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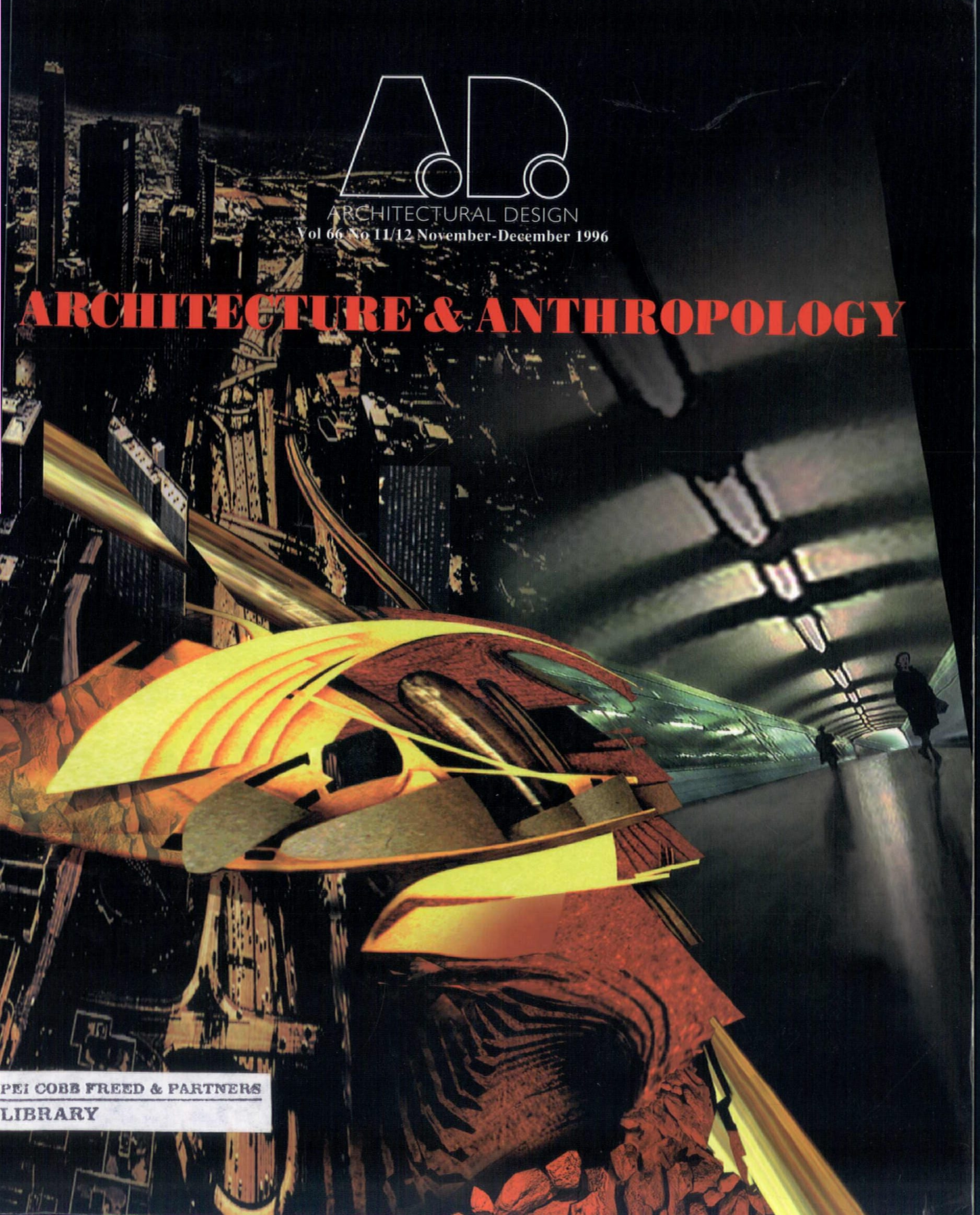

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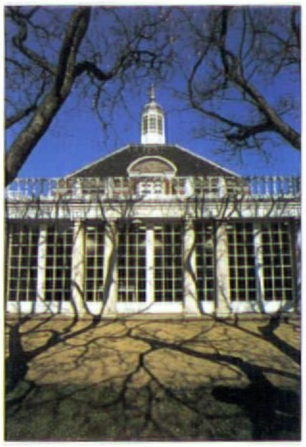
Serpentine Gallery, London (photo Hugo Glendinning)

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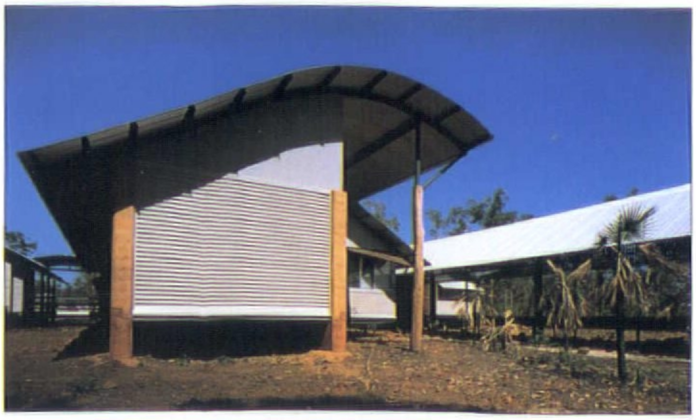
Museum cloister with new exit stairs from prehistoric room, Butrint, Albania


Glenn Murcutt (with Troppo Architects), Kakadu Landscape Interpretation Centre, Northern Territory, Australia

BATTLE McCARTHY
MULTI-SOURCE SYNTHESIS
Embodied Energy

Give to the Earth and the Earth will give to you,
Take from the Earth and the Earth will take from you.
Traditional African proverb

'Recycle and reuse' exhort the bill boards of a new town somewhere along the Pacific Rim *circa* 2025. The city itself is angular and abstracted, the product of the rational decision making of town planners and urban engineers. Back in the old world charm of Amsterdam, city folk cycle to work through tree-lined avenues, past an eclectic mix of old and new. In energy terms, both cities are models of the new sustainable society, but what of the quality of life?

Renewing City Fabric

The fabric of our cities is the result of slow underlying change combined with bursts of development associated with external forces, either natural or man-made. This is an evolutionary pattern similar to that found in all natural systems. The Industrial Revolution, the Blitz and information technology all forced major changes to the city and its fabric. As we reach the millennium, man's awareness of our effect on the planet will change his approach to urban design once again. Significant ecological damage and global economic instability is being generated by our profligate use of energy resources in building, transportation and industry. Within this framework, construction is the largest source of pollution.

In the UK, there are over 20 million existing buildings in various states of health. The sickest buildings are rightly being demolished, but the majority, with careful surgery, can be maintained, refurbished and reused. This strategy will help reduce the pollution associated with demolition, reduce the consumption of embodied energy in new constructions, and, if the building's new skin and systems are designed with the environment in mind, minimise the daily use of energy throughout the structure's lifetime.

This design work will not be about preservation in aspic, but will make use of our latest understanding of materials, technology and work patterns. Urban renewal will take place at all scales: how the building fabric works; how the structure relates to its surroundings; and how people use the internal spaces.

Demolition or Revival

Demolition costs money and creates local environmental pollution through noise and airborne particles. The waste materials are more often than not dumped in ever-decreasing landfill sites, and their embodied energy is lost for ever. Designers often feel that the best solution to our clients' problems lies in new construction. Interestingly enough this option also provides them with the most freedom to express their creative energies and leave the greatest mark. But is it really the best solution? Can designers, with imagination and analysis, provide for their clients' needs through the revival of existing buildings? By reusing and modifying existing structures and ensuring that the buildings are fully utilised, it will be possible to improve the urban fabric whilst minimising our environmental impact.

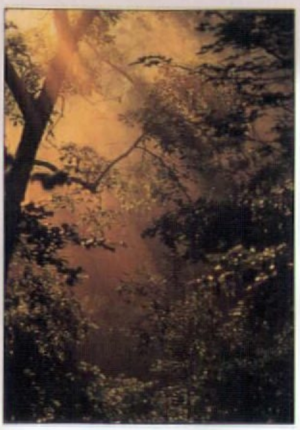
This strategy is most relevant to our run-down inner cities, which are perfectly located for the new multi-centred multi-modal integrated conurbations of the future. These cities will be pedestrianised and serviced by highly efficient low-pollution public transport and telecommunications. Buildings will be designed to open on to the streets, be naturally ventilated and comfortable, yet still provide for the needs of a modern society.

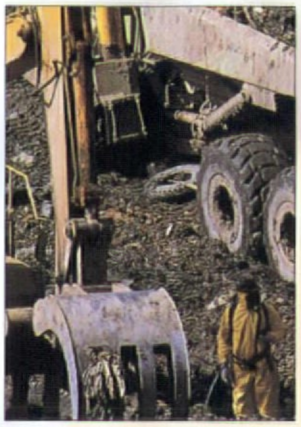
Embodied Energy in Construction

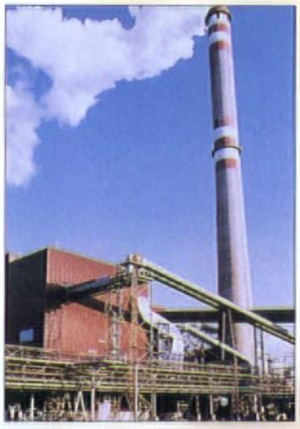
At present, the embodied energy used in the construction of new structures represents 1020 per cent of the lifetime energy consumption of the building. With improved environmental design, this energy is certain to represent a higher proportion of the total.

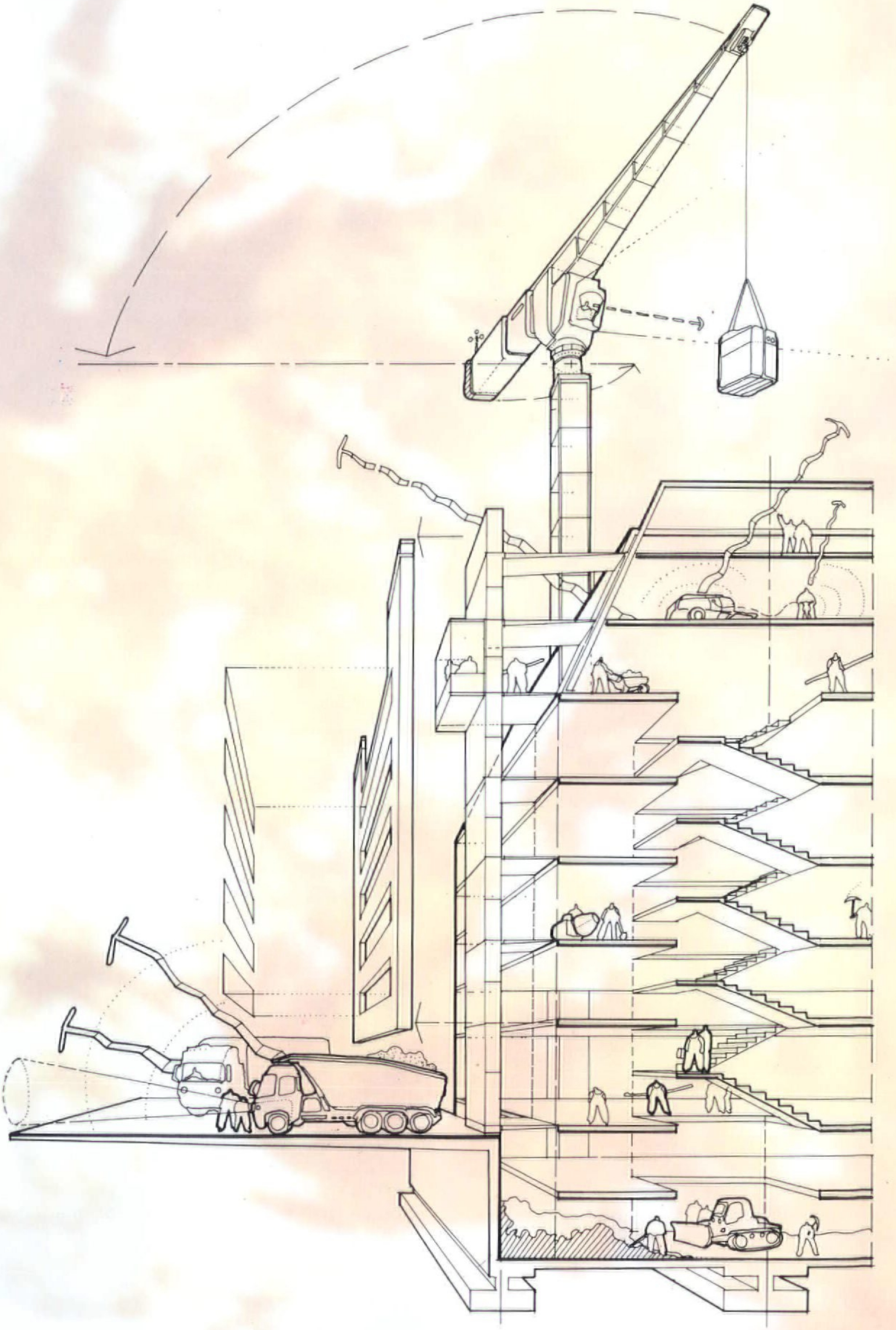
The United Nations energy optimisation programme currently provide tables for minimising the embodied energy usage of building materials. Much of this energy exists in the structural frame of the building. Embodied energy audits can also be carried out to show the environmental value of refurbishment over demolition. The audit includes the energy contained in the materials, the energy needed to demolish the building and the energy required to rebuild it. A further audit could compare the lifetime energy requirements of the refurbished building with those of an environmentally sensitive new structure. This

OPPOSITE: Buildings are our most valuable possession, which is illustrated by this farmer transporting his house to a better location; FROM ABOVE: Trees grow and adapt, replacing their outer skin each year whilst retaining their basic structure; unlike nature, man often finds it easier to start afresh









analysis can even be extended to cover the requirements for transportation to green field sites, the work habits of the building users, and the nature of the work itself.

Comparative energy requirements of a selection of building materials:

Very High Energy	(GJ/tonne)
Aluminium	200-250
Plastics	50-100
Copper	100+
Stainless Steel	100+
High Energy	
Steel	300-60
Lead, Zinc	25+
Glass	12-25
Plasterboard	8-10
Medium Energy	
Lime	3-5
Clay Bricks and Tiles	2-7
Gypsum Plaster	1-4
Concrete:	
in situ	0.8-1.5
blocks	0.8-3.5
pre-cast	1.5-8
Sand Lime Bricks	0.8-1.2
Timber	0.1-5
Low Energy	
Sand, Aggregate	<0.5
Flyash, RHA, Volcanic Ash	<0.5
Soil	<0.5

One giga-joule of energy is the equivalent of one hundred days of food for an average man.

Energy Audit

Battle McCarthy is currently renovating a listed building in Soho, London. This office was built in 1913, is 8 storeys high and has an area of 3,500 square metres. Its masonry walls are up to 0.6 metres thick, the steelwork weighs 500 tonnes and the concrete slabs occupy 700 cubic metres. The embodied energy, mainly contained within the steel frame, equals 30,000 giga-joules; the equivalent of five personal computers running continuously for 1,000 years. Demolishing the building would add another 10 to 15 per cent to the energy usage, the waste material would fill two Olympic swimming-pools and the lorry would travel over 15,000 kilometres to and from a suitable landfill site. Realistically, a new building to replace the original might be built to more efficient environmental standards, and consume a further 20,000 giga-joules. The total embodied energy would be sufficient to operate a naturally ventilated office for over 15 years.

Future Cities

If future cities are going to be sustainable, then all contemporary buildings will require refurbishment and renovation. Buildings which have deep plans, air-conditioning and poor illumination may be best replaced.

Many traditional buildings, especially those which incorporate narrow plans and exposed structure, can be renovated to meet higher environmental requirements. Rainscreen cladding, sophisticated window designs, new light wells and modern technology can be used to make them fit for a new millennium.

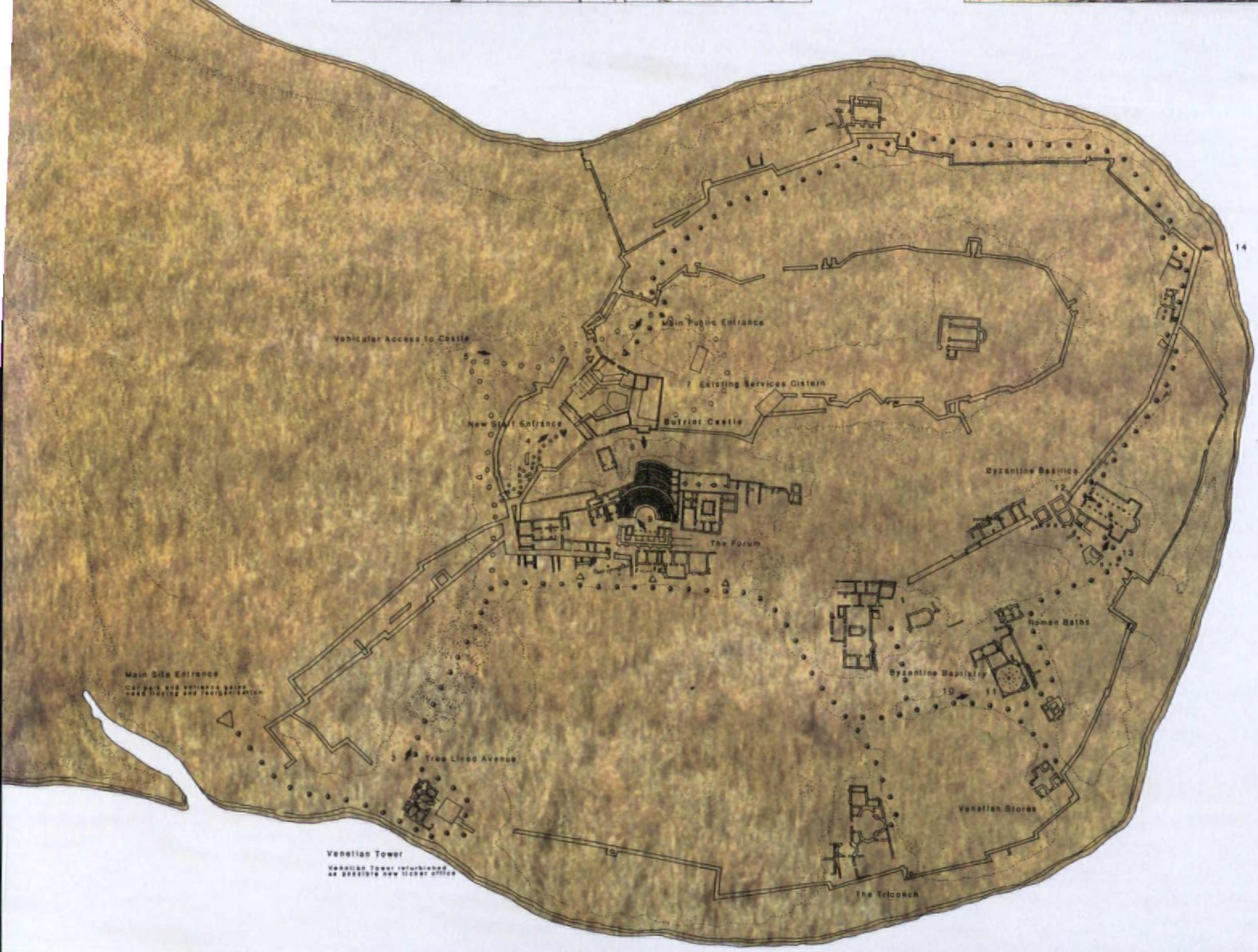
Modern buildings from the much maligned post-war era also have the potential to meet far more demanding environmental standards. Battle McCarthy's investigations into the refurbishment of the Martini Building, Brussels, illustrate that the incorporation of new facades, new plant and renewable energy sources – in the form of a roof-mounted wind turbine – can transform a poorly performing building into a racing thoroughbred. In a sluggish economy, the financial advantages of refurbishment cannot be ignored.

The exploration of how to reuse our infrastructure, for new patterns of work and relaxation, and in terms of the city ecology, will be exciting and fruitful, creating a fusion between new and old technology. The resulting buildings will not be simple renovations of the original architectural vision, but will be re-clad, shot through with communication technologies, and subtly re-engineered to allow for a natural flow of light and air.

> Mathilde locked her bike and walked through the GOR-TEX curtain which wrapped around the north face of her company's 1950s headquarters. Light filtered through from a photovoltaic wall of glass to the south. In the lobby, her work-mates held trans-continental holographic conversations with an Indo-Australian client . . . it was a warm summer day but, a cool breeze from the basement heat sink gently ruffled the leaves of a tree fern.

The authors would like to thank Dan Philip and Douglas Broadley for their assistance with the preparation of this article.

OPPOSITE: The energy embodied in a typical small office building related to other basic needs for transport and food; FROM ABOVE: Daily we consume one million days' worth of stored solar energy as we burn coal, oil and gas to maintain our current lifestyles; an understanding of chemical interaction allows man to create catalysts to speed the manufacture of useful biomaterials – building designers now have the capacity to catalyse the usefulness of our cities through a greater understanding of the complex interactions of nature and society


14
Vehicular Access to Castle
5
6
Main Public Entrance
7 Existing Services Cistern
New Staff Entrance
4
Butrint Castle
8
9
The Forum
Byzantine Basilica
12
13
Roman Baths
Byzantine Baptistry
10
11
Main Site Entrance
Car park and entrance gates need tidying and reorganisation
3
Tree Lined Avenue
Venetian Stores
Venetian Tower
Venetian Tower refurbished as possible new ticket office
The Triconch

PRUE CHILES

BUTRINT: AN ANCIENT CITY REDISCOVERED

The partially revealed ancient city of Butrint in the far south of Albania, one of Europe's least known countries, is the subject of a recent collaboration between East and West, a mere three years after the revolution.

The topography of the area surrounding Butrint is spectacular and its history is complex like those of the other Balkan states. The unravelling of this history is vital to the Albanian's national identity, as Albania is an area of disputed racial origin that has been colonised and re-colonised throughout its turbulent past.

Butrint is a microcosm of Mediterranean history. It was once an important Adriatic port, used to defend the eastern flank of the Straits of Corfu. In the age of Augustus, Virgil believed it was the new Troy and associated its foundation with Aeneas. Plutarch, writing in the 2nd century AD, recounted that Pan died here.

The most recent chapter of the city's history is one of physical neglect, imposed on the ruined city by the Communist regime of Enver Hoxha. In his colourful autobiography,[1] Hoxha describes a visit by Khrushchev who was trying to secure southern Albania as a fruit-growing colony to serve the revisionist Soviet Union. He records the premier as saying at Butrint, 'dead things . . . leave the Hellenes and the Romans to their antiquity . . . an ideal base for our submarines could be built here. These old things should be dug up and thrown into the sea.'

The most extensive and revealing excavations at Butrint were carried out in the pre-Communist era by the Italians in the 1920s, but these still exposed only 5 per cent of the ruins. Luigi Ugolini, an archaeologist sent by Mussolini, uncovered vast areas of the city and recorded the results. His documents provide us with an understanding of the Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Venetian layers of Butrint, even though Ugolini's agenda was to uncover the great Roman city.[2] Today, at the invitation of the Albanian Government, a group consisting of archaeologists, architects, historians, geographers and conservators are involved in developing a strategy for the future of the ancient city and surrounding areas.

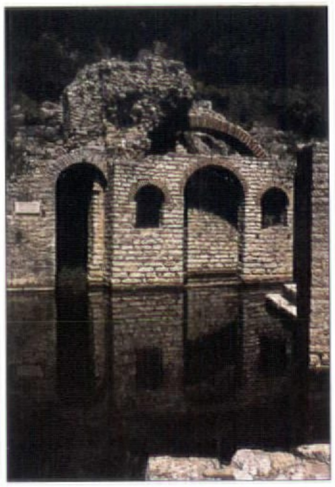
Butrint's natural beauty, unspoilt coastline and proximity to Corfu make it a prime location for mass tourism. Today, the whole area is under threat from Italian proposals for high-density coastal development, and the Albanians are torn between their need for hard currency and an informed and cultured response to their history. Four years ago there was full employment in this region, with most people employed on co-operative farms. Now there is almost complete unemployment. Olive and citrus groves are being eaten by grazing goats and the flatlands are left uncultivated. Establishing ownership of land has proved difficult, and the Albanians are understandably nervous about their future. To avoid the developmental mistakes of other post-Communist countries, there are plans to make the whole area a site of scientific interest, which would halt all development. However, the Albanians still require powerful and influential friends.

Part of the strategic plan for Butrint involves the restoration of the castle, the extension of the museum, and the creation of a centre for archaeology. Proposals such as these inevitably concern the relationship between old and new, and attempt to distinguish between a building's importance as an historical document, its monumental value, and the quality of its architecture.

Under Ugolini's instruction, the architect Carlo Ceschi reconstructed the Venetian castle, based on the original 17th century design, to provide a museum for the site. Unfortunately, this building is unfinished, and is, at best, a loose interpretation of the original, at worst a mêlée of renaissance Venetian defensive architecture and 1930s Italian Functionalism. Only the rebuilt tower gives the castle an air of authenticity.

Unlike Giorgio Grassi's theatre at Sagunto, or Carlo Scarpa's Castelvecchio museum at Verona, an intervention cannot rely on the existing architecture. Instead it must depend on the idea of a fortress – its solidity – and the view over the Straits of Corfu so admired by the Venetians during their period of occupation. However, it can, like Sagunta,[3] attempt to convey a clear idea of the original space and refer to existing Venetian fragments which litter the slopes of the acropolis. To work here, to survey and observe the archaeology of Butrint, as Ceschi did, provides an opportunity to encounter the very fabric of the past, to feel and understand its materiality, and to recognise the contradictions of history.

The new architecture intends to be both an intervention, a contrast to the architecture of the past in the tradition of the Modernists, and an interpretation of the context in which it finds itself.[4] The colours and the shadows of the



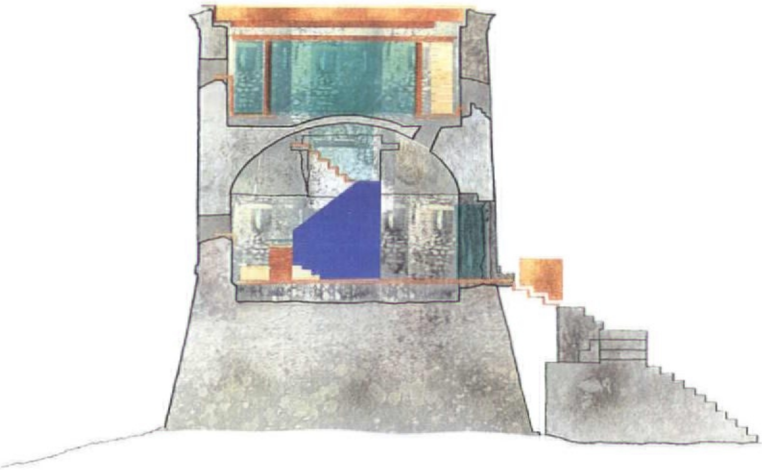
OPPOSITE, FROM ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Greek theatre (4th century BC); Byzantine baptistry; plan of Butrint including proposed pedestrian route; Byzantine basilica (6th century AD); Greek theatre from the castle; FROM ABOVE: Temple dedicated to the Roman god of medicine Escipius; very early Hellenistic walls (3-4th century BC)

Mediterranean, and the simplicity of the earlier architectural forms around the site, provide two key influences. The new museum is conceived as a 'self-effacing' wall which allows visitors to formulate and interpret their own history.

The scheme proposes that the journey around the city begins at the restored 15th century Venetian tower, which remains in good condition. This building will be converted into the ticket office, providing information about Butrint and directing visitors. The top floor will be a café with panoramic views up the channel to the Straits of Corfu. Architectural interventions will be constructed from simple timber planes; tactile and smooth in contrast to the rough, exposed masonry of the tower. The gun holes have timber sills to lean on and the flat brick vault will be visible from the café, exposing the original construction. From here the visitor follows a long path uphill, past all the finest exhibits, to the gates of the museum.

Although small, this museum allows the exhibits – including some fine statuary, prehistoric finds, inscriptions, vases and coins – to be kept on site rather than hundreds of miles away in the national museum in Tirana. The rooms, which originally terminated in a dead end, are extended into an experimental path around the buildings. This route will provide views into the excavations, and form a continuity between the exhibits and the ongoing scholarship of archaeology. The entrance courtyard will be re-paved and the rubble walls rendered a rich Pompeian red, reminiscent of a Roman fresco, to provide a contemporary backdrop for the statues it contains.

The castle is built on a limestone outcrop which will allow the majority of the new accommodation to be carved out of the rock itself.



FROM ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Byzantine basilica (5th century AD); section through Venetian tower showing timber and glass insertion; Roman shrine dedicated to the Roman god of medicine Escipius

These new rooms, to be used mainly by the museum, are arranged around a light well, which also provides a shaded outside space where the archaeologists can work and lay out and dry their finds.

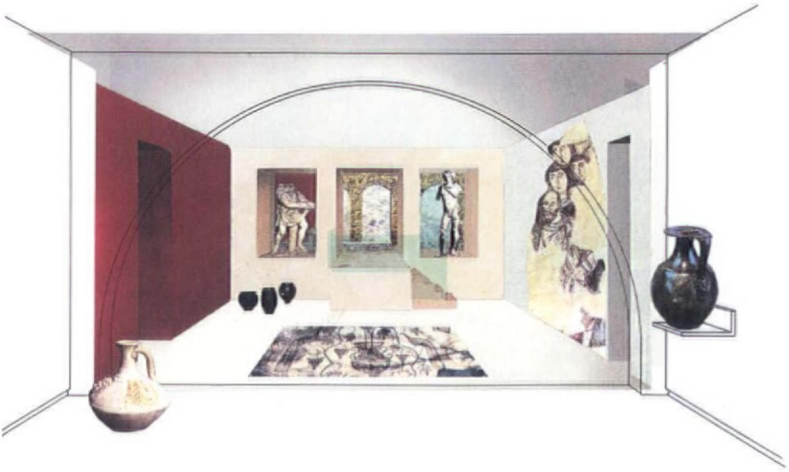
Rising up into the sun from the museum, the existing main courtyard appears to be a frenzy of limestone fragments and, apart from the tower, these incomplete single-storey buildings are a disappointing setting from which to view the extraordinary panorama. The new scheme proposes another storey for the existing building, to accommodate a lecture hall and a hostel above the refurbished conservation suite. The entrance, a timber walkway suspended over the ruined castle walls, will heighten the fortress' apparent isolation and provide dramatic views of the theatre over 100 metres below.

When completed, the castle will extend a welcome to both scholarship and tourism, while highlighting the complex history of this ancient city and the optimism of cross-cultural debate and European collaboration.

Prue Chiles is an architect and lecturer at the School of Architectural Studies, University of Sheffield.
The Butrint Foundation is a charity set up by Lord Rothschild and Lord Sainsbury in collaboration with the Albanian Government, that has enabled this work to be undertaken. Special thanks must be given to Gjergji Saraçi from the Institute of Archaeology, Tirana.

Notes

1. Enver Hoxha, *The Artful Albanian; Memoirs of Enver Hoxha*, (ed) J Halliday, London, 1986.
2. Luigi M Ugolini, *Butrinto Il Mito D'Enea Gli Scavi*, Instituto Grafico Tiberino, Rome, 1937.
3. Giorgio Grassi, 'Fixed Stage', *Lotus*, no 46, 1985, pp7-22.
4. Ignazio de Solà-Morales, 'From Contrast to Analogy', *Lotus*, no 46, 1985, pp37-46.



FROM ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Baptistry; interior view of the existing museum in the castle, looking out to exterior courtyard; uncovering the Byzantine mosaic in the baptistry (5th century AD)

MATTHEW FOREMAN

ARCHITECTURE IN EXILE
Tibetan Monasteries in Nepal

Much has been written about the human suffering in Tibet since China annexed the country in 1959. Less commented on has been the destruction of Tibet's architectural heritage. The emergence of the capital, Lhasa, as a modern industrial city in the last ten years has cost it much of its secular architecture, particularly in the ancient Shöl district. More distressing has been the damage wrought on Tibet's monasteries. Of approximately 6000 monasteries only 13 survived the cultural revolution of the early 1960s undamaged. Although the Chinese authorities have undertaken some restoration projects, it cannot be disputed that a 1000-year-old architectural tradition is on the brink of destruction. Fortunately, there is some cause for hope: the spiritual and temporal leader, the Dalai Lama, fled Tibet in 1959 and has been joined in exile by over 100,000 refugees. The small communities created in India and Nepal have revitalised Tibetan culture, transmitting it faithfully to the next generation and opening it up to Western scrutiny.

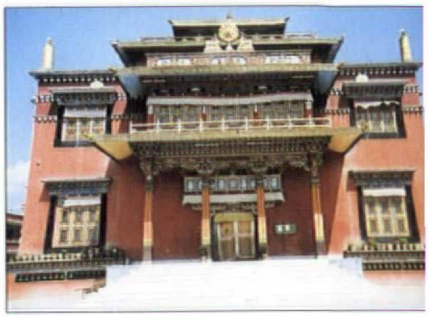
To assess whether Tibetan architecture, too, has flourished in exile, it is necessary to outline the nature of Tibetan architecture as practised until 1959. Intimately entwined with all things Tibetan is the Buddhist religion, first brought across the Himalayas from India in the 7th century. The Tibetans embraced the Tantric form of Buddhism, an enormous and perplexing amalgam of philosophy, folk beliefs, and medical notions, with a vast pantheon of gods and goddesses, often in demonic guises. A Tantric adept, Padmasambhava, was instrumental in the design of Tibet's first monastery, Samye, in 750. An account of the cosmological significance of Samye is preserved in the biography of Padmasambhava. The central temple, *U-tse*, represents the universal mountain, Mount Meru, the point around which the universe revolves. Outlying shrines represent the earth and other aspects of the Buddhist cosmos. The *U-tse* take the form of a mandala, a simple cruciform plan with the four cardinal points and centre, which symbolises both the fall from original purity and the transcendent journey back to it. Mandalas are best known in the West as two-dimensional representations in art, but are, in fact, primarily meditative aids for the neophyte, and as such are visualised in three dimensions. The class of mandalas known as 'resident' mandalas detail the celestial architecture of the gods and are the key to the transmission of Tibet's architectural heritage. This accounts for the lack of technical literature on temple design, contrasting strongly with the plethora of works on the correct methods and proportions for artists.

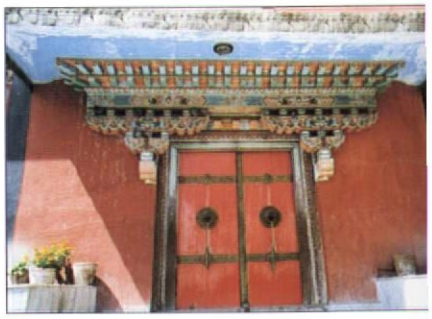
The mandala plan elaborated by the *U-tse* became the blueprint for all temple architecture in Tibet. Unfortunately this origin is obscured in many later temples, which were often in huge monastic complexes atop strategically important mountains. The monasteries' assumption of secular power in Tibet from the 13th century led to the central temple mandala being surrounded with a jumble of ancillary buildings, precluding the use of the wider cosmic symbolism to be found, for instance, at Samye.

Over the symbolic ground plan was placed a unique form of 'architecture without architects'. First a site was selected using an elaborate method of geomancy and offerings to guardian deities. The choice of materials here was purely practical; mud bricks or loose rubble were used in Ldakh, while a rammed earth technique was applied in eastern Tibet and Bhutan. This, like the digging of the foundations, is a communal act which helps in the accumulation of spiritual merit and completion is heralded by feasting and celebrations. Specialist carpenters then erect a column and beam structure within the huge load-bearing walls. Prefabricated windows and doors are added to the tapering walls.

Internal columns, *khar*, and their attendant beams, *hum*, are used to describe the central temple assembly hall. Thus we find 4, 8 or 32-*Khar* rooms – each number, of course, being highly symbolic. Elaborate capitals are one of the glories of Tibetan architecture. Beautifully carved and painted, they consist of 16 sections and are often filled with precious religious objects. The construction of timber floors, balconies, and the roof structure is followed by internal plastering and mural painting. Completed structures mirror the three-storeyed Samye blueprint. In Samye the three represented the great Buddhist lands of India, China and Tibet, as well as the Tantric division of the three 'bodies' of the Buddha. The first floor serves as temple and assembly hall while the second houses administrative offices. On the top floor are the quarters of the Head Lama, or Dalai Lama, if he should visit.

To discover whether the traditions outlined above have survived in exile I present the example of the Khatmandu Valley in Nepal. Nepal had





ABOVE: Views of Shechen Tenny Dargyeling Monastery, Khatmandu a significant Tibetan minority before 1959 and 5 per cent of its population remains Buddhist. In the Khatmandu Valley Tibetan monasteries have congregated around the two principal pilgrimage sites at Swayambunath and Boudnath.

At Swayambunath a number of small Tibetan monasteries have grouped around the base of the hilltop stupa. Most are converted Nepalese houses but halfway up the circumambulatory route lies Ganden Maitri Monastery, a scaled-down copy of the original Ganden Monastery, one of the three great monastic establishments that surrounded Lhasa and belonged to the ruling Gelugpa sect. Concrete slabs have been tapered to re-create the look of the Tibetan load-bearing walls, and imitation beam ends top the windows. The huge cloth hangings are another traditional detail and come in four colours representing both the seasons and the four elements.

The real jewels of Tibetan exile architecture are to be found to the east of Khatmandu around Boudnath. Here the Great Stupa, with its long connection to Tibetan Buddhism, has proved a magnet to the refugees. Half a mile from the Great Stupa lies the Ka Nying Shedrup Ling monastery, designed by Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche, the previous Head Lama. The current incumbent, his son Chokyi Nyima, reports that the design was not based on any particular Tibetan monastery but was 'his own plan'. The monastery follows the mandala plan exactly. It is square and three-storeyed and has doorways at each cardinal point with protective deities, *dharmapala*, at each one to guard the huge central image of Maitreya, the future Buddha. Here, as at other monasteries, the mandala plan has become more pronounced than at later Tibetan monasteries. The small scale of the monasteries has allowed the square plan found at Samye to re-emerge. The first floors have lost the rectangular shape previously adopted to allow the central temple to act as an assembly hall for far larger monastic communities. This is a by-product of secular and administrative functions of monasteries being renounced in the non-Buddhist countries of exile.

Surpassing Ka Nying Shedrup Ling is the nearby Shechen Tenny Dargyeling Monastery, founded by Dilgo Khyestse Rinpoche in 1977 and conceived as a copy of the original monastery in the Kham province of Tibet. This was destroyed during the cultural revolution but has since been partially rebuilt and currently houses 600 monks. This 'new' monastery was completed in 1986 with the addition of the traditional third floor quarters for the Dalai Lama. The superb detailing was carried out by over 200 craftsmen from Bhutan, and for this reason it is known locally as the Bhutanese monastery. As with other monasteries, the use of concrete has not deterred the Tibetans from copying traditional details. Painted white spots on the second floor imitate timber beam ends, while painted red floor stripes recall the Tibetan layer of dried twigs separating storeys.

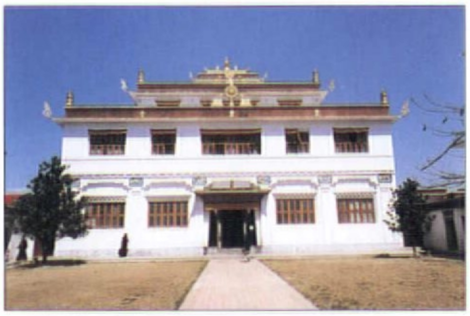
A glimpse of the future can be found a few miles from Boudnath at the new Kopan Monastery. While the Head Lama happily agreed that the design was 'close' to the Tibetan ideal he also pointed out that internal columns and the omission of a third floor lack authenticity. Like many Tibetan establishments the Kopan Monastery has been adept at attracting affluent devotees from both East Asia and the West.

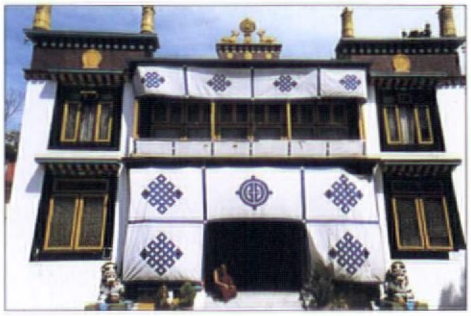
This brief study has looked at three aspects of Tibetan exile architecture. Firstly, it has been shown that the mandala plan identified at Tibet's first monastery, Samye, has not only survived as an element of architectural design but has re-emerged as the central design principle. The importance of the mandala cannot be overstated. They permeate all spatial ideas amongst Tibetans, as numerous examples from literature demonstrate. It should not be surprising that Tibetan architecture has appropriated the mandala; its obvious link to the celestial palaces of the gods has allowed it to become a repository for architectonic ideas. The mandala's function as a meditative aid requiring intense concentration also makes it the perfect method for transmitting an architectural tradition. This also explains the surprising lack of architectural treatises in a country where innumerable guides to artistic endeavour are extant.

Secondly, it has been shown in the architectural detailing of exile communities that the widespread use of concrete has not deterred Tibetans from following traditional plan forms. Columns still follow the sixteen-level ideal, and timber frames and beam ends are faked, with paint being used to replicate organic effects. Only roofs have suffered in exile. The excellent results achieved at the 'Bhutanese Monastery' are uncommon, lack of funds and craftsmen being the principal problems.

Finally, the communal nature of architecture found in Tibet has died out. The Nepalese exile monasteries have not been restricted by a lack of land and have been able to incorporate large courtyards for communal activities, but participation in the building process by the laity has ceased. The use of local construction companies and concrete as a building material has stripped Tibetan exile architecture of its opportunity to provide spiritual merit to it participants.

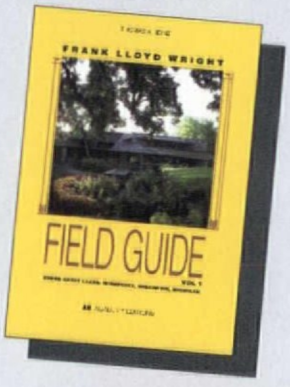
Where time, money and people with the requisite skills are available, excellent architecture can be achieved in exile. Overall, tradition and changed circumstances have combined to produce a reflowering of a 1000-year-old heritage in the Himalayas.

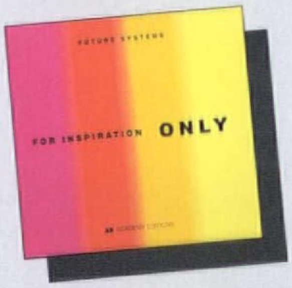


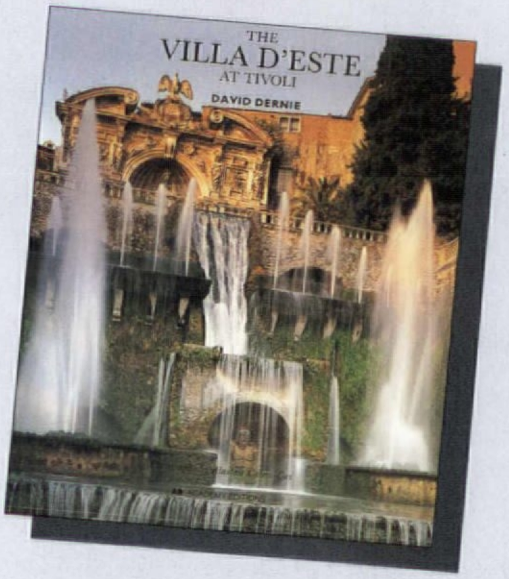


FROM ABOVE: Ka Nying Shedrup Ling Monastery, Khatmandu; Ganden Maitri Monastery, Khatmandu; decorative heads

SANTIAGO CALATRAVA







SANTIAGO CALATRAVA

Architectural Monograph no 46

DENNIS SHARP

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This monograph focuses on his most recent projects and, with critical observations from Dennis Sharp and Anthony Tischhauser, seeks to define Calatrava's philosophy, methods, originality and sources of inspiration. Among the projects featured are Lyon-Satolas Airport Railway Station, France (1989-94), the Stadelhofen Station, Zurich (completed in 1990), his competition entries for the East London River Crossing (1990) and for the Reichstag conversion in Berlin (1992), his design for BCE Place, Toronto (1987-92) and the Orient Station scheme in Lisbon (1993-) for the World International Exhibition in two years' time.

Dennis Sharp has been responsible for bringing two major exhibitions of Calatrava's work to the United Kingdom. His practice, Dennis Sharp Architects, acts as Calatrava's UK associates.

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Thomas A Heinz is an architect and acknowledged expert on Frank Lloyd Wright, having written many books for Academy Editions on the master architect.

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DAVID DERNIE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALASTAIR CAREW-COX

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In his quest to unravel the garden's mystery, David Dernie takes Du Pérac as a point of departure, explores all previous documentation, and, in light of a recent survey, considers exciting new discoveries within the villa and garden. Dernie's detailed and vibrant analysis offers the modern reader a fresh interpretation; new issues, such as those concerning the garden's relationship to the Tiburtine landscape, are raised, while questions regarding mythology, Christian symbolism and spatial perception are answered.

Dernie's vivid journey through the garden and villa is beautifully illustrated by the photographs of Alastair Carew-Cox, supplemented by careful drawings and iconic plans.

David Dernie is an architect and teaches at Cambridge University. He is also the author of *Victor Horta* (published by Academy Editions in 1995), on whom he is an acknowledged authority. Alastair Carew-Cox is an architectural photographer whose award-winning work has been exhibited throughout Europe.

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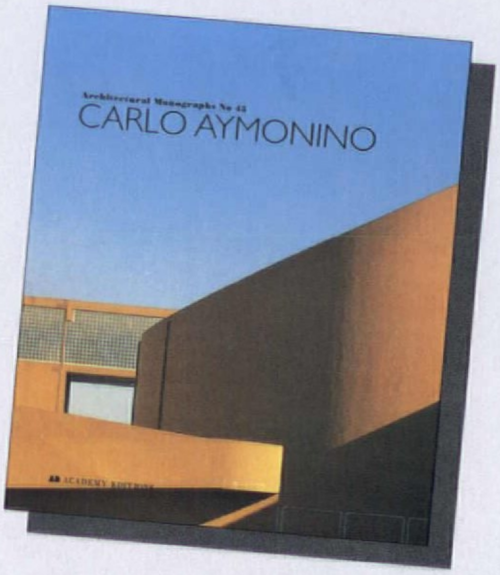

CARLO AYMONINO

Architectural Monograph no 45

- First complete reassessment of one of the undoubted masters of Italian Rationalist architecture.
- Admirers of the Italian designer Aldo Rossi – one time assistant to Aymonino – will be interested in this book, as will architects, students of architecture and historians.

Carlo Aymonino is one of the most influential rationalist architects of the post-war period. A former editor of *Casabella* and Professor of Architecture at Venice, since 1981 he has been an architectural consultant to the city authorities of Rome. In the early 70s he gained international recognition for his Monte Amiata housing complex in the Gallaratese district of Milan, part of which was designed by Aldo Rossi. Although much of his inspiration comes from the historical development of the Italian city, he has also taken part in international competitions, such as those for the Centre Pompidou and Parc de la Villette in Paris.

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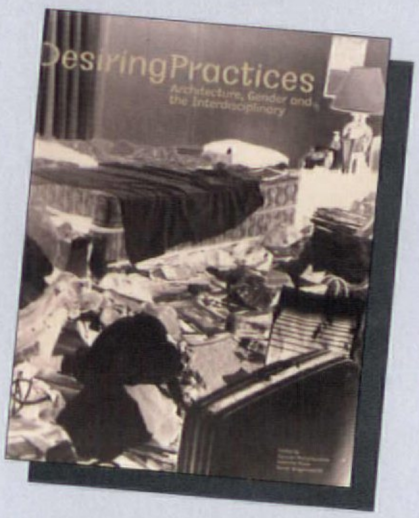
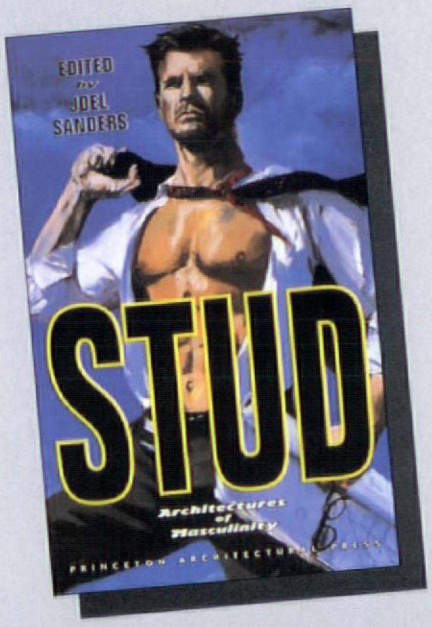




Desiring Practices: Architecture, Gender and the Interdisciplinary D McCorquodale, K Ruedi and S Wigglestone (eds), Black Dog Publishing Ltd, 300pp, 60 b/w ills, PB £15.00

This book claims to explore the role of gender in society and its inevitable impact upon the vision of architecture. In real terms, it is a collection of essays which are tenuously linked by the gender theme. Indeed the essays, which are based upon a symposium and exhibition of the same name, prove to be a very interesting read, but nevertheless seem to hold little relevance to our physical existence in society.

The tone of the book is deceptively low key, considering that it shifts the issue of gender in architecture from a sideline discussion to centre-stage debate. Indeed the dichotomy of debate presents those writers who take an overt, political stance in attacking the narrow boundaries of feminist issues in architecture today, and those who use this opportunity to delve into some academic research on the history of gender roles in architecture.

Paul Finch falls into the former of the two categories with a rather bleak view of female self-consciousness in the workplace and the attitudes of their male counterparts. Diane Ghirado on the other hand, offers the reader an alternative viewpoint from which to consider this subject. She recognises that the historical endeavour of searching out famous past female architectural figures, can only circle the subject, rather than supply the definitive answer. Therefore she urges us to consider the history of the site itself and the patronage or use of this site which has formed a uniquely feminine place.

Of particular interest are those essays which explore what is repressed and not discussed by self-conscious theory. For example, Jennifer Bloomer analyses the 20th-century urge to repress any nostalgic longings in favour of originality in design. Through implication she suggests that female architects have long since been associated with nostalgia and emotion and hence, have been marginalised. She also makes it clear that this obsession with the 'image' of architecture becomes increasingly superficial.

Ultimately, the book offers the reader a much awaited attack on the final bastion of pre-feminist historical studies. Jane Rendell, in her analysis of the Burlington Arcade and its formation through the usage by a predominantly female population, argues that architectural history should follow in the footsteps or re-analysis of history as we have read in the art history and philosophical writings of the past 20 years. Furthermore, it is perhaps quite telling that architectural history should be at the end of a strong redirection of feminist theory.

It is now that we need to reassess both methodological approaches to analysing gendered practices and the history of architecture. This book does not provide any immediate answers, but it is well worth reading for its entertaining political attacks and more importantly, the newly documented and illustrated alteration of viewpoint of the history of architecture.

Stud: Architectures of Masculinity J Sanders (ed), Princeton Architectural Press, pp304, 100 b/w ills, PB £13.00

'Stud: Architectures of Masculinity' is surely a battle cry against a gender debate in architecture which up until now has been dominated by feminist discourse. Indeed, the 'stud' who strides across the cover of the book stripping off his shirt implies both a literal, metaphorical and somewhat tongue-in-cheek way of pointing to the glaring inadequacies of the gender architectural discourse in the 1990s.

However, despite its arresting title, the collection of essays are quite often mainstream academic, including an excellent foray into the Viennese office and residence of the late Sigmund Freud. Diana Fuss and Joel Sanders cunningly lead us through the interior design of the rooms, via Engelman's documentary photographs of the time. They illustrate that spatial organisation can reflect the intent of the occupier and they also prove that through a series of carefully planned rooms Freud articulated his psychoanalytical theory and played upon the insecurities and strengths of the doctor/patient relationship.

Similarly, the public image of masculine control is most convincingly argued by the example of Skidmore Owings and Merrill's design of the Cadet quarters at the US Air Force in Colorado Springs. Here, not only the motto emblazoned above the door, 'Bring me Men', illustrates the supremacy of male influence, but the ordered symmetry of design, paring down of details and the hierarchy of forms also articulates the US Air Force's emphasis on order, discipline and lack of distraction, all of which were declared vital for the sound training of a cadet.

Despite the wholehearted engagement with this form of spatial analysis, the graphic examples of the intertwining of architecture and male/gay issues are often far more pointed. This is true both literally and metaphorically with Vito Acconci's huge *Adjustable Wall Bras* or the *Public Toilet* projects which imply a disturbing subversion of this personal activity. Indeed, all these images aim to 'subvert the architectural codes that shape and regulate sexual identity'. Furthermore, traditional objects such as Tupperware – usually associated with the kitchen and hence with women – become, through a series of photographs by George Stoll, objects of macho connotations, 'malleable wax surfaces' and phallic shapes!

The overall design of this book with its footnotes floating in the middle of the page and the snatches of illustrations amongst the text, reinforce this hip, fun and, of course, sexually suggestive discourse. But do not be fooled by this apparent flippancy of tone and presentation.

What makes this book such a compelling read is the subject matter which informs its essays, rather than the stand its takes in regard to gender and architecture. Indeed, *Stud* seems far more to be an excuse to convene a number of widely differing subjects under the auspices of one title. It is certainly a worthwhile read, even if you do partly agree with the feminist discourse which would insist there is no need for such a debate as this, as architecture and its history have always been male dominated!

MILLENNIUM PREPARATIONS

The Serpentine Gallery, London

As we head towards the millennium, the race is on for new museums and galleries to be constructed and for the old institutions to receive the inevitable face-lift. It is generally accepted that museums and galleries express a city's pride through their appearance and scale. This situation is particularly relevant in London where national pride rests in such institutions and their perception on a global scale. Lottery and Arts Council funding, and the media attention attracted by such projects as the Bankside Tate and the V&A extension, prove this point.

One Arts Council award was for the sum of £3 million to the Serpentine Gallery in Kensington Gardens, London. This contemporary art gallery, originally designed as a tea pavilion in 1934, had already raised £1 million and awarded the scheme to John Miller & Partners. The architects were faced with an ambitious brief which involved improving the security, facilities and fabric of the gallery whilst maintaining the character of this Grade II listed building. Although not quite on the same scale as the renovations currently in progress on the Pompidou Centre in Paris, this scheme is equally restricted by an existing facade which epitomises the gallery's identity.

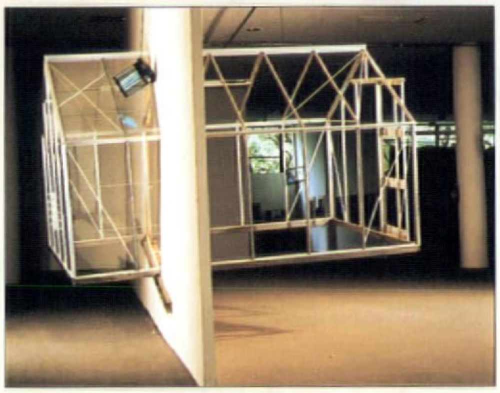
John Miller & Partners have had extensive experience in gallery design, and were responsible for the renovation of the Whitechapel Art Gallery, the new rooms for the National Portrait Gallery, and the gallery rooms for the Tate Gallery. Previous problems which have meant that the gallery has been refused art loans, such as the lack of climate control and security, will be tackled by the designers. In order to overcome the contradictory demand of additional space whilst retaining the original fabric of the building, the architects will create a series of basement storage spaces and workshops. Similarly, their best opportunity for a visually exciting new design is the creation of a new entrance hall located to the south.

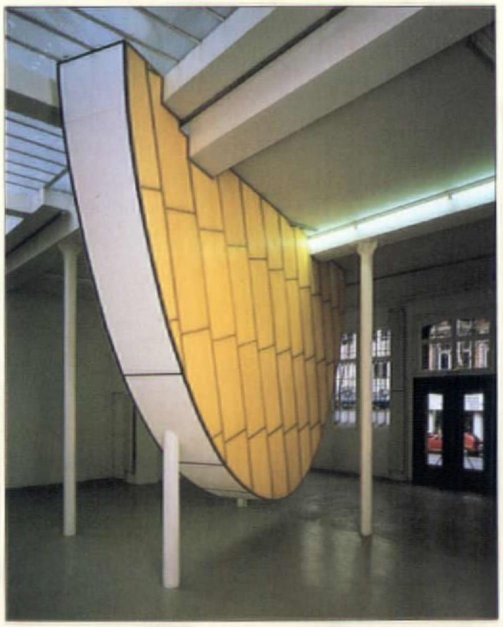
What is of particular interest to the public, is not only the determination of gallery to continue with their programme but the fact that they intend to assimilate this process of renovation into their exhibitions. The gallery will remain open, not in spite of the works, but by acknowledging and becoming a physical part of them.

This process began with Richard Wilson's unprecedented freedom to remove walls and generally destroy parts of the gallery for his summer show. Following the closure of the building in September 1996, the site has played host to a number of outdoor sculpture pieces, one of which included the scaffolding itself. Over the next few months Bill Culbert will create a sculptural piece that explores his fascination with light, both as a subject and object of his sculptures, and will bring a particularly radiant presence to Kensington Gardens on the long winter evenings.

The impulse behind this commission was to acknowledge the gallery's transformation in the hope that the works will 'complement the functional nature of the enterprise, drawing the public into a sympathetic dialogue between gallery and art work'. With a view to forthcoming millennium celebrations and the increasing trend for such schemes, the Serpentine, by working with the inevitable noise and disruption, is surely setting a positive example by highlighting the ultimate benefits of renovation.

Jane Richards





FROM ABOVE: Serpentine Gallery, London (photo Hugo Glendinning); Richard Wilson, Serpentine Gallery, High Rise, *XXth São Paulo Biennale, Brazil, 1989, glass greenhouse, wooden wall, steel beams and two Insectocutor units (photo courtesy of Matt's Gallery, London); Richard Wilson, Serpentine Gallery,* Swift Half, *1992, Le Channel, Scene National de Calais, steel polystyrene, yellow corrugated plastic (photo courtesy of Matt's Gallery, London)*

Putting Chaos Theory into Practice

I used to think 'happenings', were a phenomenon of the 1960s, culminating in the huge *événements* in Paris of 1968. But that was before the UIA's Congress at Barcelona in 1996, almost 30 years later. First of all there was the problem of registering at twelve desks under the courtyard of the Centre for Contemporary Culture. People queued for hours under the blazing sun and often had to wait for days before their magic card was actually issued. Without it they were unable to attend any sessions.

It seemed that the Committee let money motivate the organisation of the conference: £300-250 for full registration, to which had to be added the very many extras, ranging from £60 each, for any of the eleven parallel sessions, up to £300, for a coach trip to Santiago de Compostella. There were, however, some 30 national or professional groups, schools of architecture and so on, who were not in it for the profit, and those who had not paid any registration fee at all could nevertheless attend various social events.

The finances had clearly been carefully calculated but unfortunately, this was not the case with the logistics of the conference itself. It seems that Ignazio de Solà-Morales, despite advice from his fellow organisers, insisted that the main conference events should take place within the old town of Barcelona, around the magnificent *Ramblas*. On the face of it this was a very appealing idea, to engage delegates directly with the city. So the splendid opening ceremony, with the King of Spain himself, Juan Carlos, took place in Domenech's Palau de Musica Catalana; one of the world's more breathtaking auditoria and adequate indeed for the few thousands who wanted to be there. However, the next day chaos set in. Three parallel sessions had been announced, in three lovely and historic theatres. But how could one choose between Ken Yeang, Herman Herzberger, Norman Foster, Charles Correa, Roger Diener, Stephen Holl, Toyo Ito, Peter Eisenman, Daniel Libeskind, Zenghelis with Gigantes, and Oriol Bohigas? I opted for the Theatre Romea with Diener and Holl, to be followed by Eisenman and Libeskind. I arrived a quarter-of-an-hour before starting time to find a huge queue of angry and frustrated students who had already each paid their £150. It seems there had been similar queues at the other theatres.

