxlarax. Le voilé dans le vu. Paxallarax. La trame de l'existance. Parallaxe. La tâche de l'architecture. Ce numéro rassemblera les articles cherchant à cerner le rôle de l'architecture contemporain et de voir comment sa contribution peut être vue "stéréoscopiquement" avec le passé en établissant une dialectique des intersubjectivités de l'Histoire. Ce numéro sera "composé" par les étudiants du programme de maîtrise en histoire et théorie de l'architecture, de l'Université McGill, sous la direction du professeur Alberto Pérez-Gomez.

Les articles doivent être soumis avant le 1 mars, 1989.

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