The stage had been set up, clearly at vast expense, with a back-projection system which presented intractable problems: the slides, as shown, were far too small and despite Diener's repeated protests, the table in front was flooded with light so one simply could not see his delicate drawings; exasperating both for him and us. Stephen Holl summed it up when he said: 'This conference can only have been organised by Kafka'. Others, later, were to suggest Dali, but the former articulates better the sense of impending doom that we all were beginning to feel. That first event was a disaster; we could hear students chanting in the street and when they broke into the theatre, the session had to be cancelled. The riot police had been called in with their batons and everyone wandered around with a numb sense of 'now what?' Eventually, like the Pope pronouncing from the Vatican, Solà-Morales announced a change of plan from a window in the Centro Cultural. Several of the rather frustrated speakers, including Sir Norman Foster, Daniel Libeskind, Peter Eisenman and Jacques Herzog, having booked their flights to return that day, were to address the masses in the open air from the terrace of Barcelona's permutation of a Richard Meier museum, and the usual huge oversubmission had been entirely predictable. The organisers themselves had published a booklet, several months earlier, in which they stated they were expecting 10,000. They denied this later, after the riots, claiming they had stated 5,000, perhaps 7,000, but there were definitely over 10,000 present.

Once the riots were over, the 'superstars' emerged from hiding: Eisenman arrived in his Barcelona football shirt, signing autographs with two pens, red and blue – the visible expression, indeed, of that schizophrenia of which he is so proud. But even after the speakers had arrived, the crowd were kept waiting in the square as those they had come to see enjoyed their drinks and their tapas high up in Richard's building. When finally they appeared on the hastily-erected stage – but with all sound systems working very well – they behaved in very different ways. Peter had written a three-page text, a summary of his current theoretical position, and Daniel delivered his lecture with a very moving message about the need for humanity in architecture again. Every time the translator stopped, you could see him almost choking over what to say next. But one could see that as big-league 'professionals', Norman and Jacques were somewhat thrown by the situation. They had prepared their slides, no doubt in impeccable sequence, but they could not show them in the open air, so simply resorted to describing them.

It says something for architecture in Britain that on the last day Richard Rogers opened and Zaha Hadid closed the proceedings. First grab your audience, then keep them. But with Zaha reduced to a tiny dot in the distance one could not help thinking of Albert Speer's problem with the Congress Hall in Berlin where not only would clouds have formed inside but his leader, too, would have been reduced to a tiny dot. However, the students were in the same space as Zaha and afterwards mobbed her. Most amazingly of all was that Solà-Morales failed to understand the nature of this superstardom; the need for each young architect, each student actually to be, if only for an hour, in the same built space as each personal hero.

There was, however, plenty of good in Barcelona, including a number of wonderful, and on the whole free, exhibitions, including: 'Present and Future Architecture in Cities', curated, it has to be said, by Solá-Morales himself; the Miró Foundation had an exhibition of what Kenneth Frampton and others saw as the finest architecture of Europe built between 1984 and 1994; there was Salvador Dali and his relations with architecture in Gaudí's Casa Milà, and there was, superbly chronicled, the story of the Potzdamerplatz in Berlin, with lots of Richard Rogers and Will Allsop but nothing that I could see of Norman Foster. The silliest exhibition was one on minimalism, at the Colegio de Arquitectos, as the smoothest and shiniest of architecture and art was reduced to grainy, black and white pictures printed on even more grainy zinc plates, with tiny, hand-scrawled captions, and all of this displayed in near darkness. However, as a whole, the exhibitions provided a feast that made it worthwhile to be in Barcelona. Furthermore, the authorities had just opened, that week, the fully restored roof of La Pedrera, at Gaudí's Casa Milà which provides some of the most sensational spaces in the whole world. Go to Barcelona if only to see that roof.

The wonderful and the dreadful at the Congress were both etched indelibly on the memory. Fifty years from now some architects grown old will still be saying: 'I was there, in Barcelona, 1996', whilst others, as Shakespeare's Henry V stated, 'will think themselves accursed they were not here!'

Geoffrey Broadbent

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Front Cover: Anamorphosis Architects, *Stranger than Ourselves, Spatial Multitude*, featuring the Neuchâtel city entrance project
Inside Covers: Balkrishna Doshi, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, India

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JOSEPH RYKWERT

PREFACE

'Architecture and . . .' I was going to start; but maybe that is starting on the wrong foot. A conjunction gives no sense of direction – a preposition might be better, especially in a title: architecture *from* anthropology, for instance; or anthropology *for* architecture.

Yet architecture has been conjoined with all sorts of 'logies' and 'metries' for a long time. Sociologists were going to tell us exactly how to plan cities and houses because they would find out just what people wanted, simply by *asking* them: architects could then satisfy their desires. Engineers would tell architects how to build buildings, how to put them together in an industrial era; economists would show us how to make the urban fabric profitable and how the building trade related to employment patterns, and climatologists . . . so it would go on. But architects could not tell anybody anything specific in return. Their territory lay in the gap between the experts. There was a cheerful notion about in the 30s and again in the 50s and 60s that architects were team-leaders – that they co-ordinated all those different 'logists' and 'metrists' – and buildings were just a by-product of all this data assembly. But there was no specific architectural 'logy'. Yes, a clever Frenchman did come up with an architecturology, but it seems to have disappeared.

However, architecture 'by', 'with', 'from' anthropology may be a rather different proposition, since anthropology cannot show us how to do any specific technical thing, nor help to shape any particular element of a building. Anthropologists are, after all, supposed to discuss things like the place of humankind in nature, the origins of our species, as well as its subdivisions, and perhaps, most importantly, the nature of the social bond.

As it happens, architects have long believed (at any rate since Vitruvius) that together with the fear of the unknown and with language, building is one of the three constituents of the primal social bond. What, then, can the anthropologist tell the architect? Only indirect things. Anthropologists can set out the condition of building: they can tell us what people expected from them in the past; how they interpreted what they saw and experienced, even about the most obvious pieces of a building – doors and windows, walls, roofs and floors; how the experience of each part related to the whole – as the building, the district, the city were walked through, penetrated, integrated by use, their fragments compacted into a body.

It was an English architect, the great, neglected and still misunderstood WR Lethaby, who a century ago first realised what anthropologists had to offer architects: his *Architecture, Mysticism and Myth* drew on a gallimaufry of sources – from travellers' tall tales to serious anthropological work – and, most suspect of all, relied entirely on literary sources.

Architects, who (like many other contemporary 'professionals') are forever looking for direct, scientific evidence and disdain literary sources as tainted by artifice, did not take Lethaby too seriously. Yet artifice and representation is exactly what architects practise, whether they realise it or not. Their claim to be 'objective' about truth to material and fabrication, about satisfying human needs directly and 'scientifically' are difficult to abandon (particularly if the kind of architecture they practise relies for its effect on the latest technology), yet it is in this very matter that anthropologists provide a valuable lesson. They have recently learnt more about the nature of myth, about how narrative forms influence our thinking and behaviour, and even our desires; our nature, our commonality is represented more accurately by the way in which it is set out in novels and poems which have gained popular assent over generations than it is in the raw statement elicited by sociological questionnaires. In any case, if we were all to have our desires fulfilled, society could no longer work. Raw statements of desire and ambition can only reveal the corrosive conflicts which inevitably threaten personal and social stability, and yet, in this century, we have chosen half-wittingly to make our cities representations of raw conflict.

Anthropology for architecture may, therefore, provide a corrective lesson about the essential humanity of artifice, the urgency of narrative and the inescapable but salutary power of myth.

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CLARE MELHUISH

EDITORIAL: WHY ANTHROPOLOGY?

In April this year, *Anthropology Today*, the monthly magazine of the Royal Anthropological Institute, published a piece entitled 'Anthropology's Identity Crisis', in which the author, Cris Shore, sought to uncover the reasons why the discipline had such a poor public image. One of his conclusions was that 'British anthropology is still very much a prisoner of its past, indelibly tainted . . . with the idea of colonialism and "primitive" societies.' Another reason was that 'applied', as opposed to 'pure' anthropology, 'has traditionally held a greatly inferior status in Britain'. He suggested that, in order to reverse this situation, anthropologists should 'speak to (and write for) a wider audience – including other disciplines', and project a greater certainty and confidence about their 'product', which he described as:

> an understanding of other cultures and value systems and how they work; critical awareness of the importance of social context in shaping thought and action; a recognition of one's own ethnocentricity and the limits and boundaries of one's own culture . . . an understanding of how societies are organised and what that means to people. In a word, a grasp of what it means to be human, to have culture and to live in different kinds of society.

Shore's diagnosis and suggested cure might equally well be applied to the architectural discipline, which has suffered similar problems with its public image over the last 20 years, and, likewise, seems to be afflicted not only by lack of confidence and an inability to communicate, but also by uncertainty about its own *raison d'être.* Having sought answers to its predicament in a succession of stylistic renewals, architecture does now seem to be heading firmly in the direction of cross-disciplinary fertilisation, particularly at the level of education, with its sights set firmly on geography and cultural theory – and, to a much lesser degree, anthropology.

While architecture enjoyed a brief courtship with sociology, there seems to be a fundamental level of suspicion and ignorance about its sister discipline, anthropology. There is little doubt that one of the reasons is the perception, noted by Shore, that anthropology is exclusively concerned with tribal life, and therefore has no relevance to the contemporary – architecture's field of operation. Another reason must be the mutual lack of interest shown by anthropologists in architecture, a phenomenon that to the outsider, does seem strange. How, one wonders, can any study of the artefacts of 'material culture' – what we know as pots, pans and the like – overlook the actual buildings in which these objects, and the societies that use them, are housed?

One recent indication that something might be changing was provided by the choice of speakers by London's ICA (Institute of Contemporary Arts) for its 1995-96 series of architecture talks, 'Spaced Out'. Not only were two anthropologists included, Marc Augé and Charles Rutheiser, both presenting papers on contemporary urban space and culture, but also the selection of architectural speakers, including Christine Boyer, served to highlight the rise of a type of architectural and urban critique generated by observation of cultural practices. This marks a significant break with traditional architectural and urban histories, in which the relationship between space, society and culture is rarely scrutinised.

The roots of the new work go back to the late 60s, when, in response to the disastrous social and environmental consequences of modernism, architects and theorists seriously began to examine the possibility of a social content to architectural theory. Although the idea of a social programme was central to the Modern Movement itself, it was a utopian ideal of sweeping away and replacing existing communities, cultural practices and regional identities determined by climatic and topographical conditions, rather than understanding and building upon them. The stated aim of Team X when it superseded CIAM in 1954 was to do the latter. In the new climate of opinion created by the Team X manifesto, a whole series of publications appeared which explored how the basis of architectural theory might be broadened beyond the purely formal and functional, including a greatly increased attention to European and non-European traditional architectures. These ranged from Vincent Scully's *The Earth, the Temple and the Gods* (1962), to the revised 5th edition of Gidieon's *Space, Time and Architecture* (1966), Amos Rapoport's *House, Form and Culture* (1969), Christian Norberg-Schulz's *Existence, Space and Architecture* (1971), Scully's *Pueblo: Mountain, Village, Dance* (1975), and Joseph Rykwert's *The Idea of a Town: the Anthropology of Urban Form in Rome . . .* (1976). In 1979, Norberg-Schulz published his enormously influential *Genius Loci.* The effects of these publications were diverse: on the one hand, they led indirectly into the rise of conservative traditionalism, historical pastiche, 'community architecture', and post-modernism during the 1980s, but on the other hand, they did raise a new awareness of the cultural dimensions of architecture which has certainly enriched theory and practice since then, and made it more receptive to the insights of other disciplines.

Among the Team X members were Giancarlo de Carlo, who went on to found the magazine *Spazio e Società* (Space and Society), and whose work has consistently addressed the issues raised by the group. We publish a recent project of his in the first section of this issue, which attempts to show how an older generation of architects inspired by modernism – including Balkrishna Doshi, Ada and Ram Karmi, and Glenn Murcutt – have sought to reinterpret modernist ideas in the context of revision. In this section we also publish two research projects which investigate and analyse, in contrasting cultural fields (India and America), the inextricable relationship between socio-cultural systems and rituals, their expression in built form, and the topography of the landscape.

There was little specific reference to anthropology (other than by Rykwert) during this initial period of revision in architectural thinking, although one or two publications did make an impact. Amongst these was the American anthropologist Edward T Hall's *The Hidden Dimension* of 1966, which in a chapter on 'Cities and Culture' specifically applied the findings of anthropological research to the relationship between space and behaviour patterns to problems of urban form. In fact, Jan Pieper, editor of 'Ritual Space in India: Studies in Architectural Anthropology', a collection of papers presented at a seminar held in Bombay in 1979, commented:

> Compared to the enormous bulk of social anthropology, very little consideration has been given to the physical and spatial aspects of cultural phenomena, such as settlement patterns, urban ritualism, traditional modes of building and culture-specific habits related to the built environment.

However, there does seem to have been an increase of interest in architecture amongst anthropologists during the 1980s, partly as a result of a broadening of the spectrum of anthropology itself as it has become more engaged with the contemporary urban domain. A number of these anthropologists, who are keen to see the development of greater links with architecture, have contributed to this issue: Simon Coleman and Peter Collins, specialising in sacred architecture, Janet Carsten and Stephen Hugh-Jones, specialising in domestic architecture, Marc Augé, whose work on 'non-place' has had a considerable impact on architectural thinking over the last year or so, and James Holston – author of *The Modernist City: an Anthropological Critique of Brasilia* (1989) – and Susanna Rostas, now researching dance and ethnicity in Mexico, who both originally trained as architects.

There is a considerable overlap between the new anthropology of the urban realm with the field of cultural geography, which is probably more familiar to the architectural world through the work of people like Ed Soja. Soja set out his thesis in the mid-80s that 'To be alive is to participate in the social production of space, to shape and be shaped by a constantly evolving spatiality . . . '[1], picking up on many issues current in architecture. At about the same time, Michel Foucault, who was already of interest to architects on account of his work in the area of semiotics, also admitted a connection between what he was doing and current developments in geography. His essay 'Des Espaces Autres', on the spatiality of everyday social life, was published in a French architectural magazine in 1984, bringing it to a wide architectural audience.

This range of work has provided a rich context in which to investigate the anthropology of contemporary life. Clearly, there is no reason why anthropology, the study of social institutions and cultural value systems, should stop in a pre-modern age. Indeed, the rise of multi-culturalism, globalisation, and tourism in the late 20th century have raised many new and fascinating anthropological issues. The second and third sections of this number of *AD* present a series of essays and architectural projects which specifically address these issues.

In the second section, Pierre d'Avoine, Peter Barber and Nigel Coates, all engage with and subtly subvert the cultural context through the architecture which they create for it. D'Avoine's site of investigation is the now well-established, apparently familiar zone of inhabitation between the urban and rural: suburbia, a little-known, little-regarded culture in itself of purely modern creation. Barber's project is located in Saudi Arabia: a cultural context rigidly determined by tradition, and enforced by an authority intent on resisting the inexorable influence of outside cultural forces. Coates is operating in the fascinating, almost intangible realm where ethnicity, as understood in traditional anthropological terms, meets the uncharted international culture generated by multinational business, tourism and affluence.

Finally, Anamorphosis Architects and Architectural Association students with a.topos Architects respond directly to the issue of 'non-place' raised by Marc Augé. The motorways, supermarkets, airport lounges, shopping centres which now shape our lives are anonymous, sterile environments which appear to be empty of cultural content. Given that they have become fundamental to the contemporary urban and inter-urban infrastructure, they demand an architectural response. These projects take a constructive, investigative view of such spaces, aiming to reveal an inherent anthropology which might provide a cue for architecture.

This issue aims to put together, I believe for the first time, some examples of architectural and anthropological research which might reveal the scope of the potential for cross-disciplinary discussion. There is a real need for architecture to engage imaginatively with the patterns of life as it is lived in different situations at both the everyday and the celebratory level, the latter punctuating and giving rhythm and meaning to the former. We need to acknowledge that human life consists of more than simply a series of functional needs to be met: the psychological and the metaphysical dimensions of human existence are absolutely integral to each individual's capacity for wellbeing. Anthropology, unlike say, sociology, embraces these dimensions of culture as well as the more banal constituents of existence, and that is why it is important for the practice and theory of architecture.

In terms of methodology, it seems clear that the concepts of fieldwork and first-hand observation, which are central to the anthropological discipline, are widely accepted as a necessary preliminary for any architectural project, in contrast to the ideal of abstract form-making based on historical precedent which determined architectural production to a very great extent in the past. All the same, the purists will doubtless be quick to condemn the way in which the term 'anthropological' is used and understood in this context as being imprecise and even dangerous. But perhaps one should accept that life itself is unclear and full of risks – and it is in that arena, not the rational, logical world of academic discourse, that architecture takes its place.

Notes

Clare Melhuish is an architectural writer based in London, Reviews Editor of Building Design and contributor to a number of other publications.

[1] *Social Relations and Spatial Structures*, Gregory and Urry (eds), Methuen (London), 1985/7.

SECTION 1: SPACE TIME AND LANDSCAPE

JEREMY TILL

ARCHITECTURE IN SPACE, TIME

Space in Architecture

There is a review in progress at a school of architecture. A succession of students have been describing the spatial properties of their schemes. Positive space . . . negative space . . . layered space . . . flowing space . . . virtual space . . . and (because this a thoroughly modern school) folded space. In response to this last, a voice intervenes. It is the Critic From Hell. 'How do you fold space? Like a shirt?'

The language used by architects to describe space reveals an attitude that has run through the heart of architecture since the Enlightenment:

> Listen.[1]
>
> 'Architecture is the thoughtful making of spaces.' (Louis Kahn)
>
> 'We separate, limit and bring into a human scale a part of unlimited space.' (Gerrit Rietveld)
>
> 'I AM SPACE' (the wonderfully immodest Theo van Doesburg)
>
> 'Boundaries become fluid; space is conceived as flowing.' (Laszlo Moholy-Nagy)
>
> 'A boundless depth opens up, effaces the walls, drives away contingent presences, *accomplishes the miracle of ineffable space.*' (Le Corbusier)

Holding together these voices (and many others) is a common belief that architecture *produces* space – space as an abstracted form of matter, a strange kind of matter that can flow one minute and be folded the next. There is something absurd in this notion (the Critic From Hell spotlights it), but given the route by which the notion has been reached, this absurdity is not so surprising. Space is first conceived of as a property of the mind and then realised as physical matter. In the move from the metaphysical concept to the physical reality, the word 'space' has to cover a whole variety of conditions, and it is here that a confusion arises between concept and reality.

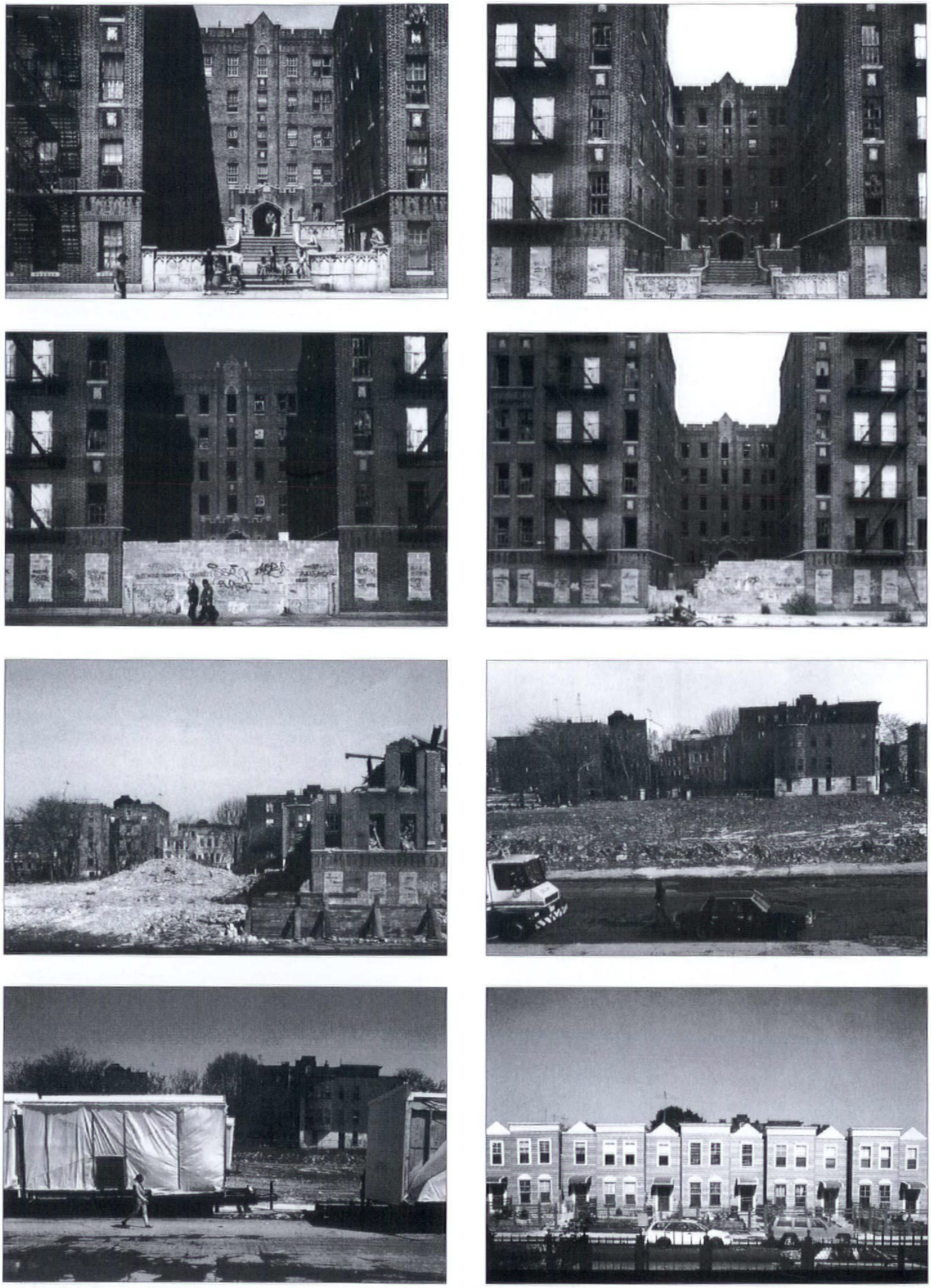
In the first instance, space is considered in a very Kantian manner as something which exists as a 'mental construction . . . a property of our mind . . . a pure form of intuition'.[2] That space can be considered a property of the mind (and a pure one at that) appeals to the notorious vanity of architects because we are not talking any old mind here, but the mind of genius. It is, so the Myth of Architect as Creator goes, a defining feature of the profession that they alone can take this stuff called space and then form it, shape it, mould it. It is this mental dexterity that sets the architect apart. However, in the use of language alone (to form, to shape . . .), we are moving away from Kantian idealism of space as a pure form of intuition. This is because the production of architectural space is necessarily informed by the material and formal parameters that will eventually define it; architects cannot remain in the realm of the mental construct alone. Space can only accomplish the difficult journey from metaphysical ideal to physical 'reality' by being emptied of anything beyond a limited set of criteria, and it is clear that these are not enough to describe the full experience of space. (Ab)using Kant again, the transcendental ideality of space (the starting point of the journey) is defined through the 'representation of things when they are considered in themselves, through reason'.[3] *In themselves . . . through reason . . .* Immediately, limits are set, and it is within these terms that space is introduced to architecture. To effect the translation from the metaphysical to the physical, the language of space is subjected to rational and formal criteria (positive, negative, layered). This is an act of terminological policing, by which architecture has the affront to subsume and emasculate the wider condition of space through linguistic subjugation. The varied descriptions of architectural space are typified by the move to autonomy, the banishment of contingency and the expert recourse to rationality – all means of achieving professional closure.

In its final 'form', architectural space is objectified, subject to quantification and measurement. This is most clearly manifested and enabled in the use of perspective as the prime mode of spatial representation. Stripped of its original symbolic and cultural content, perspective is appropriated as a technical device to control, order and quantify the evasive matter of space. Space is only allowed to enter the gates of architecture on the condition that it is subjected to the self-referential, autonomous, rational terms with which the profession protects itself from the world beyond. Space IN architecture, not architecture in space. As we shall see, the latter proposition challenges the presumed authority of the profession.

Time in Architecture

Wary of falling into spatial traps, the next student reverts to a temporal metaphor. 'Architecture is like frozen music . . . ,' he begins, only to be rudely interrupted by the CFH, 'Well then, your building is a Robson and Jerome song'.[4]

The terms on which time can enter architecture are still more limited than those set for space. It is apparent that the full dynamic implications of time represent an immediate threat to the prevailing paradigms of architecture. Temporal conditions such as weathering,[5] programmatic change, night and accidents challenge the immutable authority of architecture. It is against this threat that, as Karsten Harries argues, architecture organises 'a deep defence against the terror of time . . . to abolish time within time'.[6] Time is defeated by removing from it the most dangerous (and, of course, most essential) element, that of flux. Architecture attempts in its conceptual genesis to freeze time, to hold onto that perfected moment of the completion of the building for as long as possible before and after the event. A strident manifestation of this denial of temporality is Le Corbusier's *Law of Ripolin*, in which the whiteness of Ripolin (a modern-day whitewash) is ascribed with both the moral values of purity and



FROM ABOVE, L TO R: 178th Street and Vyse Avenue, South Bronx, New York – June 1980; June 1982; January 1983; September 1984; January 1986; March 1988; May 1991; October 1994 (photos Camilio José Vergara) also the power to banish time. White walls would resist the accretion of 'dead things' and summon up a moment of purity in architecture.[7] This use of Ripolin is indicative of some architects' (most obviously the hi-tech architects') recourse to technology to order and control time. On the one hand, technology is used to banish the marks of time – shiny, hard, immutable surfaces shrugging off the effects of dirt, accident, and weather. On the other, technology is employed to represent the spirit of the age. Here, time is packaged into a historicist lineage of progress – the illusion of a determinist series of discrete moments, the next one of which architecture assumes the right to express in a gesture of technological and formal progression.

Such attitudes lead to the presumption that time can be held within architecture, either technically or representationally – that time is IN architecture. There is something impossible in Schiller's statement that 'architecture is frozen music' (just as if architecture could presume to statically stand for a medium which is mute when stripped of temporal memory), but it remains a commonplace sentiment. One only had to visit Paris in the 80s to appreciate a problem. There lay the Pompidou lovingly swathed in scaffold and shrouds, hung with a Ministry sign – '10th Anniversary Restoration of the West Facade'. A dignity accorded to a great building in the tradition of the great cathedrals – but the collapse of the restorative time scale to ten years is an acknowledgement of the impossibility of holding time in architecture.

Space-Time in Architecture

The next student feels confident that she will be able to deflect the attacks of the CFH, who by now has begun to control the direction of the review. She presents her project through computer animations, showing the building in stunning reality – saturated colours, undisturbed light, graduated shadows, and (best of all) people with legs and, even, hands. A perfected space-time simulacrum. The CFH digs deep into his stock of pat putdowns: 'As Laurie Anderson (she is just about hip enough to quote, he thinks) says, 'I will not believe in virtual reality until they learn how to put dirt into it'.

The artificial separation of the terms space and time has served as a convenient abstraction, but one which denies the full potency of architectural experience. Because the reading of time through architecture is only possible spatially, and because our experience of space is conditioned through time and memory, space and time should be considered together as dependent categories in the discussion of architecture. In modernist thought, the conjoined terms are introduced to architecture on architecture's terms. In the guise of functionalism, they are subjected to the rule of quantity and measure; space and time are quantified and coded to represent movement and occupation. Alternatively, they are subjected to aesthetic criteria. This latter is made most explicit in Giedion's *Space, Time and Architecture*. The discussion of space and time is not introduced until over halfway through the book, at which point Giedion's hectoring tone has dogmatically established a determinist and moralist argument in favour of the modern movement. Giedion looks to synthetic cubism as the first expression of a new space-time condition. However, for him cubism's 'symbols were not rational'.[8] He then argues that architects have 'attempted to rationalise cubism or . . . to correct its aberrations. The procedure was sometimes very different in different groups, but all moved towards rationalisation and into architecture'.[9]

Two main presumptions can be identified here. First, that the move towards a 'correct' expression is achieved through recourse to rational technique. Second, that the operation is conducted purely on aesthetic and formal grounds. For Giedion, the introduction of space-time into architecture is achieved representationally. 'Productions of futurist painting, sculpture and architecture are based in *representations* of movement and its correlates – interpenetration and simultaneity', so that Gropius' Werkbund Fabrik staircases 'seem like movement seized and immobilised in space.'[10] Giedion's argument that architecture can represent a particular condition of space and time, pervades architectural culture, whether it is Peter Eisenman relating folded space to contemporary arguments concerning space-time compression,[11] or the cyber-architects appropriation of the blob as an expression of their virtual time-space. In all these cases, the emphasis is not on the particular experiential conditions that might arise out of the spatial-temporal continuum/compression/virtuality, but an aestheticisation of it, in the vain hope that this alone will re-form the fullness of each condition.

As well as denying the experiential aspects, such aestheticisation of space-time within architecture empties the categories of any political or cultural content. Space and time are treated as unproblematic universals, there to be introduced into the terms and methodology of architecture. The use of rationality to effect this introduction brings with it a further detachment. Underlying all rational ideologies in architecture (among them typology, functionalism and technological determinism) is a deluded belief that the pursuit of universal truths has a pure logic which absolves the operator of confronting the cultural conditions which defined the rational terms in the first place. This leads to an architectural belief system far removed from the contingent world which the building will eventually occupy. A tragic gap thereby opens up between a conceptually purified genesis and an endpoint charged with all the spatial and temporal aspects of dirty reality. We are reminded of Rem Koolhaas' three stages of the architect (elation, suspense, disappointment), but realistically could probably dispense with the middle term. The recent use of computers has stretched this gap. We hear that representation is getting ever more 'realistic', when in fact it could be argued that the more crude a rendering, the more real it is. The computer's dangerous conflation of stupidity and power has the effect of further limiting the discussion of architecture to technical and aesthetic criteria alone, unable to accept the existence of dirt.

Because of the reductive terms of its spatial and temporal genesis, it is therefore no surprise that architecture cannot put up a resistance to the contingent forces which it will eventually face. At a political level, it means that architecture is unwittingly appropriated by the relentless strength of capitalist exchange. The very abstraction of time and space as concepts removed from their cultural and lived realities allows them, and the architecture that has subsumed them, to be treated as pure commodities within an exchange structure.[12] We only have to look back to the Thatcherite boom of the late 80s to appreciate this in action. Caught up as part of a new economic value system, architects were unable to present any resistance. That architects were complicit in the expression and perpetuation of this corruption was a pitiful inevitability given the abstracted genesis of so much architectural production. As David Harvey argues in his seminal *Condition of Postmodernity*,[13] architecture becomes one of the aestheticised products by which global capitalism and political regimes express themselves. It is with this realisation that we must reverse the equation. Not space and time in architecture, but architecture in space and time, in an acceptance of Harvey's conclusion that 'neither time nor space can be assigned objective meanings independent of material processes, and that it is only through investigations of the latter that we can properly ground our concepts of the former'.[14]

Architecture in Space, Time

By the end of the day CFH is feeling pretty pleased with himself. He goes down to hear Ed Soja lecture on his new concept Third Space. At the end of the lecture, CFH, always the clever one, is first to put up his hand, 'Whilst geographers only speculate and comment on space, architects actually produce it,' he begins. In response, Soja pulls himself up to his not inconsiderable full height: 'WE ALL PRODUCE SPACE'.

To say that architecture exists in space and time might appear alarmingly obvious, but it is nonetheless a factor that is all too often ignored in architectural production. One reason may be that it challenges the authority that architecture presumes itself to have. The recognition that architecture exists within a range of volatile forces beyond its direct hold is a recognition that architecture must relinquish its delusion of deterministic control and pure representation. Immediately this undermines the perfected autonomy by which the profession protects itself. However, the sight of architects clinging to an outmoded and self-contained belief system which is powerless in the face of the maelstrom beyond demands a paradigmatic shift in which architecture would open up to a wider spatial-temporal condition.

There is a feeling of intimidation for the architect faced with a broad cultural landscape, and so an understandable reaction is to look for stable elements. In this way, architecture (fixed and permanent) shrugs off the ephemeral and the present, and enters into dialogue with the deeper structures which may condition culture. The language of traditional anthropology (mythic, ritual, cosmic, symbolic) is used as a vehicle for architectural exploration, with the intent that architecture will engage with enduring and stable cultural factors. The architect here reverses the role of the anthropologist. Where the latter may investigate and describe social practices through their inscription in space and time,[15] the architect describes temporal spaces in which to set those practices. There is an emphasis on architecture as a setting for ritual and as the embodiment of archetypal human situations, all constituted within cultural tradition.[16] At its worst this approach reeks of conservative nostalgia; at its best, it is a project of interpretative revisioning of an active tradition in which to set human action. It is an architecture that is firmly rooted in space and time, but in very particular interpretations of them. The space is one of concrete representation, informed by the search for authentic meaning. The time is one which combines the cyclical movements of cosmology and nature with a backward-looking naturalisation of history, both characterised by the sense of reinterpreted repetition.[17] The implication is that time and space should stand outside the contingent forces of the present, and that production must resist immanent distractions in an attempt to ground architecture in a more profound cultural horizon. It is this detachment that is both the real strength of this approach but also its weakness; in looking for the truth, it bypasses the real.

As I look out of my window and into a council estate (boarded windows, trees stunted by pollution, brackets for the repossessed satellite dish, teenagers snogging on the balcony, net curtains softening security bars) the restitutive promise of high architecture suddenly looks fragile. Out there, the conditions of time and space are evolving in ways so powerful and dynamic that we ignore them at our peril. This is not to argue for the celebration of the instant; nor is it to suggest resigned defeat in the face of the maelstrom; nor is it to succumb to the myth of inevitable progress. Rather, it is a call for a critical understanding of the present in all its complexity, conducting what Marc Augé calls an anthropology of the here and now,[18] so as to reveal the spatial and temporal inscriptions of present-day social practices. The aim is not to reproduce these inscriptions in architecture, but to know them in order to understand how to operate within them.

I have argued elsewhere[19] that for this to happen, architectural attention will have to shift from superior cultural narratives to the world of the everyday. It is in the everyday that the fullness of social life is encountered. As Peter Osborne notes:

> Everyday life is lived in the medium of cultural form. Its phenomenological immediacy is the sedimented result of myriad repetitive practices, yet it is constantly open to the randomness of the chance occurrence, the unexpected encounter, the surprising event, as well as to the refiguration of its meanings by more explicit forms of social intervention.[20]

The everyday thus acknowledges the historical constitution of the now, but also its very incompleteness demands an active (political) response to what could happen, to the 'social production of possibility'.[21] It is through such temporalisation that one escapes a myopic entrapment in the present and moves into viewing the everyday as a site for transformative practice.

It is with this site that I believe architecture should engage, but in order to do so, a shift in architectural paradigms will be required, in which architects relinquish their delusion of control and detached neutrality and face up to their political responsibility. Marx's famous epigram 'Men make history, but not in circumstances of their own choosing', forms the catalyst for a twofold revisioning of architectural practice. First, the architectural 'production' of space will have to be seen as part of a much wider condition of the social production of space ('WE ALL MAKE SPACE'), with architects placing themselves within and acknowledging the full range of material forces which shape society, as well as recognising the repressive structures that these forces have previously developed. Second, the relationship between space and the social practices within should not be seen as directly causal, with the architect acting in the manner of a social determinist. Instead, a much more complex relationship opens up in which space is seen as simultaneously the product of social practice *and* the potential vessel, producer, of social activities.[22] Two inseparable conditions arise in the present, one that gathers a critical awareness of the past, the other that projects to the future. That architectural practices always stand on the threshold of these two conditions is both sobering and empowering. Sobering because of the sense of fragility in the face of the dynamic aspects of space and time that have shaped a given condition. Empowering because, as in any act of refigurement, there is a redemptive potential, with the architect acting as a small part of the 'social production of possibility'.

Notes

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1 All these quotations are taken from Cornelius Van der Ven, *Space in Architecture*, Van Gorcum Assen (Amsterdam), 1978. The title of the book alone raises the problem I am addressing in this first section.

2 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, (trans) Norman Kemp Smith, Macmillan (London), 1929. The quotations are from 'The Transcendental Aesthetic', pp68-72.

3 Kant, ibid, p72.

4 For those uninitiated into the British pop charts, Robson and Jerome are two television actors who cover old ballads. Whilst some see their work as musical genocide, the public dismissed such elitism and made Robson and Jerome's album the fastest selling of all time.

5 See Mohsen Mostafavi and David Leatherbarrow, *On Weathering*, MIT (Cambridge, Mass), 1993 for an investigation of the temporal aspects of architecture as revealed through interpretations of weathering.

6 Karsten Harries, 'Building and the Terror of Time', *Perspecta*, Vol 19, pp63-65.

7 Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art of Today*, (trans) James Dunnett, Architectural Press (London), 1987, p189.

8 Sigfried Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture*, Harvard (Cambridge, Mass) 1941, p360.

9 Ibid, p360, my italics.

10 Ibid, p392.

11 Peter Eisenman, 'Unfolding Events', in *Re:working Eisenman*, Academy Editions (London), 1993, especially p61.

12 See Neil Smith, *Uneven Development*, Blackwell (London), 1984, p70.

13 David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Blackwell (London), 1990, Part 3.

14 Ibid, p203.

15 See, for example, Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, Polity (London), 1990, esp pp200ff.

16 I am thinking, in particular, of the phenomenological approach to architecture, whether in the popular versions of Norberg-Schulz and Kostof or the more deeply considered version of the Cambridge School.

17 See Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time*, Verso (London), 1995, p175.

18 Marc Augé, *Non-Places, An Introduction to the Anthropology of Supermodernity*, Verso (London), 1995.

19 Jeremy Till, 'Angels with Dirty Faces', *Scroope*, University of Cambridge (Cambridge) 1995, Vol 7, pp13-17.

20 Osborne, op cit, p197.

21 Ibid, p198.

22 See Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*, Verso (London), 1989, p129.

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SIMON COLEMAN AND PETER COLLINS

CONSTRUCTING THE SACRED: THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF ARCHITECTURE IN THE WORLD RELIGIONS

Questioning Space: the Temple

Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it. Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasures thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof . . . All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me . . .

1 Chronicles, 28:10-19

Thus, in front of the assembled men of Israel, David describes the divine injunction to build the Solomonic Temple. If he is acting as both king and messenger in this passage, he leaves no doubt in his audiences's mind that the true architect of the Temple is God himself. The building itself would contain – and thus fix in a single place – the Ark of the Covenant, and echo the Ark in such architectural detail as its use of gold overlay and imagery of cherubim.[1] As a holy building located high on Mount Moriah, the Temple provided a means of coming closer to a deity that was both transcendent and immanent. As an embodiment of political power, it signified the shift from a nomadic culture to a sedentary existence ruled by monarchs. Worship was centralised, not least through encouraging regular pilgrimage festivals to Jerusalem, thereby affirming both the power of the Jewish God and the authority of David's dynasty.

The Temple represents merely one example of a sacred space, central to a single religion. But its construction, use and ultimate fate present in microcosm much that is at issue in an anthropology of sacred space.[2] How, we must ask, does a site come to be seen as more sacred than any other, not least in religious systems where the divine is also perceived as omnipresent? Should the significance of fixed architectural space be understood in relation to shifting communities of social and liturgical practice – unofficial as well as orthodox? Can the demarcation of a supposedly 'set apart', sacred sphere of action actually be regarded as divorced from political and economic concerns? Today, the site on which the Temple was placed is more complex and ambiguous in meaning than ever: it is an absent centre, a focus for Jewish identity that is emblematic in its very destruction; it is also a deeply contested space, architecturally and religiously, as the Dome of the Rock has been present on the Temple mount since the inception of Islam.

For the most part, anthropology has tended to neglect the analysis of the built environment, sacred or otherwise, even though architecture can be said to be the spatial expression of social life.[3] In the late 80s, Caroline Humphrey lamented the discipline's neglect of the built environment as a cultural (as well as material) construction and noted that, even when it was discussed by anthropologists, architecture was often seen as a static reflection of symbolism and cosmology.[4] One possible reason for such neglect is the tautological one that anthropologists have not received architectural training in undergraduate courses; another is that, in Britain at least, social anthropology has tended to be taught in isolation from closely-related disciplines, such as archaeology, that have specialised in the study of material artefacts. Yet another is the absence of buildings enclosing sacred space in many of the societies traditionally studied by anthropologists.

In one sense the following discussion must be about potentialities, about opening up questions rather than providing answers. A central point we wish to make is the seemingly paradoxical one that anthropology's relative lack of focus on the built environment has given it the analytical tools to contribute much to studies of architecture. We claim that the ethnographic examination of communities of practice and interpretation, of culture as actually lived and constituted in everyday existence, can show how ideal aesthetic and moral principles embodied in architecture are constantly subject to multiple appropriations and transformations. This point is especially pertinent to sacred sites in the world religions, whose physical structures and perspectives are frequently designed to suggest authoritative narratives to worshippers but whose 'messages' may deliberately or inadvertently be misread by individuals or groups of believers.[5] Churches, temples, synagogues and mosques can house spaces of secret resistance as much as of official discourse; here issues of visibility, perspective and the intersection of the temporal with the spatial come to the fore. A purely semiotic approach consequently misses much of the shifting ideological, political and social significances of the spatial environment. Spaces, sacred or otherwise, should not be seen as fixed social forms: they are contested, modified and reconstituted in the official and unofficial realms of culture.

Keys to the anthropological approach are not merely the practices of fieldwork and ethnography, but also a comparative stance that views the Self in relation to the Other or multiple Others. In this way, the analyst seeks not merely to question whether sacred space really is any different from other kinds of space but also to deconstruct the notion of the sacred itself. Anthropologists try to understand cultural phenomena from a holistic as well as a comparative perspective, and are likely to examine material structures not as isolated aesthetic/material artefacts in themselves but in relation to other significant cultural forms, such as language, notions of time, ideas concerning the body and so on. We therefore argue that any attempt to provide a complete understanding of the built environment must incorporate an appreciation of its wider aesthetic context and an analysis of the dynamic interactions between multiple, often ambiguous, sign-systems.

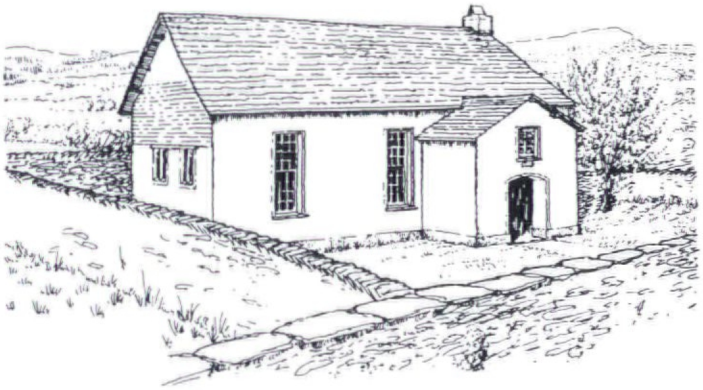
Rather than trying to cover these themes in a generalised, discursive way, we shall adopt the ethnographic method of arguing from the specific to the general. The next section will focus on the uses and meanings of space within a particular subtype of religious community: Quakerism in Britain. We shall then show how some of the themes raised in the study of this community can inform a wider understanding of how the sacred is constructed in the world religions.

Foregrounding Absence: the Meeting House

The Reformation gave rise to a process of religious ferment in England that reached a peak in the mid-17th century with the Nonconformists' attack on the Established Church. Quakers and others railed against the economic, political, cultural and liturgical bases of Anglicanism. They wrote tracts against the worldliness of the Church and its retention of much of the 'empty ritual' of Catholicism; they denied the legitimacy of professional clergy and called vociferously for its abolition; they disputed the theological basis of much Anglican liturgy. These attacks were manifested, strikingly, in their architecture. They constructed buildings outside the parish structure in which the accoutrements of the sacraments were excluded.

George Fox, a 'founding father' of Quakerism, believed that the church, or 'steeple house' as he disparagingly called it, represented, in physical terms, all that was dissolute in Anglicanism. Priests were sometimes shouted down and even dragged from the pulpit. The very distinction between the sacred and the profane was disputed. Fox and others were seen as a danger to Church and State partly because they questioned the established right of the former to control the sacred, in terms of both its ideological definition and material demarcation. In the very act of effacing Anglican architectural signifiers, Quakers came to construct new means of setting aside space for worship: it was religious, but not conventionally sacred.[6]

Generally vernacular in style, meeting houses were most often constructed on the edge of settlements, some distance from the parish church. Their style embodied the generic critique of the Established Church inherent in Quaker faith and practice. They were intentionally domestic in appearance and basic in form, generally consisting of two cells, the larger used for meetings for worship, the smaller for separate women's business meetings. Meeting houses were not orientated along an east-west axis (unlike other churches), were not cruciform in plan and the land on which they were built was not distinguished, by consecration, from the land around. Overt Christian symbolism such as the cross, the saints, apostles and prophets were noticeably absent. Benches were arranged around each of the cells. Friends gathered to worship several times a week by agreement: there was no priest and no programmed liturgy. Participants sat in silence, waiting on the spirit which they held to be immanent in everyone. The pulpit was replaced by a minister's stand, raised up above the level of the rest of the meeting room, in which sat Friends,[7] men and women, who were recorded as particularly able vocal ministers. Particularly 'weighty' Friends, appointed as elders to watch over the spiritual life of the meeting, sat together at the head of the meeting on the 'elders' bench. Quakers held



FROM ABOVE: Quaker Meeting House; Colthouse Meeting House (Lake District), late 17th century; Sawley Meeting House (overlooking Pendle Hill), Lancashire, 18th century that the sacraments were superfluous and so altar, font and nave were absent.

Contemporary Quakers worship in buildings which are more likely to have a greater number and variety of rooms for committee meetings and community functions. There has been an evident change or at least development in purpose, from a building serving the needs of insiders to one simultaneously serving the needs of outsiders. There remains a tension, however, between what is seen as the fundamentally spiritual practice of worship and the endeavour to engage with the world. This is reflected in discussions regarding alterations to meeting houses and the building projects to which funds should be allocated.

Significant developments have taken place regarding the meeting room in particular: not in terms of its external shape, but through the remodelling of internal space. Competencies are no longer marked by boundaries. In 1923 the Recorded Ministry was abandoned and thus the Minister's stand became redundant.[8] Quakers began to rearrange the furniture so that it formed a hollow square or circle. The recent arrangements pointed to a more self-conscious sense of equality. It had long been the custom to include a table in the meeting room but whereas in the past it tended, by its proximity, to mark the elder's bench, this was no longer the case. The table remains ever-present but now it is positioned centrally. Elders are far less likely to situate themselves apart from the rest of the congregation.

Despite the Quaker claim that the sacred/profane dichotomy is irrelevant the meeting room is often differentiated from the rest of the meeting house. It is the most prominent and often the most spartan room and is often distinguishable from the other rooms because of its different chairs or benches, wallpaper and carpets. An internal semiotic is apparent based on the opposition formal/informal.[9] Posters, notices, shelves of books, children's drawings, prints of a religious nature and other odds and ends find their way into other rooms. These items represent the lives of participants and are part of the text of meeting. They form part of the stories Friends tell one another about one another: interests in local charities, other faiths and pacifism are displayed on walls, shelves and table-tops. The building is a living text which can be read more or less competently by those who participate in a meeting. But it is not a static text – it changes as the preoccupations of participants change. This is read against the liturgical text inscribed and reflected in the building, and particularly in that which is significantly absent. Nor do we claim that the textuality of these or any buildings is univalent and uncontested. A Friend reported how the table in one meeting house was moved, by different parties, towards and away from the elders' bench, reflecting varying ideas concerning the relative authority of this group of Friends.

The meeting house is a highly visible metonym of Quakerism itself. It has been and still is a clear reminder, both to Friends and others, that Quaker identity was primarily constructed in the act of playing the *vis-à-vis* with Anglicanism.[10] The building can better be understood within the wider cultural context in which it is situated. Quaker identity was formed through the contestation of a national sacred space dominated by the Established Church. Furthermore, the semiotics of the meeting house, both externally and internally, facilitate or enable participants to structure the world;[11] they are a means by which the community remembers.[12] This is a world where the inner is privileged over the outer, the noumenal over the phenomenal, the plain over the elaborate, equality over hierarchy and individual over social authority. The symbolic construction of the built environment of the meeting house is critically important in enabling Friends to 'say the same thing', to form a community, a shared identity. Symbols allow individuals to gloss over differences.[13] Space created by the meeting house, in orienting the body of adepts, partially orientates their view of the world. The building, without a nave (or equivalent) along which procession might take place, accentuates stillness over and above movement. The spatial arrangement of the meeting room encourages a particular form of perspective: participants are encouraged to direct their gaze not on a single, immovable, material object (such as an altar or other iconic device), but rather on each other: each becomes an embodied reflection of the inner light.

Architecture works not to focus attention on itself but on that which it frames. Just as the form of worship is an opportunity for participants to tell their story, so too is the building itself; autobiographies are written into its fabric. The meeting house provides a symbolically charged environment which facilitates a sense of community. Adepts are able to flag their allegiance to 'the plain' without having to be too specific about what that means. Simplicity has long been the badge of Quaker buildings; it is also constitutive of Quaker identity *per se*. Not only architecture but also dress, speech, manners and liturgy are characterised as plain. The outer is suppressed in order that the inner might be made manifest.[14] The built environment cannot be viewed, or experienced, in isolation: it is part of a wider aesthetic, in which internal symbolic consistency is valued as much as the signification of difference from alternative forms of Christianity.

Constructing the Sacred

In the previous section we presented the somewhat paradoxical situation presented by Quakerism in which religious architecture and other sign systems combine to create the genre of the plain, negating the conventional distinction between sacred and profane. However we also showed that the meeting house, though plain, is far from being empty: it resonates with the meanings of the faithful who populate it.

We are now led to ask a cross-cultural question: how is the sacred, or multiple versions of it, thematised architecturally? In his phenomenological study of religious buildings, Harold Turner draws our attention to 'sacred orientations' such as the construction of centres, meeting-points, microcosms and transcendent-immanent presences.[15] Certain sacred places, particularly pilgrimage sites, are thus marked by having been the sites of extraordinary events, events in which the worlds of humans and divine beings have appeared to touch each other, if only for a brief time. Buildings, along with texts and rituals, can serve as commemorations of such meetings, thereby establishing their significance in material as well as ideological terms. In this way, Lourdes has been developed to provide maximum access to the grotto where Bernadette Soubirous saw the Virgin in 1858; the Dome of the Rock is said to mark the spot where the Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven via a ladder; Hindu sacred spots or *tirthas* represent crossings between the divine and earthly realms.

The architecture and sacred spaces created at such sites can do more than merely commemorate contact with the divine, however. As Park implies, they are liminal, acting as permanent 'gates in space',[16] offering access to a transcendent world. Their form may actually echo that which they claim to give access to or honour: the spacious interiors of mosques are believed to suggest God's limitlessness, and domes are often interpreted as symbolising how the 'grace' of heaven falls on worshippers. The architecture of Hindu temples is usually modelled on the peaks of mountains, and positioned precisely over the sanctuary containing the image of the deity. The encoding of such implicit messages in the structure of buildings is common in sacred architecture, as exemplified also in the multiple terraces and dome of Buddhist *stupas*, which represent aspects of enlightenment, mindfulness and correct endeavours.[17] Even the Quaker meeting house contained a powerful message in its signification of the plain.

Just as pilgrimage sites often diffuse their reputation through such material forms as relics, or images bearing their likeness to distant believers, so forms of sacred architecture are replicated far from paradigmatic sites. Such stylistic conservatism is important to world religions, based as they are around the notion that common faith and practice can transcend cultural boundaries. Thus Muhammad's mosque at Madinah provides a model for all mosques, incorporating a *mihrab* (a marker indicating the direction of prayer) and a pulpit; Jewish synagogues incorporate an 'Ark' at the eastern end as well as a *bimah* (raised reading area), and often recapitulate the temple in Jerusalem by dividing spaces up for different sections of the community, such as men and women. At the Anglican Shrine of Walsingham, a pilgrimage centre in North Norfolk, the pilgrim church contains a 'life-size' copy of Jesus' Holy House at Nazareth. In this way, the architecture (at least using dimensions supplied by myth) and the charisma of an original holy site are appropriated and translated to a new context.

If architectural forms can recapitulate paradigmatic sites in farflung contexts, thereby indicating in material form the imagined community of the faith, the design of a building can in itself indicate an aspiration towards universality of meaning or access. In contrast to most Indian temples, which only have one door, the Sikh Golden Temple at Amritsar was designed to be open at four sides, implying openness to all four *varnas* in society, and many other *gurdwaras* (Sikh meeting houses) have followed this pattern. The Quaker meeting house in recent years has increasingly elided the barrier between outsider and insider both in its external design (incorporating large windows) and internal arrangements (removing barriers between elders and others, between men and women). Aspects of the Dome of the Rock may be seen as symbolising the whole of the universe. Bennett, for instance, describes the Dome of the Mount thus:

> First, the octagonal shape. In Muslim understanding, the number eight is a primary step in the mathematical progression from square, which represents fixity, the earthly realm's station in the cosmic order, to circle, which represents heavenly perfection. The temple mount, or rock (with its well-like cave from where Muhammad's ascent is believed to have occurred), actually an oblong of about 18 by 14 metres, stands for the earth; the earthly origin of the seeker's quest for union with ultimate Being . . . The golden dome, or cupola, itself a perfect circle, represents the heavenly spheres.[18]

All of these examples imply the orientation of space in static, 'global' ways. Yet it is also the case that buildings, combined with rituals, frequently contain implicit narratives aimed at defining the movements and changing perspectives of worshippers as they move through sanctified space. Sacred architecture can

FROM ABOVE: Jagannatha temple, Puri, Orissa (main temple complex); Sun Temple ruins at Konarak, Puri, inner temple; whole Darga temple, Puri implicitly constrain the experience of a 'congregation', not least through giving meaning to the notion of movement itself. In Hindu temples, for instance, the visitor gradually progresses towards the interior, finally reaching the image of the deity, thus moving from light to darkness, from relatively more open to more enclosed space and increasing sanctity. The ground plan is itself a sacred geometric diagram known as a *yantra*, also evident in Buddhism as a *mandala* that symbolises the structure of the universe.[19]

At the 6th century monastery of St Catherine at Mount Sinai, the place where Moses received the tablets of the Law,[20] the architecture delineated a path in its own right, with the fixtures, images and buildings channelling visitors through sacred places and locating the process of pilgrimage in a Christian interpretative frame. The pilgrims' path down through the interior of the monastery contrasted with their ascent to Mount Sinai. In her analysis of the medieval English parish church, Graves incorporates a discussion of how permutations of time, space, perspective and movement produced *differential* access to the sacred. During the later Middle Ages, emphasis was laid during the Mass on the moment of consecration, encouraging the practice of elevating the host for all to see. Depending on where a chapel was sited it could affect the visual balance of the church, making some areas blind to the High Altar. Disputes and legal actions resulted between parties contesting favoured viewing spots.[21]

These examples raise the question of how the internal arrangement of space at a sacred site serves to orientate the body in significant ways. Sacred space can be used to indicate common spatial orientation of believers, no matter how dispersed. Synagogues tend to face towards Jerusalem and the Temple, just as Mecca is the object of Muslim prayer. East, of course, is the location of Christian altars; Quaker faith and practice, in the very act of denying this formal orientation to an external point, emphasises the immanence of the noumenal in those present. Sacred places also act as centres or microcosms of wholes. Mecca for Muslims, and Jerusalem for Jews, are the centres of the earth, and Muslim tradition argues that the world started by moving in concentric circles from the spot marked by the Ka'ba.

We started our essay with David's description of a Temple that would be unique in both conception and location. We conclude, having indicated that aspects of the Temple have not only been recapitulated in Judaic architecture but have also had intriguing resonances with spatial forms in other world religions. It would be foolish to claim that the sacred is conceptualised or constructed in the same way across cultures and religions. However, we hope to have raised some questions central to the understanding of sacred space not merely in its material forms but also as it is lived, contested and transformed through practice.

Notes

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1 See Simon Coleman and John Elsner, *Pilgrimage in the World Religions: Sacred Travel and Sacred Space in the World Religions*, British Museum Press and Harvard University Press (London and Cambridge, Mass), 1995, p 42.

2 The word 'temple' in fact derives from a different time and culture, that of ancient Greece. It is related to the verb 'temno', implying a cutting or marking out of a special area where divine signs might be seen. See Harold Turner, *From Temple to Meeting House. The Phenomenology and Theology of Places of Worship*, Mouton (The Hague), 1979, p15.

3 M Hammad, cited in G Lukken & M Searle, *Semiotics and Church Architecture*, Kampen (Pharos), 1993, p47.

4 Caroline Humphrey, 'No Place Like Home in Anthropology. The Neglect of Architecture' in *Anthropology Today* vol 4, no 1, 1988, pp16-18.

5 Of course, the metaphor used here may itself be the result of a textual orientation in the writers.

6 cf C Park, *Sacred Worlds: An Introduction to Geography and Religion*, Routledge (London), 1994.

7 'Friend' is a synonym for Quaker.

8 These 'stands' or galleries can still be seen in a number of meeting houses, though Friends no longer sit in them during worship. They are seen as 'a part of our heritage'.

9 For a particularly invigorating semiotic analysis which focuses on a single building see G Lukken and M Searle, op cit.

10 J Boon, *Other Tribes, Other Scribes*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), 1982.

11 Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems in Sociological Theory*, Macmillan (London), 1979 and *The Constitution of Society*, Polity Press (Cambridge), 1984; Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Berber House', in M Douglas *Rules and Meanings*, Penguin (Harmondsworth), 1973 and *Towards a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), 1977; Henrietta Moore, *Space, Text and Gender*, Cambridge University Press, (Cambridge), 1990.

12 cf Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), 1989.

13 cf Anthony P Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, Routledge (London and New York), 1986.

14 God was often metaphorised by early Friends as the 'Inward Light'.

15 Harold W Turner, *From Temple to Meeting House*, Mouton (The Hague), 1979.

16 Compare Chris Park, *Sacred Worlds: An Introduction to Geography and Religion*, Routledge (London and New York), 1994, p252.

17 Martin Boord, 'Buddhism', in Jean Holm with John Bowker (eds), *Sacred Place*, Pinter (London), 1994, p16.

18 Clinton Bennett, 'Islam' in Holm with Bowker (eds), op cit, p106.

19 Anuradha Roma Choudhury, 'Hinduism', in Holm with Bowker (eds), op cit, p 78.

20 Simon Coleman and John Elsner, 'The Pilgrim's Progress: Art, Architecture and Ritual Movement at Sinai' in *World Archaeology* vol 26 no 1, 1994, pp73-89.

21 C Pamela Graves, 'Social Space in the English Medieval Church' in *Economy and Society* vol 18 no 3, 1989, pp297-321.

SUSANNA ROSTAS

THE DANCE OF ARCHITECTURE: FROM RITUALISATION TO PERFORMATIVITY AND . . . BACK AGAIN?

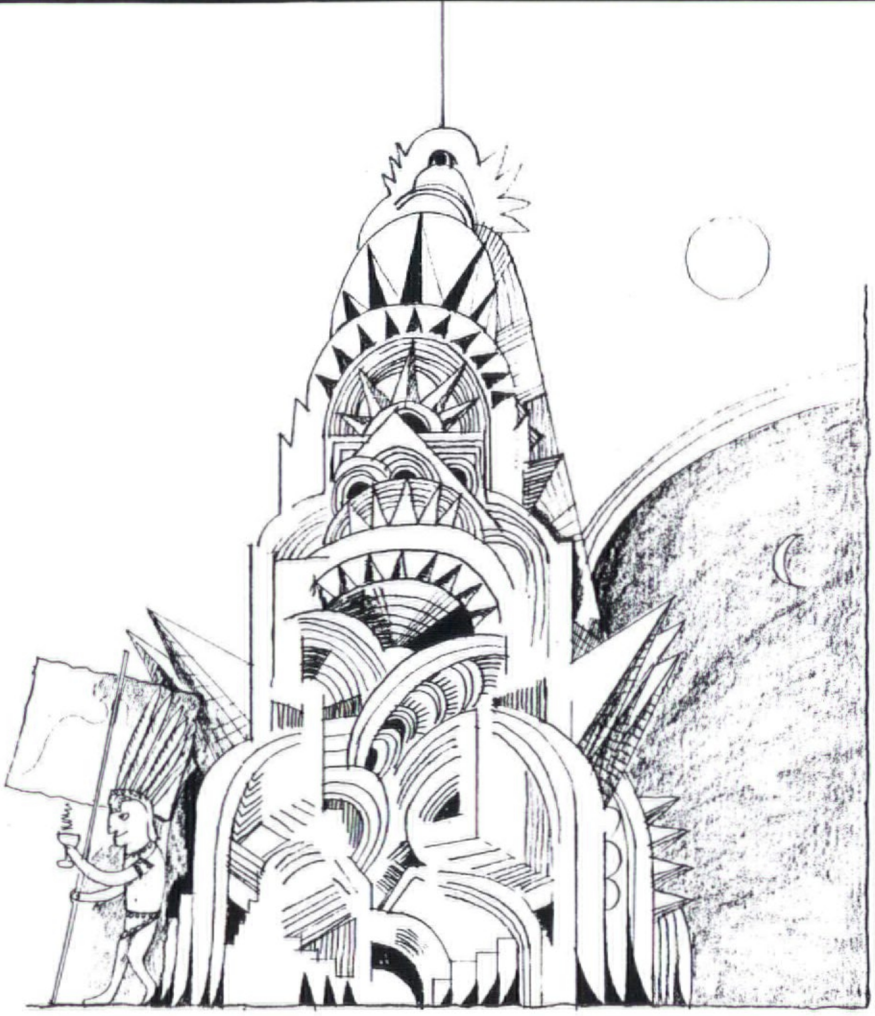
Although we might think that there could or should be closer ties between anthropology and architecture, there has so far only been an intermittent interconnection between the two disciplines. Architects have on the whole been more interested in anthropology than vice versa; they are aware that there may be something to be learnt from how other societies conceptualise built space and/or their relationship to the spaces they inhabit. The anthropologist's interest in space, on the other hand, is relational and contextual: it is in the space of practice rather than those spaces that have been physically framed by constructions; although the two may coincide. The repetition of an activity creates and defines or delineates a space by its frequent occurrence, whether this be daily, weekly or monthly: a space of practice designated by Bourdieu, the 'habitus'. It is the habitus which provides people with a practical grasp of the fundamental schemata of their culture.[1] Although anthropologists are concerned, for example, with the form of the movements made by the actors at a ritual dance, and with the ties that link them both during the enactment, and before and afterwards in their everyday lives, it is the qualitative aspects of the interactions that are most important. They are interested in people's beliefs and feelings about whoever and whatever they are involved in, whether this be an initiation ceremony, a dance, or a dinner party. The backdrop against which the social action takes place (whether this be the forest clearing, the atrium of a church, or the interior of the house) and the material objects which are intrinsic to these activities (the ritual structures around which people congregate, the cross to which obeisance is paid, or the candles lit) are of significance, not so much as physical environments or objects in their own right but rather as stage props, the bearers of meaning, the symbolic capital of interaction.

In many societies, the house is the principle locus for the objectification of the generative schemes of that culture. The house is not just a shelter, but an animate body, based in the chthonic part of a society's overall ecological relationship with the environment. As such it is an integral part of the cosmology and plays an important role as a mnemonic structure charged with implicit meanings (as well as being the matrix for the generation of new ones). In the long house of the Barasana (in Amazonia), the roof beams are seen to represent the cosmos and indeed become part of the cosmos during ritual.[2] For the Zafimaniry (in Madagascar), the house strengthens as does the marriage; the flimsy permeability of the woven bamboo walls of the young couple are gradually replaced through time by massive vertical planks.[3] In the Tenejapan community (Tzeltal speaking peasants in Chiapas, Mexico), when a house is built, permission is asked of the earth deity to construct. As a dedication to the deity and to ensure future wellbeing, blood from a sacrificed chicken is poured into a hole in the centre of the house which will then be filled in and where the fire will later burn. The predominant deities are the sun and the moon and these are propitiated by incantations uttered not only in the gardens before the peasants work, at the wayside crosses erected at various points along the paths which take them to their places of work, but also in the house. Each house contains an altar, at which prayers to the deities can be said not only on a daily basis but also in times of need.[4] The spiritual is omnipresent and quotidian. Furthermore, those spheres which we regard as distinct and separate, the political and more especially the (for us quantitative) economic, are for them inextricably intertwined with all other aspects of life: the economic element is as qualitative and value-laden as any other, involving face-to-face social relations of exchange. The house, then, is not just a 'machine' for daily living, but enshrines the spiritual and, as such, is a repository of meanings. It is a ritual space, where the complex interrelationship of the processes of objectifying thought (especially important in a preliterate society), and the embodiment of practices occurs continuously as part of the various aspects of life that make up the habitus; it is a place or space of ritualisation.

Ritualisation indicates a way of acting that is habitual (or that has become part of the habitus), and non-intentional. It does not describe an action per se, but rather the way that an act may be carried out. It is the way that it conforms to conventions that makes the act a ritual act. In everyday life, if we say that something is being done as 'a ritual' or even 'ritualistically', we tend to mean according 'to the book', according to tradition or convention, possibly rather emptily, without thought. When a 'ritual stance' is adopted, there is a subtle transformation in the relation between intention and action. At such times, the actor is, in a way, no longer the author of her actions; there is a sense that in doing things, the actor is doing more than she seems; the actor 'removes the sovereignty of herself as agent'.

Ritualisation contrasts with the linked concept of performativity. Performance, in everyday life, suggests putting more into something (in a self-conscious or intentional way) than is absolutely necessary; of loading an act with meaning (of above all insisting on 'meaning to mean'). For example, washing up is precisely the kind of action that is done ritualistically. It is done frequently, usually in the same way, with attention but not conscious intention, other than that of getting the dishes clean, which has become an embodied habitual activity. If someone carries out this action rather more dramatically than is strictly necessary for the task, with expansive movements and very amusingly, for example, it becomes 'performance' – non-conventional, non-habitual, even creative.

Performativity gives activity its zest, draws attention to it, and enables a habitual process, ritualisation that is primarily self-referential, to become something that communicates the new and the different to others. Much of any activity, walking, making bread, building a house, is habitual, part of the habitus and involves 'ritualisation', in that it has been done like that before. But for an activity not to become empty, for it to be worthwhile,



FROM ABOVE: The Dance of Architecture, Susanna Rostas, after Steinberg, 1996; A group of people meet to dance. The form of the dance is one that has endured for decades and those involved have been dancing so for some time. Before they dance, they 'cleanse' the location in which they will perform: they appropriate the locale. As they carry out their ritual dance, they carve out or create a three-dimensional space, a theatre of, or for their activity.[5]

some intention, some effort over and above the conventional, must usually be expended. Ritualisation thus lies at the heart or core of performativity. It constrains performativity but is at the same time affected by it: the two are in a dialectical relationship to each other. And it is performativity that enables ritualisation to change.

I have developed these ideas further in a very different context with reference to dance. The Concheros meet to perform a ritual dance in which both men and women are placed alternately in a circle. The dance involves a process of ritualisation and its aim, if it has one, is to achieve 'union, conformity and conquest' – the maxim of the dancers. By union is meant each individual's aim to work collectively with those around him or her, to act non-intentionally so that ritualisation will be attained. Conformity refers to the type of harmonious enactment that is achieved by the circle as a whole when performativity, in its turn, is carefully controlled. Finally, conquest refers to the conquest of the dancer herself; to what the dance says and does to the dancer and possibly to those watching (if anyone is watching). Recently, some groups of dancers, who call themselves the Mexica, have begun dancing rather differently. The dancers are more male than female, their dance is predominantly a concatenation of performative aspects; flashy clothing, overly expressive footwork combined with a reluctance to work for atonement (at-one-ment). Rather than inner conquest, the non-intentional transcendence achieved ideally by the Concheros, the Mexica appear to be more interested in outward conquest, in show, in performativity for its own sake, a performativity that is not based in ritualisation.[6]

It seems to me, however, that ritualisation and performativity can be applied as well to architecture as to dance. Thus for the Barasana, the building of a house is a process of ritualisation. On the whole they will build the new long house just like the old one, but there will always be someone who does something a little differently, who makes a performative innovation. This may be dropped the next time a long house is built, but on the other hand it may prove to work and become incorporated into the habitus or process of ritualisation. For the Tenajapans, building a house is a ritual activity; the dedication ceremony is carried out by a shaman and accompanied by prayer. Traditionally they have built houses, each very similar to the other, from the same basic raw materials; thatch for the roofs, vertical wooden planks for the walls secured by lianas. But when someone, performatively, uses something new such as asbestos sheeting, it is seen initially as unacceptable and protested about. With time and because of wider social changes, as an isolated community becomes increasingly linked into the world system, and the demands of outside agencies have to be adhered to (thatch is bad; it perpetrates disease), this also becomes part of ritualisation: habitual. And rather suddenly the vernacular form alters.

The vernacular has never been singular or unchanging. The vernacular is not about style or performance but ritualisation, but ritualisation that can combine a little performativity, that is adaptable. By definition, a vernacular tradition is invested with meanings, but these are meanings that are predominantly implicit, that cannot necessarily be formulated or explained and which have simply to be taken for granted, just as does the habitus. The English house has changed through time, as new technologies have emerged, or land became scarce, but as a type of structure it has endured, in fact been returned to by builders in the conservative 80s; people still want to be on the ground, in touch with the telluric.

Much of what is built today has lost any understanding of the vernacular (although, of course, as technologies unfold we require new kinds of buildings – as the airport takes over from the railway station, for example). Ritualisation as a process appears to bore us. Many architects appear to want to be one-off innovators involved in performativity. The meanings generated by the new architecture, if indeed there are any, are not the implicit meanings produced through time, by use and experience, generated by those who inhabit the edifices, those of tradition (of ritualisation), but rather are formulated in post-hoc theoretical explanations. The inhabitants of such overdetermined buildings may attempt to take on some of these meanings but often they never become familiar or feel at home with them; they are unable to embody them. Performativity on its own is dangerous; it is not grounded, it has no roots, it strives for something that appears to be attainable but may not be sustainable. An exterior that shouts 'performativity', will certainly make us look and ask 'what is that?' – take, for example, Daniel Libeskind's proposed extension for the Victoria and Albert Museum. But it is doubtful whether such an exterior can ever be linked to an interior that does not impose on its users, that embodies well-tried solutions to spatial requirements with some well thought through innovations. The old architectural adage used to be that 'form follows function'; perhaps this no longer has to be the case. Modern technology allows us to produce interior space that fulfils the needs of the habitus, that prioritises the habitus of those people who are to use a building, even offering them some novel solution to an age-old problem, but is framed or enshrined by an exterior that allows some degree of performativity, but not style at the exclusion of all else; this surely is the challenge of good architecture.

Notes

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1 P Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Oxford University Press (Oxford), 1977, pp72-214.

2 C Hugh-Jones, *From the Milk River: Spatial and Temporal Processes in Northwest Amazonia*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), 1979.

3 M Bloch, 'The Resurrection of the House Amongst the Zafimaniry' in J Carsten and S Hugh-Jones, *About the House: Lévi-Strauss and Beyond*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), 1995, pp78.

4 S Rostas, 'The House and Social Change in Tenejapa', unpublished paper and unpublished DPhil thesis, Sussex University, 1987, *From Ethos to Identity; Religious Practice as Resistance to Change in a Tzeltal Community, Tenejapa, Chiapa, Mexico*.

5 *Cf* S Rostas, 'The Concheros of Mexico; Changing Ideas of Indianity' in A Herle and D Phillipson (eds), 'Living Traditions: Continuity and Change, Past and Present', special edition of *Cambridge Anthropology*, vol 17, no 2, 1994.

6 For more details, *see* my paper to be published by Routledge, F Hughes Freeland (ed), *ASA (Association of Social Anthropologists) Monograph* no 34.

PETER BLUNDELL JONES

AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL VIEW OF ARCHITECTURE

I dedicate this essay to James Gowan, who spurred me towards this kind of investigation some 25 years ago. At one of my student crits at the AA, I was explaining some particularly functionalist arrangement when he remarked: 'Peter, I can eat a sandwich in a room of any shape – you try me!' Stumped, I could only claim rather lamely that some rooms are better to eat a sandwich in than others: now I can offer a better – if somewhat indirect – explanation of why.

Architecture has yet to feel the full impact of 20th-century developments in social anthropology. Perceived as the study of remote tribes living in some of the last backwaters untouched by Western culture, it seems of no relevance to how we might build today. But, the effect of anthropologists' studies is both more indirect and more essential, provoking fundamental questions about issues such as the organisation of social life, the function and significance of art, the origins of architecture, the relation of people to buildings, and the role of the architect.

Architecture, Building and Ritual

In adopting an anthropological view, the conventional division between architecture and building becomes untenable. When art is understood as a cultural system,[1] Nikolaus Pevsner's assertion at the start of his *Outline* about the difference between Lincoln Cathedral and a bicycle shed – the foundation of his historical stance – goes straight out of the window. Obviously, the cathedral is more ceremonial than the bicycle shed, but they do not belong to different worlds. Rather, they lie at opposite ends of the same scale within one cultural context.

Buildings frame human activities by establishing a setting that acts as a mnemonic or prompter for the repeated actions that we call rituals. In everyday life, we tend to use the word ritual for what goes on in the cathedral, but not for activities associated with the bicycle shed. For anthropologists, however, there is no easy distinction; repeated and ordered behaviour is everywhere and always has meaning. Obviously, the social processes of the cathedral are much more elaborated, but that does not mean that there is no ritual associated with the bicycle shed. People also come and go from it at certain fixed times, wear special clothes and use special equipment: if they are cycle-race enthusiasts such structuring of behaviour may be very elaborate, but even a lack of repeated structure is significant, for non-structure contrasts meaningfully with structure.[2] The lack of boundary between the everyday and the ceremonial is easily demonstrated through the example of meals. All are in a sense ritualistic, for they exist in meaningful contrast with one another and provide an order for the day. Ceremonial meals marking friendships and anniversaries contrast with eating a Mars bar in the street; yet even that is still a few notches higher up the scale than eating a piece of dry bread.[3]

Architecture, Text and the Meaning of Use

The preliterate use of architecture as a mnemonic or aid to memory leads some commentators to look on architecture as text, even to write of 'architectural texts'. Certainly the degree of symbolic reference can be rich in a way that we are accustomed to expect of written texts, but architecture is also much more than text, predating it as a symbolic medium. It does not operate according to such a tightly defined set of conventions as text, which can mean much the same at different times and places, when printed in different types and on different papers, and even when read aloud or translated. Architecture, in contrast, is bound to place and time; and although there are established conventions of reading, they tend to be less universal and less consistent.

Not only are the conventions of reading less established, there is a second essential difference between architecture and text: architecture is not *just* a system of signs, for it must also be habitable and useful. It therefore takes on not only those intended meanings or references applied to it, it also means *within* the terms of its use. Not only will the appearance of a building tend to become associated with the activities that go on inside it, its internal organisation will also reflect the roles and relationships of those who use it. Architecture frames human activity, and being in a certain place in a building often implies a certain role. In a court of law, for example, the seats occupied by the various parties are clearly defined, helping quickly to establish roles. This point can be beautifully illustrated by fracturing the normal order, as when for example in Luis Buñuel's film *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, the dinner guests suddenly find themselves on the stage of a theatre.

In societies whose people still build directly for themselves, they can hardly avoid expressing or embodying both their social order and their ideas of the world in their architecture. Even the responsibilities for different parts of the construction can reflect social and gender roles. In the case of nomadic societies, the spatial order has to be recreated quite regularly and can change as relationships vary within the group. At large gatherings of North American Indians in the 19th century, the tent layouts followed the order and hierarchy of the clans. The very need to organise the setting up of camp would force those responsible to choose one layout or another: there was no avoiding it, no neutral or passive position. Similarly, the dependence of the clan structure of the Bororo people in Brazil on their circular village, and the social disintegration reported by Claude Lévi-Strauss after missionaries compelled them to adopt a grid-plan instead, shows that the village layout was no mere symbol of the social order but its principal mnemonic. Knowing where they lived helped to define who they were. Architecture set the frame for social life. People still 'belong' to a house, a college, a club, a church, a pub: the building is identified with the group. A recent anthropological conference paying homage to Lévi-Strauss explored the idea that the establishment of 'house' as a social group through cohabitation in a building might be the primary structure of some societies, and more essential than kinship.[4]

Complicity, not Coercion

Except in a few extreme cases, such as prisons or the Berlin Wall, buildings are not physically coercive: that is, they do not force people to behave in specific ways, even if they do limit the range of possibilities. For uses to occur in a particular way and for particular meanings to apply, there has to be a complicity between building and inhabitant. Thus the social determinism of naive functionalists of the 1950s and 60s, which saw people as meekly following an architecturally bestowed order, was bound to fail if people's beliefs and wishes were not taken into account – and they may be hard to predict. Giancarlo De Carlo found this out with one of his early housing schemes at the beginning of the 50s, when he was dismayed to discover on a visit shortly after its occupation that the sunny balconies he had provided for sitting out were used for drying washing, while the northern access galleries had become the main focus of social life. This experience stimulated his search for understanding of the relation between architecture and social life leading to the establishment of his magazine *Spazio e società*, and to his radical – and often successful – experiments with participation.[5]

For a building to work efficiently in a social sense, its organisation and iconography need to mesh with the inhabitants' beliefs and to conform with their expectations. It is easy to underestimate the power of these social conventions. Although we habitually consider ourselves free to do as we like, walking naked down the street precipitates an early arrest. More subtly, the building regulations about ventilated lobbies for WCs seem on reflection to be driven entirely by propriety about lavatorial smells – yet another social convention – rather than by prevention of any actual health risk.[6]

The delicate balance that can exist between spatial relationships and social conventions is best demonstrated in an example that contrasts clearly with our own society. Such is a house type from North-East Thailand as described by SJ Tambiah.[7] The house is raised on stilts, entered by a balcony at the front, and becomes both increasingly enclosed and increasingly private as one progresses towards the rear. With its double gables side by side, it is almost a double house, but the internal space beneath the gables is continuous. The rearmost part is the family sleeping room, which is linked to the more social room in front by two symmetrically placed doorways.

The double doorway reflects the fact that two generations are accommodated, the active working and procreating couple and the woman's aged parents. The old people occupy the hierarchically more important and more propitious right half of the sleeping room behind the right-hand door, while the active couple occupy the left half. Since property is held in the female line, it is the husband who moves in with a daughter of the family. He is the outsider, and is subject to the following restriction: *although all other family members can use right or left doorways, he is forbidden to enter by the right.* There is one significant exception, the one that literally proves the rule. He is led through the right-hand doorway during the wedding rite, symbolising his penetration of the family.

Dimensions, Axes, Orientation and Being in the World

The cultural specificity of the double doorway arrangement is accompanied by specific symbolic references such as columns identified with man's spiritual essence and other arcane details. What might be regarded as more universal, however, is the careful orientation of the building and its progression along three implied axes – from front to back, left to right and top to bottom. The house is open and public towards the front, but increasingly private towards the back: the senior family members and Buddha shrine are to the right, and the profane kitchen and wash-place on the left. Thirdly, in the vertical dimension, the wash-place is lowest followed by the kitchen, while a series of steps in the floor rise towards the all-important sleeping place at the rear.

Such hierarchical progressions and polarities are found in houses throughout the world, and normally they are also related – as in this case – to a system of orientation favouring particular cardinal directions. East is generally propitious because of the rising sun, and west similarly associated with death, but this is by no means a universal pattern, and the Thai association of north with the elephant is a typically local association which would need elaborate explanation. The three dimensions do not take on the same meaning in different cultures; they seem to provide a common framework on which different associations can be hung. In the vertical dimension, however, there is a more universal pattern. Status always seems to rise, so the lord sits at the high-table and the altar marks the culmination of a progression of steps. We talk of high and low quality; heaven is always up and hell down, which surely has to do with the universal experience of gravity. Gravity also gives us the right angle between horizontal and vertical, the body and the ground, while the repetition of 90 degrees on the ground gives us the axes of forward and back, right and left, which relate to our bodily movements.

By relating these implied axes to the passage of the sun and stars we locate ourselves in this world according to a system of cardinal points. Elaborating the significance of the three axes, some anthropologists of the structuralist school developed sophisticated interpretations of buildings, the classic text being Bourdieu's analysis of the Kabyle House.[8] Every article of domestic equipment within this simple two-room structure has its set place along a series of polarised axes reflecting the contrast between dark and light, wet and dry, female and male, nature and culture. These placings are related to the classification and naming of things, and substantiated in both proverbs and rituals. An intriguing element of Bourdieu's thesis is the inversion of space at the threshold of the house, for on entering, one faces the 'wall of light' which has highest status, yet one leaves the house facing east, which is the propitious direction. He explains:

> *The reason why this practical geometry, or geometrical practice, makes so much use of inversion is perhaps that, like a mirror bringing to light the paradoxes of bilateral symmetry, the human body functions as a practical operator which reaches to the left to find the right hand it has to shake, puts its right arm in the sleeve of the garment which had been lying to the left, or reverses right and left, east and west, by the mere fact of turning about to 'face' someone or 'turn its back' on him, or again turns 'upside down' things which were 'the right way up' – so many movements which the mythic world-view charges with social significations and which rite makes intensive use of.*[9]

If Bourdieu is right, space inside the Kabyle house is conceived as quite separated from space outside it, in marked contrast with the modern Western sense in which space is understood as homogeneous, backed up by compasses which read the same direction within buildings as without.

The Origins of Architecture

Although the first permanent buildings seem to be relatively recent, there was arguably a much earlier need for humans to establish their place cognitively within the world and cosmos, which tends to have spatial – and therefore arguably architectural – implications. Some issues raised earlier, such as the framing of social relationships and the establishment of axes and dimensions, might therefore have predated the need for shelter, especially for peoples living in warm parts of the world. The evidence amassed on aboriginal hunter-gatherers in the anthropological record is suggestive (although it is wrong to regard any people as living fossils, or as somehow 'left behind)'.

The Australian Aborigines have developed a great knowledge of and sensitivity to their landscape, allowing them to exploit its relatively inhospitable conditions, but they must travel light, and the nearest thing to houses that they have are provisional shelters made of found materials. They have a kind of rudimentary and temporary public building in the form of the specially prepared ground for their circumcision rite. Physically this is only a cleared space in the desert, its edge defined by a low mound formed of the scrapings. It is funnel-shaped in plan, and has windbreaks of scrub set up in particular places. The ritual involves the whole tribe and lasts several days. Its importance rests in the transfer of the tribe's mythical knowledge to the younger generation, for in an oral culture anything not passed on is lost forever. A series of scenes is acted out presenting the actions of the mythical dreamtime heroes, and the prepared ground defines locations for actors and audience, and places where fires are lit at certain stages. It is a primitive theatre providing the minimal setting for the display, a necessary device for defining and mediating the spatial relationships of those involved, even though it only exists for a few days before disappearing again into the desert dust.[10] Its architects must carry the design in their heads, but the participants also have to know and recognise the places that they are required to occupy. Each ceremony resurrects the spatial order, teaching younger members their places. The ceremonial ground is thus a short-term mnemonic allowing exchange of spatial understanding, rather than a long-term one like a monument. A modern equivalent on the same principle is the improvised football pitch made by children on their way home from school, a bag deposited for each goal and the centre estimated as half way between them. Others may see no pitch at all, but it is there for those who play once the spatial convention is understood and agreed.

The Specialisation of Building Types

The role and evolution of building types is an area of architectural history that is surprisingly incomplete and still developing.[11] The existence of parliament, the law-courts, police stations, schools and hospitals is taken for granted as though they have always been there, yet they are mostly the product of the Victorian era, when industrial expansion and colonial wealth made it both possible and necessary to reshape society along with its buildings. This was a great period for the invention of traditions and the establishment of social rituals, of pomp and circumstance, uniforms and processions. The Victorians were so successful at establishing institutions that we have tended since the middle of the 20th century to feel the need to free ourselves and to deconstruct what we came to see as their stuffy formality. However, we are beginning to perceive that general purpose buildings have an alienating effect on the legibility of our cities.

In the early 19th century, the so-called mother of parliaments sat in a converted chapel, occupying an unruly hotchpotch of buildings that had grown up around Westminster Hall. After the fire of 1834, Charles Barry recast these improvised arrangements in a new and more formal building of great subtlety, enhancing both a sense of national history and the ritual relation between crown, lords and commons. Big Ben now appears as a national symbol on *The News at Ten*, temporal order representing national order. Westminster Hall was also the site of the main courts of law. The Courts of King's Bench and Chancery stood side by side within that medieval building with no acoustic barrier, everyone coming and going within the same space. As business increased, some court sessions in the 1820s were even held in the open air. Later in the century GE Street's magnificent building in the Strand put an end to all this, setting the operations of the law on a much firmer footing, with highly elaborate circulation arrangements to separate the various parties. It now seems suitably dignified and traditional, but it was innovative at the time, defining the operation of the law afresh.

The development of institutions such as schools and hospitals has belonged much more to the 20th century, and early examples make clear the great shifts that have occurred both in building technology and in user ideology – seen in the difference between a board school and a 1960s comprehensive, for example. Even so, it is not now obvious how the board school worked, and only a systematic social history can adequately reveal the link that once existed between the building and the beliefs and expectations of its first users. The anthropologist's analytical stance makes the implicit explicit.

The anthropological record shows how specialist building types first started to emerge. Some societies have only houses, which fulfil functions both practical and ideological, secular and sacred. The church or temple seems to emerge as a specialised house which also identifies a larger group of people, but shared institutions are many and variable. The famous village of the Dogon people in Mali consists largely of houses, in which cosmological ideas and memories of ancestors are explicitly held, but they also have specific shrines for particular religious observances and sacred caves in which their ritual dancing masks are kept.[12] Being agriculturalists, they have prominent granaries compartmented in accordance with the crucial roles that the different crops have in the order of things, and the geometry of the house, the village and the laying out of fields are interrelated and geared to cosmic principles also linked with the weaving of the highly symbolic funeral pall. Interestingly, the Dogon have a primitive parliament, the Toguna. This is a shelter used by the elders, and it is supposed to be placed in the village plan as the symbolic head. It consists only of tree trunk columns and a thatched roof, but the columns are carved as the figures of ancestors, while the roof of millet stalks is made impressively and ceremonially thick.

Between the Dogon village and 19th-century London, there must be a great range of gradually developing building types, and if we were to examine case studies at various stages, we could perhaps assemble a history and theory of the relation between political and architectural specialisation. Such a history could be more valuable than the old stylistic one when it comes to understanding the extremely complex and difficult conditions of contemporary cities.

Expropriation and the Loss of Complicity: Architecture and Society Today

In modern Western societies, where most buildings are inherited, the construction of new ones handed over to specialists, and the act of building constrained by endless rules and regulations, not to mention economic forces, the relationship between architecture and society is far less direct. Indeed, it has become so complex that some architects perceive no relationship at all, and view the choice of form as a free-for-all. With the recent explosion of technological means, there is a greater range of possible forms than ever before, which is demonstrated in the diversity seen among entries to contemporary architectural competitions. Although all are more or less feasible, I would argue that the competing designs are not equally effective, for each implies a different way of life. The imaginative comparison of implied habitation in such competition entries is one of the best indicators of the persisting power of architecture, revealing just how different the experience of life in each could be. This range of possibility becomes hidden once a building is constructed, because, almost immediately, people take its organisation for granted and never consider that it might have been otherwise.

When people build for themselves, as they used to, there is no difficulty about accommodating or reflecting their beliefs and values: it is almost automatic and the building process strongly encourages it. The establishment of handed-down traditions allows people to get on with building without much conscious reflection, simply as part of 'the order of things'. But as a society becomes more complex, users are separated increasingly from the making of their habitations by legal, technological and financial pressures and by professional specialisation. It is hardly surprising, then, that they do not always get what they want or welcome what they get.

Lacking complicity with designers, people may create their own kind of independent and sometimes haphazard complicity with buildings. The great growth of the do-it-yourself movement is a sign of this, as is also the care lavished on gardens – still a relatively unrestricted realm, and one in which considerable economic input goes somehow unnoticed. The takeover by the inhabitant may be aggressive, but even this is better than the total alienation that results from becoming resigned to living in a hostile environment. As people lose interest in their environment, they also lose their ability to make effective judgements about it.

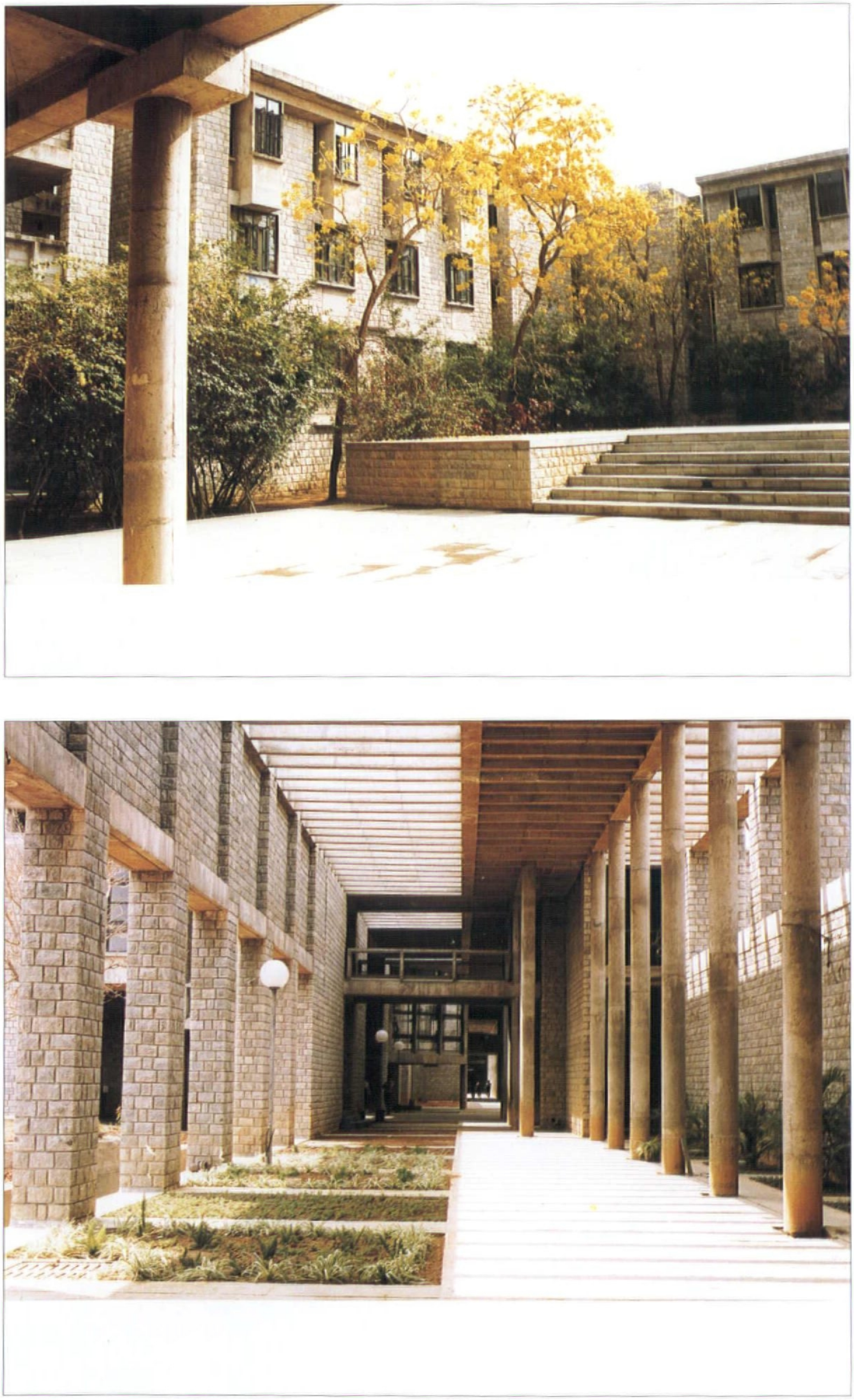
The crisis of the imposed and unloved dwelling does not apply in quite the same way with more public building types, for they have always necessarily been shared projects requiring some kind of consensus and cooperation, representing society and its values more generally. But here too there is often a sense of expropriation, for public bodies and bureaucracies tend to grow increasingly remote from building users. Public buildings become regarded as at best neutral containers, at worst symbols of an oppressive and anonymous authority. When the complicity between building and users is so far reduced, the political potential of architecture is neither noticed nor understood.

For some time, sensitive architects and designers have been fully aware that all is not well in the relationship between architecture and society, but without altogether understanding why. This was epitomised in Le Corbusier's late and resigned remark that after all life was right and the architect wrong. Why and how wrong? At least anthropologists can help us to understand how the relationship between buildings and society worked before it became so complicated, and they can also help to trace the stages of the complication. Anthropology can also help to steer architectural history away from its origins in connoisseurship and hero worship, and make it question its obsession with surface style in favour of a deeper understanding of politics and society.

Notes

Peter Blundell Jones is Professor of Architecture at the University of Sheffield.

1. See Clifford Geertz, 'Art as a Cultural System', *Local Knowledge*, Basic Books (New York), 1983.
2. See Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure* (Chicago), 1969.
3. For a perceptive analysis of the various kinds of order involved in meals, see Mary Douglas 'Deciphering a Meal', in *Implicit Meanings*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, (London), 1975. Douglas has a theory that composite and layered food objects such as the British biscuit try to mimic the layering or a more elaborate meal in a small space. The Mars bar has quite an elaborate cross-section.
4. The conference took place at Cambridge in 1990 and is recorded in, S Hugh Jones and J Carsten, *About the House*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), 1995, p226-52.
5. The story of the housing and De Carlo's reaction is told by Joseph Rykwert in his article 'The Modern Movement in Italian Architecture', included in *The Necessity of Artifice*, Academy Editions (London), 1982, p22. For De Carlo's views on an essential need for participation *see* 'Architecture's Public' of 1970, reprinted in Benedict Zucchi, *Giancarlo De Carlo*, Butterworth (London),1992, pp204-15.
6. The classic text differentiating between hygeine and the symbolic aspects of pollution behaviour is Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, Routledge and Kegan Paul (London), 1966.
7. The example is taken from his essay 'Animals are Good to Think and Good to Prohibit', included in *Rules and Meanings*, Mary Douglas (ed), Penguin (London), 1973.
8. Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), 1977, pp118-19.
9. Ibid.
10. For a fuller account see my article 'The Sustaining Ritual', *Architectural Review*, November 1990, pp93-95. The original source is MJ Meggitt, *Desert People, a Study of the Walbiri Aboriginies of Central Australia*, University of Chicago Press (Chicago), 1962.
11. Nikolaus Pevsner's *A History of Building Types*, Thames and Hudson (London), 1976, charts out the ground, but with only a short chapter on each type it is but a sketch.
12. See Marcel Griaule, *Conversations With Ogotemmeli*, Oxford University Press (Oxford), 1966, and a short but well illustrated section on the Dogon in Enrico Guidoni, *Primitive Architecture*, Faber/Electa (London), 1975.



FROM ABOVE: View across internal courtyard; view through arcaded 'corridor' with pergola structure above

BALKRISHNA DOSHI

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, BANGALORE, INDIA

Critique by Clare Melhuish

Balkrishna Doshi's Indian Institute of Management is located on the outskirts of Bangalore, identified as the fastest-growing city in Asia. The site is steadily being encroached by western-style suburban development which reflects the transformation of the city by the arrival of multinational companies specialising in computer technology. Dubbed 'the garden city' during the period of British rule in the last century, and much loved by the British on account of its temperate climate, Bangalore is fast being redeveloped with multistorey residential and office buildings which take little account of Indian cultural patterns, and threaten to alter the city landscape for ever.

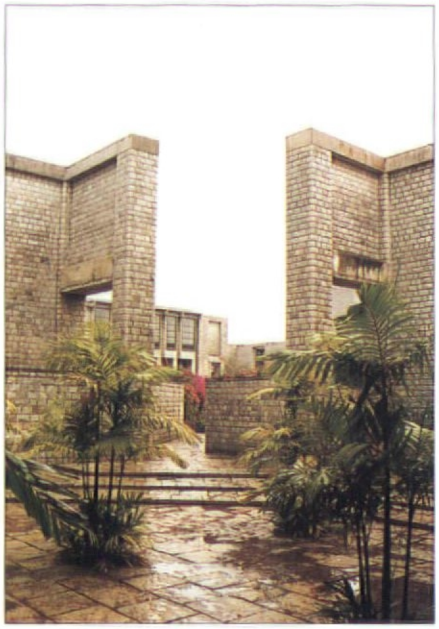
Westernisation is an incontrovertible fact in India; it may even be argued that the loss of the traditional architectural landscape is a necessary sacrifice in the pursuit of prosperity for the nation. However, the immense refinement and sophistication of Indian culture as it has evolved provides a powerful generating source for a contemporary architecture that might not only give form both to traditional patterns of life, and a sense of optimism about future development, but also offer some insights relevant to the future of non-Indian architecture.

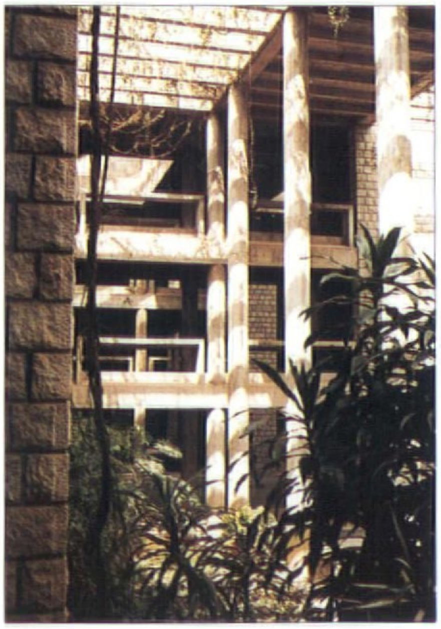
The Institute of Management may be viewed as a prestigious symbol of the steady progress of westernisation in India; yet Doshi's building is a sophisticated example of how a contemporary architecture can evolve out of a deep understanding and imaginative reinterpretation of cultural patterns that go back over thousands of years. It represents an early expression of an approach which he began to evolve in the late 70s, after a period of reassessment of his own architectural roots at the epicentre of functionalism and universalism, in the office of Le Corbusier in Paris.

While working on the Indian projects in Paris, Doshi witnessed what he describes as a transformation of Le Corbusier's European work into an architecture integrated with the land: a move away from pure form towards a more amorphous reinterpretation of modern architecture based on observation of patterns of life determined by land, climate and economy. Some years after setting up his own practice in India, Doshi invited Louis Kahn to design the Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad, a building which convinced him that 'architecture is like a fabric generated by life's forces, not an isolated object that cannot be touched'. At the same time, he began to travel extensively in India, studying the traditional architecture, and especially the temple cities.

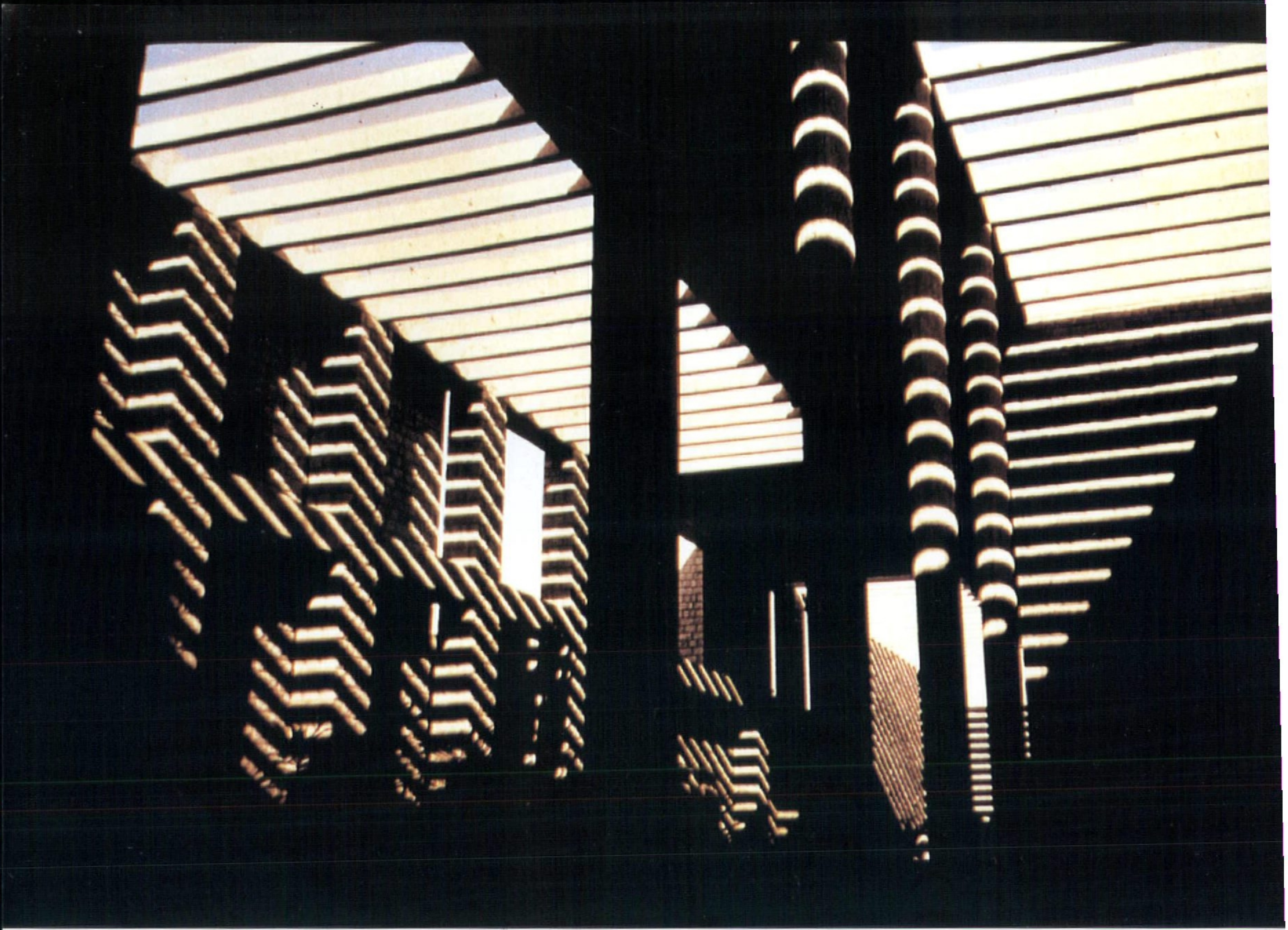
In India, there is a ritualistic tradition that life has to be breathed into a building through the dynamics of spatial and formal configurations. In order to achieve this, the *sthapati*, or architect, has to develop his awareness of his own breath and breathing patterns through yoga. This concept brings sharply into focus the underlying relationship between architecture and the human body (architecture as a container for human life), and out of it has evolved a spatially complex architecture of tightly-knit internal and external spaces.

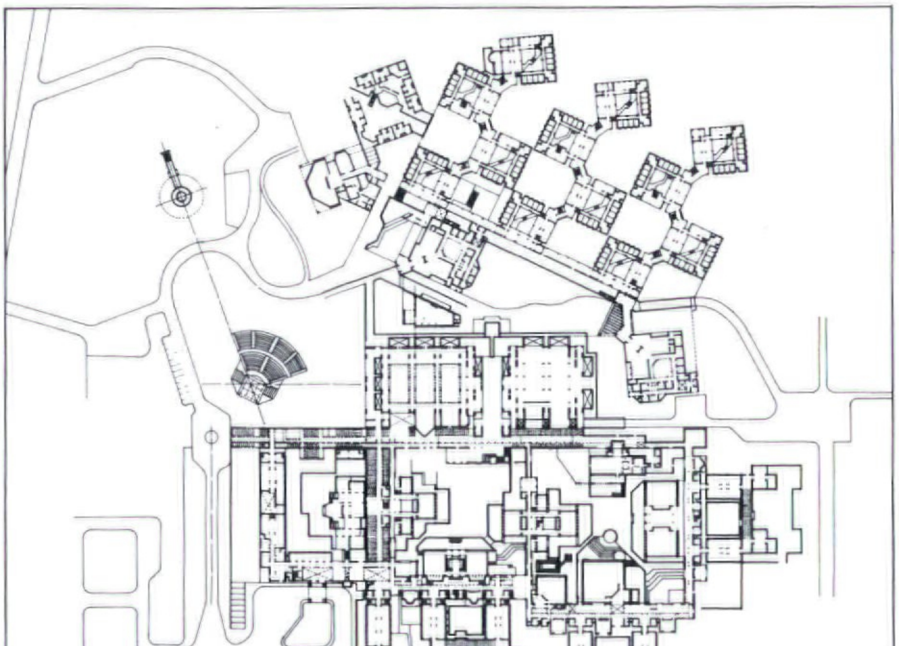
Khan's complex at Ahmedabad is based on such an organisational principal, and has clearly influenced Doshi's own building for the same client at Bangalore. But the most direct influence was the city of Fatehpur Sikri, built by Emperor Akbar in the 16th century, which consists of a network of corridors along which a collection of internal and external spaces are disposed. At the Institute of Management, Doshi applied these principles to achieve a layout which, in the comparatively pleasant Bangalore climate, permits academic exchange to take place beyond the classrooms themselves, and, in the tradition of the 'garden city', the growth of lush oases of greenery between the buildings. The corridors become a wonderful spatial experience in themselves. They are wide enough to create areas for informal sitting and gathering, and are three storeys in





FROM ABOVE: Plants and flowers flourish in the Bangalore climate; dressed stone walls contrast with reinforced concrete columns and timber pergola



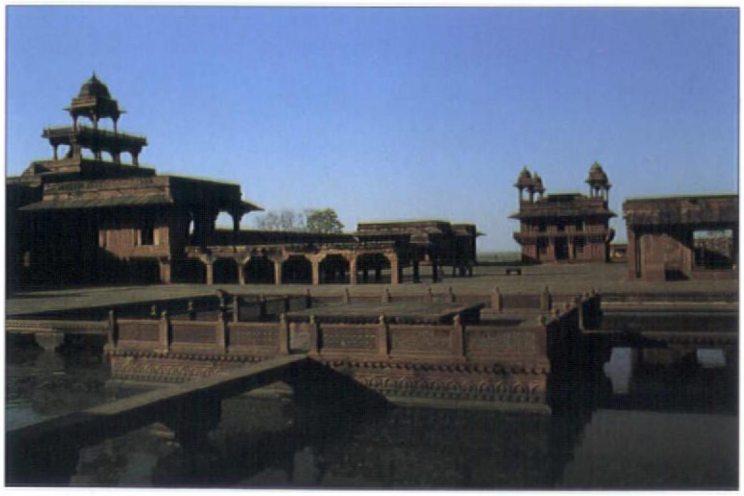


FROM ABOVE: Pergola structures cast rich shadows; ground floor plan height. Some are open to the sky, some glazed, and some covered with timber pergola frames. These frames, and the arcaded sides of the corridors, create a dramatic play of light and shadow which is both invigorating and meditative in the heat and glare of the Indian summer. The corridors also frame vistas through the complex, enhancing the sense of connectivity and vitality which one experiences inside the building.

The complex is built largely of load-bearing granite masonry, with reinforced concrete floors and columns. The forms are simple, rectilinear and repetitive, as is the detailing. It is essentially the spatial organisation rather than the forms, materials or details, which gives the place its special quality and makes it extremely pleasurable to be in. In many ways, the building is clearly rooted in the modernist tradition, yet it is also pervaded by that sense of wellbeing which modernism is perceived as having destroyed in architecture, showing that the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Doshi's own belief is that 'supreme among architectural experiences are those which occur along routes of movement and in spaces which could be characterised as pause or ambiguous, plural spaces', and he deliberately set out to explore these aspects of architecture in this building and those which followed.

If this is indeed the case, it is worth speculating why. Doshi argues that there is a fundamental connection between routes and rituals – one of the key areas of anthropological research – which is explicitly expressed in the Indian architectural and cultural tradition. Routes are established by sequences of rituals enacted to fuse the meanings of an event and its site, both in a specifically religious context – as on a temple site – and also in a domestic or secular context, as in the home. The Vastupurusha Mandala diagram (vastu = environment, purusha = energy, mandala = astrological chart), somewhat like the Chinese Feng Shui system, was conceived as a tool for ordering the design of a building to ensure that minimum standards of health and hygiene were achieved (in terms of orientation, climatic responsiveness, and relationship between public and private domains), while simultaneously fusing that order with spiritual significance. Before a building was occupied, a consecration ceremony called Prana Pratisthana, or 'infusion of breath of life', was carried out, by which the relationship between the rituals of everyday life and the cosmic order were recognised and established.

In Indian culture, the boundary between sacred and secular is far more indeterminate than it has become in western culture, where the concepts of the sacred and the ritual have acquired an almost exclusively religious association. In their article 'Constructing the Sacred', Simon Coleman and Peter Collins show how closely connected is the architecture of religious buildings, and the relationship of those buildings with their sites, with the rituals carried out inside and around them. However, this concept of the way that 'sacred space' is defined by architecture as an expression of ritual does not have to be confined exclusively to religious architecture. Ritual, to a very large extent, governs every waking moment – washing, eating, interchanges with colleagues and friends, all the forms of social etiquette, even the way we go to sleep at night. Advances in technology, changes in lifestyle, have introduced a greater flexibility in these patterns, and a greater hedonism, but have in no way weakened the ritual content of everyday life; in many senses, perhaps to counteract the sense of rapid change, it has even become more marked. As Doshi shows in his building for a westernised institution in the Indian context, the concept of ritual, and the implications it has for architecture, is as significant and as relevant in the secular domain as it is in the strictly religious.



FROM L TO R: Entrance elevation of Institute of Management; Fatehpur Sikri, the complex is generated by a network of routes

CAMBRIDGE KUMBAKONAM PROJECT

KUMBAKONAM: A RITUAL TOPOGRAPHY

by Peter Carl, Anna Dallapiccola, George Michell and Vivek Nanda

Contrary to modern Western expectations of a single highest meaning which might govern the symbolic structure of a traditional town, the ancient cities of South India display a more open continuity of significantly different symbolic themes. The city of Kumbakonam is located on the holy Kaveri River, the central artery of Tamil Nadu which still nurtures and sustains the cultural traditions of the Tamil people.The town comprises a rich structure of reciprocities between phenomena of widely different spatial and temporal reference; nevertheless, it has been largely ignored by scholarship.

The Cambridge Kumbakonam Project has begun to research the town, with a view to clarifying its urban order. Presented here are the principal constituents of the ritual topography, in particular the sites which are sacred both to the town, and, in the case of the Mahamakam Tank, to the whole of India. Unlike other temple-towns of Tamil Nadu, Kumbakonam is not constructed around a single large temple-precinct; rather the two tanks and clusters of temples are distributed throughout the town, along with a number secondary shrines, exhibiting varying degrees of autonomy and engagement with respect to each other and to the town.

The earliest history of Kumbakonam (2nd-3rd centuries) is preserved in texts, but hardly any archaeological artefacts exist. Among the early Tamil names for the town is Kudamukku ('the mouth or spout of the pot'), which may refer to its location at the point of bifurcation of the Kaveri with its tributary, the Arasalar. However, the pot motif recurs in a later Sanskirt source, where Kumbakonam is described as the site of a cosmogonic myth centred about Shiva, 'Lord of the Pot'. In the myth, the creator god Brahma seeks to preserve the most precious things from the destruction which completes a cosmic cycle. Accordingly, he places the Hindu scriptures and the seed of creation in a golden pot. The pot floats south on the cosmic flood until it is shattered by Shiva's arrow, releasing the embryonic *amrta* (nectar), which flows and congeals to form Kumbakonam's tanks and temples, marking the start of a new creation. Thus, all of the town's sacred sites participate in the cosmic origins, while particular sites directly embody the myth – for example, the Banapureshwara Temple (plan, no 2), stands where Shiva launched his arrow.

The second historical stratum corresponds to the advent of the Chola kings, who, in the 7th-9th centuries, developed a characteristically Tamil aggregative urbanity extending into the hinterland. What is now Kumbakonam was the religious centre; and 2 kilometres to the south-west (off the plan) lay Paliayaru, the palace complex, now reduced to surface remains. This sacred-royal configuration sat within a network of smaller subsidiary settlements to produce a relationship between core and environs embodied in a sacred topography of temple-centres mediated by a statehood articulated through Chola ritual kingship.

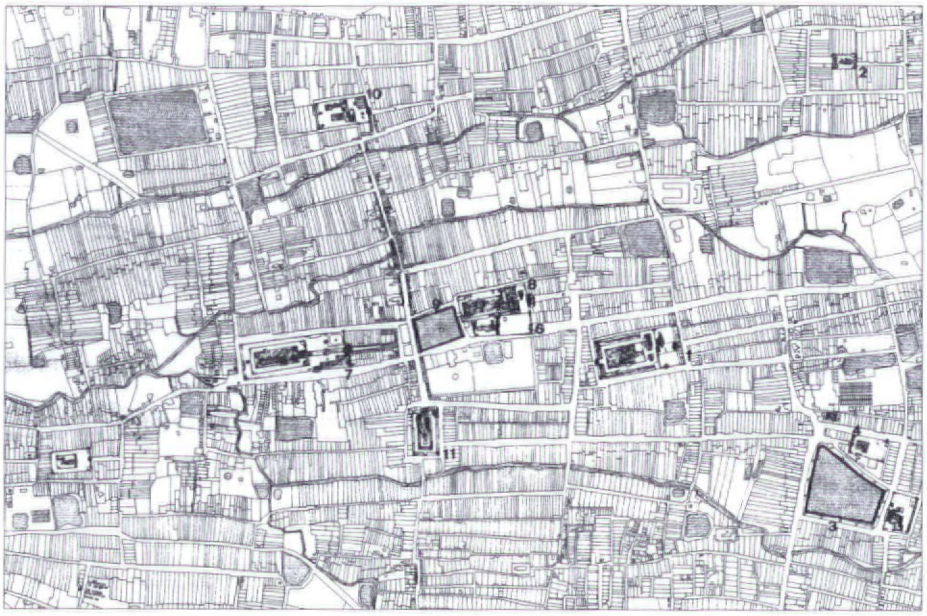
Chola royalty identified with Shiva, and the primary focus of the chola settlement was the Shaivite Nageshwara Temple (fig 12 and plan, no 1) whose sculptural programme includes the court with the gods. Underlying the symbolism of Shiva, here as at other sacred sites of the town, is the more primordial worship of Surya, the sun god. Even today, the most important annual festival occurs on the day the sun penetrates to the *linga* in the inner sanctum.

By the end of the Chola period, all of the sites itemised on the town plan were in place, excepting the Chakrapani and Ramaswamy temples, and were grouped in the eastern part of the town. In the 15-17th centuries, however, the symbolic topography was restructured by the Vijayanagara-Nayaka dynasty. This involved a suppression of Shiva in favour of Vishnu, with whom the new court identified; interventions in most of the existing sites in a neo-Chola style; and the construction of the two later temples dedicated to Vishnu at either end of a north-south street (plan, nos 10, 11), which had the effect of creating a new symbolic centre oriented about Vishnu in the western part of the town. This street is still today the ritual centre of Kumbakonam, articulated along its length by several smaller shrines consecrated to different saints of Vishnu. It is also a lively bazaar (figs 3), the principal commercial artery of the town, intricately fusing the domains of humans and gods.

The southern end of the street is marked by the towering *gopura* of the Ramaswamy Temple (plan, no 10). A carved wooden chariot used in annual ceremonies stands nearby. The neo-Chola style of the sanctuary is intended to situate the temple in the context of the earlier shrines, but the more inventive entrance *mandapa* (fig 4) transforms the supports into a representation of the powerful Nayaka king, Raghunatha Nayaka, and his retinue in the company of the gods. The Chakrapani Temple at the opposite, northern end of the street (see plan) is raised on a series of terraces. Worshippers enter the central shrine from different directions according to the time of year.

Also connected ritually with this street is the Kumbeshwara Temple (plan no 6) as can be seen from the carved wooden chariots parked in the colonnaded market (from British times) linking the temple enclosure to the street. Under the Nayakas, the ancient Kumbeshwara temple, which is directly related to the foundation myth, acquired precedence over the Nageshwara temple in Saivite worship; indeed it became the most prominent temple in the town. Shiva takes the form of an irregularly shaped sand *linga*, himself embodying the flood of embryonic *amrta* from the shattered pot. Opposite to the east, and across the Pottramarai Tank (plan, no 9), lies the equally venerable double shrine of the Sarangapani Temple (fig 6 and plan, no 8) with an exquisitely carved main sanctuary whose basement imitates a ceremonial

Location plan (fig 1), Kumbakonam City – Shaiva Kumbakonam (1) Nageshwara Temple (2) Banapureshwara Temple (3) Mahamakam Tank (4) Abhimukteshwara Temple (5) Somanatha Temple (6) Adi-Kumbeshwara Temple; Vaishnava Kumbakonam (7) Sarangapani Temple (8) Chakrapani Temple (9) Pottramari Tank (10) Chakrapani Temple (11) Ramaswamy Temple; view of Kumbakonam's Sacred Core (fig 2); Bazaar Street (fig 3)



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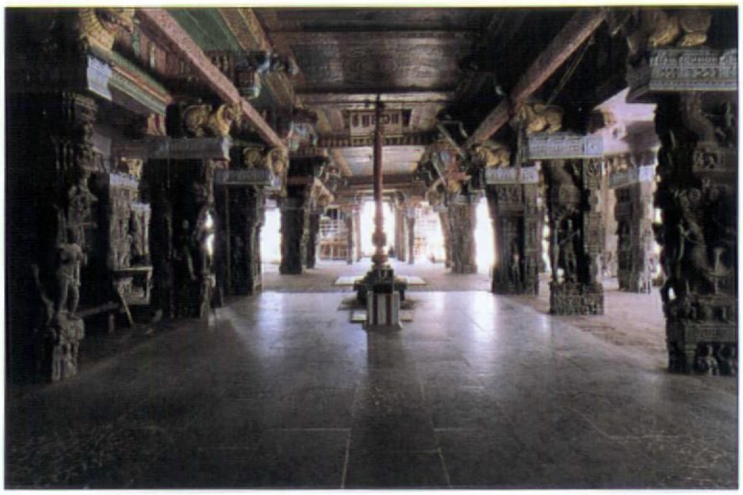
wooden chariot (fig 5), housing a representation of Vishnu reclining on Ananta, the serpent who floats on the cosmic ocean prior to the creation of the universe.

Even in barest outline, it can be seen that the Nayaka intervention is a spatial embodiment of a subtle negotiation between historical and cosmic time. The paired creation motifs of Shiva (west) and Vishnu (east), lie either side of a street which itself superimposes everyday upon ritual time, and is marked at its south by a mingling of historical figures and gods, and its north by a ritual obedient to celestial cycles. The pre-existing context is further acknowledged in the neo-Chola ornamentation, and the innovations appear as a fulfilment of the tradition.

The Nayaka rulers also reconstructed the Mahamakam Tank (figs 7-11 and plan, no 3). To them we owe its present form, comprising steps descending into the water and sixteen elaborately carved and stuccoed pavilions, each dedicated to one of the 16 great gifts, or *mahadanas*, bestowed by a ruler on a holy place. The most significant of these is the 16-pillared pavilion at the northwest end (fig 10). On its ceiling is depicted the ceremony of the *tulaprushadana*, in which the ruler, attended by his court and deities, weighs himself in a balance against the gold subsequently distributed to the Brahmins.

Celebrated by Tamil saint-poets as early as the 7th century, the deep sanctity of the Mahamakam Tank has made it a place of pilgrimage for more than a millennium. Skirted by numerous temples and religious institutions, it is the site of one of the main festivals in Kumbakonam, the Mahamakam, or Great Makam (fig 7). Occurring every 12 years, the exact time of the festival is fixed by the conjunction of the sun in Aquarius, Jupiter and the moon in Leo (the Mahamakam star), during the full moon in the Tamil month of Tai (February-March). The climax of the festival lasts a few hours, from early morning to midday, when dense crowds of pilgrims wade through the shallow waters and take a dip in its 20 springs.



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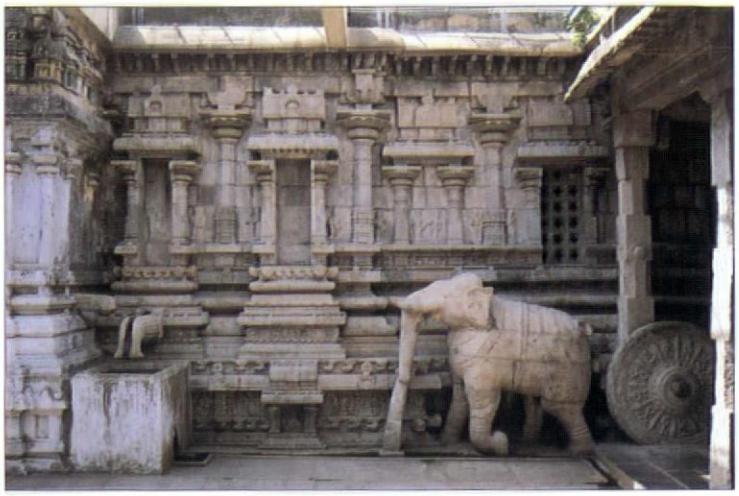

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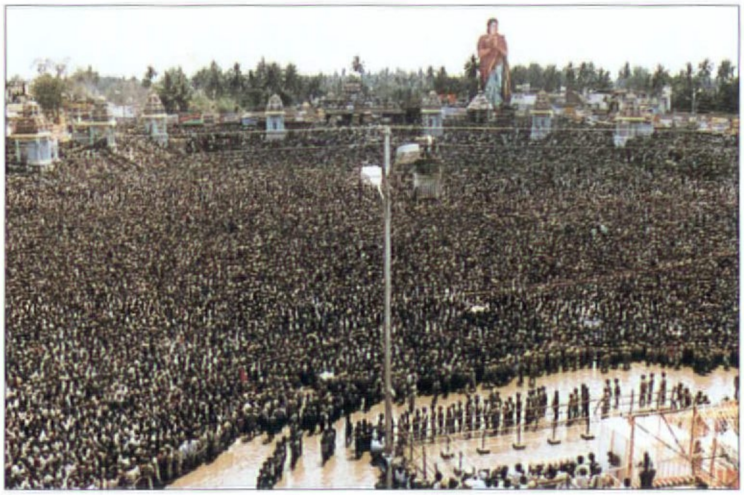

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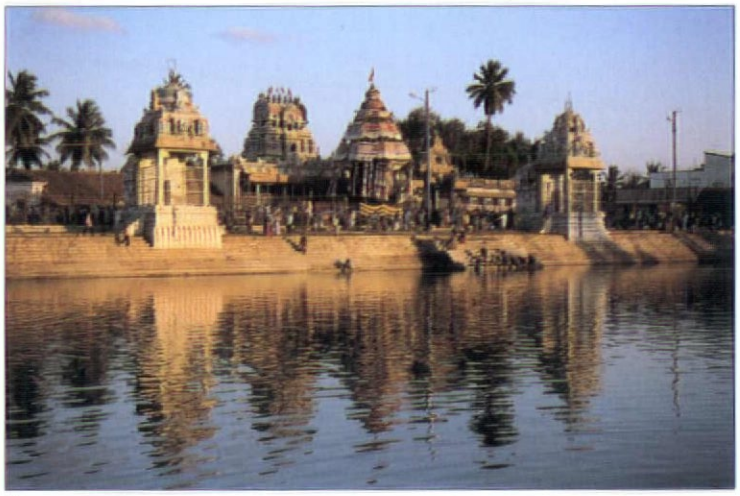

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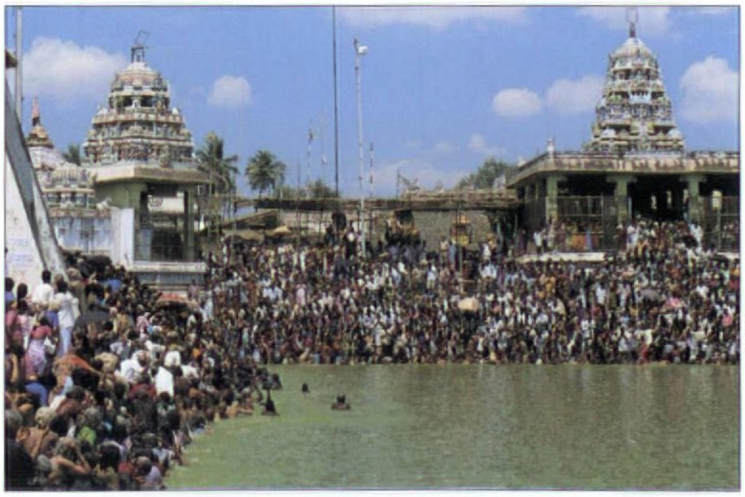

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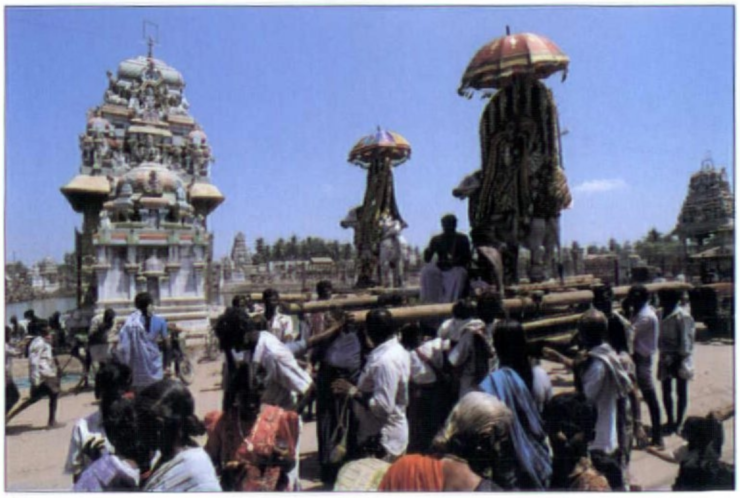

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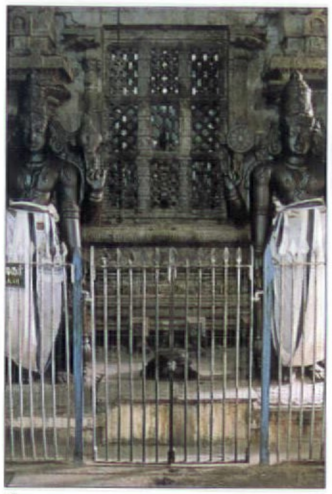
Ramaswamy Temple, entrance mandapa *(fig 4); Sarangapani Temple, basement of sanctum with carved chariot (fig 5); Sarangapani Temple, entrance guardians of the sanctum (fig 6); Mahamakam Festival, 1992 (fig 7); Mahamakam Tank complex – chariot procession outside the Abhimukteshwara Temple on the east bank (fig 8); chariot procession along the south bank (fig 9); view of 16-columned pavilion (right) on the north bank during a festival (fig 10); deities from the Kasi Vishvanatha Temple being taken in procession on the west bank (fig 11); Nageshwara Temple, main sanctum (fig 12); Nageshwara Temple, plan (fig 13)*



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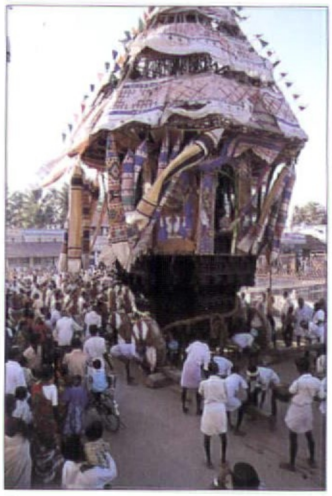

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Such is the legendary purifying power of this tank that the sacred rivers of India are believed to bathe here in order to purge themselves of the sins accumulated in their waters.

In this respect, the Mahamakam Tank (figs 7-11) is significant to the whole of India; and its great sanctity has attracted a complex mythology which includes the creation myth of the town, the nine holy rivers, the 20 springs of Hindu mythology, the 16 gifts of kingship and a celestial symbolism comprising the guardians of the cosmic quarters, the sun and the zodiac. Moreover, the nine (originally seven) river goddesses are also resident in the Sarangapani temple. Kumbakonam, like Benaras, is the centre of an annual pilgrimage of five concentric circumambulations of the town, the last within the precinct of the Kumbeshwara temple. Kumbakonam is also referred to as Bhaskara Kshetra, as it comprises shrines dedicated to the three principal Hindu deities: Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu.

This mandala-like mediation of the particular and universal, of the historical and primordial (or cosmic), arises as an understanding from its apparent opposite: the differentiated topography of localised episodes and symbolic situations. Much as the overall hierarchy of the caste structure is manifested in the conflict and exchange between particular castes, the 'cosmic geography' of a town like Kumbakonam depends upon discrete differences and reciprocities between a diversity of significant settings: natural (both regional and extremely local), royal, civic and domestic, along with the temples and innumerable shrines. These phenomena of centrality and identity embody a complex mythology, both local and universal, while different aspects of the topography (also involving different groups of people) are given prominence according to the rich cycles of ritual, ceremony and festival, whose temporality discloses the mosaic of settings as a structure. Like language, whose communicative situation depends upon a layering of meaning from the primordial to the momentary, these representational cycles restore the communication between the cosmic setting and immediate historical circumstances.

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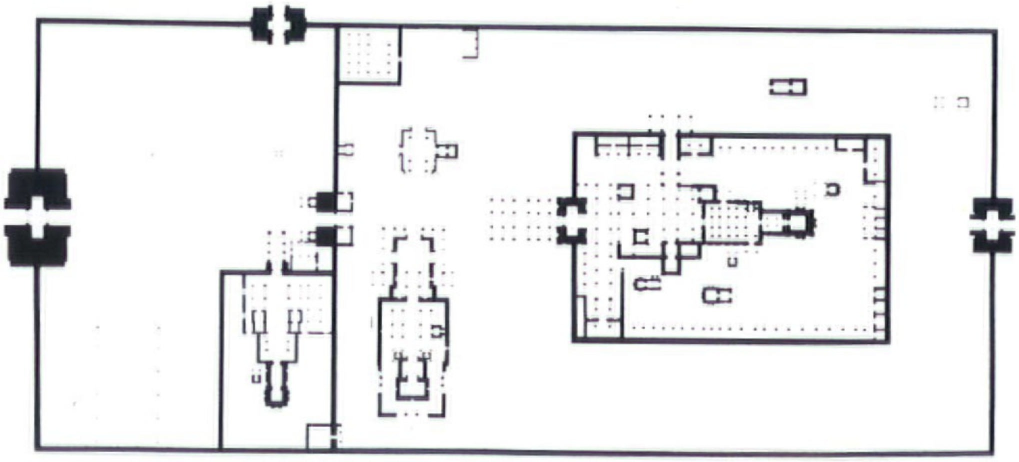

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ADA KARMI-MELAMEDE AND RAM KARMI

SUPREME COURT OF JERUSALEM
HOUSE IN NORTH TEL AVIV (ADA KARMI-MELAMEDE)

Critique by Clare Melhuish

Although the history of Judaism and its traditions go back over thousands of years, the culture of Israel itself, as a homeland for the Jewish people, is still very young, and comprises many diverse elements. The implications for architecture in this context are very interesting, since there is no real architectural tradition specific to the political and cultural identity of the country. Of course, there is the Mediterranean vernacular of this part of the Middle East, but for all those people who flocked to make their homes in Israel from Europe, Russia and the United States, this is an architecture of little immediate cultural relevance.

This unusual situation underlines the importance and relevance of taking an 'anthropological' approach to architecture; closely observing and interpreting the conditions of place and society in order to generate significant architectural forms and spaces and, in so doing, to shape and give form to cultural identity. Ada Karmi-Melamede and Ram Karmi's Supreme Court building in Jerusalem represents a landmark in the architectural development of Israel. It is perhaps the first major building which clearly expresses a sense of political order and cultural permanence.

The architects, a brother and sister team whose father Dov Karmi designed a number of International Style buildings in Tel Aviv during the 1930s, stated:

> We tried to provide a conceptual image of the urban memory and of our deep consciousness of the city in a building whose architecture would reflect the personal map imprinted in each individual. The building was intended to project a feeling of personal possession, just as the city does, and perhaps even of communal possession – in a structure that could suggest cultural orientation and be a source of pride.

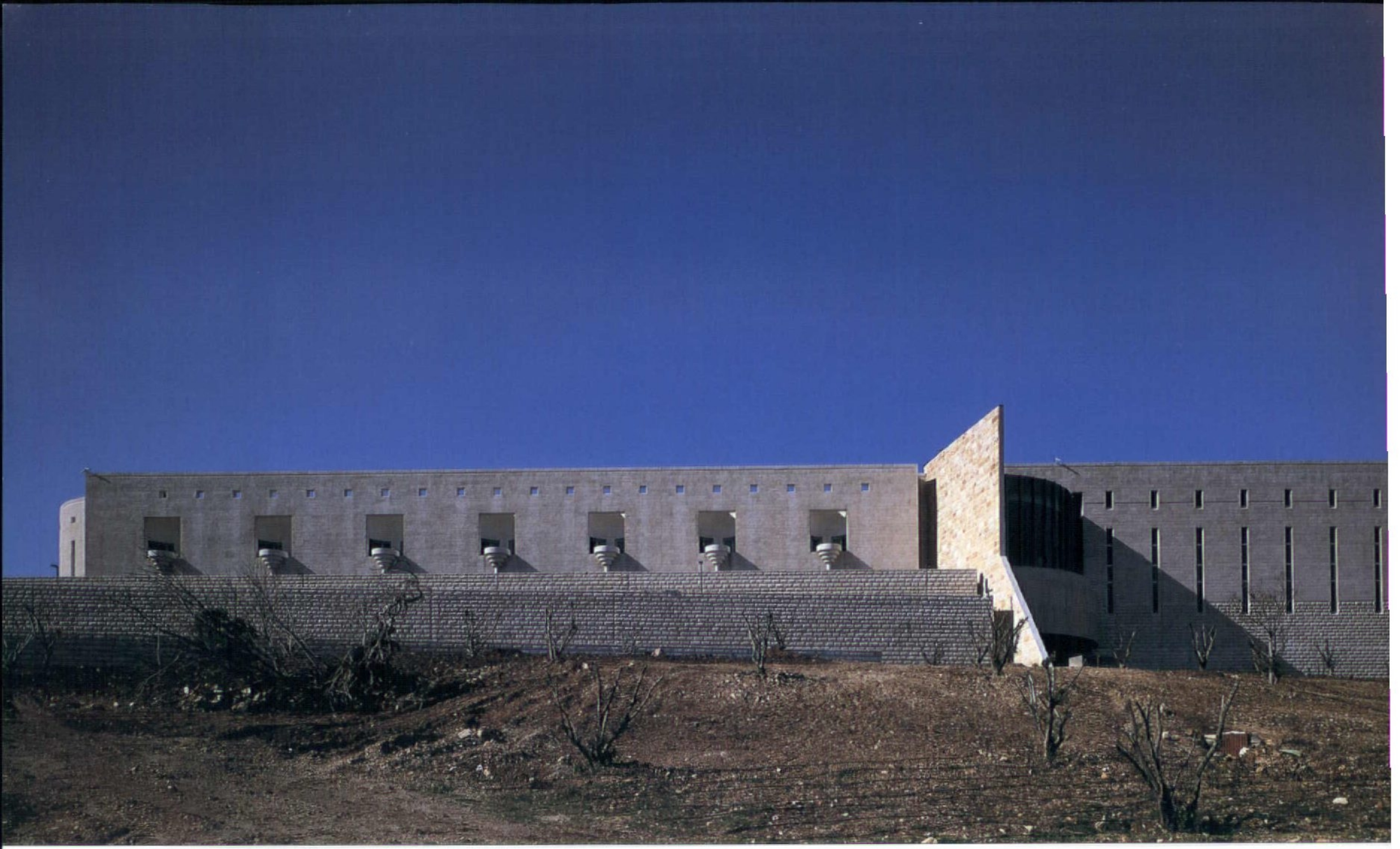
The building was intended to symbolise the way in which the law calibrates the relationship between the individual and the collective through mutual agreement: a bond resulting from a common history and tradition and reflecting a profound need for order. Historically, this was expressed by the location of law courts at the gates of a city. The Supreme Court building is located at the intersection of three axes, embedded within the fabric of the city: the formal north-south axis connecting the Central Bus Station, Convention Centre, Hilton Hotel, the Knesset and the Israel Museum; the more informal, green east-west axis connecting the Sacher Park, the Wohl Rose Park and the Hebrew University's Givat Ram Campus; and an emerging axis between the Old City and the National Precinct – a natural amphitheatre in west Jerusalem, surrounded by government buildings separated from one another by security zones and parking areas. This axis will eventually connect the Rockefeller Museum to the Rose Park, linking many important public places – the Damascus Gate, the Russian Compound, Zion Square, Ben Yehuda Mall, and now, the Supreme Court, located at the centre of the National Precinct amphitheatre. This axis strengthens the ties between the older, eastern part of Jerusalem (looking towards the Judean desert), where the spiritual institutions are concentrated, and the newer, Western, secular part of the city, which is orientated towards the Mediterranean Sea. 'Given its dominant position', the architects have explained:

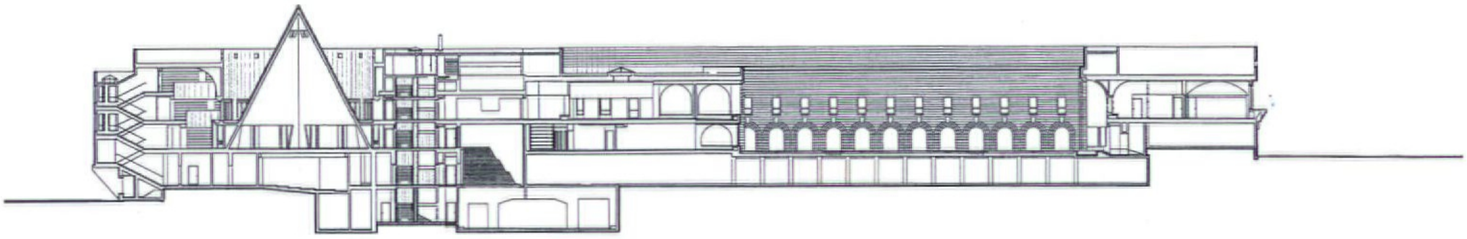
> the Supreme Court Building cannot be viewed merely as single free-standing object in the landscape, but should relate both to its immediate environment and to the larger urban context.

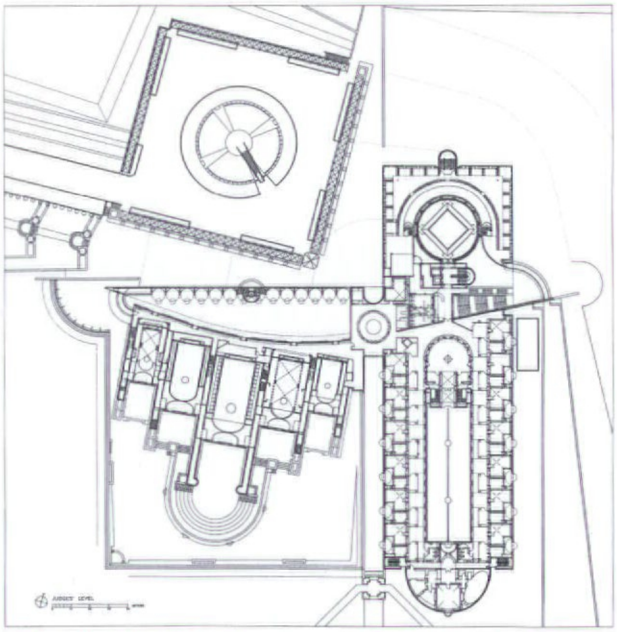
This is immediately evident in the form of the building, which has essentially been generated by a combination of circular and linear movement patterns giving physical embodiment to the biblical analogy of justice as a circle, and the law as a line. Moving away from the compactness and clear legibility of modernism, the building seems to extend tentacles across the site, a dynamic nucleus projecting movement outwards rather than gathering energy into itself. This reflects the character of Jerusalem itself: a series of historic nuclei, a dense labyrinth of seemingly disconnected places, a city of gates and walls, 'layered by conquests, built in a plurality of styles where none prevails, unified only by the language of stone'.

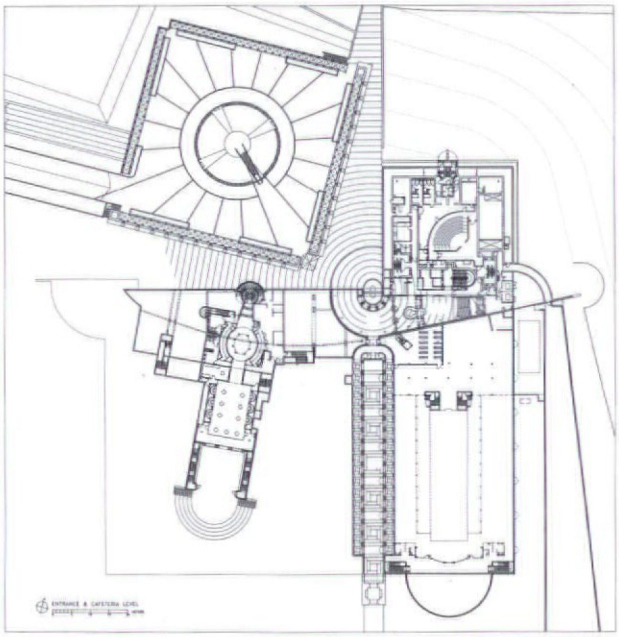
The Supreme Court is surrounded by a simple stone wall, specifically intended to invoke the *genius loci*: 'an introverted walled-in building characteristic of Jerusalem architecture'. Once within the wall, 'its particular ritual is revealed layer by layer through an architecture of procession'. The north-south axis from the bus station to the Knesset and Israel Museum bisects the building lengthwise through its centre, forming an open public route bordered on the east side by the judges' chambers organised around a linear courtyard designed for seclusion and introspection. The five courtrooms are located on the other side, carved out of the hill to express the involvement of the people with their land, and the interconnectivity of the landscape and tradition. The east-west axis is marked by the external Dorothy de Rothschild Promenade leading up to the entrance, and the massive bow-shaped stone wall, or spine, which passes through the building marking the edge between the courtrooms and the striking courtroom foyer. The entrance is treated as an extended threshold behind which is located the grand staircase, commanding a panoramic view of Jerusalem through its glazed outer wall. At first floor level one passes through to the courtroom foyer or the library via an 'inner gatehouse' enclosed within a pure pyramidal form penetrated by a column of light. Clad externally in copper, it is designed to evoke the image of Absalon's Tomb as a testimony to the centrality of law through time.

The prisoners', public, and judges' levels are defined as horizontal planes one above the other, so that the prisoners

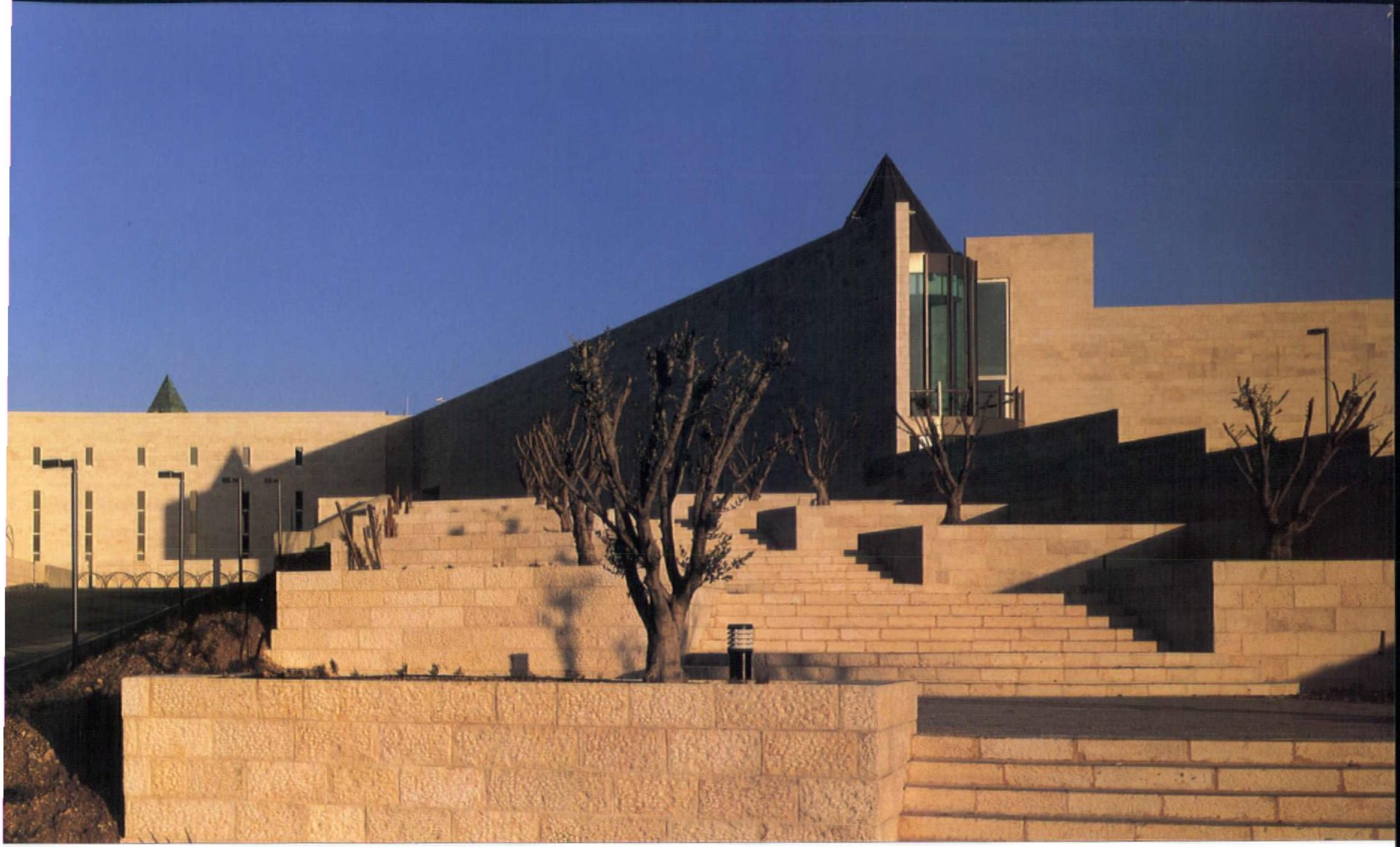


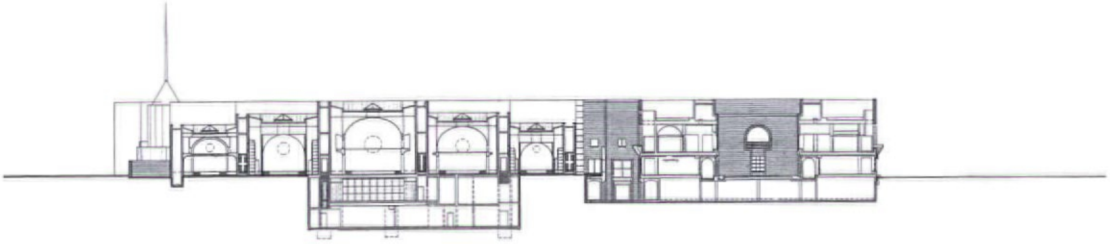


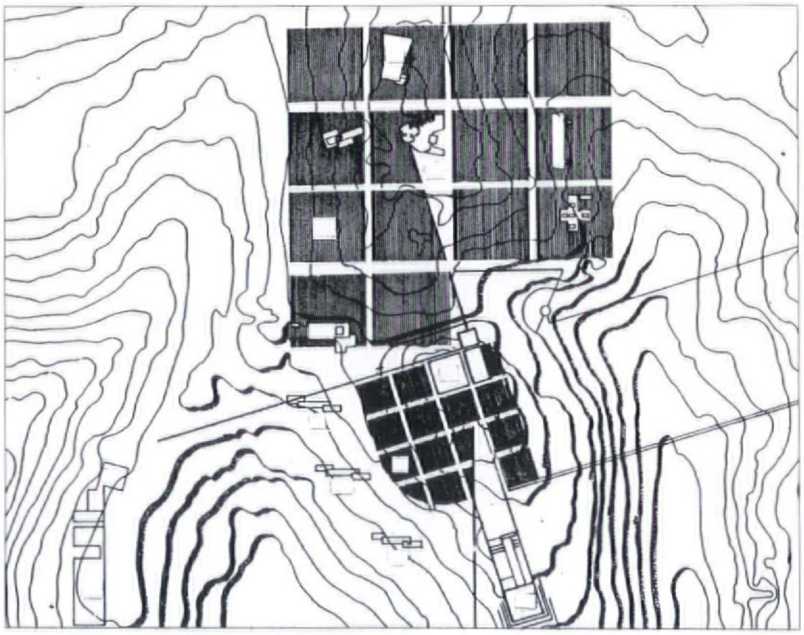

JUDGES' LEVEL


ENTRANCE & CAFETERIA LEVEL

PAGE 34: Route to the Knesset, ceremonial promenade between the judges' chambers and the courtrooms; FROM ABOVE, L TO R: East elevation, the use of stone forges a close connection with the landscape; north-south section through library and judges' court; judges' level; entrance and cafeteria level







FROM ABOVE: View towards entrance via Dorothy de Rothschild promenade; east-west section through courts and administration wings; site plan of Government Hill

ascend to the courtroom level, the judges descend, and the public approaches at the same level. At the same time, the public and private domains of the building are clearly distinguished. There is a pervasive sense of hierarchy and authority which is expressed in the spatial layout and the ceremonial routes which generate it, but also in the monumentality of the courtroom wall, and the varying play of light throughout the complex.

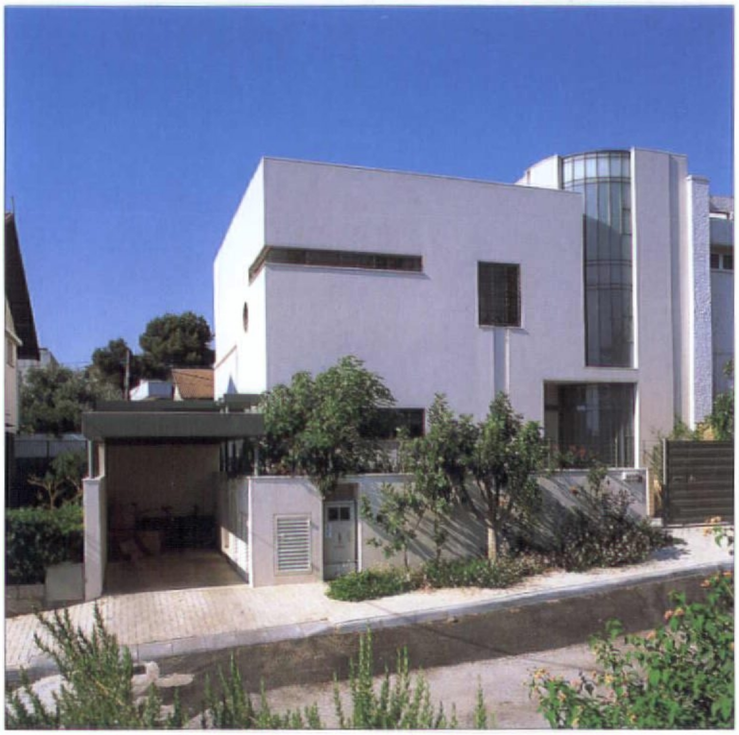
In a private house designed for a client in north Tel Aviv, Ada Karmi-Melamede explores these themes in microcosm, showing that the same issues pertain at the institutional and the domestic scale. In a city which has been described as the largest Bauhaus city in the world, it is perhaps not surprising if the house appears to owe much to the 1930s. But there is a fundamental difference, as Ada Karmi-Melamede explains:

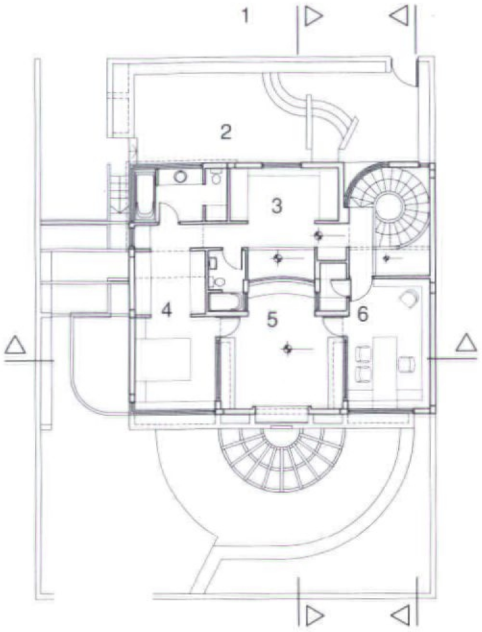
> the path which leads up to a room is as important as the room itself. The room does not exist for me without the passage, which perhaps most distinguishes my work from the work of the Modernists.

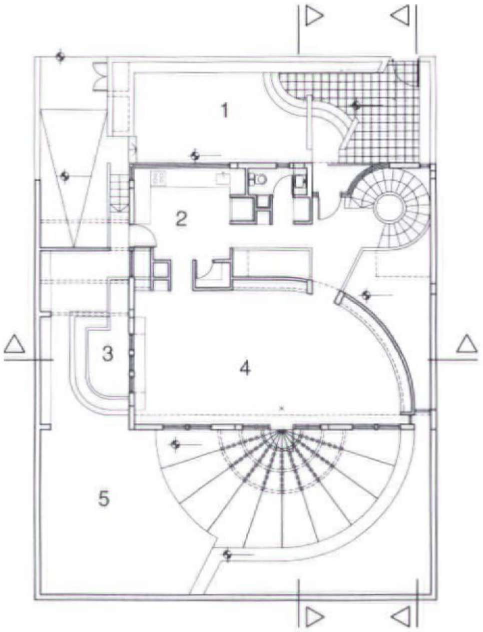
The house is not generated by the concept of the open plan, but by a series of closed spaces. A 'ceremonial experience' begins at the entrance to the house, as one passes from the public spaces to the smaller rooms. As with the Supreme Court, the building is not intended to be immediately legible, but to unfold gradually. The progression of internal spaces mediates the relationship between the street and the topography of the site behind the street: the public face of the house towards the city, separated by a light well, or *wadi*, from the more private, protected domains behind that facade. This layering is both vertical and horizontal. At third floor level the house turns away from the street to focus around a small courtyard. A striking spiral staircase draws the gaze upwards, forging a sense of connection between land and sky. Ada Karmi-Melamede explains:

> The house tries to strike roots in the site, to conquer every available piece of soil ... it was built from the qualities of the land – the soil, the climate and the vegetation.

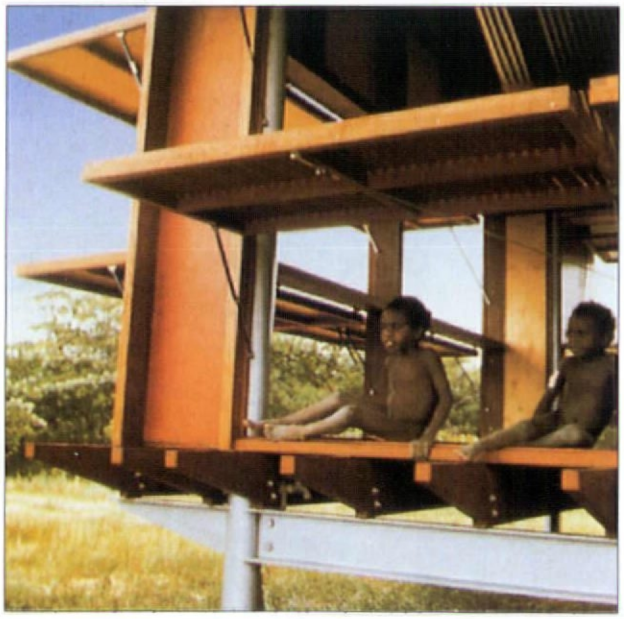
Combined with that is 'the personal story': the day-to-day rituals of the occupants, embodying past history and future hopes, where culture is lived out in its most intimate and small-scale forms.







OPPOSITE: View through public foyer to courtrooms showing entrances punched through massive stone wall; FROM ABOVE, L TO R: Private house, external elevation from street; upper level plan, (1) street (2) front yard (3) study (4) master bedroom (5) courtyard (6) study; entrance level (1) front yard (2) kitchen (3) cour anglais (4) living room (5) rear yard



GLENN MURCUTT

MARIKA-ALDERTON HOUSE AND KAKADU LANDSCAPE INTERPRETATION CENTRE (WITH TROPPO ARCHITECTS), NORTHERN TERRITORY, AUSTRALIA

Critique by Clare Melhuish

On receiving the RAIA Gold Medal in 1992, Glenn Murcutt spoke in an interview:

> understanding place is understanding 90 percent of what you've got to achieve. And then you've got the 10 percent of understanding the culture, and how that culture works in that place . . .

Like Doshi, or Ada and Ram Karmi, his work is heavily influenced by the modernist tradition, in particular Mies' Farnsworth House: when it was illustrated in *Architectural Forum* magazine in 1951, his father, a builder and subscriber, had interrogated Glenn, then 13, on the design, and Alison Smithson is said to have described him in later life as 'a timber and tin Miesian'. But this sense of empathy with the aims and means of the modernist tradition is fundamentally mediated through a deep awareness of the way that landscape shapes architecture and ways of life.

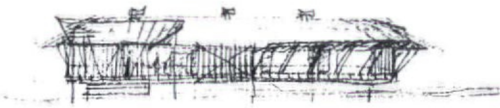
Murcutt's father built houses and brought up his family in New Guinea and Clontarf: both places characterised by a great natural rawness which was to be immensely important to Glenn Murcutt later in life. When, in the 60s, he visited Europe, it was the regional architecture of Mykonos, the Cotswolds, and Scandinavia which moved him, as well as the work of Aalto, Utzon, Chareau and Rietveld. There are strong parallels between these areas of interest and those pursued by Christian Norberg-Schulz in his work on the relationship between architecture and landscape, or the 'spirit of place', which during the 70s, in the wake of Team X (including the Smithsons among its members), and in opposition to the semiological approach originating in France, made an important contribution to the development of a 'critical regionalism' in architecture. The phenomenology of landscape which Norberg-Schulz helped to define is clearly present in Murcutt's work.

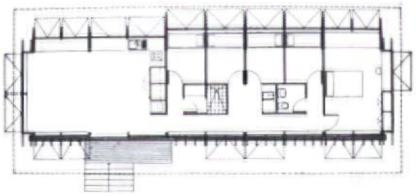
The Marika-Alderton House at Yirrkala was the first of Murcutt's projects for the Aboriginal community in the tropical Northern Territory, in which Murcutt was able to explore an existing empathy between his own concepts about landscape, culture and architecture in Australia, and the Aboriginal way of life. The resemblance between his own buildings and Aboriginal structures predated the work he began in the 1980s on documenting those structures, and derives, he believes, from a similar innate response to the landscape.

During the design of the Marika-Alderton house, Murcutt actually lived with his clients, an Aboriginal woman, her husband and family, in order to gain a fuller understanding of the cultural patterns which would determine the shape of the architecture. The house represents a natural development of Murcutt's work to date, which Marmburra Alderton, a well-known artist, christened the 'Bridge House', because it successfully bridges the cultural gap between the Aboriginal and white communities, belonging entirely neither to one nor the other.

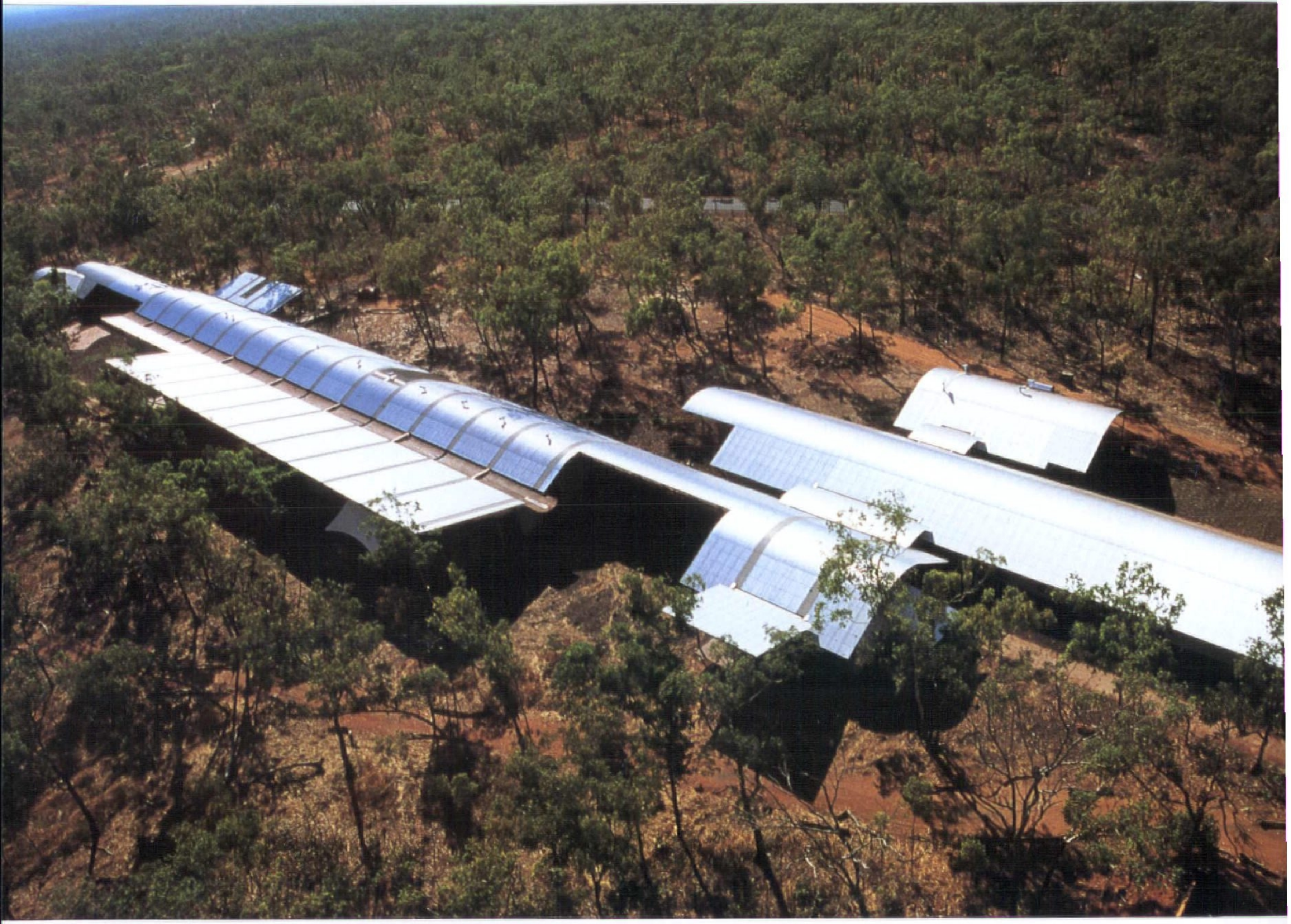
The Aborigines are usually considered a nomadic people, although in fact the distances travelled vary greatly from region to region. In Yirrkala and much of the coastal north of Australia, where food was plentiful, people only travelled very short distances. Their movement patterns, across a land clearly defined by topography and 'dream-time' and 'origin' stories, were more to do with family connections in nearby regions, involving journeys of up to a couple of hundred kilometres in order to participate in ceremonies and celebrations. As a result, the northern Aboriginal people built relatively stable dwellings of timber posts and purlins covered with sheet bark, as opposed to the more nomadic people living in central Australia, who moved across the landscape according to the seasons continuously, taking shelter as need be from harsh sunlight and rain, and to tell their dreamtime stories.

The Aborigine people have a saying 'to touch this earth lightly': a warning to treat

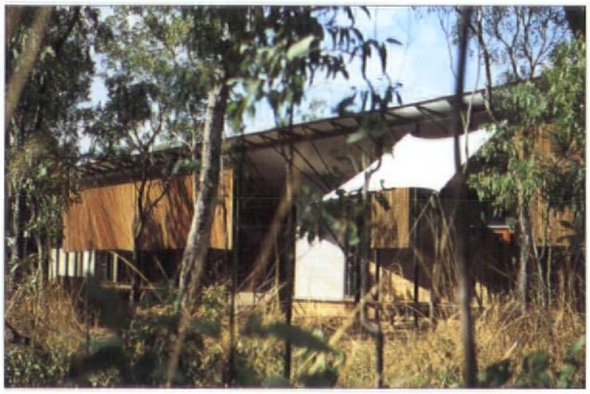


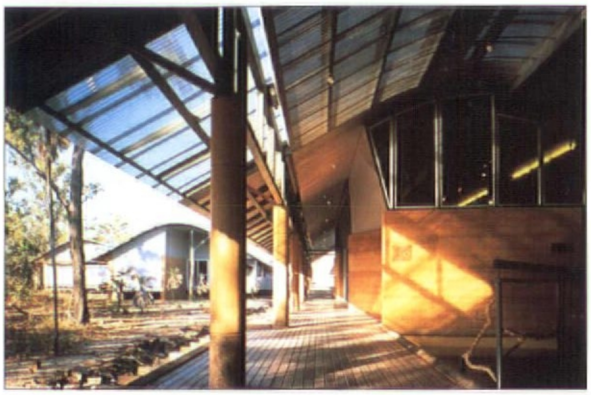


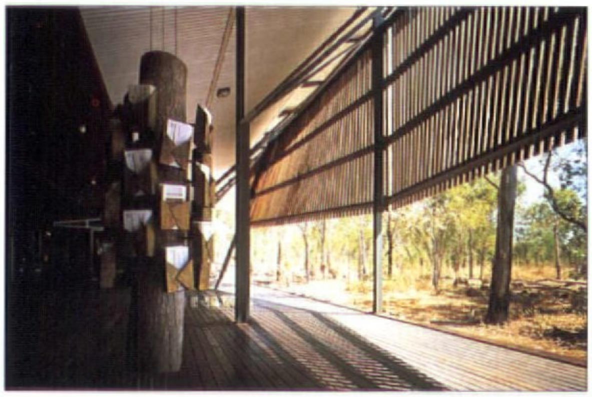
OPPOSITE, FROM ABOVE, L TO R: Marika-Alderton house – two exterior views; three interior and exterior views showing wall panel detail; interior view of kitchen/living area; FROM ABOVE: development sketch of front of house; plan

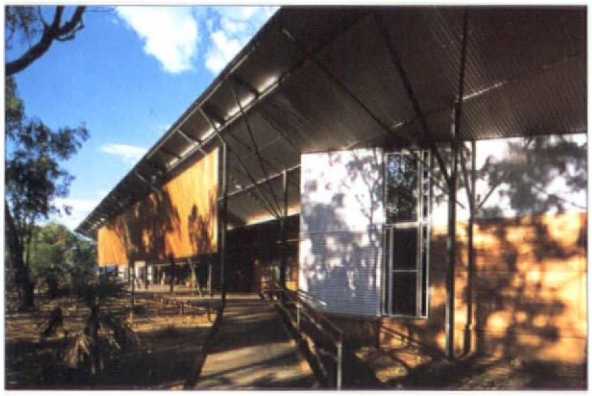


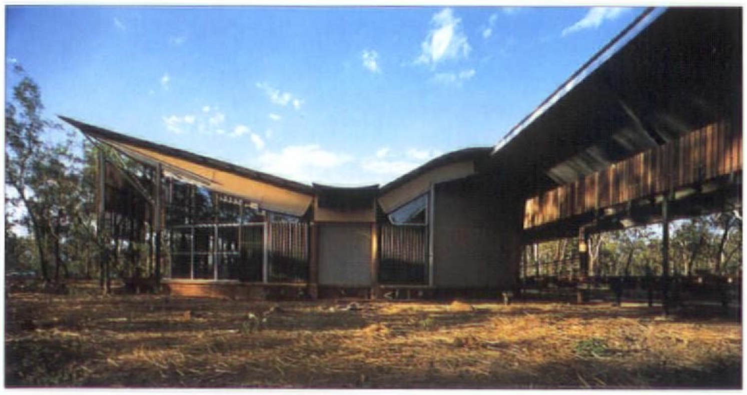
The Kakadu Landscape Interpretation Centre, aerial perspective



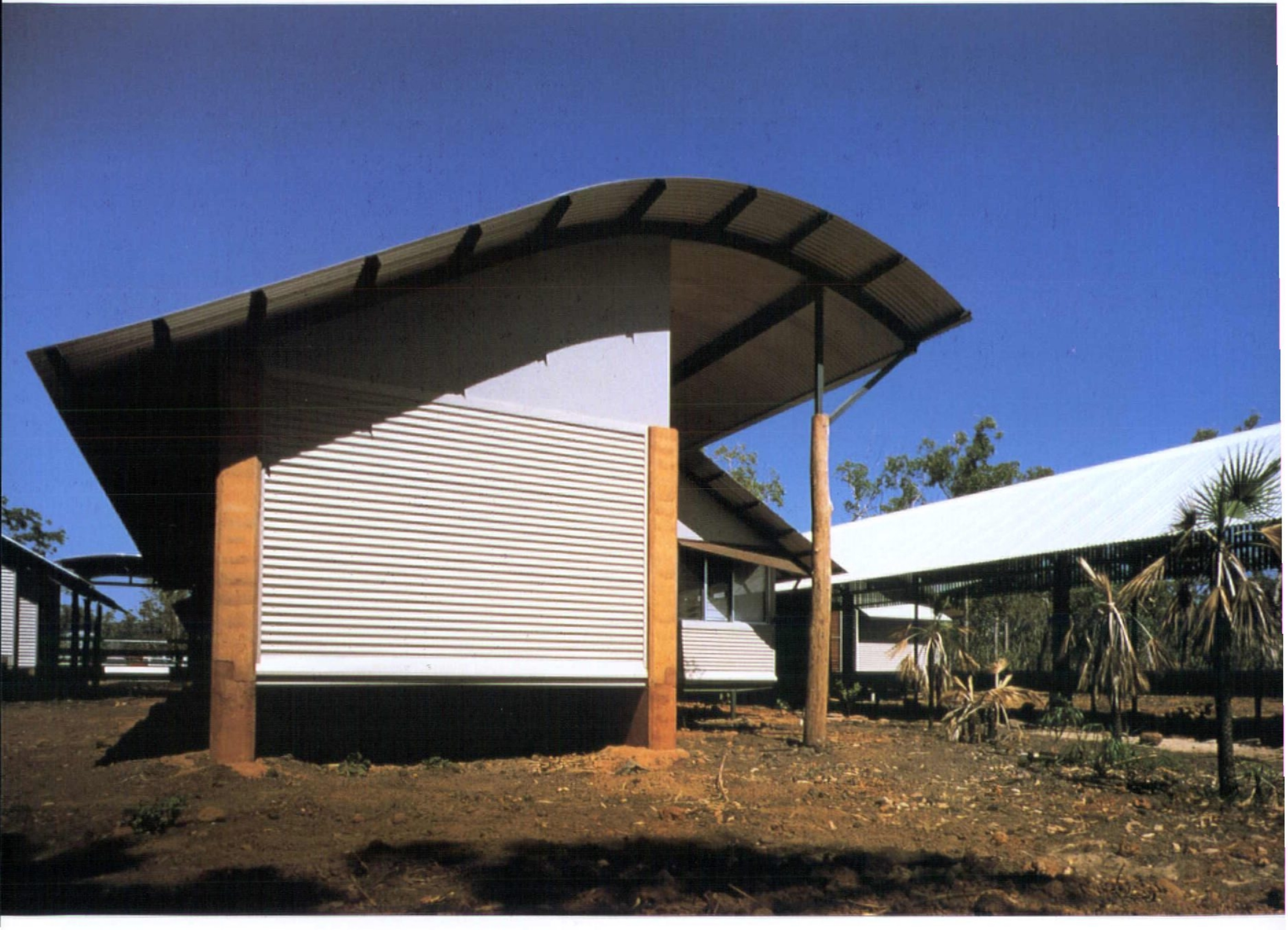








FROM ABOVE, L TO R: External edge, the building merges into the landscape; view along east side of building; interior view showing blurring of boundary between interior and exterior; entrance route into the building from the side; contrasting open and closed section of the building



The large metal roof throws off water like the escarpment the land with respect and reverence, which is redolent with meaning for contemporary society. As Peter Blundell Jones explains, the public place where the celebration of the important initiation rite takes place, is literally created by shaping the ground itself, involving the most minimal intervention. It is extremely important for the Aboriginal community to be in constant contact with nature, which shapes the ceremonies and rituals fundamental to their complex social relations.

The Marika-Alderton house allows this relationship to take place, and also responds to the aboriginal concept of the extended family as a network of clan relatives who might stay in the house at any time. In the tradition of Murcutt's earlier houses, it comprises a relatively narrow, linear platform raised off the ground on low stilts, underneath a steeply pitched, corrugated metal roof designed to keep off the overhead sun and the monsoon. The raised floor allows for flooding of up to 0.5 metres caused by a potential tidal surge of 6 metres resulting from cyclonic winds over the coastal waters 80 kilometres away. The platform itself, nearly 83 metres in length, is divided into three zones, combining the modernist notion of the free plan, embodying openness and flexibility, with an approach which is highly specific to the climatic conditions and cultural expectations of the client. At the core are the bathroom and laundry, which double as havens for survival from the cyclones as well as providing the privacy – well away from the edge of the building – which was very important to the client. Either side are the combined sitting, cooking and dining area, and a sleeping area closed off from four sleeping platforms. The parents are located to the west, representing the end of the day, whilst the children are situated to the east of the parents, symbolising the birth of the day and the beginning of life.

The walls are made of waterproof plywood and hinged, slatted tallowwood panels which can be adjusted to open up the sides and ends of the house partially or completely for cross ventilation and views out. The plywood is painted the colour Bauxite, a mineral which is mined in the area and casts its dust everywhere. Not only is this a practical colour to use, but it is also the colour of much of the land, and traditional to the Aboriginal people. Hence the edges of the house become an infinitely negotiable threshold with the landscape, while the linear space sheltered by the roof embodies an idea of movement in the shape of a route from one end to the other.

The Kakadu Landscape Interpretation Centre, a national park visitor facility intended to communicate the Aboriginal perception of the landscape, is located right in the middle of the escarpment country: a very different landscape from the coastal plains, wetlands and sandy beaches of Yirrkala. The escarpment country is full of caves and rock-fall which were used by the Aborigines as internal and semi-external rooms in which to shelter from the wet, and filled with drawings and paintings depicting their culture in charcoal and oxides. The Kakadu building was designed (in association with Phil Harris and Adrian Welke of Troppo Architects in Darwin) to embody a type of spatial organisation specific to this tradition, in which the caves would never be approached directly, from the front, in the European axial tradition, but always indirectly from above or from the side, the edge. The Interpretation Centre, approached by a meandering path from the car park, is conceived, in the manner of the escarpment, as a refuge or shelter with an open or semi-open linear frontage, or edge, commanding an open prospect across the landscape. It has a large winged roof which, like the escarpment, collects and discharges water into pools which fill up and empty according to the seasons, marking the seasonal changes. A series of 'interior/exterior' verandahs create a similar blurring of the edges between the building and the landscape as at the Marika-Alderton house, while also serving to create wind pressures based on venturi principles. Internal ventilation is enhanced by proprietary suction ventilators, also used in the house, which also equalise the pressure between the internal spaces of a building and the atmospheric low pressure associated with the oncoming of a cyclone.

Like the Marika-Alderton house, the Kakadu building becomes a mediator between its occupants, the landscape and the ritual of the passing seasons. Both buildings are fundamentally rooted in first-hand observation of Aboriginal culture, and an innate understanding of the relationship between that culture and the landscape. They are the result of a process of studying a very specific and refined morphology and its development. However, they are clearly not indigenous Aboriginal buildings. They represent a radical fusion of two cultures: the white European culture which colonised the landscape, and the Aboriginal societies which it very largely destroyed in the process – 'a disaster that has not properly been measured', according to Murcutt – and which no longer exist in any pure original form.

Murcutt's hope is that many of the principles embodied in the Marika-Alderton house might provide a basis for future development in Aborigine communities of a kind that might do precisely what his client said: bridge the gap between the two cultures – and in fact a new house based on the same principles is currently under construction. Certain European construction techniques and technologies could provide Aborigine communities with a tool by which to stabilise and strengthen their culture within the context of contemporary Australia. On the other hand, post-colonial society has much to learn from the Aborigine attitude to the landscape expressed in the maxim 'touch the earth lightly', as they build their towns and cities into the future. As Murcutt has said: 'some speculator's notion of making money . . . is a disastrous basis to develop any city'. We have reached a moment at which we need to re-examine Western cultural attitudes in the light of the wisdom of other societies.

JAMES CORNER

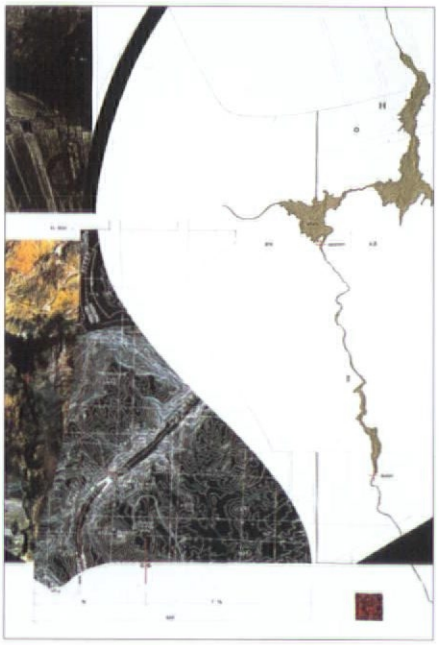
PARADOXICAL MEASURES: THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE

The American landscape, like the culture it embodies and reflects, is a magnificent paradox. For all the clarity, beauty and precision of the measures taken across America, there is an odd inadequacy – or a hidden failing – that lurks across the land, a curious errancy of measure that is at once promising and ominous.

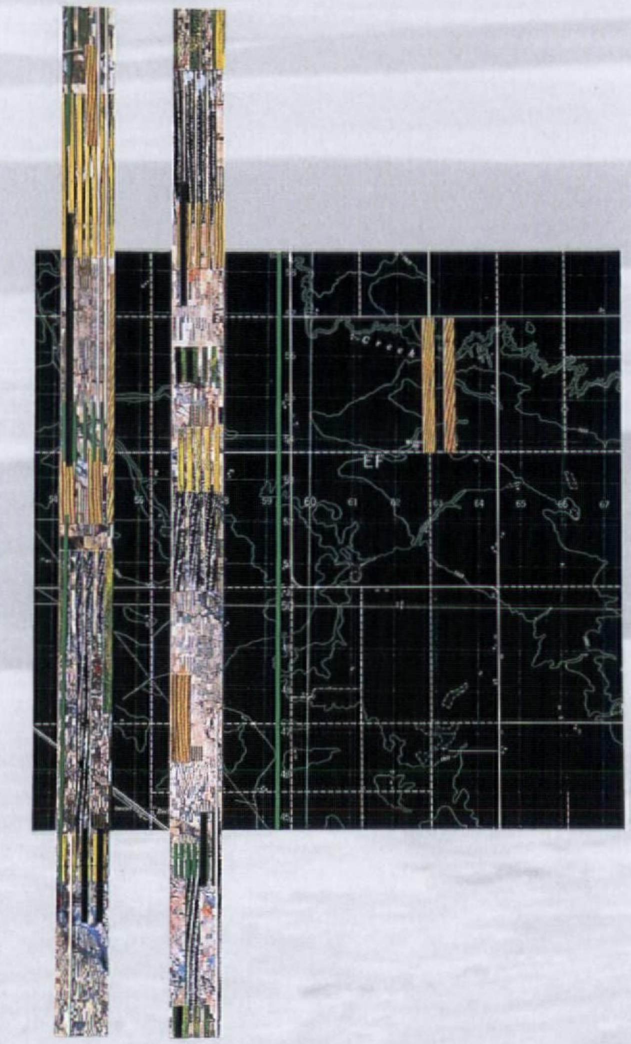
On the surface, the American landscape is a carefully measured terrain of survey lines, highways, railways, rectangular fields, irrigated circles, dams, *levées*, canals, *revêtements*, pipelines, power plants, ports, military zones, and other such constructions. All are laid out efficiently with remarkable indifference to the ecological and topographical characteristics of the land, crossing desert, forest, plain, marsh, and mountain with cool and detached reason. Conceived synoptically from aloft, these highly planned constructions are literally measures that have been taken over the past two centuries to ensure a highly productive human occupation of the land and its resources. These measures determine the way a particular landscape looks (its scale, dimension, and geometry) while facilitating various modes of occupancy (the very means by which a landscape is settled and put into productivity). Measure thereby conjoins appearance and apportionment with utility and strategy, and, as such, spacing and means are inseparable from ideology and ethics.

With great technological ingenuity, the various measures taken across America have constructed the closest approximation of utopia yet achieved by mankind, a land in which practically everything is available and anything is possible. As ambitious and optimistic as the American imagination is, however, it is also very firmly rooted to the ground; American ideals are more material than they are metaphysical. The American landscape is not that of the remote getaway, the gardenesque escape, or the scenic place of compensation that masks out all other ills; rather, it is the site of both labour and hope, the real-dream world of people investing, manipulating, and working with the land. Even American 'wilderness areas' are 'farmed' for recreation and tourism. These landscapes are not 'given', but produced and constructed. The instruments of Americans' busy activities are inscribed all across the land, ceaselessly producing, hauling, circulating, consuming, draining, transforming. America is a landscape at work, a vast machine.

There is, of course, much that is paradoxical about this meticulously measured landscape. In the first instance, utopia is here actualised, and its reality is very much that of the everyday. As Jean Baudrillard observes in America: 'Everything here is real and pragmatic, and yet it is the stuff of dreams too . . . America is utopia made actual,' an actualization that is not without difficult consequences. For all the freedom and opportunity that the measures of America afford, there is just as much social inequity and environmental violence. In an age of exact and advanced technological resources, people are at once closer to and more estranged from the earth and from one another. On the one hand, modern measures have fostered global cooperation and mutual understanding, diminished the threat of despotic tyranny and misrepresentation, and provided new and advanced forms of medicine, communication, and technology. On the other, both the uniqueness and relatedness of things and places have been objectified and diminished through the work of modern measure, with the deleterious consequences of alienation, meaninglessness, and experiential homogeneity (through the application of modern design standards, for example, every place begins to look alike). In other words, although the measures of American life liberate people from the confines of nature and ideological tyranny, and grant access and opportunity to almost everyone, the same measures have also proven to be oddly inadequate and even onerous, especially



OPPOSITE, FROM ABOVE: Canal and irrigated fields, Bakersfield, California; dry farming fields, Montana; ABOVE: Hoover Dam and the Colorado River, Arizona/Nevada. Detailed calculations account for the release and distribution of every gallon of water along the Colorado. The dam, along with other measures along the river, provides water for crop irrigation, domestic use, and hydroelectric power. The dam comprises more than 2,676,100 cubic metres of concrete. Lake Mead, the reservoir for Hoover Dam, stores 41.8 trillion litres of water (equal to nearly two years of the total river's flow), which would cover Connecticut to a depth of 3 metres



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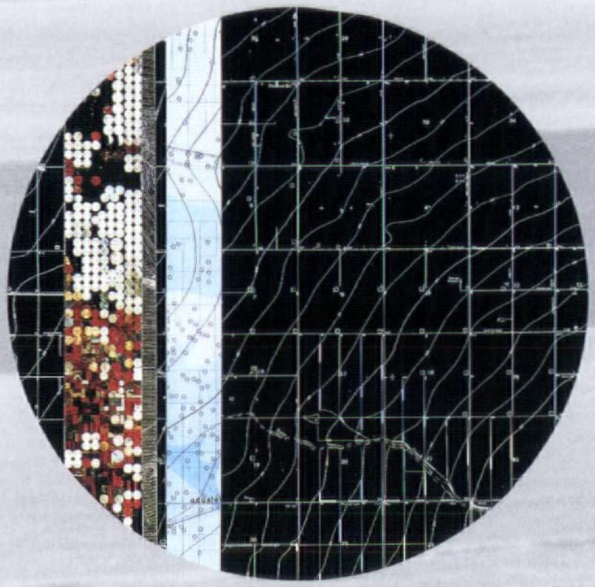
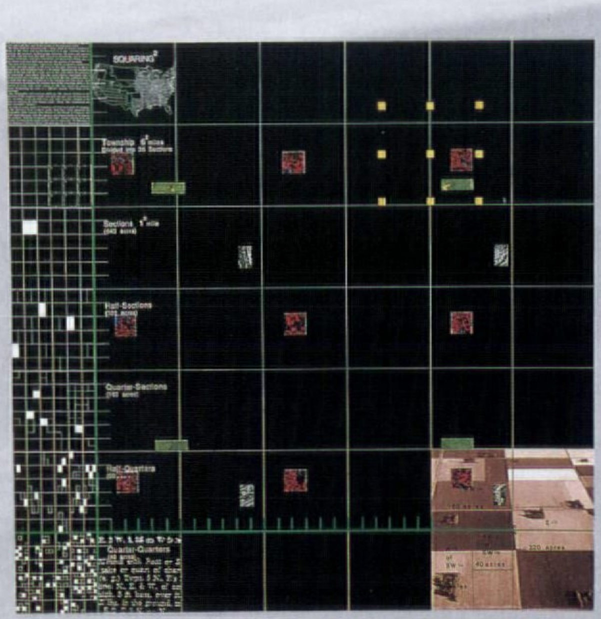




SQUARING²
Township 6² miles
Sections 1² mile
(640 acres)
Half-Sections
Quarter-Sections
(160 acres)
Half-Quarters
Quarter-Quarters
320 acres

FROM ABOVE, L to R: Dry Farming Strips, northern plains. Sometimes 1.5 kilometres long and only 43 metres wide, strips of wheat run north and south across the northern plains, alternating with strips that lie fallow in order to conserve water. The planted strips are dimensioned and aligned so as to protect the fallow beds from the erosional and drying effects of strong winds that blow from the west; The Survey Landscape, legislative and dimensional measures west of the Alleghenies were first enacted through the Land Ordinance Act of 1785. Survey teams were sent out along the parallels to record the land and divide it into a grid of 9324 hectare townships. In turn, each township was divided into 259 hectare units called sections. Sections were later subdivided into incrementally smaller units. Section lines became roads; Very Large Array Radio Telescope, Magdalena, New Mexico. Spaced along three rail tracks, each 24.1 kilometre long and radiating in a Y-shape from a single centre, are 27 dishes, each with an 8.5 metre diameter antenna. Collectively, these dishes function as a single large receiver equivalent to 33.8 kilometres in diameter. The dishes can be moved along the tracks into alternate configurations so as to focus at different depths and scale in deep space

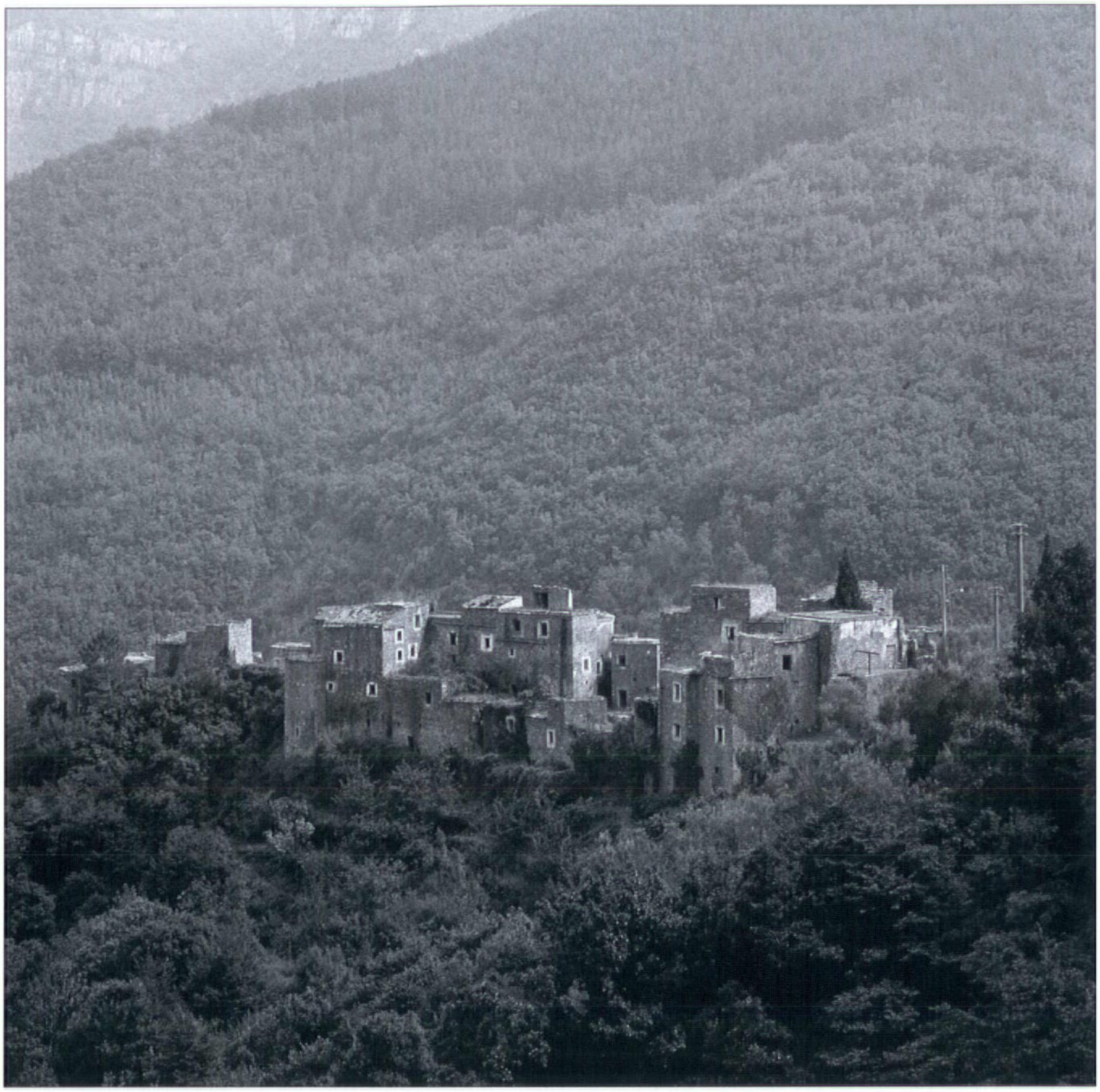
in their destruction of ecological and social relationships. In spite of providing wealth and freedom for millions of people, modern measures have been largely ineffective in alleviating alienation and waste. It would appear that for every determination and provision that technological measure affords, there follows a peculiar excess or deficiency, as if everything becomes at once overly specific and overly simplistic, overly accessible and overly estranged.

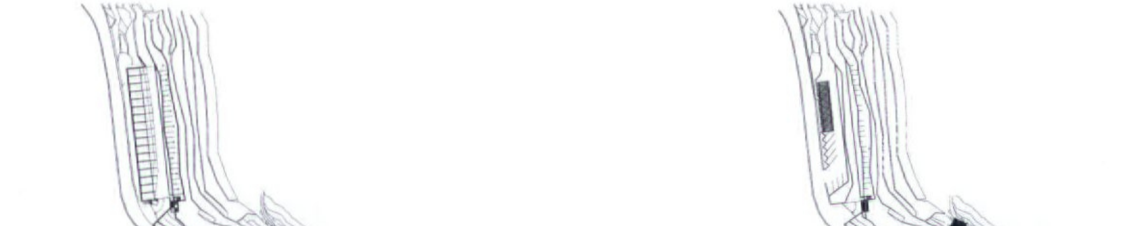
Consider the immense hydro-engineering projects in the West, for example. Enormous dams, power plants, canals, and irrigation systems have made an arid landscape productive and home to millions of people, all with quantitative precision and instrumental efficiency; yet the long-term effects of salt accumulation in soils and water, silt deposition in reservoirs, loss of habitat, and increased population demands commit this otherwise fantastically creative system to entropic failure. The great hydraulic society of the American West is on the brink of collapse. American politics in the West now circle solely around the future use and distribution of water, and, with huge investments at stake, the conjuring-up of new, gigantic hydro-engineering projects is preferable for many Westerners than any notion of restraint, conservation or relocation (indeed, some futurists predict that increased global tensions during the next century will not be over oil but water!).

In light of the ironies that surround modern measure-taking, one might also consider the remarkably democratic intentions with which the United States Government implemented a variation of Jefferson's first proposal to survey and delineate a grid for settlement across the entire country, first begun in 1785. Imagined was a landscape of family landowners, settling and making a living from the land, a nation of free and hard-working homesteaders. What has evolved, however, is an increasingly corporate and industrialised agricultural landscape, a landscape where global economies, politics, and high technology have an enormous (and often destructive) impact upon the ecological and social dimensions of the land.

It is clearly ironic that the modern success with instrumental exactitude and productivity has also precipitated an absolute failure to recognise and build upon the constitutive role that measure itself plays in the building of socially just and culturally wholesome forms of dwelling. This failure is due in large part to a general confusion about the setting of limits, the exercise of good propriety, and the practice of ethical judgement in the making of everyday determinations. These criteria are, of course, embraced in the full meaning of the term measure. Such cultural considerations, in fact, guided the use of numbers, geometry, and instruments for many traditional societies. Measured restraint characterised the practices of many native American societies (as well as ancient Greek and other pre-modern cultures) for whom measure provided revelatory experience and oriented a particular cultural reality, a reality in which the spiritual and the practical could not be understood in isolation.

While not wanting to return to a pre-technological age, nor to promote romantic illusions about Arcadian life upon the land, I do want to invoke the full metaphoric potential that is contained within the term measure, especially as this may help contemporary society to forge a greater reciprocity between people and the land. The application of more imaginative practices of measure and geometry than those of mere efficiency and utility is necessary if we are to construct settings that are fitting of both social and ecological life. Indeed, if 'the taking of measure is what is poetic in dwelling', as Heidegger argued, then we may first have to understand less about calculating procedures alone and more about the imaginative poetic-prosaics of an everyday life that is always uniquely situated and adaptive to circumstance. Here, the grandeur of the American landscape, the bland brashness of its settlement, and the brutish precision of its synoptic creation may, in fact, provide an exhilarating ground for the future cultivation of alternative landscape measures.





FROM L TO R: Site plan; massing plan

GIANCARLO DE CARLO

COLLETTA DI CASTELBIANCO: VILLAGE RECLAMATION PROJECT

The village of Colletta lies 20 kilometres inland from the western coast of Liguria. It is part of a system of villages founded between the 12th and 14th centuries and abandoned in the late 19th century when their role as road and trade links between the Ligurian coast and the Piedmontese hinterland came to an end. We were commissioned to redevelop the village to provide 50 new living units.

Colletta appears as a concretion of small built volumes ranged along the ridge overlooking the valley. It is buried in olive groves on terraces constructed by peasants in previous centuries for cultivation. The buildings and pathways were made of the local stone used to shore up the terraces. Today, it is deserted, though the volumes of the buildings and external spaces all appear intact.

Despite the simplicity of its components, the space is richly varied so that it hugs the rugged terrain. The buildings are all vaulted inside and laid out next to and above one another to a maximum of four levels. The vaulting is of stone and consequently the rooms are small: never more than 3.5-4 metres wide. The roofs are flat and were used by the inhabitants to dry their crops in the sun.

The village as a whole has the appearance and structure of a crustacean. The rooms are grouped together to form compact clusters towards the centre of the village and linear ones at the edge. Between the clusters remain open spaces and pathways which form the negative of the buildings, the one complementing the other.

The lie of the land has been the principal guide in the organisation of the village. It is also clear that the vertical projection of each cluster corresponds in section, dimension and form to its plan. The way the various clusters are aggregated, the links between them and the presence of the external spaces allow for great flexibility in the organisation of the homes. Different adjoining rooms are grouped horizontally, vertically or obliquely. The elevations are varied so light and air enter the units from below or above, or from an intermediate level. Homes of different sizes are created by grouping together a given number of rooms, and adding or sealing off rooms as required to suit the occupants. The rooms are all much the same size so their function (living-room, bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchen) becomes immaterial, or rather it can be made to suit personal preference in terms of exposure to sunlight, air and views. The external spaces, whether pathways or terraces, can be seen as extensions of the interiors. In fact, many terraces can also be used as semi-public pathways.

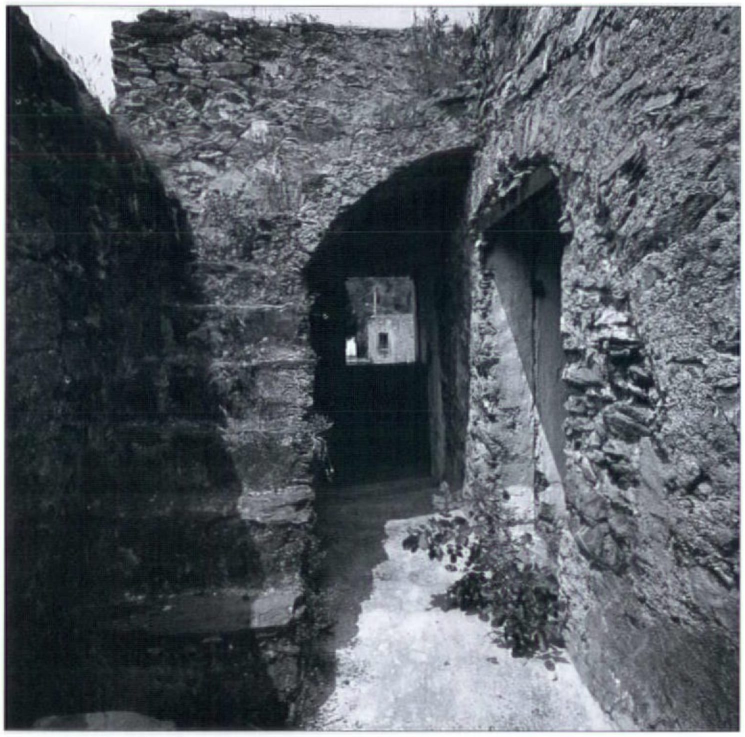
Our design approach is based on following seams within the fabric of the village which promised most in terms of organisation of internal space, and a balanced relationship between the external architectural forms. The examples of home-units illustrated here show three different forms of linear and compact layout. All homes will be developed immediately to test concretely just how the compositional system, techniques and materials function: this will determine subsequent development.

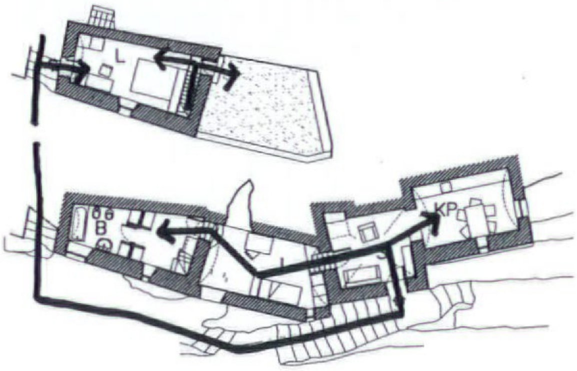
Only those parts which have collapsed over the last century will be rebuilt. The most extensive alterations will be to the structure of the spaces, but they will be kept to a minimum, comprising mainly reconstruction and reclamation work.

An example of an 'immaterial' alteration is the arrangement of the fenestration. The original village had very few windows, so, in some cases, where natural lighting was inadequate, new windows were added. To determine their position, we tried to understand the genetic code which had originally ordered the relationships between voids and solids in the elevations.

Another example of 'immaterial' alteration comprises technical measures taken to make the building healthier (waterproofing, drainage, guttering, insulation), to repair damage, improve living conditions (internal staircases, flooring, whitewashing, additional windows) and improve safety (parapets on the terraces). The original materials were used and the techniques employed were similar to, or at least compatible with, those used in the past.

The redevelopment of Colletta will cover a four-year period in seven phases corresponding to the homogeneous clusters comprising the built fabric. In the end the village will be occupied by somewhat unusual families who have decided to live in an isolated and rather austere place, where there are no cars and no facilities bar the essential ones. Except in emergencies, cars will be excluded beyond two car parks located on the access road. Facilities will be limited to small points of social focus which have been carefully positioned within the built fabric. Initially only one will be constructed – a bar and café – and others will follow as they become necessary. As a consequence, the figure of the jobbing supplier will make his return: a person who rapidly procures any goods ordered through him – groceries, newspapers, books, medicines, and so on – while a highly sophisticated information technology network will facilitate all forms of video-communication both local and long-distance.

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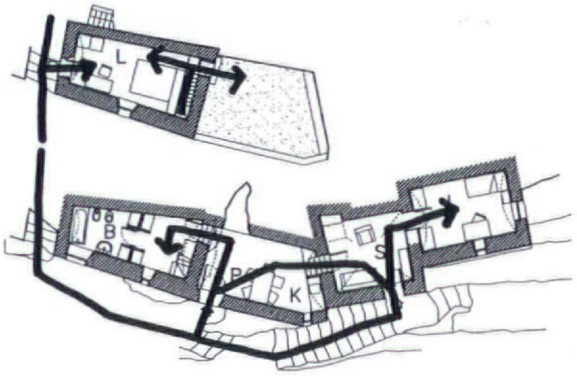
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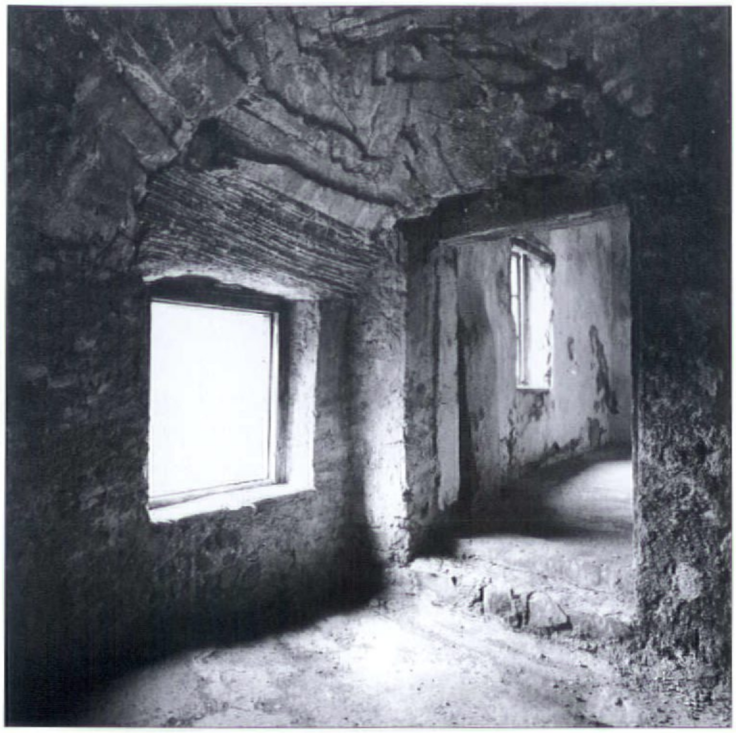
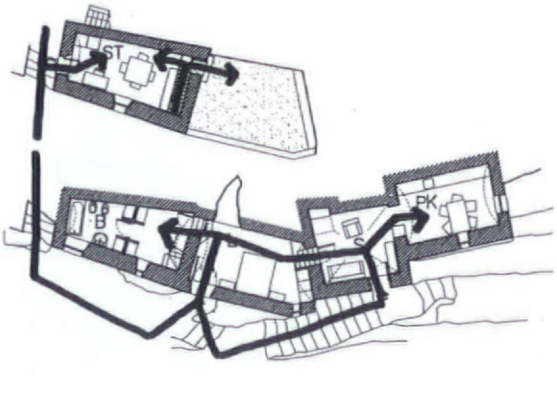
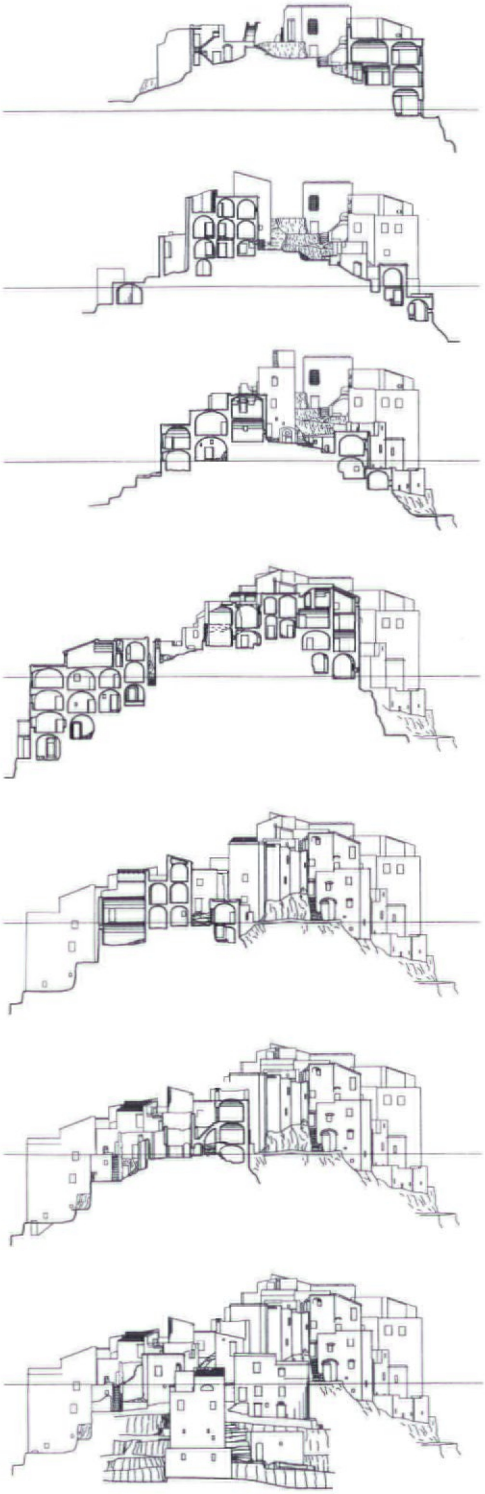






BELOW, FROM L TO R: Circulation diagrams;
ABOVE: Progressive sections through hilltop site

JAMES HOLSTON

SPACES OF INSURGENT CITIZENSHIP

Cities are plugged into the globe of history like capacitors: they condense and conduct the currents of social time. Their layered surfaces, their coats of painted stucco, their wraps of concrete, register the force of these currents both as wear and as narrative. That is, city surfaces tell time and stories. Cities are full of stories in time, some sedimented and catalogued; others spoor-like, vestigial and dispersed. Their narratives are epic and everyday; they tell of migration and production, law and laughter, revolution and art. Yet, although obvious, their registry is never wholly legible because each foray into the palimpsest of city surfaces reveals only traces of these relations. Once lived as irreducible to one another, they are registered as part of the multiplicity and simultaneity of processes that turn the city into an infinite geometry of superimpositions. Their identities, modes, forms, categories and types recombine in the grey matter of streets. City narratives are, as a result, both evident and enigmatic. Knowing them is always experimental.

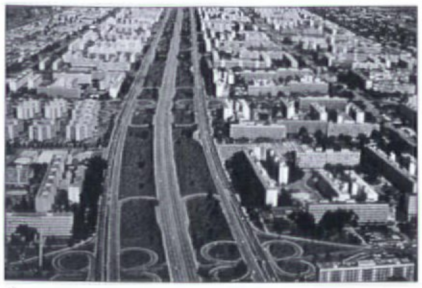
It must have been with extreme exasperation, therefore, that Dutch architect Aldo van Eyck asserted in the mid 1960s that 'we know nothing of vast multiplicity – we cannot come to grips with it – not as architects, planners or anybody else . . . [But] if society has no form – how can architects build its counterform?'[1] This confession of illiteracy is especially striking not only because it abandons the narrative of cities, but also because it does so by declaring the dissolution of the social within the disciplines of modern architecture and planning. This declaration is particularly bitter because it signals the end of a century in which modernist doctrine posed the urban questions of our time precisely by advancing planning and architecture as solutions to the *social* crises of industrial capitalism. At least in its European and Latin American versions, modernism forged what we could call an imaginary of planning by developing its revolutionary building types and planning conventions as instruments of social change, and by conceiving of change in terms of the imagined future embodied in the narratives of its master plans.[2]

But is Van Eyck's inability to find form in society – that is, to read its multiplicity – a problem of society as he implies or a consequence of a theoretical position which rejects the redemptive claims and social engagements of modernism? Given the human capacity for narrative, and its ineluctable registry in artefact, I conclude the latter. Moreover, I would argue that Van Eyck's consternation is representative of the estrangement of the social in modern architecture and its related modes of planning generally. I suggest that this estrangement is a consequence of a number of theoretical conditions which structure the current production of concepts in these fields about the urban landscape: (i) the rejection of the redemptive power of modernism deriving not only from the perceived failures of its utopian mode but also from the more general dissolution of the idea of the social itself in planning, architecture, government, and social science; (ii) the inability of the professions of planning and architecture to move beyond that rejection to develop a new activist social imagination; and (iii) the preoccupation in postmodern theory with aesthetic formalism, technologies of communication, and concepts of virtual reality that tends to disembody the social and rematerialise it as commodity images.[3] If my conclusion is correct, then the problem Van Eyck poses is more anthropological than morphological. That is, it is a question of learning to interpret anew what now appears to him thoroughly defamiliarised; in a word, society itself or, better, aspects of the social that indicate its dynamism.

As I do not believe that 'society has no form' or that 'we know nothing of vast multiplicity,' I want to argue that one of the most urgent problems in planning and architectural theory today is the need to develop a different social imagination – one that is not modernist but that nevertheless reinvents modernism's activist commitments to the invention of society and to the construction of the state. I suggest that the sources of this new imaginary lie not in any specifically architectural or planning production of the city but rather in the development of theory in both fields as an investigation into what I call the spaces of insurgent citizenship – or insurgent spaces of citizenship, which amounts to the same thing. I say insurgent to emphasise the opposition of these spaces of citizenship not only to the modernist spaces which physically dominate so many cities today. By insurgent, I also emphasise an opposition to the modernist political project which absorbs citizenship into a plan of state-building and which, in the process, generates a certain concept and practice of planning itself. At the heart of this political project is the doctrine – also clearly expressed in the tradition of civil or positivist law – that the state is the only legitimate source of citizenship rights, meanings, and practices. I use the notion of insurgent to refer to new and other sources and to their assertion of legitimacy.[4]

The Alternative Futures of Modernism

The spaces of an insurgent citizenship constitute new metropolitan forms of the social not yet liquidated by or absorbed into the old. As such, they embody possible alternative futures. It is important to distinguish this concept of the possible from the fundamentally different idea of alternative futures inherent in modernist planning and architectural doctrine. Both express the basic paradigm of modernity which emphasises that alternative futures are indeed possible. But the insurgent and the modernist are competing expressions, which I will distinguish as ethnographic and utopian, respectively. In modern architecture and urban design, the latter derives specifically from the model city of the *Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne* (CIAM). Since the 1920s, its manifestos have called for the state to assert the priority of collective interests over private by imposing on the chaos of existing cities the construction of a new type of city based on its master plans. But that model derives in turn from the pervasive ideal of modernity that the state, usually in the form of



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Brasilia, south wing of the Plano Piloto, 1981 (fig 1); Vila Chaparral, Brasilia, insurgent squatter settlement on the periphery of the Plano Piloto, 1981 (fig 2)

a national government, can change society and manage the social by imposing an alternative future embodied in plans. In this Faustian sense, the project of modernist planning is to transform an unwanted present by means of an imagined future. Whether in the form of urban design or applied social science, this idea of planning is central to the identity of the modern state: it motivates political authorities to attempt to create and legitimate new kinds of public spheres, with new subjects and subjectivities for them. The instruments of these initiatives define not only the development agenda of the state but also its accredited liberal professions and social sciences – architecture, urban design, demography, bureaucratic administration, sociology, criminology, epidemiology, and so forth – by means of which governments try to forge new forms of collective association and personal habit as the basis of propelling their societies into a proclaimed future.

This ideology of planning is utopian not because it is critical of the present or because it has as its objective the disruption of taken-for-granted norms. It shares these characteristics with the ethnographic mode I propose. Rather, it is utopian because its notion of alternative futures is based on absent causes and its methods on a theory of total decontextualisation. The CIAM version of modernist planning is an instructive example. The key features of its theory of alternative futures are four. First, it is based on a tension between existing social conditions and their imagined opposite. Second, this opposite is conceived in terms of absent causes, present nowhere in the world but existing only in plans and their technologies which are supposed to colonise the old and create the new in relation to which they then appear as natural offspring. Lùcio Costa, planner of Brasília, clearly expressed this concept of generative absent causes when he wrote the following in 'Reasons for the New Architecture', in 1930: 'There exists, already perfectly developed in its fundamental elements . . . an entire new constructive know-how, paradoxically still waiting for the society to which, logically, it should belong.'[5] Costa conceived of this technology as embodying the imagined principles of a society which did not yet exist but which it would help bring into being precisely by giving embodiment to those principles in built form.

The third and fourth aspects of the model constitute a theory of colonisation to implement the new architecture-planning-technology. Its aim is to achieve both an objective and a subjective transformation of existing conditions. In terms of the former, colonisation depends upon the force of the state to create objective conditions for the imposition of a new order of urban life. The CIAM model appeals directly to state authority to institute the total planning of the built environment which, according to the theory, constitutes these conditions and permits the implementation of its blueprints of the future. This appeal privileges the development of the apparatus of the modern state itself as the supreme planning power. Precisely because of that emphasis, state-building elites of every kind of political persuasion have embraced the CIAM model of urban development, as the history of city planning around the world attests.

The model also relies on a subjective transformation of existing conditions. In this case, borrowing from other avant-garde movements of the early 20th century, it uses techniques of shock to force a subjective appropriation of the new social order inherent in its plans. These techniques emphasise decontextualisation, defamiliarisation, and dehistoricisation. Their central premise of transformation is that the new architecture/urban design would create set pieces within existing cities which would subvert and then regenerate the surrounding fabric of denatured social life. El Lissitzky explained this premise concisely in 1929: 'The introduction of new building types into the old fabric of the city affects the whole by transforming it.'[6] It is a viral notion of revolution, a theory of decontextualisation in which the radical qualities of something totally out of context infect and colonise that which surrounds it. This something may be a single building conceived as an instance of the total plan, that is, as a fragment of its radical aesthetics and social practices. Or, it may be an entire city designed as an exemplar, as in the case of Brasília, (fig 1). Either way, the radical fragment is supposed to create new forms of social experience, collective association, perception and personal habit. At the same time, it is supposed to preclude those forms deemed undesirable by negating previous social and architectural expectations about urban life.

This use of decontextualisation ultimately springs from the conviction that it is possible to extract antithetically from existing conditions an absent ideal as a new positive entity – that is to say, to extract an imagined social and aesthetic order 'from [the] estranged and splintered reality by means of the will and power of the individual,' as Adorno once described this process in a discussion of Schönberg's music.[7] This extraction is achieved, in other words, through subjective synthesis. Such synthesis is reached through the shock of defamiliarisation during which the subject identifies with the ideal in the dialectic as the means necessary to bridge the now evident gap between his or her local and splintered situation and the proposed future plenitude.

CIAM doctrine maintained that these proposals of transformation would create a city embodying revolutionary premises of work, housing, transportation, and recreation. It argued that this embodiment would redefine the social basis of urban organisation. These propositions were not, I would hold, wrong. Indeed, over the course of this century, CIAM's new building types, urban structures, and planning conventions triumphed to such an extent that they became standard practice in the professions of architecture and planning around the world. Moreover, I would argue that they remain so today, even where their derivation from the CIAM model is unrecognised and their use has nothing to do with its social agenda, as is often the case, for example, in the USA.[8]

However, if few promises for change have captured the world's imagination to a greater degree than this idealist project of alternative futures, few have yielded greater perversity. A fundamental dilemma inevitably dominates this project if it is to have any substance beyond the imaginary world of plans. It is one inherent in all forms of planning – both as urban design and as applied social science – which propose an alternative future based on absent totalities: The necessity of having to use what exists to achieve what is imagined destroys the utopian difference between the two that is the project's premise. Worse, examples such as Brasília show that attempts to maintain the plan in spite of the corrosive effects of this utopian paradox exacerbate the very conditions that generate the desire for change. Perversely, they tend to turn the project into an exaggerated version of what its planners wanted to preclude in the first place.[9]

Consider, for example, the modernist system of traffic circulation. When we analyse it in terms of what it systematically set out to eliminate – the traditional street system of public spaces and the urban crowds and outdoor political domain of social life the street supports – its social consequence becomes clear. The resulting displacement of social life from the outdoor public 'rooms' of streets and squares to the indoor rooms of malls, clubs, homes and cars does not merely reproduce the outdoor city public and its citizenry in a new interior setting. Rather, this interiorisation encourages a privatising of social relations. That privatisation allows a greater control over the access to space which almost invariably stratifies the public that uses it. The empty no-man's spaces and privatised interiors that result contradict modernism's declared intentions to revitalise the urban public and render it more egalitarian. This interiorisation is not an extraneous consequence or a by-product of some other process. Rather, it is a direct entailment of the solid/void-figure/ground conventions of modernism's spatial logic. Significantly, it is this logic which motivates today's developers to use the vocabulary of modernist architecture and urban design to create the new fortified spaces of contemporary urbanism.[10]

The imagined future of modernism raises a further dilemma. On the one hand, it always runs the risk of the utopian paradox I just described: either it remains without substance and thus disconnected from the conditions that generate a desire for it; or, in gaining history, it exacerbates the very issues its intends to negate. On the other hand, a second conclusion is also apparent: Without a utopian factor, plans remain locked in the prison-house of unacceptable existing conditions. Is not the elimination of the desire for a different future as oppressive as the modernist perversion of it? To exclude the imaginary and its inherently critical perspective in that way is to condemn planning to accommodations of the status quo, and I reject such paralysis. Hence, a difficult question remains: if the notion of alternative futures is both indispensable and yet, in its utopian form, perverse, what kind of intervention in the city could construct a sense of emergence without imposing a teleology that disembodies the present in favour of a utopian difference?

Insurgent Citizenship

My criticism of modernist planning is not that it presupposes a nonexistent egalitarian society or that it dreams of one. To deny that dream is also to conceal or encourage a more totalitarian control of the present. It is rather that modernist planning does not admit or develop productively the paradoxes of its imagined future. Instead, it attempts to be a plan without contradiction, without conflict. It assumes a rational domination of the future in which its total and totalising plan dissolves any conflict between the imagined and the existing society in the imposed coherence of its order. This assumption is both arrogant and false. On the one hand, it fails to include as *constituent* elements of planning the conflict, ambiguity and indeterminacy characteristic of actual social life. On the other, it fails to consider the unintended and the unexpected as part of the model. Such assumptions are common to masterplan solutions generally and not only to those in urban planning. Their basic feature is that they attempt to fix the future – or the past, as in historical preservation – by appealing to precedents which negate the value of present circumstance. The crucial question for us to consider, therefore, is how to include the ethnographic present in planning, that is, the possibilities for change encountered in existing social conditions.

Not all master plans negate the present as a means to get to the imagined future (or past) of planning. A powerful counter-example is the US Constitution. It is certainly a masterplan and certainly modern in proposing a system of national government 'in order to form a more perfect union' (Preamble). Yet, its great strength is precisely that its provisions are imprecise and incomplete. Moreover, it is distrustful of the very institutions of government it creates. As a blueprint, it does not try to legislate the future. Rather, its seven original articles and 26 amendments embody a few guiding principles – for example, federalism, separation of powers, and checks and balances – which not only channel conflict into mediating institutions but also protect against possible abuses of the governmental powers they create. Above all, they establish a trust that future generations of citizens have the ability and the right to make their own histories by interpreting what the masterplan means in light of their own experience.[11]

The US Constitution has, therefore, two kinds of planning projects: one of state-building and one of citizenship-building. The key point for our discussion is that the latter is conditioned by the former but not reducible to it because the Constitution secures for citizens a real measure of insurgence against the state. On the one hand, it designs a state with the *minimum* conditions necessary to institutionalise both order and conflict. On the other, it guarantees the necessary conditions for social mobilisation as a means to include the unintended and the unforeseeable as possible sources of new constitutional interpretation.

This frame of complementary perspectives offers an important suggestion for thinking about a new production of the city. If modernist planning relies on and builds up the state, then its necessary counter-agent is a mode of planning which addresses the formations of insurgent citizenship. Planning theory needs to be grounded in these antagonistic complements, both based on ethnographic and not utopian possibility: on one side, the project of state-directed futures which can be transformative but which is always a product of specific politics; and, on the other, the project of engaging planners with the insurgent forms of the social, which often derive from and transform the first but which are in important ways outside the state and heterogeneous. These forms are found both in organised grassroots mobilisations and in everyday practices which, in different ways, empower, parody, derail or subvert state agendas. They are found, in other words, in struggles over what it means to be a member of the modern state – which is why I refer to them with the term citizenship. Membership in the state has never been a static identity, given the dynamics of global migrations and national ambitions. Citizenship changes as new members emerge to advance their claims, expanding its realm, and as new forms of segregation and violence counter these advances, eroding it. The sites of insurgent citizenship are found at the intersection of these processes of expansion and erosion.

These sites vary with time and place: today, in many cities, they include the realm of the homeless, networks of migration, neighbourhoods of Queer Nation, autoconstructed peripheries, ganglands, fortified condominiums, employee-owned factories, squatter settlements, suburban migrant labour camps, sweatshops, and the zones of the so-called new racism. They are sites of insurgence because they introduce into the city new identities and practices which disturb established histories.[12] These new identities and the disturbances they provoke may be of any social group and class. Their study views the city as not merely the container of this process but as its subject as well – a space of emergent identities and their social organisation. It concentrates on practices which engage the problematic nature of belonging to society. It privileges such disturbances, emergences, and engagements because it is at the fault-lines of these processes that we perceive the dynamism of society – that is, the 'multiplicity' which Van Eyck could not discern. This perception is quite different, however, from a sociological accretion of data, and its register includes the litter and not only the monuments of urban experience.

This dynamism and its perception are the theoretical objectives of a planning linked to insurgent forms of the social. It differs from the modernist objectives of planning because it aims to understand society as a continual reinvention of the social, the present and the modern, and their modes of narrative and communication. What planners need to look for are the emergent sources of citizenship – and their repression – which indicate this invention. They are not hard to find in the wake of this century's important processes of change: massive migration to the world's major cities, industrialisation and deindustrialisation, the sexual revolution, democratisation and so forth (fig 2). The new spaces of citizenship which result are especially the product of the compaction and reterritorialisation in cities of so many new residents with histories, cultures and demands which disrupt the normative and assumed categories of social life. This disruption is the source of insurgent citizenship and the object of a planning theory which includes the ethnographic present in its constitution.

The distinction between formal and substantive citizenship is useful in identifying this object because it suggests how the forms of insurgent citizenship appear as social practice and therefore how they may be studied. Formal citizenship refers to membership in a political community – in modern history, preeminently, the nation-state. Substantive citizenship concerns the array of civil, political, and social rights available to people. In a much-quoted essay, TH Marshall links these two aspects: 'Citizenship is a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed'.[13] As new kinds of residents occupy cities – southern Blacks in Chicago, Turks in Frankfurt, Nordestinos in São Paulo, Candangos in Brasília – these formal and substantive conditions shape their urban experience. In turn, this experience becomes a principal focus of their struggle to redefine those conditions of belonging to society.

Notions of formal citizenship have become problematic especially in the context of the massive urban migrations of recent decades. As new and more complex kinds of ethnic diversity dominate cities, the very notion of shared community becomes increasingly exhausted. What now constitutes that 'direct sense of community membership based on loyalty to a civilisation which is a common possession' that Marshall[14] considered essential to citizenship – essential because only direct participation secures the rights, responsibilities, and liberties of self-rule? In the past, this sense has been a supra-local, indeed, national consciousness. But both national participation and community have become difficult notions for citizenship in the context of the new urban politics of difference, multiculturalism, and racism. One indication of this problem is that in many cases formal citizenship is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for substantive citizenship. In other words, the substance of citizenship (rights and duties) is often independent of its formal status. Indeed, it is often inaccessible to those who are formal citizens (eg, the native poor), yet available to those who are not (eg, legally resident 'aliens'). These kinds of problems challenge the dominant notion of citizenship as national identity and the historic role of the nation-state as the pre-eminent form of modern political community.

However, in so doing, they indicate a new possibility which could become an important focus for urban planning: they suggest the possibility of multiple citizenships based on the local, regional, and transnational affiliations which aggregate in contemporary urban experience. Although this possibility represents a significant change in the recent history of citizenship, it is not a new arrangement. Multiple and overlapping jurisdictions predominated in Europe until the triumph of national citizenship obliterated other forms, among them the urban citizenships that organised so many regions of the ancient and the pre-modern world. The modern state explicitly competed with the city for the primary affiliation of its citizens. Moreover, it usurped their differences, replacing the local management of history with the national. That is, the state reorganised local diversity under the banner of national heritage. One of the most widely shared projects of modern states, this nationalisation of diversity legitimates a *singular* state citizenship as the best condition for securing a society of plural cultural identities. But the recent world-wide multiplication of 'rights to difference' movements profoundly challenges this claim. Their new ethno-cultural politics and violence are in large part a response to the perceived failures of a singular national citizenship. In this re-evaluation, the local and the urban reappear as the crucial sites for articulating not only new fanaticisms and hooliganisms but also new transnational and diasporic identities. If planning theory, as I suggest, can conceptualise this collision between state citizenship and these insurgent alternatives, planning practice can respond to this articulation first by expressing its heterogeneity – the social condition we actually live – and then developing some of the ethnographic possibilities which are, by definition, embedded in heterogeneous conditions.

In terms of substantive issues, the insurgence of new citizenship is no less dramatic. Over the last few decades, many societies have experienced great expansions and erosions of rights. The expansions are particularly evident in the new social movements of the urban poor for 'rights to the city' and of women, gays, and ethnic and racial minorities for 'rights to difference.' These movements are new not only because they force the state to respond to new social conditions of the working poor – in which sense they are, indeed, one of the important consequences of massive urban poverty on citizenship. They are also unprecedented in many cases because they create new kinds of rights, based on the exigencies of lived experience, outside of the normative and institutional definitions of the state and its legal codes.

These rights generally address the social dramas of the new collective and personal spaces of the city, especially its impoverished residential neighborhoods. They focus on housing, property, sanitation, health, education and so forth, raising basic questions about the scope of entitlements. Is adequate housing a right? Is employment? Moreover, they concern people largely excluded from the resources of the state and are based on social demands which may not be constitutionally defined but which people perceive as entitlements of general citizenship. The organisation of these demands into social movements frequently results in new legislation, producing an unprecedented participation of new kinds of citizens in making law and even in administering urban reform and local government. Thus, as the social movements of the urban poor expand citizenship to new social bases, they also create new sources of citizenship rights and new forms of self-rule.

Yet, if the city is in this sense an arena for a Rousseauean self-creation of new citizens, it is also a war zone for this very reason: the dominant classes meet the advances of these new citizens with new strategies of segregation, privatisation, and fortification. Although the city has always been a place of such contestations, they have taken on new and especially intense forms in recent decades. Where the repressive structures of the state are especially effective, as in the USA, or especially murderous, as in Brazil, the resulting erosions of citizenship are particularly evident in the city's disintegrating public spaces and abandoned public spheres. This contemporary war zone comprises not only the terror of death squads and gangs but also the terror of corporate fortresses and suburban enclaves. The latter too are insurgent forms of the social, subverting the proclaimed equalities and universals of national citizenship. Thus, the city-as-war-zone threatens the articulation of formal state membership as the principal universalising norm for managing the simultaneity of modern social identities. As the war escalates, this threat ignites ever-deeper anxieties about what form such coordination might take if national citizenship no longer has that primary role. As much as optimism may radiate from the city's social movements, this anxiety hovers over its war zone, structuring its possible futures.

Planning the Ethnographically Possible

In this essay, I raised the problem of developing a new social imagination in planning and architecture. I suggested that when citizenship expansions and erosions focus on urban experience, they constitute an insurgent urbanism which informs this development in several ways. First, they present the city as both the text and the context of new debates about fundamental social relations. In their localism and strategic particularism, these debates valorise the constitutive role of conflict and ambiguity in shaping the multiplicity of contemporary urban life. In a second sense, this heterogeneity works against the modernist absorption of citizenship into a project of state-building, providing alternative, possible sources for the development of new kinds of practices and narratives about belonging to and participating in society. This 'working against' defines what I called an insurgent citizenship, and its spatial mode an insurgent urbanism. This insurgence is important to the project of rethinking the social in planning because it reveals a realm of the possible that is rooted in the heterogeneity of lived experience, which is to say, in the ethnographic present and not in utopian futures.

But in advocating a move to the ethnography of the present, I do not suggest that planning abandon the project of state-building that modernist doctrine defined and that is basic to the notion of modernity itself. Excessive attention to the local has its own dangers. Although I argue, for example, that ethnographic investigation is the best way to establish the terms by which residents participate in the planning of their communities, such participation can be paradoxical: residents across the economic spectrum will often decide, by the most democratic of processes, to segregate their communities 'from the evil outside', closing, fortifying and privatising their spaces in relation to those deemed outsiders. Hence, throughout the United States, it is common to find homeowner associations trying to use the powers and privileges of democratic organisation to exclude and discriminate. Local enactments of democracy may thereby produce anti-democratic results.[15]

The lesson of this paradox is that planning needs to engage not only the development of insurgent forms of the social but also the resources of the state to define, and occasionally impose, a more encompassing conception of right than is sometimes possible to find at the local level. An example of this transformative power of the state comes from the conflict over legal segregation in the southern United States during the 1960s when the federal government eventually intervened into local affairs and acted against local authorities. Above all, planning needs to encourage a complementary antagonism between these two engagements. It needs to operate simultaneously in two theatres, so to speak, maintaining a productive tension between the apparatus of state-directed futures and the investigation of insurgent forms of the social embedded in the present.

In developing the latter as the counter of the former, planners and architects engage a new realm of the possible with their professional practice. But this realm requires a different kind of practice, different in both objective and method, and this difference amounts to a reconceptualisation of the fields. In terms of methods, I mean to emphasise those of an urban ethnographer – or of a detective, which are similar: methods of tracing, observing, decoding and tagging, at one moment of the investigation, and those of reconstructing, identifying, presenting and rearticulating, at another. Both the trace and the reconstruction compose this engagement with the ethnographic present. In this proposal, I am not suggesting that planners and architects become anthropologists, for anthropology is not reducible to ethnography. Rather, I suggest that they learn the methods of ethnographic detection and also learn to work with anthropologists.

As for its objective, it is the very heterogeneity of society that baffles architect Van Eyck. To understand this multiplicity is to learn to read the social against the grain of its typical formations. The typical are the obvious, assumed, normative and routine, and these are – as Poe illustrates so well in *The Purloined Letter* – hardest to detect. Rather, it is often by their deformations and counters that we learn about them. But countersites are more than just indicators of the norm. They are themselves possible alternatives to it. They contain the germ of a related but different development. Embedded in each of the facets of the multiple relations we live, such possibility accounts for the feeling we have that social life and its spaces are heterogeneous. This possibility is like a bog just beneath the surface of experience, at every step threatening to give way to something different if we let it. But generally we don't because the technology of the normative keeps us from doubting the taken-for-granted on which we depend. Reading the social against the grain of its typical formations means showing that this surface is indeed doubly-encoded with such possibility, and this double-encoding means identifying the sites at which it seeps through.

To understand society's multiplicity is to learn to recognise 'its counterform' at these sites – to return to Van Eyck's critical mission – and 'to form a more perfect union' without sacrificing this double-encoding which is the vitality of present circumstance. As I have suggested here, one path to this understanding is to hunt for situations which engage, in practice, the problematic nature of belonging to society and which embody such problems as narratives about the city. But this kind of investigation amounts to a redefinition of the practice of planning and architecture as long as these fields remain obsessed with the design of objects and with the execution of plans and policies. Even though very few architects or planners ever conduct their professional practice in ways which correspond to this obsession, it remains a powerfully seductive mirage. To re-engage the social after the debacle of modernism's utopian attempts, however, requires expanding the idea of planning and architecture beyond this preoccupation with execution and design. It requires looking into, caring for and teaching about lived experience as lived. To plan the possible is, in this sense, to begin from an ethnographic conception of the social and its spaces of insurgence.

Notes

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1 Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, Thames and Hudson (London and New York), 1980, pp276-77.

2 Van Eyck's conjunction of 'architect or planner' suggests a potentially confusing use of terms. I am grateful to John Friedmann for having urged, in a conversation about this essay, that I clarify my own sense of this problem. If we look at the use of the terms planner and planning in the various professions and disciplines which claim them, we see two distinct but, I will argue, related meanings. On the one hand, planning is very generally used to refer to urban design, derived in large measure from architectural theory and practice. In this form, the dominant mode of planning in modern times is that developed by CIAM. As I discuss, this model is predicated on an idealist project of alternative futures. On the other hand, since the consolidation of the modern state, planning is also widely used to refer to the application of social science to the management of society. Indeed, some applied social scientists, like Friedmann, who call themselves planners, are deeply critical of modernist urban design and its modes of planning. Very often, however, these two senses of planning share a notion of alternative futures and a reliance on the state which relate them both historically and theoretically. It is this relation which interests me and which permits a broader argument about modernity and planning in its various forms. Thus, I use the CIAM model of urban design as paradigmatic of modernist planning. However, I also consider applied social science as a related version when it is based on a similar ideal of the future.

3 These concerns receive such extensive discussion in the literature on postmodernism that I cannot comment on them here without being superficial. For a recent attempt to dematerialise the city itself see Michael Sorkin, 'Introduction: Variations on a Theme Park', *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space*, Michael Sorkin (ed), Noonday Press (New York), 1992.

4 See James Holston, *The Modernist City: an Anthropological Critique of Brasília*, University of Chicago Press (Chicago), 1989 and Holston, 'Insurgent Urbanism: Interactive Architecture and a Dialogue with Craig Hodgetts', *Technoscientific Imaginaries*, pp461-505, Marcus E George (ed), University of Chicago Press (Chicago), 1995 for further discussion of, respectively, this modernist political and planning project, and the notion of an insurgent urbanism. See also James Holston (ed), *Cities and Citizenship*, special issue of *Public Culture* 8 (2), 1996 for studies of contention to the state's monopoly of law and citizenship in various urban, national, and global contexts.

5 Lúcio Costa, 'Razões da nova arquitetura', *Arte em Revista* 4, 1980, pp15-23.

6 El Lissitzky, *Architecture for a World Revolution*, MIT Press (Cambridge, Mass), 1970 [1929]

7 Susan Buck-Moriss, *The Origin of Negative Dialectics: Theodor W Adorno, Walter Benjamin and the Frankfurt Institute*, Macmillan Free Press (New York), 1977, p57.

8 I cannot discuss more fully the CIAM model city here, but I refer readers to my 1989 study of Brasília (op cit, note 4, esp pp31-58) for a historical and critical analysis. Nor can I discuss its relation to postmodernism, which I would have to do to substantiate my claim of its continued dominance. The outline of my argument would be to distinguish between the actual planned, 'architected', and built environment of the contemporary city and its modes of social change and capital accumulation. Many authors have described the latter in terms of new patterns of consuming 'space and time' which they call postmodern. Be that as it may, I would call the urban landscape postmodern only where I could identify new modes and processes of developing the city that generate both spatial and social counter-formations to the modernist urbanism which already dominates most cities. From that perspective, I detect little in the built environment of Los Angeles, for example, that could constitute a postmodern urbanism beyond limited exercises in historical preservation or citation (often related to shopping malls or elite residences). Rather, I see the built Los Angeles metropolitan region as a consequence, more or less explicit, of modernist doctrines. Moreover, I would argue that recent patterns of urbanisation – eg, the downtown 'renaissance' developments and the urbanisation of suburbia into 'edge cities' – are further consecrations of these doctrines.

9 In Brasília, for example, such attempts led both urban designers and other kinds of planners to respond to the inevitable deformations of their plans (such as illegal squatter settlements, chaotic growth, and organised political opposition) with dystopic measures which characterised the rest of Brazil they wanted to exclude. These measures reproduced that Brazil at the foundations of Brasília.

10 See Teresa PR Caldeira, 'Fortified Enclaves: the New Urban Segregation', *Cities and Citizenship*, pp303-28, James Holston (ed), special issue of *Public Culture* 8(2), 1996; 'City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo'. PhD Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1992 (forthcoming, University of California Press) for a discussion of the reuse of modernist design in generating contemporary forms of segregation in Los Angeles and São Paulo.

11 Thus, for example, the Supreme Court has at different times both upheld and prohibited race discrimination.

12 Examples of such sites of insurgent citizenship may be found in the essays in Holston, op cit, *Cities and Citizenship* (note 4). It is important to stress that both the elite and the subaltern mark urban space with new and insurgent forms of the social – that these forms are not, in other words, limited to the latter.

13 TH Marshall, 'Citizenship and Social Class, *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development*, University of Chicago Press (Chicago), 1977, p92.

14 Ibid, p101.

15 For examples from Los Angeles, see Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*, Verso (London), 1990

JANE RENDELL

GENDERED SPACE: ENCOUNTERING ANTHROPOLOGY, ARCHITECTURE AND FEMINISM IN THE BURLINGTON ARCADE

Anthropology provides a welcoming, and, for some, familiar ground for both feminists and architects, and, as such, a potentially fertile place to think about gender and space. Thinking anthropologically allows a greater reciprocity of theoretical exchange between feminist criticism and architectural analysis, offering new methodologies and intellectual tools for interpreting objects of study; in this case, a particular architectural space, specifically the Burlington Arcade, built off London's Piccadilly in the early 19th century.

Feminism and Architecture

The early work of feminists engaged with issues concerning the practice of architecture, from fighting for women's equal access to architectural education and the profession, to reclaiming the work of women architects.[1] Some of this work involved subjecting architectural value systems to critique; feminists have suggested that the products women have traditionally been associated with – vernacular structures and interiors – should be thought of as 'architecture'; and that women have different ways of designing space and organising its production.[2] Feminism has also been concerned with issues of the occupation of architectural space; the problems inherent for women as users in 'man-made' environments, and the ways in which patriarchal ideology is represented architecturally.[3]

To date, much feminist work in architecture has remained internal to the discipline; only recently has research started to develop in different directions. This may be due to the increasing complexity of feminist theory, simultaneous with the emergence of differing feminist positions concerning class, race and sexuality, and the formation of gendered identity. It is also connected to the multifaceted nature of feminist studies – feminism is not a narrow discipline but a series of multiple practices. Currently, historians looking at architectural representation and gender have started to take their inspiration from the work of feminists in other fields; namely psychoanalysis, philosophy, cultural studies, film theory and art history. This new divergence is reflected in recent collections of work in feminism and architectural studies.[4]

Rethinking Feminism and Architecture through Anthropology

For anthropologists, architecture is taken to be one of many culturally produced artefacts; and as material culture, space is considered to be an integral part of daily life, intimately bound up in social and personal rituals and activities. This kind of work subjects the status of architecture and the role of the architect to critique; the term 'architecture' encompasses all aspects of the built environment rather than 'one-off' pieces of fine art or sculpture; and the term 'architect' includes all those who produce space, users of buildings, as well as designers. Such insights have, so far, influenced very few of those working in architectural studies.[5] The ideas have close connections with those of urban geographers who have posited that space is socially produced, and with the work of philosopher, Henri Lefebvre, who has argued that socially produced space works through three different yet interactive levels; as material or functional space, as codified language, and as lived everyday experience.[6] These thinkers have been influential to architectural historians who are suggesting that architecture is continually reproduced through use and everyday life.[7]

This kind of work is crucial for feminists. Anthropology was one of the first disciplines to suggest that there was a relation between gender and space, and that it was defined through power relations. The work done by anthropologists on the 'public' and 'private' has been essential for feminists, especially those interested in spatial boundaries, such as urbanists and historians.[8] The work of Shirley Ardener, for example, has been particularly important in developing studies which examine the differing spaces men and women are allocated culturally, and the role space has in symbolising, maintaining and reinforcing gender relations.[9] Making connections between the spaces occupied by women and their social status, resonates with the work of feminist geographers looking at the space of gendered and social relations.[10] It is time for architects to reconsider the work of feminist anthropologists, especially concerning kinship networks and social relations of exchange, which has not so far been considered in relation to the gendered occupation and control of space.

If, from an anthropological perspective, architecture is configured as culturally produced space, and feminism is concerned with the cultural construction of gender relations, kinship systems and processes of exchange, then the key questions for feminists and architects would seem to be, 'how are gender relations culturally produced in space?', and equally, 'how are spatial relations culturally produced in gender?' Many feminists, including myself, have adopted, implicitly and explicitly, strategies for deconstructing what we take to be the archetypal configuration of gender and space within patriarchal societies – the separate spheres.[11] In this article, I propose a way of thinking about gender and space influenced by the recent rise of interest in consumption in anthropology.[12] I argue that the Burlington Arcade was produced as a gendered space through the activities of consumption, firstly by considering how, in the early 19th century, women and men used urban space differently in relation to consumption, and secondly, by examining the ways in which architecture represented issues of gender and consumption.

The Burlington Arcade

The first London arcades were constructed during the early decades of the 19th century in the fashionable and wealthy residential areas of the West End around Piccadilly. The emergence of commodity capitalism in London at this time required new outputs for the sale of commodities – the Burlington Arcade was part of a scheme to promote the area west of Regent Street as an upper class shopping zone. In order to exploit the luxury market, it was important to create a privately-owned realm within the public zone, a place socially protected from the street for an elite class of shopper. Arcades such as the Burlington were intended both as places of static consumption and as covered routes for an 'agreeable promenade' – as such they provided a new kind of urban space.[13]

The luxury commodity industry required products to be displayed not as use-values, with a necessary productive process lying behind them, but as pure commodities – items for exchange. This focus on display and exchange, geographically divorced from the place of production, allowed shops to be smaller (and also allowed narrow strips of unusable urban land to be economically developed). The spatial layout of the arcades exploited this possibility – the shallow depths of the shop units and their wide frontages enhanced viewing possibilities. The shop fronts in particular became the most important feature of the design by utilising the dual properties of glass. As a transparent material, glass allowed an interior view and an opportunity for both presenting and protecting the commodities. As a reflecting material, glass acted as a mirror for 'conspicuous' consumers to view themselves. Glass was also a very expensive material which added to the perception of the arcades as luxury zones.

Consumers and Commodities

As a place of commodity consumption, the Burlington Arcade was the first of its type within London. The new building typology in itself was not enough to ensure the commercial success of the arcade. In order to sell the luxury goods, a new labour force and a larger consumer population were also necessary. It was intended that women fill such roles. As with the other new shopping venues, the exchanges and bazaars, where the work force was almost entirely female,[14] one of the contemporary reasons for building the Burlington Arcade was 'to give employment to industrious females'.[15] Although we do not know exactly how many women worked in the Burlington Arcade, we do know that six of the original 47 shop owners were women.[16] We can also presume from the kind of 'genteel businesses' located in the arcade, such as milliners, hosiers, hairdressers, jewellers and florists, that the customers were intended to be female as well as male.[17]

Feminists have pointed out that consumption plays a key role in women's lives – taking them out of the home into the city, as workers and shoppers, to buy goods for themselves and also for the family. However, the French feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray, drawing on anthropological and psychoanalytic conceptions of exchange, has pointed out that women are, in a patriarchal society, often 'owned' by men and treated as commodities: as mothers, wives and daughters; virgins and prostitutes.[18] In short, women are the objects as well as the subjects of consumption. It serves to highlight women's role as commodities, that during the early 19th century, the word commodity was used to describe a woman's genital organs – a modest woman was a 'private commodity' and a prostitute was a 'public commodity'.[19]

If we take a closer look at the district immediately surrounding the arcade at the beginning of the 19th century we find that it was an area of male upper class leisure, housing a large number of male venues, such as the coffee houses, gaming rooms and clubs of St James' Street and Pall Mall. Bond Street was the site of male fashion or dandyism, which in the Regency period reflected an intense preoccupation with masculinity and self-presentation. The streets in the vicinity of the Burlington Arcade also provided lodgings in the form of chambers and hotels for the single men of the nobility, gentry and professional classes. As part of the services provided for its male population, the area around the Burlington Arcade was known for its high class brothels and courtesans' residences, and the streets of St James', Pall Mall, Piccadilly and the Haymarket formed a circuit notorious for street walkers.[20]

As a consequence, the arcade played an important part in the commerce of prostitution. Its location in an upper class male district ensured a wealthy clientele, and in terms of its spatial layout it offered a covered place for prostitutes and their clients to promenade. It was an interior room but also an external street; it provided a place for the public activity of shopping but also for private life in the chambers above the shops; it was a place where public and private spheres elided in the same architectural form. The design of the shops, as discrete and self contained units, each with individual and private staircases to upper chambers, allowed them to be hired out or used for prostitution by the shopgirls themselves.[21] Architecturally the spaces of the arcade, having been constructed to maximise the potential for looking at commodities on display, provided easy places for men to gaze at the 'professional beauties'. This latter term may have referred to the female shoppers and shopgirls, as well as to the prostitutes, and to pornographic images concealed inside snuff boxes and watches within tobacconists' and jewellers' shop displays.

Virtue and Desire

The Burlington Arcade can also be examined as a gendered space, by looking at the tensions which emerge through its differing gendered representations. Representations of the Burlington Arcade were structured around images of the female body and ideas of the feminine in order simultaneously to signify virtue, safety and purity, and, desire, seduction and intrigue. On the one hand, the Burlington Arcade located the female body of the shop girl as the site of desire in order to attract male custom. In literature and art representations, spaces of commodity consumption like the Burlington Arcade with their primarily female work force and female customers were frequently depicted as places of sexual intrigue. For example, in a print of the *New Exchange* (1772) the female occupants are literally pointed to by a male figure as the focus of male attention, and in George Cruikshank's *The Bazaar* (1816), the bazaar is represented as a place for arranging sexual liaisons. Similarly, in 'Humphrey Hedgehogg's' poem *The London Bazaar*, or, *Where to Get Cheap Things* (1816), women are clearly one of the 'things' to be 'got' cheap. Guides to the sexual and other leisure pursuits of the Regency man about town identified bazaars as scenes of sexual seduction, and specifically mentioned the Burlington Arcade as a place to pick up pretty women.[22] Similarly, in literary accounts of the adventures of sporting men, or ramblers, the Burlington Arcade featured as a pleasure resort.[23] On the other hand, the presence of a female figure also provided an image of purity and virtue in the perilous city, signifying security in order to attract female shoppers. In contemporary novels aimed at women readers, shopping venues were represented as respectable female zones.[24]

Ideas of purity and seduction were also conjured up architecturally with references to both safe environments, the home and aspects of domesticity, and dangerous spaces, theatres and Parisian arcades. Architecturally, with its miniaturised scale, safe gateways and domestic facades, the arcade conjured up images of female virtue and the home. The intimate scale of the arcade and interior details – such as bow windows, low doorways and fireplaces – represented bourgeois ideologies of family and stability and so attracted 'virtuous' dress-makers and milliners and kept them off the perilous streets. Each shop unit was in essence a miniature home, with individual staircases, living and sleeping chambers. But the architecture also represented more subversive gendered ideas. The use of scaled down miniaturised elevations, combined with the lack of servicing elements usually found on the exterior face of buildings, also created an almost theatrical effect. At the time of the Regency, theatres were seen as places of dubious sexual morality – they were places where strangers of different genders and classes intermingled. The atmosphere of unreality was emphasised by the unusual quality of the light. It was quite rare at this time for an outside space to be covered and lit through roof lights, and the feeling of otherworldliness may have increased the connection of the arcades with a state of mind removed from the everydayness of the city – a world of fantasy, desire and seduction, notions connected with patriarchal constructions of the unknowable and desirable as a 'feminine' entity. It is also worth recalling that the architectural type of the arcade itself was seen as foreign. The first English arcades were inspired by those in Paris, where brothels and gambling dens were found above the shops. Being connected to French lifestyles at a time when France and England were still political rivals was something to be distrusted, and this may have increased the connections between arcades and immorality.

So, the architectural character of the arcade as both theatre and home allowed dual associations to be made with both sexual desire and virtue. The gendering of these representations all detract from the experience of real women in the arcade. But by far the most pervasive gendered representation is the prostitute, a figure with whom all women who occupied the arcade were conflated. The female shopper, through her 'conspicuous consumption' and concern with appearance, was characterised as trivial and superfluous, and so labelled a 'dolly mop' – a phrase meaning part-time prostitute. Similarly, the shopgirls were denigrated as 'sly-girls' – women who supplemented their income with part-time prostitution. Although prostitution did often provide extra income for women, whose wages were otherwise inadequate, the term was indiscriminately used to describe any young single working woman, regardless of whether she was being paid for sexual favours. In order to unravel this association of women with prostitution in the arcade, it is necessary to think simultaneously of the social mechanisms of patriarchy and capitalism.

The development of commodity capitalism at this time required women increasingly to enter the public spaces of the city both as producers and consumers, but to do so involved moving beyond the immediate control of the male in the patriarchal family unit. The increasing movement of women into spaces outside the family home resulted in the extension of patriarchal control into public spaces of the city. This was codified through government legislation, such as the Vagrancy Acts of 1822.[25] These laws exerted control over female urban movement in public urban spaces through the figure of the prostitute. Representing public women as prostitutes, while connecting prostitution with sexual deviancy or criminality, meant that all women who populated public zones of the city were seen as social and spatial transgressors.

Gendered forms of representation construct our historical knowledge of the men and women who occupied the arcade and the city around it. To hear of the spatial experience of occupants of the Burlington Arcade, we would need to find the personal memoirs of the shoppers, shopgirls and prostitutes. This is not my aim; rather I am interested in pointing out that gendered identities are constructed spatially through activities of consumption and that they are represented architecturally. An anthropological perspective plays a critical part here, both in taking architecture to be a cultural product, and in considering gender relations to be configured through exchange. If we accept that architecture is a gendered space that is constructed through social and gendered relations, and that it represents such relations, this starts to suggest ways of thinking about architecture which go beyond the intentions of designers and planners and points instead to looking at the ways in which buildings and urban spaces are appropriated and used as a settings for everyday life.

Notes

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1 See Ellen Perry Berkeley (ed), *Architecture, a Place for Women*, Smithsonian Institution Press (Washington), 1989 and Lynne Walker, *British Women in Architecture 1671-1951*, Sorello Press (London), 1984.

2 See Magrit Kennedy, 'Seven Hypotheses on Male and Female Principles, Making Room: Women and Architecture', *Heresies* II, vol 3, no 3, 1981, pp12-13; Mimi Lobell (ed), *The Buried Treasure in Architecture, a Place for Women*, Smithsonian Institution Press (London), 1989 and Susanna Torre, 'The Pyramid and the Labyrinth', in Susanna Torre (ed), *Women in American Architecture*, Whitney Library of Design, University of Illinois Press (Chicago), 1992.

3 See Dolores Hayden, *Redesigning the American Dream, The Future of Housing, Work and Family Life*, WW Norton and Company, (New York and London, 1986; Matrix, *Making Space: Women and the Man-Made Environment*, Pluto Press (London), 1984; Daphne Spain, *Gendered Spaces*, University of North Carolina Press (North Carolina), 1992; and Leslie Kanes Weisman, *Discrimination by Design*, University of Illinois Press (Chicago), 1992.

4 The first collection to deal directly with issues of space and gender in this multi-disciplinary way was Beatriz Colomina (ed), *Sexuality and Space*, Princeton Architectural Press (New York), 1992. Since then a number of publications have focused on issues pertaining to gender, such as fashion and representation, without being explicitly feminist.

5 See Anthony D King (ed), *Buildings and Society*, Routledge and Kegan Paul (London), 1980; Anthony King, *The Bungalow*, Oxford University Press (Oxford), 1995; Amos Rapoport, *House, Form and Culture*, Prentice Hall (New Jersey), 1969, and *Human Aspects of Urban Form*, Pergamon Press (Oxford), 1977.

6 See Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Basil Blackwell (Oxford), 1991.

7 See Iain Borden, Joe Kerr, Alicia Pivaro and Jane Rendell (eds), *Strangely Familiar*, Routledge (London), 1995.

8 See Shirley Ardener, *Defining Females*, Croomhelm (London), 1978; Eva Clamamikov et al, *The Public and the Private*, Heineman (London), 1993.

9 See Shirley Ardener, 'Ground Rules and Social Maps for Women' in Shirley Ardener (ed), *Women and Space: Ground Rules and Social Maps*, Berg (Oxford), 1993, pp1-30.

10 See Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, Polity Press (Cambridge), 1994 and Gillian Rose, *Feminism and Geography*, Polity Press (Cambridge), 1993.

11 See Jane Rendell, 'Subject Space' in D McCorquodale, K Ruedi and S Wigglesworth (eds), *Desiring Practices*, Black Dog Publishing Limited (London), 1996, pp216-33 and Jane Rendell 'Ramblers and Cyprians', *Scroope* no 8, June 1996, pp85-91.

12 See Daniel Miller (ed), *Acknowledging Consumption*, Routledge (London), 1995.

13 See Samuel Ware, 'A Proposal to Build Burlington Arcade (16 March, 1808), and Schematic Plans (1815, 1817-18 for the Burlington House', *Collection of Lord Christian*, Royal Academy of Arts Library (London); 'Covered Passage, Burlington House', *The Times*, 3 April, 1815; John Tallis, *Tallis' Illustrated London*, John Tallis and Co, 1851, p154.

14 John Feltham, *Picture for London*, 1821, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown (London), 1821, p154.

15 'The Opening of the Burlington Arcade', *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol 87, no II, September 1817, p272.

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17 London Topographical Society, *John Tallis's London Street Views 1838-40*, Nattali and Maurice (London), 1979, pp238-39.

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19 Pierce Egan, *Grose's Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*, (London): Sherwood, Neely and Jones, 1823).

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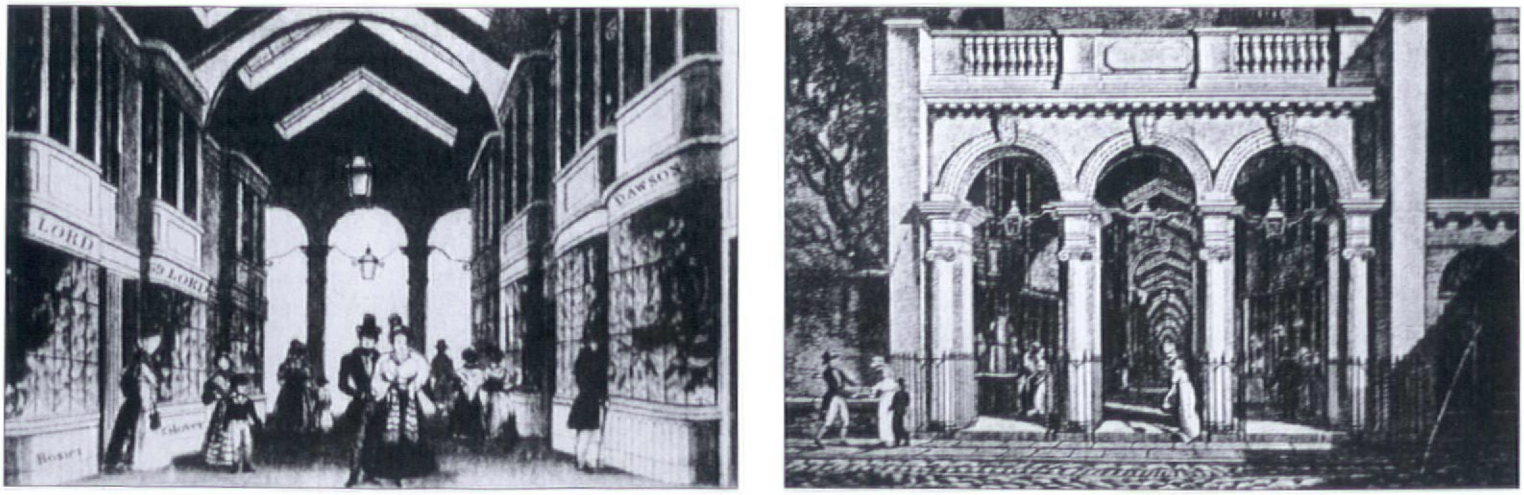
21 Henry Mayhew and Bracebridge Hemyng, 'The Prostitution Class Generally', *London Labour and the London Poor*, vol 4, London Morning Chronicle, (1861-2).

22 See the *Ramblers Magazine or Fashionable Companion* and *Ramblers Magazine of Gallantry, Glee, Pleasure and Bon Ton*.

23 Pierce Egan, *Life in London*, Sherwood, Neely and Jones (London), 1821; Johnathan Badcock, *Real Life in London*, Jones and Co (London), 1822; William Heath, *Fashion and Folly*, William Sams (London), 1822 and Bernard Black Blackmantle, *The English Spy*, Jones and Co, 1825.

24 Frances Burney, *Evelina*, Jones and Co (London), 1822.

25 *The Vagrancy Act* (1822), 3 Geo IV, cap 40.s2, p134.



FROM L TO R: Consumer or commodity: shopping in the Burlington Arcade; Virtue and Desire

JANET CARSTEN AND STEPHEN HUGH-JONES

ABOUT THE HOUSE, LÉVI-STRAUSS AND BEYOND

This extract is taken from the Introduction to About the House,[1] *which examines ideas about the house as a specific form of social organisation discussed by Claude Lévi-Strauss in* Anthropology and Myth[2] *and* The Way of the Masks.[3]

The real value of Lévi-Strauss' idea of the house as a specific form of social organisation lies in providing a jumping-off point allowing a move towards a more holistic anthropology of architecture which might take its theoretical place alongside the anthropology of the body.

The house and the body are intimately linked. The house is an extension of the person; like an extra skin, carapace or second layer of clothes, it serves as much to reveal and display as it does to hide and protect. House, body and mind are in continuous interaction, the physical structure, furnishing, social conventions and mental images of the house at once enabling, moulding, informing and constraining the activities and ideas which unfold within its bounds. A ready-made environment fashioned by a previous generation and lived in long before it becomes an object of thought, the house is a prime agent of socialisation. Moving in ordered space, the body 'reads' the house which serves as a mnemonic for the embodied person. Through habit and inhabiting, each person builds up a practical mastery of the fundamental schemes of their culture.

Houses are frequently thought of as bodies, sharing with them a common anatomy and common life history. If people construct houses and make them in their own image, so also do they use these houses and house-images to construct themselves as individuals and as groups. At some level or other, the notion that houses are people is one of the universals of architecture. If the house is an extension of the person, it is also an extension of the self. As Bachelard reminds us, the space of the house is inhabited not just in daily life, but also in the imagination. It is a 'topography of our intimate being', a 'felicitous space' with protective and comforting association, a rich and varied poetic image which 'emerges into the consciousness as a direct product of the heart, soul and being of man, apprehended in his actuality'.[4] Western children's drawings of houses with two windows and a door – two eyes and a mouth – underline this projection of the self in the house, but there are surprisingly few anthropological explorations of this identity between house and self in non-Western societies.

Intimately linked both physically and conceptually, the body and the house are the loci for dense webs of signification and affect and serve as basic cognitive models used to structure, think and experience the world. Yet if the body has long been a focus of anthropological research which has revitalised the study of kinship and has had a major impact on other disciplines, the same cannot be said for the house. As Caroline Humphrey observes, 'architecture has been curiously neglected by academic anthropology'.[5] Indeed, much of the more comparative and theoretical work on the anthropology of architecture has been done not by anthropologists but by architects and art historians.

One reason for this neglect is that houses get taken for granted. Like our bodies, the houses in which we live are so commonplace, so familiar, so much a part of the way things are, that we often hardly seem to notice them. It is only under exceptional circumstances – house-moving, wars, fires, family rows, lost jobs or no money – that we are forcibly reminded of the house's central role and fundamental significance. Anthropological field research is another such exceptional circumstance. To enter another culture is to stand nervously in front of an alien house and to enter a world of unfamiliar objects and strange people, a maze of spatial conventions whose invisible lines get easily scuffed and trampled by ignorant foreign feet. But these first, revealing, architectural impressions, reinforced by the painful process of learning who is who, who and what lives where, and what to do where and when, soon fade into the background to become merely the context and environment for the increasingly abstract and wordy conversation of ethnographic research.

Institutional divisions and specialisations also underlie anthropology's neglect of architecture – what might have been a more holistic anthropology of the house has been fragmented between various sub-disciplines and theoretical traditions. Family and household are basic units of analysis in studies of demography and kinship; economic anthropology deals with the physical and mental activities implied by the notion of 'housekeeping', treating the household as a basic unit of production and consumption; cultural ecologists deal with subsistence as an adaptation to an environment whose architecture, the result of human activities and perceptions, is often masked by the term 'natural'. We have not considered here the relationship between the house and the landscape in which it is situated. Ingold suggests a homology between the relations body; house: landscape, and organism: dwelling: environment. The former set emphasises form, the latter function. This provokes the further question of where each entity in the sets begins and ends.

Architectural works focused on the more material aspects of dwellings typically say much about environmental conditions, resources, technology, techniques of construction and types of building, and about the spatial organisation, symbolism and aesthetic values of buildings, but they often say relatively little about the social organisation of the people who live inside.

It was Lévi-Strauss who first drew attention to the potential theoretical significance of the house, who saw in house societies a specific and widespread social type, and who emphasised the significance of the indigenous category of house in the study of systems of social organisation which appeared to make no sense when seen in terms of the categories of conventional kinship analysis. His writings on the house were inspired by the noble houses of medieval Europe. He argues that the Yurok house was a central feature of their social organisation, perpetual establishments whose names, taken from their location, decorations or ceremonial function, were used in turn by the house owners.

Noting the similarity between these institutions and European noble house, Lévi-Strauss points out that 'in order to recognise the house, it would have been necessary for ethnologists to look towards history'.[6] He stresses that the house as a grouping endures through time, continuity being assured not simply through succession and replacement of its human resources but also through holding on to fixed or movable property and through the transmission of the names, titles and prerogatives which are integral to its existence and identity. He moves away from a theory in which genealogy is primary, to one where it is displaced by other symbols and to a consideration of systems in which the criteria of wealth, power and status, normally associated with literate and class-based societies, begin to play an increasingly important role in the constitution of social groupings.

Lévi-Strauss talks of the 'borrowing' and 'subversion' of the language of kinship in the pursuance of political and economic interests, but nowhere discusses how the naturalisation of status differences is achieved. In fact, a striking omission from his writing is any detailed attention to the most obvious feature of houses: their physical characteristics. The architectural features of houses are usually ignored and no consideration is given to the association of rank with architecture. This point is graphically illustrated in *The Way of the Masks* which contains Lévi-Strauss' original discussion of 'house societies'. The photographs of painted house fronts and elaborately carved house posts might suggest that, for Northwest Coast Indians, the sociological significance of the house is reflected in the care and attention lavished on buildings. Yet in his discussion of the Kwakiutl *numayma* or 'house', Lévi-Strauss makes no mention of their architecture.

Internal features of the house such as the division of space often serve as vehicles for the symbolic elaboration of systems of hierarchy which may mirror or transform those represented by the house as a whole. At the same time, decorative elaboration of the house's external facade, sometimes taken to extreme proportions, may serve as a sign for the inhabitants' identity, wealth and powers and as a vehicle for the conspicuous display of mythologically sanctioned powers and prerogatives reminiscent of the heraldic devices of medieval houses. Referring briefly to the elaborate houses of the Atoni and Batak, Lévi-Strauss does invoke the fetishistic quality of buildings as illusory objectifications of unstable alliance. The usage is suggestive but comes nowhere near to doing justice to the complexity of the issues involved. The house is a representation not just of unity but also of various kinds of hierarchy and division.

The significance of a focus on the house is that it brings together aspects of social life which have previously been ignored or treated separately. Crucially, we would consider architectural features of houses as an aspect of their importance as social units in both life and thought. Rather than seeing in the house the birth of a new analytic type, the anthropological child of alliance and descent, it is this holistic potential of viewing houses 'in the round' which we would emphasise. The relation between building and group is multifaceted and contextually determined, the house's role as a complex idiom for social groupings, as a vehicle to naturalise rank, and as a source of symbolic power being inseparable from the building itself.

Despite the historical element in Lévi-Strauss' analysis of house societies, his notion of the house often appears paradoxically static. The very language used to describe the house, how it 'solidifies' an unstable relation of alliance, or 'transfixes' irreconcilable oppositions, reveals a tendency, shared by others, to see the house in static terms. Houses are dynamic entities. Their vitality comes from a number of sources – most obviously from the people who live in them, but also from the materials used in building, from life-giving rituals, or from the movement of the heavenly bodies which often determine their orientation. But it is often expressed in much stronger terms. In certain cultures, houses are far from being merely static material structures. They have animate qualities; they are endowed with spirits or souls, and are imagined in terms of the human body. In going beyond Lévi-Strauss' formulations, we would place these qualities at the centre of an anthropology of the house which considers houses and their inhabitants as part of one process of living.

There is a tendency in anthropology, not limited to Lévi-Strauss, to focus on the ritual aspects of social life. But the house has another side. It is an ordinary group of people concerned with their day-to-day affairs, sharing consumption and living in the shared space of a domestic dwelling. It is out of these everyday activities, carried on without ritual, reflection or fuss and, significantly, often by women, that the house is built. This house, all too easily taken for granted, is one that anthropologists have tended to ignore. One conclusion we would emphasise is the need for further research on an anthropology of everyday life which might both balance, and eventually be incorporated into, studies of ritual and ideology.

Notes

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1 Janet Carsten and Stephen Hugh-Jones, *About the House*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), 1995.

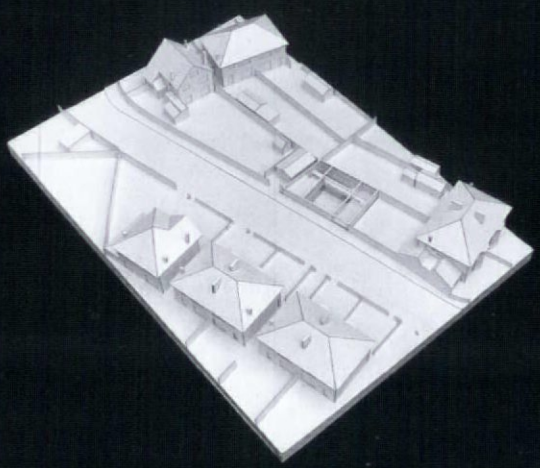
2 Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Anthropology and Myth: Lectures 1951-82*, Blackwell (Oxford), 1987.

3 Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Way of the Masks*, S Modelski (trans), Jonathan Cape (London), 1983.

4 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Orion Press (New York), 1964, xxxiii.

5 Caroline Humphrey, 'No Place Like Home in Anthropology: the Neglect of Architecture', *Anthropology Today*, vol 4, no 1, 1988, pp16-18.

6 Op cit, Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Way of the Masks*.



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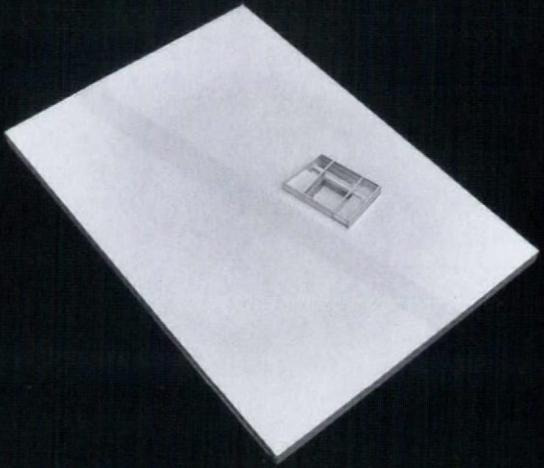

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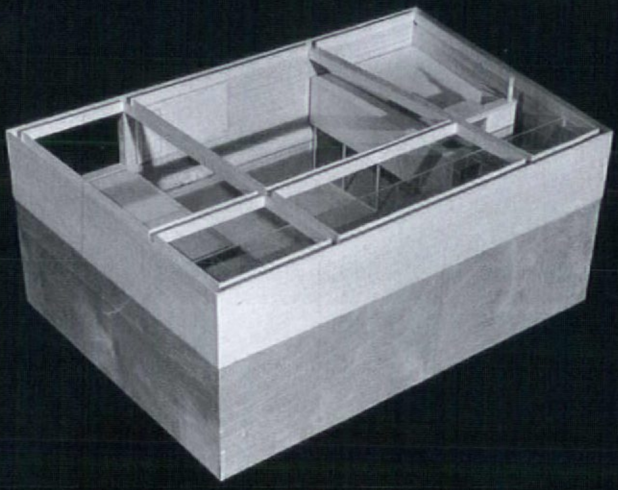

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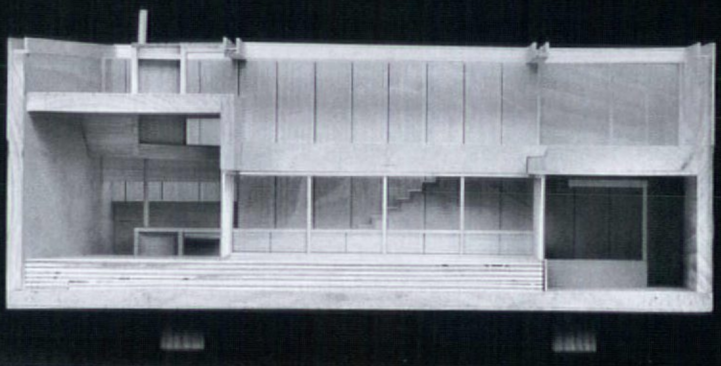

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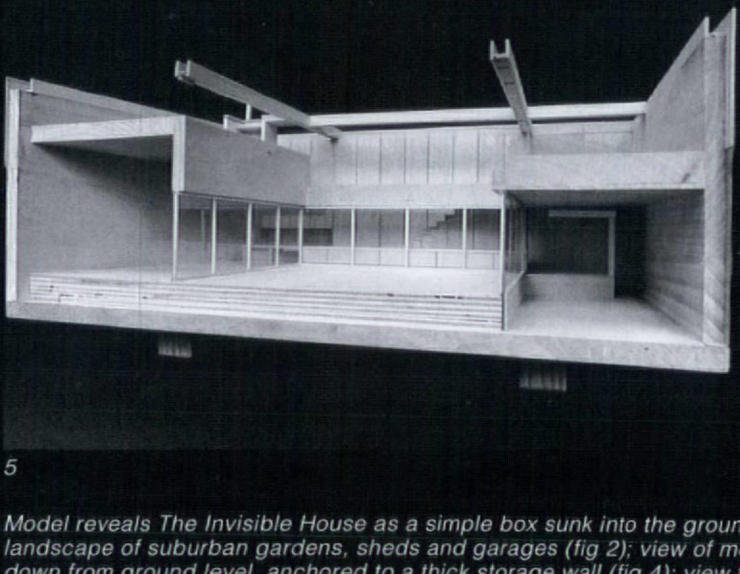

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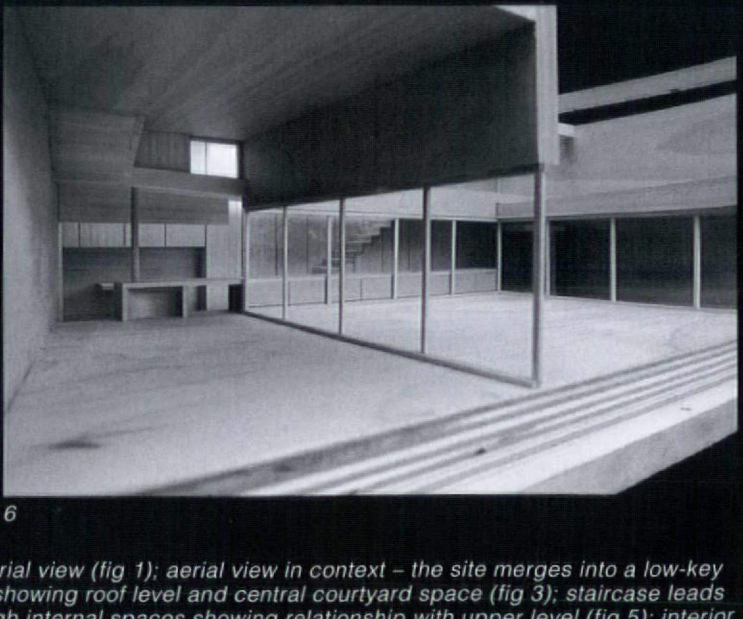

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Model reveals The Invisible House as a simple box sunk into the ground: aerial view (fig 1); aerial view in context – the site merges into a low-key landscape of suburban gardens, sheds and garages (fig 2); view of model showing roof level and central courtyard space (fig 3); staircase leads down from ground level, anchored to a thick storage wall (fig 4); view through internal spaces showing relationship with upper level (fig 5); interior view towards entrance stair showing fireplace and chimney in living room on left and kitchen worktop running through to bath and bedroom on right (fig 6)

PIERRE D'AVOINE ARCHITECTS

THE INVISIBLE HOUSE, ACTON, LONDON

Critique by Clare Melhuish

The suburb should be a rich field for anthropological research. On the surface, often monotonous, repetitive, and apparently blank, offering very little to the stranger, yet, underneath, behind closed doors, a fertile seed-bed for all sorts of unexpected cultural activities and manifestations. One only has to think back over the history of popular music and fashion in London since the 1960s, and the people who made it, to realise what an enormous contribution the suburbs have made to the dynamic alternative cultural scene which has given Britain a high international profile.

Pierre d'Avoine's work has demonstrated a consistent interest in suburbia, both in this country and abroad in Bombay and Japan, and the potential – indeed, need – for a new approach to suburban development. He has been motivated by a refusal to accept the straitjacket of prescribed models of development imposed by British planning authorities, or the market-orientated certainty of the volume house builders that the key to sales is an endless recreation of the suburban semi, replete with Tudor gables and bow windows, evoking a mythical, idyllic English past. Both are founded in a superficial appraisal of the existing architectural forms, and a deeply conservative view of the social structure and norms of suburban living, based on a 19th-century idea that has been superseded by social and technological change. D'Avoine has sought to develop new forms which reflect the great changes that have taken place in suburbia, based on an understanding of the anthropology of architecture, or the meaning that lies behind the spatial organisation and architectural forms that evolve during certain periods of social history in specific places.

The project for the Invisible House (designed in collaboration with Gerard Roberts), on a small site at the end of a back garden in Acton, now an inner suburb of west London, was, as it were, a test case for a new approach to suburban redevelopment. Interestingly enough, it provoked an intense reaction both on the part of neighbours and the planning authority, which was almost entirely negative in character. The scheme was initially refused planning permission on the spurious grounds of overdevelopment, substandard accommodation, and being 'out of character' – despite the fact that the house could not be seen at all from the street, being substantially dug into the ground around an open central courtyard. The roof was treated as a garden and car-parking bay, thus merging with the immediate, low-key landscape of back gardens, potting sheds, and garages, and the entire structure was completely concealed from the road behind the existing garden fence.

This curious state of affairs was eventually rectified when the planning refusal was overturned at appeal. However, it does raise some very interesting questions. The building was regarded as an intrusion, although it was invisible, and, in some way which no-one could quite articulate, a subversion of what was perceived to be the existing order – even though the surrounding area, close to the A40, is a far from homogeneous mixture of housing and unattractive, out-of-scale industrial development which people seemed prepared to accept, despite the environmental degradation which it has entailed.

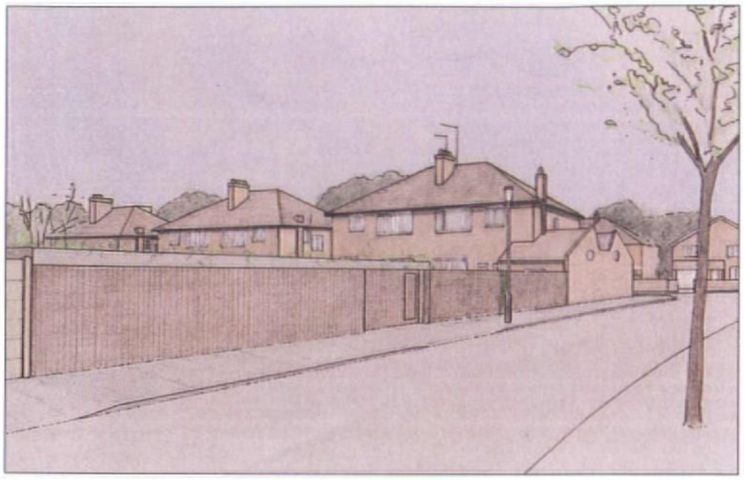
The site lies within the Goldsmiths Estate, a typical suburban development of the interwar period. As such, it lacks the architectural and infastructural merits of earlier developments, which were inspired by an ideal of country living within commuting distance of the city on the new public transport links.

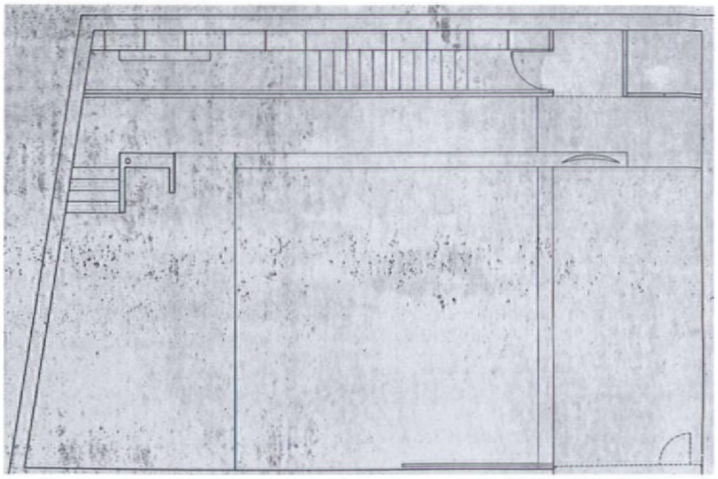
The architects took as their model a version of the English, verging towards the German, vernacular which could be easily reproduced on a large scale to provide housing first for the middle-classes and later for the masses. One such example of the latter is the Old Oak estate, close to the site of the Invisible House, developed by the London County Council between 1913 and 1920. With its pointed gables, prominent chimney pots, and steeply pitched roofs, it was intended to create a village-like, pastoral environment, apart from the city, but – planned around a railway station rather than a church – within easy access of it by means of the Central London Railway.

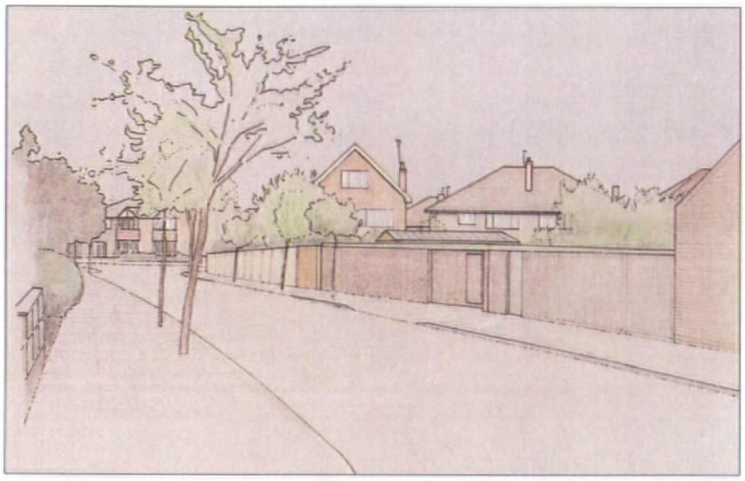
Such developments promoted what John Boorman depicted in his film *Hope and Glory* as a private, inward-looking world of the nuclear family, with no roots and no past, smug, half-cultured and narrow in outlook – a view commonly shared by the intelligentsia. Yet the suburbs constructed earlier this century have been progressively absorbed into the city as its boundaries have expanded outwards, bringing the original ideals of apartness, and quasi-pastoral low density into question. The structure of the nuclear family has broken down to a great extent: household units in the suburbs are far more varied than they were when these communities were originally built; cultural homogeneity has gone, and with it, the common dream of a mythical English past, as ethnic communities have expanded and taken root; and traditional commuting patterns have dramatically altered, with the rise of decentralisation and working from home. These factors imply significant change in the culture of the traditional suburb.

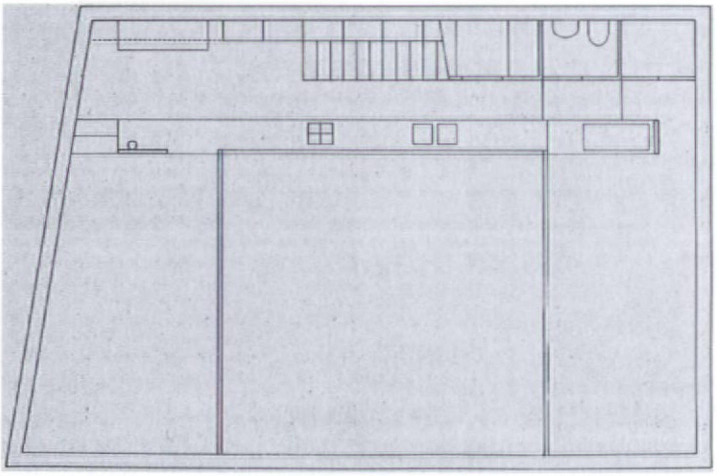
The Invisible House is the result of first-hand observation and personal experience of these developments, combined with a deep-seated concern for the degradation of the suburban environment which has resulted from a failure to evolve new directions and models for the future. It is intended as the first in a series of proposals for interstitial suburban buildings: not a universal strategy for future development, but possibly another letter in the alphabet of building types.

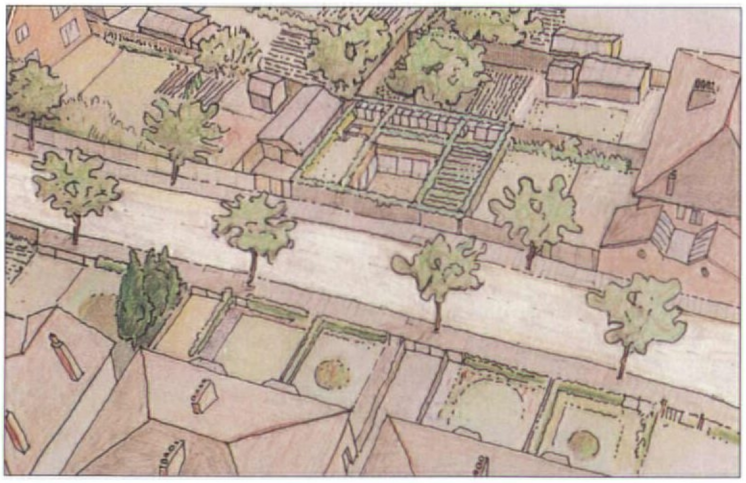
As such, the Invisible House has its roots in traditional English architecture up to the end of the 19th century – not superficially, in terms of its architectural

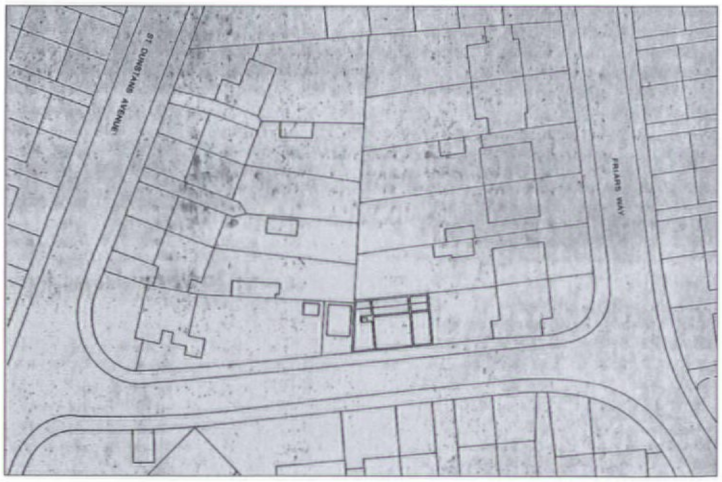


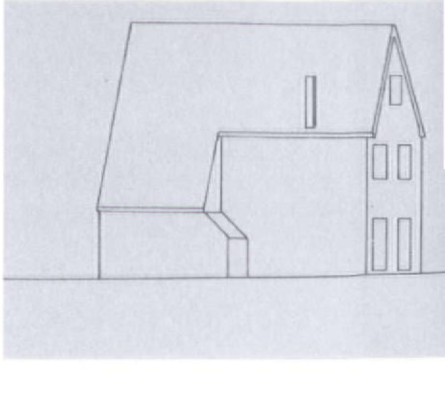










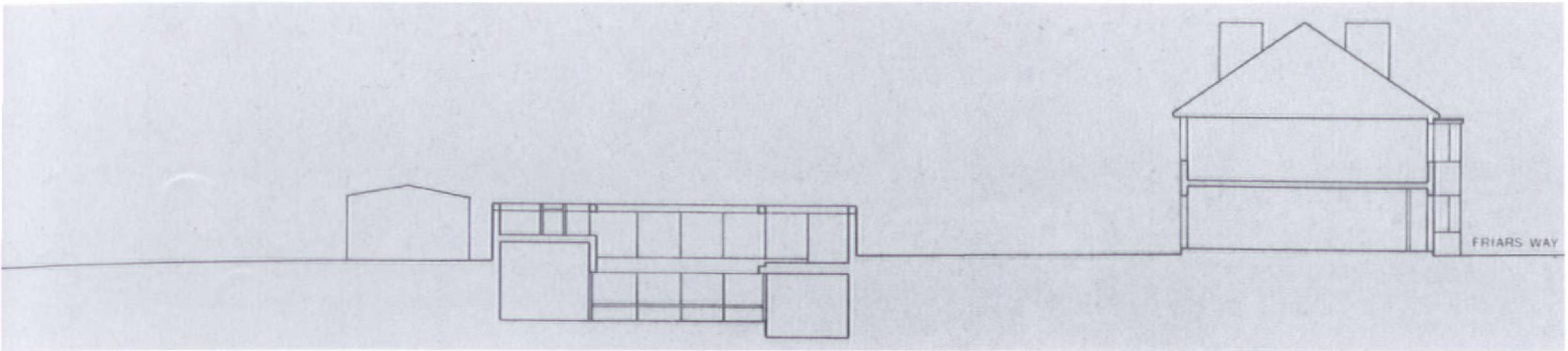


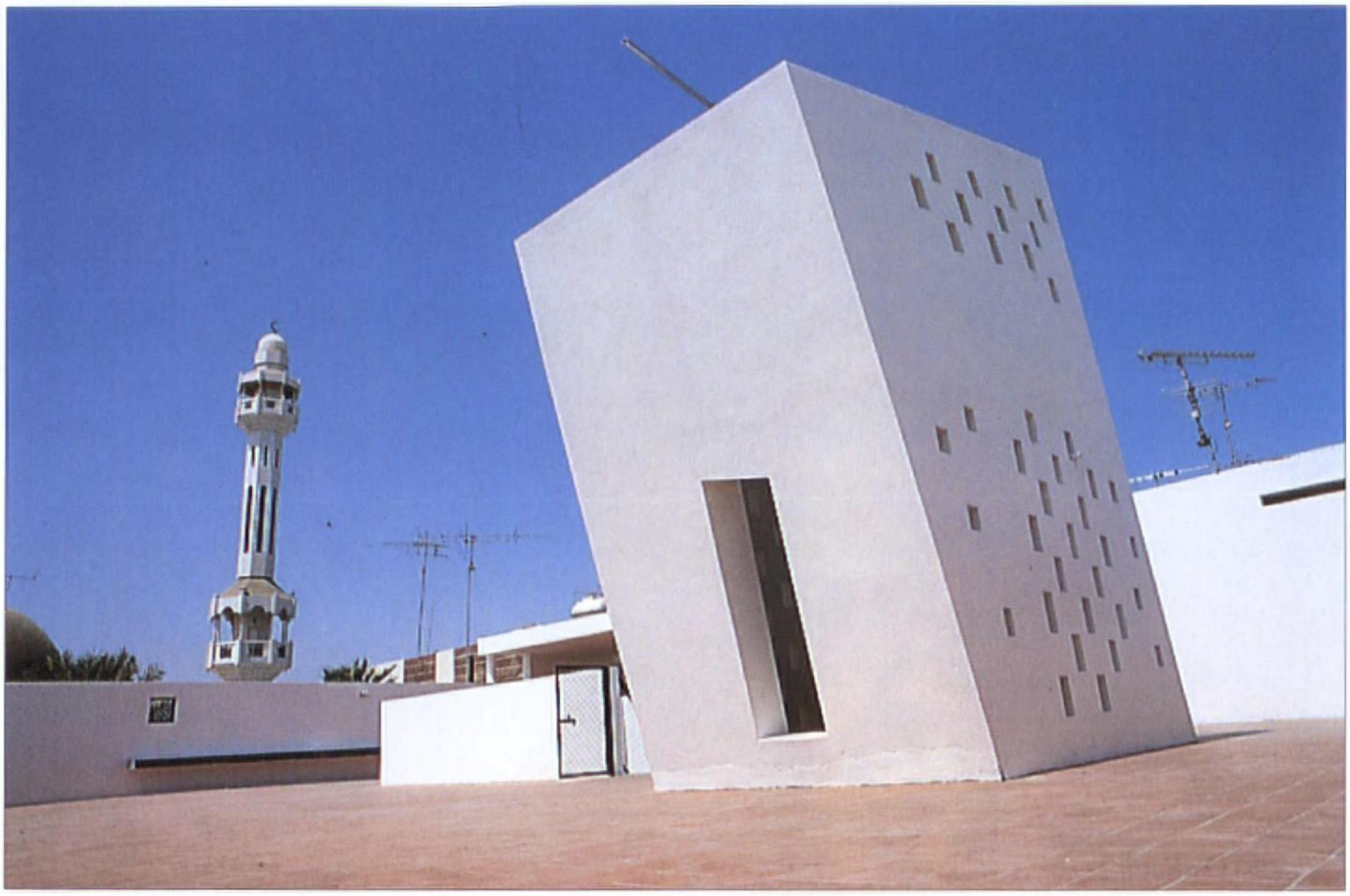
FROM ABOVE L TO R: Perspective view along garden fence showing gate and glimpse of pergola behind; entrance level plan; perspective view in opposite direction; courtyard level plan; aerial perspective showing scheme in context; RIGHT: East-west section showing levels of house below and above ground language, but in the fact that it is dug into the ground, as most houses used to be. However, the dark, dank cellar is replaced by a light, open central courtyard, around which the living accommodation for one or two people is arranged behind glass walls. The layout is informal and flexible compared to traditional house-plans (still reproduced on an ever meaner scale in speculative housing developments). It recognises the relaxation of lifestyles which has occurred, and the increased scope for sensuousness offered by domestic life today: a hedonism which would have been frowned upon in the society of the late 19th and early 20th century, and was completely denied in the original suburban house.

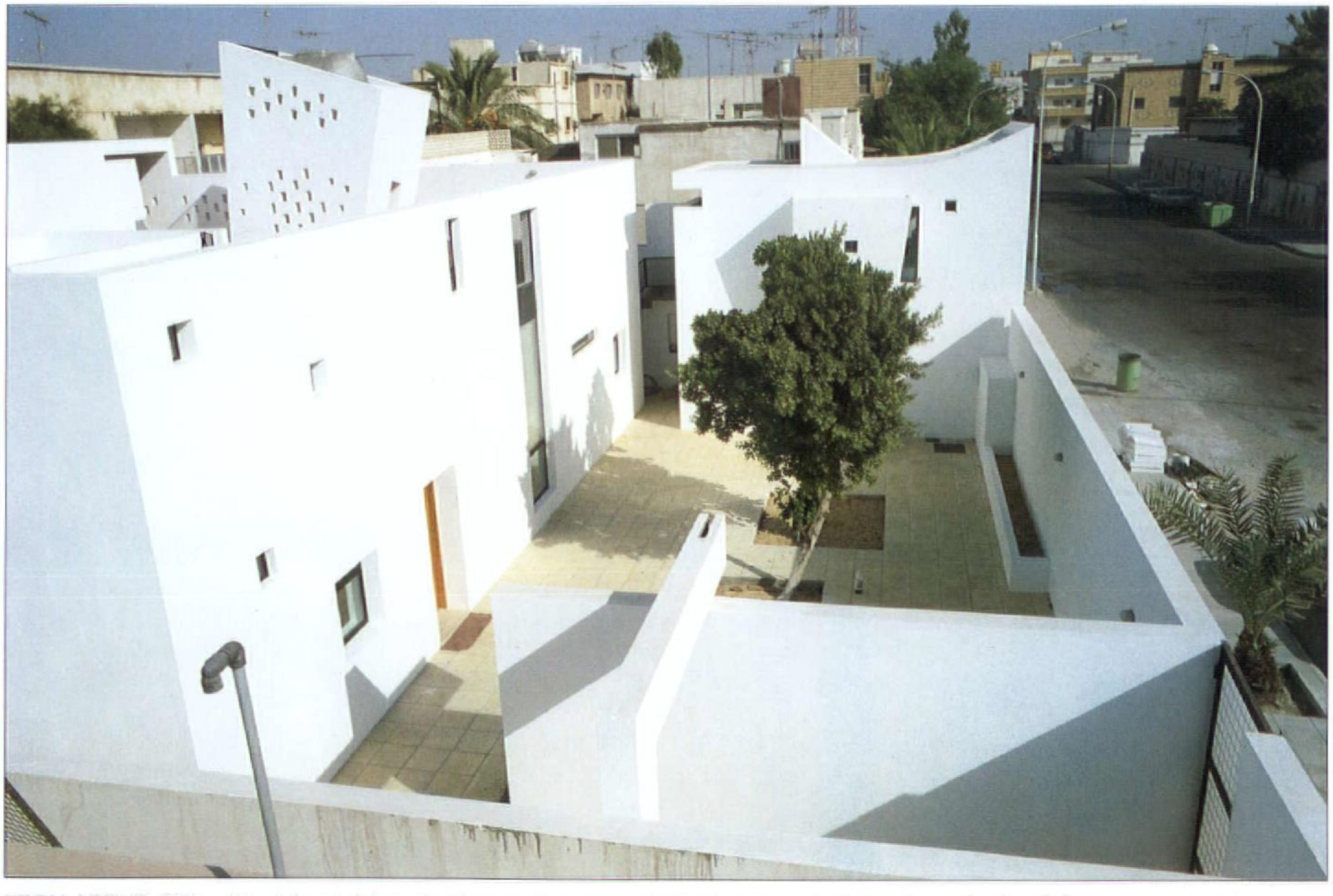
Although the traditional attic has gone, its place is taken by a wall of storage, forming, as it were, the anchor of the building against which is fixed the main entrance descending from the garden level, via a lean-to conservatory, into the living accommodation. The stairwell runs parallel with a linear plinth linking the living-room fireplace, a long work surface forming the kitchen, and the bath at the other end, next to the bedroom. Kitchen, bathroom and fireplace are all accommodated within this major structural and symbolic element.

The car has more than ever a role to play in the suburban lifestyle, despite the campaigning efforts of environmentalists, and this fact is recognised in the proposal. The car is parked on the roof of the house, surrounded by all the conventional elements of the suburban garden. From the surrounding houses, little more than the garden, sometimes with people in it, and car can be seen, as normal. As the planting grows, the structure of the house will gradually disappear into the landscape of fences, hedges, pergolas, shrubbery, flower-beds, and compost heaps. It is at one and the same time a paragon of modesty and introversion, and, in its abstract architectural language and unconventional relationship between earth and sky, a formidable piece of self-expression. Paradoxically, these are equally recognisable as powerful elements of the suburban tradition, where introversion is read in the deserted streets, representing a denial of public space, and self-expression in the strange colonies of garden gnomes, the stick-on porches and fancy front doors: the treatment of the front of the house and apron of garden as an intermediary zone of presentation and display.

The Invisible House is seemingly introverted, but is intended to provide the potential for social interaction. D'Avoine suggests that it could function as a 'granny flat' or workspace ancillary to an existing house (or houses) and in that way could act as the catalyst for a more communal lifestyle accommodated within the back-garden sites. An increase of density handled in this way could invigorate and enrich the suburban environment, by recognising and giving form to the cultural changes which have taken place and will continue to do so in the future.







FROM ABOVE: Tilting block (containing plant) on roof contrasts with minaret symbolising the authority of the mosque; aerial perspective into entrance and swimming pool courtyard

PETER BARBER ARCHITECTS

VILLA ANBAR, SAUDI ARABIA

Critique by Jeremy Till

At a cursory glance, Peter Barber's Villa Anbar may appear as a piece of sophisticated modernism. The white walls, free external spaces, pure light, roof garden and stripped aesthetic all build to an image of a villa belonging to a known architectural quantity. But it does not take long to realise that there is something much stranger going on. A window, like an eye, surveys the main entrance court; a tilting block protrudes through the body of the house; a strip window slides past the face of a wall. These, and many other examples, indicate that a set of known rules are being manipulated to reveal a much deeper reading of the building. Where early modernism is grounded in a spirit of benign emancipation, the Villa Anbar takes a far more critical stance to the society and place in which it is conceived. Because of this, a discussion of the Villa Anbar at the level of aesthetic or pure form is fruitless. Instead one needs to understand its genesis, and a series of social factors that influenced the design.

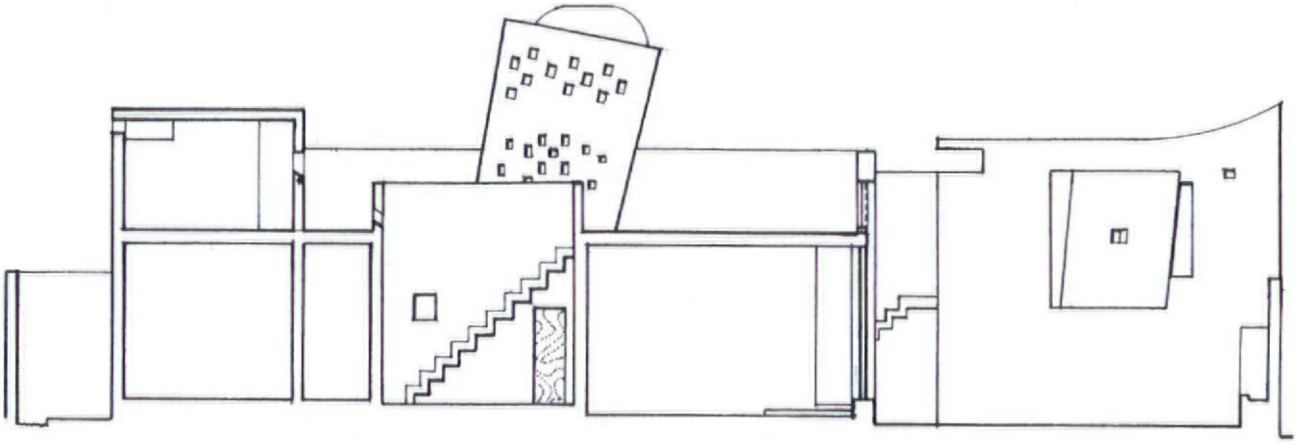
The Villa Anbar is set in Saudi Arabia, a country in which a dynastic regime structures a society of segregated race, class and gender. The client is a woman who has spent much of her life outside the country – both aspects which clearly run against the grain of Saudi male nationalism. It is built by immigrant labour, with the architect acting as foreman, labourer and engineer. During construction, a nearby medieval settlement was razed to the ground by the government, because its spatial complexity made it impossible to monitor the subversive elements who had settled there. It is clear that the situation in which the villa is grounded is not neutral. When faced with such a loaded set of conditions, the temptation would have been to retreat into an exercise in pure beauty, with the piercing sun and those blue, blue skies. However, Barber's response is to confront the issues through the means of architecture. This he does by quietly upsetting the domestic conventions which structure and control Saudi society.

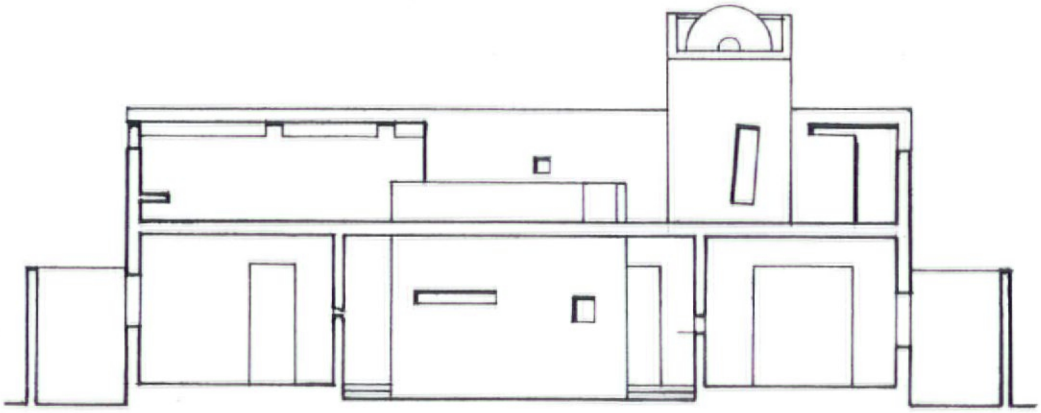
The plan of a typical Saudi house is determined by the patterns of the society. Women and men are thus segregated and the male domain assumes a hierarchical superiority within the house. Servants are equally suppressed. Finally, the family is separated from the outside world by means of a walled compound within which a series of increasingly private spaces gravitate towards a central courtyard. In the Villa Anbar, these rules are reinterpreted to create a new order.

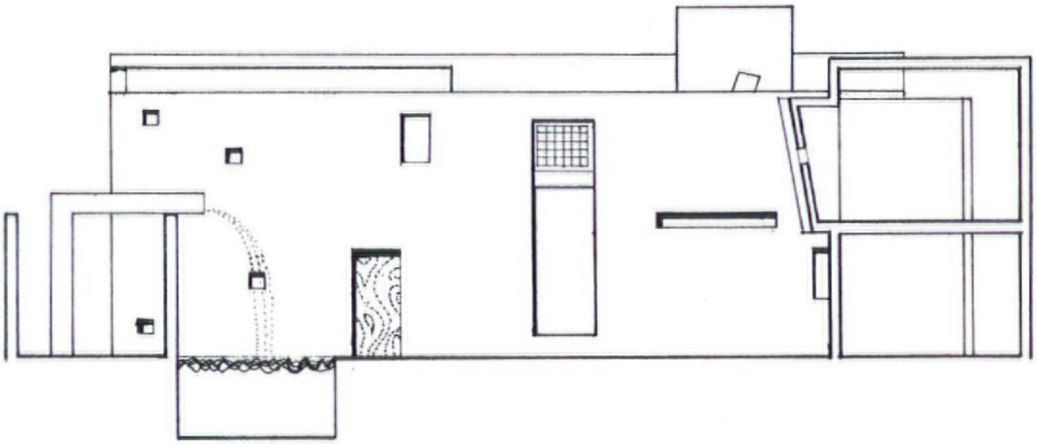
The reinvention of the Saudi house starts at the entrance. A gate gives a partial view into the courtyard, but a wall to the right prevents the gaze penetrating any further. The threshold is defined by a lintel gateway which slips over the top of the occluding wall. The entrance is at once defined and then denied, as something else beyond is hinted at. The lintel serves a double function, taking water to the swimming pool on the other side of the wall. The sound of the water brings the presence of the family at their most private and vulnerable (unclothed and at play) to the most public setting. Through the manipulation of simple elements, wall, water and lintel, a charged scene is established in which the family is neither completely shut off nor completely revealed. Barragan may use these same elements with an exquisite formal skill, but the result does not have the same social resonances.

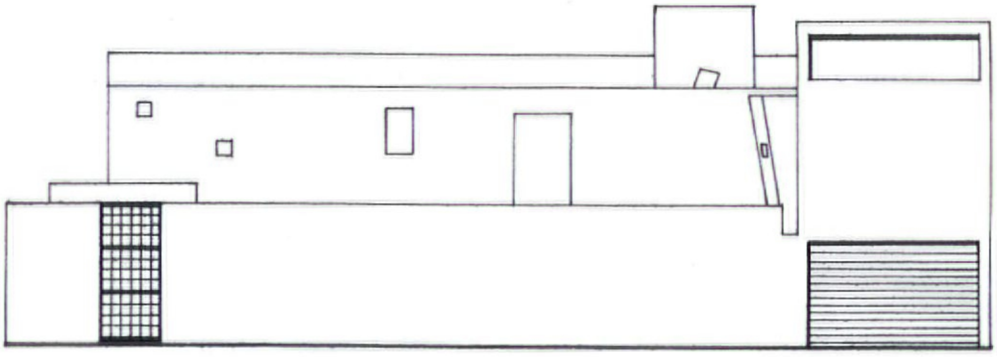
The entrance sequence anticipates the formal and social gestures employed in the rest of the Villa Anbar. The architect continually alludes to something happening beyond, so that a tension is set up between spaces which should otherwise be separated. The window that surveys the swimming courtyard belongs not to the master but to the driver. Even if the window is blocked up (which by now it may well be), the presence of the servant is always felt in the wall of his room which obliquely breaks through the structure of

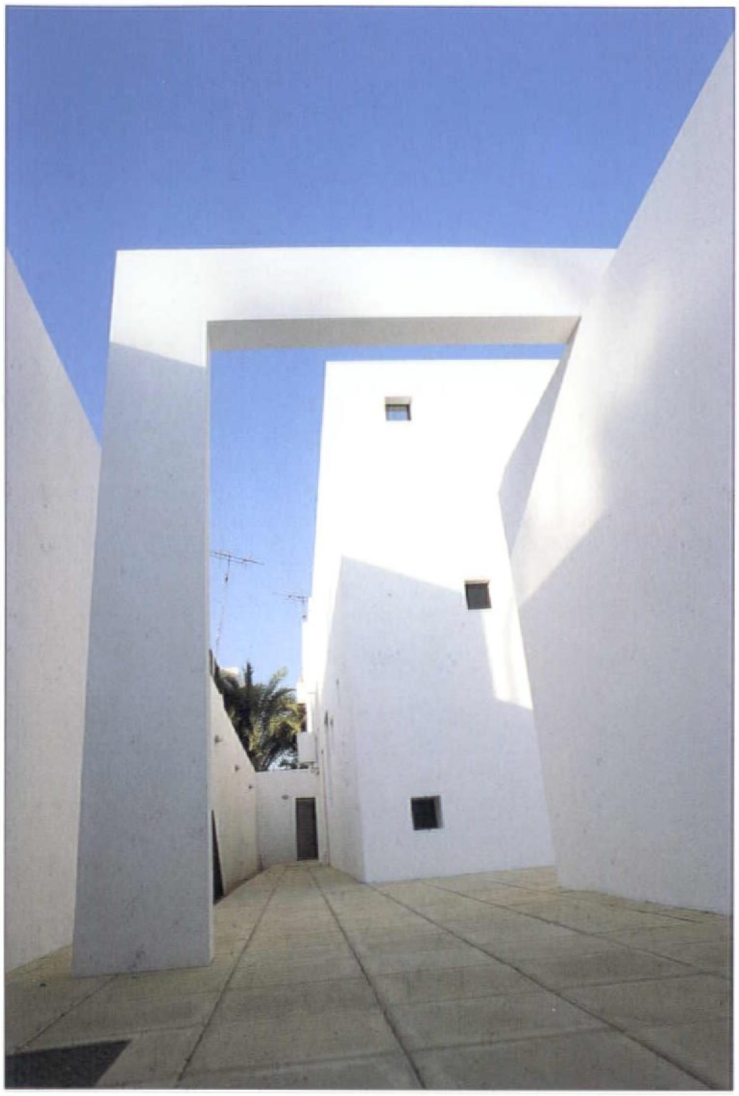
ABOVE: Eye-shaped window frames minaret

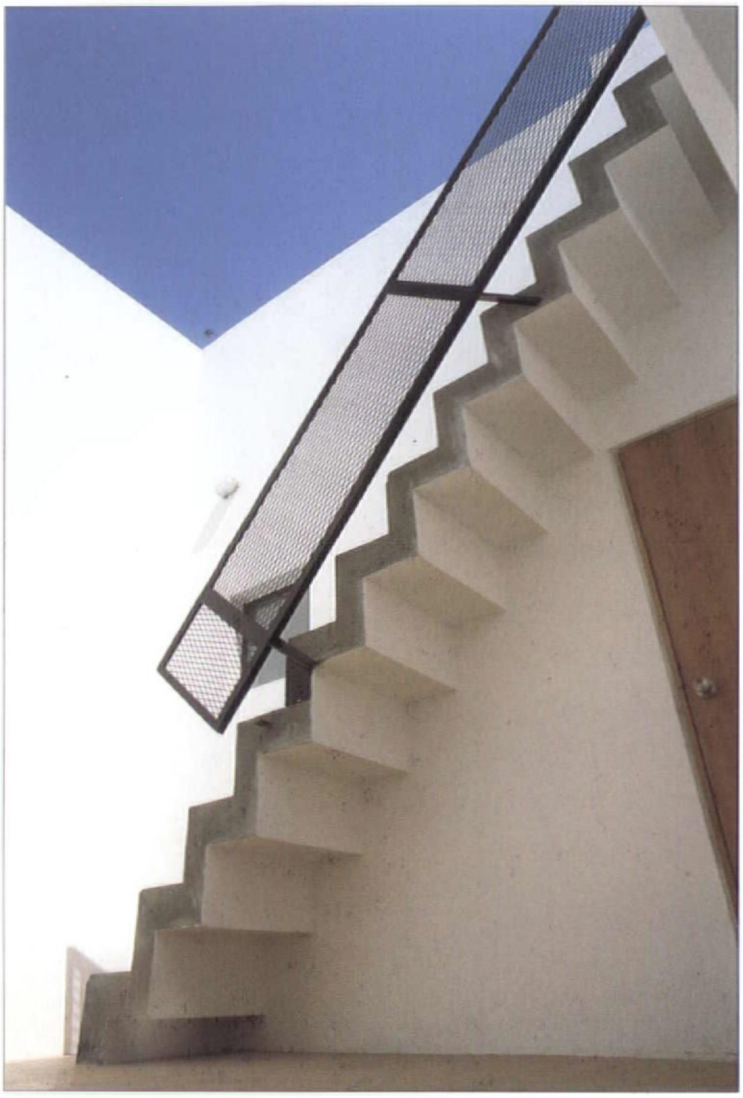


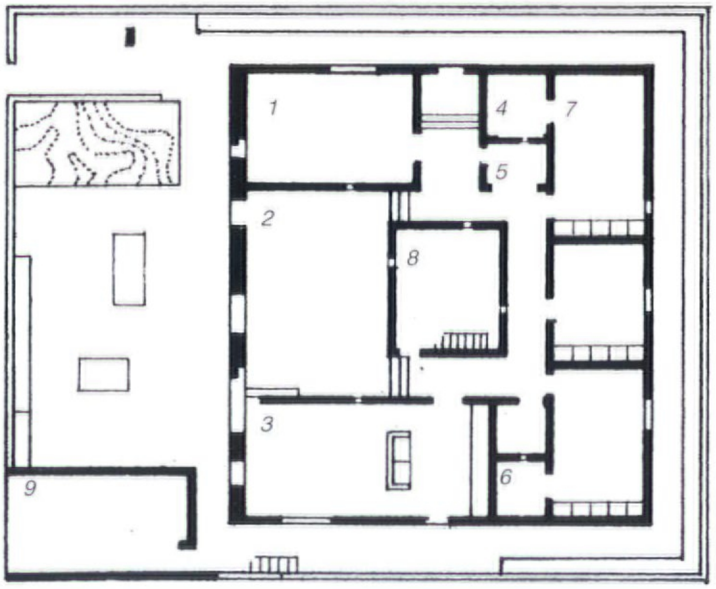


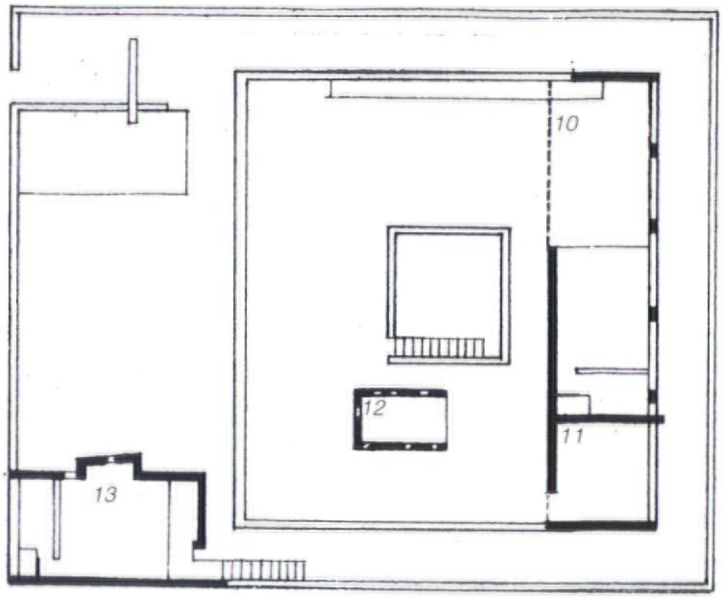




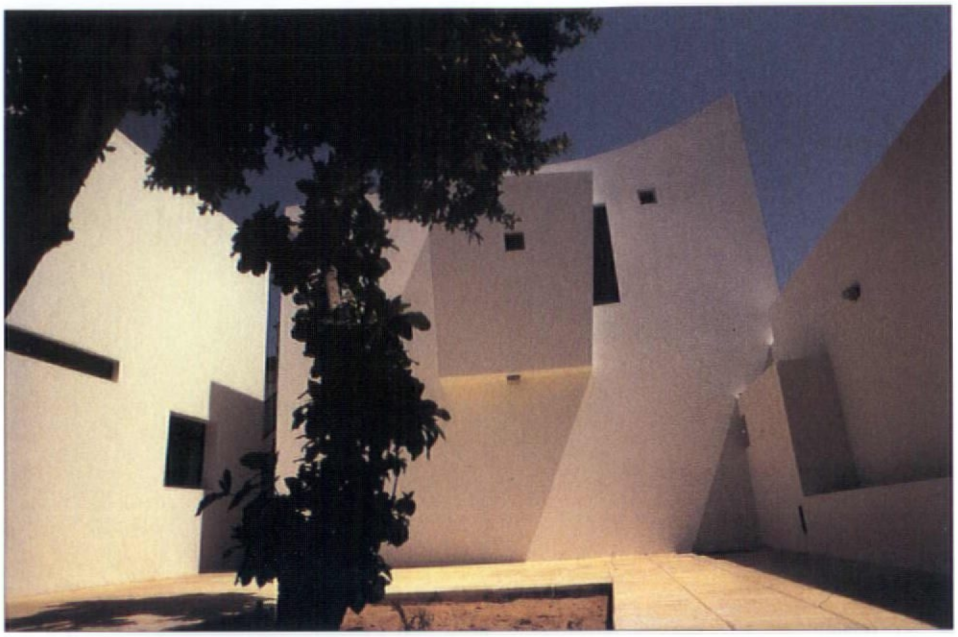


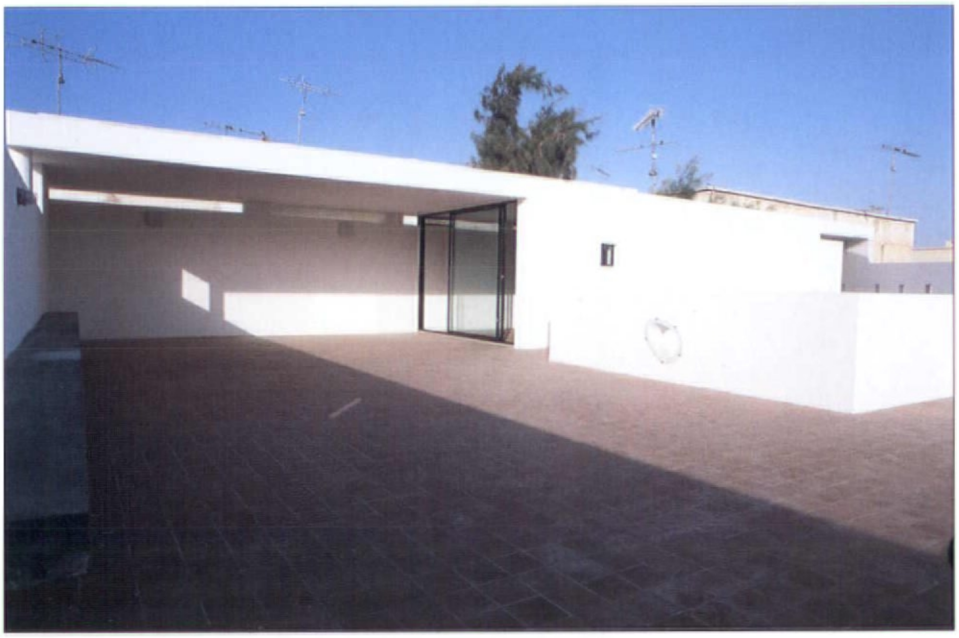






OPPOSITE, FROM ABOVE: Sections through inner courtyard, men's living room and swimming courtyard; street elevation; FROM ABOVE, L TO R: Lintel gateway defines the threshold; internal courtyard with stairs to roof garden; ground floor plan (1) women's living room (2) men's living room (3) dining room (4) shower room (5) WC (6) kitchen (7) bedroom (8) court (9) garage; roof plan (10) maid's room (11) laundry (12) plant (13) driver's room



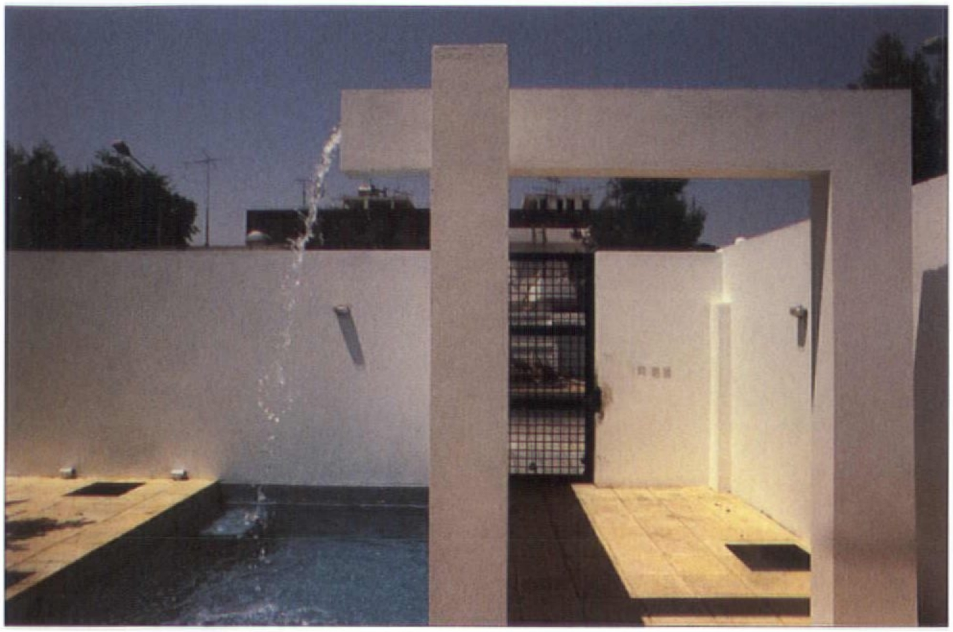


FROM ABOVE: Driver's room looks down into swimming pool courtyard; maid's room and laundry on roof

the end block in an emancipatory gesture. The same inversion of mistress-servant relationship is seen in the positioning of the maid's room. Whilst located away from the main body of the house and thereby acceptable within the prescribed structure, it sits in the the roof garden, the space which in canonic modernism gives privileged and redemptive status. Furthermore, the window from the room is connected by a series of cuts to the central courtyard. The gaze of the maid thus enters the heart of the house, promoting the control of previously suppressed female and servile aspects.

The order and containment of the lower courtyard is contrasted with the freedom of the roof garden. From here, views to the outside world are allowed. The authority of the nearby mosque is put into context through the contrast of its minaret with the tilting block on the roof of the villa – the symbolic stability of the one juxtaposed with the playful strangeness of the other. This reading is reinforced in the framing of the minaret through a curiously mocking opening, made by one of the labourers on site.

The interior spaces continue the interpretation of social practices, but here, the reinscription is less obvious. To a large extent this is because the traditional plan is so highly determined by cultural factors, with the separation of men and women an inviolate rule. The architect can therefore only deal in tiny shifts which begin to question the status of these rules. The women's room is raised up a few steps from the men's room, with a tiny opening cut in the dividing wall. The client's family immediately objected to this window and demanded a shutter be placed over it. Ironically, the positioning of the shutter charges the boundary to an even greater extent; because it is located on the women's side, it is they who have control over the view. Elsewhere the wall that separates the dining room from the men's room stops just short of a high level window which slides across its face.The two rooms are thus connected by impli-

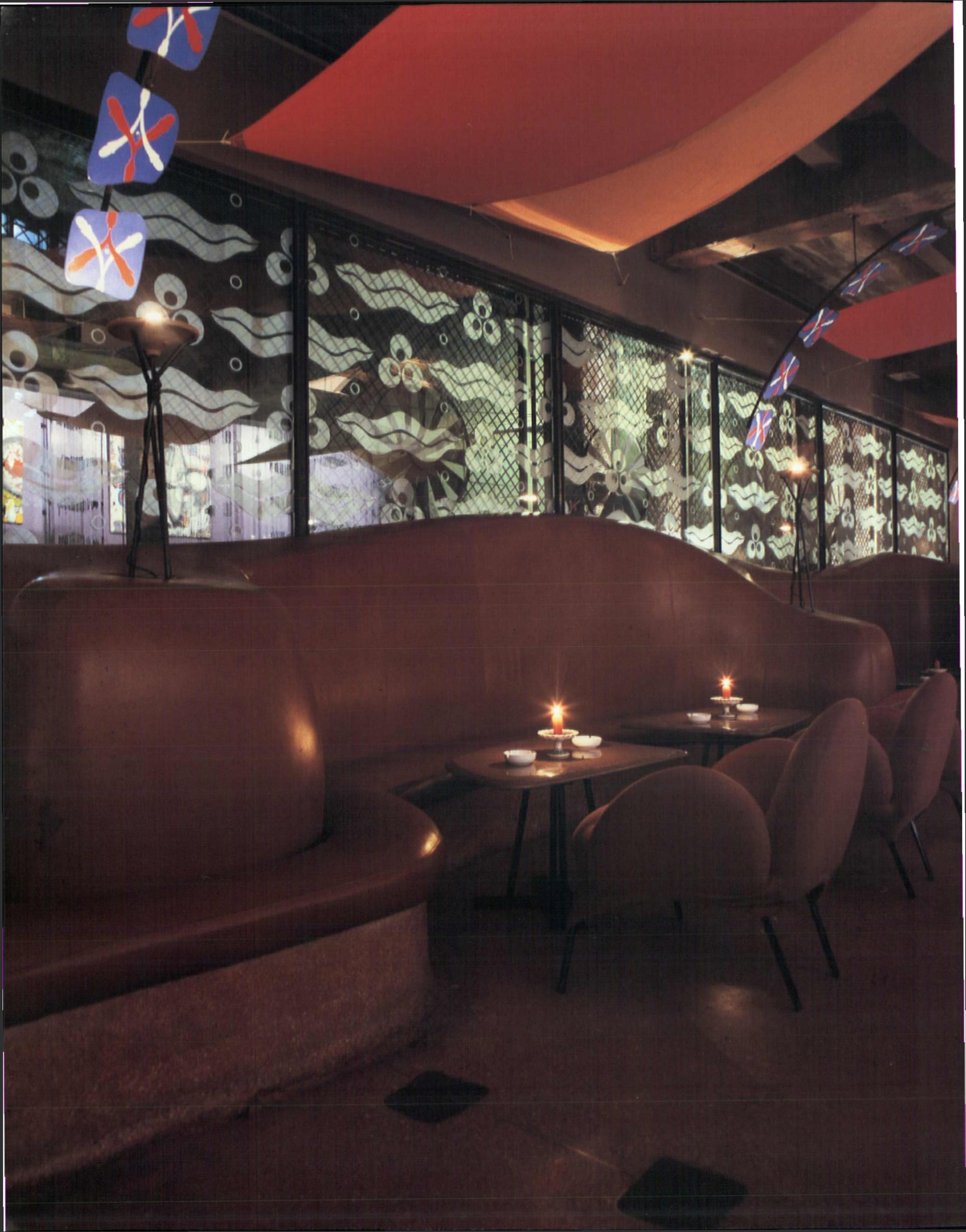


FROM ABOVE: Lintel takes water to swimming pool on other side of the wall; men's living room looking towards the dining room

cation, even if no actual views are allowed to pass between.

These small formal devices (with their larger social implications) are executed with a precision that reminds one of the villas of Adolf Loos. The same tensions are set up here as one finds in the Villas Müller and Moller. It is known that Loos made continual adjustments to his buildings when on site. The same is true of the Villa Anbar. The drawings set the general structure, but the fine tuning and precise control was achieved by Barber's continual presence on site during construction when he was able to manipulate relationships which are impossible to accurately predict (or now read) from the drawings alone.

The success of the Villa Anbar is that it acts as a critique of the place in which it is conceived, without resorting to rhetorical or symbolic gestures – it works subliminally rather than obviously. At this level it is highly architectural, affecting the perception and inhabitation of the building through the deployment of space, light and views so that one is made constantly aware of things that might otherwise be taken for granted. But it is also highly political, immersing itself in a series of difficult social relationships and subtly reinscribing them. It is not normal for architects to take a political stance in their work because it demands making judgments. Architecture is usually seen in a rational framework, where the burden of the decision making is placed within the logic of the system. Clients' demands, cost constraints, contractual procedures, technical problems – all these aspects compound to allow architects to avoid confronting the political and social dimensions in which their buildings will eventually be situated. Architecture is thus reduced to pure form (aesthetics) or pure technique. The triumph of the Villa Anbar is that it transcends such considerations. It points to a direction in which modernism is not seen as a style but in terms of its unfulfilled social and political potential.



BRANSON COATES ARCHITECTURE

TAXIM NIGHTCLUB, ISTANBUL AND LUXURY HIGHRISE APARTMENTS, BEIRUT

Critique by Clare Melhuish

When NATO was set up by Nigel Coates and others at the Architectural Association in 1983, it was, as the statement of intent in the magazine declared, set on 'an apparently separate course from the mainstream of architecture'. The statement continued, 'Its [NATO's] pursuance of current lifestyle as the sustaining parallel to the design of cities forms the basis of its spirit of optimism.'

NATO (Narrative Architecture Today), was set up just a year before the French sociologist Michel de Certeau published *The Practice of Everyday Life*, containing a chapter entitled 'Walking in the City', which is now being extensively quoted in circles at the theoretical forefront of the architectural debate. In this, he draws an opposition between 'the "geometrical" or "geographical" space of visual, panoptic, or theoretical constructions', which he also calls the 'Concept-city', and other 'practices of space [which] refer to a specific form of operations ("ways of operating"), to "another spatiality' (an "anthropological", poetic and mythic experience of space), and to an opaque and blind mobility characteristic of the bustling city'.

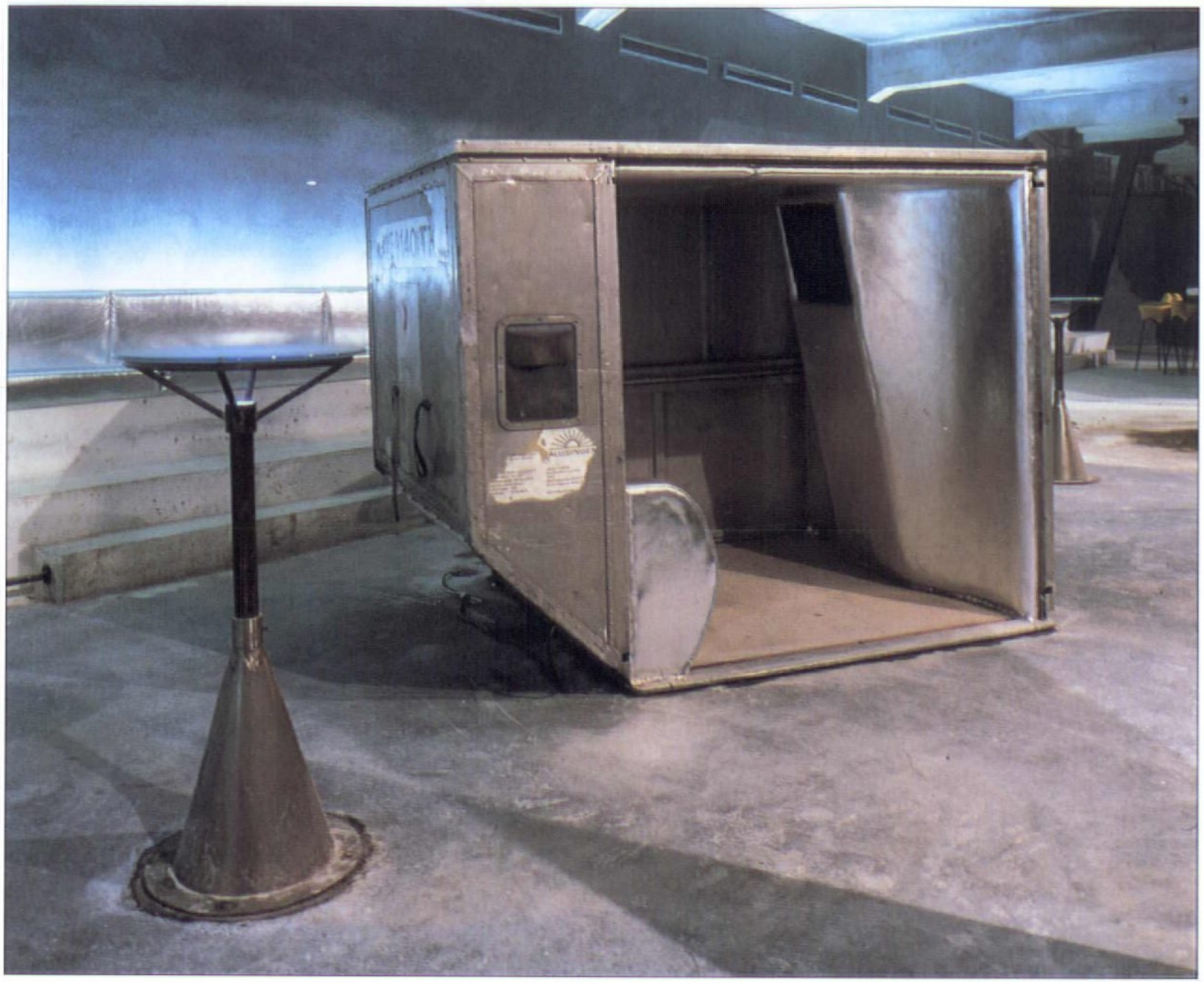
In the same year, Foucault's little-known lecture 'Des Espaces Autres', written in 1967, was published in a widely-circulated French architectural magazine. In it, he focused attention on the spatiality of everyday social life, contrasting 'real places', such as the church, theatre, garden, museum, library, fairground, holiday resort, prison, Moslem hammam, Scandinavian sauna, or brothel, with the 'fundamentally unreal spaces' of utopias.

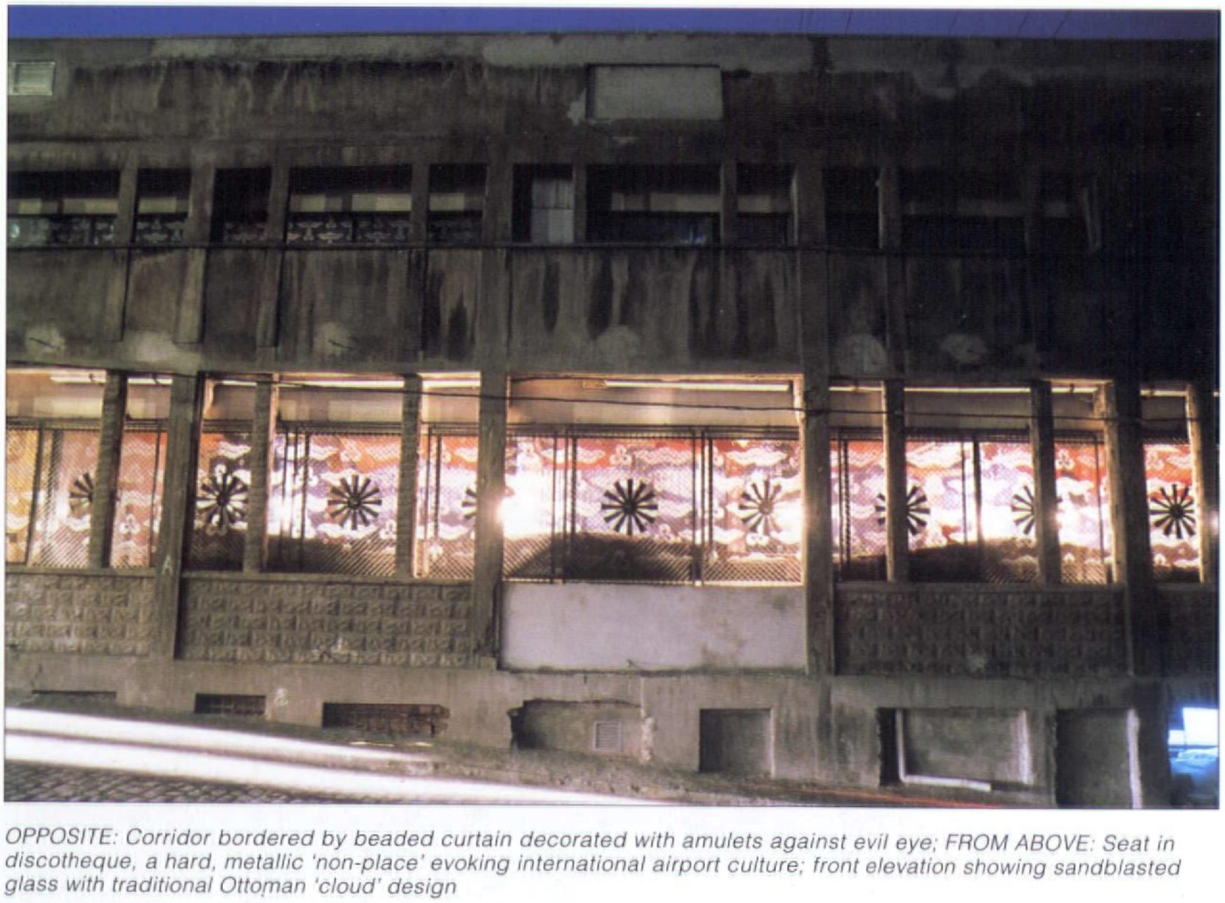
NATO effectively prefigured by ten years the great interest being shown in these authors now – mystifying the examiners at the AA – although Coates traces its lineage back directly to Archigram and Bernard Tschumi. Its approach could be described as 'anthropological', in the sense that it was based very much on observation of, and participation in, the social and cultural practices, or 'operations' (focused on 'real' places) that gave the city its life and meaning. Using photography and video they documented the real life of the city as a series of parallel and interweaving narratives, and from that – as opposed to a preconceived geometric or theoretical concept – constructed architecture. As Peter Fleissig wrote, 'To avoid format architecture one must resort to a wider cultural framework . . . '[1]

NATO's work is most readily associated with London, where many of the projects were situated. It reflected very accurately the cultural spirit of London at a particular moment. But its cultural investigations also probed beyond the boundaries of Anglo-Saxon, north European culture. During discussions about nomadism, the group visited Morocco, and during discussions about exchange, it went to Istanbul. These trips, during which observations were made about the environment and everyday customs (from how the feet are washed to how the house is heated), had a huge effect on the work produced afterwards, both by NATO and subsequently by Branson Coates when it was established as an architectural practice with a portfolio of overseas projects. NATO's approach, combining elements of narrative, references to places and processes and fragments of films, thrived on ethnicity, exuding a 'spirit of raucous ethnicity', as Coates has noted.

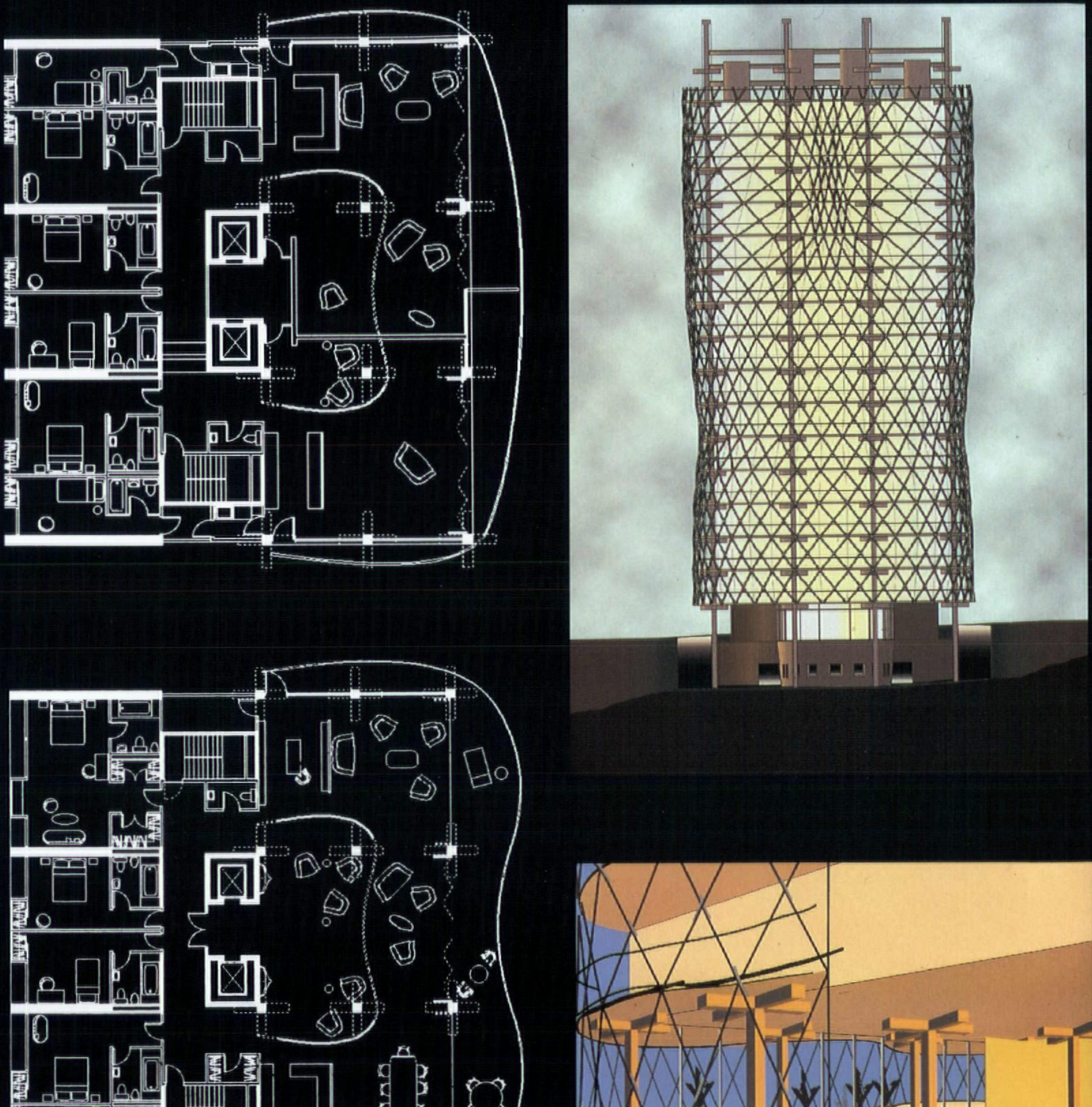
Branson Coates' work is of particular interest in this context because it shows how complex and subtle the issues of so-called 'ethnicity' are in the contemporary world. For instance, the scheme for a nightclub in Istanbul, Taxim, was almost a contradiction in terms. The concept of taking pleasure in public is essentially a Western one. It was executed for a wealthy client whose international aspirations for the venue were far in excess of what could actually be achieved in that culture, and in a climate of burgeoning Islamic fundamentalism. It highlighted the yawning chasm between the cultural

Taxim nightclub interior, restaurant area





OPPOSITE: Corridor bordered by beaded curtain decorated with amulets against evil eye; FROM ABOVE: Seat in discotheque, a hard, metallic 'non-place' evoking international airport culture; front elevation showing sandblasted glass with traditional Ottoman 'cloud' design



FROM ABOVE, L TO R: Plan showing possible layout of main living space with cellular spaces on south side; image of external profile showing steel cable 'veil' or corset enclosing balconies on cool north side; alternative plan of layout of main living space; perspective through balcony space, large enough for a large family group to eat together attitudes of the Westernised, jet-setting, wealthy elite of Turkey, for whom the club was intended, and the rest of the population, rooted in traditional ways. Yet at the same time it became clear that traditional culture and customs still had a strong influence on the life of the international set, and could not be disregarded if people were to feel comfortable. This is reflected in certain aspects of the design of the club: the use of large tables in the restaurant, because Turkish people go out to eat in groups rather than as couples, and continuous banquette seating around the walls in the authentic manner, with a very traditional sofa room upstairs. Such details are significant spatial generators, and indeed, the internal spatial organisation of the club evolved as a convoluted series of routes connecting all the spaces, which reflects the traditional structure of the bazaars and medinas of the Middle East and North Africa.

Moving beyond these fundamental aspects, at a more playful level, the architects also opted to incorporate certain traditional materials and decorative motifs in order to forge a link with the culture of the city beyond – partly through calling on the resources of local craftsmen. For instance, the front windows were sandblasted with the Ottoman 'cloud' design, the arches were decorated with tiles bearing a pattern found in the Grand Bazaar, and beaded curtains incorporating the ubiquitous amulets against the evil eye were fabricated. In the restaurant, the canopies of coloured fabric were intended as a reference to the tarpaulins which cover the flower market, and the chairs were modelled on the shape of the traditional Ottoman turban.

By contrast, the disco is a hard, metallic zone, with a 'control tower' overlooking the main space. This is the 'non-place' of Marc Augé's thesis; a transcultural realm, the world of universal youth culture brought into being by the international media corporations, and of the global economy, the multinationals, and the economically privileged, whose lives are part of that order. The disco is anonymous, rootless, but also, for that very reason, dynamic and full of promised possibilities; in itself it has been responsible for the vast expansion of ethnic discovery and, to some extent, awareness.

The juxtaposition of the two worlds of 'place' and 'non-place' at Taxim delineates a realm of the imagination where, theoretically, the two might come together in a valid and authentic way to forge new types of cultural practices. In fact the club closed; it pushed local tolerance beyond its limits.

In Beirut, Branson Coates faced a similar scenario, with a scheme for an apartment block in the Christian quarter on a street once lined by opulent mansions. It was emphasised that the flats should be modelled on the Parisian enfilade system – the 'ethnicity' of Christian, colonial Beirut – providing a continuous flow of very large spaces to accommodate very large family groups and a maid. Branson Coates interpreted the brief in a rather different way, and turned ethnic reference into a source of aesthetic expressionism. One huge main internal space was created, equipped with screens allowing the occupants to create their own, more flexible enfilades. Although the flats would almost certainly have been air-conditioned, they explored the seeds of the idea that the cross-walls might be adapted to function as chimneys to draw out stale air, in the manner of traditional Middle Eastern cone structures. Huge balconies on the cool north side, with views over the bay, allowed the whole family to eat together outside, screened behind an undulating, organic external skin made of steel cable, which is also referred to as the 'corset'. Wrapping around the glazed facade on the side of the building and visible on the skyline, it was intended as a reference to the strict covering of the body fundamental to Arab, as opposed to Western culture.

Perhaps it was this hint of 'raucous ethnicity' which disturbed the client. But perhaps it was also the architect's interest in exploring the cultural territory, for Beirut seems intent on embracing the crudest commercial Western/international models for its reinvention as a city of the 21st century.

It is the case of the Wall, an earlier project in Japan, which highlights the ambiguities of ethnicity. Here, it was the architects themselves who were perceived as 'ethnic', and the client's expectation that the project's 'foreigness' would be emphasised as much as possible: there was no question of exploring the cultural context. Branson Coates' response was to play with, and undo, the visual clichés of European culture – to the extent of bringing over Italian masons to execute the brickwork. The five-storey amusement arcade was described at the time as 'an arresting blend of Italian rustic masonry, English industrial vernacular and sheer performance art'.[2] This is the culture of the theme-park, but in Branson Coates' hands, that culture itself is manipulated and parodied to offer yet another angle on the question of ethnicity based on observation and critique of everyday practices.

Notes

1 Peter Fleissig, 'In the Late 20th Century', *NATO Gamma City* issue, 1985.

2 'The Tokyo Wallgame', *Blueprint*, Sept 1990.

SECTION 3: ANTHROPOLOGY OF NON-PLACE

MARC AUGÉ

ABOUT NON-PLACES

I first developed the notion of non-places as the negation of the notion of place. A place is a space long taken over by human beings, where something literally readable is said about the relationship these human beings have with one another. Anthropology has taught us that spatial organisation of the greatest refinement can be achieved in certain societies. For example, a given person is bound by the rules of residency to live with so-and-so, and so it goes from the cradle to the grave, throughout each one of the social and biological periods of life – youth, marriage, procreation, old age. Thus, a change in status often brings about a change in the place of residence, so that even the choice of a burial place is seldom left to chance.

From this point of view, non-places begin with uprootedness. Nineteenth-century countrymen torn from their land and thrown into urban life, migrants, refugees – all of these people have direct experience of non-places – and any act of establishing colonies and of settling in new areas is related to the hope of turning non-places into places. At this point, it is possible to see that the notion of non-places has an objective as well as a subjective dimension. A non-place comes into existence – even negatively – when human beings do not recognise themselves in it or have not yet recognised themselves in it. Desert islands, tropical forests cannot, or rather could not – because they have disappeared – be called non-places, for they were in fact spaces and eventually spaces to be conquered, that is to say, virtual places. The criteria for 'recognition' is here essential, for we all need places in which we recognise ourselves and in which others can recognise us as easily as we recognise them. Therefore, it is possible to think that the same place can be looked upon as a place by some people and as a non-place by other, on a long or short-term basis. For example, an airport space does not carry the same meaning for the passenger boarding a plane and for the employee who is working there every day with his colleagues.

In the full sense of the word, a place is a space where relationships are self-evident and inter-recognition is maximal, and where each person knows where he and others belong. Therefore, it is invested in time – a village steeple or village clock having a marked and symbolic value – and in language, for we call 'home' any place where we are understood by others and understand them without having to spell things out. Anything that takes us away from a system of social relations takes us away from the place attached to it as well.

Today, all of our circulation and information spaces can be considered as non-places. As a rule, they do not serve as meeting places. They make very little use of language – television screens carry all the information you need. Highways, airports, supermarkets, cash dispensers and computers lead to a solitary exercise of social life – this expression actually being self-contradictory though true to this contemporary paradox: one can be alone and at the same time in relation with everybody else around the world. This is a point of greatest importance, because beyond the relativeness of the place/non-place opposition – depending on the hour or usage or subject, a place can become a non-place and vice versa – three major events must be called to our attention.

First, the planet's urbanisation, certainly more dramatic in developing countries than in the most highly developed countries, and its corollary that is, of course, of great interest to urbanists and architects: the relatively indescribable and unqualifiable, often uncontrolled intellectually and unsymbolised characteristics of the new spaces thus occupied. These have been designated as 'urban filaments' by the French demographer Hervé le Bras who considers their extension as corresponding to a third period in mankind's populating process following the Palaeolithic expansion of hunter-gatherers and the next millennium's farming expansion.[1] In accordance with the French architect and philosopher, Paul Virilio, we suppose that a strictly political question in global terms can be added to the aesthetic and sociological questions raised by this state of affairs. Traditional state borders are perhaps, in a way, becoming progressively more artificial as telecommunications' unprecedented development establishes the prerequisites of ubiquity and instantaneity through which a few interconnected great cities gain a rapidly growing influence.[2] In fact, by means of satellites, the conquest of space seems today more dedicated to the planet's technological and economical management than to exploring the unknown.

'The Spectacular Display of the World' is the expression I would suggest to give a proper definition of the second event and its numerous aspects. It is mostly significant of the evolution of images and its consequences on the way we relate to reality. Everyday images are sent to us from everywhere around the world, and people living in the middle of nowhere, thousands of miles away from the nearest town, know today that they belong to the same planet as those who come to visit them once in a while; they also know – sometimes at their own expense – that they are caught in the same history. But an overabundance of images has perverse consequences to the extent that the more we get accustomed to see everything, the less we can be sure that we are still able to really look at them. More precisely, as it appears on screen, as mere reflections of anonymous camera recordings, the world becomes abstractly familiar to us so that, socially speaking, there are literally no more relations between the world and us insofar as we are content with the images imparted to us, as is the case for a lot of people today.

Other facts appear more anecdotal, though they also promote and participate in the Spectacular Display of the World. I will now randomly enumerate a few of these facts, leaving the reader to imagine the task of finding what links them together. There has been such growth in video technology that tourism without its visual or sometimes even audiovisual prolongations has become unthinkable. Camcorders are the average tourist's prosthesis, as if he found his fellow men's reality bearable only through this reality's images. World news is delivered to us fragmentarily, day in, day out, and here also, the system is based on fake familiarity: the television newscasters; the politicians and their puppets; the sports stars, pop stars, heroes of TV series (indistinguishable from the actors who play the part) and vice versa, in the end all turn out to bear the reality/unreality factor to the same extent. Television reports on the Gulf War showed us images identical to those of video war games. The illumination of tourist Meccas – and of other places of interest – as if promotion was spelled lighting – is particularly remarkable in France though France is by no means alone: this form of theatricality is applicable, for example, to natural sites such as the Niagara Falls. It seems as if everything has to be done in order to turn the landscape into postcards, to hold people's attention. Many tourists seem more eager to buy reproductions than to really look at the paintings they only glance at briefly during their fleeting visits to museums: sometimes they are allowed to film. In the so-called amusement parks and the quintessential Disneyland, the Spectacular Display of the World is at its height, as what people come to see is mostly the show of a show. For example, Disney characters walk through a fake American street, filmed by real tourists, hence restoring them to their real nature and making them into movie characters once again. Through a process that is the reverse of that in Woody Allen's film, *The Purple Rose of Cairo*, they inflict the same treatment to their families who, in turn, step into the screen to join their heroes.

The third event, that we have every good reason to wish will never happen – and a good number of psychological and sociological factors make us think its appearance will be postponed or its manifestation mitigated – is, however, already gaining ground as a threat: I am speaking of the constitution of a totally fictional ego determined by its position on virtual reality networks; an ego fascinated by images of images, fascinated by the belief that all traditional cultures have been made meaningful because they were the product of a given place and cosmology. Were this the case, we would have gone from the age of non-place to the age of non-ego.

Notes

Marc Augé is Director of Studies at the Ecole des Hautes-Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris. He has written on the ethnology of contemporary Paris, and his book *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* was recently published by Verso.

1 Hervé le Bras, *Migrations and Population in France*, Editions de l'Aube (Paris), 1993.

2 Paul Virilio, *Critical Space*, Bourgois (Paris), 1984.

Martha Rosler, Untitled, (United, O'Hara), 1990

IAIN BORDEN

THICK EDGE: ARCHITECTURAL BOUNDARIES AND SPATIAL FLOWS

Boundaries present themselves to us as the edge of things, as the limit between the here and there, present and future. The boundary in all its manifest forms – wall, facade, gate, fence, river, shore, window – appears to be a discrete separation between alternate sides of a magical divide; things are dispersed and ordered in space. Yet for postmodern urbanism, in which architects investigate the wrapping and layering of space, and urban managers review its representation and control, nothing could be further from the truth.

Clear Blue Water

On London's Kingsway in Holborn sits the church of Holy Trinity. A theatrical inwardly-curved facade grandly enfolds a semicircular portico. Beyond splendorous Edwardian aesthetics, Belcher and Joass' design also provides a public micro-retreat from the motorcycle couriers and taxis on Kingsway. As a church, Holy Trinity welcomed visitors, drawing them onto the ambiguous stage defined by its facade, then into the portico, and onwards to the interior. Forsaken by 1991 as a place of worship, it rapidly became a focus for Holborn's many homeless, a semipermanent sitting and sleeping place away from the exposed doorways in the Strand. Holy Trinity was now a different stage set, at once public domain and private to those seeking defensible space and their own appropriated form of illegal real estate.[1] Clusters of homeless recomposed a niche space from layers of clothes, cardboard and classical architecture.

Except that a line has just been drawn: a three metres high plane of wood, painted a striking resonant blue, spanning the Holy Trinity front, and shutting off the semi-public stage set from the street and passers-by. Yet it is not so much that the building is shut off from people, but that people – particularly the homeless – are divorced from it. To the cognoscenti, the screen may suggest a Christoèsque device or even Derek Jarman's reductive film screen 'Blue', and certainly it inserts a startling colourist disjunction to the grainy grey of Holborn. But for the new owners of the church, the Post Office, this is a considered attempt to keep architecture as things, and space as the distance between objects; they have constructed a boundary of exclusion, a brutally frontal relation which physically repels the unwanted and the unwashed. It is the architecture of separation, of clear blue water between spaces and peoples.

I learned much of this from a man called Bob, a small Geordie with a flat cap and weathered lines from decades of life on the streets of London.[2] To him and other former residents of the Holy Trinity portico, this is indeed a divisive boundary, demarcating the uncrossable chasm between private ownership and public use, recent history and immediate future. Architectural boundaries like this have social effects which cannot be denied.

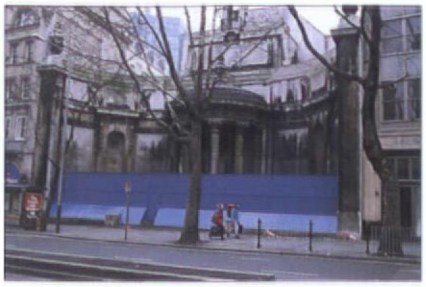
But what is the boundary's socio-spatial nature? Architecture has too often been conceived solely as the product of design intention, from which social effects simply follow. The 'second nature'[3] of architecture is posited as simply the artificial replacement for Nature, the pre-given space to which people come and respond. But this view of space ultimately offers little more than what Soja terms the 'illusion of opacity', by which 'spatiality is reduced to physical objects and forms.'

Since the 1970s, a politically-minded approach to architectural history has emerged, in which space assumes a more social character. The focus, however, still tends to the notion of function, in which buildings remain primarily designed objects, and the social activities are simply accommodated in architectural design (particularly in plan), or to the notion of social history, whereby buildings form backdrops to the drama of everyday life. In either case, the essential interrelation of buildings, spaces and people is reduced to a false dualism between object and social use.[4]

In contradistinction to this dualism, and taking their cue from sources as diverse as anthropologist Marc Augé, urban geographers Edward Soja and David Harvey, historian Michel Foucault, and, in particular, the philosopher Henri Lefebvre, more anthropologically-minded historians and theorists are now reconceptualising architecture as what I call a 'space of flows' – not as objects, but as the interrelation between things, spaces, individuals and ideas. Bernard Tschumi is the most persistent architect here, arguing that 'architecture . . . could not be dissociated from the events that 'happened' in it.'[5] Similarly, Adrian Forty remarks of the 'Strangely Familiar' project that architecture 'is not made just once, but is made and remade over and over again each time it is represented through another medium, each time its surroundings change, each time different people experience it.'[6] Architecture is both produced and reproduced, designed and experienced. It is a medium not a message, a system of power relations not a force, a flow not a line.

So what is the boundary? Georg Simmel noted that boundaries make social orders more concrete, more intensely experienced; indeterminate in themselves, they stand in contrast to the physical boundaries of nature, their significance springing from interaction on either side of the line. For Simmel, the 'boundary is not a spatial fact with sociological consequences but a sociological fact that is formed spatially'. Boundaries do not cause sociological effects in themselves, but are formed between social elements.[7]

The Holy Trinity blue screen shows precisely this. The social effects on those who experience the boundary change its historical nature, dislocating significance away from the object itself. Furthermore, these effects are simultaneously an attempt by the Post Office to patrol the social relation between the homeless and its own property. The Post Office renegotiates that relationship by erecting a physical screen which hides – metaphorically and literally – its own concerns; in experiencing the screen-as-object we should remember with Guy Debord that such things are also spectacles, and thus 'not a collection of images, but a social relation among people, mediated by images.'[8]



The architecture of separation, Holy Trinity, Kingsway, London, 1996

The conception of the blue screen purely as object is then reductive.

There is also another way in which the boundary is socio-spatial – through its materiality. The blue screen's obvious function is to keep undesirables off the stage-space beyond, hindering the transition of the human body. Apart from this, it offers another, more pervasive control over the space and time of the would-be-invasive body. In front of the stage-set space is a low wall, of the right depth and height to sit and, potentially, to sleep upon. To prevent this, the vertical screen makes a sudden 45 degrees deviation, such that instead of resting behind the low wall it terminates halfway across its depth, leaving only 150 millimetres clear in front. The condition produced is subtle and important; through the precise control of screen and wall in relation to the thickness of the human body, the low wall becomes too shallow for a person to sleep upon, or to sit upon for any length of time. Many similar edge-hardenings have begun to sprout up around London, where spiked windowsills, 'decorative' railings, studded flower-planters and night-time automatic sprinkler systems to 'clean' shop and office doorways are being used to repel the public from the edge of the street.

In the case of the Holy Trinity screen, even the 'respectable' pedestrian is discouraged from stopping. Beside erasing a temporary resting space, the smooth surface of the blue screen is devoid of detail interest and exactly that tactility which Maurice Merleau-Ponty reasserted against the domination of vision.[9] It deflects attention away, presenting a blank nothing to the interrogative eye. There is no occasion to linger, observe or inspect.

What appears to be a simple, planar boundary, is then quite different; the blue screen discloses the boundary as a zone of negotiation, in which vision is just one of a series of body-centric architectural devices. The space of the body is used to control its interrelation with the screen and, by extension, the influence of the screen's surface is projected onto the pavement. Passers-by continue to pass by, discouraged from stopping by the screen's materiality. The boundary is not a surface but a thick edge, a five metre deep in-between zone in which social relations are challenged and controlled through architectural materiality.

Rights of Passage

If the Holy Trinity screen frontally controls property and social relations through physicality, what of boundaries that seek control in a more ambiguous manner?[10] What of those new urban spaces – the shopping mall, plaza and transport concourse – those spaces at once public and private?

One of the most prominent of these spaces is the Broadgate office development, constructed for the post 'Big Bang' (1986) financial centre in the City of London.[11] Developed by Rosehaugh Stanhope and British Rail over the lines of Liverpool Street and the old Broad Street train station, the 29 acre site provides 4 million square feet of high-quality office space and three internalised urban squares.

Broadgate is also an area which strives to define its social ethos, and the dominant temper of well-salaried and besuited office workers is reinforced by many different measures. An aesthetic enclave within the fragmented postmodern city, Broadgate contains Americanised 'fashion effect' architecture designed by Arup Associates and SOM, generating a pervasive ambience of prestige and wealth. There are no 'festival' or 'liminal' spaces here, nor the crowded conflicts of pedestrians and pavement cafés in Soho. Carefully delimited shops, golfing emporia, health clubs, restaurants and bars cater for middle-manager tastes and pockets, while displaying signs barring entry to those not in 'smart' dress. The *Broadgate Broadsheet* newspaper furnishes a booster guide to news and events, like the much-publicised 'Broomball' contests on the Arena ice rink. In contrast, the army of service workers are kept out of sight, hidden in a subterranean undercroft of access roads and maintenance circuits, while in a similarly Disneyfied scopic regime undesirables are escorted off the scheme, litter is instantly removed, and hawks are brought in weekly to scare away pigeons. Social difference within the 20,000 working population is accommodated, but only within a class, gender and race framework predicated on the middle-class Oxbridge-educated businessman.

Following the two IRA bombs in the City of 1992 and 1993, both within 400 metres of Broadgate, and the later Canary Wharf attack in 1996, it might be expected that Broadgate would toughen the outer walls of its enclave. However, because the 'Ring of Steel' armed road-checks and 24-hour 'Camerawatch' CCTV networks organised by the City police have successfully (for the City) redirected both terrorism and armed robbery to other parts of London, Broadgate's managers are content to rely on their own extensive system of private security guards and surveillance cameras.[12]

Broadgate's boundaries are therefore free to be configured toward more social ends, installing a further social ring of defence within the City's militaristic frontier. Subtle yet distinctive signs mark this inner social cordon: brass rails let into the pavement signify the edge of the property line, public art like Serra's 45-tonne 'Fulcrum' signals entrances, armorial devices record the borough thresholds, and various gates denote the transition from public to private realms.

Prominent among these gates is a very curious device marking the northern edge of Broadgate Arena. Designed by the artist Alan Evans, the 'Go-Between Screens' seemingly provide the usual boundary control – open during daytime and closed at night. Except that these are not normal gates, for even when 'closed' one can walk around their sides, a 2 metre gap being left for this purpose. The boundary here is never sealed, operating in a manner other than physical exclusion. This feeling is reinforced by the artful materiality of the 'Go-Between Screens' which, in contrast to the highly-machined surrounding buildings, are fabricated of mild steel, with line forging used to create a 'soft' visibly-hammered surface.

What the Broadgate gates do is not so much obstruct horizontal movement of the body, as to challenge the visitor's self-perception as to whether they are permitted to enter. As privatised urban space under corporate control, Broadgate in effect has no resident-owners, and everyone who enters is either a worker, visitor or trespasser. As Foucault notes, '[a]nyone can enter one of these heterotopian locations, but, in reality, they are nothing more than an illusion: one thinks one has entered and, by the sole fact of entering, one is excluded.'[13] To control this ambiguity, the combination of hard architecture and soft gates, unlike the exclusionary physicality of the Holy Trinity blue screen, provokes in the visitor's mind as they momentarily pass through the thickness of the edge the questions, 'Should I be here, and now? Do I have the right of passage?'

The temporality of the through-passage is also critical, providing the momentary yet urgent actuality of this questioning process. The gates are not just the space but the lived time of several seconds through which the visitors validate themselves in relation to Broadgate. As a result, space, temporality, body and identity are mutually confronted and constructed, in a version of Augé's 'non-place as a turning back on the self', checking the contractual relation between the individual and that non-place.[14] More material and mental suggestion than brute physicality, this is the ultimate extension of the Benthamite project of surveillance, in which each and every citizen surveys and disciplines themselves.

The 'Go-Between Screens' are a form of mirror, by which the visitor is ultimately returned not a view of Broadgate but, in Augé's terms, of themselves playing a role within it:

> What he is confronted with, finally, is an image of himself, but in truth it is a pretty strange image . . . The passenger through non-places retrieves his identity only at Customs, at the tollbooth, at the check-out counter. Meanwhile, he obeys the same code as others, receives the same messages, responds to the same entreaties. The space of non-place creates neither singular identity nor relations; only solitude, and similitude.[15]

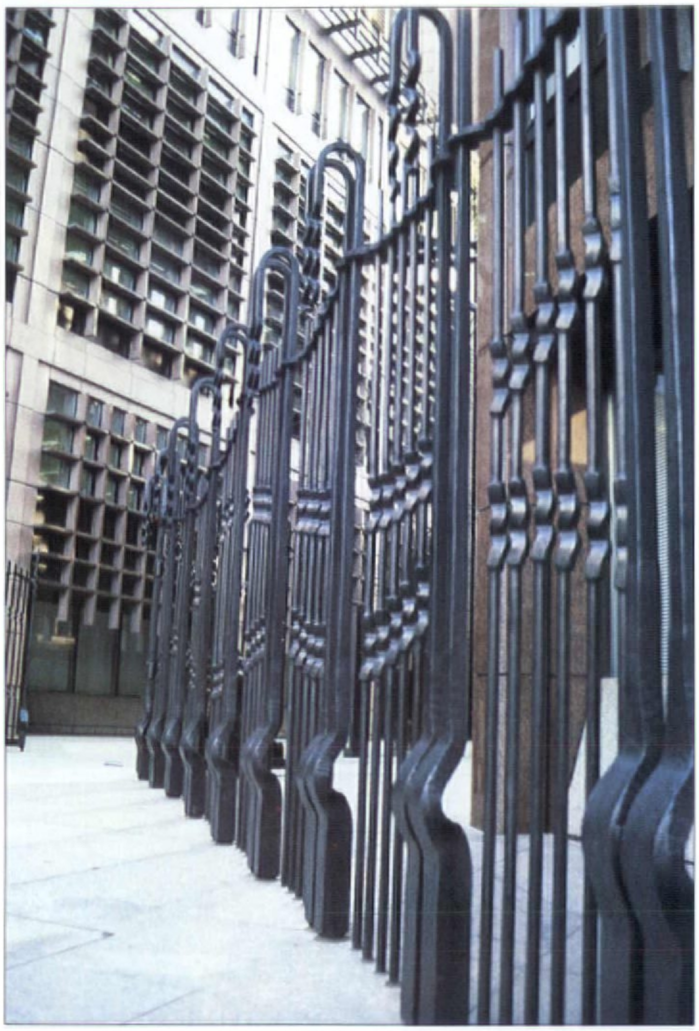
Visitors reconfigure themselves in the normative character of Broadgate, such that, as with Disneyland's staff, everyone becomes a 'cast member'.[16]

We might even consider that if Broadgate's architecture, as mirror, acts as a kind of Sartrean 'other's look', conferring spatiality on the viewer, then it too is looked back upon, the gaze being returned. This architecture is then absorbed within the self, dissolving the organic space of the body and the social space in which it lives, and entering that 'betweenness of place' beyond objectivity and subjectivity. As such, the boundary is validated by the anthropological ritual of passing through – its presence does not act upon visitors, but is a projection outward by visitors considering themselves in relation to the architecture.

Golden Arches

Boundaries are doubly useful to capitalism. First, they are implicated in those extensive systems of power delineated by Foucault which enable capitalism to control social relations and render them more productive.[17] The two boundaries of the blue screen and the 'Go-Between Screens' operate within this logic.

Second, boundaries aid in the accumulation of capital. History



FROM ABOVE: Alan Evans, 'Go-Between Screens', Broadgate, 1993; boundary of intensified commodification, Tottenham Court Road underground station, London, 1995 proffers many architectures where frontal attitudes facilitate this directly – tollgates, customs houses, ports. The postmodern boundary performs its task more indirectly, contributing to that insidious process identified by Adorno, Debord, Marcuse and Lefebvre: the intensification of capitalism into everyday lives through ever-more subtle and penetrative techniques.[18]

Advertisements are a ubiquitous form of this process, lining routes and journeys, inserting caesuras in reading and television, settling on bodies through Benetton clothes, Nike shoes and Armani spectacles, and turning the body into mediated images of itself. All these things are indirect taxations on our experience of everyday life. Due to capitalism's requirement to find ever new activities to commodify, and sites on which to promote them, Londoners have become accustomed to exactly this on their daily underground journeys. Advertisements have spread from platforms, elevators and trains onto micro-hoardings – the backs of tickets and ticket barriers.

These new micro-hoardings are now being supplemented by an even greater intensification. Appearing first at Liverpool Street and Tottenham Court Road stations, this phenomenon has rapidly spread to any tube station with a nearby McDonald's: as the traveller leaves the station, they are confronted with the commodified staircase, steps on which the risers have been transposed into a wall of advertisements, indicating the presence and direction of the nearby burger restaurant. Unlike conventional advertisements, these are unavoidable, as they must be looked at in order to negotiate the steps safely. The crucial component here is movement, for it is here that architecture is confronted as human creation rather than cold, crystallized form,[19] and it is movement which the commodified steps recognise, exploiting its open dialogue with architecture. The mini-advertisements project themselves directly into the line of sight, working through the traveller's eye/body coordination as they navigate the city. These micro-hoardings are also repetitively instructive, the golden arches being accompanied by a wall of arrows telling the traveller where to go on departing the station.

But, like the Broadgate gates, they also work through the mind in a particularly subtle manner. Here the exact moment of intrusion is precisely judged in time and space, invading the psychology of the traveller at the very moment of decision-making, and in a manner that recalls Foucault's 'materiality of power operating on the very bodies of individuals.'[20] Just as travellers leave the semi-somnambulant passivity of the train and tube station to join the decisive activity of the street, the advert selects this space and moment of awakening awareness into which to inject its message. The human body becomes a mechanism for symbolic exchange, part of Baudrillard's 'genetic code, an unchanging radiating disk of which we are no more than interpretive cells,'[21] while the boundary itself mutates from the modernist conception of crossroads as meeting place to the postmodern interchange where nobody intersects.[22]

This is the true postmodern boundary, controlling and commodifying the urban domain. Its architecture is that of the everyday, operating at the most quotidian of sites and through the subconscious and conscious spatial decisions of the urban dweller. 'A boundary,' stated Heidegger, 'is not that at which something stops, but . . . that from which something *begins its essential unfolding*.'[23] The architectural boundary emerges as not a plane but a zone, not physical but socio-spatial, not a division of things but a negotiation of flows. It is a thick edge.

Notes

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1 Neil Smith, 'Homeless/Global: Scaling Places', in Jon Bird et al (eds), *Mapping the Futures*, Routledge (London), 1993, p89.

2 Conversation, Kingsway, London, January 1996.

3 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Blackwell (Oxford), 1991 and Edward W Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*, Verso (London), 1989, p123.

4 See, for example, Iain Borden and D Dunster (eds), *Architecture and the Sites of History*, Butterworth Architecture (Oxford), 1995; Adrian Forty, *Objects of Desire*, Thames and Hudson (London), 1986; Dolores Hayden, *Grand Domestic Revolution*, MIT Press (Cambridge, Mass), 1981.

5 Bernard Tschumi, 'Spaces and Events', in *Questions of Space*, Architectural Association (London), 1990, p88.

6 Adrian Forty, 'Foreword' to Iain Borden, Joe Kerr, Alicia Pivaro and Jane Rendell (eds), *Strangely Familiar*, Routledge (London), 1996, p5. See also Iain Borden, Joe Kerr, Alicia Pivaro and Jane Rendell (eds), *The Unknown City*, 1997.

7 Frank J Lechner, 'Simmel on Social Space', *Theory, Culture and Society*, vol 8 no 3, August 1991, p197; and David Frisby, 'Social Space, the City and the Metropolis' in *Simmel and Since*, Routledge (London), 1992, p105.

8 Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, Black & Red (Detroit) 1983, para 4.

9 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, Routledge and Kegan Paul (London), 1962, pp207-42.

10 This section of the paper has benefited from studies carried out by students at the School of Architecture and Interior Design, University of North London, and at the Bartlett, University College London. I am particularly grateful to A Keightley-Moore, N Murray, S Warren, W Whyte.

11 Jane M Jacobs, *Edge of Empire*, Routledge (London), 1996.

12 City of London Police, *Camerawatch* (London) City of London Police, 1994.

13 Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias', in Joan Ockman (ed), *Architecture Culture 1943-1968*, Rizzoli (New York), 1993, p425.

14 Marc Augé, *Non-Places*, Verso (London), 1995, pp92, 101-02 and Michel Foucault, 'Panopticism' in *Discipline and Punish*, Penguin (Harmondsworth), 1979, pp195-228.

15 Marc Augé, ibid, p103.

16 Michael Sorkin, 'See You in Disneyland', in Michael Sorkin (ed), *Variations on a Theme Park*, Noonday Press (New York), 1992, p228.

17 Michel Foucault, 'Two Lectures', in Colin Gordon (ed), *Power/Knowledge*, Harvester Press (New York), 1980, pp78-108.

18 Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Herder and Herder (New York), 1972; Henri Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life, vol 1, Introduction*, Verso (London), 1991; and Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, Beacon Press (Boston), 1964.

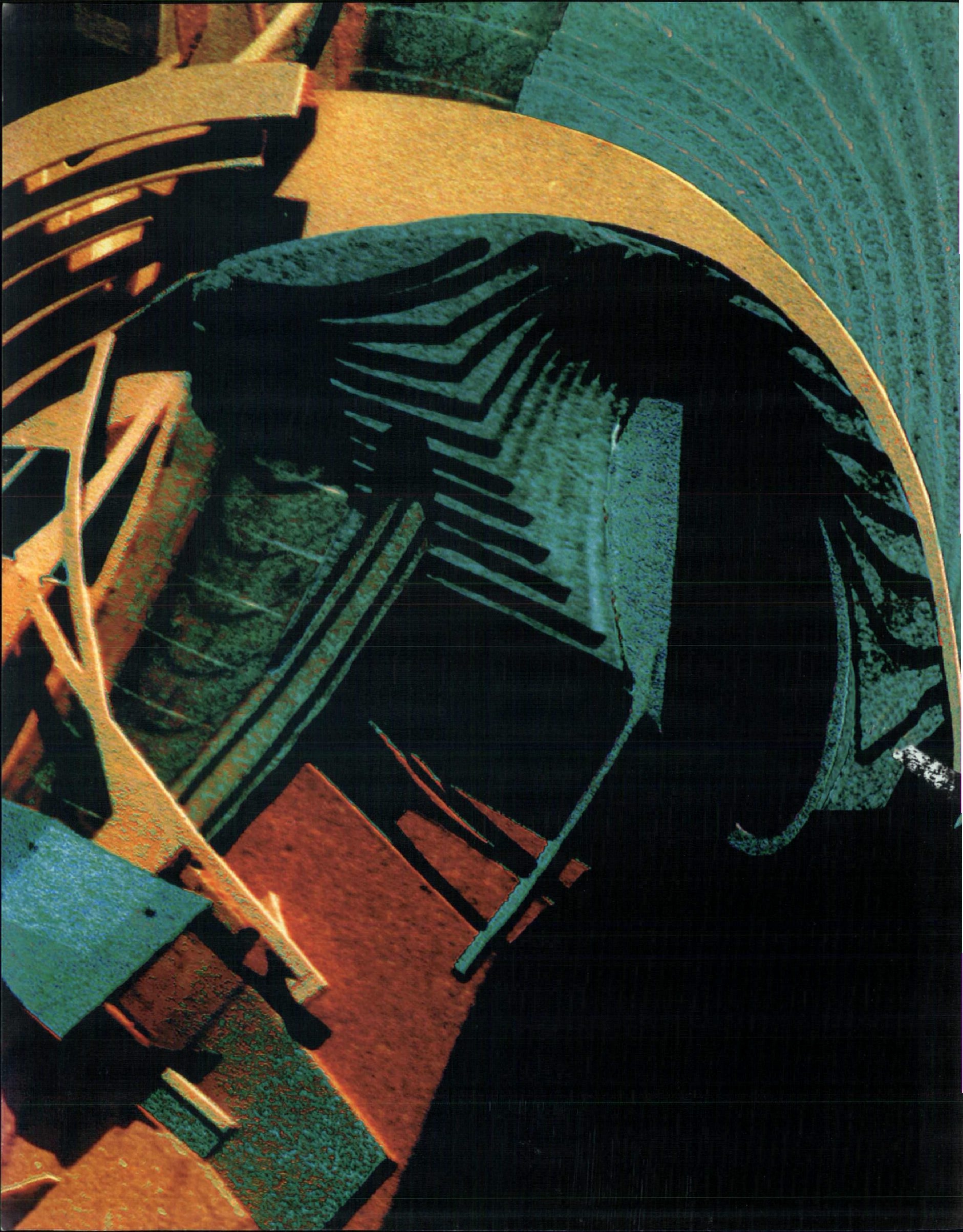
19 August Schmarsow, 'The Essence of Architectural Creation', in *Empathy, Form and Space*, Getty Center for the History of Art and Humanities (Santa Monica), 1994, pp281-297.

20 Michel Foucault, 'Body/Power', in Colin Gordon, op cit (note 17).

21 Marc Augé, op cit (note 19), p107 and Jean Baudrillard, 'Symbolic Exchange and Death', in Mark Poster (ed), *Jean Baudrillard: Selected Writings*, Polity Press (Cambridge), 1988, p140.

22 Marc Augé, op cit (note 15).

23 Martin Heidegger, 'Building, Dwelling, Thinking', in *Basic Writings*, Routledge (London), revised edition, 1993, p356.



ANAMORPHOSIS

SPATIAL DIALECTICS AT THE EDGE OF TOWN (NEUCHÂTEL, SERRIÈRES, SWITZERLAND)

Text by Nikos Georgiadis

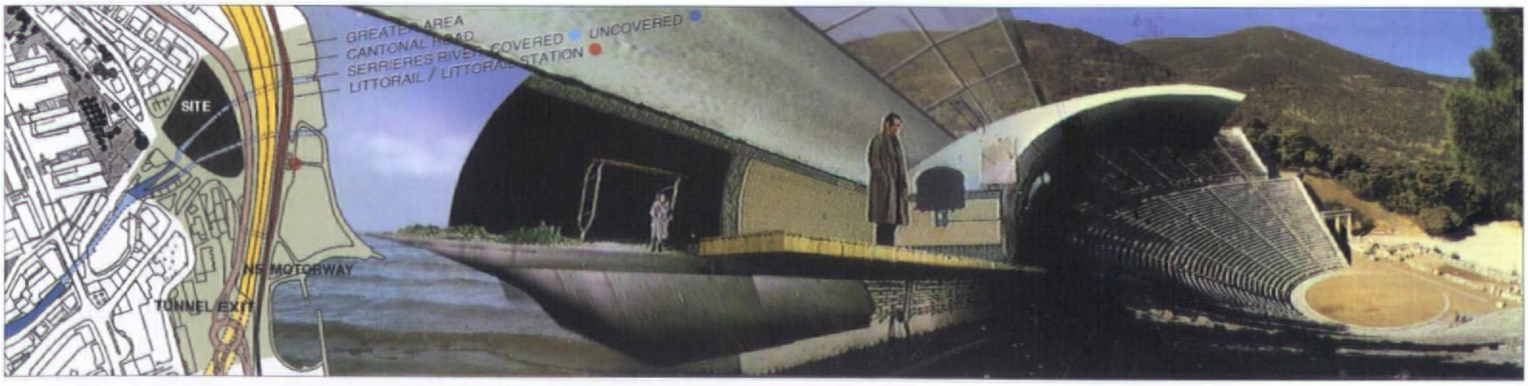
'Constructing a town upon the town' – the central theme of the Europan 4/96 competition programme – from the outset reveals a state of *contradiction and duplication on a purely spatial level;* it also intensifies the *conflict between spatiality and the new sociocultural condition* which encourages new urban actualisations to accommodate activities that are fundamentally transpatial. Moreover, to specify such actualisations on underutilised or peripheral sites in European towns challenges design to a reverse understanding of spatial experience on the basis of its unfunctional and uncultural dimension, potentially critical to such a condition. In the case of Neuchâtel, the given site is appointed with the extra role of signifying the entrance of the town for motorway drivers, while also composing a state of locality by expanding the urban fabric to the lake-front above the motorway; the site would simultaneously play the role of a 'non-site' and a 'site'.

Culturally speaking, 'non-place' constitutes a major value of supermodernity (not to be confused with the disappearance of identity-place but instead to be seen as the very latest identity-place of the supermodern frequenting individual). Unfortunately, non-place is not an indication of questioning self or identity, but the mark of a counter-identity or counterculture which entails the complete subservience of spatial experience: a condition of ultrafunctionalism whereby transitional, self-negated or atomised reason demands its spatial equivalent (something best illustrated in the 'applied negativity' of deformist/deconstructive design). Instead of accepting or negating place, we propose a spatial course of *un*identification, undoing the very non-place which the transpatial condition necessitates to deploy itself.

Non-place is a real phenomenon witnessed in sites like those of the competition but also in other micro-sites such as bus stops, tube stations, cafés or even bedrooms. To study them as operational symptoms in the body of the modern urban environment's signifying conduct reveals a real spatial condition that encapsulates *the paradox of the anthropological/un-anthropological* (cultural/critically cultural) dimension architectural practice itself is bound to have, while it also makes links with the 'pre-modern' or 'pre-symbolic' world; anthropology becomes a metaphor, an effect of architectural practice, not its conduct. The question of technique is of priority here, as an operation synonymous with formulating spatial problematics and processing inspirations into proper design tools. In its articulating and effecting sociocultural activities, we regard the traditional spatial structure of the European town as a historic-ly justified mechanism of critical realism; that is, not a state of inattention or imperception but a process of customisation, activating spatiality in its fully experiential multitude. Its distinct physicality, irreducible to any elementary gestures, cannot afford to be blurred or dissolved in schemes fashioned by circulation networking, transpatial communication and travelling, or deformed and trivialised by design attitudes aestheticising (and eventually reproducing) the desolate and abandoned late-modern urban landscapes. Citizenship, in its full spatial rigour, is a process critical to the transpatial category of the modern visitor/traveller or *flâneur* (business-minded, intellectual etc). The visitor/traveller operates on a hypercommunicational level of imperception and manoeuvring, imposing rationalities often alien to the local condition. The citizen is aware of the dialectics of spatial realism inherited via the urban 'tradition'; s/he is not a wanderer but rather enfigures spatial articulations extending from domestic objects to the town itself, while constantly searching for new rationalities, inventing new functions and setting urban scenarios; s/he activates spatial rituals effecting a paradoxical anthropological dimension which identifies with the utilised space itself rather than the cultural values attached to it.

Our scheme does not facilitate the uncritical mixture of the two; it introduces the traveller into the dialectics of citizenship – not the opposite. It does not accommodate 'functions' on a supposedly

OPPOSITE: Model detail; BELOW: Intervention, *spatial multitude*



neutral space. It progresses by approximating the core of the local urban structure as a form-binded operation peculiar to the sociocultural condition. It proposes a dialectical localisation: a critical permanency/realisation of activities, not a spatially blind (minimal, open-planned, continuous, collapsible or amorphous) accumulation of them. Priority is given not so much to places of encounters and circulation but to a morphic-ly complex and self-referring network of overtly functional relationships. Spatial intensity is not the effect of any literal mapping of movements and activities or any accidental or inevitable fusion/synchronisation of them; it instead engages a spatial multitude directing activities across the area in a manner of parallel experiences – a condition in which a certain spatial reality maps and orders distinct discursive/symbolic instances, by co-referring them. Visuality gives way to experiences of surroundness and exposure – a richer but simultaneously relaxed field of spatial relations offering no absorbing poles of attraction, but welcoming distant semantifications, or even evoking hypothetical ones – a process constitutive of traditional urban space. The scheme is overforming and unsymbolic; it progresses via homeo-morphic gestures of spatial anticipations and repetitions in both intra- and inter-formic fields; this enables, in principle, the instrumentalisation of landscape as an organic part of the built process and vice versa.

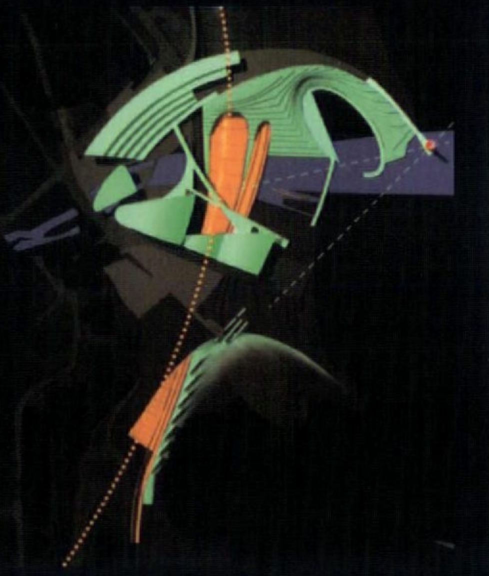
North-South Link

The link/integration of the lake-front with the rest of the town involves three distinct gestures:

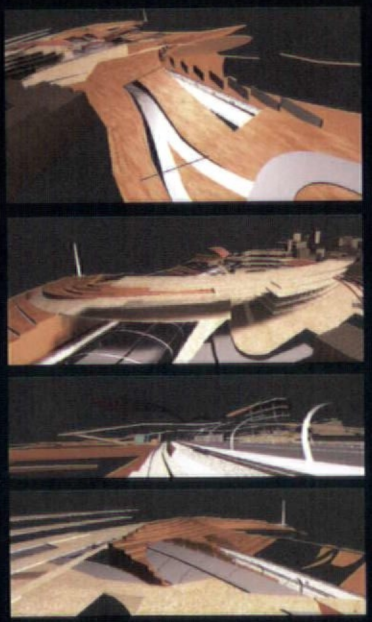
- Two major crossings – two distinct couplings of built space with the landscape – pass over the rail/motorway axis; they project their original localities (existing in opposition to each other) across that axis. The west-side crossing is shaped by the expansion of the northern landscape to the lake-front in the south, coupled with the morphic projection of the existing Littorail station towards the proposed exhibition centre in the north. The east-side crossing is shaped by the expansion of the lake-front landscape towards the north, coupled with the projection of the pedestrian flow of the proposed housing complex towards the lake in the south.
- A network of 'stitches' (routes and linking-passages) operates. Stitches are areas of interface between the local and the visiting or passing-by activities. They do not necessarily point towards places of any particular significance nor visually synchronise the linked ends, but signify potential places by emphasising their accessibility. Far from obeying any strict circulation system, they are capable of overlinking activities in the area, while often progressing in an almost parallel manner. This enables a spatial incorporation of the formerly divisive rail/motorway into the general logic of accessibility and parallel movements, the latter also being assisted by the flashing light-house.
- Couples of homeomorphic areas of local attraction are proposed, the parts of which work as spatial negatives to each other: the two oval leisure areas at the lake-side (a playground and a small marina) and the two squares (one being an open space in the green above the motorway and a major viewpoint of the area, the other, an urban piazza 'sunk' in the valley's condensed space).

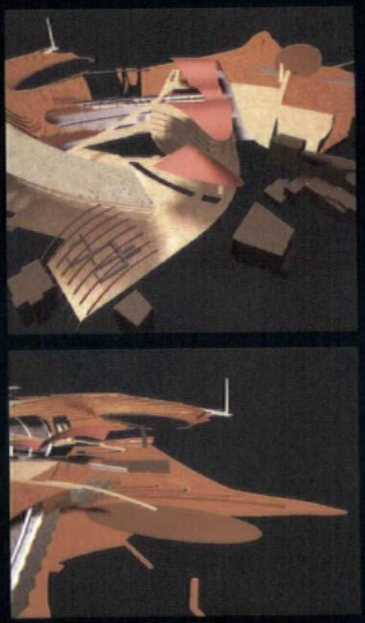
Valley Crossing: the Split Boundary

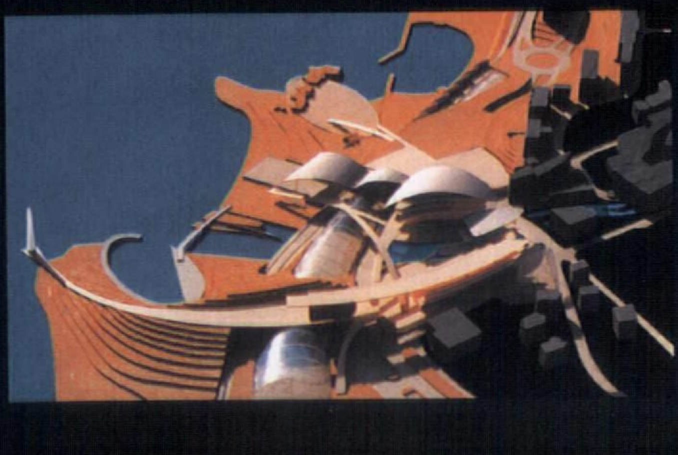
For the motorway driver, the 'gate of the town' is set critically to the idea of a single divisive boundary separating an 'inside' from an 'outside'. There operates a split boundary condition – an opening along the boundary. Instead of encountering a gate-object, the driver experiences a void-event: an extension of the Serrières valley, recomposed as a natural cut reaching the lake. In crossing the valley, the motorist undergoes a spatial reflection of both hypothetical ends of the town: 'entrance' and 'exit', in a short-cut experience of an urban situation; 'gate-crossing' is not mastering the city but exposed to the city, so becoming part of it. A setting of 'surroundness' is added, diffusing any hazardous condensation of the visual field (caused by a frontal encounter with an elaborate gate); thus, driving out of the N5 tunnel, the driver's right-hand view is a 'filmic' sequence set by panels framing the flashes of the lighthouse at the south-east end. Similarly, the gentle cut along the roof of the tunnel, shaped by the crossing slope of the west-side landscape, follows the driver's route and anticipates the valley opening ahead, whereby the spatial field is enriched with the network of stitching passages unfolding parallel to the motorway.

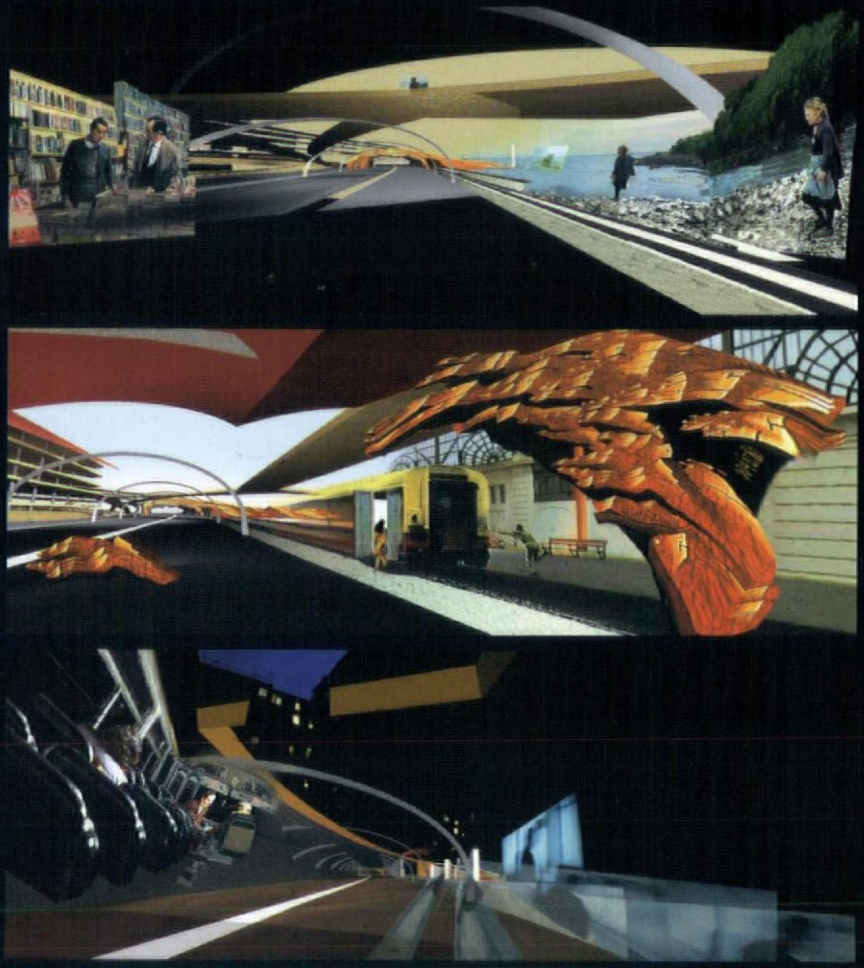


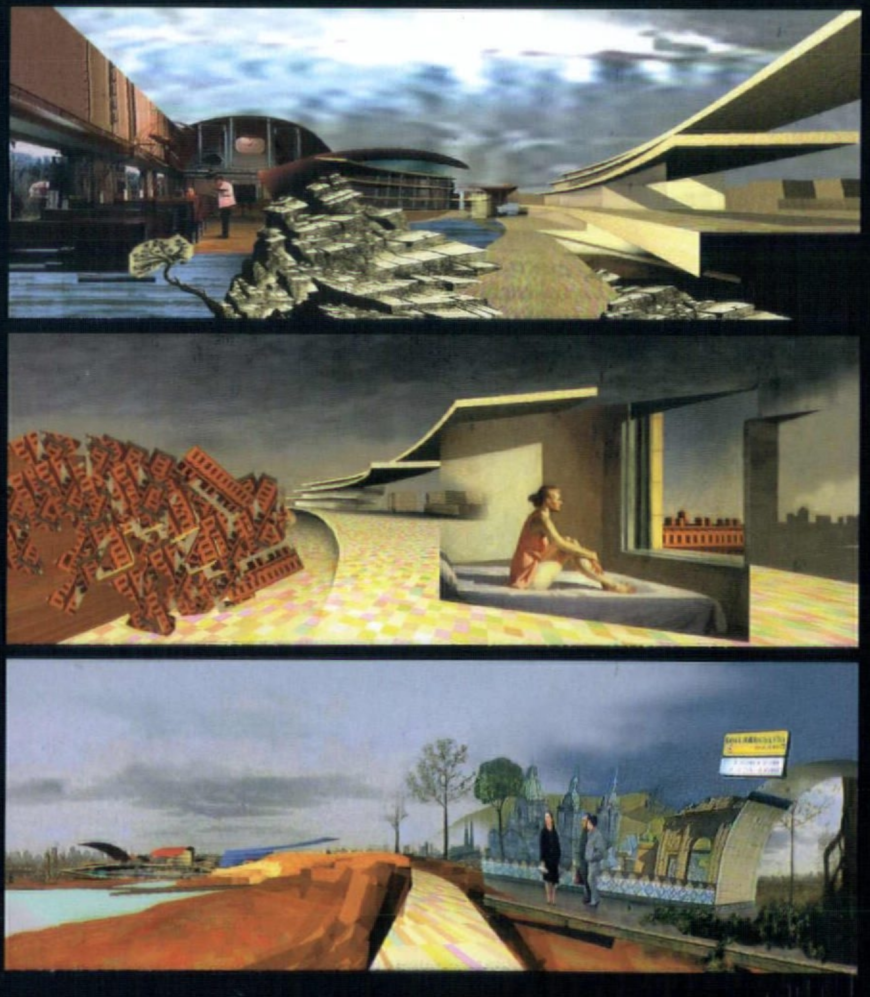
ABOVE: Split boundary; BELOW: Model – west view; south view; OPPOSITE, ABOVE, L TO R: Crossings; stiches; localities; CENTRE: Views related to the four gestures; BELOW, L TO R: Model – north-west view; north view









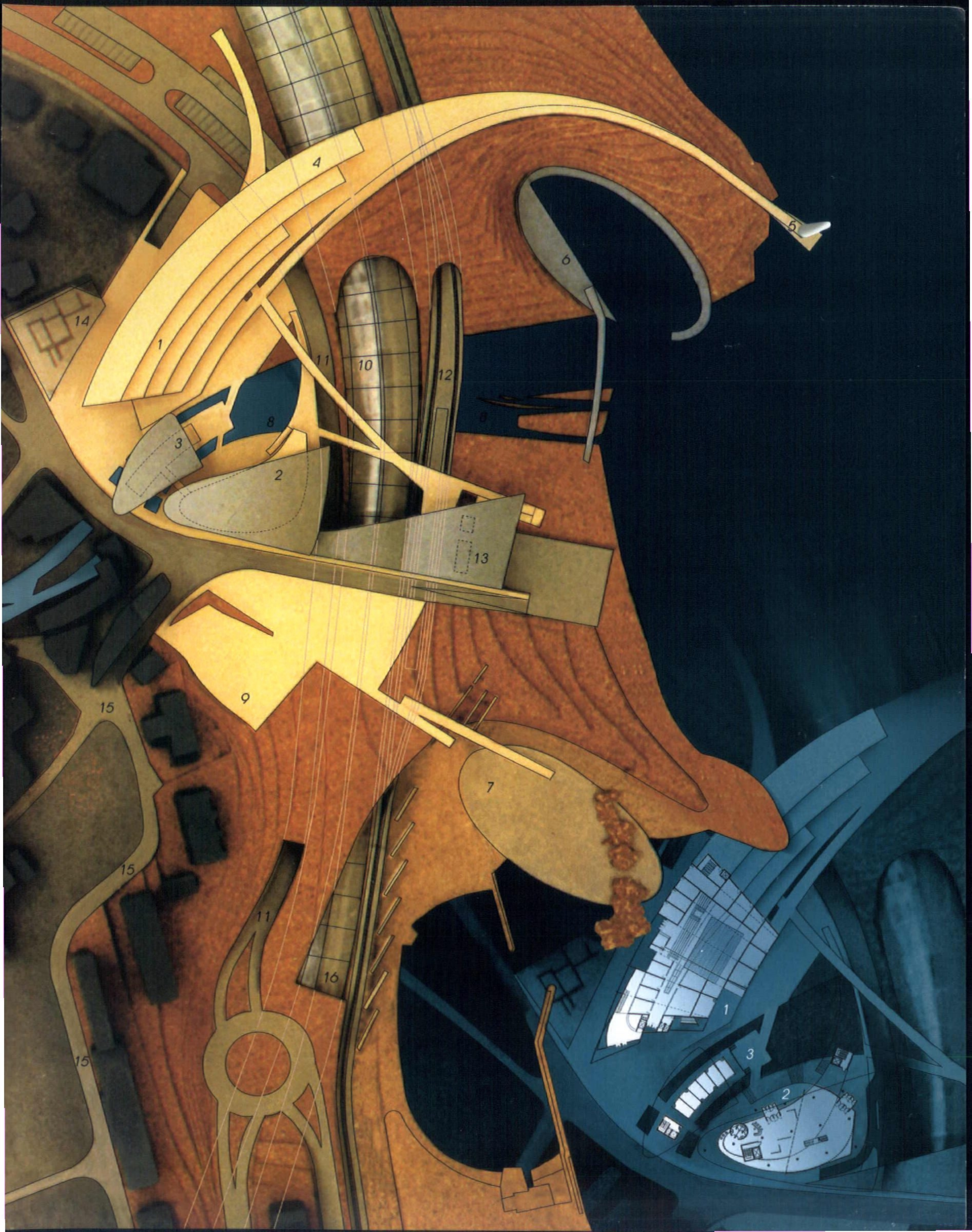


Note

Design team: Nikos Georgiadis, Tota Mamalaki, Costas Kakoyiannis, Vaios Zitonoulis.

This conceptual framework relates to an academic research project on architecture and psychoanalysis, exploring the psychoanalytic dimension of architectural design, elaborated by Nikos Georgiadis; see also, 'Architecture as Discourse of the (Un)filmed' and 'Open-air Cinemas', *AD Profile* No112, Academy Editions (London), 1994, pp26-33 and 80-83.

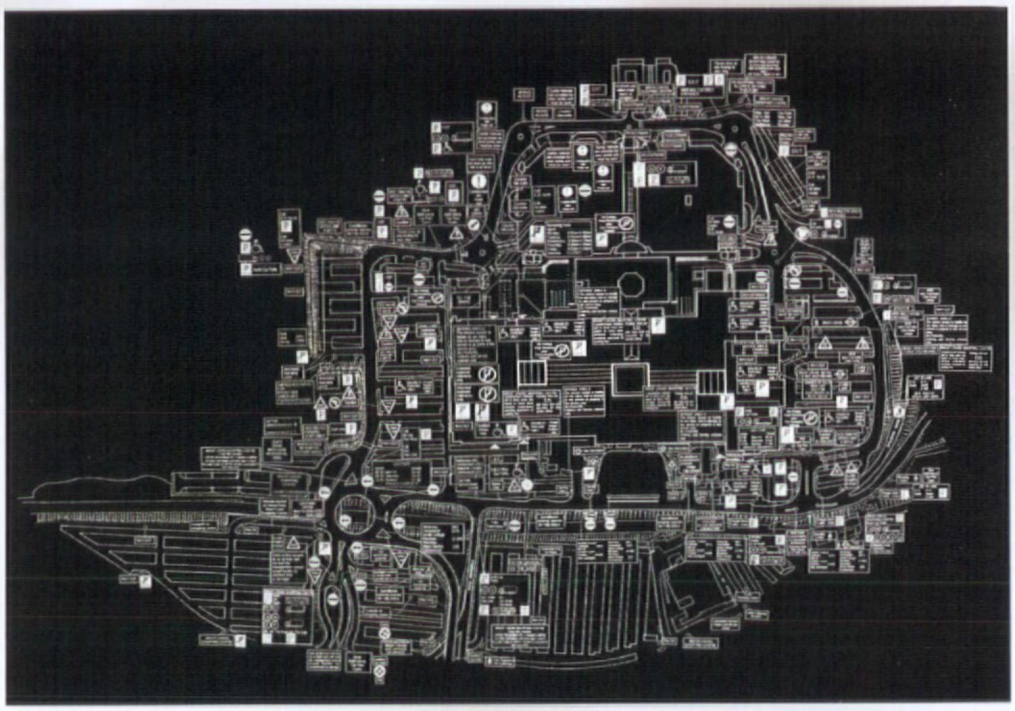
FROM ABOVE: Driving to the valley – three spatial multitudes; The promenade on the east-side crossing – three spatial multitudes; OPPOSITE, FROM ABOVE: Proposed Programme, general plan; the general layout of the motorway and the road system is given; a vehicular link is proposed between the Littorail station and the northern side. The river becomes a pole of attraction with the proposed arrangement of buildings. The scheme includes: • The residential and mixed-use building (1) containing local shops and amenities such as a laundry, library, kindergarten, post office etc, indoor swimming pool and cinema theatre (1st and 2nd ground floors 2400m²), and also a housing volume including studios, one to two-bedroom flats for small families, young couples and professionals (3rd, 4th and 5th ground floors – 2000m²); terraced pedestrian routes allow private front entrances for the flats, and develop eventually into a promenade crossing over the motorway and reaching the lake. • The commercial exhibition centre (2) (3700m²) possibly specialising in electronics and micro-technology; this comprises exhibition areas, administration offices, presentation space, restaurant and parking space and is directly linked with the Cantonal road and Littorail station with which the building forms a morphic-ly continuous complex • The canal building (3) containing artisan workshops (160m²) – ground floor and restaurant (330m²) – first floor; it is an island within the river, naturally texturising the urban tissue around the valley flow. • Also proposed: small motorway café (4) at the top of the housing promenade, offering panoramic views of the greater area, the lighthouse (5) landmarking the area for the motorway drivers, also perceivable from distant locations around the lake, a small marina (6), playground (7), the locale of the Serrières delta (8), a public square (9), a glass covering of the motorway (10) • Existing features: Cantonal road (11), railway (12), Littorail station (13), Roman villa ruins (14), housing (15), exit of the motorway tunnel (16); Ground floor plan, (1) shops, amenities, swimming pool etc (2) exhibition centre/reception (3) workshops



A.TOPOS WITH AA DIPLOMA UNIT 12

SOFT CITIES 1: FLATSCAPES

Commentary by Jane Harrison and David Turnbull



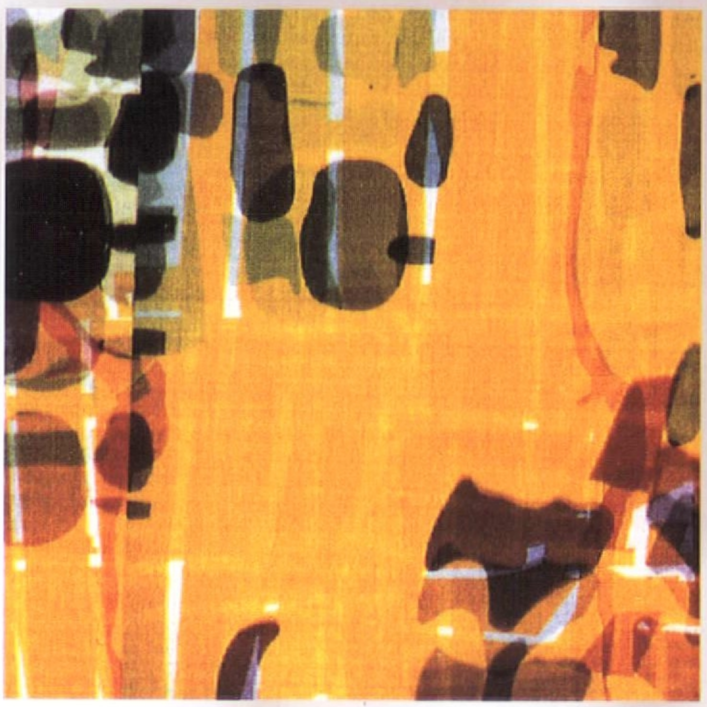
FROM L TO R: Analysis, text space of commercial field; simulation, a motile code produced through analysis of existing patterns of land use and their projected mid-term migration pattern; materialisation, variable viscosity field sample site

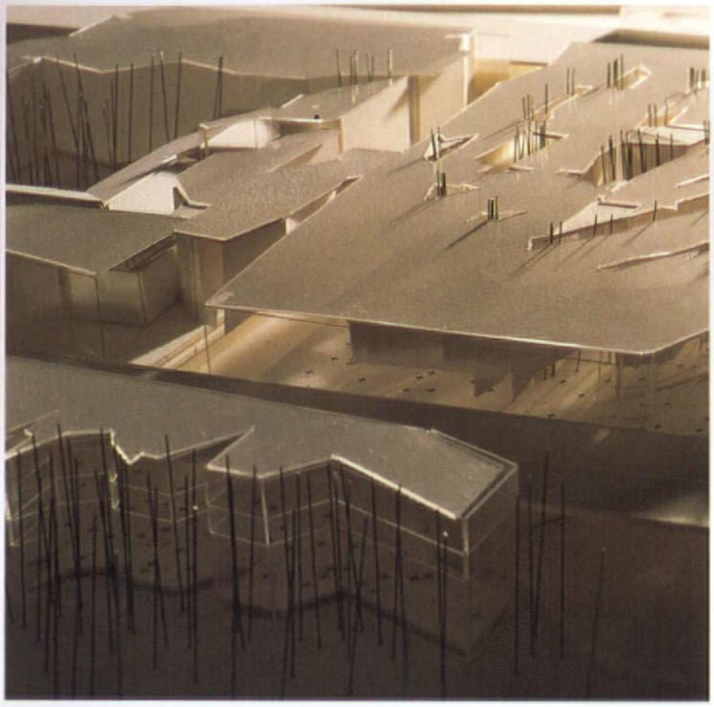
Flatscape

We use the term flatscape to indicate the physical condition of the *infra-urban*[1] landscape and a psychological state. This is a condition of apparently limitless horizontality, evenness and homogeneity. A flatscape is also a surface of *inclusion* which contains an overabundance of connection and a surplus of *dead ends*. Flatscapes can be found everywhere. They are non-places producing the emerging extremes of solitude and isolation identified by Marc Augé and information spaces as described by Paul Virilio.

Brent Cross

Brent Cross[2] is a paradigmatic flatscape. We have been using this environment as a test case in our work with Diploma Unit 12 at the Architectural Association. The objective of the work is twofold. One, to develop analytic methods by which such environments can be critically assimilated and two, to develop transformative techniques for projecting an optimistic future for such environments. This work explores the theory and prac-





tice of Soft Urbanism, focusing on the production and materialisation of *psychelogical*[3] space.

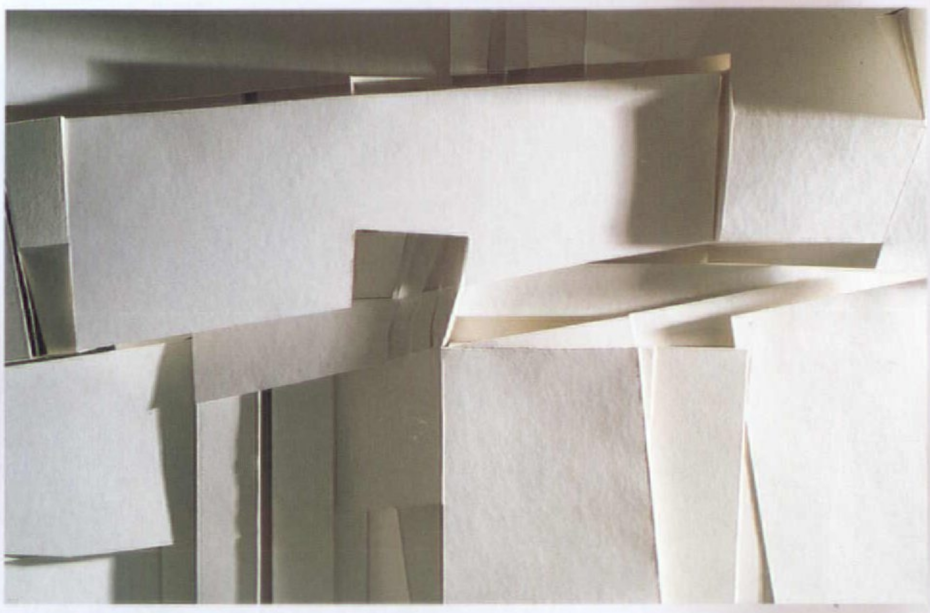
Soft Urbanism

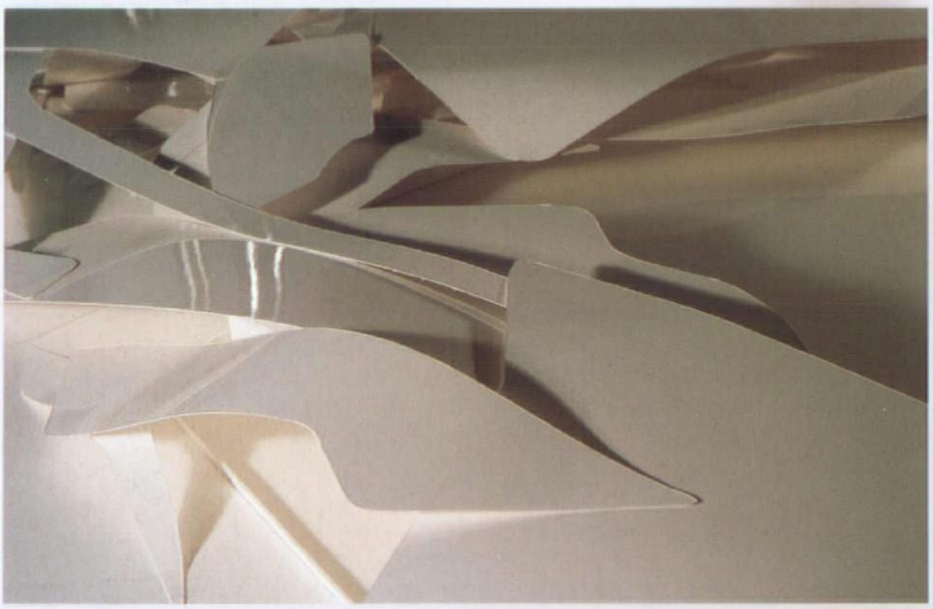
The *infra-urban* is a global condition. It is clear that a practice of urbanism must be discovered which is based on acceptance and transformation rather than the rejection of this condition; an urbanism which is not based on the wholesale construction or reconstruction of urban fabric but on principles of connectivity and condensation which, when materialised as new *infrastructures*, absorb the forces of and act as catalysts for growth within developing urban contexts. We reject procedures of exclusion (that is, systems of judgement based on fantasies of order and omnipotence) in favour of models which sustain, rather than restrain, excess to produce systems of coherent differentiation. In our research we have been developing techniques which explicitly mix, blur, distort, condense, and/or redistribute information found in the setting itself to produce effects which establish continuities where none apparently exist, revealing new possibilities for social interaction, new forms and new materialisations. These techniques explore the *depthless* space of sampling, while at the same time mining the *thickness* of information as it is found in the world – demonstrating the potential of systems of inclusion rather than exclusion in the production of a complex mix, physical and social.

There are three stages to this work:

Analysis

A series of analytic techniques have been developed and expanded upon to extract and collate vast sets of data from the context of operation in the form of a series of data-fields. A data-field is understood to be always already deterritorialised. Its usefulness lies in its materiality and in the structures of combination it establishes rather than in any imagined meaningful relationship to its source. Data-fields are simultaneously precise and provisional. They are the slack surfaces of information.





FROM ABOVE: Recreation field (sample site, Brent Reservoir) where a sports related infrastructure emerges from an analysis of the behaviour of existing patterns of mobility and materiality; maximum intensity commercial and recreational infrastructure – north circular business park

Simulation

Slack information surfaces are then manipulated systematically through procedures which simulate the probable and/or projected trajectories of development. Data is accelerated, condensed and redistributed in accordance with rules which reflect both strategic forces (political, social and economic) and errant forces (interference, accident and manoeuvre). The result of this stage of work is the production of a *motile code*, a thick construct of urban potential, simultaneously real and imaginary; excessive, complex, dense, and pointing. A code reflecting flow and movement which is capable of being interpreted spontaneously and independently.

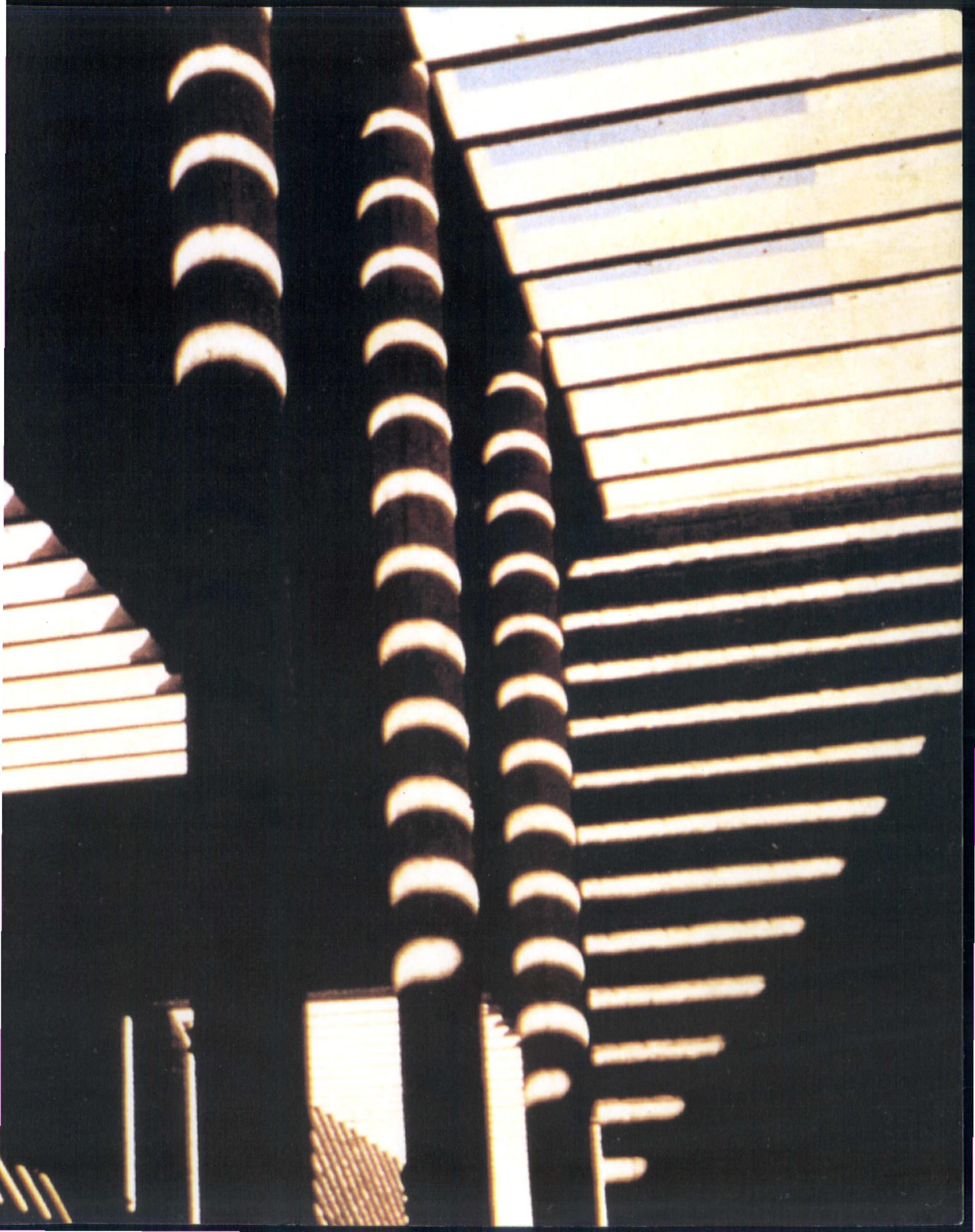
Materialisation

The motile code carries within itself multiple possibilities and instructions for urban growth and change. To test the implications of these, sample sites are identified and performance criteria are established. Through a process of negotiation between the specific local conditions and the motile code, multiple speculative materialisations and effects – policies, infrastructures, landscapes and hybrid buildings – are produced.

Notes

1 *Infra-urban* = INFRA + URBAN: BEYOND/BENEATH/AFTER/FURTHER THAN the URBAN.

2 Brent Cross is in North London, where the terrain has been changing continuously since the mid-19th century. The Town and Country Planning Acts of the 1940s had a profound impact on the suburban character of the area. Proximity to Heathrow airport and the M1 motorway has stimulated ribbon development at a large scale along the major roads. This is now being re-formed into cluster arrangements where shopping and entertainment zones, hotels and business parks cohabit with interwar and postwar suburban housing, the remaining 19th century infrastructure and new high speed roads: a zone of maximum potential.

3 For a discussion of the *psyche-logical* see Christine Wertheim's review of the Eidetic Images exhibition, curated by David Turnbull, in *AA Files* 30, Autumn 1995, pp74-76.